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# THE HOCKET IN MEDIEVAL POLYPHONY<sup>1</sup>

By WILLIAM E. DALGLISH

THE hocket, commonly described as the truncation of a melodic line with rests and the distribution of its tones between two or more alternating parts, was not, as some modern writers have intimated, a technique of purely subordinate import. Indeed, in certain music of the late *ars antiqua*, its use bespeaks a degree of ingenuity and sophistication rivaled only by the isorhythmic motet in its most advanced development. To misunderstand the hocket is to overlook much of significance concerning the craft of composition and the art of improvisation in the music of medieval Europe. Nevertheless, it has been misunderstood, although practical examples and theoretical explanations have been available for a considerable time. In this paper I shall attempt to explain the hocket as a compositional device with greater precision than has been done before, and to describe a previously unrecognized genre of hocket based on preexistent polyphony.

## I. The Literature

The only modern study of the hocket in medieval music is "Der

<sup>1</sup> I wish to express my gratitude to the governments of the United States and the Republic of Austria for affording me the opportunity, under the Fulbright program, of spending a year of study and research in Vienna, part of which time was devoted to the preparation of this article. I am also indebted to Professor Hans Tischler of Indiana University for many valuable suggestions.

The following abbreviations are used:

*AfMW* = *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft*

*CS* = Edmond de Coussemaker, *Scriptorum de musica mediæ ævi*, 4 vols. (Paris, 1864-1876)

*MD* = *Musica disciplina*

*MQ* = *The Musical Quarterly*

*RMI* = *Rivista musicale italiana*

*SIMG* = *Sammelbände der internationalen Musikgesellschaft*

*SJMW* = *Schweizerisches Jahrbuch für Musikwissenschaft*

*ZfMW* = *Zeitschrift für Musikwissenschaft*

Hochetus" by Marius Schneider.<sup>2</sup> Relying on the remarks of Johannes de Garlandia, Walter Odington, Franco of Cologne, and others, Schneider defines the hocket as follows: "A well-known melody would be divided between two musicians in such a way that the first sang every first, third, and fifth note, etc., the second every second, fourth, and sixth note, etc. To this *cantus* a harmonizing tenor was added. Often an improvised free coda was also added. We are informed about this [coda] by Grocheo."<sup>3</sup> Although Schneider concedes the existence of a restricted number of hockets without tenors, he considers those with tenors to have been the norm. Indeed, he says that pseudo-Tunstede "describes the tenor as the very basis of the hocket practice."<sup>4</sup> Four species of hocket are enumerated:<sup>5</sup> *duplex* (one part alternating with another), *triplex* (two parts alternating with a third), *quadruplex* (four in free exchange), and *contraduplex* (two pairs alternating).

From an evolutionary standpoint, Schneider considers the hocket to be of extreme antiquity, supporting this contention with convincing evidence drawn from an investigation of its use in monophony among primitive peoples. Within polyphony, the following stages of development are postulated:

- I. *The simple melodic hocket.* The simplest form of the *Wechselhocketus*; two voices alternate with one another at the same pitch level.

Ex. 1 Categories of hocket according to Marius Schneider.

a)



- II. *The compound melodic hocket.* A more advanced stage of I; the voices now alternate at different pitches. However, it is still possible to unite the two lines into a single melody.

<sup>2</sup> *ZfMW* XI (1929), 390-396.

<sup>3</sup> P. 390; cf. n. 53.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Jacob of Liège, *CS* II, 429: "Item hoketos similiter duplices, contra duplices, triplices, quadruplices." Walter Odington, *CS* I, 248b: "Ista truncatio fit super . . . tenorem . . . ut semper unus taceat, dum alius cantat; vel si triplex, sic: duo cantent et tertius taceat."



- III. *The harmonically governed hocket.* This type, a direct result of the “emergence of harmony” in Western music, is supposedly represented by the work on the tenor *Neuma* of the Codex Bamberg (= Ba).<sup>6</sup> The upper parts of this composition, Schneider says, “no longer engage in hocket at the unison; nor is it any longer possible to unite both into a single line; but rather they stand in a harmonic third, fourth, and fifth relationship to one another.” A transitional stage between the melodic and the harmonic hocket is found in the final section of the motet *Amor potest conqueri*<sup>7</sup> of the Montpellier Codex (= Mo).



- IV. *The hocket in the isorhythmic motet.* As a consequence of the rhythmic innovations of the *ars nova*, the hocket “lost much of its older rhythmic strength.” It nevertheless retained an important rhythmic function, that of marking off the *taleae* in isorhythmic motets. “Nothing,” Schneider says “impresses the ear and the eye more, and nothing indicates more emphatically the presence of isorhythmic relationships than does the hocket.”<sup>8</sup>

Finally, Schneider devotes a short paragraph to the hocket as a form. In the 13th century, a texted voice constructed over a tenor was called motetus, to which “a triplum or contratenor might be added.” Likewise, an

<sup>6</sup> The hocket on the tenor *Neuma* is printed in Aubry, *Cents motets du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1908), II, No. CII. The passage in question begins in m. 5.

<sup>7</sup> Yvonne Rokseth, *Polyphonies du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, 4 vols. (Paris, 1936-1939), III, No. 328.

<sup>8</sup> P. 393.

untexed voice constructed over a tenor and moving in hocket with a triplum was called *hocketus*, which then, like the motetus, became the designation for the entire form. Differences existed between the two as individual lines: "The motetus is texted and independent of the triplum; the hocketus is untexed and stands with the triplum in the well known alternation relationship." However, there was no difference, from a general tectonic standpoint, between the motet and the hocket: "Both," according to Schneider, "are through-composed forms with a tenor which repeats one or more times."<sup>9</sup>

Despite its relatively early date, Schneider's article has never been subjected to review. Most modern reference works accept its conclusions unhesitatingly, as the following excerpts easily demonstrate:

[Hocket is] the truncation of a melodic line into fragments (frequently single notes) which are given to two parts in alternation. . . . Theorists of the 13th century mention *hocketus* not only as a technique to be applied within the course of a motet, etc., but also as an independent musical form.<sup>10</sup>

A class of composition apparently not very important for its own sake, but the technique of which was sometimes used to ornament motets . . . is the *hoquetus*. . . . Odington states that in the hocket "A truncation is made over the tenor . . .<sup>11</sup> in such a way that one voice is always silent while another sings." The part above the tenor was known as *hoquetus* and gave its name to the whole type. . . . Four kinds of hocket are described: duplex . . . triplex . . . quadruplex . . . and contraduplex . . . . Notwithstanding the implications of Odington's description, it seems that the hocket technique was sometimes used when no borrowed tenor was present. There are three degrees of complexity in this technique. In the simplest, each note is repeated [cf. Ex. 1A]. . . . In another type, the . . . notes are sung alternately without repetition [Ex 1B]. . . . In a third type, the truncation occurs between groups rather than individual notes [Ex. 1C]. . . .<sup>12</sup>

There are several shortcomings in Schneider's explanation of the hocket. First, his conclusions are based primarily on the writings of theorists, not on the analysis of music, a procedure which has tended to focus undue attention on several matters of only peripheral musical significance. We shall later return to a consideration of the theoretical question. Second, the article contains a number of seemingly truistic statements which are in reality quite controvertible. For example, no evidence exists to support the oft-repeated assertion that the part above the tenor was, in the 13th century, called *hocketus* and that this gave its name to

<sup>9</sup> P. 395.

<sup>10</sup> Willi Apel, *Harvard Dictionary of Music* (Cambridge, Mass., 1944), p. 339.

<sup>11</sup> Ellipsis in original.

<sup>12</sup> Gustave Reese, *Music in the Middle Ages* (New York, 1940), pp. 320-321.

the entire form.<sup>13</sup> Johannes de Grocheo, who explains the nomenclature employed for the individual lines of a hocket, uses numbers for this purpose. However, he assigns them not according to the position of the voices above a tenor nor even according to their relative position from lowest to highest but rather according to their function within the technique itself. "The *primus* in a hocket," Johannes says, "is that part which begins the truncation, while the *secundus* is that part which truncates in the second position, following the *primus*."<sup>14</sup> This same system is used in a musical work transmitted in the *Speculum musicae*;<sup>15</sup> the upper part is labeled *primus*, the lower *secundus*. Therefore, the statement that the part above the tenor gave its name to the entire form must be regarded as incorrect. A more likely explanation is that, in the Middle Ages, any composition making extended (though not necessarily exclusive) use of *truncatio* was called a hocket (whether or not it was based on a tenor). In fact, Jacob of Liège calls the piece just mentioned a hocket,<sup>16</sup> even though only two of its four sections employ truncation and notwithstanding the absence of a tenor.

It is regrettable that hocket, as a device of composition, is never precisely defined by modern authors. Its outward manifestations — the presence of notes and rests in alternation between several parts — are explained, but then the reader is left with generalizations: some hockets have tenors, others do not; some are melodically oriented, others harmonic in nature; some have rhythmic strength, while others apparently lack it; some alternate by single tones, others by groups of tones; some are in two parts, others in three or four. Aside, perhaps, from the question of a tenor, these are all things appertaining primarily to the analysis of individual works. They do not, alone or together, satisfactorily delineate the device itself. It is true that Schneider does recognize a difference between compositions using hocket in an ancillary manner and those using it in a primary one (the so-called hocket form), and the cogency and usefulness of this distinction are not to be minimized. However, it is an oversimplification of the entire problem, as I shall seek to demonstrate.

<sup>13</sup> To my knowledge, there is only one composition employing the terms "Tenor — Hoquetus — Triplum" to designate the parts: Machaut's *Hoquetus David*, a relatively late work. The piece is printed in Schrade, *Polyphonic Music of the Fourteenth Century*, 4 vols. (Monaco, 1956), III, 65-67, and elsewhere.

<sup>14</sup> Ernst Rohloff, ed., *Der Musiktraktat des Johannes de Grocheo* (Leipzig, 1943), p. 57: "Primus vero in hoquetis est, qui primo truncare incipit, sed secundus, qui secundo post primum truncat."

<sup>15</sup> *CS II*, 417-419; cf. Ex. 2A.

<sup>16</sup> P. 417b: "... ut in sequenti patet Hoketo duplici."

## II. The Music

To facilitate investigating the music of the hocket, the following three-fold classification of all works employing the technique is proposed:

- I. *The incidental hocket.* This class includes all compositions in which hocket is used in a manner incidental to the general style of the piece. The presence or absence of a tenor in such works is irrelevant; the hocket is simply incorporated in the existing texture. Although works in this category may vary widely in style and amount of hocketing employed, they have one important characteristic in common: the hocket passages are freely invented (not, as in category III, based on preexistent music).
- II. *The independent hocket.* To this class belong all compositions in which the hocket itself constitutes the major stylistic trait. Such works are (apparently) freely invented, textless, use hocketing throughout, and are based on a liturgical tenor.
- III. *The variation hocket.* To this class belong all hockets fashioned as variations (or figural paraphrases) of preexistent polyphony. No independent examples of this type have survived. Our knowledge of it rests on hocketing melismas incorporated in motets, secular pieces, and movements of the Mass.

With this classification in mind, type III, the variation hocket, will be examined. For reasons already alluded to, it will receive more extended consideration than either of the other two types.

In book VII, chapter 33, of the *Speculum musicae*,<sup>17</sup> Jacob of Liège introduces, as a musical example, *A l'entradre d'avrillo*, a Provençal chanson in simple conductus style. It is for two voices (without liturgical tenor) and falls into two *partes* of two sections each. Heinrich Husmann, who devoted a short article to its analysis, found two things about it that are unique: <sup>18</sup> the use of different rhythmic modes (*transmutatio modi*) for its two otherwise identical *partes*,<sup>19</sup> and the presence of initial upbeats.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. n. 5.

<sup>18</sup> "Der Hocketus *A l'entradre d'avril*," *AfMW* XI (1954), 296-299. This article contains a transcription of the entire piece.

<sup>19</sup> Husmann considers the second hocketing melisma (our section IV) to be only erroneously written in the same rhythmic mode as the first. This is, however, hardly compatible with the directive "sicut prius" appearing twice at the beginning of this section.

However, he overlooked the most striking stylistic peculiarity: its two hocket melismas are varied restatements of the music of the texted portions. The most obvious clue to a relationship between the texted and the hocketing sections is their equal length; both contain exactly sixty-one perfections.<sup>20</sup> Equality of length between a variation hocket and its prototype is, in fact, a hallmark of the genre in general and a phenomenon which we shall encounter repeatedly in the course of our analyses. The form of *A l'entree d'avrillo* is as follows:

Pars I		Pars II	
Section I	Section II	Section III	Section IV
(prototype for all following sections; conductus style; rhythmic mode II; texted)	(hocket var. of music of sec. I; mode II; untexted)	(same music <sup>21</sup> as sec. I, but different text; mode I)	(repeat of sec. II [i.e., in mode II])

As we shall see, the incorporation of musical material in the hocket is a sophisticated process. It is not, as one might at first imagine, simply a matter of "breaking up" the original melodies with rests. Quite the contrary. The object is a balanced and well-proportioned admixture of preexistent and new elements — a variation in the literal sense of the word.

Melodically, each voice of the hocket is at liberty to draw on either line of the texted section for its tonal material. The integrity of the original voices is only partially respected. In the first complete measure of section II,<sup>22</sup> the first perfection of the upper voice is drawn from the *superius* of the original, the second from the *inferius* (Ex. 2A). The same procedure is found in measures 39-41 (upper hocketing voice; Ex. 2B). However, notwithstanding this centonization of the individual lines, a definite attempt is made to preserve the melodic outline of the original in the hocket. The tones of the upper voice (marked by asterisks in Exx. 2A and 2B) are traceable throughout the hocket. By comparison, one hears only the briefest snatches of the lower part.

<sup>20</sup> A longa rest must be inserted in both parts after the thirty-sixth perfection of the hocket section.

<sup>21</sup> With some minor variants.

<sup>22</sup> The barring employed for the hocket section in our examples differs from that used by Husmann.



Ex. 2a *A l'entrade d'avrillo*, mm. 1-4 (prototype) and mm. 31-34 (hocket) superposed.

Section II

HE ODELO  
Primus 31\*

Secundus

Section I

1

A l'en - tra - de d'a - vril - lo d'u - -

b) *A l'entrade d'avrillo*, mm. 9-11 (prototype) and mm. 39-41 (hocket) superposed.

39\*

9

tro - vai ga - io ri - se

Often, new melodic elements not found in the prototype are introduced, ranging from simple embellishments to entirely novel lines. To the first type belong sustained tones rendered in the hocket as a series of

repeated notes ( $\text{♩} = \text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩}$ ) or as a neighbor-note group ( $\text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩}$ )

=  $\text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩}$  or  $\text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩}$  ). The second type is best

illustrated by the passage in measures 51-55 (see Ex. 3), where the lower hocketing voice reproduces the chanson melody (normally divided between the two parts), while the upper voice spins out an entirely original line. It is interesting that the highest point in the absolute range

of the piece is reached at this same place — a *d''* in measure 52.



Ex. 3 *A l'entree d'avrillo*, mm. 21-24 (prototype) and mm. 51-54 (hocket) superposed.



51

21

en un jar - din sou l'om - bre d'un pu - -

The hocket generally follows the harmonic structure of the original. When foreign tones are introduced, they harmonize with the original concord, as in the final measure, where the tonal focus is shifted from F in the chanson to B $\flat$  in the hocket. An idiosyncrasy is the penchant for rendering melodic whole or half steps of the original as vertical sonorities

in the variation — the changing of  into 

or  into 

Naturally, the use of truncation itself effects some changes in the rhythmic contour of the chanson. Aside from these, two things are important to the rhythmic style of the hocket: the breaking up of long notes into shorter ones — already mentioned in connection with melody — and the greater use of small note values (the chanson progresses generally by  $\text{♩}$ . and  $\text{♪}$ , the variation by  $\text{♪}$ ,  $\text{♩}$ ,  $\text{♪}$ , and, at times, even  $\text{♩♩}$ ).

In combination, these changes give the hocket greater rhythmic animation than its prototype, giving it a character and function somewhat similar to the *Proporz* of early dance music. Of interest is the modal neutrality of the hocket. Section I is in rhythmic mode II, section III in mode I, yet sections II and IV are identical, both being in a modified version of mode II. Finally, it should be pointed out that the somewhat

enigmatic title, *He odelo*, given to the two hocket sections is almost certainly a corruption of *Hic* (or *Huius*) *ocheto* — “The Hocket for the Preceding.”

The next composition, the famous motet *Huic ut placuit* from the Montpellier Codex,<sup>23</sup> has been discussed by numerous writers.<sup>24</sup> In particular, Jacques Handschin has repeatedly advanced the theory that it forms part of a group of three motets in Mo of English provenance,<sup>25</sup> the other two being *Balaam inquit* (to be discussed presently), and *Alle psallite*.<sup>26</sup> All writers have called attention to the extensive use made of *Stimmtausch*, but only one — Friedrich Ludwig — recognized that the second of this motet’s two sections (both of the same length) bore a direct musical relationship to the first. In his exemplary essay, “Studien über die Geschichte der mehrstimmigen Musik im Mittelalter,”<sup>27</sup> Ludwig says: “There follows [after the texted section] a large concluding hocket . . . which, in places, looks exactly like a free, hocketing variation of the previous melodies. . . .”

Despite the early date of Ludwig’s study, no later scholar picked up the clue contained in this statement. Handschin, for example, mentions Ludwig’s analysis in his own article on the *Summer Canon*,<sup>28</sup> but makes no reference to this interesting detail. In fact, Ludwig himself may not have recognized the full import of his own observation, for he overlooked exactly the same phenomenon in *Balaam inquit*, a work which he analyzes on the same page with *Huic ut placuit*.

<sup>23</sup> Rokseth, III, No. 341.

<sup>24</sup> Edmond de Coussemaker, *L’Art harmonique aux XII<sup>e</sup> et XIII<sup>e</sup> siècles* (Paris, 1865), p. 282; Aubry, III, 151; Heinrich Bessler, “Studien zur Musik des Mittelalters II,” *AfMW* VIII (1926-1927), 181; Friedrich Ludwig, “Studien über die Geschichte der mehrstimmigen Musik im Mittelalter,” *SIMG* V (1903-1904), 221; *idem*, “Die Quellen der Motetten ältesten Stils,” *AfMW* V (1923), 207; Rokseth, IV, 90; Manfred Bukofzer, *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Music* (New York, 1950), pp. 24-25; Hans Tischler, “English Traits in the Early 13th-Century Motet,” *MQ* XXX (1944), 466; Willi Apel, *The Notation of Polyphonic Music* (Cambridge, Mass., 1953), p. 315; J. Müller-Blattau, *Geschichte der Fuge*, 3rd ed. Kassel, 1963), p. 15.

<sup>25</sup> “Angelomontana polyphonica,” *SJMW* III (1928), 88-89; “Zur Frage der melodischen Paraphrasierung im Mittelalter,” *ZfMW* X (1927), 517-518; Review of Hughes, *Worcester Mediaeval Harmony*, *ZfMW* XIV (1931), 57-58; “The Summer Canon and its Background II,” *MD* V (1951), 73 ff.

<sup>26</sup> Rokseth, III, Nos. 340 and 339 respectively.

<sup>27</sup> P. 221; cf. n. 24.

<sup>28</sup> P. 73; cf. n. 25.

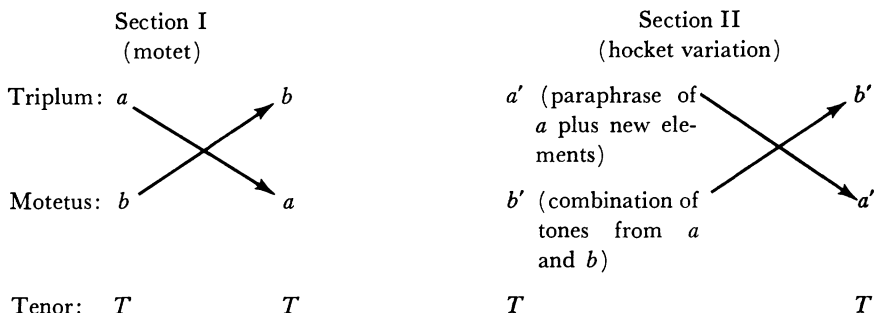
*Huic ut placuit* manifests greater artistry than the first work discussed. The lines of the hocket are carefully formed and coalesce with precision. The upper hocketing voice is fashioned primarily as a paraphrase of the triplum of section I. The lower voice incorporates elements from both lines of the original, though a certain predilection for the motetus is discernible. As in *A l'entree d'avrillo*, new melodic elements are introduced at times, as in measures 33-37 (upper line) in relation to measures 7-11 (see Ex. 4). The harmonies of the hocket with few exceptions are those of the texted section, this being partially due to the repeated tenor.

Ex. 4 *Huic ut placuit*, mm. 7-11 (prototype) and mm. 33-37 (hocket) superposed.

The image displays a musical score for 'Huic ut placuit'. It is divided into two systems. The first system, labeled '33' and '36', shows a hocket variation with two staves of music. The second system, labeled '7' and '10', shows the prototype with Latin lyrics: '- ta - bant mu - ne - ra, I - psum mi - ri - fi - ce re - gem di - cen - ti - a'. Below the second system is a Tenor part labeled '[Tenor]' with a single staff of music.

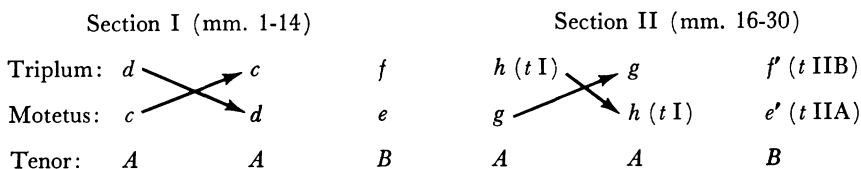
The important role played by *Stimmtausch* in this work has already been mentioned but the full implications of its use can only be appreciated in relation to the technique of hocket variation. Section I comprises two subsections of thirteen measures each (two tenor statements), both practically identical, except for voice interchange. Section II emulates this structure, even though, as individual melodies, the hocketing voices bear only a modest resemblance to those of the texted portion. Obviously, the hocket variation was expected to reflect all important architectonic characteristics of its model. The two sections remain identical in the abstract; only their physical appearance is transformed. The following diagram illustrates this form:

*Huic ut placuit* (formal structure; T = repetition of tenor melody)



*Balaam inquit*,<sup>29</sup> the sister work of *Huic ut placuit*, is of similar structure but of greater complexity. Friedrich Ludwig has explained many of its formal aspects in his "Studien."<sup>30</sup> The composition is in four sections, all of equal length, and each coterminous with one complete tenor statement of the liturgical melody *Balaam*.<sup>31</sup> In its original version, this melody has an A-A-B or bar form, and the composer, through *Stimm-tausch* and the judicious disposition of the text, has silhouetted this form in the accompanying voices. Thus, in the opening (textless) passage, the same music is heard over both A segments of the tenor (with voice interchange); only over the B segment is new material introduced. The same is true of the following section, except that the tripartite tenor structure is even further highlighted by the arrangement of the text, the same text being used for the two A segments; two different but related ones for the B part. The form of both sections is shown in the following chart. Upper-case letters refer to melodic elements of the tenor, lower case letters to those of the other voices. It is important to notice that sections I and II are not musically identical.

*Stimm-tausch* and disposition of text in *Balaam inquit*, *pars I*  
(*t* = text; all parts textless unless otherwise noted)



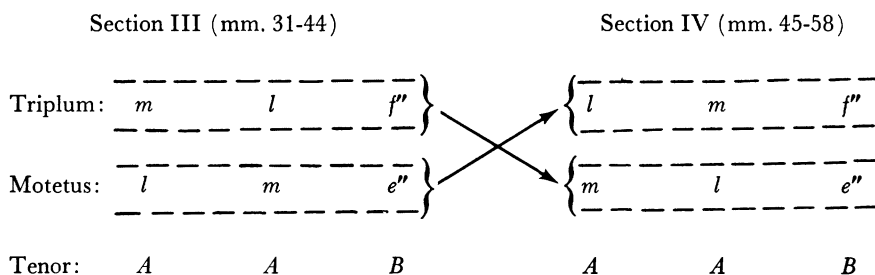
<sup>29</sup> Rokseth, III, No. 340.

<sup>30</sup> Pp. 220-221.

<sup>31</sup> From the sequence *Epiphaniam Domino* (cf. Bukofzer, *Studies*, p. 25, n. 24); the tenor of *Huic ut placuit* is taken from the same sequence.

*Pars II* is exactly as long as *pars I*, and is an extended hoquet. Unlike *pars I*, *pars II* contains the same music in both sections, contrast being effected through *Stimmtausch*. However, since this technique has already been employed within each section in the manner described, *Stimmtausch* now occurs at two levels — a lower one within the sections and a higher one between them. (See the following chart; the *Stimmtausch* is not maintained at the end of section IV.)

*Stimmtausch* in *Balaam inquit*, *pars II*



*Pars II* is, of course, a hoquet variation of *pars I*. However, it was remarked above that sections III and IV are alike while I and II are not. To resolve this seeming paradox, we must analyze *Balaam inquit* in even greater detail than Ludwig did. We begin by observing that of the four sections of the work, section II, the one with text, is the most important. The remaining three exercise an indispensable decorative function, but are, from a purely structural standpoint, definitely subordinate. The ascendancy of the motet (section II) over its surrounding *florificatio* is graphically conveyed in the music itself; it is both preceded and followed by complete rests in all parts. Section II contains the only independent music. Everything else is derivative (section I from section II, sections III and IV from section I). The following examples demonstrate how these derivations are effected. Section I, although drawing on both lines of section II, shows a certain preference for the texted one (see Ex. 5A). Section III is fashioned from section I as a hoquet variation (see Ex. 5B). Since section I is intimately related to section II, it is therefore possible for section III to function as a variation for both sections I and II. It may already have been noticed that (basically) the same tonal material is heard in the treble throughout, exposing what we may term the “basic treble melody” (see Ex. 5C).

# The Hocket in Medieval Polyphony

Ex. 5a *Balaam inquit*, derivation of Section I from Section II.

[Section I]  
1

[Section II]  
16  
Ba - lam in - quit ua - ti - ci - nans: Iam de Ia - cob

[Tenor]  
8  
[Balaam Inquit]

Detailed description: This musical example consists of four staves. The top two staves represent Section I, starting at measure 1. The bottom two staves represent Section II, starting at measure 16. The lyrics 'Ba - lam in - quit ua - ti - ci - nans: Iam de Ia - cob' are written under the second staff of Section II. A Tenor part is shown on a separate staff below, starting at measure 8 and labeled '[Balaam Inquit]'. The notation includes various rhythmic values and rests, with some notes beamed together.

Ex. 5b *Balaam inquit*, derivation of Section III from Section I.

[Section III]  
31

[Section I]  
1

[Tenor]

Detailed description: This musical example consists of four staves. The top two staves represent Section III, starting at measure 31. The bottom two staves represent Section I, starting at measure 1. A Tenor part is shown on a separate staff below. The notation includes various rhythmic values and rests, with some notes beamed together.

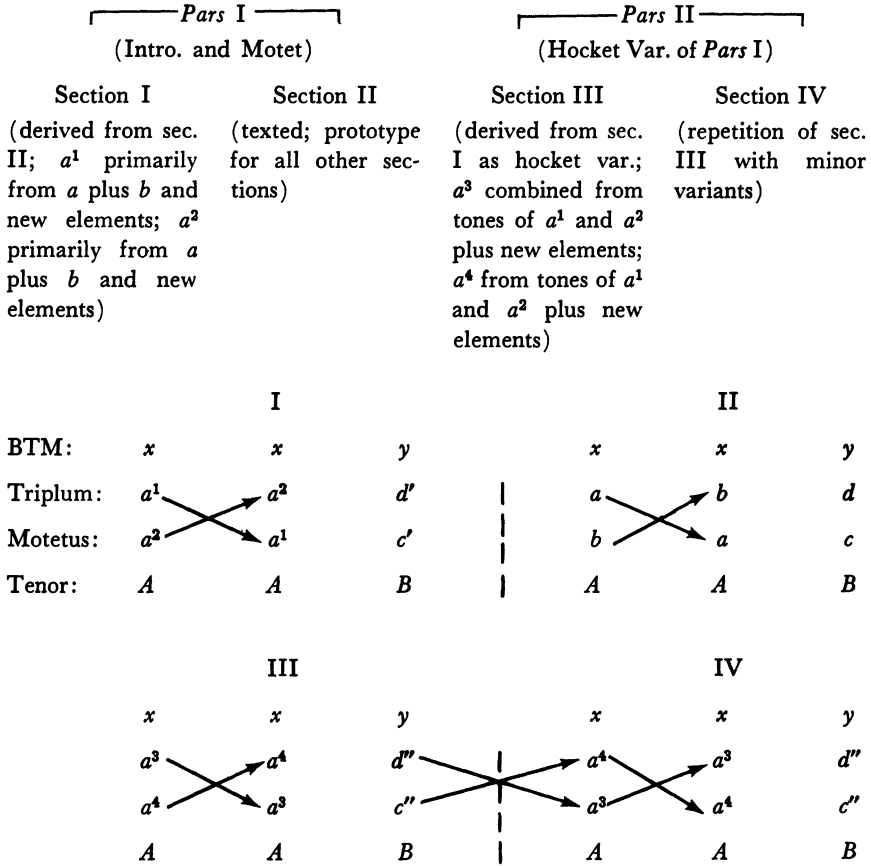
Ex. 5c *Balaam inquit*, basic treble melody, Sections I, II, III, IV.

[Tenor]

Detailed description: This musical example shows a single treble staff with a circled X at the beginning and a circled Y further along. Below it is a Tenor staff. The notation includes various rhythmic values and rests, with some notes beamed together.

The following chart shows the form of the entire composition.

*Balaam inquit* (formal structure; *BTM* = basic treble melody)



Jacques Handschin,<sup>32</sup> following Rokseth,<sup>33</sup> has called attention to the manuscript Oxford, New College 362 (= NC),<sup>34</sup> which preserves both *Huic ut placuit* and *Balaam inquit*. The two are here written as a single work, and only the lower voices are transmitted, the tripla being omitted. While I do not intend to enter the discussion concerning the

<sup>32</sup> "Summer Canon II," 73-74.

<sup>33</sup> IV, 90.

<sup>34</sup> The source is described in G. Reaney, ed., *International Inventory of Musical Sources IV: Manuscripts of Polyphonic Music, 11th-Early 14th Century* (Munich, 1966), 588 f. Cf. also the *New Oxford History of Music II* (London, 1947), 356, and III (London, 1960), 83; Bukofzer, *Studies*, p. 24, n. 23.



possible insular origin of these pieces, I wish to emphasize that the transmission of NC is definitely corrupt. The omission of the tripla destroys not only the elaborate *Stimmtausch* structure but the other intricacies of form as well. Without the upper voices, the two works make very little sense; under no circumstances could these lines be considered later additions. Therefore, the three-voice versions must unquestionably be the original ones. Furthermore, the two are not a single composition. Although closely related, their internal formal peculiarities make them incontestably independent.

The three works examined<sup>35</sup> are not the only known hocket variations, but completeness of coverage is not the aim here. Let us instead briefly consider the two other types. The independent hocket (type II) is represented by the six hockets appended to Ba,<sup>36</sup> the composition on the tenor *Portare* of Mo,<sup>37</sup> the one on the tenor *Sustinere* (= *Portare*) of the manuscript Paris, Bibl. Nat., Lat. 11411,<sup>38</sup> the *Hoquetus David* of Machaut,<sup>39</sup> and a fragment.<sup>40</sup> The Machaut hocket is almost certainly an independent (i.e., freely composed) work, but the same is not necessarily true of the others. The possibility at least exists that these might be based on preexistent music. While proof of any kind is lacking, it is worth remarking that the form of some of these hockets is fluid rather than fixed. The three-part *In seculum* by the Spanish Anonymous is transmitted in Ba in two different metric versions, one in (modern) 6/8 (6/4), the other in 3/4.<sup>41</sup> These same versions are found in Mo,<sup>42</sup> but with a

<sup>35</sup> Cf. the motet *Amor potest conqueri* of Mo (III, No. 328). This work will be discussed in my forthcoming article, "The Harmonic Ostinato in Medieval Vocal Polyphony." A Credo by Pennard in the Old Hall Manuscript (cf. A. Ramsbotham, *et. al.*, *The Old Hall Manuscript*, 3 vols. [Nashdom Abbey, Burnham, Bucks, 1932-1938], II, 241) was recognized by Bukofzer as a hocket variation (*Studies*, p. 66). The composition partially printed as Ex. 223 in the *New Oxford History of Music*, II, 398-399, may also belong to this category.

<sup>36</sup> Aubry, II, Nos. CII, CIII, CIV, CVI, CVII, and CVIII. No. CIV is found in Mo. (II, No. 73) and in Madrid, Bibl. Nac., 20486 reproduced in H. Anglès, *El Còdex musical de Las Huelgas*, 3 vols. [Barcelona, 1931], I, 73, and L. Dittmer, *Publications of Mediaeval Musical Manuscripts No. 1: Madrid 20486* [New York, 1957], p. 65).

<sup>37</sup> Rokseth, II, No. 5.

<sup>38</sup> F. 45; cf. L. Dittmer, *Publications of Mediaeval Musical Manuscripts No. 4: Paris 13521 & 11411* (New York, 1959), pp. 8, 70.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. n. 13.

<sup>40</sup> One of the Worcester fragments; cf. Hughes, *Worcester Mediaeval Harmony of the 13th and 14th Centuries* (Nashdom Abbey, Burnham, Bucks, 1928), No. 97.

<sup>41</sup> Aubry, II, Nos. CIV and CVI.

<sup>42</sup> Rokseth, II, Nos. 2 and 3.

fourth, texted (*Je n'amerai*) and nontruncating line added, thus making them solo songs with hocket accompaniments. Elsewhere,<sup>43</sup> a three-voice motet is fashioned from the two lowest lines of the *In seculum* hocket (the tenor plus the lowest hocketing part, to which the text *Sire Dieus* is added) plus the texted voice *Je n'amerai* mentioned above.

The most heterogeneous of the three categories is the first — that of the incidental hocket. In works of this type, hocketing may be used for only a few measures or it may constitute a significant portion of the piece. Occasionally, extended hocketing melismas are found in large works in the manner of a hocket variation, but lacking the requisite dependence on preexistent music. An ideal example of this is a Credo by Bittering in the Old Hall Manuscript (= OH).<sup>44</sup> Frequently the hocket is conjoined with another favorite technique, the canon, as in the French chace *Se je chant*<sup>45</sup> or the Gloria by Pycard in OH.<sup>46</sup> Its use in the isorhythmic motet

Ex. 6 Rowland, *Gloria*, mm. 35-38 (prototype) and mm. 60-63 (hocket).

The image displays two musical excerpts from Rowland's Gloria. The top excerpt, labeled '60' and '63', shows a vocal line with the lyrics 'Qui tol - lis pec - ca - ta mun -' and a hocket accompaniment consisting of three staves. The bottom excerpt, labeled '35' and '38', shows a vocal line with the lyrics 'Do - mi - ne De - us Rex ce -' and a hocket accompaniment consisting of three staves. Both excerpts are in C major and 4/4 time.

<sup>43</sup> No. 137.

<sup>44</sup> Ramsbotham, II, 203; the hocket section begins in m. 113. Cf. Bukofzer, *Studies*, p. 64.

<sup>45</sup> Printed in a two-voice version in Bessler, "Studien zur Musik des Mittelalters I," *AMW* VII (1925), 251-252. However, Nino Pirrotta has shown the work to be for three voices ("Per l'origine e la storia della 'caccia' e del 'madrigale' trecentesco," *RMI* XLVIII [1946], 317 ff.; cf. *New Oxford History of Music*, III, 16).

<sup>46</sup> Ramsbotham, I, 84, mm. 77 ff.; cf. Strunk in Bukofzer, *Studies*, pp. 83-84.

has already been mentioned. The incidental hocket may be either texted or untexted, the former gaining greater currency in 14th-century secular music (*caccia*).<sup>47</sup> It must be pointed out that, strictly speaking, not all short sections of hocket within large works belong to this category. As Example 6 from OH demonstrates,<sup>48</sup> sometimes such passages are based on music heard first in nonhocket form.

### III. The Theory

It has been known for some time that some theorists of the Middle Ages explain a type of hocket composed over a tenor — generally what we have called the independent hocket. The following two passages are illustrative of such explanations:

... Truncatio fit super excogitatum tenorem vel super cantum, ut semper unus taceat, dum alius contat... (Walter Odington, *De speculatione musice* [CS I, 248b])

Item sciendum quod quaelibet truncatio fundari debet super excogitatum tenorem vel super certum cantum, sive sit vulgare vel latinum, ut semper unus cantet, dum alius taceat. (Pseudo-Simon Tunstede, *Quatro principali* [CS IV, 296])

In both of these passages, a distinction has been drawn between the hocket *super tenorem* and that *super cantum*, yet modern scholars completely ignore this distinction.<sup>49</sup> When interpreting passages of this type, they begin by assuming that the words *cantus* and *tenor* are synonyms, both referring to melody. This is possible, but another interpretation is equally plausible.

In the Middle Ages, the word *cantus* was used not only as a term for melody but might also be employed as a generic designation for polyphony. Johannes de Grocheo says that a motet is "a *cantus* composed of several [melodies] and having several texts."<sup>50</sup> Similarly, Franco describes organum as "a *cantus* not measured in all its parts."<sup>51</sup> Even the title of Franco's treatise, the *Ars cantus mensurabilis*, reflects this ambivalence of

<sup>47</sup> E. g., W. Thomas Marrocco, *Fourteenth-Century Italian Caccia* (Cambridge, Mass., 1961), Nos. II (mm. 145 ff.), XV (mm. 40 ff.), XVI (mm. 84 ff.), XXIV (mm. 162-169); also the French chace *Se je chant* already mentioned. Cf. Bukofzer, "Popular Polyphony of the Middle Ages," *MQ* XXVI (1940), 41-42.

<sup>48</sup> Ramsbotham, I, 104 (the note values have been reduced in our example). A similar passage is found in a Credo by Pycard (II, 135; cf. mm. 59-63 with mm. 241-244).

<sup>49</sup> E. g., the passage from Reese cited above.

<sup>50</sup> Rohloff, *op. cit.*, p. 56: "Motetus vero est cantus ex pluribus compositus, habens plura dictamina. . ."

<sup>51</sup> CS I, 134b: "Organum proprie sumptum est cantus non in omni parte sua mensuratus."

terminology. If this broader meaning is used in interpreting the above passages, it becomes evident that not one but two types of hocket are being described — that composed over a tenor (*super tenorem*) and that based on preexistent music (*super cantum*). Credibility is lent this hypothesis by Tunstede's remark that the *cantus* may be either in the vulgar tongue or in Latin. Such a consideration could hardly be of consequence if the *cantus* were merely a tenor melody, a scaffolding for the other voices. If, however, a composer were to rework an entire existing composition as a hocket, he might wish to be reassured concerning the acceptability of both vernacular and Latin texts for this purpose. Thus, the two definitions above may be rendered as follows:

A truncation can be made over an invented tenor or upon a polyphonic work [*cantus*] in such a way that one part is silent while the other sings. (Walter Odington)

Likewise it should be known that any truncation should be based on an invented tenor or on some polyphonic work, be it either in the vulgar tongue or in Latin, in such a way that always when one sings, the other is silent. (Pseudo-Simon Tunstede)

**Franco of Cologne's well-known definition of *truncatio* lends itself to the same interpretation:**

**A truncation is a type of polyphony [*cantus*] produced through truncating by the retention and omission of tones. And observe that a truncation may be effected in as many ways as the long, breve, and semibreve can be divided.**

**And observe that through truncations of the type described, the vulgar hockets are created by the omission of longs and breves, and also by their sustention. And observe that in all these the equivalence of the [original] time values and the concordance of the voices should be observed. And note that any truncation is to be founded on a preexistent polyphonic work, whether it be in the vulgar tongue or in Latin.<sup>52</sup>**

**Some readers may be hesitant to accept these translations, considering them to be unorthodox. There is, however, one medieval theorist who, I believe, unquestionably substantiates the existence of the variation**

<sup>52</sup> "Truncatio est cantus rectis obmissisque vocibus truncate prolatus, et sciendum quod truncatio tot modis potest fieri, quot longam, brevem, vel semibreve contingit partiri."

"Et notandum quod ex truncationibus dictis creantur oketi vulgares ex obmissione longarum et brevium, et etiam prolatione. Et notandum quod in omnibus istis observanda est equipollentia in temporibus, et concordantia in vocibus rectis. Item [sciendum] est quod quelibet truncatio fundari debet supra cantum, prius factum, licet sit vulgaris et latinum." (Franco of Cologne, *Ars cantus mensurabilis* [CS I, 134-134b]).

hocket. In his important and unusual dissertation, Johannes de Grocheo says the following:

If you wish to compose a hocket in two parts (by that understand with a *primus* and *secundus*), you should divide up the *cantus* or the *cantilena*, upon which the hocket is to be made, and distribute a part of it to each [part of the hocket]. And the *cantus rectus* [i.e., the entire composition, the texted section plus the hocket] may close with a certain modest addition, without [this addition] observing the measure [i.e., the length] [of the original].<sup>53</sup> In this way, one [the hocket] lies above the other [the *cantus*] like the roofing shingles on the roof of a house, and in this way continuing a hocket is made.<sup>54</sup>

The compositions discussed in this article are important in their own right. But they are more important because they undoubtedly reflect medieval improvisational practice. With the music of a motet or similar work before him, the medieval instrumentalist may well have habitually improvised preludes, postludes, and perhaps even accompaniments in hocket style.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Cf. *Amor potest conqueri* (cited in n. 7), the hocket section of which is slightly longer than its model by virtue of a cadential extension.

<sup>54</sup> "Volens . . . hoquetum ex duobus, puta primo et secundo, componere debet cantum vel cantilenam, supra quod fit hoquetus, partiri et unicuique partem distribuere. Et potest aliquantulo rectus cantus exire cum decenti additione, nisi quod eius mensuram observet. Sic enim unus iacet super alium ad modum tegularum et cooperturae domus et sic continua abscisio fiet." (Johannes de Grocheo, "De Musica" in *Der Musiktraktat* . . . , ed. Ernst Rohloff, p. 58).

<sup>55</sup> Concerning instrumental preludes and postludes generally, cf. Aubry, III, 151 ff., and the composition printed there (= Rokseth, III, No. 322); Leonard Ellinwood, "The Conductus," *MQ XXVII* (1941), 181; Reese, *op. cit.*, p. 324. The instrumental accompaniment of early polyphony is discussed in Gilbert Reaney, "The Performance of Medieval Music," *Aspects of Medieval and Renaissance Music* (New York, 1966), pp. 704-722, esp. pp. 719-721.