

Continuity and Change

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The Great Matins Responsories in the Birgittine Sisters' Liturgy of Hours 'An Ode to Petrus of Skänninge'

C*antus Sororum* – the sisters' chant – is the liturgy of the hours in the medieval Birgittine monastery. I want to bring forward the continuity and change that happened already in the beginning when the *Cantus Sororum* was formed, in the second half of the fourteenth century. I will demonstrate this development through the examples of three great matins responsories.¹

There are altogether 21 great responsories for the sisters' early morning hour, matins. Every morning Birgittine sisters sang three great responsories, and before each one of them they listened to the lesson about the theme of the great responsory, which was also the theme of the day. 21 lessons, together with the great responsories, are called *Sermo Angelicus* – the angel's sermon. The great responsories and the 21 lessons of matins formed the thematic core of the Birgittine sisters' liturgy in medieval times. When looking at the great responsories, we are examining the very central form of the liturgy.

The musical creator of the *Cantus Sororum* chants was Saint Birgitta's confessor Petrus Olavi of Skänninge (1298–1378). Petrus of Skänninge organized all the chants in the liturgy, and also set music to many of them. He organized the lit-

¹ The present article is a selective summary of the results shown in my 2011 thesis.

The great responsories (GR) are complicated compositions, written with regard to the medieval way of composing with musical formulas. A great responsory consists of two parts, which are called *responsum* (response) and *versus* (verse). Everybody chants the *responsum*, after that one person sings the *versus*, after which the end part of the *responsum* is sung again. The end part is called *corpus* or *repetendum* (to be repeated). After the last, that is the third great responsory of matins, a shortened doxology, *Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto*, was chanted, after which everybody repeated the *corpus* again. See Geete 1895, p. V; Hiley 1993, p. 70. The doxology ties the great responsories to the historical antiphon and psalm singing, where the doxology *Gloria Patri* was sung at the end of the recitation. Taitto 1992, p. 388.

urgy from older known Gregorian tradition, adding into some chants respectful lines for Mary. Some chants in the liturgy are assumed to have been composed by him, with respect to the older tradition.

The great responsories can be divided into three groups: old tradition, varied old tradition and new compositions.² However, the division of chants into new compositions and variations is not simple or even necessary, since the variation can bring forward something new, while new compositions can be created with old formulas.

It is written in the foreword of the *Sermo Angelicus* that Saint Birgitta received them from an angel. Saint Birgitta's way of working is described to have been very disciplined.³ She showed the texts to Petrus of Skänninge, who translated them into Latin. It is also possible that she dictated the texts to him, and he wrote them down. The *Cantus Sororum* was written in Rome between 1354 and 1366.⁴

In Birgitta's visions, Petrus is given authority over the chants and liturgy, and in this way he is allowed to change and adjust her texts according to the melodies.

The chants came to his ears and his mouth from the Virgin like a blowing wind inflating his heart with God's flaming love. His tongue telling matters, which he had not known before, words to be composed and responsories, antiphonies and hymns to be organized.⁵

Together Saint Birgitta and Petrus of Skänninge formed a working team, which created the sisters' liturgy.⁶ When looking at the music and texts together, they reflect like a mirror the composition and the story of a great creative companionship.

2 Lundén divides the *Cantus Sororum* chants into three layers: the material from Saint Birgitta and Petrus of Skänninge, the material they have received from other sources, and the material added by later generations, e.g. masses for Saint Birgitta and Saint Katarina. Lundén 1976, pp. xxxviii; xxxix; xl.

3 *Sermo Angelicus* (henceforth SA), Prologue 4, 7.

4 In the *Revelationes Extravagantes* 113:3 Saint Birgitta mentions the showing of the 'hours' to Bishop Hemming. This is a reference to the hours of *Cantus Sororum*: 'Sed dic sibi, quod ostendat ea dilecto amico meo vero, episcopo Hemmingo; quod ipse velit, potest addere vel planare'; Servatius 1990b, p. 217. Lundén and Nordahl share the opinion that this would be the completed *Cantus Sororum*. The Virgin Mary urges Saint Birgitta to take the completed manuscript to Alvastra monastery, so that sisters could learn the chants while waiting for the Vadstena convent to be ready for them. Lundén 1976, p. cxiii; Nordahl 2003a, pp. 90–91.

5 'Virgo Maria loquebatur sponse Christi: 3 [...] aures sue et os aere replebantur et cor tamquam vesica ex ardenti ad Deum caritate extumescebat. Unde optinuit ipse illa scire verba, que prius ignoravit quomodo scilicet responsoria, antiphonas et ymnos componere et cantum debuit ordinare'; Rev. Extr., 114:1, 3–4.

6 Helge Nordahl calls them 'författarduo', a writer's duo. Nordahl 2003b, p. 57.

OLDER TRADITION IN THE GREAT RESPONSORIES
OF THE *Cantus Sororum*

In my musicological dissertation (2011) I came to the conclusion that in the contemporary and earlier liturgical sources there are models for fourteen of the twenty-one great responsories of the *Cantus Sororum*.⁷ Eleven of these chants are written in many notated European manuscripts.⁸ In the *Cantus Sororum*, these eleven chants have only minor changes made by Petrus of Skänninge.⁹ Added to these are three of Friday's great responsories, which have contemporary variations written in Swedish and Finnish manuscript sources.¹⁰ We can form an idea of the musical thoughts in the mind of Petrus of Skänninge when we compare the themes of these fourteen chants with the chants sung by brothers in Vadstena, according to the *ordinarium* of the diocese of Linköping.¹¹

From the older tradition Petrus of Skänninge has chosen the chants to build up the body, the *corpus*, of the *Cantus Sororum* liturgy. All the chants of Thursday and Saturday, the birth of Christ and the resurrection of Christ, are from the older tradition. By contrast, all the Tuesday chants are more or less new, with the theme of matriarchs, patriarchs and prophets. What else did he want to emphasize? He composed two chants for Sunday's theme: Mary in God's thoughts, one song for the theme of angels and one song for Saint Anna. He greatly renewed all Friday's great responsories with the theme of the passion of Christ and compassion of Mary.

Vadstena monastery was situated in the diocese of Linköping. Thus the brothers in the Birgittine convent sang the chants according to Linköping's *breviarium*. When comparing the *Cantus Sororum* and its great responsories with similar ones, or variations, from the diocese of Linköping – which are based on an older tradition – we can see how rooted Petrus of Skänninge was in old tradition, although he did make some changes in the older chants. In the *responsum*-parts the differences are quite small, for example, in the twelfth great responsory of

7 Vuori 2011, p. 46.

8 Ibid., pp. 14–21.

9 Ibid., pp. 68–69.

10 Ibid., pp. 92–99.

11 According to Sven Helander, the *Ordinarium Lincopense* was written 1391–1393, Helander 1957, pp. 40 and 46. Birgittine brothers were chanting their office (*De Die*) according to the order of diocese, where the monastery was situated, while sisters were chanting the Marian office *Cantus Sororum* (*De Domina*), Rev. Extr. 18:4, in Lundén 1976, p. xxxv. In Vadstena, the brothers were chanting according to the order of Linköping, and in Naantali, Finland, they were chanting the office according to the order of Turku diocese.

the *Cantus Sororum* we find the words *maris renitens*, whereas in Linköping's *breviarium*, as well as in other sources, we have *maris hodie*. In the verses even bigger changes can be seen, with the idea of giving more respect to Mary. For example, in verse four of the great responsory in the *Cantus Sororum* it is written: *Cherubim atque seraphim, omnisque celicus ordo, pro tua Gloria o Virgo laudes proclamant Domino dicentes*,¹² while in Linköping's *breviarium* and the other sources the same verse is *Cherubim quoque et seraphim Sanctus proclamant et omnis celicus ordo dicens*.¹³

GR*	<i>Breviarium Lincopense</i>	<i>Cantus Sororum</i> .
1	Omnium sanctorum	Sunday: Holy Trinity, Creation
4	Omnium sanctorum	Monday: Angels and Mary
4	Omnium sanctorum	Saint Michael
6	Annuntiatio Marie	Monday: Angels and Mary
11	Assumptio de BMV	Wednesday: Birth of Mary
12	Nativitatis Marie	Wednesday: Birth of Mary
13	Nativitatis Domini	Thursday: Birth of Christ
13	Circumcisione Domini	Thursday: Birth of Christ
14	Purificatione de BMV	Thursday: Birth of Christ
15	In festis BMV	Thursday: Birth of Christ
15	Omnium sanctorum	Thursday: Birth of Christ
16	Sabbatum de comp. BMV	Friday: Passion of Christ and compassion of Mary
17	Sabbatum de comp. BMV	Friday: Passion of Christ and compassion of Mary
18	Sabbatum de comp. BMV	Friday: Passion of Christ and compassion of Mary
19	Assumptio de BMV	Saturday: Resurrection of Christ and assumption of Mary
20	Assumptio de BMV	Saturday: Resurrection of Christ and assumption of Mary
21	Assumptio de BMV	Saturday: Resurrection of Christ and assumption of Mary

* The great responsories (GR) are: 1. *Summe Trinitati*, 4. *Te Sanctum*, 6. *Christi Virgo*, 11. *Stirps Jesse*, 12. *Solem iustitie*, 13. *Sancta et immaculata*, 14. *Videte miraculum*, 15. *Felix namque es*, 16. *Sicut spinarum*, 17. *Perbenniter*, 18. *Palluerunt*, 19. *Beata es*, 20. *Que est ista*, 21. *Super salutem*. Vuori 2011, p. 75. BMV = Beatae Mariae Virginis.

TABLE 1: The daily themes of twenty-one *Cantus Sororum* great responsories and the feasts of the comparative great responsories in Linköping's breviary.

- 12 'Cherubim and seraphim and all of the heavenly host proclaim in thy honour, O Virgin, the praise of the Lord, saying ...'
- 13 Vuori 2011, pp. 77 and 256. The same differences are also found when comparing the *Cantus Sororum* material with the tenth century Hartker antiphonary (Sankt Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. 390–391), the thirteenth-century Worcester antiphonary (MS F 160), and as a text source in the Hesbert antiphonary, see *ibid.*, pp. 254–255.

A CASE STUDY I:
 MONDAY'S SECOND GREAT RESPONSORY
Benedicta terra

Seven out of 21 great responsories were, presumably, partly or totally composed¹⁴ by Petrus of Skänninge. In his work can be seen a balanced reach for continuity and also for change: two thirds of the great responsories are based on the old Gregorian tradition with slight additions. One third consists more or less of his own compositions, that is, the great responsories 2, 3, 5, 7–10.¹⁵

The seven great responsories below are not included in older or comparative sources. Two of them are Sunday's great responsories and one of them is Monday's great responsory. Furthermore, we have all three of Tuesday's great responsories and one of Wednesday's great responsories. If these are more or less composed by Petrus, he has chosen material that is not common in the older tradition. He composed songs for a need, and I would argue that these songs would please the feminine atmosphere in a Marian theology, especially the chants regarding the matriarchs Anna and Eve, Mary in the thoughts of God in eternity, and Mary and the angels.

The great responsories not included in older or contemporary sources are (R= responsum, V = versus):

2. R. *O Maria, dignissimum vehiculum* V. *Infer igitur cordibus nostris*, III mode.
3. R. *Maria summe Trinitatis* V. *Respice propicia*, II mode (versus authentic).
5. R. *Benedicta terra* V. *Vere hec terra est Virgo Mater*, II mode.
7. R. *Eva mater hosti consiciens* V. *Laus Deo sit gloria*, I mode.
8. R. *Intelligens Abraham successionem suam* V. *Exultet igitur*, VIII mode.
9. R. *O ineffabiliter divitem* V. *Hic ad patriam*, VIII mode.
10. R. *Beata Mater Anna* V. *Exulta reverenda*, VI mode.

In the musical analysis I have used Hans Holman's categories for the *responsum*-parts. He divides them into four different categories.¹⁶

1. Responses with melodies similar to each other.
2. Responses with standard phrases or standard formulas (not necessarily in similar order with each other) (GR 5).

¹⁴ The word 'compose' in its musical meaning was a much wider concept in the Middle Ages than it is today. It meant also arranging, copying and organizing the music, not only creating something new. In compositions well known musical and modal formulas were often used. See Servatius 1990b, pp. 225–226.

¹⁵ Vuori 2011, p. 77.

¹⁶ Holman's dissertation is written on the great responsories of the Worcester antiphony; his descriptions of letters indicate musical formulas. Holman 1961, pp. 82–83, 277.

3. Responses with a combination of standard formulas or phrases and free composition (GR 2, 3, 7–9).
4. Responses considered free compositions (GR 10).

Out of the seven *Cantus Sororum* great responsories five belong to group 3, that is, combinations of standard formulas and free formulas. The great responsory 10 belongs to group 4 being a free composition, and the great responsory 5 belongs to group 2 with standard formulas.

The fifth great responsory, Monday's second one, *Benedicta terra*, is an example of Petrus of Skänninge creating something new with gratitude to the older tradition. The chant has a melodic model in older tradition, a great responsory *Erue a framea*.¹⁷

A 84 f. 9^{R-V}, *Benedicta terra*, the intonation of the responsum, 5th GR.

C₁' D₁ D₂

B Benedicta terra cuius flores non marcescunt

WA, p. 108, *Erue a framea*, the intonation of the responsum.

C₁ D₁ D₂

E Erue a framea Deus anima mea

TABLE 2: The great responsory *Benedicta terra* and a comparison with the great responsory *Erue a framea*. The intonations.

The intonation and the most of the *responsum* melody of *Benedicta terra* are perfectly similar with the older chant (see table 2). However, in *Benedicta terra* there is an extra phrase at the end of the respond *Tribuens omni carni nutrimentum* (table 3, overleaf). This musical phrase does not exist at all in the comparative chant. It is an addition made by Petrus of Skänninge.

¹⁷ Easter great responsory *Erue a framea, Deus, animam meam* (Worcester antiphony, p. 108; Hesbert 1970, p. 171). Holman 1961, p. 98 ('Deliver my soul', Ps. 22:21). Using Holman's analysis the melodic structure of *Erue a framea*-response is C₁ D₁ D₂ D₁. and for *Benedicta terra*, the *responsum*-part, it is C₁' D₁ D₂ D₁' D₁' D₁. This type of plagal d-mode fifth melody type, according to Holman, always appears with two parts. Ibid., p. 98.

A 84 f. 9^{R-V}, *Benedicta terra*, the end of the responsum, 5th GR.

D₆' D₁

Tri- buens, omni car- ni nu- tri- men- tum.

TABLE 3: The great responsory *Benedicta terra*. The end of the responsum.

What makes this chant so special and interesting, when it does not contain so much new melody written by Petrus of Skänninge? It is a constructive part in the sisters' liturgy. The great responsory is closely linked with two other second mode great responsories of the *Cantus Sororum*. These responsories are the eleventh responsory, *Stirps Jesse*¹⁸ and the thirteenth responsory, *Sancta et immaculata*.¹⁹ Both these great responsories are very well known chants from the older liturgical traditions. They could be called classics of Gregorian chant.

In musical analysis the focus is always on the *responsum*-parts of the great responsories. This is because the verses of great responsories are usually composed according to a certain pattern. In this case the verses for all these three great responsories have a similar structure and melody. These three great responsories are related according to the first melody family of second mode, but not in a strict sense.²⁰ According to Hans Holman, all II-mode *responsum*-melodies are variations on one basic melody.²¹ The eleventh *responsum* varies the most of these three. The fifth and thirteenth *responsum* are, in their first three phrases, very similar.²²

18 Holman describes the *Stirps Jesse*-response to be outside the plagal d-mode melody group, because it consists of one standard frase and a variation ...d ...d D₉ ...d ...d. Holman 1961, p. 108. There are 122 second mode great responsories in the Worcester antiphony. Ibid., p. 86.

19 According to Holman, the thirteenth responsory belongs to the first plagal d-mode group. c₄ D₁ D₆ C₂ A₂' D₇'. Ibid., pp. 88–89.

20 Ibid., p. 89.

21 Ibid., p. 85; Helsen 2008, p. 121.

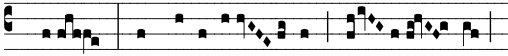
22 The formulas for three great responsories, when using the categories by Holman are: 5 GR: C₁ D₁ D₆ C₂ A₂' D₉'; 13 GR: c₄ D₁ D₆ C₂' D₇' A₅; 11. GR: ...d ...d D₉ ...d ...d.

A 84 f. 9^{R-V}, the intonation of the responsum, 5th GR.



℣ Benedicta ter- ra cuius flo- res non mar- ces- cunt,

A 84 f. 28^{R-V}, the intonation of the responsum, 13th GR.



℣ Sancta et immacula- ta vir- gini- tas,

A 84 f. 22^V–23^R, the intonation of the responsum, 11th GR,



℣ Stirps les- se vir- gam

TABLE 4: Comparison of the intonations of the great responsories *Benedicta terra*, *Sancta et immaculata* and *Stirps Jesse*.

The most typical interval in these three chants, the musical step, is the second interval. There is also considerable repetition of the same tone height. It means that the melodies move very little or in very small steps. This gives a meditative atmosphere to the chant. In the fifth responsory there is not even one leap of fifth, and in the other two responses there are only a few.

The melodies are similar to each other. How about the texts? In these three plagal d-mode *responsum*-texts God, the Virgin and her Son are praised. All of the responses praise Mary, the mother of God, the giver of life. They have a beautifully poetic way of describing Mary. The texts of the fifth and eleventh great responsories especially complement each other. In the eleventh responsory Mary is a branch and Jesus is a flower. In the fifth responsory Mary is the earth, the flowers are her actions and her Son is the fruit of this earth. The thirteenth great responsory has a classical *Ave Maria* with Jesus as a fruit of her womb. When writing the chant text *Benedicta terra*, Petrus of Skänninge has deepened, broadened and continued the classical story of *Stirps Jesse*, the branch of Isai.²³

23 For further studies about the theme of *Stirps Jesse*, see Blunt 1998 pp. 180–181. Mews and Powell have approached the theme by reflecting on the book *Speculum Virginum*, which Saint Birgitta is known to have been aware of; Mews 2001, p. 22; Powell 2001, pp. 95 and 98. The theme of

Fifth responsory

R. Blessed is the earth whose flowers do not fade, whose fruit is the life of all living things, spreading nourishment to all flesh. V. Truly this earth is the Mother Virgin, the flowers its actions, her Son its fruit. Distributing ...²⁴

Eleventh responsory

R. The root of Jesse hath brought forth a branch, and that branch a flower. And over this flower doth rest a gentle spirit. V. The Virgin, Mother of God, is the branch, and the flower her Son. And over this ...²⁵

Thirteenth responsory

R. O holy and immaculate virginity, I know not by what praises I may extol thee: for thou hast born in thy womb, whom the heavens could not contain. V. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.²⁶

Before every great responsory the sisters would listen to one of them reciting a lesson with the theme of the day. In the great responsory the text would reflect the theme of the lesson just heard. The relationship between the great responsories is also seen in the lessons. In the fifth lesson Mary is praised as an earth bearing fruit.²⁷ In the eleventh lesson Christ, the seed in the mother's womb, is praised for his greatness.²⁸ The thirteenth and fifth lessons praise Mary's virtues.²⁹ In the lessons can be seen relationships with each other as well as in the great responsories. Petrus of Skänninge has not only created a great responsory for the sisters' liturgy, he has created it in a deep relationship and in harmony with the great responsories.

Stirps Jesse can be also followed in the music and texts of Hildegard of Bingen, a twelfth-century religious, poet and composer. Fassler 1998, pp. 156–159.

- 24 R. 'Benedicta terra, cuius flores non marcescunt, cuius fructus vita est omnium vivencium, tribuens omni carni nutrimentum.' V. 'Vere hec terra est Virgo Mater, flores eius opera, fructus Filius suus. Tribuens ...' SA, GR 5.
- 25 R. 'Stirps Jesse virgam produxit virgaque florem. Et super hunc florem requiescit spiritus almus.' V. 'Virgo Dei genitrix virga est, flos filius eius. Et super ...' SA, GR 11.
- 26 R. 'Sancta et immaculata virginitas, quibus te laudibus efferam nescio, quia quem celi capere non poterant, tuo gremio contulisti.' V. 'Benedicta tu in mulieribus, et benedictus fructus ventris tui. Quia quem ...' SA, GR 13.
- 27 'Preterea toti terre in eo similis extitisti, quod, sicuti omnia in hoc maiori mundo terrenum corpus habencia ex terre fructibus debebant enutriri, ita omnia illa non solum nutrimentum ymmo et ipsam vitam ex tuo fructu debebant optinere.' SA, fifth lesson.
- 28 'Hec itaque virga tam gracilis erat, quod in matris aluo faciliter versabatur, medulla vero ipsius in longitudine et latitudine tam immensa et grandis erat, quod nulla mens ipsius magnitudinem excogitare sufficiebat.' SA, eleventh lesson.
- 29 SA, fifth and thirteenth lessons.

A CASE STUDY 2:

FRIDAY'S FIRST GREAT RESPONSORY *Sicut spinarum*

The second case study includes contemporary sources of the *Cantus Sororum* from the dioceses of Linköping and Turku, the three great responsories from the *officium, compassio Mariae virginis*. The feast day is found in four of my comparative sources: the Karjalohja and Tammela antiphonaries from Finland and two processionsals from the C-collection in Uppsala University Library. They are all dated to the fifteenth–sixteenth centuries.³⁰



FIG. 1: *Sicut spina rose florem*, from Antiphonarium Tammelense (TA), MS ÅAB D 71/161, fols 90rv. By permission: Åbo Akademis bibliotek, Handskriftsamlingarna, Antifonarium Tammelense.



FIG. 2: *Sicut spinarum vicinitas florentis*, from *Cantus Sororum*, Helsinki, National Library of Finland, F.m. IV 132, fol. 10v. By permission: National Library of Finland.

Friday's first great responsory *Sicut spinarum* is an example of Petrus of Skänninge's creative work in addition to the seven great responsories not found in the older repertoire. The upper example (fig. 1) is a rhymed chant from the Tammela antiphonary, *Sicut spina*, and below (fig. 2) is the *Cantus Sororum* version. The

³⁰ MS Gum I:3; MS ÅAB, D 71/161; UUB MS C 21 and C 23.

Tammela antiphony was assumingly sung and used by the Birgittine brothers in Naantali. The brothers in Naantali were supposed to sing the chants of the diocese of Turku. This manuscript was also probably written in the Naantali scriptorium.

The Tammela antiphony version is a rhymed one and the *Cantus Sororum* is not, but they are definitely variations of the same chant.³¹ The musical analysis shows that the versions do not differ from each other very much in intonation, that is, in the beginning of the chant. The notes show small differences, mainly in notation. Two rhymed office sources are from Finland (Gum I:3; TA), while the other two rhymed office sources are from Sweden (C 21, C 23) and a *Cantus Sororum* source (A 84).

The greatest differences are found at the end of the *responsum* parts. When the *Cantus Sororum* version ends, the rhymed ones continue. The rhymed versions are considerably longer than the *Cantus Sororum* version. In table 5 is an example from the Finnish source, the Birgittine fragment *breviarium* 127 and a rhymed office from the antiphony MS Gum I:3.

This type of difference is found in all three *Cantus Sororum* chants, for example, Friday's great responsories compared to the brothers rhymed great responsories for the day of *Compassio Marie Virginis*. The sisters were singing these three great responsories every Friday, while the brothers were perhaps only singing the variations on the day of *Compassio Marie Virginis*, the second Saturday after Easter.³²

This leaves unanswered the question of which of the sisters' or brothers'

31 *Sisters*: R. 'Sicut spinarum vicinitas/ florentis rose odorem non minuit,/ ita tribulationum immensitas in te,/ Christi Mater, minorare/ non valuit virtutem constancie,/ omnium enim virtutum/ fragrantia redolebas.' V. 'Assiste, spes nostra,/ in auxilium parata nobis/ tuis supplicibus,/ ne nos extollat prosperitas,/ nec deprimat adversitas./ Omnium enim...' (*Cantus Sororum*)

Brothers: R. 'Sicut spina rose florem/ non immutat vel odorem/ cum crescat vicinius,/ ita, Virgo, tuam mentem,/ cunctis donis redolentem,/ furor fugit obvius./ Immo videns flagellari/ et in cruce conclavari/ tuum primogenitum,/ patienter sufferebas/, et constanter requirebas,/ dextre Dei digitum. Alleluia.' V. 'Confer opem tua crece,/ ne mundi prosperitas/ nos excecet sua fece,/ vel premet adversitas.' MS Gum I:3; MS ÅAB, D 71/161; UUB MS C 21 and C 23. *Breviarium Lincopense* (BL) 1953, p. 358. Translation of the *Cantus Sororum* version: 'As the proximity of thorns does not degrade the fragrance of a blossoming rose, so did thy immense tribulations not degrade the virtue of thy inner strength, O Mother of Christ, for thou didst possess the fragrance of all virtues. Help us, our hope, and be ready to assist us, thy humble supplicants, so that success doth not make us proud and adversity doth not depress us.' Translation by Jaakko Mäntyjärvi and Diana Tullberg.

32 The time of *Compassio de Marie Virginis* was 'sabbato post dominicam in albis', that is, Saturday before the second Sunday after Easter. Malin 1925, p. 239.

The intonation of the responsum, 16th GR.
Gum I:3 f. 134^V-135^R.

♫ Sicut spina rose florem

TA f. 90^{R-V}.

♫ Sicut spina rose florem

C21 f. 78^V, 79^{R-V}.

♫ Sicut spina rose florem

C23 f. 72^V-73^R.

♫ Sicut spina rose florem

A 84 f. 35^{R-V}.

♫ Sicut spinarum vicinitas

TABLE 5: Comparison of the great responsory *Sicut spinarum* with the rhymed versions.

F.m. III Brev 127 f. 2^{R-V}, the end of the responsum, 16th GR

redolebas

TA f. 90^{V-R}, the end of the responsum.

patienter ufferebas, et constanter requirebas, dextre Dei digitum

Alle - luia

TABLE 6: Comparison of the great responsory *Sicut spinarum* with the rhymed version. The end of the responsum.

versions of Friday's great responsories were the earliest. From a musical point of view the *Cantus Sororum* versions are younger, since they are altogether less melismatic and shorter than the comparative ones sung by the brothers. They are also in a modal order, which is not typical with regard to the *Cantus Sororum* great responsories, but a typical feature of rhymed offices. Rhymed songs and rhymed offices were a modern way of singing during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Petrus of Skänninge did not want to compose in a modern way, so this suggests that he would have written variations of the rhymed ones.³³

On the other hand, the comparative rhymed chants have so far only been found in northern sources, dated later than the *Cantus Sororum*, but with roots deep in an older tradition.³⁴ It could be that somebody wrote rhymed versions from the compositions by Petrus of Skänninge. That would show a great respect for him, for Saint Birgitta and the *Cantus Sororum* as well as making Petrus of Skänninge the composer of Friday's great responsories. From my scholarly view, this question of which versions were the first remains open to further evidence, but it is a strong possibility that Friday's chants are compositions of Petrus of Skänninge, and thus the models for the great rhymed responsories of the feast *Compassio Marie Virginis*.

A CASE STUDY 3: WEDNESDAY'S FIRST GREAT RESPONSORY *Beata mater Anna*

The last example of the *Cantus Sororum* great responsories is Wednesday's first great responsory *Beata mater Anna*. It is assumingly composed by Petrus with a great respect for the older Gregorian material. Saint Anna is a matron saint of Birgittine convents. The love for the saint is expressed in this song, which was also sung in the feasts *Omnium sanctorum* and *Sanctae Anna*.³⁵

33 The flourishing time of rhymed offices was in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The term 'rhymed office' was not invented until the nineteenth century. Taitto 1992, p. 225. See also Servatius 1990a, p. 15 and Hiley 2009, pp. 154.

34 MS Gum I:3; MS ÅAB, D 71/161; MS C 21 and C23. According to Sven Helander, the *Ordinarium Lincopense* was written 1391–1393. Helander 1957, pp. 40 and 46, but the roots of liturgy are much older. For example, the feast of Visitatio Beate Marie Virginis was written already in 1263 for the Franciscans, but it is mentioned as a new feast in Linköping 1406 and mentioned in Vadstena already in 1388. *Ibid.*, p. 42. According to Helander the feast of *Compassio de Beate Marie Virginis* was officially founded in Köln 1413, *ibid.*, p. 44, but again the roots of the feast are older. The *Cantus Sororum* was, as we have seen, written between 1354 and 1366. Lundén 1976, p. cxiii; Nordahl 2003, pp. 90–91.

35 In UUB MS C 482, there are chants from offices *Omnes sancti*, *S. Anna ja S. Birgitta*, See MHUU, 1992, p. 207.

R. Blessed mother Anna, ark of the eternal king, in you he has preserved the treasure that is dearest to him, his legacy to his only begotten son, who became the richness of the poor and the liberation of the poor prisoners. V. Rejoice, O revered mother, about your yet more revered daughter: As a virgin she bore Him who created everything. And the liberation ...³⁶

According to Hans Holman's categories, the *responsum*-part of the chant consists of seven phrases, which are all of free formation.³⁷ They sound like typically f-mode formulas, but are still unique. As a comparison, Holman writes that out of the 51 VI-mode great responsories he has studied only six can be said to have a clear structure.³⁸ Also, in this case, a verse is a variation of a 6th melody formula and is also free by structure.³⁹

In the *Cantus Sororum* there are two other VI-mode great responsories: one with the theme of compassion, the eighteenth great responsory *Palluerunt*, and one with the theme of the assumption of Mary, the nineteenth great responsory *Beata es Virgo*. These three VI-mode chants are not related to each other. It is typical for this mode that there are few standard phrases, but free variations.⁴⁰ This is also seen in three *Cantus Sororum* VI-mode great responsories. All are different from each other.

The great responsory *Beata mater Anna* has an air of mature happiness in the melody. There can be seen similarities with the *Cantus Sororum* Tuesday's antiphon, *Magnificetur Rex*, which is also assumingly composed by Petrus of Skänninge. Both chants are in VI-mode.⁴¹

With the three great responsories presented in this paper – Monday's *Benedicta terra*, Friday's *Sicut spinarum* and Wednesday's *Beata mater Anna* – we have been able to see the work of Petrus of Skänninge from different angles. He had a great knowledge of tradition. He did acquire from the older tradition many beautiful 'corner chants', corner stones of Marian liturgy. With Monday's great responsory

36 'R. Beata mater Anna arca Regis eterni, qui in te thesaurum sibi gratissimum recondidit, quo suum Unigenitum hereditavit, inopes locupletavit. Et miseros captivos liberavit. V. Exulta reverenda Mater de reverendissima filia tua que eum Virgo genuit qui omnia creavit. Et miseros ...'; Translation Jaakko Mäntyjärvi and Diana Tullberg, 2003.

37 ... D... E... E... E...E... F... F; see Holman's formulas. Holman 1961, pp. 428–451.

38 *Ibid.*, p. 229.

39 6th melody group, see *ibid.*, p. 257.

40 In the Worcester antiphony, there are 55 V-mode and 51 VI-mode great responsories, *ibid.*, pp. 216 and 229. In the *Cantus Sororum* there are no V-mode great responsories, see Vuori 2011, p. 212.

41 *Cantus Sororum*: Tuesday's antiphon *Magnificetur Rex*, in for example F.m. IV Ant. 132 f. 1rv; see Servatius 1990a, p. 110.

A 84 f. 22^{R-V}, the intonation of the verse, 10th GR.



∩ Exulta re- ve-renda ma-ter, de reverendissima fi-lia t-ua

F.m. IV Ant 132 f. 1^{R-V}. A part of a CS antiphon *Magnificetur Rex*.



... incessanter eius be-ningna cari-tas...

TABLE 7: Comparison of the great responsory *Beata mater Anna* with the antiphon *Magnificetur Rex*.

we see an example how he wanted to leave his own mark in this tradition by composing a new text and using old melodies with the theme of blessed earth and blessed nurturing mother. With Friday's great responsory we can see a variation or a composition by Petrus of Skänninge. Either way, the Friday's chant is also a masterpiece. Finally, in Wednesday's great responsory there is a joy in the music and the text – a core of Birgittine feminine appreciation, the theme of motherhood. It is interesting that Petrus of Skänninge not only brings forward the motherhood of Virgin Mary in the chants, but also that of mother Eva and Anna, the grandmother of the infant Jesus. In these choices we can return to the idea of the writer's duo consisting of Saint Birgitta and Petrus of Skänninge. He was not making these choices on his own.

The three great responsories presented here only constitute 1/7 of all the *Cantus Sororum* great responsories. The musical world of Petrus of Skänninge is much larger, as is the entire modal atmosphere to be opened up with the great responsories of matins.

With respect to Syon Abbey, here follows an instruction from the *Myroure of oure Ladye*, regarding how sisters were supposed to recite the lessons and chant the great responsories.

First the understanding needs to be awakened with the knowledge of good and evil. This understanding can be reached through the reading and listening of lessons. Secondly there needs to be freedom of will to love the good and hate the evil. So the will answers the knowing – The responsum answers to the lesson. Thirdly, one

must act so that she understands what is bad, and at the same time understand what is good, and act doing it. This comes as a singing of the versus. The understanding of the lesson, and the will to sing the responsum come as acts of good deeds when singing the versus. And after the singing of the versus, part of the responsum is sung again. For as a good will causes good deeds, so the good deeds help stabilise and strengthen the good will.⁴²

42 ‘The fyrste ys that the vnderstandinge be lyghtened with knowlege of trouthe to knowe what ys good & what ys yuel. And for thys knowlege ys had by redyng & heringe of holsome doctryne! therefore yt ys vnderstoded by the lessons. The seconde ys. good vse of the frewyl that the wylle assente to loue that. that ys knowen good. And to hate that. that ys knowen yuell. And for the wylle answereth thus to the knowyng. therefore yt ys to vnderstode by the responce. That ys as moche to say. as answer. for yt answereth in sentence to the lesson as ys before sayde. The thyrde ys werke so that that thyng that the vnderstondyng knoweth yuel. and the wyle hateth! be fled in dede and eschewed. And that thyng that the vnderstondyng knoweth good. and the wyll reuled by grace loueth! be done in dede. And this is vnderstoded. by the verse that is as moche to saye as a tornyng. for the knowlege and wyle. oughte thus to be turned in to dede. And after the verse a parte of the responce is songe ageyne. For as a good wylle causeth good dedes. soo good dedes helpe to stable. and to strengthe the good wylle.’ Blunt 1998, pp. 114–115, modern English translation by the author.

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