

The musical libretto and the “accompaniment” functions subsumed to it. The Hourglass opera *The last days, the last hours ...* by Anatol Vieru

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Abstract: *Theoretical formulations about the development of the drama genre called libretto of an opera (operettas) were many and will still be as many, as psychological reactions to any form of theater have an intentional nature, they are phenomenological. These reactions are (maybe) initially blurred, but then they give rise to intellectual reflexes of analysis and synthesis that can no longer be curbed. And this happens because a libretto is a psychic experience means arising from our inner self. It is the first identity-landmark in the long way of emancipation of the opera starting with Orpheus (1609) by Claudio Monteverdi (considered by Theodor Adorno as the archetype of the genre), passing through Mozart's Singspiel, then through the progressive trends of Verdi, Puccini and Wagner's operas, to take only some of the last masterpieces of the twentieth century: Schönberg and Berg's operas, Bernd Alois Zimmermann's collage opera Die Soldaten, (1960) or clepsydra opera- The last days, the last hours... by Anatol Vieru (1997). The dramaturgical accents of a libretto are further transferred to a syncretic projection area getting direct contact with the composer's music, the stage movement, with the live dramaturgy of the characters (drawn from their book-type capsule), with all the arsenal of opera genre objectification. I'll expose here some of the functions that a libretto acquires until it is staged (its final metamorphosis) guiding analytical reality towards Vieru's above-mentioned opera.*

Key words: *libretto, opera character, “accompaniment” functions*

1. Introduction

Today the artistic phenomenon stratifies discursively ever more good training and idiomatic self-regulation rules, (activation of subconscious images as landmarks of the conscious project) so as to disperse multiple resonances of human behaviour (so complex) on the airwaves .The artistic breathing rhythm in the art of music is set by the musicalization of its space; and this musicalization (its rhythmical harmony) is concentrated in the opera representations complex, in the character's emotions, in his gravitational function among the analogies volutes. The pedantic explanations feeding supportive grounds for the Aristotelian principle of Analogy- which the

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psychological, metaphysical, hermeneutical and musicological reflections try to use as a tank of speculations rediscovering the intuitive perception of similarity in the non-similar things - are found as intended and achieved means under different forms of expression in the historical- ideatic genesis of (very) old European culture.

The syntagm "rhythm is a perceived periodicity" introduced by Matila Ghyka, describes a common ancestral place of art evolution: by movement, rhythm, pulsating dynamics of the surrounding phenomena in their extended scale. The complexity of proportion designing in the sensitive relationship with art on the basis of the natural phenomena model through the prism from which it is observed (with its spectrum of symmetries) belongs to the artistic inspiration. The case of opera musical genre integrating "sonority scenes on the thread of a story" (Balint 2015, 161) extracts rhythms and frequencies from different fields of human manifestation articulating similarities already predicted by the above-mentioned principle. It goes without saying that "by "invention" and twinned similitude of opera and modern science I mean something both more and less than a "common ground" (Cassier), be it "a priori" (Panofsky) or "a posteriori" (Hauser), or a "parallel ideas" or an "eternal golden braid" (Hofstadter)" (Kerstein, 1996, p. xi) meanings and mental contents are put together, as well as affective virtues and guidelines to a center- point: the character's expression, his intimate psychological pace attuned to the other rhythms (external) "of the scene". At this point I feel the need to introduce a new concept: accompaniment functions subsumed to a libretto; It reflects external participations/involvements to the act of the immediate world: pure musical gestures (and acoustic instrumentation), orchestration (derezundancy/poetic redundancy space), agogical (tempo, speed), sound dynamics, costumes, lighting, stagehands, so the entire stage production. Once set, well fixed into the ground, a libretto will subsume its startup scenario, the scenario itself becoming an accompaniment function (landmark element). Instead, a libretto's functions (pure, unaccompanied) are centered on the core vocal arsenal itself (derived from the literary adjacent text) unimpressed and unimpressionable –as an attractor derived from the prototype scenario which libretto had once been inspired from.

1.1. The Character and its human physiology set by the libretto

Libretto-meaning that course of action with a personification value which puts together the ingredients of the syncretic intonation: logos, musical, choreographic sounds, sound of "lights", "costume sound",- thus causing a meta-scenario, a sound meta-tuning, syncretic and particular at the same time. It comprises on the vertical and horizontal plot coordination a substantial bunch of aspects concerning the significance of this melting, organically belonging to the human being and transcending it at the same time. I think it is a cosmic encompassment because the secret life of both emanations of the human being represent vast experiences of feelings, states of mind, existential or sound ambient.

The literary screenplay is a first gleam of a dramatic text; it is a starting point and one of the semantic discourse prototypes particularly adjusted, an organic element for a character achievement. According to the nature of its text, the screenplay places the character in the breathing, in the horizon of these resonances. Thus, the literary screenplay is present through the consensus form as a setting which determines, as a unique particular form of merging the concrete (concentrated) self with his persona -with the mask face, of the forged consciousness of the same self, in a conditioning parameterized by the proper consensus of the artistic style (see further below. The geometry of a screenplay as a text- of a theatre play (according to the definition) - will benefit in its transfer towards the musical genre called opera, from a narratological and compositional renewal. This transformation is necessary, being the very necessary (and sufficient) condition for a screenplay to extend its corpus in order to be officially considered a libretto, a text of a musical composition, -precisely of an opera genre (opera/oratorio). When the importance of a libretto grows by its abstraction degree (or on the contrary, by the playful nature of the plot), in case that forms/semantemes are under a magnifying glass through which it is assimilated to the aforementioned sound complex, then consistent analysis repertoires can be established. Thus one can closely follow or "between the lines" the correspondences between a libretto (as a text) and a screenplay (as a text). One can analyze (for example) the adaptation corridor of a libretto starting from a literary screenplay; one can distinguish the hidden biography (libretto's meta text) taking as a starting biographical basis the character (more or less sophisticated) of the screenplay. For example, in the case of Iona opera signed by the composer Anatol Vieru - the libretto adapting work starting from the screenplay (designed by Romanian playwright Marin Sorescu - see his tragedy *Iona*) is relatively relaxed, as the accurate and fluid literary wording (nearly physiological), short monologues of Iona character (from the text screenplay) are perfectly consistent/appropriate with the rhetoric-narrative functions of the libretto.

Introverted, the drama character changes only his relationship with the environment, creates a psychological modular condition, without disturbing the primacy of his intimate type of sensibility. Affected by a kind of obsessive, contradictory interrogation, his personality wavers under the pressure of adjusting to the given circumstances; but, despite his chained state, when he realizes that the world never becomes a moral issue (Jung, 1997, 375), being chained by his gloomy thoughts, the rhythm, the pulsation and the core of his inner dialogue remain the same. Sorescu establishes in *Iona* a strong correlation between self (fundamental simplicity) and the image of this self, and Vieru keeps it ennobled in sounds, transforming it innerly once again. This character is certainly, a Hamlet of the 20th century. "To be or not to be" does not remain confined in a space of logos or a caput mortuum psychic, but gathers its forces to participate in life, the archetype of the inner growth, "whose essence [...] represents the sediment formed during the ancestral psychic functions, that is the organic existence

experiences in general, gained through millions of iterations and condensed in types." (Jung 1997, 184).

Thus a libretto can represent the articulation environment of a vast archetypal, rhythmical-pulsed experience, within the opera genre, unfolding through the harmonic composition law which manages by images (the collaboration of more or less people) and by elementary forms of stimulation of the intuition (exactly like a theatre play or a film) a macro psychology of the character types. Every human type- in its characteristic symptomatology, shaped by the perception's "how" and stated in multicoloured ways by an appropriate narrative matrix, stands out along with his neurosis/his ambitions, either aligned to the particularities of theatrical stage, or as the integrated character in the immanent ambience of the opera genre. In the case of Vieru's opera "The last days, the last hours..." (conceived on the composer's libretto), referral to the psychological traits/outlines by the unique sound formula to fine tune them through the sound, orchestration, through paradigmatic transfer from one language (tonal) to another (modal-atonal), it not only induces the aesthetic message of the story but also the "secret" life of the character.

1.2. The perception of the relationship between the characters's self and his *persona*

The character is a living melting pot of psychic sensations, a medium continuously loading with perceptions that it develops to make them credible both for itself and for the psychological world reflected (from inside out) by its dramatic role. If we refer to a certain character and we scan his characteriological pattern related to his *persona*-let's call it <A> character, we'll see that he dissociates himself from his own self (and from his *persona*) both through himself and through the other figures, human "x-rays" who share his "musical existence. The resulting gestural-characteriological chromatic involves various psychic reactions, significant forms of sensory-motric interaction, a bunch of activated perception areas ideatic and scenographic morphology exercises (connected to the sound in different degrees). The reciprocity of the perspectives which the character manages in a biplane way (as self-sincerity and as his own *persona*) is collected into a center of conscience symmetry, represents while as a darkroom, while as a hole through which impressions penetrate, while as a "center" room or as a room as Universe. So here's a rhetoric of the character which self-develops. Relying on a certain autonomy, the character enjoys his own spontaneity, a partially unconscious condition whose soul speaks ahead to his self. Through the asymmetries embodied by his "polyphonic" monologue experience with the characters , <C>, <D> it aggregates what we call opera as a genre: with a libretto (based on the screenplay), a theatre production, with her sound ample set of representations. The opera substance becomes no less than the scene of a "special brain" with specific forms of expression of the characters which maintains and coordinates (as a guide) both the syncretic-visual

coherence and the autonomous musical one with her slice of the objectivation of the generative register space.

All these are like a melting pot in which the image of the self and of each character's *persona* evolve to an organic mixing in the action workspace, retreating from the ramp all together in order to be received as a unique creative state. "The obscure" room remains to empower in flanks the emotional force of music. If we were to separate the image of the self from the persona all we have to do will be to disable the phrase *melting into consciousness* of the two chained characters chain: self and *persona*. In fact here, both connected and "mixed" forces continuously twisted in the character's emotional experiencing are living substance, setting up his *biography*. The introverted character type is silent, hiding the public exposure, his manifestation is "uncertain and imprecise to such an extent, that he does not dare to appear in front of his fellows other than equipped with products he considers perfect." (Jung, 1997, 103) the extroverted comprises the diversity of dramatic aspects through the natural, spontaneous related system (often only plunging on the surface of the act). Therefore, the sensitive detection of the human behaviour folds and its radiographic representation through the narrative analogy contribution, moves the general human rhythm towards its *mirror*, towards the expression/formulation of the meeting between the intimate self with *persona*, with "the other great lonesome" of the personality. This meeting shall be converted from the (literary) screenplay space into the (musical) one of a libretto, and the latter into the show space (kinetic events anchored in syncretism). This conversion takes the form of an attunement of the dramatic self in relation to "the scenic vocabulary and syntax".

2. About complexity. The hourglass Opera ... an "Eternal Return"

The last opera (*The last days, the last hours ...*) of Vieru's creation gains in complexity owing to the memorable course in terms of mental contents as general human archetypes, configured by two compact morphological structures, carefully delineated: <Mozart-Salieri> structure on the one hand and that of <Pushkin>'s image on the other hand. Then it retains a considerable complexity thanks to valorisation of some concepts which illustrate postmodernism in art such as: *palimpsest, paradigm, narrativity*. Investigating in a transdisciplinary way the new types of modeling the contemporary opera format, we'll meet original activations of the movements, an awareness of the impact generated by the emergence of literary and philosophical modern theories on the art firmament in general. Thus, opera as a historically determined genre well comeasured by generations of composers, will bear the forces beyond the "biographical" limits with the intent of succeeding to reveal its potential asymmetries in drama aspects (facets), the variationing of periodicities up to the intervention of (assumed) ambiguities concerning the libretto

concept. The above-mentioned modeling is generated by components of unique, nondecorative significance, through a strategy intimately tied to *intentio auctoris* as well as *intentio operis*.

The investigative itinerary that I probe through mixing sound paradigms checks two aspects. It is about both *òpus* translation process from a semantic linear space into a rotating multidimensional one = palimpsest (see Mozart's opera cliché idiomatically included as a paradigm and attached to the modal architectonics circumscribed to "Vieru" stilemas), and the integration of verbal epic into an intertextual polarization system of structural fragments. As the arching of the artistic message expands through different layers aiming at various sound materialities, its narrative space implies a curve that buckles (or it turns into a zig-zag); however, the waving allows a certain regularity, skillfully crossing the bridge from one side to another in such a way as to be able to detect the rhymes of every level (of the right part opposite the left part), even if their elementary units are syntactic-semantic remotely placed.

Speaking about the omnipresent constant universal harmony, Vieru's libretto plays a distinctive role, inverting the minimum-sufficient horizontal paradigm (linear arching); this is why the analysis of the (multi) semantic field emitted by "reading" and not "listening" the score coordinates will need to emit paradigmatic interpellations. They must be taken seriously first by the theatre director and by the other actant corpus facing it. Starting from two source texts- *Mozart and Salieri* tragedy signed by A. Pushkin (1830), and *The last days* of M. Bulgakov (1934-'35) - as Pushkin's nuanced biography, light is made in the space of the libretto by Vieru's ability to follow a chronological path for the two bands of palimpsest alike; chronologies are actually two hourglasses that are flowing/draining recording time; they last because they have always lasted pronouncing the archetypal "The Eternal Return".

The supreme attunement of parallel lastings also allows for shadows of other hourglasses, of other texts, involved non-explicitly by the author, although introduced implicitly in a semantic field- apparently proposed in "3D" text corpus. Dealing with the screenplay substance such as a drain delta towards other texts, the analysis must capture the libretto as a wording/formulation of certain cores which performs directly yet non-restrictively/non-teleologically on their text orbits. It is a performance ordered "from the top" which spreads out the binary/duality "performed at the bottom". This study dealt with-since that was its aim- the "aesthetics" of the analysis, without describing its creation and materializing algorithm. To transfer it into an object, in the responsibility of "can be", requires a different module of reference, leading to such a comprehension of the time, of length/duration, of the movement of "different flows/drains until the meeting with meaning, with the ontological and phenomenological meaning of the libretto put at the service of *òpus*.

3. Conclusions

From the register of suggested interferences we only reached (as one can easily see) a sketch of thinking polarities about *what should be* aiming at "the book's table of contents" the analysis of a contemporary opera mediated by the perspective of intertextual targets. This "table of contents" could coordinate the relationship literary text as a libretto text only when the framework goals can shed light with a flashlight on the narratological deeds, the rhetoric pulsation, the hermeneutics picture of the syntactic semantic rhythm of the opera. The extension of meaning which the libretto text gained in the 20th century became spiritualized and civilised on the pedestal of a wider paradigm in experience generally of a reflexive kind and appropriate to increasingly broader criteria of ideatic representation. Evolving historically, today it is about a new energy, "quantum energy", which gives free rein to the language of "theater of the avant-garde"-meaning an hourglass whose symbol does not stand alone in one place to be seen (much admired ...), but it is (precisely because it moves to new formal biologies) tragical and real, assessing objectively the elastic distance between past, present and future.

The composers Anatol Vieru and Aurel Stroe (the latter with "morphogenetic" clepsydras), travel in the space-time by their operas, in dialogue with the landscape of the quantum Universe, by the very distance they go through in their ideatic work. Their complex message, emerged from the shadow of the world (Balint 2015, 35) marks the sensitivity and the comprehension extra musically/ meta-textually synchronously and diachronically investigated alike. Thus *Iona* or *The last days. The last hours*. Last hours ... signed by Vieru, open a flank of criteria to establish and reflect the complexity borders alongside *Orestia I*, *Orestia II-III* or *Das Welt Konzil* of A. Stroe. Through an analysis that could accommodate the composition project with the ("teaching") comprehension/understandability register, new impulses of inspiration will be perpetuated in contemplating the new reading grids, in a metadialogue centered towards the (non) limit of the relationship "pure" music – "pure" libretto.

Adjudication of axiology appropriate to libretto is quantified with dexterity as a result of the observation of its (multi)semantic levels behaviour. From this angle concerning research, the project of an axis on which rotate the listed semantic entities, is still in its early stages .the analytic tools of the opera *The last days. The last hours* ... may be the old ones, of the early 20th century, or they may be others, newly invented. What might be the necessary and sufficient conditions for a text to be ranked as modern or postmodern - especially in the case of musical aesthetic responses given by Vieru for each period he lived – it is hard to state. If the tone of the "hourglass" opera had an unhistoric existence (as I like to think), the temperature of these concepts (more or less fed by the pulp of the sound) it would be able to fill the space between the determinism of the opera (the intentional teleological argument) and the quantum space of the significant elements immersion in the

contemporary opera. But (much more important) is the reaction of the receiver to such a referent, which is revealed not only while meeting *the impression* that opera emits but also through the opera substance. A final conclusion: the horizon of meaning of a libretto can be broken down; we can therefore agree upon the idea of a libretto, the libretto itself and its analysis, all of which having references to the original textual content; the mould of the narrated text on a syncretic type pronounced reality- *libretto* type, will remain to define consequently (through a masterful aircraft) the set of relationships resizing its image, the reception of the resulted aesthetic object articulating intentionally a schematised, remodeled, alchemised expression.

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