Counterpoint

Contrapuntal thinking: first phase (14th-15th cents.)

Focus on two-voice simultaneities

Rules govern use of intervals

Fixed melodic kernel (cantus firmus) usually in tenor voice

Added voice could be higher or lower

Intervals allowed: 1, 4, 5; later 3, 6 (but not always 4)

Imitation between lines not common

Contrapuntal thinking: second phase (15th-16th)

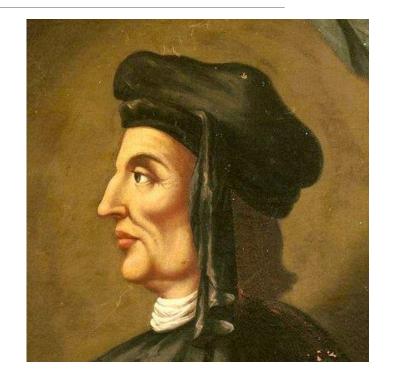
More voices added

Some liberalization of intervallic rules

Some passing tones (2nds, 7ths) acceptable on unaccented beats

Flow of music was to be continuous (cadence avoidance); Palestrina

Fixed melody in tenor might be secular (rather than sacred)



Gioseffe Zarlino: Early, much imitated music theorist

Palestrina: Mass for Pope Marcellus



Diruta, Il transilvano II (1622)



Mixed species in three voices



Points of imitation





Contrapuntal thinking: third phase (17th-18th cents.)

Shift towards metricalization (from mensuration)

Shift towards tonal counterpoint (from modal counterpoint)

Free counterpoint (main melody, now called subject, devised by composer)

Formal rules for

- subjects
- types of imitation
- stretto (overlapping) realization

Counterpoint became more florid

Retrospective formalization of rules (Fux)

Species counterpoint (18th century overview of 16th century usage)

- First species: whole note against whole note
- Second species: whole vs half
- Third species: whole against quarter)
- Fourth species: suspensions (and resulting dissonances)
- Fifth species: mixed values





Mattheson's rules for subjects

Up or down: skips, then steps (pyramid rule)



Haydn, Quartet Op. 71, No. 1, III

Mozart, Divertimento K. 287, III

Best to change direction after leap, or to interrupt run in one direction



Brahms Concerto No. I, III

More rules on subjects (Peter Schubert)

If repeated notes occur, place them on varying metric positions



Chopin, Prelude, Op. 28, No. 12

Many subjects start begin with a rest or start in second half of measure



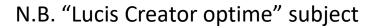
Beethoven 5th Symphony, I (stretto)

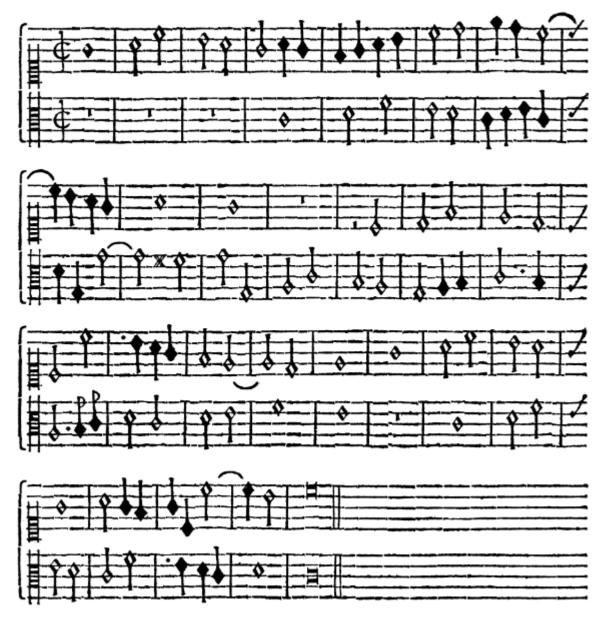
This was already true in second-species counterpoint



...and finally, fugue







Ockeghem masses (jrp.Stanford.edu)

mass	Ockeghem	Kyrie-Gloria-Credo Sine nomine	5		
 mass	Ockeghem	Missa Au travail suis	4		
mass	Ockeghem	Missa Caput	4		
mass	Ockeghem	Missa Cuiusvis toni (on D)	4		
mass	Ockeghem	Missa Cuiusvis toni (on E)	4	n D	
mass	Ockeghem	Missa Cuiusvis toni (on F)	4		
mass	Ockeghem	Missa De plus en plus	4	n D	
mass	Ockeghem	Missa Ecce ancilla domini	?	n D	
mass	Ockeghem	Missa Fors seulement	5		
mass	Ockeghem	Missa L'homme armé	4		
mass	Ockeghem	Missa Ma maistresse	4	n D	
mass	Ockeghem	Missa Mi mi	4	n D	
mass	Ockeghem	Missa Prolationum	4		
mass	Ockeghem	Missa Quinti toni	3	n D	
mass	Ockeghem	Requiem	3–4	n D	
mass	Ockeghem	Credo [Village]	4		