



Analysis of the Singing of Cadenza of Vocal Works in Different Periods

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Abstract. Cadenza is an important singing technique in vocal works, and it is also a difficult skill for many vocal learners. Rhythm, intonation, and expression are all important reference factors for good singing. Cadenza has been developed by composers for a long time. However, some students and even teachers in music schools are unable to distinguish the characteristics and methods of the singing cadenza in various periods, and a wrong understanding can lead to wrong expressions and singing. In the perception of many vocal learners, the cadenza is just a way to show off and has no practical significance, but cadenza in different periods is performed in completely different ways. Nowadays, there is little research on cadenza, and most institutions only let students find the pitch and rhythm in vocal teaching, but do not show the content of cadenza and the style characteristics required in different periods. Although there is a great deal of research on arias in opera works of various periods, there is very little research on cadenza. This study combines previous literature, compiles articles on vocal works from different periods, and analyzes them through its own experience as well as repertoire, examining the musical aesthetics of different periods and the way in the cadenza.

Keywords: cadenza · Baroque · Classical · Romantic

1 Introduction

Information on the composition and improvisation of cadenza comes from a variety of sources, including pedagogical treatises by composers and performers of the time, analyses of cadenza by performers and composers of the time, and the writings of present-day musicologists, music historians, and educated performers. Because the literature examined consists of period writings by eighteenth-century musicians and studies conducted by twentieth- and twenty-first-century scholars, these writings vary widely in time.

Johann Georg Tromlitz was a German flutist of the mid to late eighteenth century. In the mid to late eighteenth century, he provided instructions for playing the Allegro in his treatise *The Virtuoso Flute Player* written in 1791. The instructions in his treatise include the correct position of the Allegro, the length of the Allegro, the rhythm of the Allegro, the length, and the notes of varying lengths. His treatise includes the correct placement of the Allegro, the length of the Allegro, the harmonic and interval restrictions of the

Allegro, and the use of Allegro motives. The use of motivic ideas in the Allegro, and instructions for writing Allegro for a variety of instruments.

Daniel Gottlob Tilke's "The School of Piano Playing" was written in 1789, and is a pedagogical text on keyboard playing. The book contains a chapter on improvised ornamental notes, dealing with the Allegro and the lead-in. In addition, David Lasocchi and Betty Bon Mather's *Classical Woodwind Pieces*. Written in 1976, explores sonatas and Allegro and pedagogical writings from the classical period, and presents this information in a practical way. This work also describes many common mistakes made by modern performers when composing such as inappropriate harmonic vocabulary, excessive duration, too high a range, and adding too many ornamental tones.

2 The Cadenza of Vocal Works in the Baroque Period

Early Baroque works are represented by Monteverdi. The cadenza in this period is not difficult, but it requires a very high sense of phrase direction and a close connection between musical mood and lyrics, as well as the need to pay attention to the ornamental notes at the end of the cadenza, and the rapid trills are also one of the difficulties. Taking Monteverdi's art song *Quel sguardo sdegnosetto* as an example, we can find from the score that the florid part of this piece only uses individual column chords as accompaniment, and there are no other chord transitions, so some of the tones will not seem to be in harmony when singing, and this composition technique is the two *prattica* proposed by Monteverdi. He believes that the pre-Baroque works are dominated by the *prima prattica* (music over lyrics), while Monteverdi used *seconda prattica* (lyrics over music) in his composition. As a result, we do not see much sound in the accompaniment of this piece. Because of this, it is necessary to give emotion to the piece through the lyrics and the melody, and the flow of the melody, the transition between tones, and the intensity of the tones become the focus of this period.

The works of the Baroque period are represented by Handel, this period is the heyday of the castrato singers, when singing the works of this period, the granularity needs to be expressed, the speed must also be flowing, and the composer likes to add flowers in various ways, the singer needs to have enough breath and vocal flexibility, but this does not mean that the works of this period do not need to express emotion, the Baroque era is after all The Baroque era was a vibrant and dynamic period, and the works of this period, whether early or in their prime, must not be dull and unemotional. Most domestic academic studies have concluded that the 17th-century arias were intended only to reflect the singing ability and technique of the singers, not the emotional expression of the work. In the 19th century, however, the orchestral section, which was originally used to show off the technique, was closely related to the plot, and composers used it to reflect their creative intentions to the fullest. Take Vivaldi's aria *Agitata da due venti* as an example. The most characteristic feature of this aria is that it has many bass parts in the cadenza, and the accompaniment and melody are almost simultaneous, and they go up or down at the same time, and the works of this period usually have a large scale span. The composer is accustomed to using the up and down lines of the scale to express emotions. It is also important to note that Baroque works usually have an accent on the last beat, followed by a concluding melody.

In summary, the accompaniment parts of Baroque works are not as important as in other periods, perhaps because of the characteristics of the basso continuo. The composers of this period liked to write out only a part of the chords or a few notes in the score, leaving the rest to the performers. Therefore, when we listen to works of the Baroque period, it is difficult to hear two versions of the same piece. Another special type of aria is called *da capo*, which is played by the performer only in the nocturne, because two identical parts played in the same way would seem to lack interest for the audience. However, this period was not friendly to polyphonic works, and composers overemphasized the importance of the voices, so they would play several important voices together, and if the cadenza came in one part, it would cause the overall effect to sound confusing. Because composers at that time only cared about the vertical development of harmony, they seemed to be unconcerned about the horizontal development of melody and its visual and audio effects.

In addition, in terms of the singing characteristics of the singers of this period, most of them were mainly castrato singers. Since the church of the time required absolute silence for women in the church or in public, the church used unaltered male children to replace the female voices. However, the artistic lifespan of boys was very short because they went through a period of vocal change. After puberty, the male voice will sound an octave lower than the female voice, and the voice lacks beauty and flexibility, which leads to the emergence of castrati singers. The castrato singer itself is a product of religious contradictions, a baroque compromise between religion and the violation of human nature driven by aesthetic circumstances, which is why we sometimes refer to this period as baroque (irregular pearls).

3 The Cadenza of Vocal Works in the Classical Period

The classical period of cadenza will discuss in the early and the prime periods. First is the early classical period (late baroque). Gluck is the most representative composer of this period. Since the vocal works of this period, especially operas, are not related to the story, Gluck improved the operas by removing some unnecessary cadenza and ornamentation, so the works of this period are more simple, elegant, and without excessive ornamentation. For example, in the *Gli sguardi trattenuti* from Gluck's opera *Orfeo e Eurydice*, the ornamentation in the work is more like ornamentation, but more complex than ornamentation, giving people a sense of elegance. Basically, there is no more baroque shadow, but more classical solemnity. Therefore, compared to the cadenza in the Baroque period, the cadenza in this period cannot be overly expressed.

As for the cadenza in the classical works in the prime period, there are two different views. One view, represented by Tosi [1], is against a long cadenza. He does not allow too many flourishes in a work, but only one bar of cadenza in an aria so that the audience knows the piece is coming to an end, and only the simplest ornamentation is allowed beyond that. At the same time, Agricola [2] agrees that a piece can be ruined if it is overly ornamented. Take Mozart as the representative. Firstly, although Mozart accepted Gluck's practice of improving opera, he still insisted on his own style in the characterization of opera and portrayed the characters more imaginatively. For example, his operas still have the characteristics of gorgeous style and are influenced by the

Enlightenment, people advocate reason, and the influence on music is reflected in not having too many emotional components in them, so most of the works in this period are mainly in major keys. Mozart's works of this period are mostly in the major key, but Mozart cleverly used the characteristics of cadenza, while keeping the original key unchanged, adding certain variations or ornamental tones. Therefore, the cadenza in this period is not just for showing off, but more of an expression of emotion, and the singer needs to be more natural and interpret the work in the context of the song.

The other view is that some singers still add a great deal of ornamentation to classical works. It is clear from most of Mozart's score examples that Mozart's works are largely free of expressive terms and that Mozart did borrow from the Baroque period in some of his compositions. For example, when Juan Diego Flórez sang the aria *dalla sua pace* from Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, he did not follow the score exactly in the repeated parts, breaking the traditional perception that classical music should be sung strictly according to the score. For example, in the pen of the *dipende* in the first phrase of the recurring section, Flórez does not sing it as upward ornamentation, but as a downward chromatic ornamentation instead. Another example is in the lyric *che a lei*, where a large number of auxiliary notes have been added to the otherwise single melody.

In general, based on an examination of the studies to date and the singing of the singers, it appears that the florid passages of the classical period, although essentially improvised, need to be sung according to several aspects such as length, time value, rhythm, melody, and harmony. According to David Lasocki [3], the classical cadenza should be longer than the Baroque ones, but not as long as the Romantic cadenza that emerged later. Also in singing, although German flutists Johann Joachim Quantz [4], Daniel Gottlob Türk [5] and Johann George Tromlitz [6] state that cadenza should last only one breath, Tromlitz describes many exceptions to this rule, according to Tromlitz, breathing after short notes or before the final trill, and both Quantz and Tromlitz state that many cadenza of the time were too long.

Structurally, classical cadenza usually begin with a *rallentando*, and the first note should be a long dominant chord note, usually the dominant in the key, and Quantz said that you can't sing too far from the original one.

4 The Cadenza of the Vocal Works in the Romantic Period

The composer who made the most use of the cadenza in this period must be Rossini. In the heyday of the Italian *Bel Canto*, the cadenza in this period was somewhat more important than the granularity and needs to be distinguished from the characteristics of the Baroque in its prime. In addition, because it was the Romantic period, with its emphasis on individualistic colors, the cadenza were not as rigorous as those of the Classical period, and the composer could adapt them to the situation, so that the different versions of the same vocal work we hear today may be sung differently by different singers. In the aria *una furtiva lagrima* from Donizetti's opera *Lelisir D'amore*, the cadenza in this work, different performers would even change the rhythm, speed, or pitch in order to conform to their own understanding in order to change the overall feeling of the florid part by examining a total of 52 versions of *una furtiva lagrima* so far, and the differences of these versions The differences between these versions may

be reflected in the strength of the tone, the variation of the tone, the height and so on. For example, in the version performed by Luciano Pavarotti and Lawrence Brownlee in 2014, it is obvious that Pavarotti sings each accent on the first beat of the rhythmic pattern in groups of four sixteenth notes, while Brownlee emphasizes more on the flexibility of this section and does not put the accent on the first beat. Brownlee emphasizes the flexibility of the cadenza and does not make the accents too obvious.

In addition, depending on the timbre, the singer may add or subtract notes in the cadenza according to his or her own conditions. Compared to the Classical period, the Romantic vocal division is more detailed. For example, we would not ask a dramatic tenor to sing a work by Rossini because the dramatic tenor's voice is thick and strong due to its timbre, so it would lack beauty when singing the cadenza.

5 Conclusion

According to Quantz, the cadenza was intended only to create an unexpected surprise for the audience, while today's view is that the flashy section needs to fit the main passion and emotion of the piece, which shows that there are still different interpretations of the cadenza, and Swain [7] says that the flashy section is not adequately addressed in current literature or education has not been adequately addressed. For these reasons, many performers do not have the knowledge necessary to create historically accurate or audience-pleasing cadenza. This study will allow more vocal learners to gain a deeper understanding of cadenza, which is more than simply singing or existing to reflect the singer's technique; different periods of cadenza have their own characteristics in terms of singing as well as expression.

At the same time, we need to pay attention to the singing of the cadenza: the cadenza should show the audience something novel, not imitative, but at the same time it needs to fit the thematic idea of the work. In addition, the cadenza should try to avoid using dissonant sounds. Finally, in addition to expressing emotions, the cadenza section needs to have some techniques and musical variations to maintain the interest of the audience.

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