A Study of the Effects of the Italian Influence on the Vocal Literature of Handel for the Purpose of Proper Interpretation

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A STUDY OF THE EFFECTS OF THE ITALIAN INFLUENCE 
ON THE VOCAL LITERATURE OF HANDEL 
FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROPER INTERPRETATION 

A Covering Paper 
Presented to 
the Graduate Faculty 
Central Washington State College 

In Partial Fulfillment 
of the Requirements for the Degree 
Master of Arts in Music 

by 
Francis Gene DeMiero 
July, 1967
DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC
CENTRAL WASHINGTON STATE COLLEGE

presents in

Graduate Recital

FRANK DE MIERO, Tenor
CHARLES W. DAVIS, Piano

PROGRAM

FOR EVER BLESSED ..........................................................Handel
(Jephtha)
O LORD, HOW MANY ARE MY FOES? ..................................Handel
(Occasional Oratorio)
GREAT DAGON HAS SUBDUEO OUR FOES ...............................Handel
(Samson)
WHERE 'ER YOU WALK ....................................................Handel
(Semele)
LASCIA CH'IO PIANGA ....................................................Handel
(Rinaldo)
LA FLEUR QUE TU M'AVAIS JETEE ...................................Bizet
(Carmen)
UNA FURTIVA LAGRIMA ...............................................Donizetti
(L'Elisir D'Amore)
MATTINATA ...............................................................Leoncavallo

INTERMISSION

DICHTERLIEBE ............................................................Schumann
(Six selections of the Cycle of Sixteen Songs)
Im Wunderschoenen Monat Mai
Aus Meinen Tranen Sprissen
Die Rose, Die Lilie, Die Taube
Wenn Ich In Deine Augen Seh'
Ich Will Meine Seele Tauchen
Ich Grolle Night

ONLY THE CHILDREN KNOW ............................................Hunt
LULLABY .................................................................Schirmer
(Forty Ways to Sunday)
LET IT BE FORGOTTEN ................................................Kagen
I HEARD A PIPER PIPING .............................................Peterkin
WHEN I HAVE SUNG MY SONGS .....................................Charles

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
MASTER OF ARTS IN MUSIC

HERTZ RECITAL HALL
July 19, 1967
8:00 p.m.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A properly trained vocalist includes in his repertoire literature of all periods of music history—Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic and Contemporary. Not only should the singer have a complete knowledge of the proper mechanics and a skilled use of his instrument, but also he should be aware of the musical styles of each of the major periods. To properly interpret any selection, the performer is required to be acquainted with more than just the text and musical score.

"... One needs to know about the life of the composer, the motives behind his composition, and particularly, the aesthetic style characteristics and influence of the age or period" (6:97).

In the course of his career, the student of vocal music is likely to encounter compositions by George Frideric Handel. Since "Handel's manner of writing for the voice is so extraordinarily considerate of the singer" (23:115) his songs and airs are popular inclusions in the artist's repertoire. Responsible interpretation of Handel's vocal music lies in the hands of the performer. An understanding of the many factors which influenced Handel's compositional style assists in this endeavor.
I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. It is the purpose of this study (1) to investigate the influential philosophies and musical forms of the Baroque, (2) to survey the shaping factors of Handel's life and career, (3) to determine the major characteristics of the dominating Italian principles, and (4) to cite compositional examples of this Italian influence.

Importance of the study. It is hoped that this concentrated study will aid the student of vocal music in understanding the factors which influenced the majority of Handel's vocal compositions.

II. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study is confined to determining the proper interpretation of Handel's vocal literature and particularly that literature performed by this writer.

III. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Bel canto. In Italian, bel canto means beautiful singing. The term "denotes the Italian vocal technique of the eighteenth century with its emphasis on beauty of sound and brilliancy of performance" (1:82).
Opera. Opera literally means "a work in music" (1:505) and is a return to the ideal of the old Greek drama. Apel further defines opera as "a drama, either tragic or comic, sung throughout, with appropriate scenery and acting, to the accompaniment of an orchestra." The Baroque opera may be defined as a dramatic spectacle in which the entire text is set to music, and which consists mainly of solos.

Oratorio. An oratorio is a "large-scale work for solo voices, chorus, and orchestra" (25:402). With an "extended libretto of religious or contemplative character [the oratorio is] performed in a concert hall or church, i.e., without scenery, costumes, or action" (1:516).

Aria. Found in opera of all periods and in the cantatas and oratorios of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the aria is "an elaborate solo song (occasionally for two solo voices), with instrumental accompaniment" (1:49).

Da capo aria. The principle musical form of the Neapolitan Baroque opera was the da capo aria. This aria form follows "a simple ternary plan, represented by the structural formula, A B A, i.e., a section, a contrasting section, and a return to the first section with embellishment" (27:75).

Monody. Monody means "music for one singer" and, according to Apel (1:455), "denotes that particular type of accompanied solo song which developed around 1600."
Recitative. Designed to melodically carry on the action from one aria to another, the recitative is a declamatory text with the inflections of spoken speech (26:76).

Polychoral. Apel (1:592) states that the polychoral style refers "to compositions in which the ensemble is divided into several (usually two or three) distinct groups singing and playing in alternation."

Canzona. Canzona is a term which designates "16th-century Italian secular vocal music" (1:118).

Disjunct. The movement of a single melodic line by leap, rather than by step to the next note, is considered to be disjunct (7:315).

Appogiatura. Appogiatura is an ornamental note that is melodically connected with the main note that follows it (1:42).
CHAPTER II

THE BAROQUE PERIOD

The art, literature and music identifying the cultural trends of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries make up what historians refer to as the Baroque era. Baroque music started about 1600 and extended to 1750; the period closed with the deaths of Bach and Handel. Unlike the Renaissance, the Baroque period does not show a uniformity and refinement of practice throughout its one hundred and fifty years. Rather, the music falls into three fairly well-defined phases, designated simply as: early, middle and late Baroque. George Frideric Handel was a representative of the late Baroque. Handel's greatness and historical significance are evidenced by the fact that his contributions "dominated the musical life of a nation for a century after his death" (25:436).

I. PREVAILING PHILOSOPHIES

The Baroque was an era of great contrasts, both spiritual and secular, such as the physical love of life and the exaltation of religious emotion. Since spaciousness and richness were esteemed qualities in all forms of art, emphasis was placed on size and rich decoration.

... Soaring lines, ebullient swellings and convolutions, expansive rolling curves characterize the music, the architecture, the paintings, the literature.
Everywhere there is visible the piling up of theatrical and dramatic effect, the use of strong color areas, alternations of light and shade, violent contrasts of emotional representation (21:125).

As secularism grew, the Church saw its controlling element of society shaken in the Renaissance, and during the Baroque yielded place to the state as the source of authority on "men's lives and arts" (26:73). The importance of princes and hereditary sovereigns increased and magnificent palaces were built, befitting their status. Musicians entertained the nobleman and his guests to provide a pleasant pastime.

... Everywhere art is pressed into service: to glorify the ruler, to add to the pomp and brilliance of the Counter-Reformation, to amuse, to entertain, to contribute to the lustrous panorama of life, be it the worldly spectacle of the temporal ruler or the religious magnificence of the Church (21:126).

Since the Baroque was the "era of absolute monarchy" and "all art and culture served the cult of the ruler" (25:382), all courts maintained elaborate musical establishments. With the employment of the great artists of the time, these princely courts of Europe were gradually developing into centers of artistic activity where special demands were made upon the skills of the professional musician. Reflecting the characteristics of the Baroque habit of thought and expression, Baroque music is impressive, dynamic in movement, rich in harmonic color, dignified in utterance, and above all, intensified in emotional expression (21:126).
II. IMPORTANT VOCAL FORMS

During the Renaissance musical art had been developed largely by the Church. In the Baroque period music was influenced more by nonecclesiastical bodies. Since the nobility and upper classes took the greatest interest in music, secular music took precedence over sacred music.

**Opera.** The greater popularity of secular vocal music, compared to sacred, was stimulated further in the last two decades of the sixteenth century. This was attributed to the creation of opera, which continued the supremacy of vocal music during the major part of the Baroque period.

Baroque opera, which had become the favorite diversion of the aristocracy, centered about gods and heroes "in whom the occupant of the royal box and his courtiers found a flattering likeness of themselves" (25:382). Opera, the art-form which is the most characteristic expression of the ideas of the period, is considered by many to be the single most important achievement of Baroque music.

**Oratorio.** In addition to the opera, another composite vocal form, the oratorio, originated in the Baroque. Where opera was "designed for and supported by the aristocracy, the oratorios were written for a wider public" (36:271). Suited to the taste of the middle class, these choral dramas with "their soaring arias and dramatic recitatives, stupendous
fugues and double choruses consummate the splendor of the Baroque" (25:441).

The prevailing Baroque philosophies along with the development of the above vocal forms played an important part in formulating Handel's musical style. In reverse, Handel's outstanding contributions not only influenced the musical philosophies of the time, but also greatly influenced the development of the opera and the oratorio. Indeed, Handel's works depict "one of the most majestic, tender, and human voices ever lifted in praise of life, of love, of beauty, and of the art of music" (37:307).
CHAPTER III

HANDEL’S LIFE AND CAREER

I. IN GERMANY

George Frideric Handel was born February 23, 1685, in Halle, a town in central Germany then known as Saxony. Handel's father was a barber-surgeon who opposed a musical career for his son. When Handel was seven, he went with his father to the court of Duke Weissenfels. The court musicians allowed the young lad to play for them on the organ. When the Duke overheard the gifted child, he was greatly impressed and urged Handel's father to allow him to study. Father Handel, afraid to displease the Duke, consented.

Zachow (Zachau), the organist at the Lutheran Church in Halle, gave Handel a thorough training in every phase of music. After three years of study, Zachow confessed there was nothing more that he could teach the boy. When he was eleven, Handel visited Berlin. He so pleased the Elector of Brandenburg that the official offered to provide funds for Handel's continued study abroad in Italy. Father Handel refused and ordered his return home. Soon after, his father died. His sense of duty made him continue his studies at the University of Halle.

Upon his appointment as organist at the Cathedral of Moritzburg, Handel abandoned the study of law. In 1703, he
resigned that post and went to Hamburg where he secured a position under Keiser, director of the Hamburg Opera.

There was an opera house there, and he became one of the violinists in the orchestra. Sometimes, too, when the conductor was away, he would take his place, sitting at the harpsichord and playing it to keep the band and singers together. (That was how conducting was done in those times. Nowadays we use a stick or 'baton,' for the same purpose) (31:26).

During this time he composed his first opera, *Almira*, at the age of nineteen.

II. IN ITALY

Handel left Hamburg in 1706 for Florence, Italy where he wrote his first Italian opera, *Rodrigo*. Handel "came into close contact with the oratorios of Giacomo Carissimi" (2:116). He also became personally acquainted with the great opera composer Alessandro Scarlatti and his son, the harpsichordist, Domenico Scarlatti. Handel was "feted by the art-loving princes of Italy" (2:116). Audiences in Venice applauded twenty-seven successive performances of *Agrippina*. The Italians honored the talented musician by shouting, "Viva il caro Sassone!" ("Long live the dear Saxon!") His three-year stay in Italy was profitable and filled with triumphs. He had become famous at the age of twenty-five!

III. IN ENGLAND

In 1710, Handel succeeded Steffani as Kapellmeister to the Elector of Hanover. Taking a leave of absence, Handel
visited London. His successful opera, *Rinaldo* (1711), set a new standard for Italian opera in England and established his reputation there. Having overstayed his leave, Handel returned to Hanover in 1712. Later that same year, he acquired another leave to go to London. This time he stayed; he became a citizen and resided in England for the remainder of the forty-seven years of his life.

His popularity soared. With his composition for the celebration of Queen Anne's birthday came the status of court composer which meant a life pension of two-hundred pounds a year. In 1714, the Elector of Hanover ascended the English throne, succeeding Queen Anne. Handel composed *Water Music* (1717) at the King's request.

Inasmuch as opera fell into a declining state in England in 1717, Handel accepted an appointment as music master to the Duke of Chandos at the ducal estate at Canons, near London. During his three years there, he produced anthems, masques and also harpsichord suites for his pupils.

Handel returned to London when there was a revival of interest in opera. He was appointed artistic director of the Royal Academy of Music which had been founded by an influential group of opera lovers for the express purpose of presenting Italian opera. The finest singers of Europe were employed to perform the operas of Handel and others. *Radamisto*, composed in 1720, was a great success.
Success inevitably meets with opposition, as was the case with Handel. There were those who disliked him because he was a foreigner. Others envied him because he was so successful. Even some of those under his musical direction opposed him because of his tyrannical demands. His personal appearance was not an endearing one.

They used to call him the Great Bear. He was gigantic: broad, corpulent, with big hands and enormous feet; his arms and thighs were stupendous. His hands were so fat that the bones disappeared in the flesh, forming dimples. He walked with his head thrown back under its huge wig, whose curls rippled heavily over his shoulders. He had a long horse-like face, which with age became bovine and swamped in fat; with pendant cheeks and triple chin, the nose large, thick and straight, the ears red and long (29:45).

Never completely able to master the English language, his violent temper frequently gave way to swearing oaths with an absurd and comical accent. "He was not polished in manner; a glutton, his eating habits were even said to be repulsive" (8:333).

Handel's most noted rivalry was with the Italian opera composer, Giovanni Battista Bononcini. Failure of Handel's Floridante in 1721 gave Bononcini the lead in popularity. But the success of Ottone in 1723 re-established Handel's reputation. His sense of humor is displayed in an incident which occurred while rehearsing the extraordinary prima donna, Francesca Cuzzoni, whom he had secured to star in Ottone. Handel told her how to sing one of the arias. She refused. A big man, Handel seized the plump, but small,
Cuzzoni around the waist and told her she would sing exactly as he wished or he would drop her out of the window. Cuzzoni agreed; the resulting triumph of her performance proved his demands were merited (25:438).

As the English public grew weary of Italian opera, the financial situation of the Academy grew serious. Bankruptcy brought the organization to an end in 1728. Handel went into partnership with Heidegger and formed his own company. With renewed energy, he wrote the operas Lotario, Partenope, Poro, Ezio, and Sosarne. The popularity of the Italian opera continued to diminish and so did Handel's funds. He faced bankruptcy, even debtors' prison. Suffering from rheumatism, a paralytic stroke and signs of losing his mind, Handel collapsed. To rehabilitate his health and spirits, he went for a rest cure in Aix-la-Chapelle. He determinedly returned to London to compose new operas. Productions of these and revivals of some old operas failed to succeed. He finally had to face the exhaustion of the opera form. "He had to find a new medium for his prodigious creative energy. He wrote his last opera in 1741. From then on he was to concentrate on oratorios in English" (8:335).

Turning to a new form, the oratorio, Handel revived a masque entitled Haman and Mordecai, which he had composed while serving under the Duke of Chandos. The plan to present a religious or Biblical work in an English theater met with clerical opposition and the Bishop of London banned the
performance. However, Handel was determined it be performed, so he added a few scenes and changed the name to The Story of Esther: An Oratorio in English.

The success of this presentation encouraged Handel to write a series of oratorios: Deborah, Saul, Israel in Egypt. "After 1741 Handel knew that he had found a new medium for his genius, and for him the greatest medium of all" (8:335). For his trip to Dublin, Ireland, in 1742, Handel composed the Messiah in twenty-five days. The successful performance brought in about eighteen-hundred dollars, which was equally distributed among three Irish charities.

The Messiah awed the members of its London audience on March 23, 1743. During the "Hallelujah Chorus" George II rose and stood for the whole section. The rest of those present rose with their King. Thus it became traditional for audiences to rise during the singing of the "Hallelujah."

Handel produced a surge of new compositions: Samson (1741), Semele (1744), Belshazzar and Hercules (1745), Judas Maccabaeus and Occasional Oratorio (1746), Joshua (1747), Solomon (1748), Theodora (1749), Choice of Hercules (1750), and Jeptha (1751). "This outpouring of genius—which Arnold Schering considers the greatest period of all in oratorio history—found Handel at the peak of his creative powers" (8:337).

While working on his last oratorio, Jephtha, his sight gave way. After several unsuccessful operations Handel was
totally blind. Even this mighty blow didn't stop the resolute Handel. He continued to give organ concerts and to conduct performances of his oratorios.

In 1759, while conducting a performance of Messiah in London, he felt faint. He seemed to recover quickly and not until the final applause subsided did he pass out. On April 14th, Handel died, leaving forty-six operas, thirty-two oratorios and more than one hundred large vocal works, in addition to a multitude of instrumental compositions. "The choice of Westminster Abbey for his final resting place indicates the esteem in which the British held this remarkable foreigner" (2:118).

Music followers all over the world join with the people of England in admiring the qualities of Handel.

... And so personal force, musical genius, business talent, education, and general brain power went to the making of a man who hobnobbed with dukes and kings, who ruled musical England with an iron rule, who threatened to throw distinguished soprano ladies from windows, and was threatened with never an action for battery in return, who went through the world with a regal gait, and was, in a word, the most astonishing lord of music the world has seen (10:47).
CHAPTER IV

ITALIAN INFLUENCE

"Certain elements of musical style, indeed, which to-day we think of as 'Handelian' come in fact from the common tongue of the Italian operatic composition of the time" (22:148). Maturing in "an age that was markedly Italianate" (10:9), Handel's artistic development was inevitably shaped by this influence.

At the early age of eleven Handel was exposed to the music of a country to which he was destined to journey. "In 1696 Handel visited Berlin, where, at the court of the Electress Sophia Charlotte, he had the chance of hearing Italian music and musicians" (3:38). During his studies of the next several years he undoubtedly was made even more aware of the musical activities in Italy. So his trip, in 1706, to that cultural center was the realization of a natural endeavor for this ambitious young genius.

Handel's overwhelming acceptance allowed him to associate with the musical societies of Italy's aristocracy. Throughout his travels, Handel not only came into direct contact with many representatives of the Roman, Venetian and Neapolitan schools, but also he studied, at first hand, their techniques. The impressionable twenty-one-year-old eagerly absorbed the formuli of Carissimi, Scarlatti, Corelli, Lotti, Steffani and others.
Being somewhat of an opportunist, "he possessed an ability for assimilating quickly the style of the surroundings in which he moved" (3:39). Handel's early writings, from Almira to Rodrigo, indicate that Keiser's works were those "which he studied and lived amongst at Hamburg that served him as model" (3:42). However, from 1706 throughout his remaining career, Handel projects direct influences he acquired during his Italian sojourn. "Carissimi had earlier set the standard of a new type of choral writing, and it was his declamatory and rhythmic choruses that Handel took as a model for his own early oratorios" (3:42). Handel employed these techniques of the Roman composers in his La resurrezione. An immediate influence of the Venetian school is exemplified in Handel's first opera containing an all-Italian text. "The Venetian school of Caldera, Legrenzi and Lotti that he came into contact with in 1707 affected the composition of Agrippina" (3:42). With this opera, young Handel awed the Italians with his virtuosity. "Handel had come to Italy as a scholar; now he had surpassed the Italian masters" (28:15).

When Handel left Italy to accept the position of Chapel Master in Hanover he had acquired knowledge, friendship and a reputation.

... In the first London operas, Rinaldo, Pastor fido and others, the influence of his friend of the Italian days, Alessandro Scarlatti, is noticeable. The effective writing for voices which Handel had learnt from them both was put to use in these early works, where the conventions
of the stage rendered it necessary to employ solo voices much and often, and in such later operas as Atalanta, Poro, Orlando, and Tamerlano, where duets and trios were introduced (3:42).

Handel's education had been thorough before he was drawn to Italy. Zachow and Keiser had nurtured the seed of Handel's musical genius to a healthy young plant which flowered in Italy's cultural sunshine.

The three years in Italy were to Handel as a postgraduate course. He had previously learned the fundamentals of musicianship in a good school, that of Halle and Hamburg, but Italy provided the opportunity of absorbing, at first hand, the principles which were to dominate the eighteenth century (39:19).

I. MAJOR SCHOOLS

Roman school. The Roman school tradition of a capella church music was established in Rome with Palestrina, its strongest advocate. Rejecting the monodic Baroque forms, Roman composers devoted themselves to strictly liturgical compositions of masses, motets and requiems. Palestrina's works represent the contrapuntal style at its best. He effectively used imitation, consonance and dissonance, and melodic movement.

In opposition to the polyphonic traditions and papal authority, opera was introduced to Rome. Taking their cue from the Florentine Camerata, Landini and others employed certain characteristics of the Roman school to develop opera in that city. Comic scenes and a more extensive use of choruses were special features of Roman opera.
Venetian school. A group of Flemish and Italian composers, headed by Willaert, were instrumental in developing the Venetian school. Primary characteristics included the use of chromaticism, polyphonal treatment, and an extensive use of echo effects. Gabrieli, Praetorius and Zarlino were other important composers of the school.

The first public opera house was established in Venice in 1637. Following the Roman school, Venetian opera flourished under the innovations of such composers as Cavalli, Cesti, Legrenzi, and most importantly, under Monteverdi. Venetian opera was characterized by the frequent use of short popular songs and canzonas. Other features frequently included cantabile melodies which were brief, rather than elaborate and lengthy.

Neapolitan school.

... By the latter half of the seventeenth century the center of gravity in Italy was shifting from Venice to Naples, where a school of composers headed by Alessandro Scarlatti poured out an endless stream of operas (7:331).

This operatic school was characterized by its development of form rather than concentration on the dramatic implications of the text. The da capo aria, with its ternary plan of A B A, was a principle Venetian form. Melodies were composed specifically for the virtuoso, who was expected to improvise in a coloratura manner. The Neapolitans' excessive dependence upon virtuosity and display of technique over dramatic
truth led to the decline of the operatic art (27:76). Major roles were enacted by the *castrati* (male altos and sopranos) with the subordinate parts portrayed by tenors and basses. Choruses were infrequently employed in the operas of the Neapolitans. Although Naples was the last Italian city to develop opera, the Neapolitan style not only influenced opera in Italy, but all over Europe.

In the early eighteenth century, the Neapolitan school was represented by Porpora, Leo and Hasse.

... But unquestionably the greatest composer of Italian opera in this period is Handel, who from 1711 to 1740 produced at London a series of works some of which have never been surpassed for nobility of style or profundity of dramatic insight (1:511).

II. EFFECTS ON HANDEL'S COMPOSITIONS

The influential factors of the Italian Baroque effecting Handel's vocal works are exemplified in four general areas of compositional technique and style. The elements to be discussed are: (1) meter and tempo, (2) emotional representation, (3) dynamic scheme, and (4) melodic line.

**Meter and tempo.** With the exception of the recitative, the rhythmic pulse of the Baroque is firmly and decisively conveyed.
"O Lord, How Many Are My Foes!" from Occasional Oratorio, Example One, is characteristic of the rigid adherence to tempo that is neither rushed nor dragged. A display of steady and decisive rhythmic movement is also found in Example Two, "Where'er You Walk" from Semele.
Example Two. G. F. Handel: "Where'er You Walk"
(Semeele)

Where'er you walk, cool gales shall fan the glade; Trees where you sit shall
Example Three  G. F. Handel: "Ye Verdant Hills"
(Susanna)

Ye verdant hills, ye balmy vales,
Bear witness of my pains.
How sweetest of thy lovely race,
How matchless are thy charms;
When oft have Shinar's flow'ry dales
Been taught my tender strains!
Thy heart may my devotion move
To grant a sweet return of love,

The wounded oaks in yon-der grove
Retain the name of her I love.
To grant a sweet return of love,
To grant a sweet return of love.

Oh,
Accentuations placed at regularly spaced intervals with the bar-line indicating a marked accent are evident in "Ye Verdant Hills", Example Three. The metrical character of this selection projects impressive dignity.

Example Four G. F. Handel: "Who Dares Intrude?"

(ESTHER)

Example Five G. F. Handel: "Despair Not"

(Hercules)
In contrast to the steady, unchanging tempo and meter of the aria, the recitative style declaims the text in a free, rhythmic pulse. Examples Four, Five and Six note the inflections of the spoken word through disjunct and ametrical, unmeasured, movement of the vocal line.

Emotional representation. Of importance in the Baroque was the "emotional and theatrically dramatic possibilities" (21:133) of the word.
Example Seven  G. F. Handel: "Let Me Wander, Not Unseen" (L'Allegro)

A light-hearted dancing mood is chromatically and rhythmically effected in Example Seven.
Example Eight  G. F. Handel: "To Alceste"

Example Nine  G. F. Handel: "O Lord, How Many Are My Foes!"  
(Occasional Oratorio)

Playing an important part in representing emotion, dissonance is found in Examples Eight and Nine. The punctuation of steadily repeated notes emphasizes the dissonant
mood.

**Example Ten** G. F. Handel: "Dimmi, Crudele Amore"  
(Muzio Scevola)

**Example Eleven** G. F. Handel: "Lascia Ch'io Pianga"  
(Rinaldo)

Another emotional device used to express the textual meaning was the appogiatura. This ornament is found in Examples Ten and Eleven.
Dynamic scheme. Generally the dynamics were "in the intermediate range from $p$ to $f$ with a real $pp$ or $ff$ seldom appropriate" (6:99). However, effective sudden dynamic variances were occasionally used by Handel for contrast.

Example Twelve G. F. Handel: "Dimmi, Crudele Amore"  
(Muzio Scevola)

Example Thirteen G. F. Handel: "Notte Cara"  
(Floridante)
Examples Twelve and Thirteen verify that textual meaning may be re-emphasized by sudden changes from one dynamic level to another.

**Melodic line.** The most important performance development of the Baroque was the *bel canto* stylistic technique.

**Example Fourteen** G. F. Handel: "Lascia Ch'io Pianga" *(Rinaldo)*

Handel's "Lascia Ch'io Pianga", Example Fourteen, shows beauty in the marriage of the vowels which form a union with the expressive melodic line. In *bel canto* tradition, Handel employs the extended vocal line, *sostenuto* style.

... A typical *bel canto* melody, usually in triple meter, flows smoothly and with restraint, avoiding sharp melodic contrasts; the affective intervals (diminished fifths, major sevenths, and the like) are usually absent (36:223).
At times the extended line is used to avoid a cadence, as in Example Fifteen.
Example Sixteen  G. F. Handel: "Come, Beauteous Queen"
(Esther)

Ask, and 'tis granted from this hour,

Who shares our heart shall share our pow'r, Ask, and 'tis granted from this hour, Who shares our heart shall share our pow'r.

D.C.
Example Seventeen  G. F. Handel: "Great Dagon Has Subdued Our Foe" (Samson)

The repetition of thematic material is shown in Examples Sixteen and Seventeen. "There is usually only a simple text with only one idea repeated often in a section" (6:99). In accordance with the text, the melodic patterns are often repeated.
Example Eighteen characterizes the widespread use of embellishment and ornamentation for the virtuosos of the Baroque.
V. SUMMARY

Since Handel composed for every type of voice, and since he wrote songs in every conceivable manner, a singer at any stage of development, will be able to find selections suitable to his type of voice and singing. In the performance of Handel's vocal music, the singer is concerned with interpretation. By examining the numerous influential elements which formulated Handel's compositional technique, the performer is provided with the necessary background to properly interpret the master's selections.

An understanding of the Baroque philosophies which prevailed during his lifetime is helpful in determining the influences on Handel's musical style. Although this composer wrote instrumental music, Handel is primarily known for his vocal music. His development of the Italian opera and his expansion of the oratorio reflect the importance of these vocal forms during the Baroque period.

Provided is a biographical sketch of the personal events and accomplishments which effected Handel's artistic contributions. Although Handel's operas project his adherence to the conventions established by Scarlatti and his Neapolitan school, he gave these ready-made musical ideas new life. His arias, which display the emotional and dramatic content of the text, exemplify Handel's mastery of the bel canto technique. His oratorios, which combine the
dramatic and vocal resources he had perfected in his operas, display Handel's genius as a musical dramatist.

The Italian cultural dominance of the period influenced Handel throughout his entire musical career. His first-hand study of the techniques which were promoted by members of the three major schools of musical tradition, instilled Handel with the dramatic artistry displayed in all his works.

Examples One through Six show Handel's rhythm as strictly adhering to the meter and tempo. Examples Seven through Eleven display the techniques of emotional representation. Examples Twelve and Thirteen are concerned with dynamic variances. Examples Fourteen through Eighteen depict Handel's skillful treatment of the melodic line.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


