

# The Rhetoric and Symbolism of Forms in Romantic Music



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Cambridge  
Scholars  
Publishing



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This book first published 2020

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Lady Stephenson Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2PA, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

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ISBN (10): 1-5275-4725-6

ISBN (13): 978-1-5275-4725-4

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## FOREWORD

The analysis of the impact of rhetoric and the symbolism of forms in philosophy, language and fine arts comes from Greek and Latin influence on western tradition, and, quite independently, from Indian tradition(s). Basically, rhetoric is the discipline that uses any type of discourse, for example, spoken, written, gestural, and with various forms of symbolism, with the aim of efficiently communicating with and persuading an audience to understand and share an attitude, an event, or to support a fact or a decision. Aristotle defined rhetoric as the faculty of discovering and using all the available means of communication and persuasion in a given situation to communicate and to convince an audience.

Rhetoric uses a large number of communication means provided by language since language basically conveys meanings. However, a discourse aimed at convincing an audience clearly needs to combine language with non-verbal persuasion means, which are as crucial as the contents conveyed by language. These non-verbal means are essentially visual or based on the use of appropriate sounds or musical elements.

This book explores the contribution of music and in particular the symbolic aspects of its structures or forms to rhetoric during the Romantic period. Form in music is a central issue, probably more than in any other fine art. Investigating forms and the symbolic elements they convey is important to understand the music of the Romantic period. We feel that there is quite an abundant literature on the symbolism of forms and its use in rhetoric which covers the Baroque Periods, but much less for the Romantic period. The goal of this book is to fill a gap in this area. This book remains an introduction and an exploration, it cannot be substituted for much deeper investigations dedicated to precise authors or to precise forms.

The association of music with a text or, more generally, with a conceptual or a psychological content, is of much interest and importance as an intellectual consideration but also in a number of aspects of our everyday life since rhetoric influences our everyday actions and behaviours. This book is not a treatise on rhetoric, symbolism or musical analysis. It is basically an introduction to a number of analytical elements of music symbolism and rhetoric developed during the Romantic period. Investigating the impact of form on our cognitive and psychological

attitudes remains somewhat subjective and empirical: the reader will note that different listeners may analyze things in different ways: these differences in opinion are natural and necessary.

This book is organized as follows. The three first chapters develop theoretical considerations about Romanticism, rhetoric and symbolism of forms. Chapter One develops the sociological and cognitive contexts behind rhetoric and symbolism in Romantic music. Then, Chapter Two deals with the different facets of rhetoric and symbolism, in order to provide the reader with the necessary background. Chapter Three deals with the complex problem of what kind of meaning is conveyed by music and how it is realized by means of symbols. In our approach, music is essentially analyzed as both a cognitive and symbolic activity.

In a second part, Chapters Four to Eight are dedicated to specific composers whose contribution to symbolism and rhetoric is essential to the understanding of the Romantic period. Chapter Four is devoted to L. van Beethoven, whose work constitutes a bridge between the Classical and Romantic periods and whose contributions to form are essential. Chapter Five is dedicated to F. Schubert and Chapter Six to R. Schumann. These three composers are essential in the perspective adopted in this book. Then, Chapter Seven is dedicated to the Golden Age of Romanticism. We present a number of composers whose contributions are also crucial and open the next periods of music: post-Romanticism, Symbolism, Impressionism, among others. The contribution of composers such as F. Mendelssohn, F. Chopin, J. Brahms, H. Berlioz, F. Liszt and R. Wagner are surveyed and analyzed on the basis of examples. Finally, Chapter Eight deals with post-Romanticism and beyond. This chapter shows how the symbolic systems which flourished during Romanticism have evolved till contemporary music, and attempts to identify a set of constants.

A large number of examples from several different composers are provided in order to motivate and illustrate the different facets of symbolism in the Romantic period. For the sake of readability, most of the examples are borrowed from chamber music, piano or organ. Indeed, we feel reading orchestra scores or transcriptions is more difficult.

This book is conceived as an introduction. However it requires some basic familiarity with music, musical notation and musical score reading for an in-depth understanding. It is nevertheless designed to be accessible to a large audience. The different concepts which are used are carefully introduced so that the content can be understood by musicians, linguists, philosophers and computer scientists. The bibliography section contains additional references for readers who may want to expand their knowledge on precise topics.

Numerous score extracts are given in this book to illustrate the formal and analytical elements. They are all public domain and come from the IMSLP large score database. I thank its contributors. These scores are available at: [https://imslp.org/wiki/Main\\_Page](https://imslp.org/wiki/Main_Page).

The terminology of musical language has been a major concern in writing this book. The lexicon of music shows significant differences depending on the language used. In this book, we have adopted the terminology used in British English. We feel it is quite easy to become familiar with the English terminology for any reader. We suggest that readers consult web sites such as: <http://www.cadenza.org/glossary/search.cgi>, among many others web sites of great value, or Wikipedia pages, for example: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Musical\\_notation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Musical_notation) to have access to the lexicon of music they might need. In our text, some textual elements of musical notation are often given in Italian or German. These elements are however marginal and in general familiar to most musicians, otherwise translations are given.

We feel that this book, although introductory, opens many investigations and directions for further analyses, at the intersection of symbolism and music rhetoric. To conclude this preface, I would like to thank my institution, the French CNRS (*Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique*), for providing me with the adequate means and environment for achieving this work. I also very warmly thank Dr. *Marie Garnier* for a careful and insightful proof-reading of this book.

—Patrick Saint-Dizier



## CHAPTER ONE

# RHETORIC AND SYMBOLISM OF FORMS IN ROMANTIC MUSIC: THE SOCIOLOGICAL AND COGNITIVE CONTEXTS

### **Introduction**

In this introductory chapter, we begin by showing that music can be understood and modelled from different perspectives: as a communication activity, a language activity, a conceptual activity or a cognitive process. Then, we address the cultural and sociological foundations of romanticism and their impact on music composition and performance. This chapter ends by an introduction to the main concepts which define the notion of rhetoric in music. This topic is addressed in more depth in Chapter 2. The present chapter proposes a relatively simple introduction to the main challenges and notions of rhetoric and symbolism which are addressed in the chapters devoted to more in-depth analysis, dedicated to specific composers, beginning from Chapter 4.

### **Understanding the Language of Music**

Besides its obvious emotional and psychological dimensions, which are basically irrational, music is also a very rational system that obeys complex and relatively rigorous construction laws. Aristotle argued that *'music is numbers made audible'*. Considering the high level of elaboration that most musical works have reached since the 17th century, one could argue that music is *'symbols, structures and processes made audible'*. This perspective motivates the development of conceptual and formal models which can account for the different dimensions of the structure of the musical discourse. This perspective includes models for composition, performance and listening.

Language utterances convey information, beliefs or jokes, suggest actions, teach, give orders, ask questions, remind listeners about their obligations, etc. Language is first designed to convey meaning. Meaning entails reasoning, knowledge and beliefs. Meaning may provoke affects. Music does not convey information and meaning in the same sense than language. Music is designed to convey affects, but the content of a musical work is probably not just psychological, as shall be seen below. The means used to stimulate affects in music have a strong internal structure, with a high level of cohesion and recurrence. Detailed analyses of this perspective are developed in (Raffman 1993), (Patel 2003), and (Carruthers 2010). These means are based on abstract symbolic structures and principles, called figures of sounds, and on their variations. Such structures are also found in natural language, for example in the form of metaphors (Bartel 1997), (Saint-Dizier 2014). These symbolic structures induce abstract forms of non-verbal meaning. These figures of sound, the musical counterpart of figures of speech, have strong emotional capabilities due to their rhetorical and symbolic power.

Music, in its macro and micro structures, conveys a number of symbolic elements such as typical numbers and proportions (van Houten et al. 1985) which can be discovered in the structure of motives (also called motifs) or in the structure of a development. If numbers and proportions are essential from an aesthetics point of view, they may have, in addition, a strong psychological impact. The way these proportions are perceived by listeners is developed in the next chapters.

Music also makes a frequent use of metaphors that parallel language metaphors, for example going up is positive (for example, *interest rates are going up*), going down is negative (for example, *the government fell during the demonstrations*). These were developed in the baroque and classical periods: metaphors are very common in romantic music and still frequently used in the contemporary period.

Besides the analysis of the emotional aspects of music, there is a major rational component that needs to be explored and categorized in a scientific manner. In spite of the rigorous types of analysis they induce, the formalisms used in logic, artificial intelligence, language analysis and cognitive sciences could be the ideal formal vehicles to realize this exploration and to develop accurate models.

A good command of the rational components of music is essential for musicians. Indeed, before using an instrument, or conducting an orchestra or a choir, most performers develop a detailed mental image of the musical work they want to play, including the main structure, local structures and types of developments, the articulations and the main associated gestures.

It may be different from the composer's mental images. This mental image includes structures, processes and emotions. It can also include concrete elements such as colors, pictures or textual elements. Performers often repeat that they do not play an instrument with their fingers, but with their brain. Although some physical training is crucial, fingers must remain marginal: they execute the brain's orders. Quite a similar view is shared by composers: as early as 1917, E. Varèse said '*I dream about instruments that obey my thoughts, that would lend themselves to the combinations I wish*'.

The study of music composition, performance, improvisation, listening, whatever the tradition (Western, Indian, etc.), involves forms of theorizing. This means developing an analysis of the knowledge and the processes that conceptualize the parameters involved in the composition, the listening or the reception and the performance of a piece of music. However, as shown in (Temperley 2004), understanding music cannot be reduced to rigorous abstractions, as more informal aspects of cognition and personal psychology largely interfere and contribute to making music a complex, but fascinating, topic of investigation. Rhetoric is one of these major features of music for which a combination of a formal analysis and a psychological approach is required to make an in-depth analysis of its real scope and effects.

## Music and Rationality

Since the Greek period, a number of authors investigated the structure of music from a rational and scientific point of view. Till the Renaissance, music was part of the *Quadrivium* together with geometry, arithmetic and astronomy. The three other 'liberal' arts, called the *Trivium*, included grammar, rhetoric and dialectics, developed for example in (Worthington 2010). Music was however the closest discipline to the Trivium because of its communication capabilities. Saint Augustine (354-430, in the *Confessions* and *De Musica*) and Boece (470-525, in the *Consolations*) argued that music is a science. With the formal means available at that period, they developed a rational analysis of music based on numbers and proportions, supposed to reproduce the harmony of movements, in particular the movements of planets.

At that period, music was considered not only as a mathematical object that described the structure of melodies and rhythm, with a strong explicative power, but also as a form of abstraction that reflected creativity and perfection. In the Gregorian tradition, music was viewed as a *perfect sound with a unified view of body movements, pitch, metrics and text*; it

was an art of the orator (*jubilus*). At that period singing and recitation were not very different: this is probably the origin of the more recent *SprechGesang*.

In the early Middle-Ages, Hildegard von Bingen (1098-1179) was probably the first composer that developed the most interesting scientific and logical analysis of music rhetoric. Her very visionary style, made of images with striking effects, reveals a nun fascinated by theological questions and their psychological representations. Her analysis is illustrated by liturgical songs that she composed, under the form of monodies, including hymns and sequences, such as: *Ave Generosa*, *Ordo Virtutum*. A few years later, in particular with the emergence of the notion of motive development and simple forms of polyphony (*Notre Dame School* with *Perotin*), composers of the medieval period developed an in-depth analysis of the role of music based on a metaphysics of sound organization: music became a rational part of theology.

From the Renaissance and during the Baroque and Classical periods, the scientific analysis of the musical discourse and of its effects on the listener gradually took some distance from philosophy and theology (Laurin 2012). Music underwent major structural developments. It was therefore associated with a more analytical vision, with, among others, the following major points of investigation, which are still influential to-day:

- Musical structure: which include melodies as well as comprehensive structures, such as fugues, variations, tripartite forms, sonatas, rondos. These structures were generalized at the end of the 19th century with, for example, the use of cyclic themes (C. Franck) and poly-thematic forms (A. Bruckner, J. Sibelius) and then in the early 20th century by the Vienna school of Serial music (A. Schoenberg and A. Webern). The serial vision was then generalized to all dimensions of music in the 1950s.
- Harmony: with the enhancement and the diversification of the tension-resolution mechanisms in tonal harmony, which allow e.g. the development of more complex types of colors and contrasts. These generalizations of the initial principles of harmony, gradually lead to the notion of note cluster (from F. Chopin, culminating in C. Debussy), the re-introduction of Greek and medieval modes and rhythms (e.g. M. Emmanuel, C. Tournemire), and, finally, the dissolution of tonality.
- Rhythmic sequences: which acquired a large autonomy regarding pitch and chords in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, leading to polyrhythmic polyphonies,

- Polyphonies: with the analysis of their communicative perception and dimensions on the listeners, culminating in the late Baroque period (J.S. Bach) and then in the late romantic period (for example, M. Reger) and in contemporary music with extensions of the Baroque model based on various types of mathematical models.

A number of 17th century composers, who were also mathematicians and philosophers, produced treatises on music structure and rhetoric dealing with the above aspects, such as M. Praetorius (1571-1621), J. Burmeister (1566-1629), M. Mersenne (1588-1648), A. Werkmeister (1645-1706), and J. Mattheson (main treaty circa 1722). More recent theoretical works which share this vision include in particular those of A. Schoenberg (Schoenberg, 1954) and P. Hindemith (Hindemith, 1984). The synthesis published by G. Cantagrel, for example in (Cantagrel 2006), gives a good overview of the musical traditions and philosophy of the baroque period.

## Music and Cognitive Sciences

Besides the obvious parallel that can be made with language, a major approach to research in music and music rhetoric in particular comes from cognitive psychology. Music cognition aims at improving our understanding of human psychology and emotion capabilities. In 1944, A. Copland said *'that music gives pleasure is axiomatic. But the source of that pleasure is one of the prime puzzles of consciousness'*. Analyzing the notion of pleasure and how it operates in human beings is a complex challenge where rhetoric plays a major role. However, the formal and experimental means to investigate this dimension are extremely complex.

It is important to recall that the approach of the composer or of the active performer is essentially mental: before creating a musical work or before using an instrument, it is essential for most composers and performers to develop a mental image of the musical work they want to produce or play with a deep understanding of all the details. Analyzing and modelling the features, the construction and the evolution of this mental image is a step toward our understanding of the notion of 'musical' pleasure.

The development of cognitive models aim at telling us how active musicians, performers, composers and improvisers express emotions and reason about these emotions. These models may also reveal features related to the role of music in the society. Specific models developed in e.g. (Raffman 1993), (Jackendoff et al. 2005), (Jackendoff 2009) and (Patel 2003, 2008) are of much interest to go in this direction.

The cognitive approach of music is very challenging: so far musicology has essentially focused its domain of analysis on idealized listeners, with a clear separation of knowledge and action, a tribute to Cartesian assumptions (Sloboda 1985). Cognitive musicology tries to model musical knowledge and production in a way that integrates most aspects of music in relatively strict mathematical and computational terms using, for example, the formalisms developed for natural language theories and processes. It is however clear that, for example, Beethoven's musical thinking cannot be reduced to rewrite rules and well-formedness constraints or to the possibilities of a Turing machine. What is left out is essential.

The area of research of music cognition investigates the existence of music composition universals, in a way similar to the analysis of universals in linguistics developed for example in the Generative framework. This research has to deal with complex experimental problems among which the identification of the parameters of a given style, ways to measure these parameters and ways formally represent music components (sound, processes, and structures). These parameters and universals are explored in depth in the next chapters, which are dedicated to major composers of the romantic period.

The next question that arises is how to use this data to have a better understanding of music, music composition, and music performance. Besides improving our understanding of music, one of the results could be the production of new forms of music (Mantaras et al. 2002), (Temperley, 2004).

Western music notation, based on scores, is a simplification and a partial abstract model of the reality of music and its practice. Scores represent, for example, pitch and rhythm in a straightforward and mathematical way, but they fail to describe how to interpret pitch and rhythm in context. Experimental psychology, in particular Gestalt psychology, has developed models that explain how music is perceived from scores, on the basis of patterns or grouping principles. Gestalt psychology (Hamlin 2019) has also contributed to the analysis of the perception of musical motives, including rhythms. These models include perceptual notions such as proximity, continuity, closure, similarity, regularity, etc. These models partly allow an analysis of the discrepancies observed between, for example, notated rhythm, performed rhythm and the listener's perception. The same observation holds for chords, melodies, tempi (for example, *rubato*) and many other dimensions of music, even if they may be more difficult to perceive.

An interesting and relatively simple model is Narmour's Implication-Realization model (Narmour 1980) which is based on the notion of expectation. Expectations in the listener's mind are structures or motives that the listener, via its musical experience, expects to hear after a certain musical sequence. For example after a series of dissonant chords developing a tension, a resolution is expected. When these expectations are not fulfilled, the listener is surprised, disappointed, uncomfortable or even stressed. Narmour proposed a cognitive Gestalt theory based on a set of expectations for musical motives which provides a psychological model for melodic surface realizations. This system can be generalized to more abstract structures such as interval alteration, timbre or even dynamics. However, it makes the hypothesis that the listener has some familiarity with the style of the piece of music she/he is listening to.

Recent research in music cognition focuses on musical action and aims at modeling the listener's and the musician's behaviour. These actors are integrated into a model of intelligent agents where their different actions are modelled and interact. The notion of musical knowledge remains however quite shallow or simple. Several assumptions guide this research. The first is that it is possible to identify stable primitive ingredients that constitute musicians' behaviour. The second critical point is the possibility of defining subsets of consistent rules or constraints operating on these ingredients. A third question is the nature and the structure of a musical memory, and the way it differs from the language memory and from a computer designed to automatically produce music. For example, experiments show that e.g. humans tend to remember musical fragments of a musical piece which are not necessarily tied together by any global and coherent musical principle, such as a motive development or a theme repetition. These could be the fundamental ingredients on which a model could be developed, from, e.g. (Lewin 1986) model of musical perception. The perception of large forms is more difficult to analyze, however it seems that the expectation system developed by Narmour and followers could be of much interest.

## **Musical Structures vs. Language Structures**

Music is a language since it allows humans to express themselves (Blacking 1980), (Katz et al. 2009). It may therefore be interesting to compare its structure with other forms of natural language. Natural language is roughly organized in five levels:

- (1) the phonetic or phonological level, dealing with the oral aspects of language, then
- (2) the lexical, level where words and their morphological properties are generally described in a lexicon, possibly associated with an ontology,
- (3) syntax, which describes how words are organized to form grammatically correct sentences. Linguistics has developed a large number of theories of syntax, which, in fact, have a lot in common,
- (4) semantics, which, given the principle of compositionality, constructs a meaning from the individual meanings of the words in a sentence, and, finally
- (5) discourse, which organizes sets of sentences into a coherent discourse (Grosz et al. 1996), possibly with an underlying rhetorical structure (Mann et al. 1988).

These five levels incrementally contribute to defining the structure and the meaning of a text or a dialog. In an orthogonal way, we can also consider the metaphorical dimensions of language which are also largely present in music (Lakoff et al 1999), (Lawley et al. 2000). A number of typical examples are developed in the chapters that follow.

Music has an organization which is also highly hierarchical, but quite different from natural language, except for the discourse level and, to some extent, the syntactic level. In spite of these differences, a number of formalisms borrowed and adapted from formal linguistics are used to model musical structures, in particular (Lehrdahl et al. 1983) and (Jackendoff et al. 2005) for a generative analysis of music structure. The main levels involved in music are, informally:

- the melody level which accounts for the structure of the 'horizontal' dimension of music. This is the level where motives are developed to form themes. It can be compared to the level of the sentence,
- the harmony level, which develops the 'vertical' level of music in close connection with the melody, by specifying the structure and the sequencing of chords, and how they support motives. This level has no counterpart in language,
- the polyphony level, which develops the organization of parallel layers of melodies materialized by several voices. Polyphony must observe the rules of harmony and melody construction. Polyphony does not exist in natural languages since it will obscure understanding, except for a few novels or theater plays,



- the form level, comparable to the discourse level in language, that specifies various musical organizations (for example fugue, sonata, minuet) on a scale larger than the melody or theme level.

Music has many other components which are crucial in rhetoric, such as: timbre and instrumentation, meter and rhythm, dynamics and accentuation, phrasing and articulations, and in music of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, more advanced forms, such as note clusters, groupings, series, etc. These latter structures are developed in Chapter 8.

## The Romantic Revolution in Music

The Romantic period emerged gradually from several trends which are generally expansions or counterweights to the Classical and Baroque traditions. A detailed analysis of this transition is described in (Taruskin 2010). Let us note in particular the *Stylus Fantasticus* which developed during the early and middle Baroque periods, with typical organ and instrumental works showing a lot of expressive freedom, in contrast with more severe forms of counterpoint in *ancient style*. The tenants of the Stylus Fantasticus were e.g. G. Frescobaldi (*Toccate, Ricercari*), J.J. Froberger, D. Buxtehude (organ *Preludes*), N. Bruhns (organ *Preludiums and Fugas*) and the early works of J.S. Bach, in particular his toccatas, some violin solo sonatas and early cantatas such as the *Actus Tragicus*. The *Stylus Fantasticus* appeared again with relatively similar themes about a century later under the term *Sturm und Drang*. It is a typical German movement as far as literature is concerned and an German and Austrian movement concerning music, illustrated in particular by J. Haydn, K. M. von Weber and several of J.S. Bach's sons. Freedom and expression of personal emotions are the main features of this movement. This movement ends with the *Freischütz*. The musical expression of the *Sturm und Drang* (and to a lesser extent of the *Stylus Fantasticus*) is characterized by tragic colours, syncopation, dissonant chords, violent dynamic contrasts, rhythmic hammering, unexpected periods of silence, extensive use of brass instruments, etc.

The *Sturm und Drang* movement motivated the development of new, short forms, typical of romantic composers such as R. Schumann, F. Liszt or F. Chopin. These short forms (*intermezzi, nocturnes, impromptus, romances*, etc.) were more adapted to the expression of romantic feelings. Large and elaborated forms such as sonata forms tended to be less frequently used after L. van Beethoven and F. Schubert, although they did not fully disappear.

The style of Enlightenment period, which covered most of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, was the dominant trend. It was challenged by the *Sturm und Drang* movement and also by forms of *pietism*. The musical expression of the Enlightenment movement was more controlled and rational. The Romantic revolution in literature emerged at the end of the eighteenth century as a reaction to the *Enlightenment* philosophy and ethics. It is a mixture of various trends, not as coherent as the *Enlightenment*, which played a major role in the evolution of music composition and in its relations with poetry. Music, as literature a few years before, underwent major revolutions in form and contents in the early years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, while keeping links, but with striking evolutions, with the previous periods, for example at the levels of polyphony and rhetoric.

Among a few others, F. Schubert, J. F. Reichardt and L. van Beethoven stand at the threshold of the Romantic era. A few typical works illustrate the emergence of the Romantic period. In 1815, F. Schubert composed the *Tragic* symphony no. 4 in C minor. Then, in 1816, he wrote a large number of lieder, string quartets and other chamber music works, among which the well-known the quartet *Der Tod und das Mädchen* and the quintet *Die Forelle* D.550 with piano and double bass. In the period 1802-1812, L. van Beethoven began to write passionate and innovative compositions which often threatened the classical forms in which he was educated. This period includes the symphonies no. 3 (*Heroic*) and no. 5 (C minor), the very chaotic *Appassionata* piano sonata in F minor (1805), a number of string quartets and the opera *Fidelio*. Then, after a dark and depressed period (1813-1817), L. van Beethoven investigated new forms and thematic development techniques, which supported a new philosophical perspective, perfectly expressed through music. L. van Beethoven composed major works during this period (1818-1827) such as the *Mass in D major*, the last five string quartets, a number of piano sonata (in particular the sonatas 30, 31 and 32) and the 9<sup>th</sup> symphony with choir and soloist. In contrast with the previous periods, instrumental music, without any relation to a text, became prominent.

Both F. Schubert and L. van Beethoven were influenced by a number of German poets including J.W. Goethe, Novalis, F. Hölderlin, J. Byron, J.P. Richter and H. Heine. They were also influenced by a number of philosophers such as W. Humboldt, K.W.F. Schlegel, and F.W.J. Schelling. These poets and philosophers originated and developed the main features of Romanticism.

Romanticism was more widespread than the Enlightenment both in its origins and influence. No other artistic movement has had comparable variety, touching to the roots of a large part of a population, whereas the

Enlightenment was basically confined to a tiny elite. The origins and motivations of Romanticism can be summarized by the following main points, which have their translation in music:

- ***Nature and folklore***, where fairy tales could attract the attention of a larger population of readers than the productions of educated poets. Romanticism favored naturalness and simplicity, it favored long walks in the mountains, a higher attention to lakes, to rivers and to the sky. Nature is a major source of inspiration for a large number of painters and poets.
- ***Individualism*** which partly originated from new forms of economy, the declining influence of the Church, the rebellions and the chaos induced by revolutions, such as the French revolution. The romantic vision is centered on the composer's life or on a few characters in close symbiosis with the composer. L. van Beethoven was probably the first composer to live from his compositions, independently of any protection from an aristocrat or a church, although he regularly got some financial help. He obviously gained more and more freedom, and this is visible in the evolution of his style. However, he had to fight to survive. Individualism entailed a new vision of the world where people favored their own desires with less consideration for morality, religion or tradition.
- ***Expression of emotions*** is certainly one of the major features of Romanticism, in particular sadness, affliction, sorrow and even horror. The development of empathy for the others (J.J. Rousseau, C. Dickens), independently of any religious character, which was the norm in the Baroque period, induced a greater sensitivity to feelings and these personal feelings could be expressed publicly. This was not in contradiction with individualism, but rather a consequence. The influence of the Medieval and the Gothic periods, where imagination and fantasy was the rule, is noticeable in various authors such as W. Scott and F. Mendelssohn.
- ***Exoticism*** was associated with relatively simple images and stereotypes, from either northern (e.g. the Scottish witches of Macbeth, the Russian and Scandinavian legends) or southern countries with a sunny atmosphere where everyday life was easier (Spain, northern Africa) as described by European travelers and European colonialism. Exoticism was not opposed to nationalism, another feature of Romanticism, but it reinforced it.

The visions developed by Romanticism were sometimes felt to be excessive, as, for example, in H. Berlioz' *Symphonie Fantastique* and *Requiem*, R. Schumann's *Kreisleriana*, or R. Wagner's operas (e.g. *The Ride of the Valkyries*). These works and their authors were the target of criticism about their emotions and sometimes their underlying nationalism, independently of the great value of these musical works and their contribution to the evolution of the musical language. This motivated counter-movements in the late nineteenth century, such as, in music, Impressionism (M. Ravel), Symbolism (C. Debussy), Neo-classicism (C. Saint-Saens, I. Stravinsky), Realism mixed with some Romantic features such as exoticism (e.g. G. Bizet), and anti-romanticism (E. Satie). Another important trend is the use of traditional forms, for example, the use of the counterpoint from the Baroque period in music works from the Romantic era. This was done in the attempts to develop highly structured works, sometimes interpreted as a form of nostalgia for the past (J. Brahms, M. Reger, A. Bruckner).

## **Main Features of Romantic Music**

The major economic and social changes that occurred in Europe during the 19<sup>th</sup> century had consequences on composers, this is described in detail for example in (Plantinga 1984) and in (Taruskin 2010). For example, composers could no longer be funded by rich and wealthy nobles. They had to survive from their own work. Some of them had to give lessons to increase their income. As compensation, they gained the freedom to let their imagination and emotion soar spontaneously in their works.

New instruments emerged and replaced older ones while others received improvements. This is the case for the piano which, to a certain extent, replaced the harpsichord and the pianoforte. The piano was felt to be more expressive than the harpsichord, with the possibility of larger nuances, attacks, articulations and a larger ambitus (the number of notes available, which was relatively limited for the harpsichord in the lower and higher registers). The piano itself underwent several transformations till the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to have the power and the timbre it has nowadays. The brass instruments gradually developed, became more diverse and easier to tune and to play, and got a larger role in orchestras (e.g. in R. Wagner operas and in H. Berlioz Requiem).

Besides the piano, quartets and quintets, possibly including the piano besides the strings, became very popular. They could be played at home with a few friends. These forms were frequently considered as a test-bed

for composers to investigate new ideas. They played a major role in the diffusion of music and the circulation of these new ideas.

Orchestras gradually became larger, with a higher diversity of wind instruments and percussions, allowing stronger dynamics effects and a larger range of colors. Although the opera dates back from the 16<sup>th</sup> century, it became really popular from Mozart's operas. During the romantic period, operas developed a number of themes borrowed, for example, from W. Shakespeare (for example *Hamlet, the Tempest*), as in G. Verdi's operas. The literary themes became more subjective (compared to, for example, the theological or mythological themes of the Baroque period), with a higher expression of personal emotions. To develop this subjectivity, dynamics, pitch, tempi and rubato played a more central role than in the past.

Musical forms and the treatment of themes saw major evolutions during the romantic period. New short forms (*nocturnes, arabesques, rhapsodies, intermezzi, moments musicaux*, etc.) allowed composers to express their emotions more spontaneously without the need to have recourse to predefined forms and their formal constraints. From J. Haydn, symphonies replaced the old suites. Program music (F. Liszt, F. Mendelssohn) and character pieces played an important role because of the freedom of their structures. Harmonic progressions became more elaborated to gradually go beyond the notion of tonality.

## **Late and Post Romantic Music**

Late romantic music saw an amplification of the forms and trends developed during the Romantic period. It is frequently viewed as a bridge between the Romantic period and the modern period, although the modern period emerged as a reaction against some excessive attitudes of romanticism. The late Romantic period is characterized by the development of a more chromatic harmony (sometimes moving to unexpected tones), longer musical pieces, and the use of larger orchestras. Operas became longer, symphonies may last more than an hour (for example, G. Mahler's and A. Bruckner's symphonies) instead of about thirty minutes, and orchestras may count more than one hundred musicians, whereas they almost never counted more than forty musicians around 1820, for example, to perform Beethoven's symphonies. Musical forms were expanded, for instance with A. Bruckner and C. Franck, with the development of poly-thematic sonata movements and cyclic themes. This was a period of virtuosity, flamboyance and color. This period includes,

for example, authors as diverse as R. Strauss, J. Sibelius, M. Mussorgsky, and A. Scriabin. Characteristics of this period are described in Chapter 8.

Gradually, during the late Romantic period, composers acquired a different social status: they were gradually considered as geniuses or as artistic references. They often had students. The number of music schools and conservatories increased, in particular in Europe. Instrument training was enhanced up to a high level of technical virtuosity. This period also saw the development of nationalist schools, for example in central Europe. The influence of non-European music was emerging.

Post Romantic music covers the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Post-romanticism exaggerates certain elements of romantic music such as contrapuntal complexity (for example, M. Reger in his organ works), complexity of forms, new uses of instruments, etc. Post-romanticism is often associated with various forms of mysticism (most notably A. Scriabin, R. Vaughan Williams and F. Liszt) or a return to the Gregorian tradition (the French organ school with, for example, C. M. Widor, C. Tournemire and L. Vierne).

Finally, neo-romanticism covers movements in literature, music, and philosophy which occurred during the first part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is a kind of return to the values of romanticism. This includes composers who rejected other styles such as realism, impressionism, symbolism or serialism.

A number of composers had different styles and composition periods in their lives, for example, romanticism followed by neo-classical. Others combined styles such as J. Brahms and A. Dvorak, with the use of classical forms in a romantic context. Others, such as B. Bartok (for instance in the *Duke Bluebeard's Castle*) or A. Schoenberg in their first works, are typically romantic, whereas they evolved in different directions in a later stage of their career. For example, A. Schoenberg string trio is typically not romantic. Finally, a number of composers saw a major evolution of their style, such as F. Liszt who moved from typical early romantic to polytonality and a style close to B. Bartok in his late productions for the piano. It is therefore difficult to classify a number of composers in a single period, in particular for composers of the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Nevertheless, we give below a short list of composers by period, with the goal to associate names with the definitions given above.

***First Romantic period*** (born before 1800):

- F. Schubert (highly melodic works inspired from *lieder*, developed in Chapter 4),

- L. van Beethoven (symphonic, major evolution of his musical language, developed in Chapter 5),
- F.A. Boieldieu, J. N. Hummel (French revolution and after),
- J. Field (promotor of the *nocturne*),
- N. Paganini (violin virtuoso),
- C. M. von Weber (operas, symphonies, concertos),
- G. Rossini, G. Donizetti (operas with *bel canto*).

***Main Romantic period*** (born early 1800):

- H. Berlioz (massive orchestra, character pieces, did not play the piano),
- F. Chopin (short, character pieces: nocturnes, mazurkas, polonaises, scherzo, etc.),
- R. Schumann (symphonic music, character pieces, developed in Chapter 6),
- F. Mendelssohn (vocal and symphonic music, influence of the Baroque period),
- F. Liszt (symphonic poems, vocal music, piano virtuoso),
- G. Verdi (famous operas),
- R. Wagner (who developed an interesting chromatic language, the notion of *leitmotiv*, and a massive but transparent orchestration in his operas).

***Late-Romantic period*** (born 1820-1850):

- J. Brahms (symphonies, chamber music, piano music),
- C. Franck (organ and symphonies),
- E. Lalo, G. Bizet, C. Saint-Saens,
- C. Cui, A. Borodin, P. I. Tchaikovsky (symphonies, ballets),
- A. Bruckner (famous symphonies with a lot of novelty),
- B. Smetana, M. Bruch, M. Mussorgsky, E. Grieg,
- E. Elgar, R. Vaughan Williams (recent English school),
- G. Puccini (operas).

Most of the authors of the Late-Romantic period developed original forms, new types of melodies and harmonies, with a bright orchestration. Some of them were influenced by national styles and popular music, in particular the Russian composers.

***Late and post-Romantic period:***

Authors of this period tended to borrow quite a lot of features to local music, and to various styles and trends:

- J. Massenet (operas), E. Chausson (return to modal music), G. Fauré (complex harmonies and motives in chamber and vocal music),

- A. Dvorak, N. Rimsky Korsakov (character music), E. Glazounov,
- C. M. Vidor and L. Vierne (organ symphonies),
- C. Tournemire (mystic organ music, use of medieval modes and Gregorian liturgy fragments),
- R. Strauss (major operas, lieder and program music),
- I. Albeniz (Spanish school),
- G. Mahler (large symphonies with soloists and choir),
- J. Sibelius (innovative symphonies, program music inspired by Finnish legends, very personal modes and harmonies),
- F. Poulenc (for some of his works, operas and religious music),
- H. Wolf (lieder),
- A. Scriabin (very complex piano music, mystic chords, complex rhythmic structures, symphonic music),
- S. Rachmaninov (rather classical for that period),
- M. Reger (organ with a massive polyphony, religious music).

## **Main Trends in Rhetoric over the Centuries**

After a short presentation of the main feature of Romanticism in contrast with the previous periods, let us present the main features of rhetoric, considered from an historical point of view. The technical aspects of rhetoric are developed in Chapter 2.

Coming from the Greek tradition (Worthington 2010), rhetoric is first a social activity, oriented towards controversy and discourse, in particular in political and judicial areas. It is frequently associated with argumentation. Rhetoric is a set of techniques designed to create good quality texts, with appropriate articulations, developments and style. From its original persuasion and argumentation uses, rhetoric evolved toward a more aesthetic point of view and became an important element of poetry.

The first Greek proponents of rhetoric were the Sophists (such as Protagoras and Gorgias). The emphasis was on the contents of a discourse and its organization, which were felt to be more crucial than the language forms that were used. Socrates' contribution to rhetoric is a major development of critical thinking. It is developed in Plato's dialogues. Then, the focus of rhetoric gradually evolved towards more external aspects. For example, Isocrates established a school in 390 BC, putting the emphasis on morals. He developed a sophistic rhetoric with an emphasis on style, with the development of complex forms, sacrificing clarity to form. This approach has been influential on literature and theater.

In a very different perspective, Plato developed an analysis of the differences between the objectives of philosophy and those of rhetoric,



while Aristotle established most of the main structures, categorizations and classifications well-known in philosophy, science and rhetoric. Other Greek sources include e.g. Démosthènès (in the application of rhetoric, he was an excellent orator), Demetrius (focus on style), Dyonisus (arrangements of words) and Longinus (development of the Sublime).

The main Latin sources include Anon, Tacitus, Cicero, who described the virtues of the ideal orator and his qualifications (*De Inventione, De Oratore, Brutus*, etc.). Quintilian (*Institutio Oratoria*) developed several foundational aspects of rhetoric, and showed its importance in political and judicial institutions. He also elaborated topics in rhetoric applied to education that any orator should consider and master.

During the Middle-Ages, rhetoric was part of the *trivium*, it was somewhat in opposition with the views of the Catholic Church where argumentation was not admitted in a number of sectors. A stricter use of grammar and logic was preferred to rhetoric (Donatus, Priscien). Rhetoric was essentially taught to political and administrative managers, diplomats, and judges, so that they could express themselves and present their ideas, motivations and arguments in an accurate and efficient manner. Rhetoric was also used for sermons and religious predication, with the aim not to discuss religious principles but to convince the audience of the religious dogma.

The resurgence of the initial principles of rhetoric occurred during the Renaissance, in association with poetry. However, during the Renaissance, dialectic was the most prominent discipline; therefore, argumentation got some autonomy with respect to rhetoric. Erasmus (*De Duplici Copia Verborum et Rerum*, 1512) is probably the most prominent figure of this period with major contributions to the areas of elocution and invention. The art of making a good speech, with appropriate words and language forms was developed by major orators and poets such as Boccace, Dante and Petrarque, in his Sonnets.

During this period, the importance of the other forms of art (painting, music, sculpture, architecture) that could contribute to rhetoric was emphasized. The scholars investigated how the principles of textual rhetoric were applied in these artistic activities and vice-versa how some elements of these arts could contribute to rhetoric in its non-verbal dimensions. The goal of rhetoric in art at that time was not only to please and touch but also to instruct. The *inventio* and the *dispositio* are indeed central in art (*what to say* and *how*). In addition, in music, the study of metrics and rhythms (*elocutio*), memorization and restitution to an audience was, and still is, very crucial.

From the 15<sup>th</sup> till the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, a number of scholars and composers developed music composition principles in relation with rhetoric. J. Burmeister, J. Mattheson, J.J. Quantz and J. P. Kirnberger are the main authors and theoreticians that heralded this approach. The principles they developed are still of much interest for musical analysis and interpretation of the Baroque and early Classical periods. From the 17<sup>th</sup> century, rhetoric and language are closely interrelated, with the goal of defining the ideal social behaviour, such as the courtiers found in the royal or prince courts in Europe. Theoreticians and writers from this period include B. Lamy and N. Boileau.

Rhetoric then tended to disappear in literature during the 19<sup>th</sup> century with the rationalist period, where it was felt to be a useless form of chatter, or worse, a kind of trickery. However, it was frequently used in music with references to the past centuries. The revival of rhetoric in the 20<sup>th</sup> century is due to a few major philosophers such as C. Perelman (Perelman 1973), artists, and theoreticians of argumentation. The major trend in rhetoric aimed at analyzing, by means of rational and scientific methods, the structure of messages produced by orators and musicians from a linguistic, psychological, cognitive and logical perspective. In music, this scientific approach was paired in psycho-musicology with an in-depth analysis aimed at identifying the impact of motives, rhythms, timbres, etc. on an audience. The vision was based on empirical and analytical processes, with much more reliable and accurate foundational and scientific results than in the previous periods, which made a heavy use of personal intuitions and where contradictions between authors were frequent.

More recently, with the development of media such as the TV and the Internet, the analysis of music associated with social and political discourse, advertising, business, in particular in its persuasion potential on the public, became prominent. Several research trends and research groups emerged dealing with central topics in music including rhetoric, psycholinguistics, symbolism (for example, K. Burke), poetry, communication, and sociology. Discussing these approaches goes beyond this short presentation, but these trends reveal a very active and productive revival of rhetoric in various domains of analysis.

The analysis and the interpretation of the effects of music on the listener is becoming a central issue. A number of psychological measures of the effects of sound on the brain are being conducted in psycho-acoustics in order to develop a more accurate analysis of sound perception. Music is obviously a form of interaction which triggers various types of reactions, positive or negative. Music is for example capable of presenting contrasts, in particular via theme elaboration, opposition between themes,

and variation techniques. Sound intensity, pitch level, tone, theme profile, choice of instruments and orchestration, durations, accentuation, etc. are parameters of such contrasts. These investigations have a lot of concrete applications for the media and in business.

Such an analysis is made possible because music is a normalized and rather generic communication activity in the sense that it follows rules recognized and accepted by large groups of listeners, in a certain context or historical period. It can therefore be perceived as a rather homogeneous and uniform way of communicating. Finally, music is figurative in the sense that it uses forms, largely symbolic, which have a clear impact on listeners. These considerations allow an analysis of the rhetorical components frequently used in musical works, which will be developed in the next chapters.

## **Rhetoric in Music in the Classical and Romantic Periods**

Rhetoric associated with the use of symbolic elements was developed in music as early as the Middle-Ages and the Renaissance. Historical references are given, for example, in Saint Dizier (2014). Briefly, the main parameters of music that are considered relevant for rhetoric for this period are the role of music in the society, the theory of music structure, the art of performance and the evolution of musical notation, which, for this latter point, was still quite primitive. Medieval rhetoric tended to favor eloquence as a means to convey contents, emphasizing the structural aspects of musical form and style. The structural aspects reached a high level of complexity in religious music and lyric pieces, for example by G. de Machaud (1300-1377) or Matteo da Perugia (early 15<sup>th</sup> century). On the contrary, the Renaissance period favored persuasion and how to move an audience.

The transition between the Renaissance and the Baroque period started with, among a few others, the Dutch composer J. P. Sweelinck (1562-1621), who made, in his works for the organ, a synthesis of a large number of styles: Italian, German, Dutch and French. A number of composers were also mathematicians and philosophers, such as J. Burmeister. They developed several mathematical aspects of music and investigated the relations between music and poetry, in particular via the development of musical figures and their symbolic and rhetorical effects. Finally, with the emergence of large polyphonies, the foundations of counterpoint evolved toward a certain stability.

The transition between the Renaissance and the Baroque is quite complex. It is a combination of continuity in the *dispositio* (e.g.

elaboration of complex forms of counterpoint never used so far) which is the macro-level of musical discourse, and a radical evolution towards more advanced forms of *elocutio* and style. Concerning *elocutio*, besides foundational and philosophical aspects due to, for example, the major impact of Kepler's and Leibnitz' theoretical works, an important element was the development of the quality of instruments and singers. Elocution was improved by the fact that performers had a greater freedom to include a large variety of ornaments into the music they were performing. Composers of this early Baroque period who were influential in the development of symbolism and rhetoric include M. Praetorius (1571-1621), J. Burmeister (1566-1629), J. H. Schein (1586-1630), H. Schütz (1585-1672), C. Monteverdi (1583-1643) and S. Scheidt (1587-1654).

The Baroque period was a very active period for the development of music rhetoric, culminating in Northern Germany in particular in D. Buxtehude's and J. S. Bach's works. Theology and religion were the main themes for cantatas and masses, besides a few instrumental pieces produced for sponsors (suites, concerti) which were designed for pleasure and distraction or for particular important events. At this period, a large number of treatises were produced in aesthetics and on the way to produce various forms of *pathos*. The objective was to develop, in a more rational way than previously, the means to produce various forms of emotional states in the listeners' minds such as hope, happiness, doubt and astonishment.

The classical period, which ranges approximately from 1750 to 1800, includes composers such as J. Haydn, W. A. Mozart, W.F. Bach, J. C. Bach, K. Stamitz, D. Cimarosa, and C. W. Gluck. Most of them are German or Austrian composers. This period is very different from the previous one. It is the period of pleasure, delight and spontaneous emotion. The major composers of this period developed new forms of compositions such as string quartets (Fournier et al. 2004) that became the starting points of the 19<sup>th</sup> century music. For example, the bi-thematic sonata movement was firmly established with its rhetoric profile at this period, in particular by J. Haydn in his string quartets (Begin et al. 2007) and piano sonatas. Similarly, symphonies became popular while instrumental suites tended to disappear. The architecture of symphonies, in four movements, induces a stronger form of rhetoric compared to suites. In particular, these new forms introduce new aspects of *invention* and *arrangement* in music rhetoric.

The new views on musical composition entailed adaptations of the previously established rhetorical schemas so that they touched the public of this period. Schemas were simpler, more accessible and with less references to theological considerations such as chorales. The figures of

sound of the Baroque period became progressively obsolete, while basic forms, in particular of the counterpoint, remained and were even expanded. From the perspective of rhetoric, this period can be seen as a transition with the Romantic period, with the *Sturm und Drang* movement.

During the classical period, a theoretician such as J. N. Forkel (1749-1818) identified two classes of symbols: forms and figures, the former for the intellect and the latter for the imagination. The first class of symbols deals with forms, analyzed by the intellect (canonical forms, variations, etc.) while the latter is dedicated to melodies and rhythms, able to stimulate the imagination. For example, the structure of Mozart's overture *Die Zauberflöte* is based on typical forms such as numbers, proportions and musical motives representative of the Masonic movement of which Mozart was an active member. There are also many links between the music figures deployed in this overture and the situations being described in the opera (running, zigzags, twisting, agitation, terror, and escape). Instrumentation in operas and symphonies started to become important for the rhetorical discourse, with a greater care concerning instrument tone and induced colors, especially with the woods (for example, with the clarinet which was introduced in orchestras not long before). In the major operas of this period, the different characters are abstractions rather than real characters (e.g. *Tamino*, *Zarastro*, *Papageno*, *the Queen of the Night*), they constitute facets of the philosophical debate omnipresent in most operas up to *Fidelio*.

J. Haydn (1732-1809) is probably one of the last major composers to adhere to classical rhetoric. The principles and the new vision he developed in his sonatas, string quartets and symphonies illustrate his deep knowledge of classical rhetoric. From an aesthetic point of view, J. Haydn developed very well-delimited and established forms, with clear and relatively simple melodies and rhythms, clear and well-balanced transitions between themes, appropriate modulations, etc. This enabled the composer to move the listener quite easily and also to stimulate his intellect, as any good orator must do. Most of his major works include the presentation of contrastive views, on the basis of two themes, developments, transitions and conclusion, where expressivity is the main point. These schemas will be further expanded in the Romantic period. However, the Romantic period had a preference for short and more spontaneous structures. These large and complex forms were still used in symphonies (for example by F. Mendelssohn, J. Brahms, and R. Schumann), concertos, string quartets and piano sonatas (for example by F. Liszt and J. Brahms) which however attracted less composers after the expressive and formal summits reached by F. Schubert and L. van Beethoven.

L. van Beethoven (1770-1827) is considered as the transition between the Classic and Romantic periods. In his symphonies, string quartets and piano sonatas (analyzed in Chapter 4) he developed a very innovative approach to musical composition that went far beyond the forms established by J. Haydn. In spite of the numerous difficulties he had to overcome, he developed a very optimistic view of artistic creation. Heroism and a strong faith in humanity are the major characteristics of his discourse. This is perceptible in the form of his melodies and musical motives. His rhetorical and symbolic discourse was largely influenced by poets and philosophers such as Kant. An interesting feature is that his rhetorical discourse over a certain topic is not confined to a precise piece, but ranges over large sets of his production. For example, questions raised in early piano sonatas progressively get a response in later sonatas and in string quartets.

The Romantic period in music roughly covers the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in particular its first part. The major forms of this period are the symphony, the string quartet and the sonata (piano solo or piano with another instrument). The symphony gradually evolved towards symphonic poems that follow a literary theme, a character, or even a precise poem or novel (for example, F. Mendelsohn, F. Liszt, H. Berlioz, R. Strauss, E. Grieg). Symphonic poems are elaborated from typical musical motives sometimes called *leitmotifs*. These represent a character, an idea, a concept or a type of behavior. First tested in smaller formations, symphonies became the ideal place to promote experimentations.

From a structural and formal perspective, the second part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century saw the development of new forms with some symbolic content, such as poly-thematic forms (for example, A. Bruckner), cyclic themes (for example, C. Franck), as well as reinterpretations of baroque forms such as passacaglias, fugues, etc., for example in J. Brahms' symphonies, in particular the fourth one.

The concerto became the place where the composer directly expressed himself directly and, if he was also the performer, showed his instrumental virtuosity. The heroic position of the soloist must be outlined in the romantic context, fighting alone against the power of the orchestra. Finally, the opera reached its climax with authors such as G. Verdi, G. Puccini, R. Strauss and R. Wagner. The symbolism developed in R. Wagner's operas and the evolution of his orchestral and harmonic language is a major example of the evolution of rhetoric, given a certain philosophical perspective. Except for a few major works (for example, H. Berlioz', R. Schumann's and J. Brahms' Requiems and vocal works by C. Frank), the religious repertoire became less prominent. In G. Verdi's requiem, the influence of the opera and of the Italian *bel canto* is largely perceptible.