

EDITORIAL NOTES

Source: *Sanctissimae Virgini Missa Senis Vocibus Ad Ecclesiarum Choros Ac Vesperae pluribus decantandae*, Venice: Ricciardo Amadino, 1610.

Much has been written about the music of this much-loved and seminal collection, and I do not intend to replicate it here. Despite extensive research, prevailing views on performance practice continue to vacillate between alternate established positions: Should sections written in high clefs be transposed, or not transposed? Should there be a proportional relationship between the duple and triple-time metres, or should they be entirely free tempi? (And if there is proportion, what sort of proportions might they be?) Is instrumental doubling warrantable, or it is not warranted? And if so, where?

This edition does not intend to add further heft to the weight of scholarship on these matters, but rather to provide suggestions based on that scholarship, yet still allowing performers to make whatever decisions they judge most suited to their needs. Those wishing to read more on the subject would do well to consult the works of Jeffrey Kurtzman, Uwe Wolf, Roger Bowers, Andrew Parrott, Paul McCreech, and others.

GENERAL EDITORIAL METHOD

It is sufficient to say that Amadino printed the music with some haste, and there are a great deal of obvious errors. Accidentals frequently appear after the note to which they obviously belong (a hazard of setting moveable type in reverse). Time signatures, and the notes themselves, vary between the Bassus generalis and the vocal parts. The 'echos' do not always match their source. All editorial interventions are clearly marked as such, and differences in the edition from the source material is footnoted.

ACCIDENTALS

The major editorial contribution is the consideration of accidentals that are either missing or erroneously added in the source. Most of these are self-evident: accidentals missing in one part but present in others (where the possibility of a false relation is unlikely); accidentals missing in one bar but present in a repeated instance of the phrase (e.g. antiphonal sections or 'echo' voices); or implicit in conventions of the time, such as an implied B natural before C sharp, or the continued validity of an accidental across several repeated notes. Editorial accidentals are printed small: cautionary accidentals, used to convey both the continued validity of a source accidental and also to warn of a return to the key signature, are in parentheses.

METRE and TEMPO

Although it is well established that the beat may vary and need not be a constant 'tactus', some proportionality is clearly evident from the rhythms used on either side of the metre change, such as in *Laudate pueri* (Altus, bb. 91-92) and in the hemiolas in 13h. *Esurientes*. This edition provides editorial suggestions for tempi, and for proportional relationships between triple- and duple-time sections that immediately follow one another. Those who require the advice will gladly welcome it; those who want things differently will easily ignore it. (The editorial indications are not displayed in the parts!)

One possibly controversial departure from other editions is the halving of note values in the 3/1 triple-time sections. This may cause some academic gnashing of teeth, but is designed to simplify metre changes by considering the same note value on either side of the barline (also this 'writes in' the implied diminution of the often used $\text{C} \frac{3}{2}$ signature),

with the bonus of providing note values that might be more comfortable for performers. The original time signatures in the 1610 print convey more information than their modern counterparts, and 3/1 sections throughout the *Vespers* are frequently performed with differing relationships to the duple metres that surround them; the same is also true for 3/2 sections. By reducing the note values of the 3/1 sections, all triple-time sections can be either *tripla* (three beats in the time of one beat) or *sesquialtera* (three beats in the time of two beats) on the minim, as the conductor desires. Alternatively, metre changes can be entirely free of proportionality and no harm is done by the reduction of note values.

This leaves only the coloration on minim triplets in the Sonata (bb. 130-153) to be considered: some scholars have recently argued that these should be the same rhythm as the (*sesquialtera*) 3/2 section that follows it, though others maintain that they should be twice as fast (one triplet for each duple minim beat).

TRANSPOSITION

In keeping with the suggestion that high clefs suggest a lower pitch, *Lauda Jerusalem* has been transposed down a fourth; the *Magnificat* has been transposed down a minor third. This seems to be the best fit for voices and instruments: the middle voice in each choir of *Lauda* is hard to assign to an alto in any key without making other parts unsingable and is more suited to tenors if moved downward; the *Magnificat* goes beyond the normal range of a tenor trombone in 'Quia respexit' if performed down a fourth. These keys also fit well with those of the neighbouring movements, avoiding any awkward 'gear-change'. However, original pitch and other transposition schemes can be provided.

FERMATAS and DOUBLE BARLINES

Fermatas have been added to the final note of each movement, which is frequently a longer note than the modern note value used to fill the bar. They are also found only the Bassus generalis in some places. They typically do not represent a held note but merely a gathering of voices at a cadence. Double barlines have been added and are entirely editorial.

BASSUS GENERALIS

The Bassus generalis is more of a reduced score than a single part, frequently showing music from other parts. However, it does not always agree with the other books. Where the B.g. contains significantly different music for the vocal lines, these have been shown in *ossias* above the vocal staff. Unsatisfactory variants have been discarded, such as where the Echo does not directly repeat the preceding material. The edition's instrumental part for organ and theorbo, like that of the 1610 print, features music from the other parts. There are almost no figures in the source, and editorial figures have been supplied throughout.

SOLO PASSAGES

Large vocal forces may wish some passages in the psalms to be sung as *solis*, and so these have been suggested editorially. They are usually self-evident: a greatly reduced texture of only a few voices, and a more florid 'virtuosic' line. Conductors might wish to decide whether lone *cantus firmus* lines are sung by one voice or several, such as the *Gloria Patri* of *Dixit Dominus*. One suggestion made here is of having the first choir in *Nisi Dominus* as *solis*: this comes from the *cori spezzati* tradition found at San Marco and elsewhere, in which one choir was 'one to a part' and all the remaining singers sang the other choir.

NAMING OF PARTS

There can be some confusion between the name of a vocal part and the part book in which it is found, e.g. for *Nisi Dominus*, the Altus book contains a Quintus part, and the Septimus book contains an Altus part. This edition provides a clear and consistent name for each part, so that the same singer or player can be assigned to that part across the entire work.

INSTRUMENTAL FORCES

The following instruments are specified in the 1610 print:

- 3 Cornetts "*Cornetto*"
- 3 Trombones (one of which is named "*Trombone doppio*")
- 2 Violins "*Violino da brazzo*"
- 2 Viola "*Viola da brazzo*"
- 2 Violoncello "*Viola da brazzo*"
- 1 Contrabass "*Contrabasso da gamba*"
- 2 recorders and/or flutes "*Pifara/Fifara, Flauto*"

Registration indications identify the Bassus generalis instrument as an organ. A plucked instrument, such as a theorbo, or even harpsichord or harp, may be a reasonable addition. No other melodic bass instrument is required: the lowest violoncello or trombone will frequently have the same line.

The *Contrabasso* is only mentioned in No. 1, where it doubles Violoncello 2, so they have been considered as the same part. The *Trombone doppio* is only mentioned in No. 11, where it is the third trombone. Usual practice is for two Tenor and one Bass trombones. (However, an editorial suggestion is for Trombone 1 to be an Alto trombone as the part is high and mostly written in C clefs in the 1610 print.)

The woodwind is only required for a few bars in one section of the *Magnificat* (13c), and could conceivably be replaced by the cornettos or violins if too extravagant a requirement.

INSTRUMENTAL DOUBLING

Perhaps the greatest flexibility in a performance of the Vespers is how much should the instruments double the voices, if at all, and which instrument should double which voice. However, the vocal textures in the psalms are generally more suited to no further accompaniment than the Bassus generalis. For conductors that want additional doubling throughout the psalms, a set of 'generic' parts has been produced for the psalms that replicate each vocal part. These can be distributed as required.

The general policy for instrumental doubling in this edition is for the *Gloria Patri* of each psalm and (very) occasional broad tutti moments. This matches Monteverdi's own scheme in the *Magnificat*. With two orchestras of six instruments, either both orchestras together cover all the vocal parts, or each covers one choir (strings, choir 1; brass, choir 2). A table of the doubling is on the inside back cover. Remarks for some sections follow:

Deus in adiutorium

The instruments have their own independent lines, and so do not double the voices. The 1610 print clearly specifies the instruments to be used.

Dixit Dominus

As this section contains instrumental ritornelli, it seems better to provide contrast between the vocal and instrumental sections by not doubling. However, doubling has been supplied for the 'tutti' section at bb. 17–22 and *Sicut erat*. No instruments are named for the instrumental lines of the ritornelli in the 1610 print. Conductors may wish to alternate the ritornelli between string and brass orchestras.

Laudate pueri

Monteverdi's instruction for 'voci sole nel organo' suggests that no instruments should double, though some doubling may work in the broader tutti sections. Doubling has been supplied from the start of the *Gloria Patri* until bar 211, the start of the final *Amen*.

Audi coelum

Doubling has been supplied for the two tutti chords ('Omnes' bb. 85–86, and 'praestet' bb. 129–130) and the triple-time sections that follow them.

Lauda Jerusalem

The first 19 bars are doubled, plus the *Gloria Patri*.

Ave maris stella

Doubling has been provided for verses 1 and 7, and the *Amen*.

Magnificat

This is the only work that explicitly includes instrumental doubling in the 1610 print, for the first and last sections. An editorial 'completion' of the doubling has been added for the Tenor, Quintus and Septimus (Bassus 2) lines, which would otherwise be un-doubled. This follows Monteverdi's instruction for 'tutti gli instrumenti'.

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