

Unity and Diversity in Mozart's work

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Abstract: *A global perspective on his entire composition works imposes the conclusion that Mozart was a genius in his expression in absolutely all types of music that existed in his lifetime. If other composers only excelled in sacred music, and others stood out in instrumental music only, and others were very operatic, Mozart has left us outstanding works in all these domains. The consequence of the fact that he was divine in all three great chapters of the music of his time is that we find specific elements from each genre in every other. This highlights the supremacy of Mozart's genius. He is great, original, but individual in his own way, in each of the respective genres.*

Keywords: *music, sonatas, genres, Mozart, style*

1. Introduction

For Mozart, historical time and space had a wholly different meaning as for his contemporaries; he had an all-encompassing vision about the renewals that had to be brought to the art of sounds, about the unity of stylistic spheres. His visionary thinking brimmed with romanticism and modernity.

The exemplary order of Mozart's universe is reflected in the variety of his work, starting from instrumental music, instrumental concertos, chamber music, up to operas and symphonies. He is the one who accomplishes the structural intertwining of the three fundamental styles in the world of classical music: chamber, theatre, sacred style, making us witnesses to their intercommunication and interrelation. He equally mastered all composition styles and techniques, being excellent in every one, above all his contemporaries.

His work stands out through diversity, through the effort regarding melodic invention, the acute classicisation of the sensitive style and the gallant tone, and especially through the classical romanticisation of the musical form.

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1.1. Instrumental music, sacred music and opera music, seen as a Unity of all special directions, between Particular and General

Mozart “shares with Bach the privilege to sovereignly succeed in all genres he approaches” (Dictionary of Great Musicians, Encyclopedic Universe, Bucharest, 2006, p. 334).

All three activity domains of Mozart, instrumental, sacred, and theatrical, are united through constant renewals, as his creation surpasses the conventions of general styles; the unity of the three directions is achieved by corroborating harmonics with counterpoint, leading to an intertwining of the composing manner. Mozart creates tirelessly, consistently and systematically in all three styles.

Mozart’s work is monitored during four periods: 1762-1764 (the years of travels through Europe, of intense study of the various music styles), 1775-1780 (largely in Salzburg, where he composed the first works in order to make a name at international level), 1781-1788 (the time spent in Vienna, the most prolific in compositions), and the period 1789-1791 (of the most visionary composing experiments).

Mozart initially includes his classical act of creation within a unitary pattern of the requirements of the time: installing a balance between contents and form, between intention and the achievement of expression, a concern for simplification, logic, and balance.

His third period, extremely prolific from the perspective of creating, reflects the stimulus of musical and intellectual richness of the Vienna life. Here, Mozart feels happy and freed; in his soul, the vivid and constant wish to compose is reborn, due to the numerous concerts which took place, but also to him coming into contact with the music of J.S. Bach and Händel at the musical gatherings organized by Van Swieten.³

The period spent in Vienna represents for Mozart a step toward his growing mature, far from his father Leopold; the latter does not approve of his son Wolfgang leaving the service of Archbishop Colloredo. From the correspondence between Leopold and his son starting with May 1781, the situation reveals itself as extremely tense; offended and unappreciated by Colloredo, Wolfgang moves to the Webers (on May 2nd 1781) and, despite his father opposing it, decides to stay in

³ The baron *Gottfried Van Swieten* (1733- 1803), an enthusiast amateur musician, a diplomat and an official of the Austrian Empire; remained in history as a patron of many composers from the Classicism. Since 1782, Mozart will frequently visit him to research and perform the manuscripts of some works of J.S. Bach and Fr. Händel, which Van Swieten had collected during his office time in Berlin. He is a typical example of *Maecena* for that epoch.

Vienna. In a letter to Leopold, Mozart motivates his decision: "My honour is more structure.

The proof of unity in the whole and of impeccable order is revealed in the manner of approaching the composition for five voices, the string quintet summing up the greatest possible variety in Classicism in its writing: recitative, dialogue-monologue, the wonderful leading of the voices, different in timbre and register. The Mozartian quintet appears through the stylistic classicality of all elements, reunited in the architecture of the ensemble form of the monumental cycle of movements. precious than anything else, and I am convinced it is the same way for you, too", calming him regarding his situation in Vienna: "Here I have the most important acquaintances in the world. I am loved and respected by the most important families. I am treated with utmost respect and I get paid extra" (Anderson 1938, 1087).

Despite the overall impression perpetuated over time regarding Mozart's so-called innocence and inability to relate correctly to his contemporaries, Mozart was permanently connected to the matters of his time. The present stage of Mozartian research allows us to draw the conclusion that Mozart was much more involved in current social, political, and cultural phenomena than has been known until recently. The letters and correspondence documents talk of a competent and involved Mozart, a fine judge of interhuman relations in their great complexity.

Mozart was lucky, ascending to maturity at the same time with change. "According to the new concept, the new features of the opera of the different nations could be assimilated within one single opus. A first way of achievement was to reunite the 'serious' Italian music with the French drama level. Another solution was to transfer the musical techniques from the Italian comic opera, where the number of styles and structures was increasing, for the sake of a more natural way of the dramatic presentation, toward the German or French comic opera [...] But, as often as the occasion arose, Mozart used this, leaving to the world not only the most wonderful Italian operas of the late 18th century, but at the same time, some might say, the first authentic operatic masterpiece in German" (Robinson 1996).

In Mozart's opera works, the relation of literary text and music constituted a constant concern both at the level of writing, construction, and at that of performance. Mozart, a good connoisseur of the expressive valences of the music-word connection, saw the potential of incorporating the text in the design of music. His passion for reading, for which both Constanze and fragments of his correspondence with Leopold bear testimony, developed his clear aesthetic criteria and an acute sense of literary value; it also enhanced his exigence regarding the librettos of the operas he was composing. We have as a testimony the letter sent

to his father in May 1783: "I have looked through more than one hundred librettos, but I hardly found only one I am satisfied with" (Anderson 1938, 1263).

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Regarding instrumental works, Mozart conveys an intense state of mind, he reflects the interiority of the feeling, of the artistic emotion, which he translates through dynamic language.

Mozart stresses the thematic principle and tonal stability; he first brings the thematic balancing to the foreground (in the exposition), its breaking in the "crisis" of development, and then the reprise and at the same time the remaking of the balance, in the recapitulation. The themes increase in number, suffer temporary reversing, polyphonic variation occurs; all reflect the new path – the one of renewal – regarding the renewed evaluation of the exposition, of the dimensions, of the main theme subject to graduate, progressive development. Mozart reintroduces and redefines the form of both fugue and sonata; the fugue now has a topic taken out of the sphere of sobriety, strongly treated in concerto style, and its outline stands out through an intensely developing expression.

As to the sonata, it gets to the rank of an independent opera, getting close to drama; if the solo sonata expresses the experiences and feelings of one person only, those for two or more instruments must concentrate in only one feeling and experience the sensations felt by all "characters" participating in the eternal re-creation of the work.

Regarding the instrumental concerto, Mozart brings here the double thematic exposition for the first time, thus highlighting the importance of dialogue. Gradually, the double thematic exposition will also be part of the Mozartian chamber and symphonic genre, thus testing the stability in outlining the formal

"The symphonic principle and the principles of stage and sacred songs mix and melt into each other in this high circle-dance of the classical arts. The personification of the central topics and themes is accomplished in this voyage of all musical arts, disciplines, domains, and techniques. The osmosis of specific methods and the intersection of definitory dramaturgies convey the Mozartian

stylistics its special status, which has never had any equal, the glory of evident uniqueness. The signs of stylistics certify the beauties of music.

The singspiel, the opera buffa and opera seria, as the serenade and divertimento, all become wrapped in the cloak of the sonata, and the symphony, the piano concerto with orchestra accompaniment or the string quartet conquer the show hall, the stage of public events, taking on the meanings of the drama of ideas, while the mass concentrates and reinvigorates the shining rays of the great sacred music tradition. Mozartian stylistics is the loyal witness of all existential situations" (Berger 1991, 9).

1.2. Vocalising the Music for Instruments and instrumentalising the Vocal music

From time immemorial it has been known that music was organically related to the word; this close relationship has the role to enhance expressivity. In his treaty "The Art of Oratory", Quintilian strengthens the important role of both word and sound: "in discourse, the raising, lowering, the inflexions of the voice also intend to awaken feelings in the audience.

Through a certain bar, to use the term from music, when choosing the words and modulating the voice, we aim to wreath the ire of the judges, through another, their compassion" (Quintilian 1974, 15). Etymologically, the word "rhetoric" comes from ancient Greek, and means "to flow", an expression that is connected inseparably to the ability of music to be fluent, as this feature leads to influencing our feelings.

"Like nobody else, Mozart knew how to transform the theory of affects into an aesthetic of composition and into a poetics of performance, involved in the built work. The cycle of the sonata or variations is structured like an inseparable, organic whole, complete in its own self. The ratio between part and whole mirrors the classicality of the concept, the clarity and firmness of the artistic vision. In its individuality, the instrumental opus casts a light on the distinct dimensions of the aesthetic of form and the aesthetic of expression or feeling" (Berger 1991, 9).

The supreme concept of Mozart's stylistics is represented by the dialogue of the voices, by the parable illustrates in the singing of harmoniously intertwined voices. Mozart permanently looks for the necessary and adequate means for expressing a certain affect: the matching literary discourse, the sound support that is most adequate for this discourse, the performer and the public he addresses.

Mozart is constantly concerned to adapt his writing to the technical and expressive possibilities of the performers, as many letters from his correspondence with Leopold show. Mozart's operatic genius is revealed through the cantability of melodies, the ability to convey the meaning and expressiveness of words and

phrases; Mozart gives life to characters, dramatic situations and different types of character, so that these, although they come from time immemorial, seem both known and close to us. The upperhand of music or word depends, in Mozart's opinion, of what he wishes to express, and is put to the service of the highest goal, that of convincing, of moving.

Over time, the technical development of instruments and of pedagogic didactics allows the achievement of that ideal, whose supreme model is the human voice on the instrument with keys and with hit strings, instrument which was practically unfit for such a physical operation.

The vocalisation of sound is the gateway to shaping the piano player's internal, self-critical musical hearing, the will for sound, for cantilena. It refers to conveying a cantable ability to the piano – an instrument which is unvocal par excellence because its tuning is tempered – an artificial operation, a compromise made by musicians at a certain moment in history, when the imperious need to work with modulation appeared.

„By deepening this feature of Mozart's instrumental melodic style, Richard Wagner wrote: He, Mozart, breathes into his instruments the nostalgic breath of the human voice, toward which his genius feels inclined with predilect love. The unending flow of rich harmonics leads him to the heart of the melody, as if permanently concerned with transmitting to the voice the inner warmth and feelings, which is the feature of the natural human voice, the forever refreshed source of expression of the deepest corners of the human heart” (Cristian 1958, 108).

Mozart's opera works could be described through the perfection of writing, the richness, originality and permanent renewal of inspiration and the acuteness of an ever awakened sensitivity; Mozart finds in sung theatre the most direct, purest expression of his dramatic genius.

1.2.1. Vocal Procedures in Mozart's Instrumental Music

Mozart's instrumental works abound in different types of accompanied melody, which start from the large vocal genres (song, lied, cantata, oratorio, opera).

Ru - he - sanft, mein hol - des Le - ben - , schla - fe - bis - dein Glück - er - wacht; d

Fig.1. Opera „Zaide”, Nr. 3 Aria Tempo di Menuetto grazioso (ms. 8-16)

66

11. Sonate in G
KV 301 (293a)
Entstanden Mannheim, Februar 1778

Allegro con spirito Sonata I^o

simile

Fig. 2. Sonata for piano and violin K.301, I Theme (ms. 1-8)

In the examples above we notice the manifest tendency toward the broadest expansion and expressiveness of the melody. Mozart expresses his ideas and feelings through broad melodic lines, intensely expressive, run through by the pathos of the human voice.

Talking about the vocal procedures we come across in instrumental music, we also must mention the un-tempered intonation, the timbre colour which the instrument players imagine and transpose in every different characterial motif. Each slow theme has a solemn character, embodying grave, thinking characters who express themselves through the abstract language of instruments.

2. Acknowledgements

Before Mozart, in drama, music had served for feeling and expressivity (in arias and duets), while the action was owned by recitatives; music remained essentially an illustration and an expression of the word, only associated with the action in the most primitive manner.

The upperhand of text over music asserted itself from the very beginning, while this aspect meant not situating the music in a servile position, but rather imposing a hierarchy when conveying significations: music performs the text, and the text interprets the action, and the words stay between music and drama in almost every case.

In Mozart, the connection between language and composing style is a feature, and it is noticed that the rhythm in spoken language influences the musical rhythm. We cannot discuss the vocal effects in Mozart's instrumental music without also watching the phonetic language.

Like linguistics has a branch that studies the production, acoustic structure, transmission, audition and evolution of the sounds of articulate language, musical phonetics concerns the articulate musical language (articulation of sounds). Thus, according to the linguistic model, we can classify the various forms of articulating the musical discourse depending on the consonants and vocals in spoken language.

This is a form of verbalising the musical text, which leads to an ever-greater closeness to the inflexions of the human voice.

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