

Kerygmatic Message in the *Lord's Supper Recitative* from *Matthäus-Passion* by J.S. Bach (Musical-rhetorical Figures and Affects)

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Abstract: *This paper contains a series of musical-rhetorical figures and the affects, particularly intended by the composer. The Gospel text included in the recitative is considered fully fulfilled by Bach's own language elements. Preliminary work in designing of this study included a diachronic analysis of the score. The later stage plays some specific elements of music, organized on a series of musical figures, all are subordinate to a single purpose – kerygmatic message send by Jesus Christ. This refers to the Eucharist setting up, a reality with some profound significances for the Jesus's followers.*

Key-words: *kerygma, musical-rhetorical figures, affects (emotions), the Last Supper*

1. Introduction

This paper, as part of a larger personal pursuits, surprises the kerygmatic central concept in *The Lord's Supper* recitative from *Matthäus Passion*.

The kerygmatic concept is part of verbal and nonverbal communication especially for ecclesiastical communities. I have chosen this recitative as a reference illustration gender of musical works from the Baroque period, epoch which had a specific affective rhetoric and musical affects theory. The kerygmatic concept has one-way, playing a main character message to a spiritual audience. The spiritual profile reveals in ideally way that kerygma is regarded as a God's communication address to mankind through a human messenger (Pass 1989, 64).

The rhetoric with an arsenal of persuasive means to be achieved the desired effect in addressing is of utmost importance. The music and the rhetoric are complementary ontologically speaking. Both are made through speech, trying to reproduce an objective reality into the present subjective field (Misdolea 2011, 77).

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Bach's primary concern was to underline the biblical text through music as eloquent as possible and determine the intended reaction into the audience. The composer shows a profound rhetoric art of the musical discourse that defines the order and balance. The musical discourse manages to impose, to persuade, to offer estetical knowing to the listener. And it can do through an elaborate construction which obeys the rigorous rhetoric's principles (Dadisman 2016, 3).

2. Working hypotheses

The research method proposed in this paper is the analysis of diachronic-evolutionary musical-rhetorical figures with emotionally suggestions corresponding to them. We have to catch the vision of Bach on music as a plenary teaching tool, going beyond of the biblical text's hermeneutics, which is reported in recitative. The form, harmony and melody items are encoded in the musical-rhetorical vocabulary. They mean for composer resources to communicate the emotional content of the text.

We'll register some specific elements of music, with an attempt to decode the emotions intended by the composer. We'll do by selecting from the list of arrays rhetoric musical figures, some of the types. An important guide is here the hermeneutics of the biblical text and over sense of it (Baron 2006, 36). In the rhetorical figures list we have included 1. repetition figures, 2. imitation figures in *fugatto*, 3. dissonance figures, 4. interval figures, 5. sounds figures, 6. silence types, 7. metro rhythmical figures, 8. figures of tonal dynamics (Grove, 10).

The music has taken as primary goal stylistic unity conceived on certain moods called *affekt* in Baroque age (Williams 2007, 190).

And all these as a result of rhetorical concepts relationship in that period. It was imposed necessity that to awaken emotions in the listeners, such as sadness, hate, love, joy, anger, doubt. It is important, therefore to capture the emotional meaning of music and spiritual text dichotomous message.

Recitative No. 17 of vocal-symphonic work *Matthäus Passion* contains 40 bars and plays two distinct pictures. The first 16 bars are aimed to indicate of Judas Iscariot's betrayal and the last 24 bars contain a main kerygmatic concept to establish the Eucharist and also the good news of salvation through partaking of flesh and blood symbols of Jesus Christ, The Redeemer (Melamed 1988, 110).

Bach was a proponent of the music *per se* concept, in the sense that music contains within itself a spiritual message. He manages to highlight the spiritual text that is explicitly in the Bible in Matthew, chapter 26 and verses 23 until 29.

The characters that appear in the recitative are Jesus, Matthew The Evangelist and a brief appearance of Judas Iscariot. Instrumentation is reduced to a set of strings consisting of first violin, second violin, viola and as harmonic support played organ and continuous. There is a different texture between the two sections. As a rarefied writing of accompanied monocytes in the first, organ and continuous punctual play together with Matthew and the rest of the strings sustain Jesus. The second brings a constant increasing density musical elements rendered in a polyphonic manner involving dialogue between human and instrumental voices.

3. Figures and affects

After a synchronic analysis were crystallized some elements belonging to the rhetoric groups mentioned above.

3.1. Repetition figures

The term *Menschen Sohn* (Son of Man) appears playing a major downward accord in the bar no. 4 and a diminished downward accord in the bar no. 8.

The downward course reproduces feeling pain before imminent betrayal. The same diminished accord supports the interjection *Wehe* (I pity you) in bar no.7, through which Jesus deplores the fate traitors (fig. 1).



Fig. 1. *Repetition figures, bars 4, 8, 7*

In The Lord's Supper scene we find a repetition when the Evangelist required blessing prayer over the bread (bar no. 17) and the wort (bar no. 23).

The suspension on the G note of the first syllable of the word *dankete* (prayers) is a suggestion that the prays rises to heaven (fig. 2).

A key repetition figure, which emphasizes the Eucharistic unity message we can find in the bars 21 and 22. The bread theme as a symbol of Jesus's body starts on the third F major tone, match Jesus voice (fig. 3).



Fig. 2. Thanks figures, bars 17, 27

Musical score for 'The bread theme' (bars 20-21). The score includes staves for Violin I (VI.), Viola (Vla.), Evangelist (Ev.), Jesus (Jes.), and Cantor (Cnt.). The lyrics are: 'Neh - mei, es - - set, das ist mein Leib.' The score features various musical notations including dynamics (p), articulation (accents), and fingerings (6, 6, 4, 8).

Fig. 3. The bread theme, bars 20-21

The presence of the same theme, Jesus voice, in the bars 25 and 26 contributes to the dialectical unity. Because of rhetorical consideration this time we have only slightly modified theme which is in C major tone.

It is obviously the similarity of the two motives for the listener and it becomes more compelling dogmatic unity of the body of Jesus that breaks, to feed and His blood, which make atonement (fig. 4).

Musical score for 'The wort theme' (bars 25, 26). The score includes staves for Violin I (VI.), Viola (Vla.), Jesus (Jes.), and Cantor (Cnt.). The lyrics are: 'Trin - ket Al - - - le dar - aus;'. The score features various musical notations including dynamics (p), articulation (accents), and fingerings (6, 6, 4, 8, 6).

Fig. 4. The wort theme, bars 25, 26

3.2. Imitation figures in fugatto

We can talk about some imitation types in fugatto style into the sacramental scene of The Last Supper. Here there is a magnificent polyphonic texture.

A group of six eights in the bar 25 played by Jesus become a significance element. It is picked up by first violin in the approximate reversal, and after a break in the bar 27 is taken from the first violin in the bar 28 and subsequently by the continuous in the bar 29 and multiplied by the other instruments until the end, where will be played by Jesus.

What is important therefore is rhythmically type as support term *alle* (all), which contains the recommendation of Jesus to all disciples to drink of the cup. This message transcends in time until us, with confidence and hope like a image of some propagating waves to the end of time and space (fig. 5).



Fig. 5 - 6 eights motive, bars 25, 26, 28

In the bar 26 organ plays C major arpeggios. In the bar 27 Jesus takes the first three items but instead of fundamental element brings a seventh dissonant accord. This dissonance on word *blut* (blood) suggests awareness once again that the joy of salvation cost him an enormous price, His own life. The continuous comply the intention and in the bar 27 reaffirms first three elements of the accord, but in stead of C as fundamental it skip downward to C# as seventh for minor accord of second stage (fig.6).



Fig. 6. The seventh accord, bars 26-27

3.3. Dissonance figures

In the bar 4 appears on word *verraten* (betrayl), first dissonant element. This is an increase interval of fourth played by Jesus and also harmonic vertically sustained, by continuous which marks stronger the betrayal (fig. 7).

The image shows two staves of music. The top staff is labeled 'Jes.' and the bottom staff is labeled 'Cnt.'. The lyrics 'ver - ra - ten.' are written below the staves. The music is in a key with one flat (B-flat major or D minor). The interval between the two parts is a fourth. Below the staves, there are numerical figures: '6', '4', and '2'.

Fig. 7. *An increase fourth*

In the bar 11 appears a dissonant accord of seventh sustain by the strings on the text in which Jesus says that it had been better for traitor never borned (fig. 8).

The image shows two staves of music. The top staff has five notes with stems pointing up, and the bottom staff is labeled 'Cnt.' and has one note with a stem pointing down. The lyrics 'ge - bo - ren wä - re.' are written below the staves. The music is in a key with one flat (B-flat major or D minor). Below the staves, there are numerical figures: '6' and '5b'.

Fig. 8. *Seventh accord*

In the bar 13 between Matthew's voice and a bass note it creates a dissonant interval of increases fourth on the word *verrich* (traitor) (fig.9).

The most dissonant sound from the entire recitative is the first time from the bar 14. As a disagree of hypocritical Juda, where he asked *Bin ich, Rabbi?* (Am I, The Master?), Bach conceives a strident sounding, even bleak by F#. This dissolved F fundamental of the precedent accord. The feelings that transpires here are frustration even horror (fig.10).



Fig. 9. *Increases fourth*

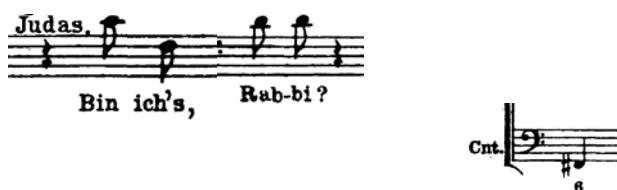


Fig. 10. *Juda's speech*

As a general note stands bleak picture in the first section of betrayal rendered abundance of dissonances. The second stage illuminates and it is characterized by the presence of discrete dissonances necessary in certain cadences, helping to create tension, to the develop of the musical discours.

3.4. Intervals figures

A first specific element here is the vocal line of Matthew, The Evangelist. Bach chooses to assign for a lyric tenor voice that can get to the high register easy and with flexibility. Matthew has an affective participation to the entire event, as a proof stand the skip interval, which are specific for instrumental music rather than vocal one (Taruskin 2011, 380). For example the very first bar captures audience attention through a fifth upward, followed by a skip of eight downward (fig. 11).



Fig. 11. *Matthew speech*

In the bar 13 the downward skip of big sixth as far as support for word *der verrich* (the traitor) it is strong disapproval of Iuda's betrayl. This skip by entering of natural E causes tension because the ear get uses F minor tone. Natural E as sensitive for F introduces us in to F major tone.

From the bar 16 the Evangelist will have two interventions, by which reports Jesus's asking God to bless the bread and then the wort. The abundance of skips this time suggests joy and confidence in the promises of Jesus.

Bach given a profoundly spiritual role to the continuous bass and that is why we propose to observe its course and the significance of its impact. In the bar 4 right after an increase fourth from Jesus vocal line, continuous sustains vertically the same increase fourth, pointing the betrayal, see fig.7 (Block 1985, 22).

After this moment, continuous goes downward suggesting the falling of betrayal After bar 8, it gradually goes upward until the bar 11, sustaining the upward line of the soloist and points the climax from this bar.

Judas has a brief but meaningful appearance. A downward fifth seems to suggest the falling of Judas on the words *Bin ich's...* (It's me...), while the sixth skip on the word *Rabbi?* (Master?) aims to provide respect. The continuous intervention brilliantly highlighted the hypocrisy of Judas.

In the discours of Jesus, along with other musical types mentioned above we can find some from interval field. For example in the bar 2 three times repeated D on the text *mit der Hand* (dips his hand) suggests to introduce a hand into the bowl, as sign points the traitor.

In the bar 5 the sixth skip on the word *dahin* (indeed) plays pain to be betrayed but also the reconciliation with providence.

In the bar 15 Jesus replied to Judas's question by a neutral intervention *Du sagest's*, (you are saying it) which reveales so great decency from Jesus who spares Judas in front of a publicly denouncement.

In the bar 20 Jesus introduces the bread theme as a spiritual nourishment. His vocal line gives trust by its gradually upward going. Than Jesus uses an upward skip of eight on the word *das ist* (this is My body) through make disciples to realize such a decisive truth (fig. 12).



Fig. 12. *Jesus body*

In the bar 25 appears almost the same theme, which introduces the wort topic. The bread theme is on F major tone while wort theme is on C major tone. It is interesting to watch also the continuous. It sustains Jesus's message with a consonant going in tenths, in the first theme and in thirds, in the second theme.

A special effect has the rhythmical division on the word *alle* (all), by which Jesus want that entire mankind will benefit of his sacrifice (fig. 13).

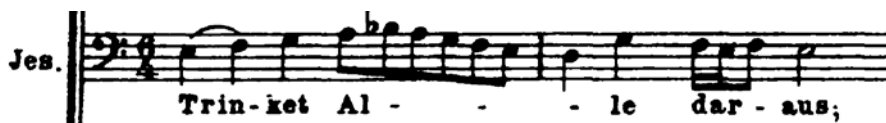


Fig. 13. *Jesus blood*

In the bar 27 Jesus has a seventh acord on the word *blut* (blood), which emphasizes the reality this consonance atmosphere of peace and joy of salvation will cost His Own Life.

In the bar 34 the second violin introduces a group of three sounds in upward passage. This new theme will be picked up and amplified by Jesus step by step in upward line untill the bar 38. It is followed by final climax from the last two bars, which hences the theme of the Father's Kingdom, as a top of the entire melo-dramatic edifice (fig. 14).

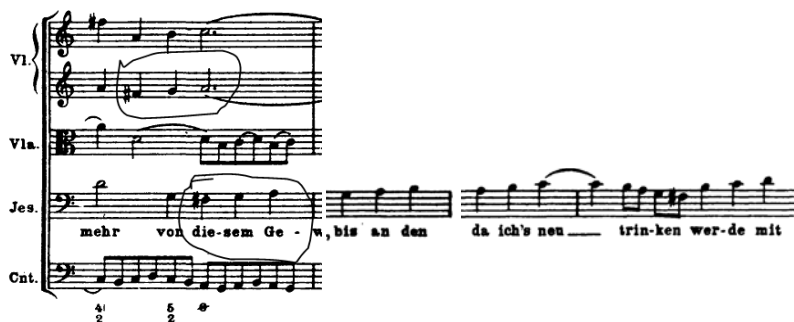


Fig. 14. *Three notes passage motive*

The string instruments (first violin, second violin and viola) are characterized by sustained notes and small intervals in the betrayal scene. Instead, in the Lord's Supper scene the same instruments make several skips of intervals and rhythmic fragmentation as a prove of their join in the emphassys atmosphere of joy.

3.5. Sound figures

In the first stage we have to notice a very distinct sonorousness. First of all, Matthew and Judas s lines are discreetly sustained by organ and continuous highlighted strident cadences or the relevant points. The other strings sustained Jesus voice only. They obtain a sound effect through some accords held by related sounds. almost a visual image of sunbeams, as a halo, which enhances Jesus heat discourse.

The strings conceive a special sound effects at the end of first stage, in bars 15 and 16. They have a downward course of the accords in eights as if they try to veil Jesus's answer, in which He points the traitor. Smoothly downward course of the accords creates visual image compared to the fall of leaves in autumn, as a symbol of traitor falling (fig. 15) (Bălan 1997, 296).



Fig. 15. *The strings downward course*

Previously we talked about the abvious distinction Between the two scenes of recitative in terms of texture and its density as a noticeable implication at the sound level. The continuous flow between both stages is another remarkable issue.

The Evangelist suddenly introduces the second stage, after the first one of betrayal. The Lord's Supper scene comes in the bar 16, the same of first scene ending. Before Wagner and other composers, Bach is supporter of continuous flow music. He has a spiritual reason by relating both scenes. The betrayal and meditation to it should not overshadow the good news which Jesus wants to let for His disciples at the last supper and to us over time. The grim picture is balanced by a positive image, with a solid resonance - the good news (kerygma) of fellowship with the symbols of the body and blood of the Savior.

3.6. Silence figures

I found two distinguished categories: a first category is the breaks in a speech, meant to highlight either what was said or what is to be spoken, a second category constituted Bach's choice to interrupt the instrumental discourse in order to convey some special feelings (Paradiso 2012, 10).

In Jesus speech appear the shortest breaks, at phrases ending and have a role to better outline the rhetoric of the text. In the bar 4 after the words *der wird mich verraten* (shall betray me), in the bar 5 after the word *dahin* (definitely), which marks the destiny of Jesus implacable death, in the bar 6 *wie von ihm geschrieben stehet* (as it is written in the Gospel) and before word *wehe* (I pity you) in the bar 7.

In the bar 10, after *es ware ihm besser* (was better for him) and before the final phrase, emphasizing the idea that it was better for the traitor never to have been born.

In the bar 13 in Matthew's discourse there is a pause between the introducing of Judas and the appellation attributed to him *verraten* (traitor). The Evangelist evokes suggestively, also through the presence of breaks the moments in which Jesus prays to the Father for the blessing upon the bread and the wort.

The second silence category is shown so eloquently in the first picture. Here there are entire passages from Matthew's declamation such as in bars 1,12,13, and 14, where the tension is so great that instruments, hesitate to play, and wait in tense silence giving traitor away. The strings get much energy by silence which generous overflow with Jesus interventions.

3.7. Metro-rhythmical figures

In the features of melodic lines, the metric text imposes eights and sixteenths especially in the first scene.

In Jesus's speech from the second scene we notice many quarters which give dignity to the discours. Also we can find some halves used on key words and they highlight these words.

Bar 27 - *Blut* (his blood).

Bar 32 - *euch*, (I say to you), that Jesus warned them about the final message.

Bar 34 - *mehr* (more) allusion on their presence in the Father's Kingdom.

Bar 35 - *Wein* (wort)

Bar 40 - *Reich* (Kingdom) with repetition of a note where is situated the main climax right to the end.

At the instruments stands long notes by the strings in the first scene with the above shown effect, then a walk in the increasingly fragmented rhythm, predominantly eighths and quarters, which gives to the scene dynamism and joy.

3.8. Figures of tonal dynamics

Bach payed tribute to emotions theory from epoch also regarding tonal design, one of main importance. He overcomes the conventional thinking, proving his mastery and he chooses to play on his own key distinguished paintings by different tones (Lenneberg 1958, 50).

Betrayal scene is shown consistent in F minor tone, which becomes a symbol of the betrayal. After a modulatory inflexion in G minor, which marks the end of the first scene, the second one plays Matthew intervention in B flat major.

In the bar 20 the bread theme as a symbol of Jesus body is played in F major tone. In the bar 25 the wort theme as a symbol of Jesus blood is played in C major tone. And the last part appears in solar tone of G major.

As a personal interpretation I made some correspondence and I equated flat with - and up with +, obtaining the following graphic which reveal an increases of hope from - - - until +.

Butt notices that Bach gave specific meanings for two tones: E minor with a terrestrial resonance and G major with heavenly resonance, the last one is also focused on Jesus as God's Lamb. Bach used to finish his spirituals works either one or the other. He emphasis the kerygma message from the Recitative finishing on G major, as happy end (Butt 2010,100).

- - - (F minor)	the betrayal scene
- - (B flat major)	insinuating the possibility of salvation
- (F major)	the bread theme
0 (C major)	the wort theme
+ (G major)	the salvation in the Kingdom of Heaven

Table 1. *Tonal evolution*

4. Conclusions

A conclusion arising from this analysis is Bach obtains through his music, even in the absence of the gesture most present in the opera, a special suggestion force. He

uses strictly musical elements such as polyphonic structures musical rhetoric figures but also pictorial fantasies and a numerology's symbolism (Kubik 2009, 72). A second conclusion concerns the composer gives flexibility and attention to details which facilitates tension's projection in the present moment (Butt 2010, 254). Bach's music is sacred in its ability to capture live this primordial sanctity and normal human feeling it offers affordable eternity (Misdolea 2011,76).

Also the contrapuntal art by its specific temporal structures, after his own logic of Bach genius can bring into present the possibility to stop the time as a symbol of eternity event.

The Baroque period had an objective vision, in which the affections stimulates a similar and clear response in the audience. On the other hand, in Romantic period compositional practice brings emotional-spontaneous creations which awakens the same kind of spontaneous emotions in both, creator and listener.

Nickolaus Harnoncourt said "that music spoke until 1800, and after 1800 it painted". He claims that rhetoric separates these two eras. In the first music speaks and in the second colours. The music must be understood, since anyone who speaks supposes to be understood, while in the second the affections should not be understood but rather felt. Besides, a large collection of composers and valuable works from both ages testify this is true (Harnoncourt 1998, 34).

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