

THE SYNTACTIC AND SEMANTIC DIMENSIONS OF THE MUSICAL LANGUAGE IN *KYRIE* FROM JOSEPH HAYDN'S *HARMONIEMESSE*

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SUMMARY. Starting from the opening (*Kyrie*) of Haydn's last opus – *Harmoniemesse*, the present essay propositions a synthetic model of performance analysis. First enounced by Dinu Ciocan, the analytical model is set in distinct stages of investigation and development: the structuralist approach (principles which derive from the syntactics, semantics, and pragmatism in music) is followed by meanings from connected art fields (religion, philosophy, logics, semantics, visual arts, oratory). This *modus operandi* focuses at the same time on the non-verbal dimension as well as the heterogenous character of music as art, a step through which the poetics of the music is revealed – meaning the religious character, which is categorized in different stages. Continuing to discuss the theory in this analytical boundary, I will also present a possible application of this *psycho-physiological* archeology specific to music, which accents the syntactical as well as the semantic dimension of the musical language.

Keywords. *Harmoniemesse*, Joseph Haydn, Musical Language, Semantics, Syntax, Vocabulary.

Introduction

Haydn's Mass is a result of the artistic creativity specific to the classical style focusing on a historical theme: applying the compositional process of the period (second half of the 18th century) to a musical version with religious undertones (the catholic mass procession), which transcends the church space in which the ritual traditionally takes place, to meet the high art concert medium. Seen through the lens of this transcendence from an "enclosed" to an "open" space, which allows only a simulation of the mysticism of the rite, the *Harmoniemesse* will permanently rapport to an archaic and religious context. The new "gravity center" will contain secular elements and will change the perspective of the experiential embodiment. It

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is particularly this perception that sets in the mass opposing elements of prospection and introspection, an analytical set of instruments, which will shed light on lost meanings at this crossroads and give rise to new gained meanings, more “liberal.”

Analytical methodology in the performance approach

An assessment of Haydn’s mass through a synthetically analysis will lead to a set of arguments that will serve the performance approach firstly because in the *hors temps* stage, one can identify and classify vocabulary elements in each of the mass’ structures (according to their role in the text economy), and secondly, setting them in real time (*en temps*), by observing the differences among them, one could build the intended plan for the perceptive embodiment. This plan sheds a clear light at the chronology of each unit, and at the next perception level, we could reconstruct a plan of emotional state.

By vocabulary, I’m referring mostly to the minimum structural renderings that establish (in a diversified way) through the cadences of the text or the music, moments of discontinuity in the formal plan at the (sub)motivic profile propositioned in an ensemble configuration. The cadences in the text are demarcated by the lyrics, while those of the music, by the accents of the formal rests (as a result of specific harmonic-melodic relationship along with the metric space though which these succeed through time).

The vocabulary can be presented also through typical thematic matrixes ordered to the combination formulae between different morphologic elements according to the inflexions of the spoken text. These are perceived in the discourse as unique elements and authorized as attitudes of consciousness: either as “expressive” distance, either as profile, ever closer, and fixed by the rhetoric and symbolism of the musical text. Through the correct listing of the vocabulary, we can control and contextualize both compositionally as well as hermeneutically the sound discourse as an unified entity; we can precisely show and argument in a semantic diagram the formal development, the continuities and the discontinuities, the labeling, and their weighing.

The syntactical instrument as an organizational driver of the discourse for the purpose of uncovering the technique of adapting the format to a form - has been for this mass, the experience that led me to a series of justifications in the labeling and representing its primary meanings.

As an attribute to embodiment, the *fluid movement* of states (as a first expression wave) can be understood through taking it out of time (*hors temps* representation). The movement of states on a larger scale is made out of structural signifier sequences organized on various levels: from the

highest level of the opera (first level of the entire opera) to the minimum level (the last one – that of the sequences which cannot be further decomposed). Just like the strata of the natural language from the text perspective (conventionally organized in micro-texts), the density of its forms can be determined by the hierarchical representation of the segments, from the largest to the smallest one. It is a conceptualizing of a structural tree which opens up in multiple parts for the same sounding configuration as a whole, as Dinu Ciocan postulates. Yet a performer only stops at one of them, declaring this way the consciousness' attitude faced with a sum of possibilities. The concept reached through the classification of the morphological elements, describes the event timeline that indicates the structural boundaries of each vocabulary unit for each sounding parameter (height, rhythm, dynamics, instrumental color)².

The aspects mentioned so far correspond to the grammatical (syntactical) analysis. If we bring to the conversation the concept of style, of metaphorical meaning, to measure for example, the fantasy and the hermeneutic fond of the *Kyrie* section of *Harmoniemesse*, the analysis cannot be restricted to the limits of the vocabulary, nor can it stay to the syntactical measuring; new aspects arise that belong to symbol and codification and expression forms beyond the structural scale representations *stricto sensu*. It's enough to mention for example the dimensions and temporal breathing of the consciousness movement in the main pray section, *Credo*.

Such an aspect, emphasizing the complexity of the signifying act of the sounding work will constitute the direction to the meaning synthesis, the relation of this synthesis with specific epitome: that of a cultural conditioning share by the performer to the listener through the cluster of codes that he devolves through "breathing".

The nature of this embodiment – set by Dinu Ciocan under an extraordinary psychophysiological phenomenal manifestation – is reverberation through a reflection of the sounding reality which leads to new conclusions from the previous level – that of the syntactical analysis. It is the object of semantics that validates the work not only as an expression of meaning, but which also eases the reception as aesthetical and ethical³ dimension. This fund prospects and often confirms the ethics as a wave that traverses the entire work will be potentiated (or not) according to the hermeneutical concept that leads the action of expressivity.

The psychophysiological states (determined by the emotional nature of the living receptor reported to the perceived work) do not only combine in

² See further the structural trees that appear in the last chapter of this article.

³ By initiating issues with religious connotations (sacredness surplus and secularism minus), the ethical aspect is obvious.

a cathartic time that has the role to award the receptor with the author's individual consciousness a unique image – but in a composing object re-evaluated in successive performing stages – this object represents the *referent* of the sounding work. The living embodiment given by those specific states cannot be translated through another language other than the musical one; in a permanent state of change, of affective disposition, it will capture with the conciseness a sounding movement meant to delight, transform, and mentally lead from one side to the other.

I have attached to the energy released by this states the aforementioned analytical concept expressed by a few stages – semantical interpretation (according to Ciocan's algorithm) – to designate certain intertwined categories of musical expression, of states symbolized by certain semantical labelings (on various levels) of the sounding manifestations of the mass, and to also reveal the referential universe of these states.

The analysis processes the sounding material according to the functionality of the liturgical text in the following stages:

- the analysis of the maximum and minimum semantical tension at the whole as well as the individual (sub)parts
- proving that the tension/energy of the build-ups does not match the dynamic curve⁴; for example, a *forte* dynamic does not necessarily symbolize a semantical tension of the affect (quantitative level of essentializing the sounding material)

I will attempt to verbalize the musical content through musical expression semantics⁵, which leads to what Ciocan calls “the semantical interpretation of a statement” (orientation of the analysis towards a qualitative aspect).

The performer will choose an interpretative concept determined by this verbal filtering, which will lead to a unified equilibrium of expression at the level of the whole pieces, as well as at the parts level. This filtering will not exclude the other terms, which will be situated with various weighing as intrinsic presences of state in their sounding discourse. Their fluctuation will be marked through a matrix of weighs labeled through percentage numbering.

This concept is induced by the sacred character - the liturgical teleology by excellence. Regardless of the terms of the sounding syntax, it crosses explicitly or implicitly the mass, showing a unique “soul” perception. I have also talked about the ethics, which complements the entire mass. I

⁴ As it seems at first sight.

⁵ Giuleanu, Victor, *Tratat de teoria muzicii (Treaty of Music Theory)*, Bucharest, Musical Publishing House, 1986, p. 756

will also keep track in this analytical vision of the interferences of the two languages, music and text, which can spur semantical splits and thus interpretative ambiguities. I am talking here about different semantics shown in parallel by the religious text and the harmonic-melodic language of the sounding structure. The consciousness of the performer has to triumph these splits as well, meaning, a correct decision has to be taken in rapport to the general architectural plan, to the plan of the two linguistic strata, their rhetoric, the presence of the ethos in each harmonic-melodic orchestral structure.

Kyrie from Joseph Haydn's *Harmoniemesse*

Harmoniemesse follows the successes scored with *Paukenmesse* (1796), *Nelsonmesse* (1798), with the oratorios *Creation* (1798) and the *Seasons* (1801).⁶ It is a key work in the cycle of the 14 masses Haydn wrote. This will be Haydn's last major work, finished shortly before his death. His illness and permanent state of tiredness caused Haydn to tell prince Nicholas II that "this last mass wore me down and it is most likely my last."⁷

The title *Harmoniemesse* is comes from the German language *Harmonie* – meaning a group or a wind ensemble.⁸ The ensemble he worked with during his tenure at the Esterhazy court was constantly changing; oftentimes, due to financial circumstances, the court was only able to afford a small number of musicians (as it's the case for the orchestra employed for the *Nelson Mass*, written in 1798 for soloists, string orchestra, trumpet, timpani, and organ).

Similar to the other masses, *Harmoniemesse* keeps the same formal model, but as substance, it has to particularities: a large orchestral introduction in *Kyrie*, and the music in *Agnus Dei* references the Symphony 98 *Adagio* and Mozart's *Coronation Mass*.

The form of *Harmoniemesse* is that of an *Ordinarium*⁹ in five movements, specific to the catholic mass. It is based on the *Missa solennis*¹⁰

⁶ *Harmoniemesse* (the last important work completed by Haydn) was followed by only two parts of the Quartet op. 103, a march and some arrangements on popular themes.

⁷ Landon, Robert, *Haydn. Chronicle and Works*, vol. V, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1977, p. 231.

⁸ In Eisenstadt there was an important tradition of wind ensembles, confirmed by the existence of chamber music groups and military associations. Also the wind octets (made of pairs of oboes, clarinets, horns and bassoons) were popular in the Austrian capital since the late eighteenth century.

⁹ *Ordinarium Missae* is represented by the totality of mass chants that remain constant during the ecclesiastical year. See Staicovici, Ianca, *Dicționar de termeni muzicali*, (Musical Terms Dictionary), Bucharest, Encyclopedic Publishing House, 2010, p. 405.

tradition in which the movements with longer texts (*Gloria* and *Credo*) can be performed fragmented. Biographer Robbins Landon states that Haydn's last masses are a syntetical articulation of the functionalism of the classical form, and also states that "in the profoundness of their construction, Haydn's last masses are true symphonies for singers and orchestra."¹¹

Similarly to Landon, the British analysts Martin Chusid shows that each mass represents a cycle of three vocal symphonies.¹² This means that by juxtaposing occasional sacred works (*proprium missa*), the usual form (*ordinarium*) is divided in three large sections:

- *Kyrie and Gloria*
- *Credo*
- *Sanctus, Benedictus and Agnus*

Inside each section, Haydn sets a fast movement (usually preceded by a slow introduction) in the opening and the end, while the middle section is slow and in the tonic key, with contrasting character. This way, the symphony form is closely followed, ensuring an architectural unity through an analogy with the arch form. Many of the inside section of Haydn's mass are borrowing forms specific to the symphonic genre, such as the sonata or the rondo.

¹⁰ *Missa Solemnis* is the correspondent mass of Hierarchical Divine Liturgy in Orthodox Church. This is officiated by at least one priest and a deacon, and all parts are sung.

¹¹ Landon, Robbins, *Joseph Haydn: Critical Edition of the Complete Symphonies*, Viena, Universal Edition, 1963, p. 596.

¹² Chusid, Martin, „*Some Observations on Liturgy, Text and Structure in Haydn's Late Masses*”, în *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Music*, (Eds. Robbins Landon and Roger Chapman), Oxford University Press, New York, 1970.

Short analytical vision of the first movement

The soundscape atmosphere resembles that of the first movement (Kyrie) of the Nelson Mass: heavy and testament-like; the diversity of states it transmits are unifying the whole. It's expressive force is born out of its tempo (*poco adagio* - close to the slowest of Haydn's time signatures - *Largo*), a firm pulsation of metric units of 2-4 bars. The architectural model chosen for this piece, the sonata form, was already experimented by Haydn in previous masses, as well as in other instrumental and orchestral works.

We also discover the double exposition, an element specific to the instrumental concerto of the 18th century. The first 19 bars are an orchestra ritornello (E.g. 1) in the key of Bb major, in which the winds are the highlight, justifying the title of the work.

The choir entrance is not prepared as it was customary in the genre's prior practice. The choir is called upon to highlight the text's dramatic force through singing in unison of the Kyrie eleison text (in the key of Bb major), over the orchestra's tutti which has a fully diminished chord. This moment (bars 17-9) display Haydn's maturity style, based on rhythmical and harmonically surprise elements. It is a climax perceived aurally as majestic, by objectifying the density at an orchestral scale.

E.g. 1

Poco Adagio

The musical score for the first movement of the Kyrie, showing the first 19 bars. The score is in B-flat major and 3/4 time. It features a piano introduction with dynamic markings of forte (f) and piano (p). The score is written for piano and includes a double bar line at the end of the first system.

12 *Tutti* *f* Ky - ri - e - e
Tutti *f* Ky - ri - e - e
Tutti *f* Ky - ri - e - e
Tutti *f* Ky - ri - e - e

Kyrie from Harmoniemesse (m. 1-17)

This tension climax is followed by exposition material (bars 20-38) in alternations between the solo quartet and the orchestra. If the first occurrence of the ritornello is identically repeated in the second exposition, the secondary thematic material is treated differently. Instead of repeating bars 13-9, Haydn leads the composition to the keys of g minor and d major through the use of the fully diminished counter dominant (secondary dominant) towards a development section (bars 32-8).

The middle section (bars 39-83) have a typical Haydn compositional technique, with choral *tutti*s alternating with solo pairs Soprano - Alto, tenor - bass. The modulation plan encompasses several tonal inflections - in the keys of F major, g minor, a major, c minor, g minor; the third occurrence of the arpeggiated melodic gesture (four chord elements) specific to the basso continuo bring back the dominant chord f the relative minor (E.g. 2).

E.g. 2

Kyrie from Harmoniemesse (m. 83-84)

The punctuated rhythmic formulas in the tonic key of Bb major (E.g. 3) triggers the beginning of the recapitulation section of the sonata form.

E.g. 3

Ky - ri - e,

Kyrie from Harmoniemesse (m. 84)

This punctuated ternary rhythmic formula represents the traditional Viennese formula of the word "Kyrie" just like the variants of the "Christe eleison" expression presented in bars 35, 62, and 65 are traditional from the prosody point of view. The CODA lasts 17 bars and reunites five cadential units ornamented by triplets and sixteenth notes, the last two being plagal cadential progressions.

The note length duration of the strings in the first measure (♩ ♪) should be emulated by the winds in place of the half notes, which would add too much heaviness to the tempo unit).

The correctness (cleanliness) of the sixteenth notes formula in the same measure is the driving engine for the interpretation of the initial musical motif. We have to distinguish between the 16th note formulae with a rest (as it first appears in the first theme) and that without a rest.

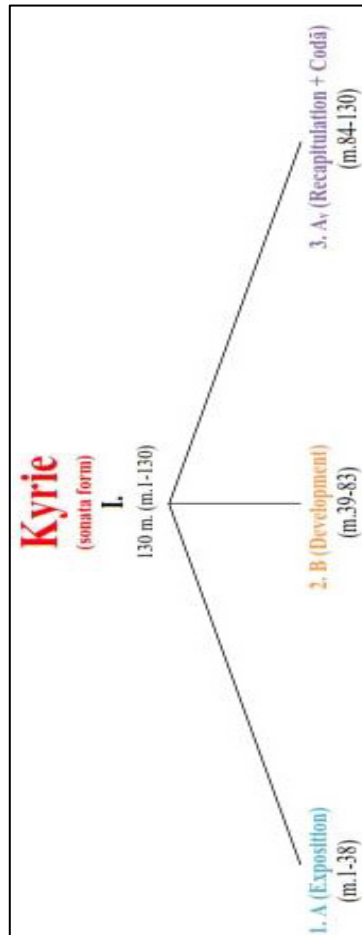
The great density of articulation signs in the whole score and particularly in the Kyrie section invites the conductor to set the character and the weighing of each element of the discourse in formal conjunction or disjunction. Same holds true for the dynamic marks; not only in the sonata's exposition can we count more than 20 elements of the intensity of a sound

parameter, a motif, or a musical fragment. The conductor has to not only monitor these expressive elements, but to gesturally operate and differentiate among them (and establish tension hierarchies) to ensure the sounding realization of the compositional score.

Kyrie - syntactic and semantic analysis

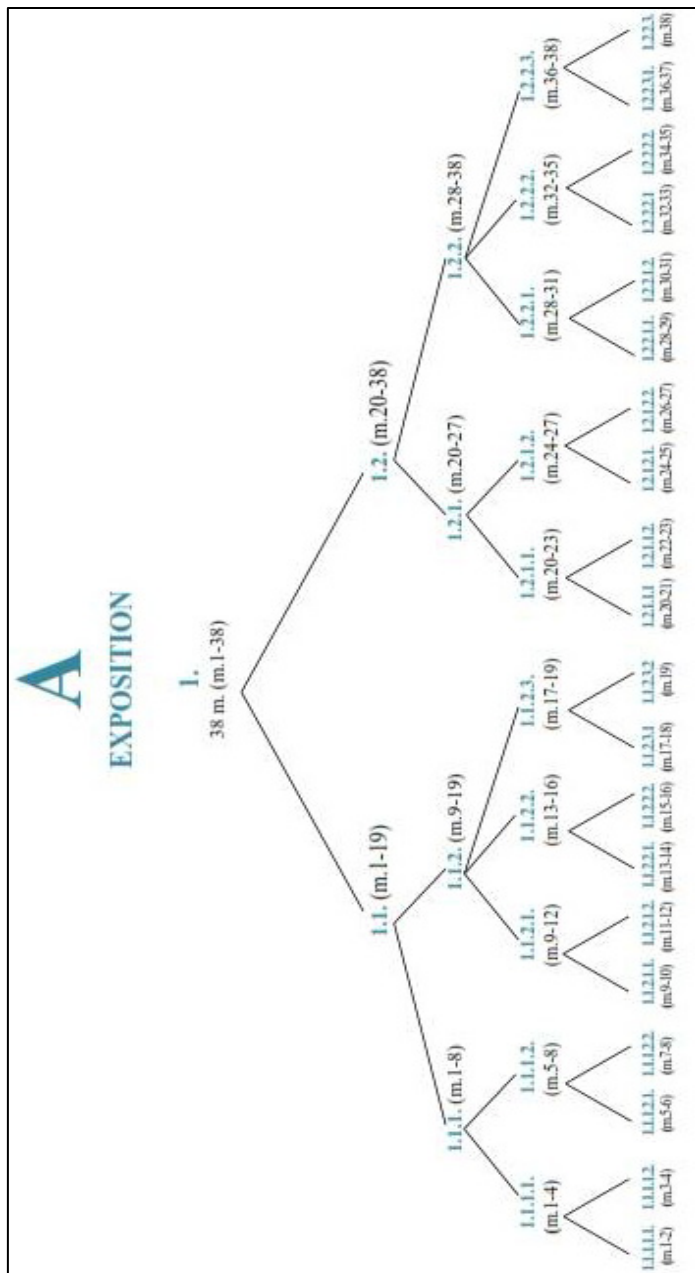
In this chapter I will apply the syntactic and semantic analysis model designed by Professor Dinu Ciocan on *Kyrie* section of *Harmoniemesse*. So here's how the syntactic tree is expressed grammatically, as prototypical framework event.

E.g. 4



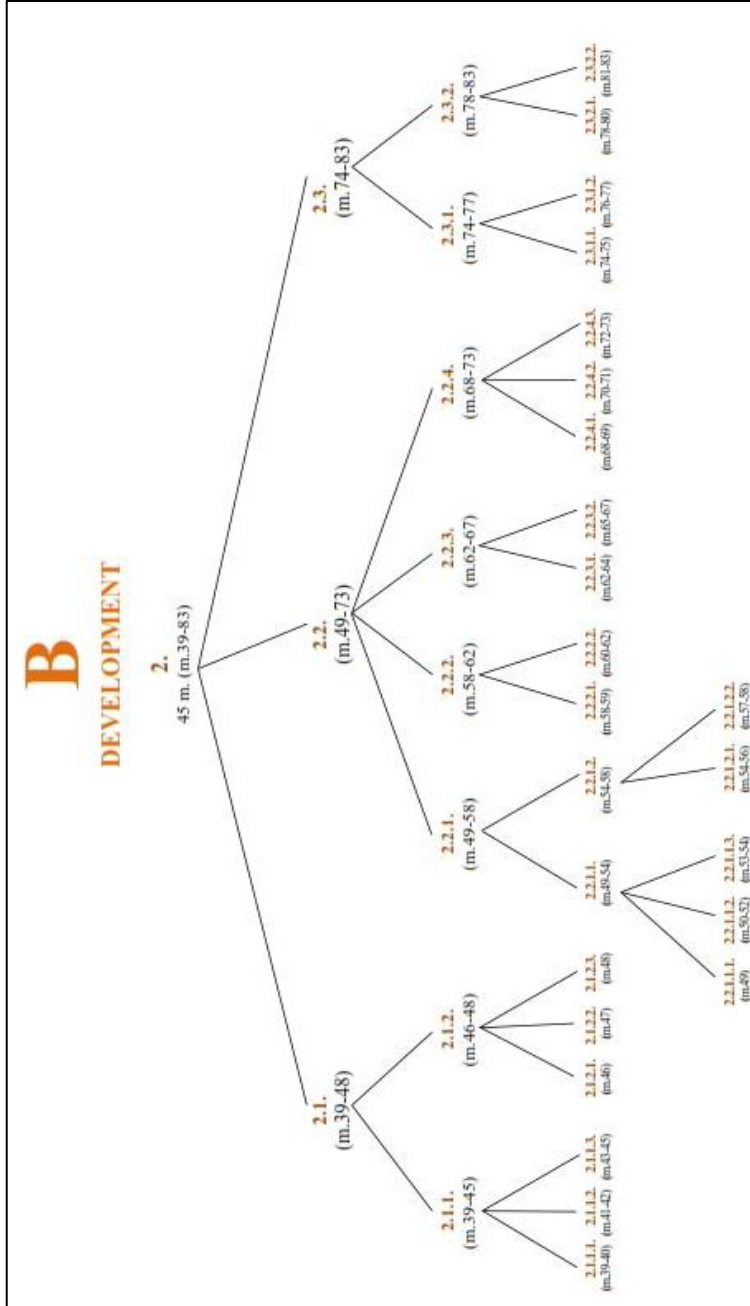
Syntactic tree of the entire section (*Kyrie*, *Harmoniemesse*)

E.g. 5



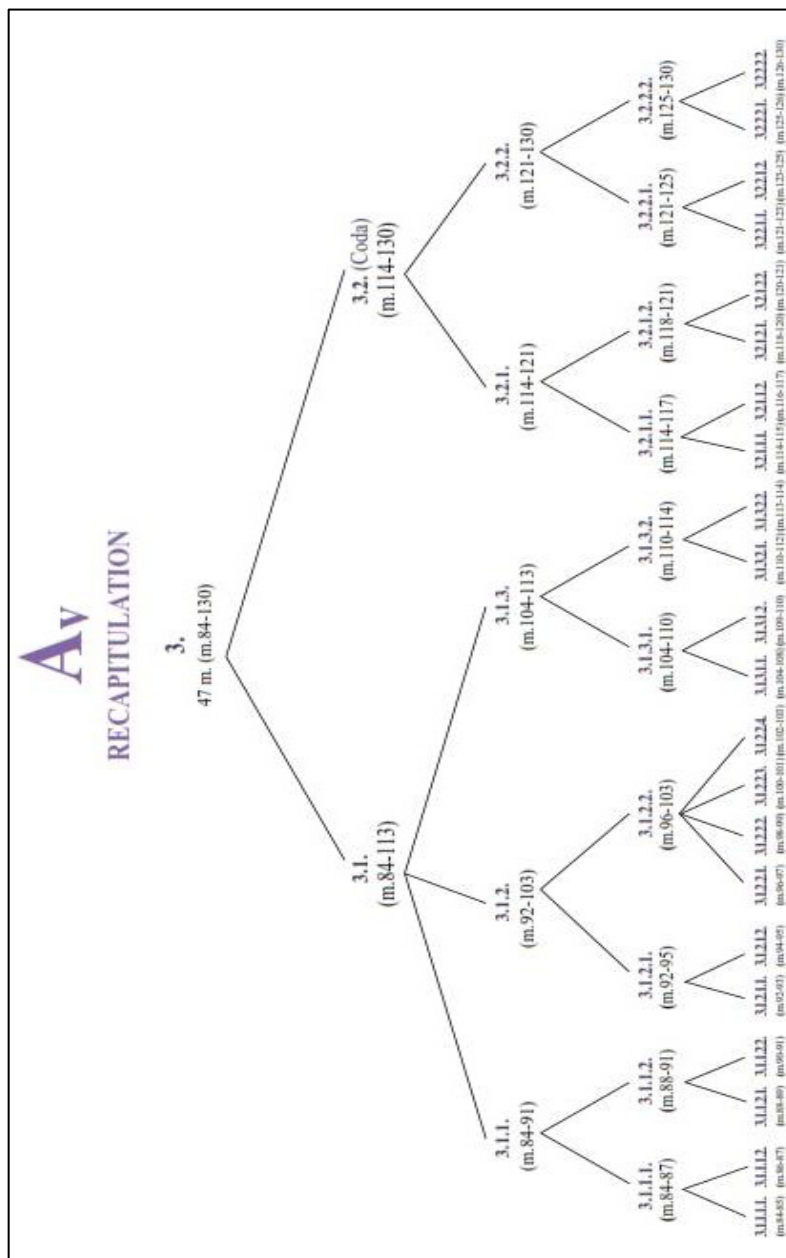
Syntactic tree of the Exposition (*Kyrie, Harmoniemesse*)

E.g. 6



Syntactic tree of the Development (*Kyrie, Harmoniemesse*)

E.g. 7

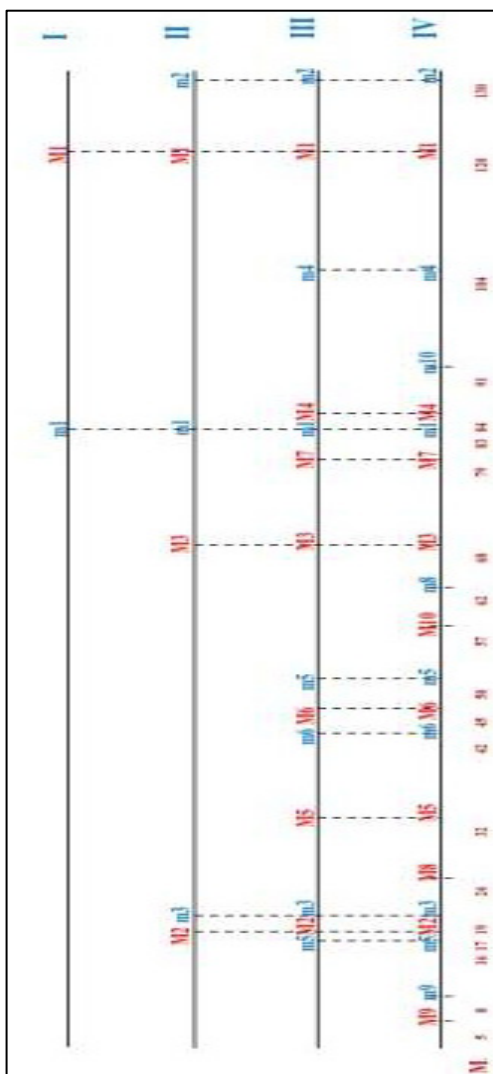


Syntactic tree of the Recapitulation (*Kyrie, Harmoniemesse*)

The aspects that correspond to the quantitative semantic analysis are grouped in two stages:

- the analysis of the maximums and minimums of semantic tension at the wholistic level of the Kyrie section, as well as that of the subsections

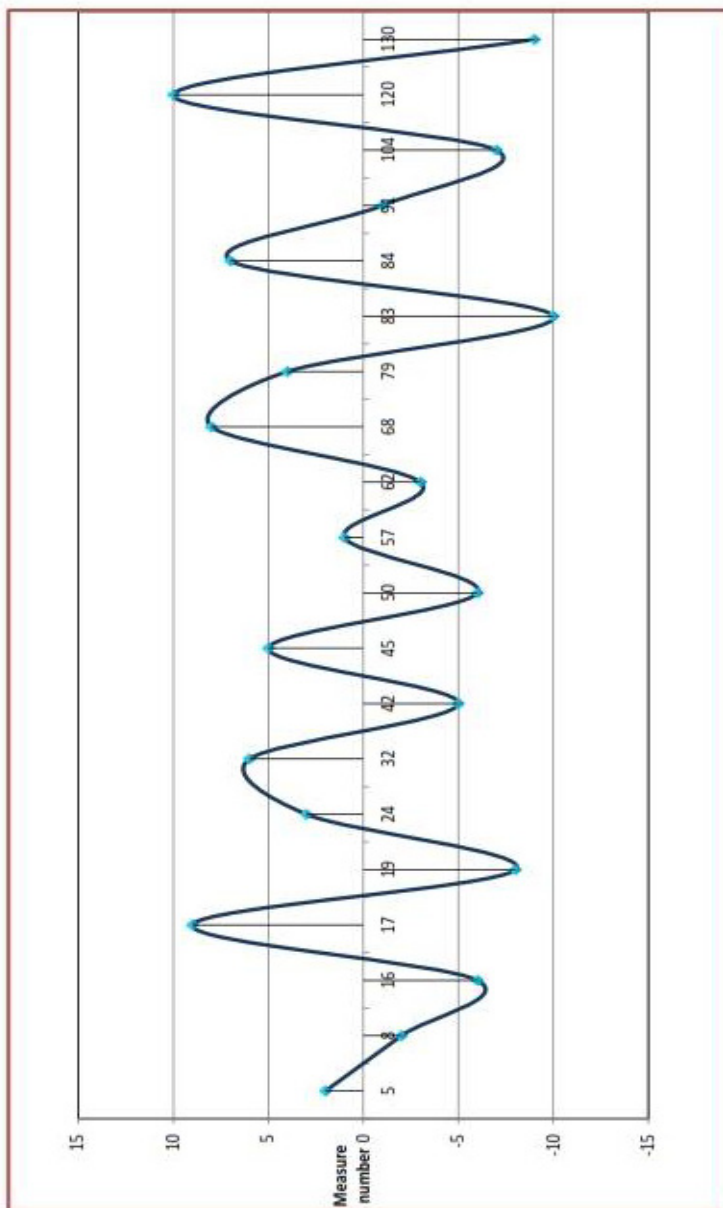
E.g. 8



Minimum and maximum tensional points, structured in four levels of the whole part (*Kyrie, Harmoniemesse*)

- charting the semantic tension curve that expresses the section's energy plan.

E.g. 9



Semantic tension curve of the whole part (*Kyrie, Harmoniemesse*)

I will exemplify what Ciocan calls the "semantical interpretation of a statement" (orienting the semantical analysis towards a qualitative aspect) in the Kyrie section, which clarifies the religious and adjacent character.

The tree-chart below follows a display similar to the syntactical stratification tree-chart (figures 4-7), and reflects a hierarchy of the character functions of each of the units. I labeled with the Roman numeral I the display of the whole, and with Arabic numbers the combination of the units (1.; 2.; 1.1; 1.1.1., 1.1.2, etc.) to deconstruct and particularize the underlying units of it.

At a first glance, the entire horizontal structure displays in a transparent way an ample collection of psychophysiological states in an order and exhaustive polychromy that reflects the psychological field (see categories: PSYCHOLOGICAL, MORAL, PHYSIOLOGICAL, SACRED). On the vertical, I am listing the spiritual states corresponding to the line "tunning;" adjectives that are coloring and ordering the emotional states, and clarify the expression of the musical consciousness. Thus, at the PSYCHOLOGICAL level, the conducting feel inclines toward the *choleric, phlegmatic, sanguine, melancholic*.

On the MORAL/UNMORAL field, the feel inclines towards *victory, religious, belief, purity versus cowardliness, barbarism, and decay*.

For the PHILOSOPHICAL level - I recommend the subtle continuity of the intellectual reactions, the leading feel being focused on the values of *transcendence, wisdom, superficial, contemplation*.

The last level - SACRED versus SECULAR is built on the following succession of states: *apologetic, belief* opposed to *demonic*.

I have pointed out general aspects for the entire first movement defined and explained by a certain choice, however the hermeneutical approach can vary among different audiences. This fluctuation is reflected by symbolizing the living states reflected in the ensemble sound (soloists, choir, and orchestra) and are confirmed or informed through the choices of tempo, the atmosphere of the melodic contour, through the cantabile or joyous expressivity, through the soundscape which emanates spirituality or (only) feelings, or rebellion, etc. My following example will show the distribution process at the section level.

The performer will choose the intellectual gesture based on these semantic realities in order for the version of his interpretative act to take a decisive turn in his analytical project. The performer will weigh all the micro-processes from the interaction between the *literary* text and *instrumental* music, assigning the instruments a singing character (melodicity), or assigning the voices an instrument-like melos. At the same time, the performer will have to realize the phonetically side (inherent in both the vocal as well the

instrumental execution), to realize in the most efficient mode the process of semantical analysis, and afterwards to conceptualize the appropriate timbral coloring for the mass' liturgical context.

The performer cannot give up the syntactical analysis, the sequential stages discussed in the strict structural context, and neither can the performer give up the semantical tensions - as the sum of which constitutive elements have to be ordered according to multiple correlations: melodic, rhythmic, orchestral, and formal. As I have shown in E.g. 9, the semantic tension curve unites points of maximum and minimum intensity; it is the "electro-diagram" of the entire structure. Clarifying it would make the music preserve a somber character, redundant, that design that we unfortunately meet today in more and more interpretative conceptualizations.

See E.g. 10 (page 42)

Conclusion

I have experimented in this study only a few possible analytical models - able to capture historical and spiritual issues which I deemed efficient in my interpretative approach and my conducting experience. I have combined the *classical* analysis models with *modern* ones, starting from the constitutive elements of the musical discourse (musical syntax, rhythmic, metric, orchestration, form, speed, and dynamics) to interpretation issues (phrasing, singing-like character, as well as the relationship between the liturgical text and the music, semantics, and rhetoric).

The interpretative approach choice is highlighted by the need to maintain the audience's attention (by continuously feeding of information) on each of the compositional plans, by reuniting all the meanings uncovered during the analytical process, to confess to the listener and the concert hall audience.

Translated by Bogdan Scurtu

E.g. 10

I (Kyrie)																																											
PSYCHOLOGICAL			MORAL			UNMORAL			PHILOSOPHICAL			SACRED		SECULAR																													
0.1			0.2			0.2			0.1			0.5		0.6																													
CHOLERIC			SANGUINE			PHLEGMATIC			MELANCHOLIC			VICTORY		RELIGIOUS		HUMILITY		PURITY		COWARDLINESS			BARBARISM		DECAY		TRANSCENDENCE			WISDOM		SUPERFICIAL		CONTEMPLATION		APOLOGETIC		BELIEF		DEMONIC			
1. (Exposition)												2. (Development)												3. (Recapitulation)																			
Psych.				Moral				Philos.				Sacred				Psych.				Moral				Philos.				Sacred															
0.1				0.1				0.1				0.7				0.1				0.2				0.2				0.5				0.2				0.1				0.5			
1.1.				1.2.				2.1.				2.2.				2.3.				3.1.				3.2.																			
P		M		F		S		P		M		F		S		P		M		F		S		P		M		F		S													
0.3		0.2		0.2		0.3		0.1		0.2		0.1		0.6		0.1		0.2		0.1		0.6		0.2		0.1		0.2		0.5		0.1		0.4		0.1		0.4					
1.1.1.		1.1.2.		1.2.1.		1.2.2.		2.1.1.		2.1.2.		2.2.1.		2.2.2.		2.3.1.		2.3.2.		2.3.3.		2.3.4.		3.1.1.		3.1.2.		3.2.1.		3.2.2.													
P		M		F		S		P		M		F		S		P		M		F		S		P		M		F		S		P		M		F		S					
0.5		0.2		0.1		0.3		0.1		0.3		0.1		0.2		0.3		0.1		0.2		0.4		0.1		0.2		0.3		0.1		0.2		0.3		0.1		0.4		0.1		0.4	

Qualitative semantic analysis (Kyrie, Harmoniemesse)

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