

The Poetics of Quietness in Music of the Late Romantic Era

Stacy Olive Jarvis

The University of Manchester, United Kingdom

Abstract

The study focuses on the 'quiet' finale in opera music as a structural and meaningful phenomenon. Finales as a figurative category within the framework of the theory of genre content requires reflection. An essential question of the research is how the finales are organised in the realisation of the artistic idea of the whole. The 'movement pattern' of quietness in a musical composition relates to its dramatic solution.

The study aims to examine the features of the poetics of quietness in classical opera and use it as a reflection of the idea of a panorama of artistic and stylistic trends in the musical works of the Romantic era. In the 19th century, musical endings started to carry different meanings, and non-climactic endings became more common depending on the composer's idea and the plot of the libretto. This allows us to interpret the quiet endings of such as operas *Aida*, *Otello*, *La Traviata*, by Verdi, Tchaikovsky's *Mazeppa* and *Boris Godunov* by Mussorgsky.

A semiotic approach was used to analyse the concept of quietness by exploring the narrative components and features of intertextuality in two operas. This research results in a semiotic analysis of the concept of quietness, which is established in general patterns associated with the functioning of the 'quiet' ending.

The study concluded that there are many gradations of quietness: the quietness of a dreaming soul, the quietness filled with mystical expectation, the quietness of farewell to the world pain and death.

Keywords: displaced plot, narrative, thematic strength, quiet finale, quietness.