

# USES OF THE HARMONIC 6/5 IN SIXTEENTH-CENTURY STYLE COUNTERPOINT

John Hanson

**T**raditionally included among theory courses offered as part of the collegiate music curriculum is the study of the craft of counterpoint. Such a study includes surveys of common techniques and procedures along with the presentation, illustration, and use of individual devices that often are style-specific.

Over a period of time a person involved in counterpoint pedagogy inevitably becomes interested in accumulating materials that can clarify and augment information as it is presented in texts for stylistic-oriented courses, and this article reflects such an interest. In an introductory study of sixteenth-century (Palestrinian) style counterpoint it is common to start with aspects of melody and rhythm, proceed to text setting and two-voice texture, and then move on to devices associated with three- (and more) voice texture. One of these latter devices is the harmonic combination of the 6th and the 5th above the bass (designated as "6/5" in this article), interesting because of the consonance/dissonance anomaly, because it is found in various guises in Palestrinia's music, and even because of its connection to seventh-chord vocabulary of the subsequent tonal period. In texts dealing with sixteenth-century style, the content and the amount of coverage given to the 6/5 vary quite widely. Therefore, on the basis of a survey of 6/5's in three- and four-voice sections/movements of the masses of Palestrina and of presentations found in seven counterpoint books, I am suggesting a categorization of various uses that should be helpful for both teacher and student. The categorization provides an overview of contextual uses

as found in the masses and can serve as a check list when the 6/5 is being studied and when information from texts is being employed.

Specifically surveyed were the discrete three-voice sections (such as the *Crucifixus*, *Pleni sunt coeli*, and *Benedictus*) of all the masses and all the four-voice movements of the 40 four-voice masses.<sup>1</sup> In the four-voice movements, examples of 6/5's in both three-voice texture and four-voice texture were enumerated. Not included in the study were 6/5's in textures of more than four voices, since generally these thicker textures are less relevant to an introductory sixteenth-century course. In the 2,894 measures of the three-voice sections, 71 6/5's were found; in the 18,166 measures of the four-voice masses, 319 6/5's were found in three-voice texture and 205 were found in four-voice texture. The total of 595 was reduced by twelve weak-beat placements which are acknowledged in a category but which were not included in the total of 583 strong-beat placements. The books that were surveyed include those by Bassett, Benjamin, Gauldin, Jeppesen, Merriman, Smith, and Soderlund.<sup>2</sup> Six are texts; in the case of Jeppesen, his work *The Style of Palestrina and the Dissonance* is referenced because it contains examples of 6/5's from literature, whereas the 6/5 is not discussed in his book entitled *Counterpoint*.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, *Le Opere Complete* (Rome: Fratelli Scalera, 1939).

<sup>2</sup>Leslie Bassett, *Manual of Sixteenth-Century Counterpoint* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1967); Thomas Benjamin, *The Craft of Modal Counterpoint* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1979); Robert Gauldin, *A Practical Approach to Sixteenth-Century Counterpoint* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1985); Knud Jeppesen, *The Style of Palestrina and the Dissonance*, 2nd rev. and enl. ed. (Copenhagen: E. Munksgaard, 1946); Margarita Merriman, *A New Look at 16th-Century Counterpoint* (Washington, DC: University Press of America, 1982); Charlotte Smith, *A Manual of Sixteenth-Century Contrapuntal Style* (Newark, DE: University of Delaware Press, 1989); and Gustave Soderlund, *Direct Approach to Counterpoint in 16th Century Style* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1947).

<sup>3</sup>Knud Jeppesen, *Counterpoint*, trans. Glen Haydon (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1939). Other sources consulted were H. K. Andrews, *An Introduction to the Technique of Palestrina* (London: Novello and Company, 1958); and Harold Owen, *Modal and Tonal Counterpoint* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1992).

The categorization is based on four factors. The first is placement of the 6/5 in relationship to beats, differentiating between the very common strong-beat placement (within the context of 4/2 meter as generally employed in the pedagogy of sixteenth-century counterpoint) and the occasional weak-beat or off-beat occurrence. The second through fourth factors reflect linear considerations: the member of the 6/5 having preparation and resolution, the melodic approach of the bass (lowest voice) to the 6/5, and the melodic departure of the bass from the 6/5. Two other factors include the specific interval size of the 5th of the 6/5 (perfect or diminished) and occurrences within sections in triple meter. Examples of the most common use (entitled Category 1, Normative) share the following characteristics: they occur on a strong beat (beat 1 or 3 in 4/2); the fifth is prepared by the same note in the same voice; this prepared 5th resolves down by step; and the bass of the 6/5 is left by ascending step, with the chord of resolution being the 5/3 position of a major or minor triad, on the next weak beat (2 or 4). The remaining categories provide for possible but less frequent alternatives: 2) like category 1, but with a modification in the resolution of the 6/5; 3) the bass to and/or from the 6/5 is a common tone; 4) the 6th is prepared and resolved; 5) the placement is other than on a strong beat 1 or 3; 6) any other less usual occurrence.

These categories, along with subcategories and conditional factors, are itemized in Figure 1. For each subcategory the number of examples found is given, along with the percentage that number is of the total of 583. Because the categories group related linear motions and are not based only on number of occurrences, successive entries do not in all cases reflect a descending numerical ordering. Therefore it is necessary to observe the numbers and percentages when checking for relative amounts of usage. Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number. No percentage is given if there are only one, two, or three occurrences; taken together, these instances total approximately 2 1/2% (see Fig. 1).

Examples 1-6 are notated illustrations from the masses and from texts of each of the subcategories indicated in Figure 1. Further information includes Figure 2, which shows numbers of occurrences in the masses by respective texture, and Figure 3, which cross-indexes the six categories with all of the notated examples of 6/5's found in the seven selected texts.

**Figure 1.** The categories of uses of the harmonic 6/5 in Palestrina masses

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | In<br>Palest. | Approx.<br>% |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| 1. Normative. On strong beat (first or third half note in 4/2 bar); 5th of 6/5 is a perfect fifth; 5th is prepared by same note in same voice, and resolves down (as in suspension figure); bass (i.e. lowest-sounding voice) of 6/5 is left by ascending step; resolution is to a major or minor triad in 5/3 position, on second or fourth half note. |               |              |
| a. Bass of 6/5 approached by ascending step.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 207 / 36      |              |
| b. Bass of 6/5 approached by ascending leap.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 28 / 5        |              |
| c. Bass of 6/5 approached by descending leap.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 83 / 14       |              |
| c. variant: descending leap is filled in with passing motion.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 35 / 6        | [61]         |
| 2. Like 1, but with a modification in the resolution of the 6/5.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |               |              |
| a. Bass of 6/5 left by ascending step to diminished triad in 5/3 position.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 41 / 7        |              |
| a. variant: bass left by ascending leap to diminished triad in 6 position.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 2             |              |
| b. Bass left by ascending step to major or minor triad in 6 position or with 5-6 motion                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 11 / 2        |              |
| c. Note values of 6/5 are augmented, so the resolution is delayed until the next strong beat.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 5 / 1         |              |
| d. Bass left by descending leap to 6 position.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 2             |              |
| e. Bass left by descending step to 6 position.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 1             |              |
| f. Bass left by ascending leap.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 0             | [10]         |
| 3. Bass to and/or from 6/5 is common tone. On strong beat; 5th prepared.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |               |              |
| a. Bass of 6/5 approached by ascending step, continued by common tone; 5 of 6/5 proceeds to consonant 4th.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 16 / 3        |              |
| a. variant: bass approached by descending leap.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 1             |              |
| b. Bass to and from 6/5 is common tone; 5 proceeds to consonant 4th.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 23 / 4        |              |
| b. variant: bass enters at point of 6/5 after a rest.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 3             |              |
| c. Bass of 6/5 approached by common tone but left by descending leap; not to consonant 4th.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 6 / 1         |              |
| d. Bass approached by common tone, left by ascending step; not to consonant 4th; not to avoid parallel fifths.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 32 / 5        |              |
| e. Bass approached by common tone, left by ascending step; not to consonant 4th; ascending 5-6-5 voice leading to avoid parallel fifths.                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 31 / 5        | [18]         |

(continued)

Figure 1. (cont.)

4. The 6th is prepared and resolved. On strong beat.

- |                                                                                                                           |        |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| a. Bass approached and left by descending step; descending 5-6-5 voice leading to avoid parallel fifths.                  | 17 / 3 |
| b. Bass approached by descending step, left by ascending leap; descending 5-6-5-3 voice leading to avoid parallel fifths. | 5 / 1  |
| c. Bass approached by descending step, continued by common tone; descending 5-6-5 voice leading to avoid parallel fifths. | 1      |
| d. Bass approached by ascending leap, continued by common tone; does not have 5-6-5 voice leading.                        | 3      |
| e. Bass to and from 6/5 is by common tone; 5-6-5 is neighbor motion.                                                      | 1      |
| f. Bass approached by common tone, left by descending step; does not have 5-6-5 voice leading.                            | 1      |
|                                                                                                                           | [4]    |

5. Placement other than strong beat.

- |                                             |      |
|---------------------------------------------|------|
| a. On second or fourth half note in 4/2 bar | *(3) |
| b. In quarter-note motion.                  | *(9) |

\*Not counted in the total of 583, as there may be other examples in addition to these 12.

6. Less usual occurrences.

- |                                                                                 |          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| a. 5th of 6/5 is a diminished fifth (therefore dominant-seventh sound results). | **15 / 3 |
| b. 6/5 occurs in triple meter                                                   | **13 / 2 |
| c. Free treatment; some aspect of voice leading is very unusual.                | 0        |
|                                                                                 | [5]      |

(one every 36 bars) 583

\*\*Counted only here in category 6; but of 6a 11 are 1a, 1 is 1b, 1 is 1c, 1 is 1c var., 1 is 2b. Of 6b 4 are 1a, 2 are 1c, 3 are 2a, 2 are 3b, 1 is 3d, 1 is 3e.

The first category, *Normative*, reflects the large percentage of occurrences of this type (61%) in the surveyed masses; also, this use is illustrated in six of the seven books (all except the Jeppesen). The subcategories differentiate only the *approach* to the bass note; the normative departure is by ascending step (see Ex. 1). Examples 1a, 1b, and 1c are from the Palestrina masses surveyed. Each example is first labeled with four abbreviations (such as the label for 1a - "S, 5, AS, AS") to indicate the respective items of categorization: strong (S) or weak (W) beat placement; member prepared (5 or 6); approach to bass; departure from bass—ascending (A), descending (D), step (S), leap (L), common tone (CT). The next line of the example label gives the source of the example (P = Palestrina), and the third line gives the specific mass (M) when the example is from the surveyed sources. For pedagogical reasons, examples are chosen mainly from three-voice textures; the few in four voices are for the sake of comparison or when a three-voice example is not available. Even though the categorization is based on linear considerations, normative use acts and sounds like a II 6/5 if the context were tonal.

Category 2 provides acknowledgment of the 10+% of the total that are essentially normative in the preparation and taking of the 6/5 but exhibit a difference in resolution (see Ex. 2). Whereas the category 1 use often implies a tonal II 6/5, those in 2a imply a tonal IV 6/5 because of the scalar placement necessary to achieve resolution to the diminished triad in root position. The other subcategories should be clear as defined and illustrated. The indication of the approach to the bass is left blank in the labels for Example 2, as the subcategories are differentiated only by the nature of the departure from the bass. Note that for Example 2d the second illustration is from the Smith text and for 2e from the Gauldin text, but for neither is a source identified in their texts. These uses are very rare, as in the survey only two are in subcategory 2d and one is in 2e. For 2f the example is by Palestrina as cited in the Soderlund but is not from the sources surveyed in this study.

Category 3 occurrences, constituting 18+% of the total, are those in which the bass is approached and/or left by common tone (see Ex. 3). In subcategory 3a the *departure* from the bass is by common tone, in subcategory 3b *both* approach and departure are by common tone, and in subcategories 3c, d, and e the *approach* is by com-

**Example 1. Category 1: Normative**

- 1a. S, 5, AS, AS**  
P. v.IV, p.39  
M. Inviolata; Crucifixus

98 105

- 1b. S, 5, AL, AS**  
P. v. I, p.15  
M. Ecce sacerdos magnus; Crucifixus

126 #

- 1c. S,5,DL,AS**  
P. v.I, p15  
M. Ecce sacerdos magnus; Crucifixus

111

variant: \* descending leap approach may be filled in with PT

**Example 2.** Category 2: Normative but with a modification  
in the resolution of the 6/5.

- 2a.** S, 5, ( ), AS to dim. 5/3  
P. v. I, p.116  
M. Gabrieli Archangelus; Benedictus

19

- 2a var.** AL to dim. 6/3  
P. v. XXVIII, p.24  
M. Descendit Angelus Domini; Sanctus

50

- 2b.** S, 5, ( ), AS to 6 or 5-6  
P. v. VI, p 102  
M. L'homme arme; Gloria

12

(continued)

**Example 2. (cont.)**

P. v. XXI, p.89

M. Quem pulchra es; Crucifixus

132

C  
A

T  
B

2c. S, 5, ( ), AS in Augmentation

P. v. XV, p. 67

M. Panis quem ego debo; Benedictus

32

C  
A

T  
B

2d. S, 5, ( ), DL to 6

P. v. IV, p.35

M. Inviolata; Credo

16

C  
A

T  
B

Smith (1989) p.79

(no source)

C  
A

T  
B

(continued)

## Example 2. (cont.)

- 2e. S, 5, ( ), DS to 6  
 Gauldin (1985) p. 93  
 Example 9-9G (no source)



- 2f. S, 5, ( ), AL  
 Soderlund (1947) p. 96  
 Example from P. v. XXIII, p. 120.

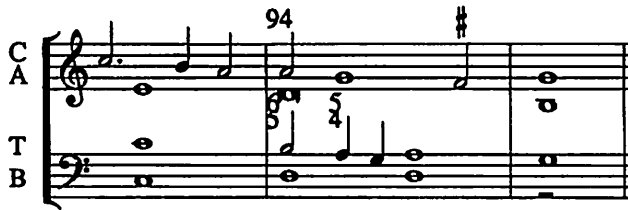
mon tone. Occurrences in subcategories 3a and 3b are those where the 5th of the 6/5 descends by step over the sustaining bass, thus exemplifying the so-called consonant 4th figure (suggesting a kind of embellished cadential 6/4). Both a three-voice and a four-voice example are given for subcategory 3a, and the 3a variant shows the descending-leap bass approach. While all other examples in category 3 are from the surveyed masses, the second example for the 3a variant is from the Jeppesen book *Counterpoint*. It is included here to show that Jeppesen used a 6/5 with continuation to a consonant 4th in a fourth-species exercise. Although his accompanying textual explanation points out the consonant 4th, no mention is made of the 6/5 combination. In subcategory 3c a stepwise descent from

**Example 3.** Category 3: Bass to and/or from 6/5 is common tone

- 3a. S, 5, AS, CT to C4  
 P. v. XXIII, p. 208  
 M. In Minoribus Duplicibus; Agnus (3-vc. example)



- P. v. I, p. 70  
 M. Virtute magna; Gloria (4-vc. example)



- 3a. var  
 S, 5, DL, CT to C4  
 P. v. XXVIII, p. 5  
 M. Descendit Angelus Domini; Gloria



(continued)

**Example 3. (cont.)**

**(3a. var)**

Jeppesen (1939) p. 189 (4th-species counterpoint)

CF

**3b. S, 5, CT, CT to C4**

P. v. VI, p. 89

M. de Fera; Benedictus

C  
A  
B

**3b. var. (lowest voice enters after rest)**

S, 5, ( ), CT to C4

P. v. VI, p. 1

M. Spem in alium; Kyrie

C  
A  
T  
B

(continued)

**Example 3. (cont.)**

- 3c. S, 5, CT, DL  
P. v. VI, p.16  
M. Spem in alium; Credo (3-vc. exmple)

100

C  
A  
B

- P. v. XXIX, p. 26  
M Regina Coeli; Agnus (4-vc. example)

33

C  
A  
T  
B

- 3d. S, 5, CT, AS (not to C4; not to avoid 5ths)  
P. v. XXIII, p. 197  
M. In Minoribus Duplicibus; Crucifixus

109

C  
A  
T

(continued)

**Example 3. (cont.)**

- 3e. S, 5, CT, AS (Asc. 5-6-5 to avoid parallel 5ths)  
 P. v. I, p. 46  
 M. O Regem Coeli; Crucifixus

93

A

T

B

the 5th also occurs, but this subcategory provides for a change-of-bass effect under the resolving 5th, to either a 5/3 or 6/3 position. In subcategory 3d the motion from the bass of the 6/5 is by ascending step to a 5/3 position; note that this use is approximately 5% of the total. Also with 5% of the total, the use in subcategory 3e has a similar ascending-step bass resolution. Now, however, the moving upper voice creates an (ascending) 5-6-5 pattern with the bass, thereby avoiding parallel fifths; I assigned this procedure a separate subcategory in order to highlight this 5-6-5 device. Its last place in category 3 suggests a similarity to subcategories 4a, b, and c, which share the 5-6-5 feature to avoid parallel 5ths. However, category 4 examples have a different preparation of the 6th: the 6 of the 5-6-5 pattern is created by a *descending* step in the bass.

The fourth category, constituting approximately 4% of the total, contains those instances where the 6th and not the 5th is prepared (see Ex. 4). While four of the seven surveyed books have an example of this possibility, none of them refers to the voice leading from which the 6/5 emerges. Subcategories 4a, b, and c all contain the descending 5-6-5 two-voice combination whose purpose is to avoid direct parallel fifths. At the point of the sustained 6th, the third voice moves to the 5th to create the 6/5; then the resolution of the 6th (down by step) doubles this third-voice fifth. Note that 23

of the 28 examples in category 4 are in subcategories a, b, or c, and that the aural effect is rather different from the more usual prepared-5th setting. Examples for 4a (the most common, with 3%) show two different third-voice approaches to the 5th; Examples 4b and 4c show the ascending leap and common-tone departure from the bass. However, it is not impossible to have a prepared 6th without the maneuver that avoids parallel fifths; these constitute subcategories 4d, e, and f. The first example for 4d is in three voices, from the Gauldin text, where no source was identified. The three examples of 4d in the surveyed masses are all in four voices, as in the second illustration for 4d. Example 4e also is in four voices, but 4f is in three. In employing information from the categories in a counterpoint course, a teacher should share with students the 5-6-5 voice-leading implication of 4a, b, and c (as well as 3e) as a part of the

**Example 4. Category 4: The 6th is prepared and resolved**

**4a. S, 6, DS, DS (Desc. 5-6-5 to avoid parallel fifths)**

P. v. I, p. 16

M. Ecce sacerdos magnus; Crucifixus

155

P. v. X, p. 31

M. Primi Toni; Benedictus

22

(continued)

**Example 4. (cont.)**

- 4b. S, 6, DS, AL (Desc. 5-6-5 to avoid parallel fifths)  
P. v. XV, p. 32  
M. Jam Christus astra ascenderat; Crucifixus

121

- 4c. S, 6, DS, CT (Desc. 5-6-5 to avoid parallel fifths)  
Soderland (1947), p. 98  
P. Motet; Dies Sanctificatus

16

- 4d. S, 6, AL, CT  
Gauldin (1985), p. 93  
Ex. 9-9f (No source)

- P. v. 1, p. 38  
M. O regem coeli; Kyrie

77

(continued)

**Example 4. (cont.)**

- 4e. S, 6, CT, CT (Neighbor 5-6-5)  
 P. v. XXIII, p. 65  
 M. Emendemus; Gloria

56

- 4f. S, 6, CT, DS  
 P. v. XXIII, p. 156  
 M. In Majoribus Duplicibus; Gloria

73

process of expanding analytical vocabulary, especially since the 5-6-5 pattern is not pointed out in the textual sources.

Occasionally a 6/5 combination will appear in a rhythmic position other than on strong beats one and three. Such occurrences constitute category 5 (see Ex. 5). Subcategory 5a is for the 6/5 in a half-note value on beats two or four; the examples show one three-voice illustration from the Merriman text and two in more than three voices from the Soderlund text. The three examples in the study are in four-voice texture. Subcategory 5b, with the 6/5 occurring only as a quarter-note value, is illustrated by two excerpts from the masses. The first is an off-beat placement; the second is on the weak half-note beat but in the relatively accented position. The 6/5 combinations in category 5 are by-products of individual lines moving above a bass and do not create the same aural impression as the strong-beat placements of categories 1 through 3. While I noted twelve occurrences in the survey, I did not investigate every weak-beat and quarter-note combination. Thus 3 and 9 appear in parentheses in Figures 1 and 2, as they represent a minimum number of

occurrences. (These are the twelve that are not included in the total of 583 for the other five categories.)

A sixth category completes remaining possibilities. In 6a (3% of the total) the 5th of the 6/5 is diminished (see Ex. 6a). Modal counterpoint does not often provide the opportunity to incorporate what would be regarded in functional tonal music as a dominant seventh in 6/5 position on the strong bass-note leading tone, thus pointing up a significant difference between the two styles. That some 6/5's occur with a diminished fifth instead of the usual (prepared) perfect fifth suggests, however, that the fifth of the 6/5 is the note that needs the careful handling afforded a dissonance.

Subcategory 6b acknowledges that 6/5's are not proscribed from passages in triple meter (see Ex. 6b). However, there is nothing different about the linear treatment for the 6/5's in category 6; thus the double asterisk footnote in Figure 1 gives the breakdown of the examples in 6a and b according to the voice-leading conditions in categories 1, 2, and 3. Finally, for the sake of completeness, subcategory 6c is provided (even though not needed for this study),

**Example 5. Category 5: 6/5 placement on other than strong beat.**

5a. W, ( ), ( ), ( ), 1/2 note  
Merriman (1982), p. 74  
Ex. 12-4 (No source)



(continued)

**Example 5. (cont.)**

Soderlund (1947), p. 101  
P. Litaniae de Beata Virgine

C  
A  
TI  
TII  
B

Soderlund (1947), p. 99  
P. M. Ut Re Mi; Agnus Dei

CI  
CII  
AII  
T  
B

(continued)

**Example 5. (cont.)**

**5b.** W, ( ), ( ), ( ), 1/4 note  
 P. v. IV, p. 39  
 M. Inviolata; Crucifixus

123

Coprino

Alto

Tenor

P. v. XXIII, p. 206  
 M. In Minoribus Duplicibus; Benedictus

27

Coprino

Alto

Tenor

since in the analysis of other examples from different sources, especially in textures of four and more voices, an occasional instance may not fit within the delimitations of any other category. An example of category 6c is included in the Soderlund text (see Fig. 3).

Figure 2 lists the number of appearances of 6/5's for each subcategory by textures of sections of the masses: strictly three-voice sections, three-voice textures from four-voice mass movements, the sum of these two, then the 6/5's in four voices, and the sum of three- and four-voice appearances, followed by the approximate percentage this number is of the total of 583 when this number is five or more (see Fig. 2).

**Example 6. Category 6: Less usual occurrences****6a. 5 of 6/5 is a diminished fifth**

P. v. XXVII, p. 212

M. Pater noster; Crucifixus

**6b. 6/5 occurs in triple meter**

P. v. IV, p. 19

M. De Beata Virgine; Sanctus

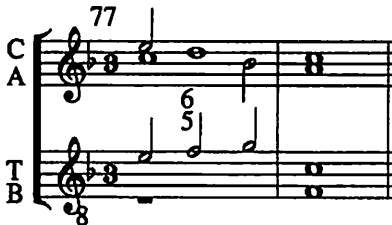


Figure 3 lists the seven textual sources by column. In each column are page reference numbers, by respective category, for the 6/5 uses illustrated in notation in each book. Abbreviations employed include: Cl = Clemens non Papa; DeM = DeMonte; ns = no source identified (it is assumed that the example is by the author); P = Palestrina; Vic = Victoria; + = more than one example. Examples are in three voices unless indicated otherwise (see Fig. 3).

Figure 2 should help to relate the information from this survey to the kind and amount of coverage of the 6/5 that one would choose to include in a counterpoint course and, as it does in relation to Figure 3, help to provide a source for comparing material in texts to the uses in the surveyed masses. The information in this article is meant to show that the employment of contextual references from a wide selection of Palestrina's music contributes a broader dimension to what otherwise could be a less-than-complete view of the 6/5 in a study of sixteenth-century contrapuntal style.

**Figure 2.** Occurrences of 6/5 in Palestrina 3-voice sections and 4-voice masses

| Categories    |    |      |   |   |                           | 2894  | 18166      |       | 18166      | 21060 |         |
|---------------|----|------|---|---|---------------------------|-------|------------|-------|------------|-------|---------|
|               |    |      |   |   |                           | bars  | bars       |       | bars       | bars  |         |
|               |    |      |   |   |                           | 73    | 3-vc. tex. |       | 4-vc. tex. |       |         |
|               |    |      |   |   |                           | 3-vc. | from       |       | from       |       |         |
|               |    |      |   |   |                           | secs. | 40 4-vc.   | 3-vc. | 40 4-vc.   | Total | Approx. |
|               |    |      |   |   |                           |       | masses     | Total | masses     | Total | %       |
| To avoid 5ths | 1. | a    | S | 5 | AS AS                     | 22    | + 130      | = 152 | + 55       | = 207 | 36      |
|               |    | b    | S | 5 | AL AS                     | 2     | 19         | 21    | 7          | 28    | 5       |
|               |    | c    | S | 5 | DL AS                     | 11    | 50         | 61    | 22         | 83    | 14      |
|               |    | var. |   |   | PT                        | 7     | 18         | 25    | 10         | 35    | 6       |
|               | 2. | a    | S | 5 | ( ) AS to <sup>5</sup> /3 | 4     | 32         | 36    | 5          | 41    | 7       |
|               |    | var. |   |   | AL to <sup>6</sup> /3     | 0     | 0          | 0     | 2          | 2     |         |
|               |    | b    | S | 5 | ( ) AS to 6 or 5-6        | 1     | 8          | 9     | 2          | 11    | 2       |
|               |    | c    | S | 5 | ( ) AS in Aug.            | 2     | 1          | 3     | 2          | 5     | 1       |
|               |    | d    | S | 5 | ( ) DL to 6               | 0     | 1          | 1     | 1          | 2     |         |
|               |    | e    | S | 5 | ( ) DS to 6               | 0     | 0          | 0     | 1          | 1     |         |
|               |    | f    | S | 5 | ( ) AL                    | 0     | 0          | 0     | 0          | 0     |         |
| To avoid 5ths | 3. | a    | S | 5 | AS CT to C4               | 0     | 4          | 4     | 12         | 16    | 3       |
|               |    | var. |   |   | DL CT to C4               | 0     | 1          | 1     | 0          | 1     |         |
|               |    | b    | S | 5 | CT CT to C4               | 6     | 9          | 15    | 8          | 23    | 4       |
|               |    | var. |   |   | ( ) CT to C4              | 0     | 1          | 1     | 2          | 3     |         |
|               |    | c    | S | 5 | CT DL                     | 1     | 4          | 5     | 1          | 6     | 1       |
|               |    | d    | S | 5 | CT AS                     | 1     | 15         | 16    | 16         | 32    | 5       |
|               |    | e    | S | 5 | CT AS Asc 5-6-5           | 7     | 12         | 19    | 12         | 31    | 5       |
|               | 4. | a    | S | 6 | DS DS Des 5-6-5           | 2     | 4          | 6     | 11         | 17    | 3       |
|               |    | b    | S | 6 | DS AL Des 5-6-5           | 1     | 0          | 1     | 4          | 5     | 1       |
|               |    | c    | S | 6 | DS CT Des 5-6-5           | 0     | 0          | 0     | 1          | 1     |         |
| To avoid 5ths |    | d    | S | 6 | AL CT                     | 0     | 0          | 0     | 3          | 3     |         |
|               |    | e    | S | 6 | CT CT N 5-6-5             | 0     | 0          | 0     | 1          | 1     |         |
|               |    | f    | S | 6 | CT DS                     | 0     | 1          | 1     | 0          | 1     |         |
|               | 5. | a    | W |   | 1/2                       | 0     | 0          | 0     | (3)        | (3)   |         |
|               |    | b    | W |   | 1/4                       | (2)   | (1)        | (3)   | (6)        | (9)   |         |
|               | 6. | a    |   |   | 6 <sup>5</sup> 5          | 2     | 2          | 4     | 11         | 15    | 3       |
|               |    | b    |   |   | Triple                    | 0     | 6          | 6     | 7          | 13    | 2       |
|               |    | c    |   |   | Free                      | 0     | 0          | 0     | 0          | 0     |         |
|               |    |      |   |   |                           | 69    | + 318      | = 387 | + 196      | = 583 | 98      |
|               |    |      |   |   |                           | (2)   | (1)        | (3)   | (9)        | (12)  |         |

**Figure 3.** Notated examples of 6/5 in surveyed texts

|      | Bassett | Benjamin | Gauldin | Jeppesen<br>The Style | Merriman | C. Smith | Soderlund     |
|------|---------|----------|---------|-----------------------|----------|----------|---------------|
| 1. a | p42 P   | p95 ns   | p93 ns  |                       | p73 ns   | p79 ns   | p95 ns        |
| b    |         |          |         |                       |          |          |               |
| c    |         |          |         |                       |          |          |               |
| var. |         | p95 ns   |         | p208 C1 5v            |          |          |               |
| 2. a | p42 P   |          | p93 ns  |                       |          | p79 ns   | p96 P         |
| var. |         |          |         |                       |          |          |               |
| b    |         |          | P93 ns  |                       |          | p79 ns   | p95-6 ns      |
| c    |         |          |         |                       |          | p79 ns   | p95 ns        |
| d    |         |          | p93 ns  |                       |          |          | p96 ns        |
| e    |         |          | p93 ns  |                       |          |          |               |
| f    |         |          |         |                       |          |          | p96 P 4v      |
| 3. a |         | p96 ns   | p94 ns  |                       |          | p80 Vic  |               |
| var. |         |          |         |                       |          |          |               |
| b    | p43 P   |          |         |                       | p 76 ns  |          | p97 P         |
| var. |         |          |         |                       |          |          |               |
| c    |         |          |         |                       |          |          | p96 P         |
| d    |         |          |         |                       |          |          |               |
| e    |         |          |         | p205 P 4v             |          |          |               |
| 4. a |         |          |         |                       |          | p81 P    | p99 P+3,4v    |
| b    |         |          |         |                       |          |          |               |
| c    |         |          |         |                       | p 74 ns  |          | p98-9 P+4-6v  |
| d    |         |          | p93 ns  |                       |          |          |               |
| e    |         |          |         |                       |          |          |               |
| f    |         |          |         |                       |          |          |               |
| 5. a |         |          |         | { p232 P 4v           |          |          | p99 P 4v      |
| b    |         |          |         | { 241-4 P + 4v        | p 74 ns  |          | p102 P 4,5v   |
|      |         |          |         | 242-3 ++ 4v           | p74 ns   |          |               |
| 6. a |         |          | p93 ns  |                       | p74 ns   | p79 ns   | p97 DeM       |
| b    |         |          |         | 113-4P 5v             |          |          | p104-5 P 4-6v |
| c    |         |          |         |                       |          |          | p100-1 P+3-5v |

