Module B6: Music and the Roman Catholic Church from the Council of Trent to the Second Vatican Council

This is a vast topic, and it can only be addressed selectively. The first study area is concerned with the impact of the Papacy on Roman Catholic church music; six study areas relate to specific centres; the final study area considers aspects of the subject in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The module aims to review musical provision, practice and repertory in selected periods and places in the light of general trends and requirements within the Roman Catholic Church.

You will need to acquire an outline knowledge of the Latin Tridentine liturgy, which is closely related to the medieval Latin liturgy included in the programme of study for module A1.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of the module you will have considered the Tridentine Rite and papal requirements for music, and examined the musical provision, practice and repertory in three specific periods and places, gaining an understanding of the relationship between the liturgy and its music.

Study areas
1 The Papacy and music in the Roman Catholic Church
   1.1 The Council of Trent and music
   1.2 The late sixteenth-century Roman Missal and Breviary, and their impact on music
   1.3 Papal legislation on sacred music
   1.4 Papal documents on sacred music
Suggested Reading: see bibliography sections 1.1-1.3
Essay questions related to study area 1:
B6.1.1 Outline the Roman Catholic Church’s official policies and directives on liturgical music between the late sixteenth and and the early twentieth centuries. Have they had a significant impact on the style, repertory, and performance of Latin liturgical music, or have other local or regional factors been more important?
B6.1.2 Assess the significance of the stability and uniformity of the late-sixteenth-century Roman Missal and Breviary in relation to Latin liturgical music of succeeding centuries.
B6.1.3 What important liturgical changes were effected between c.1550 and 1620 in the Roman Catholic Church, and what was their lasting impact on Latin liturgical music?

2 Church music in Rome I: the period of Palestrina and Victoria (c.1550-1600)
2.1 Ecclesiastical institutions in Rome and their musical provision and practice
2.2 Music for the Mass
2.3 Music for the Office
2.4 Motets

Essay questions related to study area 2:
B6.2.1 Give a brief account of Roman ecclesiastical institutions in the later sixteenth century and their musical provision and practice.
B6.2.2 Make a concise study of the provision of polyphonic music for either the Roman Mass or Office in the later sixteenth century with particular reference to either Palestrina or Victoria.
B6.2.3 What features of the ‘Palestrina’ style have proved so influential to succeeding composers of Latin liturgical music, and why?
B6.2.4 Choose a small group of Latin motets by Palestrina and/or Victoria, and consider the relationship of text, music and spirituality.

3 Church music in Rome II: the period of Frescobaldi and Carissimi (c.1600-1660)
3.1 Polychoral music
3.2 Chamber motets
3.3 The organ and organ music in the liturgy
3.4 Oratories, confraternities, and the music written for their observances

Essay questions related to study area 3:
B6.3.1 Write a short survey of either polychoral liturgical music, or chamber motets, or the organ and organ music in the liturgy, in Rome in the first half of the seventeenth century.
B6.3.2 Present a brief outline of lay devotion in Rome in the early seventeenth century, and its influence on sacred music.
B6.3.3 Make a study of Carissimi’s oratorio Jephte. What does it tell us of the ethos and spirituality of the confraternity for which it was originally composed?

4 Church music in Venice and Northern Italy: the period of Giovanni Gabrieli and Monteverdi (c.1580-1650)
4.1 The establishment and musical practice of San Marco, Venice, and other ecclesiastical institutions in Northern Italy
4.2 Polychoral motets and psalms
4.3 Smaller scale church music
4.4 Canzonas and sonatas for instruments
4.5 The celebration of Vespers during the time of Monteverdi

Essay questions related to study area 4:
B6.4.1 How and why was San Marco, Venice, so important as a centre of liturgical music.
B6.4.2 Give an account of the musical organization, provision, and repertory of a north Italian ecclesiastical institution (this may include churches in Venice) in the first half of the seventeenth century.
B6.4.3 Make a study of a small group of representative north Italian and/or Venetian works to illustrate the nature and liturgical use of polychoral motets and psalms, or smaller scale church music, or canzonas and sonatas for instruments, in the first half of the seventeenth century.

5 Church music in the Iberian peninsula c.1550-1650
5.1 Ecclesiastical institutions and their music in Spain and Portugal
5.2 Motets
5.3 Masses
5.4 Music for the Office
5.5 Organs and liturgical organ music

Essay questions related to study area 5:
B6.5.1 Present an outline of the principal ecclesiastical institutions and their liturgical music in Spain and Portugal, c.1550-1650.
B6.5.2 Write a study of a small group of representative works to illustrate the musical nature and spiritual ethos of liturgical music in Spain and Portugal, c.1550-1650. You may limit yourself to either to one composer or to one genre of vocal music, or select a cross-section.
B6.5.3 In what ways was liturgical music employed as part of the Counter-Reformation in the Iberian peninsula and/or as an agent of the Christian inculturation of their foreign colonies in this period?
B6.5.4 Outline the principal characteristics, repertory and use of the organ in the Church in the Iberian peninsula, c.1550-1650. You should refer to specific instruments and musical works, and may if you wish limit yourself to specific case studies.

6 Church music in Paris c.1650-1750
6.1 Music and worship in the Royal Chapel and other ecclesiastical institutions
6.2 Grand and petit motet
6.3 Mass settings
6.4 The organ and the liturgy

Essay questions related to study area 6:
B6.6.1 Present a concise account of music and worship in the Royal Chapel and other significant ecclesiastical institutions in Paris, c.1650-1750.
B6.6.2 Make a study of the liturgical music of François Couperin or Marc-Antoine Charpentier or Michel-Richard de Lalande. Refer to specific representative works.
B6.6.3 Choose a small but representative group of works to illustrate the style and use of vocal liturgical music in Paris, c.1650-1750. You may limit yourself to one genre if you wish.
B6.6.4 Outline the principal characteristics, repertory and use of the organ in the Church in Paris, c.1650-1750. You should refer to specific instruments and musical works, and may if you wish limit yourself to specific case studies.

7 Church music in Austria c.1770-1830, with particular reference to Haydn, Mozart and Schubert
7.1 Ecclesiastical institutions in Vienna and Salzburg and their musical provision and practice
7.2 Motets
7.3 Mass settings
7.4 Instrumental and organ music

Essay questions related to study area 7:
B6.7.1 Write a concise account of the principal ecclesiastical institutions in Vienna and Salzburg and their musical provision and practice, c.1770-1830.
B6.7.2 Is Austrian liturgical music of the period c.1770-1830 best regarded as absolute music used in the liturgy, rather than as liturgical music? Make reference to specific works, their style, structure, resources and aesthetic.
B6.7.3 Modern choirs perform Austrian Masses liturgically, especially at major feasts. How do the liturgical circumstances and ethos differ from those for which the Masses were originally composed? How should a modern musical director address these issues? Relate your answer to specific representative works.
B6.7.4 What place did instrumental and organ music have in the Austrian liturgy? Does the liturgical context affect the nature of the music? Refer to a small group of representative works.

8 Aspects of Roman Catholic church music c.1830-1960
8.1 The Cecilian movement: 'authentic' chant and the ideal of a cappella polyphony
8.2 Editing and revival of chant and earlier repertories
8.3 The church music of Liszt, Bruckner, and Verdi
8.4 The French organist-composers, including Saint-Saëns, Guilmant, Vierne, Tournemire,
Essay questions related to study area 8:
B6.8.1 Give an account of the revival of interest in liturgical chant and a cappella polyphony during the nineteenth century, especially in Italy and France, and its influence on liturgical and musical practice.
B6.8.2 Does the Latin sacred music of Liszt and/or Bruckner and/or Verdi represent concert music for church performance rather than music appropriate to the liturgy, either at that time or now? Is their religious music best heard in the surroundings of a concert hall? Refer to specific works by one or more of the three composers.
B6.8.3 Examine the role and contribution of the organist-composer in the liturgy in France. You may limit yourself to one or more composers active in the period, but must refer to specific musical works (and/or improvisations) to support your discussion.
B6.8.4 In what ways does Messiaen's faith manifest itself in his music? Can you account for the smallness of the number of liturgical works?

Study
You must study at least four of the areas listed above, including study area 1. If you are also taking module B2, study area 5, you should not select study area 2 in this module.

Although you may choose (or be directed by a supervisor in) your own pattern of study it must include those issues listed in the study areas above, and you are advised to take account of the recommended reading.

In undertaking the writing of essays you are advised to consult the guidance for presentation of written work in the general study notes.

Assessment and satisfactory completion
At the end of the module you must submit two essays, each of 3,750-4,000 words, for assessment. The subjects of the essays must be selected from the topics set above. Each essay must relate to a different study area. A bibliography of materials consulted should be appended to the essay.

The assessment of the module will be based on the two essays. You should complete a module log listing materials used for the study, time spent in study, and noting any special factors or difficulties encountered.

Two copies of all materials for assessment and establishment of satisfactory completion should be forwarded to the Course Secretary and postmarked not later than 31 January or 30 June in the appropriate study period.

Bibliography: Module B6
1. Liturgical
1.1 Introductory


James F. White, Roman Catholic Worship: Trent to Today, Paulist Press, New York, 1995 (especially chapters 1-3; a recent overview, but with a modern liturgical slant)

Donald Withey, Catholic Worship: An Introduction to Liturgy (Bury St Edmunds, Kevin Mayhew, 1990), especially chapter 7
1.2 Reference books


1.3 Special books


Robert F. Hayburn, Papal Legislation on Sacred Music (Collegeville, Minnesota, Liturgical Press, 1979)

Adrian Fortescue and J. B. O’Connell, The Ceremonies of the Roman Rite Described, 13th edition (Curridge, St Austin Press, 1996), a classic, very detailed description of the ceremonial of the Tridentine Rite

2. Musical

2.1 Introductory

Andrew Wilson-Dickson, A Brief History of Christian Music (Oxford, Lion Publishing, 1997), not a specialist book, but the only concise survey; useful but selective bibliography and discography

2.2 Reference


2.3 Special books

Here, as in other subjects, some of the most important recent writings are in articles in journals and Festschriften. What follows is very selective, but ought in most instances to be reasonably accessible. Individual books include more specialised bibliographies and references.

Surveys

The New Oxford History of Music:

4 The Age of Humanism, 1540-1630, ed. Gerald Abraham (1968)

5 Opera and Church Music, 1630-1750, ed. Anthony Lewis and Nigel Fortune (1975)

7 The Age of Enlightenment, 1745-1790, ed. Egon Wellesz and F.W. Sternfeld (1973)


9 Romanticism, 1830-1890, ed. Gerald Abraham (1990)

10 The Modern Age, 1890-1960, ed. Martin Cooper (1974)


George J. Buelow (ed.), Man and Music: The Late Baroque Era (Basingstoke, Macmillan,
1993)

Tim Carter, Music in Late Renaissance and Early Baroque Italy (London, Batsford, 1992) 1989

Curtis Price (ed.), Man and Music: The Early Baroque Era


David Schulenberg, Music of the Baroque (New York, Oxford University Press, 2001)


(especially chapters 4-6 on Vienna and Salzburg)

Composer studies (in chronological composer order)

Jerome Roche, Palestrina (London, Oxford University Press, 1971)


Denis Arnold and Nigel Fortune (eds.), The New Monteverdi Companion (London, Faber, 1985)


Catherine Cessac, Marc-Antoine Charpentier, Eng. transl. (Portland, Oregon, Amadeus Press, 1995)


H. C. Robbins Landon and David Wyn Jones, Haydn: his Life and Music (London, Thames and Hudson, 1988)


Charles Osborne, Schubert and his Vienna (London, Knopf, 1985)


Rollin Smith, Louis Vierne: Organist of Notre-Dame Cathedral (Hillsdale, NY, Pendragon Press, 1999)


Peter Hill (ed.), The Messiaen Companion (London, Faber, 1995)

Other studies


James Garratt, Palestrina and the the German Romantic Imagination (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002)

David Hiley, Western Plainchant: James Garratt, Palestrina and the the German Romantic Imagination (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002)

James Moore, Vespers at St Mark’s (Ann Arbor, Michigan, UMI, 1981)


Eleanor Selfridge-Field, Venetian Instrumental Music from Gabrieli to Vivaldi, rev. 3rd ed. (New York, Dover, 1994)


Robert Stevenson, Spanish Cathedral Music in the Golden Age (Berkeley, California, University of California Press, 1961)

Peter Williams, A New History of the Organ (London, Faber, 1980)

Editions
Collected Works of 'Key' Composers are held in most university and other major music libraries

Other Editions
Some sheet music editions are available, but often of popular works rather than a representative selection. Mapa Mundi and JOED Music publish editions of sixteenth-century polyphony.