

STYLISTIC-INTERPRETATIVE ASPECTS IN THE MUSICAL REPERTOIRE SPECIFIC TO BAROQUE VOCAL SINGING

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SUMMARY. These arias, which played an important role in the history of music, leading to the flowering of the Italian bel canto school and vocal virtuosity, occupied a leading place in all the genres of vocal music that were beginning to develop: opera, cantata, oratorio. The characteristic feature of the vocal arias is that they express new, secular, humanistic content, reflecting faith in human strength, love of life, love of nature, etc. as opposed to religious music. The arias, which are analyzed in this work, represent a stage when the exaggerations of vocal virtuosity had not yet left their mark on musical discourse. We will therefore note that between the lyrics and the expressive melodies, full of naturalness and singing ability, there is perfect unity, perfect interweaving, designed to convey the richness and diversity of the content. The soft imagery, the gentleness and at the same time the exaltation of the love verses - echoing the echoes of troubadour poetry with its tendency to idealize women and the feelings of love - give rise to the melodic ardor and sincerity much adored by Gluck. The pathos of the lyrics of Handel's *Let me mourn my cruel fate, and sigh for freedom* also permeate the dramatic accents of the melody. Many of the old arias were destined for the opera house, with the representative composers (Alessandro Scarlatti, Paisiello, Caldara, Carissimi, Handel, Gluck and others) being recognized masters of the genre. Even though most of the works for which they were intended have not been performed for centuries, the wonderful arias still delight listeners all over the world today, and the musical education of young singers is inconceivable without their substantial contribution. The performance of ancient arias requires serious vocal technique, finesse and elegance of expression, restrained interpretation, without excesses of intensity, but with intonational precision, especially in the delivery of specific ornaments. Through their high artistic qualities, they contribute to the formation of good taste in music lovers and to the enrichment of their knowledge of the heritage of pre-classical music.

Keywords: Belcanto, arias, baroque, Georg Friedrich Händel, coloratura, drama for music.

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Introduction

A careful analysis of research into the history of European civilization and culture reveals that between the end of the 16th century and the middle of the 18th century we can distinguish an era whose dominant features are encompassed under the name of baroque style (preclassic). It was spawned by the Renaissance and moved further away from its equilibrium.

While the Renaissance literature of the 14th century flourished through the famous Italian poets Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Giotto and Botticelli, the music of the time, dominated by the polyphonic tradition, began to develop timidly a popular trend.

From the end of the 16th century, as Renaissance art reached its peak, courtly and religious music was characterized by grandiloquence and emphasis, driven by social and political causes. In the life of the Church, the Reformation shook Catholicism, which sought to recover and fight Protestantism, a political struggle which even led to wars, but which did not resolve the crisis of the Catholic Church.

The Council of Trent (1545-1563) recommended the Jesuit order and the Inquisition to control culture and strengthen ties with the Catholic monarchies as methods of attack. In addition to the repressions of the Inquisition and the tactical actions of the Jesuits, attempts were made to attract the faith by building monumental churches, where spectacular processions were held with music capable of moving and captivating people.

Another factor that created the stylistic features of Baroque was the absolutist monarchy. The bourgeoisie, eager to gain more economic power, had to contend with the feudal lords, whose opposition hindered the development of trade and new economic relations. To stifle resistance from the aristocracy, the bourgeoisie supported the absolutist monarchy in forming a centralized state, which limited the rights of the lords. In the eyes of its subjects, the monarchy imposed itself on the monarchs with a pomp like that displayed by the church. The royal court lived in opulence, manifested in solemnities and grand receptions. Hence the need for sumptuous buildings, with rich ornamentation and grand music to give the impression of power and splendor.

Through the rationalist thinkers - Fr. Bacon, Th. Hobbes, Pierre Gassendi, Benedict de Spinoza, John Locke, R. Descartes - and the followers of Morus's Utopia, the role of the church was reduced, and the new secular culture was stimulated. (1562-1625), Calderon de la Barca (1600-1681), Carlo Goldoni, Tirso de Molina (1585-1648), Pierre Corneille (1606-1684), Blaise Pascal, Jean Racine (1639-1699), J. B. Molière (1622-1693), La Fontaine (1621-

1695), Nicolas Boileau (1636-1711), La Rochefoucauld, La Bruyere (1645-1696),³ the aesthetics of classicism were established.

The Baroque style dominated, in particular, architecture, characterized by monumentality and rich ornamentation, represented by Francesco Borromini and Gian Lorenzo Bernini. In painting, Rubens (1577-1640), Rembrandt (1606-1669), Jordaens, Van Dyck, Vermeer, Poussin, Caravaggio, Velasquez (1599-1660). The Baroque style has influenced clothing and furniture, and in music it has certain features that contrast with the simplicity and naturalness of the Renaissance. The name "baroque" comes from the Italian painter Federico Barocci, or from the Portuguese word "barocco", meaning an asymmetrical pearl.

In royal courts and princely palaces, music played an important role in the festivities. Court life sometimes gave a conventional character to many creations, as the richly ornamented interiors of the palaces influenced the music through rich melodies or musical genres (opera, ballet), the performance of which required pomp and rich ornamentation. The court's precious atmosphere also stimulated instrumental music without a rich emotional content, but also the development of opera and ballet, thanks to the material possibilities for staging grand performances. At the same time, the artistic refinement of the court made it possible to evoke subtle psychological portraits in harpsichord music and to cultivate the court music of popular (rustic or urban) origin, which brought a new life into the musical culture of the French aristocracy.

The tendency towards the solemn and festive was due not only to the aristocratic courts, but also to the church hierarchs who built large, lavish cathedrals adorned with impressive paintings and majestic sculptures. Solemn processions and intricate rituals were performed by priests dressed in gilded vestments.

The impressive music at the divine services of the Catholics contrasted with the sober music of the Protestants. Naturally, the music written for these cultic events took on their emphasis, sometimes characterized by an outward brilliance. The church was responsible for stimulating the development of organ genres, and thanks to the timbral possibilities of this instrument great progress was made in musical drama.

The bourgeoisie was also responsible for the development of musical culture in the Baroque period, as it spurred the development of manufacturing, which in turn led to the perfection of instrument construction. The family of

³ Ștefănescu, Ioana. *O istorie a muzicii universale (A History of Universal Music)*. Vol. 1,2, București, Ed. Fundației Culturale Române, 1996.

violins was established as the only stringed bowed instruments, gradually replacing the lyres and violas, and the invention of the piano would later replace the harpsichord.

Their refinement of instruments gave impetus to musical creation both in opera, a genre created in the Renaissance spirit, and in instrumental music, broadening the expressive power of music and stimulating the creation of musical genres and forms, which were detached from words and dance.

From the Baroque period onwards, music freed itself from the tutelage of the other arts, becoming capable of expressing human feelings through its own means in generalized images superior to the other arts. The development of the sciences and the continuation of Renaissance tendencies to explain musical phenomena scientifically led to solid acoustic research and the theorization of harmony, which would become, at the end of the Baroque, a fundamental element of musical expression.

Since the 16th century, theorists have scientifically determined the laws of harmony and tonal organization. After Henricus Glareanus, who, in *Dodecachordon* (1547), emphasized the importance of the major-minor modes and added the Ionian and Aeolian with their plagal to the eight modes, in 1555 Nicola Vicentino took up the Greek theory in his *Ancient Music Reduced to Modern Practice*. In 1582, Sethus Calvisius' *Melopoeia* or the *Rationale of the Construction of Melody* appeared, and Gioseffo Zarlino laid down the laws of harmony in his treatises: *The Fundamentals of Harmony* (1558) and *Demonstrations of Harmony* (1571).

The stylistic features of Baroque, characterized by grandiosity, festivity, rich and ostentatious ornamentation, are not entirely specific to Baroque music, as they are not general in music. Music has stylistic aspects which are in keeping with the spirit of the Renaissance and the new artistic climate of the time in general.

From a stylistic point of view, Baroque music will enrich the means of expression and deepen the musical drama through broader sound constructions. If the chain of phrases of the Renaissance genres represents a succession of snapshots of isolated, static images, to a certain extent, the Baroque genres are characterized by structures which tend to depict life in movement and human experience as it unfolds.

The path between the early Renaissance and the late Baroque is of decisive importance for the development of all the fundamental disciplines in the art of music. In essence, it represents the process of the affirmation and crowning of the contrapuntal concept of polyphony. Here the process of the great vocal-instrumental symbiosis, as evidenced by musical practice, unfolds, and here the division of music into vocal and instrumental genres takes place.

The spatial expansion of forms of expression and the coexistence of different⁴ styles will influence the variability of the Baroque's temporal boundaries, marking the complexity of Europe's spiritual and cultural life for around 150 years.⁵

The Baroque blends in with the Renaissance, giving it a faster pace and a more pathetic tinge, sometimes upsetting the balance and replacing it with a more tumultuous and more complex expression, which only seldom does it find its way into the rigorous mold of Classicism, which also makes its appearance in the culture of the 17th and 18th centuries.

The Baroque style, whose name has often carried a nuance alluding to the over-emphasis on the effects through which one communicates, or to a fashion detail of the time - the wig, defines an era of an explosion of shapes, lines, colors and sounds that even ostentatiously reveal the frenetic spirit of the time. It was to be seen not only in the art of the time - architecture, sculpture, music, theatrical performances - but also in the way of life, with everything from the adornment of palaces and churches, stages and instruments, to gardens and parks, carriages and carriages, all bearing the stamp of pomp and pageantry.

As far as the art of sound is concerned, we cannot speak of Baroque music in the sense in which we attribute this stylistic feature to the architecture or sculpture of the time.

However, we can recognize traces of the Baroque (pre-classicism) in the development of music throughout the period, both in its indigenous forms and in the syncretic genres - opera, cantata and oratorio - in which the language of sound was associated with verbal or visual means of communication. In both cases, the presence of the Baroque will describe a sinuous line, often difficult to demarcate from the features of the Renaissance, as well as from those of Classicism, which is now making its way. The first half of the 17th century, while leaving room for the configuration of musical genres specific to the Baroque era, is still dominated by the serene spirit of the Renaissance, both in vocal and instrumental music. In the latter, which was to reach its first culmination, genres such as concerto grosso and orchestral suites developed from the Middle Baroque (1630-1680).

The musical language used in the instrumental genres is in the same aura of the Baroque style, with the swirls of the melodic line. Thus, the melody breaks out of the rectilinear framework of the previous era. Not only the melody, but also the polyphonic and harmonic structure will change by restricting the

⁴ De Cande, Rolland. *Histoire universelle de la Musique* ((*Universal History of Music*). Tome 1, Editions du Seuil, 1978.

⁵ Hofmann, Alfred. *Drumul operei* (*The Road of Opera*), Ed. Muzicală, București, 1960.

Renaissance modes to the two - major and minor. These lose their step mobility, becoming stable horizontal structures and creating a complex called tonality.

Together with the definition of the tonal-functional system comes modulation, which is not merely a coloration of the unitary modal flow, but an opportunity to confront contrasting elements - two or more different tonalities.

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At the beginning of the 16th century, this new trend was manifested in art and literature in the form of the revival of ancient traditions. The spirit of the Renaissance was particularly strong in Florence, because of the existence of the *Camerata Fiorentina*. by turning the tabs of the history of music, we must remember that Florentine city was, was, since the fifteenth and fifteenth centuries, the cradle of refreshing the polyphonic tradition, of the so-called *Ars nova* (new art).

From the desire to revive the ancient tradition of the symbiosis between word and music, but also from the need for more accessible art, musicians from the end of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the XVIII-th century oppose polyphony, considering it too complicated and often formal art, militating for the accompanying monody. Therefore, the accompanied monody has come to the forefront of the predilections, taking advance towards polyphony, outlining two distinct melodic types: vocal and instrumental, "between the two having no essential differences, both highlighting their own physiognomies given by the progress made in the construction of musical instruments technique and the interpretative resources specific to voices and instruments, both preserving, at first, the features of the Palestinian melos".

A first step in the crystallization of instrumental music is the transition of the practice of polyphony from vocal music to instrumental music, which will be used as a means of configuring complex musical images.⁶ Released by word and gesture, instrumental music has a brown development, and the richness of images and content have required the creation of various musical forms, such as running, theme with variations, suite, monothematic sonata, overture and concerto grosso, some going to more complex forms.

In the previous century, the vocal polyphony added harmonic writing, accompanying monody and "concerting style" (concerted), in reaction against polyphonic complications and sophisticated utilitarian. The composers preferred the accompanied monody, considered closer to the natural and more accessible, because by the recitative approach, the text became intelligible. At the same time, the recitative monody represented better the feeling of expressing the poetic sense, from which comes the name *rappresentativo* style, given to the monody style, in which the vocal line, following the natural rhythm of the words, has melodic undulations that translate the affective states.

In opera music, in oratory, sung, miss, the modalities of writing were very diverse, but it dominated the accompanied monody, in which the accompaniment was done with a continuo basso, to harpsichord, organ or lute.

In vocal music, monodies are recitative, open and closed symmetrically. Thanks to the verse, canzonettas, arias and ariettas will have symmetrical structures. Under the influence of instrumental music, we find vocal lines that lend motivational structures, based on arpeggios and passages of instrumental technique. The taste for virtuosity will stimulate the development of the technique of bel canto, dominant at the end of the XVII-th century. In Baroque, the vocal style is determined by the crystallization of opera and oratory.

⁶ Iliuț Vasile. *O carte a stilurilor muzicale (A Book of Musical Styles)*, vol. II, București, Editura Muzicală, 2011, pp. 15-16.

Just as Gluck at his time considered “I thought most of my work should be limited to looking for a beautiful simplicity”, so today, we, teachers, guide students to the same search for simple things.

The simplicity of which the composer speaks is the ideal of the whole epoch, marked by the influence of Enlightenment philosophy, the principles underlying the reform of the musical drama, aiming at the realization of this ideal. One of these principles refers to the treatment of operatic recitations. If until now the dramatic action was just a pretext to compose a music meant to delight the audience and to remain in their memory for as long as possible, the accentuation of the importance of the dramatic subject and the use of librettos with a real literary value will change this.

The importance that the creators of the work of the spoken word have given, that recitation cantando gradually loses its importance. At the height of the Baroque era, the recitative comes to be treated somewhat like a link between areas or duets. Gluck wishes to revive this ideal of ancient drama, to convey generally valid feelings through his music, which served the word and has adapted to its hidden meanings. In his attempt to purify the genre of the work, the German master brings back to the fore the importance of the recitative and strives to eliminate definitively that striking contrast between the recitative and the sung parts, preferring in this respect the use of the accompanied recitations the accompaniment completing what the word can only name and penetrating into the essence of the feelings and states that it wishes to convey.

The trend of decorating the vocal melody with virtuosity passages (trills, game, staccato, etc.) has existed since ancient times and will develop fulminant starting with the 16th century. The appearance of instrumental works with an expressive sound palette much larger than the vocal one and of the soloist song that emphasized the virtuosity of the performer, it stimulated the vocal singing in the search and exploration of new interpretative techniques and the conquest of new heights in terms of virtuosity, expressiveness, ambience, nuance, etc.

Starting with the 16th century, the emancipation of the accompanying soloistic song, instrumental or vocal in front of the polyphonic one, will lead to the appearance of the areas, executed either independently or as an integral part of a much larger work (oratorio, opera, passion, singing). The term **aria** derives from the Latin word *aria* and appears for the first time in correlation with music in the 14th century, then designating a way to sing or perform. Within the areas are distinguished two singing manners: **canto spianato** (song stretched) and **canto fiorito** (song blooming⁷). Areas written

⁷ Eremia Ramona. *Funcția expresivă a coloraturii vocale (Expressive Function of Vocal Coloring)*, Cluj-Napoca, Editura Vremii, 2007, p. 15.

in the *canto spianato* manner are developed on high values of notes (half-notes, whole notes), while areas created in the style of *canto fiorito* show values of low notes (eighths, sixteenths, thirty-seconds) and various vocal ornaments (trills, appoggiaturas, mordents, etc.) This ornamental enrichment leads to the coloring of the melody, hence the term *color soprano*. The term vocal coloring is first defined in several old dictionaries such as⁸ :

- *Musicum* - Michael Praetorius (1618);
- 1703 *Dictionaire de musique* - Sebastien de Brossard;
- *The Musicalisches Lexicon* by Johann Gottfried Walther (1732).

From its very beginning, vocal coloration has intertwined two aesthetic directions: one being the – **ornamentation** that highlighted the virtuosity and vocal qualities out of the ordinary and the other – **expression** the most accurate embodiment of the feelings and passions of the portrayed character. At the beginning of the history of this model of singing there were a number of voices - among them that of G. Caccini - which was against the use of coloring by human voices, considering it suitable only for instruments, claiming that due to its vocal coloring, the words no longer understood each other and proposed its use only in the final cadences, when the instruments had to intone long notes. With all these opinions to the contrary, vocal coloring has become a mandatory style requirement in the era. Trillo, appoggiatura, portamento, glissando, gruppetto, mordent, tremolo, cadenza are a series of means by which coloration could be achieved. To describe the ways of achieving these virtuosity elements, various treatises dedicated to vocal art will be elaborated, signed by Pier Francesco Tosi, Giambattista Mancini, Manuel Garcia.

Dramatic performances of vocal music, dance and pantomime had existed in Europe since ancient times. The ancient Greek tragedy itself, with choir, presented many aspects that can be considered as precursors to the work. Closer to the era to which we refer, elements of the work existed in the religious mysteries of France and those sacred *rappresentazione*, sacred performances, from Italy of the fifteenth century, in which dramatic and musical means had been used by the church to attract believers to Catholic worship.

Throughout the 16th century, the trend towards a "new musical art" has translated into the ever-increasing appearance of the song accompanied by the monody style, in which a single voice is embossed, being accompanied by the fairly simple agreements of the ciphered bass, which complete the harmony.

⁸ Cf. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coloratura> accessed on February 17, 2025.

The general orientation of the Fiorentina Chamber was to create a perfect fusion between poetry and music. This is the basis for the evolution of the opera genre. Euridice (1600), composed by Jacopo Peri (1561 - 1633), perfectly embodies the ideals of "Camerata Fiorentina".

Claudio Monteverdi (1567 - 1643) is the first great name in the history of opera, giving the new genre of dramatic-musical a brilliance and also a depth that could hardly be overcome – **opera series**. The difference between him and his predecessors is that the Florentines were primarily theorists, while he opened new perspectives to the genre. Claudio Monteverdi proved to be a musician first, his grandiose and colorful imagination, the inexhaustible richness of melodic inspiration, the inclination towards the tension of dramatism were looking for the most appropriate expression element.

At the beginning of the 18th century, the city of Naples is unanimously recognized as the world center of lyrical theatre. Here we will find the apogee and sunset of severe and ceremonial art, with all its patrimonial atmosphere, but also the birth of the slag and sharpness in the tongue of the **comic opera**, which leaves the world of legendary and conventional heroes and is heading towards the actuality.

If Jean-Baptiste Lully (1632 - 1687) had founded the solemn French court overture, consisting of three sections after the scheme of slow - fast - slow movements, Alessandro Scarlatti (1660- 1725) it blurs the form of the Italian overture, of course, much closer to the vivacity of its people, reversing the succession of movements: quickly - slowly - quickly. The most important achievements of the great composer are those in the field of the actual means of dramatic expression, of the interweaving of the word with music, in which he establishes three distinct forms: the first is that of the secco recitation, of the quick musical speech, used in passages of maximum dynamism of the action, of, in which the lively unfolding of the phrases is supported only when and when by the plated agreements of the harpsichord. But when it comes to expressing pathetic feelings, deeply dramatic, Scarlatti introduces the accompanied recitative (*stromentato*), the recitative accompanied by the orchestra, in which the meaning of the words is emphasized and commented on by the wide and diverse language of the orchestral passages, more or less developed. Where the mood of the characters is rendered in larger monologues, the aria brought to its consecrated form, called the aria da capo (A-B-A), appears.

From those comical intermezzi of the works the series developed the genre of **opera buffa** in its own right. Its sources are "*commedia dell'arte*" and the Spanish theatre. Having debuted as a cartoon of the *fumed* opera series, the new Italian musical comedy was soon advanced from the rank of a light hoax to that of true satire of mores, encompassing the increasingly real reflection of the age, in its various aspects.

From this moment on, the castrated voices disappear from the stage, defending the male voices, among which, especially the bass voice takes on an important role. The recitative and the aria are now delineated as forms of expression, the former being used as a basic musical means for the playback of lively dialogues, while lyrical feelings flourished in the area.

**Aria *Lascia ch'io pianga* from *Rinaldo* opera -
Georg Friedrich Handel**

One of the most imposing masters of the late Baroque musical, Georg Friedrich Handel (1685-1759) represents a whole epoch of opera history before Viennese classicalism.

"If in the XVII century the Italian opera still dominated a large part of the European musical life, through Handel, the musical theater knows a special development, a synthesis of various influences and currents of the time. His creation combines elements of French, Italian and German opera, offering the most illustrious painting of the Baroque musical theatre, in which we meet the nobility of the great concert areas (transpositions of parts of the preclassical instrumental suite), the vocal brilliance of the belcanto, the, the subtlety of the accompanied recitative (mainly cultivated by Rameau) and the spectacular complexity of the Lully"-style mountings"⁹.

Handel¹⁰ was born in 1685 in Halle and proved very early to be the possessor of exceptional gifts for music. Determined to make him a jurist, his father, a tenacious and severe person, refused around 1694 as the Duke of Saxe, then King Friedrich I of Prussia, whom he met in Berlin in 1696, to take care of his son's musical education. However, he agreed to entrust his child to Zachow, the outstanding musician of Halle, who taught him the flight, counterpoint, composition and practice of several instruments. Handel continued his high school studies and became an organist of the Halle Cathedral in March 1702; eager for wider horizons, in 1703 he terminated his contract and went to Hamburg. Matthewson introduced him to the musical and cultured environments of the city at St. Mary Magdalene, where she will become an organist, and especially at the Opera Orchestra where, after playing as a violinist and harpsichordist, she wrote *The Passion for John*, then his first opera, *Almira*, and so on, followed by *Nero* (1705). Faced with the failure of this last work and dissatisfied with the musical situation in Hamburg, he went

⁹ Constantinescu, Gabriela, Caraman-Fotea, Daniela, Constantinescu, Grigore, Sava, Iosif. *Ghid de operă (Opera Guide)*. Editura Muzicală a Uniunii Compozitorilor, București, 1973, p. 180.

¹⁰ Nicolescu, Mircea. *Händel (Handel)*. București, Editura Muzicală a Uniunii Compozitorilor din R.P.R., 1959, p. 3.

to Florence (1706), then to Rome (1707). From this era there are many religious or profane compositions, in which Handel displayed his entire talent as a melodist.

Before Handel left for Naples in 1708, he wrote *Rodrigo*. In 1712, the composer went to London to become an official composer of the Crown. Here are some works including *Ode* for the anniversary of Queen Anne, opera *Amadigi*, two *Te Deums*. Following his sovereign in Hanover, Handel returned to Germany in the summer of 1716 and composed the *Passion*. Since the end of December 1716, the composer has been back in London.

Focusing only on the stage, attracted only by the opera, he established an academy, the Royal Academy, under the patronage of the king and aimed at assembling works. Since then, Handel has fought to impose himself, to modernize, to harmonize the work, making it a total creation, in which the music expresses, through a language of remarkable evocative force, the drama lived by exceptional characters in extreme situations. Among his best-known works are *Rinaldo* (1711), *Teseo* (1712), *Giulio Cesare* (1724), *Rodelina* (1725), *Tolomeo* (1728), *Ezio* (1732), *Serse* (1738), *Arianna* (1734), *Atalanta* (1736), *Imeneo* (1740), *pastorale Acis and Galathea*.

The composer remains imprinted in eternity by memorable psychological portraits, outlined primarily through the *da capo* aria form, which will become *the established form of the opera aria* ¹¹, and secondly by the originality of the musical language with inspiration from ancient history.

Handel, on the other hand, focuses on the composition of secular orators and instrumental music in the tradition of Henry Purcell's English music. He composed the oratorios *Athalia* (1733) and *Saul* (1739), as well as the 12 *Concerti Grossi*, op. 6 (1739).

In 1742 the famous *Messiah* oratorio was brought to light, as well as *Israel in Egypt* (1739), *Samson* (1743), *Judas Maccabeus* (1747), and *Solomon* (1749). It also includes *Fireworks* (1748), which together with *Water Music* (1717) will gain great popularity. While working on the *Jephtha Oratory* (1751), Handel loses his sight. He died in London on 14 April 1759, being buried with special honors in *The Poets' Corner*, in Westminster Abbey.

One of the operas of Georg Friedrich Handel is *Rinaldo*, drama per musica in three acts. The libretto is by Giacomo Rossi from a screenplay by Aaron Hill, inspired by the *La Gerusalemme liberata* ovvero *il Goffredo*, by Torquato Tasso. It premiered in London at the Haymarket Theatre on February 24, 1711.

¹¹ Constantinescu, Gabriela, Caraman-Fotea, Daniela, Constantinescu, Grigore, Sava, Iosif. *Op. cit.*, p. 181.

Through the opera Rinaldo, Handel manages to compose areas in the ornate rich style of Neapolitans, as well as simple areas, specific to the opera buffa. At the same time, it also uses melodic lines whose specific rhythmic formulas come from dance music.

The recitative is secco and has a monologue character¹². It is supported instrumentally by harmonic type accords, which lead to the idea of basso continuo, specific to time. The tonality chosen by the composer for this segment is minor soil, with a strong hue of forces, to create scenic gravity for the character Almirena. The pauses in melodic speech have an increased expressive meaning, highlighting the pain and anger of the character at the loss of love.

One of the most famous areas of the Baroque period, *Lascia ch'io pianga* is a reference page in the soprano repertoire, capitalizing on vocal technique with stylistic-interpretative specific of any performer at the beginning of his career.

The text imprints the suffering experienced by the character of Almirena, in his tumult and pain, at the loss of love, symbolically embossed by deprivation of liberty, being constrained "in inferno", in "eternal uryg":

Figure 1

A	B	A
a a ¹ a a		a a ¹ a a

As you can see, the repeated joint (A) is identical to its half. The phrasic arrangement of **a a¹ a** contains elements prior to the classical compositional the accordion arrangement with harmonic support role. Melodica has a profound lyrical character, the fusion between the meaning of lyrics and the soloistic line being the foundation of the construction of the entire work. Surprisingly the tonality is not minor, as we might have thought, but major, the composer building a flowing, warm and expressive melodic line *ch'io pianga la dura sorte, eche sospiri la liberta*, but at the same time crossed by regret, and suffering, as the verse asks: Lascia.

¹² Parisoti, A. *Arie antiche (Ancient Arias)*. vol. 3, Ed, Ricordi, Milano, 1984.

E.g. 1

ARIA.
Larghetto.

p La - scia ch'io pian - ga, la du - ra sor - te e che so - -
Lass mich dñr kla - gen, dass mñr hie - nie - den mein Loos be - -

p

spi - ri la li - - ber - - tà;
schie - den, ver - bann! zu - sehn,

Georg Friedrich Handel: Aria *Lascia ch'io pianga*,
opera *Rinaldo*, m. 1-8, tempo *Andante*¹³.

The ternary measure of 3/4, together with the Andante tempo, on a predominantly equal rhythm, with some cadential exceptions, interspersed by expression breaks, contributes not only to the creation of the moment, but also to the creation of the moment, a state of suffering, but also comes to the support of the soloist, in the correct execution of breaths, emission, diction. The median phrase of the first period, **a**¹, brings a dramatic note through the modulation towards the dominant C Major, but also through the melodic arrangement in the acute, yet penetrating the initial motivating elements.

¹³ Handel, Georg Friedrich. *Lascia ch'io pianga* (Let me mourn my cruel fate, and sigh for freedom).

STYLISTIC-INTERPRETATIVE ASPECTS IN THE MUSICAL REPERTOIRE
SPECIFIC TO BAROQUE VOCAL SINGING

E.g. 2

spi - ri la li - ber - tä; e che so - spi - ri, e che so -
schie - den, ver - brennt zu sein, dass mir nie - den mein Loos be -

spi - ri la li - ber - tä!
schie - den, ver - brennt zu sein.

**Georg Friedrich Handel: Aria *Lascia ch'io pianga*,
opera *Rinaldo*, m. 9-14, tempo *Andante***

After resuming the initial sentence, the composer resorts to an instrumental moment **a'**, which will acquire cadential valences at the end of the area, but also of connection for period **B**, which will follow. The contrast of the median period is achieved by modulation to the relative D minor, then deriving to C Major with direct cadence on its relative minor - in the minor:

E.g. 3

Fine
f
 Il duol in - fran - ga
 Der Fret - heit Won - ne

p
f
Fine
f

que - ste ri - tor - te de' miei mar - ti - ri sol per - pie - -
 schwand mei - nem Le - ben; könn' ich mit - Thrd - nen den Tod - er - -

tà, si, de' miei mar - ti - ri sol per - pie - - tà!
 seh - nen, er brängt Er - lö - sung von at - ter - Pein. *Dat segno at Fine.*

Georg Friedrich Handel: Aria *Lascia ch'io pianga*,
 opera *Rinaldo*, m. 31-42, tempo *Andante*

As it is noted, melodic tension intensifies through various elements of language: contrasting shades f-p-f, with indicated accents, the accompaniment is doubled in octaves, the melody contains higher jumps and sensitizations of harmonic fundamentals.

From a technical-interpretative point of view, we encounter some problems that need to be mentioned. In the first sentence, the first sound from the measure has a slight settling, the next withdrawing easily, later an

anacrusis is led to the cruises. The second phrase has as climax the syllable *pi*, from the word *sospiri*, the anacrusis formed exceptionally from the triplet will be led to it.

In the median section **B**, the long-breath phrases and the leaps in the legato, are some of the problems that will be solved by suspending the base of the interval for a correct achievement of the peak, considering the flow of the phrase, taking care of the incidence of unwanted accents.

Being a baroque area, in the educational process we must strictly follow the rhythm, as well as its indications. Dynamics, in the Baroque score in general, is terraced, based on the transmission of emotions and the tension of phrases. The score of the area *Lascia ch'io pianga* has indications of dynamics in terraces, but we can also be guided by the text, depending on it we will identify certain dynamic tensions of the score.

The Baroque melody, compared to the Renaissance one, is instrumentalized, being more varied and richer in expressiveness and enlarged and diminished intervals, which in the Renaissance were not used. This area is still at the level of non-instrumentalization, keeping the syllable-note relationship approximately intact, but the melodic exigency and diction must not be respected in any way. The melody of the area must have suppleness, the sounds must be equal in sound intensity throughout their duration, well-articulated and detached from each other. The criteria for phrasing and interpretation of melodic lines are based on instrumental style, namely the violin style, and the music requires very good vocal support, due to the execution of the sounds in the detachment. The interpretation retained is another aspect related to the perniculations of pre-classical areas.

Large intervals must be performed correctly from an intonational point of view and must be expressive. In this case, the interpreter must give them greater importance in the study of the score. In this area, the difficult intervals are of perfect ascending quart (even from the onset of the area), small ascending and descending sexta, descending great sexta.

Leaps of this type are executed by putting the first sound on the second position (at the position of *fa2*), on the column of air, support, and with opening of neck and mouth relaxed. Also, the sounds of the jump must be linked to each other to avoid chipping the throat before the acute sound, and for the accuracy of the intervals, we will take care to intonate them directly, not underneath.

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