

THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS ON TECHNIQUE AND EXPRESSIVITY IN THE FOUR-VOICE MASSES OF CLAUDIO MONTEVERDI

APOLKA FÁBIÁN¹ 

SUMMARY. This work focuses on two of Monteverdi's four-voice Masses. One was published in 1640/41 in the collection *Selva morale e spirituale*, and the other appeared posthumously in 1650. Both Masses demonstrate Monteverdi's distinctive compositional techniques. While the works are mainly grounded in the traditional *prima prattica*, traces of the *seconda prattica* style are also evident.

Keywords: Renaissance music, Claudio Monteverdi, Mass, sacred music

Introduction

To gain a deeper understanding of Monteverdi's masses, it is essential to examine the development of his musical language and compositional techniques. Among his sacred works, three major collections can be mentioned. The first is *Vespro della Beata Vergine* and *Missa in illo tempore*, both published in 1610. The second important collection is *Selva morale e spirituale*, published in 1641, which includes a four-voice Mass, psalms arranged for four to eight voices, hymns, and two versions of the *Magnificat*. The third collection was published posthumously in 1650 and contains a Mass, *Messa a quattro voci da cappella*, written for four voices, as well as arrangements of some psalms.

In Monteverdi's oeuvre, there are only three Masses, which is very few compared to his predecessors, such as Palestrina, who composed around 104 Masses. However, from Monteverdi's letters, we know that he composed several other Masses, which are presumed lost. During his entire stay in

¹ PhD student, Gheorghe Dima National Music Academy, Cluj-Napoca, Assistant Lecturer at the Babeş-Bolyai University, Faculty of Reformed Theology and Music.
E-mail: apolkafabian@gmail.com



Venice, lasting 29 years, Monteverdi probably wrote at least one service per year, as indicated in several letters.²

This work analyzes two of Claudio Monteverdi's Masses: The *Missa da cappella*, included in the volume *Selva morale e spirituale*, and the *Messa a quattro voci da cappella*, published in the 1650 edition. Both works are written for four voices (SATB), a criterion that guided their selection, thus facilitating comparative analysis.

**The table below includes the masses whose existence and context are documented through the letters of Claudio Monteverdi, thus providing a solid historical basis for the subsequent analysis of the works.*

Table 1

Mass / Mention in Letters	Date of Letter/Documented Date
Mass (Christmas Eve Liturgy)	29 December 1616
Concertato Mass	21 April 1618
Solemn Mass and Vespers	21 April 1618
Funeral Service	17 April 1621
Solemn Mass	27 November 1621
Vespers and Service	1 May 1627
Sacred Music	23 February 1630

**Summary of Monteverdi's masses documented
in letters and archival sources**

Messa a 4 da cappella from Selva Morale e Spirituale (1641)

Monteverdi's Mass written in the F Ionian mode was titled *Messa a 4 da cappella* in the volume *Selva morale e spirituale* published in 1641. Some musicologists are convinced that this Mass was composed of the Feast of Presentation of the Virgin Mary, specifically for the Thanksgiving service of 21 November 1631, which celebrated the end of the devastating Venetian plague.³

² Tim Carter mentions a service from 1625, written in honor of the visit to Venice of the Polish heir to the throne, Sigismund Władysław. However, no information is available as to whether this Mass is identical to the compositions mentioned above.

Carter, Tim. *Monteverdi and His Contemporaries*, Ashgate, Aldershot, 2000, p. 83.

³ Kurtzman, Jeffery. Preface to the *Messa a 4 da cappella* from *Selva Morale e Spirituale*, Carus Verlag, Stuttgart, 1992.

Claudio Monteverdi's *Missa* in F consists of the movements of the *Ordinarium Missae*: Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus–Benedictus and Agnus Dei. These sections are written in the manner of the *prima prattica* style with *basso continuo*. The latter functions largely as a true *basso seguente*⁴, except for a few short passages.

Denis Stevens, in his work *Monteverdi: Sacred, Secular, and Occasional Music*, described this composition as “sober and uneventful”⁵. However, he was also the first to observe that the short recurring theme present in each movement of the Mass is related to one of Monteverdi's own madrigals from his First Book of Madrigals, *La vaga pastorella*.

On this basis, Monteverdi's second Mass may be interpreted as a parody Mass, in which the source of the parody is not a work by another composer but Monteverdi's own composition. In the technique of the parody Mass⁶, the composer reuses existing musical material - either a melodic line, an opening thematic idea, or a principal thematic element - which is then developed and transformed into a new musical structure.

E.g. 1



**Claudio Monteverdi - Messa a 4 da cappella from
Selva Morale e Spirituale (1641), Kyrie (m. 1-5)**

⁴ A bass line that follows the lowest vocal part, supporting and adapting to the movement of the choral texture.

⁵ Stevens, Denis. *Monteverdi: Sacred, Secular, and Occasional Music*, Associated University Press, Cranbury, New Jersey, 1978, p. 71.

⁶ The composer uses either his own melody or that of another composer, which is then expanded and developed in various ways. The compositional technique of the parody Mass may include the following procedures:

- The borrowing of a vocal line or melody from an existing piece, to which an additional, transposed voice is added.
- The borrowing of an opening theme or introductory material from a composition, which is then continued through the composer's own musical invention.
- The borrowing of a principal thematic element, which is subsequently transformed and integrated into a new musical context.

E.g. 2

50

La vaga pastorella

(Allegretto)

Canto

Quinto

Alto

Tenore

Basso

Sen

Claudio Monteverdi - La vaga pastorella (m. 1-4)**Kyrie**

In Monteverdi's Mass, the Kyrie opens the work with a distinctly prayerful character, articulated through a tripartite (ABA) structure. The movement is written for four voices (SATB) in duple meter. Each section introduces new musical material, which unfolds within a polyphonic texture, being successively presented and developed across the individual vocal parts.

E.g. 3

Messa A 4 da Cappella.

Kyrie eleison

Claudio Monteverdi - Messa a 4 da cappella from Selva Morale e Spirituale (1641). Original manuscript, Kyrie

A noteworthy feature of this Mass is that each movement concludes with an authentic cadence (V-I), characterized by sustained long note values. This emphasizes the significant role of tonal-functional organization within the structure of the work.

Section A consists of two fragments, each introduced by polyphonic imitative entries corresponding to the thematic exposition. In the first fragment, the theme is first presented in the Bass, then in the Alto, followed by a fifth-related answer in the Tenor, and finally in the Soprano in C. The cadence is realized on an F chord with the third omitted.

Section B begins with the thematic statement in the Soprano and Tenor voices, followed by responses in the Alto and Bass. A notable feature occurs at the end of this section: the cadence resolves in C major with a complete chord, while the dominant degree is presented with a natural B, reinforcing the tonal-functional orientation of the musical discourse.

Section C returns to the home key of F Ionian. The new theme is successively treated in all voices, and the final cadence is an authentic F cadence with the third omitted.

Gloria

The Gloria is structured into five sections, delineated according to thematic material and the organization of the musical discourse. The movement opens with a variant of the Kyrie theme, which also appears in the *Agnus Dei*, thereby consolidating the work's cyclical unity.

Within this movement, a single metric alternation occurs: the transition from duple to triple meter in the *Gratias agimus tibi* section, which imparts an expansive and festive character.

In the *Domine Deus* section, the discourse is built on imitative interplay between the Tenor + Bass and Soprano + Alto groups. The sections *Qui tollis peccata mundi* and *Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris* introduce new thematic material, whose progressive development leads to a delayed V–I cadence; immediately before this cadence, the theme from the Kyrie reappears, reinforcing the motivic coherence of the movement.

In *Quoniam*, the succession of broad, sustained chords highlights the close relationship between text and music. Tonally, the passage tends toward D Aeolian/Dorian, marked by the appearance of its dominant, before returning at the cadence to the dominant of F Ionian.

The final section, *Cum Sancto Spiritu*, through its solemn character and energetic thematic material, provides a festive conclusion, closing with a IV–I cadence. The theme of this section is later treated in the *Hosanna*, using similar developmental procedures, thereby consolidating the thematic unity of the entire composition.

Credo

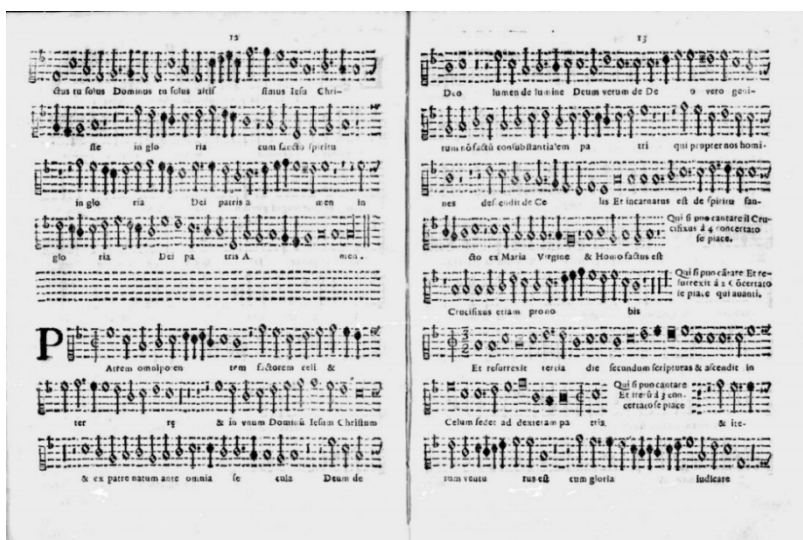
One of the distinctive features of this Mass is that certain sections have alternative concertato versions, which can be inserted in place of the original sections if desired (*Crucifixus*, *Et Resurrexit*, *Et iterum venturus est*). These movements appear separately in the printed edition, and their use raises several issues.

Firstly, the vocal distribution and orchestration differ from the sections they might replace. For example, *Et Resurrexit* requires two violins and solo vocal parts, while *Et iterum venturus est* is conceived as a trio for two alto voices and one bass, which do not appear elsewhere in the four-voice Mass.

Secondly, these concertato sections introduce a strong stylistic contrast within an otherwise *stile antico* composition.

Thirdly, in terms of sonic material, they deviate from the tonal logic of the original Mass, which consistently remains in F Ionian.⁷

E.g. 4



Claudio Monteverdi - Messa a 4 da cappella from Selva Morale e Spirituale (1641). Original manuscript, Credo

Vaughn Roste, in his study *The Three Extant Masses of Claudio Monteverdi*, notes that some scholars have suggested these sections might form part of a complete Credo in concertato style, although no evidence

⁷ These characteristics suggest that Monteverdi maintained a flexible approach to the Mass's structure and was open to stylistic experimentation, even within a work framed by traditional conventions. At the same time, the use of these alternative sections allows performers to shape the character and sonority of the Mass according to the available voices and instruments.

supports this hypothesis. It is more likely that they were conceived solely as substitute sections. Hans Ferdinand Redlich argues that in making this choice, Monteverdi revised his own principles of the *prima prattica*, whereas other specialists believe that these sections were composed later for specific occasions⁸.

Interestingly, these sections reflect Monteverdi's understanding of the evolution of styles, suggesting that *prima* and *seconda prattica* can coexist not only historically but also within a single composition.

Moreover, the thematic material of these sections exhibits clear motivic connections with the themes of the Sanctus and Agnus Dei, thereby reinforcing the structural unity of the cycle. The sections are articulated in close correlation with the Latin text, as observed in Et incarnatus and Et *resurrexit*, where the musical discourse is shaped according to the theological meaning of the text, faithfully reflecting its content.

Sanctus – Benedictus

The Sanctus–Benedictus is structured in an ABCDC form, with each section articulated in binary phrasing.

Section A opens with a two-measure slow introduction, after which the theme continues with shorter note values, imparting a more animated pulse and ornamented character. The theme unfolds imitatively across all voices throughout the section. In the *Dominus Deus* passage, the Kyrie motif is identifiable, albeit in the form of a melodic inversion variation.

Section B, *Pleni sunt caeli et terra*, also unfolds imitatively. The theme begins in the Bass, then gradually proceeds through all voices. Notably, there is no clear cadential closure between the two sections: the Bass enters before the previous section ends, creating a fluid sense of continuity. Additionally, the theme opens with three repeated notes, which, interpretively, produces a gradual intensification and subtle *crescendo*.

Section C, *Hosanna*, begins in a similar continuous manner, overlapping with the preceding section. The theme is stated in the Alto, using low notes adapted to the timbral qualities of the voice. It incorporates the previously mentioned quotation from the madrigal *La vaga pastorella*. The musical material relies on alternating vocal pairings (S+A and T+B).

The cadence concludes on a sustained F major chord with the third omitted, a characteristic feature of this Mass.

Benedictus, Section D, treats the theme from *Pleni sunt caeli et terra* in a varied form. Sequences play a prominent role in thematic development. The vocal pairings are inverted relative to the previous section: T+B and A+S.

⁸ Redlich, Hans Ferdinand. *Claudio Monteverdi: Life and Works*, trans. Kathleen Dale. Oxford University Press, New York, 1952, p. 122.

The final *Hosanna* (Section C) returns identically to conclude the Sanctus–Benedictus section.

Agnus Dei

The Agnus Dei integrates the principal motif of the Mass organically into the musical discourse. Its compositional structure demonstrates the same imitative conception observed in previous movements, confirming the stylistic coherence of the cycle.

In the *Miserere nobis* and *Dona nobis pacem* sections, the predominant compositional technique is descending sequencing, which enhances the expressive intensity and amplifies the internal tension of the musical phrases. Unlike other *Agnus Dei* sections, there is no tripartite segmentation; the musical discourse unfolds in a continuous, fluid manner without clear structural delimitations. The triple invocation is realized through repetition of the same musical structure on the text *Dona nobis pacem*, ensuring both formal coherence and expressive unity across the movement.

The final cadence employs a VI–V–I progression, providing a stable and conclusive closure to the movement.

Messa a quattro voci da cappella (1650)

The *Messa a quattro voci da cappella*, published in the 1650 collection titled *Messa a quattro voci et Salmi a 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 & voci e Parte da Cappella et con le Litanie della Beata Vergine* by Alessandro Vincenti, was originally composed in G dorian.⁹ The work is characterized by rich, imitative counterpoint and expansive melodic lines, exploring the same thematic idea in multiple ways. In this Mass, Monteverdi demonstrates a retrospective approach to the *prima prattica*, employing a learned musical language that was already considered somewhat archaic in his time.

However, the modal sonorities are enriched by the alternation of major and minor tonalities, the expressive use of dissonance in a madrigal style, and sudden changes of rhythm and meter, all hallmarks of the *seconda prattica* style.

Phrases are relatively short, often with one syllable per note, ensuring textual clarity. Monteverdi's Mass thus combines the rich contrapuntal texture

⁹ The score used for this analysis is taken from the Carus Verlag edition. In the preface, editor Rudolf Walter notes that the Heidelberg version of 1967 represents a transposition to F, motivated by the demands of modern choral practice. To facilitate reading and performance, the note values were shortened, a practical adaptation that does not affect the essential musical structure of the work but solely enhances graphical clarity and interpretive accessibility.

of the Renaissance with the purity and expressive power of the new musical language. From this fusion of styles emerges a composition in which the characteristics of both traditions are distinct yet balanced, producing a coherent and profound synthesis.

Kyrie¹⁰

Kyrie expresses the opening prayer of the Mass through a three-part strophic (ABA) structure. The Kyrie is scored for four voices (SATB) in duple meter.

The main theme consists of a descending tetrachord, which recurs in Kyrie, Sanctus, and Agnus Dei. Monteverdi employs a minor tetrachord, with the response formed as a Phrygian tetrachord at the upper fifth.

In section A, in addition to the initial tetrachord, two further essential thematic elements can be identified. These do not introduce new musical material but are variations derived from the original tetrachord, contributing to the coherence of the musical discourse, reinforcing motivic unity, and highlighting the generative role of the foundational tetrachord within the section's overall structure.

E.g. 5

The image shows a musical score for the Kyrie, featuring four voices (Canto, Alto, Tenore, Basso) and a Basso continuo. The score is in F Dorian (one flat) and 2/4 time. Red boxes highlight specific musical phrases in the Canto and Tenore parts. The Canto part has a red box around the notes Ky - ri(e) e - le. The Tenore part has a red box around the notes Ky - ri(e) e - le. The lyrics are: Ky - ri(e) e - le - - - - - i - son, Ky -

Claudio Monteverdi - *Messa a quattro voci da cappella* (1650), Kyrie (m. 1-6)

Section B begins and cadences with a homophonic passage featuring a single virtuosic imitative theme. The imitative vocal groups are S+A and T+B,

¹⁰ For the purpose of this analysis, the Carus Verlag edition, transposed to F Dorian, has been used. This ensures coherence between the studied material and the analytical approach.

alternating to create a polyphonic imitation, with entries at perfect fifths between the vocal groups.

In Section A1, the text returns with new musical material, yet the principal compositional idea remains intact. Following the introduction, the descending tetrachord appears in Soprano, Tenor, and Bass, contrapuntally paired with a descending, syncopated rhythm that defines the section. This section represents the most complex segment thematically, rhythmically, and contrapuntally, with imitative entries occurring at perfect fifths between voices.

The originality of Monteverdi's compositional style is reflected in the final theme of this section. The foundation remains the descending tetrachord but now embellished with sequential descending ornamentation.¹¹

From a tonal perspective, the three sections are treated differently. The first section cadences on an incomplete F chord (without the third), the second section concludes on an incomplete C chord, and the final section returns to a complete F chord with a Picardy third. The dominant - tonic relationship is present throughout all three sections, achieved either through melodic notes or the use of suspensions.

Gloria

The Gloria opens with a Gregorian invocation, derived from *Missa XI* and transmitted through liturgical sources compiled in the *Liber Usualis*.¹² The musical material is constructed in close alignment with the Latin text. Alternating homophonic and polyphonic passages create clarity, expressive definition, and dynamic momentum. Homophonic segments delimit and separate polyphonic episodes, providing structural stability while highlighting textual meaning.

The first segment sets the text from the *Ordinary: Gloria in excelsis Deo. Et in terra pax hominibus bonæ voluntatis* homophonically, with an anacrusis in the tenor on *Et in*. The introduction of the raised fourth (sensible) and the

¹¹ Based on analytical experience, this compositional technique can also be identified in Josquin des Prez's *Missa Beata Virgine*. This observation suggests that Monteverdi was not only familiar with and applied the new compositional techniques of his time, but also drew on the technical traditions of the Franco-Flemish masters.

¹² The Roman Catholic Church maintains an official liturgical corpus encompassing the essential repertoire of Gregorian chant. One of the most important reference sources is the *Liber Usualis*, edited by the Benedictine monks of Solesmes Abbey, which contains the Gregorian melodies used regularly in the Mass and Divine Office. Based on authentic medieval sources, this collection played a fundamental role in standardizing and transmitting the Gregorian tradition in modern liturgical practice.

use of the minor IV degree produce a V–IV⁶–V harmonic progression, leading to a Picardy third cadence.

The second segment develops the original *Christe* theme up to *Gratias agimus tibi*, with a cadence identical to the first segment. The text, expressing praise and thanksgiving, is set as follows: *Laudamus te, Benedicimus te, Adoramus te, Glorificamus te* – polyphonic; *Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam* – homophonic; *gloriam tuam* – polyphonic. *Domine Deus, Rex cœlestis, Deus Pater omnipotens* predominates in polyphonic imitation, with vocal groupings B+T and S+A, cadencing on the same degrees as in previous segments.

The third segment is fully imitative, with B+T and S+A groups converging into a tutti imitation toward the end.

The fourth segment mirrors the initial invocation. The first two phrases are homophonic, distributed as SAT + ATB, before evolving into polyphonic imitation leading to the section's climax. The text *Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris* is treated homophonically, whereas *miserere nobis* is set with longer note values and suspensions, producing an agogic *ritardando*. This section stabilizes on a V chord without the third, creating an open and tensioned ending.

The final segment, corresponding to glorification, begins with a slow introduction. For *Tu solus Sanctus, Tu solus Dominus, Tu solus Altissimus, Jesu Christe*, the texture is imitative, with identical entries across the SATB ensemble. The text *Cum Sancto Spiritu in gloria Dei Patris* reintroduces the fundamental descending tetrachord, serving a unifying structural role. The *Amen* section is composed in a polyphonic-imitative manner, with successive vocal entries and complex rhythm, emphasizing the conclusive character of the movement.

The constant presence of D^b and E^h throughout the work contributes to tonal-modal instability, suggesting an intentional ambiguity between functional tonality and modal organization.

Credo

The Credo opens with a Gregorian invocation, derived from *Missa I*¹³, and is structured into eight distinct segments¹⁴.

¹³ *Liber Usualis*

¹⁴ For the analysis of the Credo, both the Latin liturgical text and essential musical parameters were considered, including thematic material, cadence types, the development of imitative-polyphonic processes, and their modal resolutions. Based on these analytical criteria, a coherent segmentation of the movement was established, reflecting both the internal organization of the musical discourse and its relationship to the textual content.

The segments are constructed through the alternation of homophonic and polyphonic textures, a device that articulates the musical discourse and highlights the expressive contours of the composition.

The first segment begins with a homophonic setting in the SAT voices, followed by BTA, which develops a concise imitative passage. This segment functions as a formal introduction, establishing the opening of the Credo.

The second segment exhibits a tristrophic structure, alternating homophonic and polyphonic textures (homophony–polyphony–homophony). Within this segment, the thematic head corresponding to the *Christe* section is introduced, built on a descending sequence that can be regarded as the fundamental tetrachord, providing structural cohesion for the entire Mass.

The next segment, *Et incarnatus est*, is presented in homophonic texture, emphasizing the mystery of the Incarnation of the Second Person of the Holy Trinity. A clear melodic line and vocal uniformity underscore the solemnity and theological significance of the passage. The segment concludes with a Picardy third, offering tonal resolution and highlighting the gravitas and sacred character of the moment.

Fourth Fragment, *Crucifixus*, opens with an imitative texture, marked by rhythmic and melodic agitation, which develops up to the *et sepultus est* passage. Here, the S+A voices and tenor convey the sorrow through sustained notes and rhythmic suspensions, concluding with a Picardy cadence.

This section, *Et Resurrexit*, introduces a ternary rhythmic character, giving the passage a contrasting energy compared to the previous material. By the end, the pulse returns to duple meter, and the imitative lines and melismas reflect the close relationship between text and music. Cadences are built on triadless harmonies, creating tonal ambiguity and a distinctive resolution.

The sixth fragment begins with a theme similar to the fundamental tetrachord, with polyphonic imitation predominating and defining the musical discourse throughout. The following fragment opens with a homophonic texture and presents a bistrophic structure; both strophes maintain the duple pulse and conclude with a Picardy cadence.

Seventh Fragment, beginning with a homophonic texture, this fragment follows a bistrophic structure, with both strophes adhering to duple meter and concluding with a Picardy cadence.

The final fragment features complex rhythmic writing, with interleaved imitative entries that create a dynamic and expressive character. The theme recalls that of the Sanctus, *Pleni sunt caeli et terra*, retaining its main features while introducing subtle variations that give the fragment originality. The last four measures function as a coda, ending with a IVb - I progression and a Picardy third, emphasizing the solemn resolution of the entire passage.

Sanctus-Benedictus

The overall form is ABCDC, with alternating ternary and duple articulations. Section C is repeated both textually and compositionally: the first at the end of *Sanctus* and the second at the end of *Benedictus* (*Hosanna*, as above). In section A, the musical material is drawn from section A of the *Kyrie*. The theme begins in the bass with a descending minor tetrachord, followed by a virtuosic passage in counterpoint appearing in the tenor line. The vocal groups performing the identical tetrachords are B+A and T+S.

Section B, *Pleni sunt caeli et terra*, introduces a new theme in the alto and soprano voices. The descending tetrachord first appears in the tenor in major form, while in the bass it is presented with a Phrygian tetrachord, creating a gradually descending line that supports and anchors the harmonic pillars up to the cadence, following the movements in the soprano and alto.

Section C, *Hosanna*, presents the motivic cell from *Christe*, distributed across the vocal groups B+T and S+A. At the end of this section, the shift from duple to ternary meter introduces rhythmic instability, producing a quasi-polyrhythmic effect. The cadence returns to duple meter with a delayed V4-3-I progression, forming a Picardy cadence.

The *Benedictus*, corresponding to section D, is written in homophonic texture and structured in three phrases (6+6+6 measures). In the first two phrases, only three voices are active (A+T+S), followed by B+T+A. The third phrase is presented in four voices, *tutti*. A new ornamental rhythmic formula appears at the cadence of the second phrase in the alto and at the beginning of the third phrase in the tenor.

E.g. 6

Claudio Monteverdi - *Messa a quattro voci da cappella* (1650),
Benedictus, (m. 12-16)

Section C, *Hosanna*, returns identically at the end of the *Sanctus-Benedictus* section.

Agnus Dei

In this section, the musical material is built around two themes: the first theme is the descending minor tetrachord, taken and augmented from the *Kyrie*, presented first in the tenor, then in the alto, bass, and soprano.

The second theme, derived from *Christe*, passes through all voices and converges homophonically at a climactic point. The text *Agnus Dei* is centered on the descending tetrachord, while *qui tollis peccata mundi* is set to the second theme, which exhibits virtuosic figurations. Polyphonic imitation permeates the entire section, and a change in character begins at *miserere nobis* with a descending sequence.

Two primary textures can be identified in this section: homophonic and polyphonic (imitative), whose alternation drives the movement toward the conclusion of the mass. In the coda, a shift occurs in the tenor voice, which enters with a half-note delay, counterpointing the other voices. The final cadence features an E, producing a IVb–V₄–I progression.

In conclusion, Monteverdi's two four-voice masses exhibit his innovative compositional approaches, while their structures remain largely grounded in the principles of the *prima prattica*. Among the notable features are the concertato style in the Credo, the application of tonal procedures, and the subtle ornamentation appearing in the Benedictus. These elements demonstrate a conscious balance between tradition and innovation, characteristic of Monteverdi's individual style.

REFERENCES

- Alwes, Chester L. *A History of Western Choral Music: from Medieval foundations to the Romantic Age, Volume 1*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2015.
- Apel, Willi; Davison, Archibald T. *Historical Anthology of Music, Volume I: Oriental, Medieval and Renaissance Music*, Harvard University Press, Massachusetts, 1949.
- Brown, Howard Mayer. *A reneszáns zenéje (Renaissance Music)*, Zeneműkiadó, Budapest, 1980.
- Bukofzer, Manfred. *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Music*, W. W. Norton & Company, New York, 1950.
- Calcagno, Mauro. *From Madrigal to Opera. Monteverdi's Staging of the Self*, California University Press, Berkeley, 2012.

THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS ON TECHNIQUE AND EXPRESSIVITY
IN THE FOUR-VOICE MASSES OF CLAUDIO MONTEVERDI

- Carter, Tim. *Monteverdi and His Contemporaries*, Ashgate, Aldershot, 2000.
- Chew, Geoffrey. *Monteverdi Claudio*, The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, Editor Stanley Sadie, Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Crocker, Richard L. *A History of Musical Style*, Dover Publications, New York, 2014.
- Dell' Antonio, Andrew. *Listening as Spiritual Practice in Early Modern Italy*, California University Press, 2011.
- Denis, Arnold, *Master Musicians-Monteverdi*, Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Goldfarb, Hilliard T. ed. *Art and Music in Venice. From the Renaissance to Baroque*, Yale University Press, 2013.
- Golcea, Ioan - Badea, Florin. *Creația corală a renașterii, resurse și problematice interpretative (Renaissance Choral Creation: Resources and Interpretative Issues)*, Editura Transversal, Târgoviște, 2010.
- Kelemen Imre, *A Zene története 1750-ig (The History of Music up to the Year 1750)*, Nemzeti tankönyvkiadó, Budapest, 1988.
- Lax, Éva. *Claudio Monteverdi, Levelek, Elméleti írások, (Claudio Monteverdi: Letters, Theoretical Writings)*, Kávé Kiadó, Budapest, 1988.
- Leech-Wilkinson, Daniel. *The Cambridge Companion to Monteverdi*, Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- Leopold, Silke. *Monteverdi: Music in Transition*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1991.
- Palisca, Claude V.; Grout, Donald Jr.; Burkholder, Peter J. *A History of Western Music. Seventh Edition*, W. W. Norton & Company, New York, 2010.
- Redlich, Hans Ferdinand. *Claudio Monteverdi: Life and Works*. trans. Kathleen Dale. Oxford University Press, New York, 1952.
- Reese, Gustav. *Music in the Renaissance*, W. W. Norton & Company, New York, 1959.
- Schrade, Leo. *Monteverdi: Creator of modern music*, Norton, New York, 1950.
- Șorban, Elena Maria. *Noi și istoria muzicii: Permanențe creative*, (Us and the History of Music: Creative Permanences), Eicon, Cluj-Napoca, 2013.
- Stevens, Denis. *Monteverdi: Sacred, Secular, and Occasional Music*, Associated University Press, Cranbury, New Jersey, 1978.

Scores

- Monteverdi, Claudio. *Missa in F (Messa a 4 voci da cappella)*, from *Selva morale e spirituale*. Edited by Jeffrey Kurtzman, Carus-Verlag, Stuttgart 1991.
- Monteverdi, Claudio. *Messa a quattro voci da cappella (1650)*. Edited by Rudolf Walter, Carus-Verlag, Stuttgart, 1967.

