LONGITUDINAL SURVEY: THE CHORALE TOPIC

Prototypical properties in late eighteenth century

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Musical attributes</th>
<th>Expressive Attributes:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SATB texture</td>
<td>Level 1: voice-like, gentle and calm, serene, pure, restrained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major mode (though minor certainly possible)</td>
<td>Level 2: transcendent spirituality, “walking in the spirit”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sott’o voce, dolce</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soft dynamics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Harmonic simplicity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rhythmic simplicity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Duple meter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moderate to slow tempo</td>
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<tr>
<td>I-V-vi, often</td>
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Prototypical instrumental example

**J.S. BACH:** Chorale no. 29, *Freu dich sehr, o meine Seele.*
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QtkyyeAqgF0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QtkyyeAqgF0) (similar)

**HAYDN** (1782): Divertimento no. 1 in Bb Major, Hob. II:46, *II: Chorale St. Antoni*
[https://youtu.be/0T4at_omvF4?t=3m41s](https://youtu.be/0T4at_omvF4?t=3m41s)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composer/Opera</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Act/Scene</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Key</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jean-Baptiste Lully</td>
<td>1733</td>
<td>Act 1, Scene 3</td>
<td>Procession of Priests</td>
<td>GM</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Hippolyte et Aricie</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tommaso Traetta</td>
<td>1759</td>
<td>Act 1, Scene 3</td>
<td>Procession of Priests</td>
<td>GM</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Ippolito ed Aricia</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Christoph Willibald Gluck</td>
<td>1767</td>
<td>Act 1, Scene 3</td>
<td>Procession of Priests (begins and ends the scene)</td>
<td>GM</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Alceste</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Alkestis</td>
<td>1776</td>
<td>Act 1, Scene 3</td>
<td>Procession of Priests (begins and ends the scene)</td>
<td>GM</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Iphigénie en Tauride</em></td>
<td>1779</td>
<td>Act 1, Scene 1</td>
<td>Chorus of Priestesses</td>
<td>Am</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Act 4, Scene 2</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hymn</td>
<td>GM</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Iphigenie auf Tauris</em></td>
<td>1781</td>
<td>Act 1, Scene 1</td>
<td>Chorus of Priestesses</td>
<td>Am</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Act 4, Scene 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niccolò Piccinni</td>
<td>1781</td>
<td>Act 1, Scene 2</td>
<td>Chorus of Priests</td>
<td>EM</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Iphigenie en Tauride</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Antonio Salieri</td>
<td>1784</td>
<td>Act 1, No. 2</td>
<td>Hymn</td>
<td>CM</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Les Danaïdes</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Paul Wranitzky</td>
<td>1789</td>
<td>Act 1, No. 4</td>
<td>Alter Music</td>
<td>GM</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Oberon</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart</td>
<td>1781</td>
<td>Act 3, Scene 7</td>
<td>Procession of Priests</td>
<td>FM</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Idomeneo</em></td>
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<td>Act 2, No. 9</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Die Zauberflöte</em> 1791</td>
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<td>Rejected sketch of Procession of Priests</td>
<td>FM</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Act 2, No. 10</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Aria and Chorus of Priests</td>
<td>FM</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Act 2, No. 18</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ludwig van Beethoven</td>
<td>1805</td>
<td>Act 1, No. 9</td>
<td>Leonore’s Prayer of Hope</td>
<td>EM</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Fidelio</em></td>
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Johnson, Chorale Topic 2
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bbgBaHGbqcc

https://youtu.be/I_CMWOwLUKg?t=58s

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VVk73dFpZ0M

Johnson, Chorale Topic 3
**Beethoven** (1821): Piano Sonata No. 32, Op. 111, II (*Arietta*): theme, but especially mm. 12–16.  
[https://youtu.be/rjQ7TxpMize?t=9m18s](https://youtu.be/rjQ7TxpMize?t=9m18s)

**Vocal music**

- *Fidelio, Leonore’s Prayer of Hope (Act I, No. 9)”* Op. 72, EM
- *“Meeres Stille”* Op. 112, DM
- *“Elegischer Gesang”* Op. 118, EM
- *Symphony No. 9, 4th mvt., Adagio ma non troppo, ma divoto* Op. 125, Gm
- *“Opferlied”* WoO 126, EM
- *“Abendlied unterm gestirnten Himmel”* WoO 150, EM

**Instrumental music**

- *String Quartet in A Major, 3rd mvt.* Op. 18, no. 5, DM
- *String Quartet in E Minor, 2nd mvt.* Op. 59, no. 2, EM
- *String Quartet in Eb Major, 2nd mvt. (Variation 3)* Op. 127, EM
- *String Quartet in A Minor, 2nd mvt. (Heiliger Dankgesang)* Op. 132, FM
- *Piano Sonata in C Major, 1st mvt. (second theme)* Op. 53, EM
- *Piano Sonata in E Major, 3rd mvt.* Op. 109, EM
- *Piano Concerto No. 3 in C Minor, 2nd mvt.* Op. 37, EM
- *Piano Concerto No. 4 in G Major, 2nd mvt., mm. 19–26* Op. 58, DM
- *Piano Quartet in Eb Major, 1st mvt.* WoO 36, no. 1, EM
- *Seven Variations on “God Save the King”* WoO 78, CM

**McKee, 36:** Example 10 – “Instrumental and vocal music by Beethoven that use the chorale topic. In all, the progression I-V7-vi is prominent and in most cases it is used as the opening progression.”

Johnson, Chorale Topic 4
MENDELSSOHN (1830-2): Symphony 5, IV, Chorale: *Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott*. Starts with melody in the flute, slowly fills out texture. Moves through various topics, textures, accompaniments, etc. throughout the movement.
https://youtu.be/otcrnrQAwD8?t=22m59s

And at end, more of a grandiose, fanfare-like chorale texture
https://youtu.be/otcrnrQAwD8?t=30m20s
CHOPIN (1840): Nocturne in g minor, Op. 37, no 1: m. 7 cadence, foreshadowing middle section
https://youtu.be/zl683bGRrcE?t=24s

Middle section, beginning m. 41:
https://youtu.be/zl683bGRrcE?t=2m50s

Other CHOPIN examples:
(1834) Nocturne in g minor, Op. 15, no. 3: middle section (religioso).
https://youtu.be/L1w2_2WG5q4?t=2m35s
(1836-9) Ballade no. 2 in F major, Op. 38: opening, a bit more playful.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nrucRaRGTY_w
https://youtu.be/e94nySKKoWE?t=2m
(1842-3) Ballade no. 4 in f minor, Op. 52: middle section.
https://youtu.be/7tmQSWuYwrI?t=4m
**SCHUMAN** (1838): *Kinderszenen*, Op. 15, no 13, *Der Dichter spricht*

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PNSq5utKlq4

**SCHUMANN** (1841), first symphony, end of first movement (begins in 437-467):

https://youtu.be/EkSVTJ598uQ?t=9m54s

**SCHUMANN** (1848): *Album for the Young* Op. 68.

No. 4, *Chorale*: https://youtu.be/IM_t8o3JLtQ?t=3m

No. 42, Figured chorale: https://youtu.be/IM_t8o3JLtQ?t=1h11m20s

Johnson, Chorale Topic 7
https://youtu.be/JWuVEFwT5fw?t=4m3s

And, more famously, with Beethoven's Ninth literal-choir intertext, beginning m. 61. To me, with the bouncy octave/fifth/timpani and low voices, sounds a bit more dance-like, rustic, or pastoral.  
https://youtu.be/JWuVEFwT5fw?t=5m11s

**Other Brahms**  
https://youtu.be/rOGYVcje82I?t=1m56s  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=awDnj7f3I8  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QMnhKaMIU6w
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WUkvKWV07Pw

And later on, just before big key change: https://youtu.be/WUkvKWV07Pw?t=5m

SAINT-SAËNS (1919): Organ Fantasie no. 3 in C Major: frequent occurrences, in many different guises: various registrations, tempi, affect, length, etc.  
Including mm. 11–13: https://youtu.be/Pu714ubLs4M?t=25s

Sprinkled throughout mm. 39–65: https://youtu.be/Pu714ubLs4M?t=1m50s  
mm. 193–201: https://youtu.be/Pu714ubLs4M?t=9m10s
**Dvořák** (1893): Symphony 9, “New World,” II.
[https://youtu.be/ETNoPqYAIPl?t=12m40s](https://youtu.be/ETNoPqYAIPl?t=12m40s)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MBhgEfFluaFw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MBhgEfFluaFw)

**Mahler** (1888-94): Symphony 2, “Resurrection,” V.
[https://youtu.be/JWP9byshDH4?t=6m36s](https://youtu.be/JWP9byshDH4?t=6m36s)

**Debussy** (1903-5): *La Mer*, I:
[https://youtu.be/4s4kjPRL4Ic?t=7m3s](https://youtu.be/4s4kjPRL4Ic?t=7m3s)
And movement III:
[https://youtu.be/xbsX74pFr9I?t=7m6s](https://youtu.be/xbsX74pFr9I?t=7m6s)

(Given in Lewin 1994, Example 1)
[https://youtu.be/Ny_v1Aab-y4?t=47s](https://youtu.be/Ny_v1Aab-y4?t=47s)
IVES (1914): General William Booth Enters into Heaven. Tune throughout, but most topically-pertinent 5 measures from the end.
https://youtu.be/SnbGruNIV1o?t=5m

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l8aSTvtKDGM

IVES (1910-24): Symphony 4, I. With or without choir.
https://youtu.be/aMT_EGXQwyk?t=1m20s

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zKWXnoSTVWI

**Stravinsky** (1920): Symphonies of Wind Instruments. Fragmented, frequently juxtaposed with other topics. See Cone (1962) for a stimulating take on how apparently disjointed sections can be understood and reconciled in Stravinsky’s music.

https://youtu.be/93jCMnrMmhI?t=18s
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w8az7NBzQhQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w8az7NBzQhQ)

**BARTÓK** (1943): Concerto for Orchestra, Sz. 116:  
[https://youtu.be/LDO1g-gidwA?t=2m50s](https://youtu.be/LDO1g-gidwA?t=2m50s)

Johnson, Chorale Topic 13
MESSIAEN (1943): *Visions de l’Amen, I, “Amen de la Creation”*. Throughout in piano two, all parallel motion of triads. Score excerpt begins in m. 17 when the chorale topic enters a normative register. [https://youtu.be/ucZhSNVue0g?t=2m](https://youtu.be/ucZhSNVue0g?t=2m)
COPLAND (1944): *Appalachian Spring*, rehearsal 9 – Stratified texture, but chorale in winds, low strings:
https://youtu.be/7ZPe6d2jiY8?t=3m40s

https://youtu.be/cbgmBz973Fg

Johnson, Chorale Topic 15
**WILLIAM BOLCOM** (1970): Graceful Ghost Rag, sort of raggy version of a chorale? (Especially since the bass and two hands align much more than in beginning syncopated stuff. Also, Major.) Grazioso, beginning m. 33 (ish)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pQVoY3f-Ctc&feature=youtu.be&t=2m24s

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**PAUL SIMON** (1973): American Tune. Chorale ends up as a more folky topic, representing Americana tradition via the hymnal.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C3_qvWU3-qQ

From Hassler’s “Mein G’müt ist mir verwirret” (1601?):

Possibly via English hymn: “Oh sacred head now wounded.”
IS THIS A CHORALE TOPIC?

BARTÓK (1911): Bluebeard’s Castle, fifth door opening. Reveals a huge expansive view, letting a powerful light into the dark castle, but overwhelmingly and blindingly so. Then Bluebeard sings a pastoral topic.

https://youtu.be/wJnfmDivZqQ?t=34m43s