## Etude sur le chant baroque français par segmentation accentuelle et intonative

Study on French Baroque singing by accent and intonation segmentation

Abstract

The baroque music is modeled on the language, so the claim of the composers of the time and the report of the musicians and musicologists of today. Typically, we consider as a proof the work of the composer Jean-Baptiste Lully who, as the saying goes, would have formed his recitatives according to the declamation of the actress Champmeslé.

Starting from a specific linguistic material, Baroque music is national: it es French, Italian, German, English ... Numerous studies, especially musicological, have shown the treatment of language rhythm among composers. In this article, we will discuss the subject from a broader angle. Our goal is to show to what extent the prosody of French and the French Baroque music correspond. For this, we proceed by segmentation of accent and intonation groups in the text and the melody composed by the musiciens.

We use the prosodic segmentation model proposed by Piet Mertens for French, and we base our study on a corpus of recitatives. Indeed, the recitative is the genre par excellence for the proximity between spoken language and singing. He is "close to the word of which he marries with more or less stylization or fidelity the flow, as well as the accentual and rhythmic characteristics" (« proche de la parole dont il épouse avec plus ou moins de stylisation ou de fidélité le débit, ainsi que les caractéristiques accentuelles et rythmiques », Montalembert 2010: 1013).

First, we explain Mertens' model for an excerpt from a Monteclair recitative: segmentation into accent and intonation groups and links between groups to form sentences. In a second time we present the observations on the accent and intonation groups, the case of the initial accents and the forms of intonation for the whole of our corpus.

We see that quite a large number of results concerning training and the links of the groups confirm that the Mertens model is convincing to describe the setting of the text by French Baroque composers. The tone creates groupings of different types of groups to clarify the information and hierarchy between the elements that serve to express it. It can also be used to highlight an element of the sentence.

Two major differences can be noted: first the register generally higher in singing than in speech. It can be explained by the position of the singer (accompanied) who must, to keep all the flexibility of his voice, be able to express himself without forcing. The second argument is semantic: the recitative plays a decisive role in the dramatic unfolding of the works, a fact which is precisely a rise of the voice.

The accent and intonation segmentation confirms the close proximity between textual and musical prosody for the French musical Baroque. On a phonostylistic level, it seems comparable to reading, a finding that remains to be refined.