

Revision of vocal melodies in Giuseppe Verdi's *Simon Boccanegra*: Changes in correlativity between prosodic and musical modifications

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This dissertation aims to clarify the dramaturgy of *Simon Boccanegra* (1857, 1881) by Giuseppe Verdi (1813–1901) by analysing its revision of the vocal part. This work has two versions: the original version, which was set to the libretto of F. M. Piave and premiered in 1857, and the revised score produced with another librettist, Arrigo Boito, in 1881.

Comparative studies of the two versions have discussed the changes in Verdi's dramaturgy, since the revision was done 24 years after the original version's premiere, and the librettists were different. However, the following two features of this work warrant further research: first, previous studies have not focused on the revision of the 'canto declamato' style of the vocal line, which has been indicated as a musical feature of *Simon* since the nineteenth century. Second, the analysis of dramaturgy should be conducted by considering the different levels of revision. The revised manuscript contains a mixture of new and old content: Piave and Boito have radically different styles of versification that coexist; with regard to the music, the old score was partially retained, and the revised part consists of various levels of modification. This patchwork aspect of the revised version demonstrates the consequences of Verdi's decisions on 'what' and 'how' he had to revise.

To overcome these issues, this study analyzes the relationship between prosody and melody in both versions. The analysis of the modification of the vocal line is based on 'musical accent', which indicates how prosody is reflected in the vocal line, thereby showing the specific differences in the writing style of the two scores. The various levels of revision in the revised score are also discussed based on whether the libretto has been revised. The analysis distinguishes between passages where only the music has been revised, where the libretto has been revised partially and where the libretto has been rewritten.

In the introduction, I compare the compositional processes of both versions and their reception at the time of their premiere. The documents – including Verdi's letters – show that the two librettists' poetic styles were radically different and that Boito engaged in production more actively. Furthermore, a comparison of Verdi's view of the singers and the criticism publicised at the time shows that, in the revised score, Verdi expected the singers' clear pronunciation and acting skills to properly express the lyrics. Thus, vocal revision is closely related to changes in prosody in the libretto.

In Chapter 1, I present a definition of 'musical accent', which is the analytical criterion for

this study, and discuss how the correlativity between prosody and ‘musical accent’ was changed in the revised score. I analyse the passages where only the music was revised and where both the libretto and music were rewritten, to clarify the influence of the prosodic features of Boito’s libretto on the revised melody.

Chapter 2 focuses on the relation between the change of the musical form and vocal melody. As a criterion of musical form, I use the concept of ‘la solita forma’ in nineteenth-century Italian opera proposed by H. Powers. By comparing the scene in which ‘la solita forma’ was transformed and those in which modifications were made only partially while ‘la solita forma’ was maintained, I define the purpose of the musical form’s transformation and its influence on the vocal melody.

Chapter 3 addresses another issue: the relationship between vocal melody and other theatrical elements such as orchestral accompaniment and visual information, including acting. In addition to the perspective of ‘how the words are sung’ in the singing expressions, which is discussed up to Chapter 2, I attempt to clarify the ‘sound’ aspect of the revised vocal that is realised on stage by fusing with other theatrical elements.

The overall analysis shows that although the vocal melodies in both versions have a commonality, namely that their ‘musical accent’ matches the prosody in the libretto, the characters of the vocal melody in the revised score have a clearer connection with the dramatic situation where such melody would be sung. In the revised version, Verdi uses vocal lines with the ‘musical accent’, which is close to the natural intonation in three purposes: (1) attracting the audience’s attention by creating tensions in dramatically important moments; (2) forming a musical section of ‘pezzi aperti’ such as *recitativo* and *scena*; (3) evocating a realistic narrative tone which allows more room for the singer’s spontaneous expression. What all three uses have in common is the effect of accentuating the pronunciation of words and vocal sounds at dramatically important moments.

In conclusion, this study explores the differences between the original and revised ‘declamatory’ vocal settings in terms of the correlation between prosody and music, demonstrating a concrete link between the revision’s intentions and results. In the revision of *Simon*, Verdi and Boito achieve dramatic effectual expression in the libretto and music in their own ways, and Verdi’s dramaturgy is evident in the way he differentiates the vocal character according to the dramatic situation. Moreover, Verdi’s attitude places vocal effects at the core of whole "sonic event" indicates that *Simon* is the beginning of the last phase of the works which have evolved within the tradition of 19th-century Italian opera.