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Classic to Romantic Singing

The Expressive Pause: Punctuation, Rests, and Breathing in England 1770-1850*

Robert Toft

Authors of treatises on singing published in England between the late 18th and the middle of the 19th centuries view singing and speaking as arts which are related closely. In fact, several writers declare that singing should be based directly on speaking and that singers should use the orator as a model. One of these authors, Anselm Bayly (1719-94), a clergyman at the Chapel Royal who sang under Maurice Greene, discusses recitative and makes the connection between the two arts explicit:

[Recitative] is an expressive and elegant manner of speaking...let [the singers] ask themselves how an orator would pronounce [the words in recitatives], preserving the grammatical connection, touching lightly, without any appoggiatura, short syllables and

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unimportant words, and giving a due, but not fierce, energy to the emphatic.¹

In the nineteenth century, Richard Bacon, William Gardiner, Isaac Nathan, Maria Anfossi, and Manuel García, in addition to demonstrating that speaking and singing remained closely affiliated until at least the middle of the century, provide further details of the ways in which the two arts are related. For Richard Bacon (1776-1844), a student of Samuel Arnold:

the effects of reading or declamation are produced by the quality of tone, by inflexion, by emphasis, and by total cessations or pauses. Singing seems only to heighten these effects by using in a bolder manner the same agents. The principles of both are the same ... The student [of singing] ought first to consider the appropriate delivery of the words before he tries them in combination with the air. Having thus

¹ Anselm Bayly, *A Practical Treatise on Singing and Playing with Just Expression and Real Elegance* (London, 1771), vol. 3, p. 60. Similar views were espoused in both Germany and Italy in the 18th century. Johann Adam Hiller, in *Anweisung zum musikalisch-zierlichen Gesange* (Leipzig, 1780; facs. ed., Leipzig: Edition Peters, 1976), 25-26, instructs singers to include the art of reading aloud, that is, the art of declamation, in their training. Because this skill helps singers prepare texts for performance, Hiller advises students to learn the proper declamation of the words (speaking them in the same way that an orator would) before they learn to sing them. He coined the phrase "gut gesprochen, ist halb gesungen" (well spoken is half sung) to characterize the close relationship between speaking and singing. Giambattista Mancini, in *Riflessioni Pratiche sul Canto Figurato* (Milan, 1777, facs. ed., Bologna: Forni Editore, 1970), 220—trans. Edward Foreman as *Practical Reflections on Figured Singing by Giambattista Mancini* (Champaign: Pro Musica Press, 1967), 65—counsels singers who wish to recite well in the theater to "listen to the discourse of a good orator, and hear what pauses, what variety of voice, what diverse strength he adopts to express his ideas; now he raises the voice, now drops it, now he quickens the voice, now harshens, now makes it sweet, according to the diverse passions which he intends to arouse in the listeners" ("Attenti pure al discorso d'un buon Oratore, e sentirete quante pose, quante varietà di voci, quante diverse forze adopra per esprimere i suoi sensi; ora innalza la voce, or l'abbassa, or l'affretta, or l'incrudisce, ed or la fa dolce, secondo le diversi passioni, che intende muovere nell'uditore.").

determined how the words ought to be read [spoken aloud], he will proceed in the adaptation of them to melody.²

Later in his treatise, Bacon makes it clear that his comments apply to both recitative and air (but in differing degrees):

The principles [of expression] I have thus endeavoured to elucidate in recitative, are all capable of being applied to air, but in a degree limited by the nature of such compositions, by the time and by the melody, which is more continuous, more connected, and more strictly vocal than recitative. The elocution must therefore be more uniform, and the transitions, if not less marked, yet not so sudden.³

William Gardiner (1770-1853), a hosiery manufacturer who not only composed and edited music but also wrote a treatise on music observes that in singing the elements which comprise music and language should be blended together:

To sing with taste and expression, many qualifications are required:—first, as music, voice, ear and execution; secondly, as language, enunciation, mind, and action. These, when combined with a just feeling, constitute the highest point of vocal excellence ... to blend the singing and speaking voice together—to unite them artificially in song—is a great achievement.⁴

Like earlier writers, Isaac Nathan (1790-1864), a student of Domenico Corri and composer of comic operas, views oratory and singing as subjects which share many of the same characteristics:

We may account oratory, the twin-sister of music:—in both, expression holds the same inalienable sway ... In oratory the requisition of accurate pronunciation, management of the voice, and appropriate gesture were particulars, which completely identified this subject [oratory] with that now under discussion [singing]. Hence, considering oratory as a science

² Richard Bacon, *Elements of Vocal Science* (London, 1824); ed. Edward Foreman (Champaign: Pro Musica Press, 1966), 73, 78.

³ *Ibid.*, 83.

⁴ William Gardiner, *The Music of Nature* (London, 1832), 57.

congener to music, as far as *expression* goes, we shall apply the one to the other.⁵

Maria Anfossi's treatise on singing echoes the sentiments of Richard Bacon:

After [the pupil] has learned the tune, he must read the words, taking care to pronounce them distinctly, and with proper accent; then he should declaim them [that is, read them aloud], that he may know what sort of expression he is to give the song.⁶

And Manuel García, one of the most important teachers of singing in later 19th-century England, also taught his students to model their style of singing on speech:

A pupil, in order to discover the tone [of voice] suitable to each sentiment, should attentively study the words of his part, make himself acquainted with every particular relating to the personage that he is to represent, and recite [that is, speak] his *rôle* as naturally as if giving utterance to his own feelings.⁷

Singers, we learn from these writers, recited their roles before singing them and transferred the details of spoken recitation to singing. Moreover, they were vitally affected by the emotions they were to communicate and projected these emotions through the voice. Maria Anfossi captures the essence of the approach. Singing, Anfossi proclaims, is the combination of

⁵ Isaac Nathan, *Musurgia Vocalis* (London, 1836), 223-24.

⁶ Maria Anfossi, *Trattato teorico-pratico sull'arte del canto ... A Theoretical and Practical Treatise on the Art of Singing* (London, [1840], 66. Anfossi's treatise has quite an impressive list of subscribers: John Braham, one of the most famous English singers of the early 19th century; the singing teachers Crivelli and Lanza; the composers Bishop, Meyerbeer, and Rossini; the pianist Moscheles; and the double bassist Dragonetti.

⁷ Manuel García, *García's New Treatise on the Art of Singing* (London, 1857), vol. 2, p. 64. García first published his treatise in Paris as *Traité complet de l'Art du Chant* (part one in 1841 and part two in 1847). It appeared in a condensed version as *Nouveau Traité sommaire de l'Art du Chant* (Paris, 1856), which was translated as *García's New Treatise on the Art of Singing* (London, 1857). García's pupils included Charles Bataille, Erminia Frezzolini, Jenny Lind, Mathilde Marchesi, Hans Hermann Nissen, Charles Santley, and Julius Stockhausen.

poetry and declamation (speaking) with music. The object is to awaken the affections, to inspire sentiments of admiration, or to arouse the imagination. Anfossi continues by comparing the styles of singing to those of rhetorical speaking and notes in relation to the grand style of singing that it

inspires admiration by the irresistible power with which it seizes on the soul. The hearer is carried away by that grand and majestic tone, by that force and vehemence which are the essential characteristics of that style.⁸

The "irresistible power" to which Anfossi refers was created by varying emphasis, accent, tone of voice, rests, pauses, breathing, gesture, and so on to match the changing sentiments of the text. These principles formed the basis of both spoken and sung discourse, and one of the most potent tools speakers and singers had at their disposal for moving the passions of listeners was the pronunciation of grammatical and rhetorical pauses.⁹

Stops, or points as they also were called, helped illustrate the sense of a text, and their insertion in spoken and sung discourse was of such fundamental importance to eloquent delivery that treatises on both speaking and singing discuss the matter in considerable detail. In fact, throughout the period under consideration, these discussions are remarkably similar to one another, for the practices associated with punctuation, rests, and breathing remained

⁸ Anfossi, *Trattato*, 7. The grand style is one of the three manners of singing which Anfossi equates to the orator's styles of speaking. The other two styles are the simple and the ornamental. The ornamental style, as its name suggests, abounds in passages of execution, whereas the simple style, even though its charms do "not dazzle, or cause astonishment," the genuine and chaste beauty of these charms invest it with a grace that is "enhanced by that unassuming and peculiar manner, which never fails to captivate the heart" (*Trattato*, 7).

⁹ Gilbert Austin, in *Chironomia; or a Treatise on Rhetorical Delivery* (London, 1806), 52, differentiates between the grammatical and the rhetorical pause: "rhetorical pauses [as distinct from the "ordinary pauses which are marked in writing"] ... [are] to be adjusted by correct judgment and feeling. They are placed either before or after important matter, in order to introduce or leave it impressed on the memory with stronger effect. By suspending the sense in an unusual manner and in an unexpected place, they arrest the attention."

relatively stable even though the style of music to which the expressive pause was applied changed dramatically.

The two ways in which orators and singers articulated the structure of their sentences were the observance of notated punctuation (the grammatical pause) and the application of pauses in places where, although a stop was not indicated, the sense of a sentence called for one (the rhetorical pause). Accurate pronunciation was considered vital to effective delivery, and writers regularly refer to the important role that pauses play in speaking and singing. John Walker believes that the art of speaking well is based upon acquiring a knowledge of the rests and pauses that are necessary to "clear and enforce the sense,"¹⁰ and Anselm Bayly insists that in speaking and singing a "just observation of stops" establishes the sense of a text, but an improper use of stops obscures the meaning.¹¹ These views are echoed again and again by later writers, Gilbert Austin going so far as to declare that pausing between the members of a sentence, or in any other place which will admit a momentary suspension of the voice, is that "beautiful point of art [in which] the singers of Italy excel all others."¹² Proper pronunciation of stops, then, organized and paced the delivery of ideas and emotions and allowed orators and singers to speak or sing elegantly. Eloquent discourse moved listeners, and because speakers and singers in the 18th and 19th centuries were expected to imitate real life,¹³ their style of articulation was modeled

¹⁰ John Walker, *A Rhetorical Grammar, or Course of Lessons in Elocution* (London, 1785; facs. ed., Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1969), 40.

¹¹ Bayly, *Practical Treatise*, vol. 2, p. 6.

¹² Austin, *Chironomia*, 51-52. See also, for example, the grammarian William Cockin's *The Art of Delivering Written Language* (London, 1775; facs. ed., Menston: Scholar Press, 1969), 99, and the writers on singing discussed below.

¹³ Michael Maittaire, *The English Grammar* (London, 1712; facs. ed. Menston: Scholar Press, 1967), 240; Ann Fisher, *A New Grammar* (Newcastle, 1750; facs. ed., Menston: Scholar Press, 1968), 141; John Wesley, *Directions Concerning Pronunciation and Gesture* (Bristol, 1770), 5; Bayly, *Practical Treatise*, vol. 2, p. 15; John Herries, *The Elements of Speech* (London, 1773; facs. ed., Menston: Scholar Press, 1968), 154; Cockin, *Art of Delivering*, 141; Thomas Sheridan, *A Rhetorical Grammar of the English Language* (Dublin, 1781; facs. ed., Menston: Scholar Press, 1969), 177; John Walker, *Elements of Elocution*, 2 vols. (London, 1781; facs. ed., Menston: Scholar Press, 1969),

on the speech of someone in the appropriate state of mind. The expressive pause was, in short, one of the many techniques upon which orators and singers drew when feigning the emotions of the characters they were representing.

In writing, notated punctuation consisted of a number of different symbols and included the following elements:¹⁴ comma [,], semicolon [;], colon [:], period [.] , interrogation [?], exclamation [!], and parenthesis [()]. The comma, the shortest stop in reading, was pronounced with a little pause while the speaker counted to one (about the time of a quaver).¹⁵ It signified that the sentence was unfinished and momentarily suspended the sense in such a way that it gave the expectation that much more was to follow. The semicolon required a pause long enough for the speaker to count to two (about the time of a crotchet)¹⁶ and was used when the foregoing member of the period was perfect in sense, but the following member was so dependent on the previous one that the latter made no sense without the former. In pronouncing a colon, the speaker counted to three (about the time of a minim),¹⁷ and like the semicolon, the colon was used when the foregoing member was perfect in sense. However, with the colon the following member did not so immediately depend upon the former, for the colon divided the sentence into halves or distinguished it into several limbs, clauses, or lesser sentences. In fact, both the semicolon and the colon

vol. 2, pp. 273-76; James Burgh, *The Art of Speaking* (London, 1782), 39; Bacon, *Elements*, 74-75; Nathan, *Musurgia*, 198; and García, *New Treatise*, vol. 2, p. 64.

¹⁴ The list and succeeding definitions were derived from James Greenwood, *An Essay towards a Practical English Grammar* (London, 1711; facs. ed., Menston: Scholar Press, 1968); Maittaire, *English Grammar*; John Mason, *An Essay on Elocution and Pronunciation* (London, 1748; facs. ed., Menston: Scholar Press, 1968); Fisher, *New Grammar*; James Gough, *A Practical Grammar of the English Tongue* (Dublin, 1754; facs. ed., Menston: Scholar Press, 1967); Bayly, *Practical Treatise*; Herries, *Elements*; Cockin, *Art of Delivering*; Sheridan, *Rhetorical Grammar*; Burgh, *Art of Speaking*; Joseph Robertson, *An Essay on Punctuation* (London, 1785; facs. ed., Menston: Scholar Press, 1969); Walker, *Rhetorical Grammar*; and Lindley Murray, *English Grammar* (York, 1795; facs. ed., Menston: Scholar Press, 1968).

¹⁵ Maittaire, *English Grammar*, 201.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

implied that the thought of the sentence was finished only partially. The period was used when the sense of the sentence was fully completed, and it was marked by a pause long enough for the orator to count to four (about the time of a semibreve).¹⁸ Such a pause composed the mind and enabled the listener to reflect upon the entire sentence in order to gain a full comprehension of it.

Interrogation and exclamation were related to the period, interrogation denoting a question and exclamation being used when a sentence, to paraphrase the words of John Walker, showed that the mind labored with some strong and vehement passion. Exclamatory outbursts generally were indicated by interjections such as O! Oh! Ah! Alas! and the like (the signs of the figure) and were delivered with far greater energy than normally was employed for expressing passion or emotion, that is, with greater force, loudness, and vehemence.¹⁹ The pauses associated with both interrogations and exclamations were indeterminate in length, some writers remarking that the stop may be equivalent to a comma, semicolon, colon, or period, as the sense of the sentence demands.²⁰ One writer, however, Joseph Robertson, notes that in questions the stop should be longer than that of a period, because "an answer is either returned or implied; and consequently a proper interval of silence is necessary."²¹ Parenthesis, on the other hand, enabled writers to insert some other matter into a sentence which was independent enough that its omission would not harm the sense of the rest of the sentence. It was marked by a short stop at the beginning and the end, and these pauses, especially when the words enclosed in parentheses were spoken with a quieter and quicker voice, allowed listeners to perceive where the main thought broke off and where it resumed.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Walker, *Rhetorical Grammar*, 93, 144. Singers probably raised their voices at exclamations as well. Although the English treatises on singing which I cite in this study do not specifically advocate this style of delivery, it was certainly the practice of at least one teacher of singing in Germany, Johann Adam Hiller, who mentions that the proper delivery of exclamations required both orators and singers to raise their voices (in loudness) and to strengthen the tone (*Anweisung*, 26).

²⁰ See Walker, *Rhetorical Grammar*, 37, and Murray, *English Grammar*, 170.

²¹ Robertson, *Essay*, 95.

Punctuation did more than simply indicate the nature of the pause to be employed, however, for it also suggested the cadence the voice was to have. The general principle in reading a sentence or period, at least according to Ann Fisher in 1750, was to raise the voice gently (in loudness) until one reached the middle and then to let it fall gradually to the end.²² This falling of the voice was known as cadence, and it generally took place at a full stop, but William Cockin suggests that the other punctuation marks which, in his view, often terminate complete sense (semicolon and colon) may also carry a cadence.²³ The one exception to this principle occurred when sentences closed with emphatic words (as often happens in questions), for emphasis required the speaker to deliver those words with a stronger and fuller sound.²⁴

The technique of delivering emphatic words and the role of pauses were inseparable, emphatic delivery being just one of the many reasons speakers introduced rhetorical pauses at places where, even though a stop was not indicated, the sense of a sentence called for one. Thomas Sheridan tells us that written texts contain many commas, colons, and periods, but in order for a speaker to communicate the sense of a sentence fully, additional pauses are often necessary.²⁵ For example, Sheridan insists that speakers pause to clarify the sense of emphatic words:

unless a pause be made at the end of the last word belonging to the former emphatic one we shall not be able to know at all times, to which of the two emphases the intermediate words are to be referred; and this must often breed confusion in the sense.²⁶

²² Fisher, *New Grammar*, 142.

²³ Cockin, *Art of Delivering*, 102-3.

²⁴ Mason, *Essay*, 27; Burgh, *Art of Speaking*, 14; and Murray, *English Grammar*, 152-54.

²⁵ Thomas Sheridan, *A Course of Lectures on Elocution* (London, 1762; facs. ed., New York: Benjamin Blom, 1968), 80.

²⁶ Sheridan, *Rhetorical Grammar*, 104.

Another late 18th-century writer, John Walker, painstakingly catalogued the range of options open to speakers.²⁷ His "Rules for pausing" extends to 17 pages, and Walker identifies many places in which unwritten pauses need to be inserted. For instance, pauses are to be introduced after nominatives, especially when the nominative consists of more than one word ("The great and invincible Alexander [pause] wept for the fate of Darius."), and the relative pronouns who and which normally admit a pause before them. Even descriptive phrases which follow a substantive are to be preceded by a pause ("He was a man [pause] learned and polite." or "It is a book [pause] exquisite in its kind.").

Undoubtedly, a good knowledge of both the grammatical and the rhetorical pause was essential to eloquent spoken delivery. But it was equally important to expressive singing, and one early 19th-century writer, William Kitchiner, implored composers not to leave such an important matter entirely to the discretion of singers and accompanists:

If Composers would first attend to the accurate punctuation of the Words,—and then, over the several *Stops*—introduce *Rests* of defined value,—equivalent to the *Stops*;—it would in a great degree prevent that playing at cross purposes which now so often occurs, to the great perplexity of both the Singer and Accompanist.²⁸

Kitchiner was, however, unsuccessful in reforming the practices of composers, and the guiding principle of singers is, perhaps, best expressed in Isaac Nathan's paraphrase of a passage from the English translation (1767) of Francesco Algarotti's treatise on opera:

There are certain suspensions of the voice, certain short pauses, and a certain insisting on one place more than another, that cannot be communicated [in the score], which are therefore resigned to the singer's sagacity and discretion: for it is in such minute refinements that chiefly consists the delicacy of expression, which impresses the sense of

²⁷ Walker, *Rhetorical Grammar*, 44-60.

²⁸ William Kitchiner, *Observations on Vocal Music* (London, 1821), 72-73.

the words, not only on the mind, but on the hearts of all who hear them.²⁹

Many writers on singing in the late 18th and 19th centuries underscore the importance of Algarotti's and Nathan's remarks and disclose the parallels between spoken and sung pauses. These writers frequently discuss the role of pausing in relation to phrasing and the places suitable for taking breath. In fact, many teachers of singing from the period equate punctuation in singing to the grammatical and rhetorical pauses of speaking. In his chapter on phrasing, Manuel García, for example, observes that good melodies, like speeches, are divided by pauses [points of rest], which are regulated by the length of the partial ideas which comprise the melody. Such rests may be introduced, he asserts, even in places where they are not marked by the composer. They serve to emphasize the ideas much more clearly and fall into two categories. Pauses which separate phrases and the members of those phrases, because they are of a longer duration than those which separate figures or other small groups of notes, receive a full breath. But the small rests between figures admit only very short, rapid breaths. These latter pauses García calls *mezzi-sospiri*, and as they are indicated rarely, singers are left to insert them where required. García illustrates his principles with passages from Mozart's *Don Giovanni* (see Exs. 1-2). In the first example, García expects singers to take full breaths at the end of each four-bar phrase whether or not Mozart had marked them. In following normal vocal practice of the period, the last note of each phrase is shortened to allow for respiration, and the repetitions of the words "cerca menar" also are punctuated by pauses. The half breaths García indicates in the second example subtly articulate the thoughts in the text and allow singers an opportunity to refresh their breath in a vocal line which, if sung as notated, offers only one breathing point at the comma in the middle. As with the full breath, the time needed for respiration is taken from the note preceding the pause.³⁰ Nevertheless,

²⁹ I quote Nathan, *Musurgia*, 290, which paraphrases Francesco Algarotti, *An Essay on the Opera* (London, 1767), 53. See also Sandra Rosenblum's discussion of the rhetorical pause as it pertains to Classic piano music in *Performance Practices in Classic Piano Music* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), 366-68.

³⁰ García, *New Treatise*, vol. 2, p. 48. Luigi Lablache in *A Complete Method of Singing* (London, c1840), 23, Gilbert Duprez in *A Treatise on the Art of Singing*

even though García sanctions the normal practice of separating the members in a phrase, he also informs singers that in specific cases the effect of a phrase could be increased by suppressing the pause between two members.³¹ He illustrates this procedure with a passage from Donizetti's *Anna Bolena* that benefits greatly from unusual treatment (see Ex. 3).

**Ex. 1. Full breaths [B]; Mozart, *Don Giovanni* (1787);
García, *New Treatise*, vol. 2, p. 48**

Don Giovanni:

Fin-ch'han dal vi- no cal- da la tes- ta u- na gran fes- ta fa pre-pa- rar se tro- vi in piazza
tes- ta
qual- che ra- gaz- za te-co ancor quel- la cer- ca me- nar te-co ancor quel- la cer- ca me- nar,
cer- ca me- nar, cer- ca me- nar, sen- za alcun or- di- ne la danza si- a.
me- nar, me- nar.

While their heads are filled with wine, lay on a lavish celebration. If you find some girls in town, bring them along if you can. Let the dances follow no pattern.

(London, 1847), 7, and John Addison in *Singing, Practically Treated in a Series of Instructions* (London, 1850), 31, concur with García in their recommendation that for both full and half breaths the last note of the phrase or member of a phrase should be shortened to allow time for breath to be taken. See Rosenblum, *Performance Practices*, 158ff, and Robin Stowell, *Violin Technique and Performance Practice in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 284-89, for discussions of the ways in which figures and members of phrases were separated (articulated) in Classic piano music and late 18th- and early 19th-century violin music. This approach to phrasing seems to have persisted in singing until at least the end of the 19th century, for Alberto Randegger in *The Songs in Don Giovanni* (London, 1898), vol. 2, p. 6, marks breaths in "Batti batti" in the same places that García did. Please note that all of the music examples presented in this article faithfully represent, among other things, the textual punctuation of the original document.

³¹ García, *New Treatise*, vol. 2, p. 48.

**Ex. 2. Half breaths [b]; Mozart, *Don Giovanni* (1787);
García, *New Treatise*, vol. 2, p. 48**

Zerlina:

Bat-ti bat-ti o bel Ma-zet-to la tua po-ve-ra Zer-li-na, sta-rò
Ma-zet-to la tua Zer-li-na sta-rò
qui co-me a-gnel-li-na le tue botte ad as-pet-tar
li-na le tue

Beat me, dear Masetto,
beat your poor Zerlina.
I shall stand here like a lambkin
waiting for your blows.

García joins the two members together through a crescendo into the expletive 'ah' and heightens the intensity of the sentiment in a way that would have been impossible to achieve had the normal approach to phrasing been adopted. Observance of the rest would have robbed singers of the opportunity to augment the emotional impact of the text in a dramatic way.

**Ex. 3. Suppressing the pause; Donizetti, *Anna Bolena*
(1830); García, *New Treatise*, vol. 2, p. 48**

Anna:

Del mio pri-mi-ero a-mo-re ah non a-ves-si il pet-to
a-mo-re ah

[The embers] of my first love [smoulder still]. Ah, had I not [opened] my heart [to another love].

In spite of this type of exceptional practice, García's description of customary phrasing is strikingly similar to the explanations given by the earlier writers Giusto Tonducci (1785), Giuseppe Aprile (1791), and Domenico Corri (1810). Corri states that

a Phrase in music is a short portion of an air, or other composition,
consisting of one or more notes, and forms, without interruption, a sense

more or less complete, and which is terminated by a decrease of the voice forming a cadence more or less perfect ... The observance of the musical Phrase is necessary to regulate the taking [of] breath, and to make the sense and meaning of a composition understood.³²

In the same vein, Tenducci and Aprile observe that one should

rest or take breath between the Passages, and in proper Time; that is to say, to take it only when the Periods, or members of the Melody, are ended.³³

Another teacher of singing from the nineteenth century, Mary Novello, increases our understanding of the issues García, Corri, Tenducci, and Aprile raise about breathing in a particularly lucid way:³⁴

In taking full breath before a musical phrase, the time necessary for inhalation should be subtracted from the preceding note. In taking a half breath in the middle of a sentence, the time of inhalation should be taken from the note which follows respiration, unless the musical phrase require[s] this note to retain its full value of duration [note that on the placement of half breaths Novello expresses the opposite opinion to García, and to Lablache, Duprez, and Addison cited in note 30].

Breath must never be taken in the middle of a word, and, if possible, not until a poetical or musical phrase be terminated.

Full breath should be taken at the commencement of all passages; and a half breath (when necessary), to complete a passage, or whenever a

³² Domenico Corri, *The Singers Preceptor* (London, 1810), 7.

³³ This statement is number thirteen in the set of rules ("Necessary Rules for Students and Dilettanti of Vocal Music") which appears in both Giusto Tenducci's *Instruction of Mr. Tenducci, to his Scholars* (London, c1785), 2, and Giuseppe Aprile's *The Modern Italian Method of Singing* (London, [1791]), 2.

³⁴ In her discussion, Novello distinguishes between full and half breaths: "Full breath consists of a complete inhalation taken before the commencement of singing, or after an apparently entire expiration; half breath consists of an additional supply of air, taken by a partial inspiration during the course of singing, so as to refresh the lungs and tonal strength," *Voice and Vocal Art* (London, 1856), 10.

melody is interrupted by rests. When breath is requisite in the middle of a passage, it should be taken before a word of small importance, such as *the, of, to, and, &c.*, because respiration shortens the note succeeding it, and therefore should not occur before words of much significance.

Breath should never be taken so as to divide an article from its substantive, nor this latter from its adjective; neither may it be taken between a dissonant note and its resolution on the succeeding tone.³⁵

Novello's discussion of the places in which pauses should be introduced through the inhalation of breath resembles the elocutionists' discussion of the grammatical and rhetorical pauses employed in speaking. She expects breathing to reinforce the sense of sentences and advises singers to maintain the grammatical integrity of the text. Obviously, speaking and singing relied upon the same principles of articulation, and other teachers of singing, particularly Gesualdo Lanza (1813) and Maria Anfossi (1840), broaden our understanding of just how closely related the two arts actually were in this regard. Lanza recommends that students of singing read the words of songs attentively and mark in the melody the best places for taking breath. These places, Lanza maintains,

must be after the comma, semicolon, colon, or period, or in other words, where the sense permits it. [But] when the melody is too long the mark for taking breath may be put after any word, but never in the middle so as to divide a word.³⁶

³⁵ Novello, *Voice*, 11. On the relationship between the grammatical structure of sentences and breathing in singing, John Gothard states "when it is necessary to breathe before the sentence is concluded, not to do so between an adjective and the noun to which it is prefixed, as "fair lady," nor between possessive pronoun and noun, as "my heart," nor between article and noun, as "the man," as these interruptions impede the current of the sense and impair the effect," in *Thoughts on Singing* (Chesterfield, 1848), 44, and James Hamilton comments, "we must not take breath between the syllables of a word, nor between words which, from their intimate grammatical relation, cannot be separated without affecting their meaning. But wherever stops may be inserted in speaking or reading, the breath may be taken in singing." in *Hamilton's Modern Instructions in Singing* (London, 1853), 15.

³⁶ Gesualdo Lanza, *Elements of Singing*, (London, [1813]), part 3, p. 44. Lanza contends that his observations on the art of breathing apply to both Italian and English

In another part of his treatise, Lanza clarifies these general guidelines:

Breath may be taken wherever a rest occurs; or after any staccatoed (or short) note, (so that no word is broken between the two notes;) because every *staccatoed* note will have only half the value of the Time there will be sufficient time for breath to be taken: Breath may be taken after any long note, as a *Semibreve* or *Minim*; so that it is not tyed into the next, but should it be tyed, then the breath may be taken after the tie. After a dotted note breath may also be taken, as, a small portion of the time may be withheld from the dot.³⁷

Similar principles were discussed by Maria Anfossi 27 years later:

[Breath may be taken] not only at every rest, but after a long note, before shakes, cadences, notes sustained for one or more bars, and on the second of two notes tied together, and within the same space, or on the same line, provided the second note is not followed by a semitone.

In cases of emergency, the singer may also avail himself of the four following expedients: 1st, between two words ending and beginning with a vowel; 2ndly, by singing a note staccato, in order to use that portion of its value for breathing; 3rdly, by employing a portion of a dotted note; 4thly, when the composer has set but one note to two words, the first ending, and the second beginning with a vowel, this note may be divided, and the opportunity of taking breath be thus obtained; but generally speaking, though the interruption of the words for the sake of respiring should be avoided, yet there are cases where the

songs: "As the rules for taking breath in English songs are similar to those for the Italian, being on the same principle, the repetition of them as applicable to English words would enlarge the work [that is, his treatise], without giving any new aid to the Scholar or Superintendant" (*Elements*, part 3, p. 46). One writer, John Addison, notes that if breath is not needed at any particular division in a sentence, then the punctuation may be marked by a suspension of the voice instead: "The punctuation of the words must be as strictly attended to in *Singing* as in *Reciting*. Each Comma, Semicolon, Colon, and Period, should be duly observed. During the longer pauses the Breath may be taken, but not always, at the others they may be sufficiently marked by a suspension of the voice." (*Singing*, 31).

³⁷ Lanza, *Elements*, part 1, p. 53.

expression requires it, and these are the same when audible respiration [that is, sighing (see below)] is highly effective.³⁸

And Manuel García furnishes singers with one additional place to breathe in emergencies. When two notes are joined by a slur, and the singer finds it necessary to respire, the breath should be taken only after the slur has been executed. The singer should then "attack" the second note (see Ex. 4).³⁹

Ex. 4. Breathing within a slur; Rossini, *La gazza ladra* (1817); García, *New Treatise*, vol. 2, p. 49

Ninetta:

Quan-ti con- ten-ti si al- fin go- drò tut- to sor- ri- de- re


When so much happiness, yes, at last is mine. Everything smiles on me.



But not all writers leave the application of unnotated pauses to the discretion of the singer. Domenico Corri and Gesualdo Lanza, for instance, regularly indicate places for breathing. Corri employs two symbols:


When this mark * is used [the mark for distinguishing musical periods], a Pause is always to be made and breath taken. The Pause [is]


³⁸ Anfossi, *Trattato*, 12-13. Richard Bacon recommends the same procedures: "The management of the breath is indeed most important to the singer. The principal rules are, to fill the chest just before beginning a strain—to take breath on the weak or unaccented part of the measure, and never at the beginning of a bar, or in the middle of a word—to sing a single strain, or musical phrase, if possible in the same breath, to prepare, by a deep inspiration, for a long passage or division—to take advantage of the opportunities short rests or pauses afford for inhaling and giving out the breath as slowly as possible. These are the general laws, which, like all other rules, are susceptible of licences and exceptions, the knowledge of which must be acquired by experience" (*Elements*, 91-92).

³⁹ García, *New Treatise*, vol. 2, p. 49.

to be about as long as that made by a Comma in reading, and the time taken for it [is] to be deducted from the Note to which the mark is nearest. For example, when before the note, This  will be nearly

equal to this  and when after the note, This  equal to

this  NB. This is likewise applicable to Instrumental Music ...

This mark  also directs the Singer to take breath in the same

manner as above, but to make the pause as imperceptible as possible; because (as has been remarked) it is to be done only on account of a period being too long, or when a particular exertion of voice is necessary, as before a Cadence &c. &c. . . . This sign only respects vocal music.⁴⁰

Corri's publication *A Select Collection of the Most Admired Songs* (Edinburgh, c1781) demonstrates how some of the principles discussed by both grammarians and teachers of singing are applied in practice. On the title page, Corri explains that the symbols he uses to indicate breathing are equivalent to the punctuation found in sentences: "the Music in this Work is divided into phrases, as, in reading, sentences are marked by points." Consequently, Corri locates breath marks in the same places that speakers would introduce grammatical or rhetorical pauses. Full breaths are designated between repetitions of words and short phrases (the rhetorical figure *epizeuxis*⁴¹), and the anticipatory effect created by these pauses enables singers to draw attention to the increased vehemence (that is, the intensification of the passion concerned) which is to be placed on the reiteration (see Ex. 5; note the full stops with which Corri punctuates the repetitions of "rosy wine"). But the full breath has other functions as well. It gives listeners an opportunity to reflect upon the sentiments and thoughts expressed, and for this reason, Corri marks the longer pause after exclamations (see Ex. 6) and at

⁴⁰Domenico Corri, *A Select Collection of the Most Admired Songs* (Edinburgh, c1781), 3, 8.

⁴¹*Epizeuxis* is a figure of repetition in which a single word or short phrase is reiterated immediately in order to amplify the vehemence of the sentiment. John Mason (*Essay*, 27), John Wesley (*Directions*, 8), and John Walker (*Rhetorical Grammar*, 153) state that the second utterance of the word or words should be louder than the first.

the ends of periods (see Exs. 5b and 6). He uses the half breath, however, to articulate other aspects of grammatical structure and places the shorter pause before prepositions (see Ex. 7) and conjunctions (see Ex. 8). Corri also employs the half breath to indicate where singers should breathe in the middle of a word (see Ex. 9).⁴²

Ex. 5. (a) 'If the heart of a man,' Gay, *The Beggar's Opera* (1728); Corri, *Select Collection*, vol. 2, p. 63

(b) 'The wanton God who perces Hearts,' Arne, *Comus* (1738); Corri, *Select Collection*, vol. 2, p. 59

(a) she swee-tly swee-tly Rai-ses the spi-rits,

(b) ro- sy wine. ro- sy wine. who baths the wound with ro- sy wine.

sure they're free, sure they're free, to

⁴² Reasons for interrupting words with pauses are given below.

Ex. 6. (a) 'Would I might be hang'd,' Gay, *The Beggar's Opera* (1728); Corri, *Select Collection*, vol. 2, p. 65

(b) 'When my Hero in Court appears,' Gay, *The Beggar's Opera* (1728); Corri, *Select Collection*, vol. 2, p. 64

(a)

O leave me to Thought! I fear I doubt! I
trem-ble! I droop! See my Cour- age is out.

(b)

for ah! poor Pol- ly's his wife.

Ex. 7. 'Water parted from the Sea,' Arne, *Artaxerxes* (1762); Corri, *Select Collection*, vol. 2, p. 47

Tho' in search of soft re- pose
still it mur- mers as it flows

Ex. 8. (a) 'Beneath a green Shade,' anonymous Scottish air; Corri, *Select Collection*, vol. 3, p. 96

(b) 'Pious orgies,' Handel, *Judas Maccabaeus* (1747); Corri, *Select Collection*, vol. 2, p. 76

(a) So sad yet so sweet-ly

(b) will to the Lord ascend and move his pi-ty his pi-ty

Gesualdo Lanza also indicates the places where singers should take breath, but in contrast to Corri, Lanza includes lengthy discussions of some of the examples in his treatise. In the third part of *Elements of Singing* (London, 1813), Lanza fully annotates one of his examples (see Ex. 10), suggesting that in the Italian language it is better for singers who are short of breath to respire between elided vowels, thereby creating two syllables, than to break a word:

The places for taking breath will be the more or the fewer according to the movement being taken slow or quick. If this Air be sung in just, or true time [tempo] (that is, in the time which the Author intended) and the singer have sufficient breath the proper places will be wherever this mark * is set, which will be found to coincide with the end of each line of the poetry,

Ah perdona al primo affetto,
Questo accento sconsigliato,
Colpa fù dell' labbro usato,
A così chiamarti ognor.

But if the air be sung in a slower time and the singer require breath, he may take it also, at this sign: * . . . At [note] * I. as the word "perdona" ends with a vowel and the next, "al" begins with one, the singer may take breath between them, giving one of the two

Demisemiquavers above, which are tied [beamed] together, to one vowel, & the second to the following vowel; altho' he ought if he had breath sufficient, to give but one vocal sound, as they are both "a.a." to these two notes or musical sounds. At ♯ 2. as the note to the last syllable of "accento" is a semiquaver, it may be made short enough by being sung staccato, to allow sufficient breath to be taken. At ♯ 3. as the syllable "fū" is, by itself, a word, and is set with a dotted note, breath may be taken by allowing a portion of the dot for that purpose. At ♯ 4. the same as at ♯ 1. At ♯ 5. the same as at ♯ 2. and at ♯ 6. the same as at ♯ 1. [At notes 4 and 6, the words end and begin with vowels, but in both cases the vowels differ.]⁴³

Lanza gives further advice on the places where unnotated breaths or pauses may be introduced:

Breath ought to be taken between certain words altho' the Singer may not require it, as if it be not, the words by being tied together will have a very different signification from that intended [see Ex. 11]. [In the example,] breath ought to be taken after "l'ami," to divide it from the following word, as if they be sung in one breath, the line will sound thus, "Tu l'ami e ancor per lui", (You love him and still for him,) while, the sense being unfinished, the proper division, by taking breath after "l'ami", will lead to the meaning. It ought to be sung thus "Tu l'ami, e ancor per lui nutri un secreto amore", (You love him, and still for him you nourish a secret love.) [Note how Lanza uses the comma to signify a breath.]⁴⁴

Ex. 9. 'Water parted from the Sea,' Arne, *Artaxerxes* (1762); Corri, *Select Collection*, vol. 2, p. 47



⁴³ Lanza, *Elements*, part 3, pp. 44-45.

⁴⁴ Lanza, *Elements*, part 3, p. 45.

Ex. 10. 'Ah perdona al primo affetto,' Mozart, *La clemenza di Tito* (1791); Lanza, *Elements*, part 3, p. 44

Ah per- do- na al pri- mo af- fet- to Ques-to ac- cent- to scon- si-
 glia-to Col-pa fù dell' lab- bro u- sa- to A co- si chia- mar-ti ognor.
 Ah, my former love forgive that thoughtless word. It was the fault of lips always accustomed to call you so.

When the vowels which end one word and begin the next share the same note (as opposed to the two vowels being set to different notes [see Ex. 10]), Lanza recommends the following:

If the ending vowel & the beginning one are to be sounded as one syllable, and the composer has put but one note for both, the singer may divide it between the vowels [see Ex. 12]. If breath be wanted for the words "*lieto istante*", which if sung in slow time [tempo], may be too much for one breath, the best place for taking it will be after the vowel ending "*lieto*"; but as this vowel, together with the next beginning "*istante*", is set to but one note, (a crotchet,) the "o", must take but half the note and leave the other half (a quaver) for "i" the following vowel.⁴⁵

Ex. 11. Breathing to maintain proper sense in the text; Portugal, *L'Argenide* (1804); Lanza, *Elements*, part 3, p. 45

Tu l'a- mi e an- cor per lu- i nu-tri un se-cre- to a- mo- re

⁴⁵ Ibid.

Ex. 12. Breathing at elided vowels; Pucitta, *La Vestale* (1810); Lanza, *Elements*, part 3, p. 45



The observations cited here on the use of unnotated pauses and breaths to articulate the sense of vocal melodies parallel the traditional view of pauses in speaking, a view which formed the basis of phrasing in singing.⁴⁶ Indeed, singers even ended their phrases in the same way that orators did, for in both spoken and sung discourse the cadence was employed. Domenico Corri declares:

On the last note of a passage [member of a larger period], always die the Voice, and at each note of the final phrase, end thus < > this swell must be done as gentle as possible, only as much to accent the sound, and immediately die it away.⁴⁷

Similarly, John Turner wrote that

the greatest force and expression should be given to the middle of the phrase; the notes at the beginning and end being sung in a softer strain, and those at the end, in particular, never quitted abruptly, but gradually sunk, as it were, into silence.⁴⁸

Moreover, Corri recommends that the “dying or diminuendo of the voice” should occur not only at the ends of phrases but also at all those places

⁴⁶ Richard Bacon, in fact, considers the judicious use of pauses to be one of the “principal means by which the singer can improve the declamation of recitative” (*Elements*, 80).

⁴⁷ Corri, *Preceptor*, 52.

⁴⁸ John Turner, *A Manual of Instruction in Vocal Music* (London, 1833; facs. ed., Kilkenny: Boethius Press, 1983), 95. Turner’s remarks obviously parallel Ann Fisher’s comments on reading periods made some 83 years earlier (see above).

where "the Singer finds it necessary to take breath."⁴⁹ Both Giusto Tendu-
ducci and Giuseppe Aprile, in taking our understanding of cadence in sing-
ing one step further, insist that singers should not dwell too long on the last
note of a musical period lest the singer lose the opportunity this note affords
for taking breath.⁵⁰ And Manuel García, in his methodical way, identifies
the principles involved most clearly.⁵¹

The way in which figures, members of phrases, phrases, periods, and
pieces are finished deserves our fullest attention. The resting points in a
melody are indicated by the silence which follows the final note of
phrases, or portions of phrases. This note ought to be lightly and
instantaneously quitted; for were it to be too much prolonged the
thought would cease to be distinct and elegant; besides which, the
prolongation of these final notes would make the singing heavy and
would absorb part of the time necessary for renewing the breath . . . The
note which ends a final period, or an accompanied recitative, should be

⁴⁹ Corri, *Preceptor*, 65. On this principle of phrasing, John Barnett comments
"the termination of *half-phrases*, *whole-phrases*, *subjects*, or wherever there is a *resting*
note, should be both *crescendo* and *diminuendo*." (*School for the Voice* [London,
1845?], 81), and John Addison states "when the punctuation of the words requires a
Comma only, and the Rest in the Music allows more time than sufficient, let the note
before the rest fade, and the succeeding one be commenced with the subdued Voice, by
which the attention may be kept in suspense." (*Singing*, 31).

⁵⁰ Tendu-
ducci, *Instruction*, 2; Aprile, *Italian Method*, 2. William Kitchiner,
quoting the Rev. Charles Smyth on recitative, captures the essence of the relationship
between a composer's notation and a singer's realization of it: "It might be necessary for
the Composer to fill up his Bar, but he never intended that the Singer should pay
mechanical attention to his notation." (*Observations*, 67).

⁵¹ Similar practices were employed by violinists of the period. See Stowell,
Violin, 284-89 for a discussion of the violin treatises by François-Antoine Habeneck
(*Méthode théorique et pratique de violon* [Paris, c1840]) and Pierre Baillot (*L'art du*
violon [Paris, 1834]). Stowell expands upon the similarities between speaking, singing,
and violin playing in an article which, among other things, examines phrasing in the
music of Mozart (see "Leopold Mozart Revised: Articulation in Violin Playing during
the Second Half of the Eighteenth Century," in *Perspectives on Mozart Performance*, ed.
R. Larry Todd and Peter Williams [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991], 141-
43).

longer than all the other final notes; because it marks the completion either of a thought or discourse.⁵²

Furthermore, García notes that

the end of the phrase should always be maintained in the sentiment of the phrase, that is to say that the ending will be soft, medium, or loud, only in proportion with the expression of the melody, and not always loud as a stereotype, or always soft for a lack of vigor, as one can often observe with some singers.⁵³

He also suggests that after a melody has been suspended by a momentary pause the singer should resume the melody with the same degree of power and in the same vocal timbre as was employed before the interruption.⁵⁴

Predictably, teachers of elocution in the late 18th and 19th centuries advocated the same approach. John Wesley proposes that the ending of one period and the beginning of the next should be determined by the nature of the subject and that the speaker should

take care not to sink your voice too much, at the conclusion of a period: but pronounce the very last words loud and distinct, especially if they have but a weak and dull sound of themselves.⁵⁵

⁵² García, conflation of *New Treatise*, vol. 2, p. 56, and *Traité complet de l'Art du Chant* (Paris, 1847; facs. ed., Geneva: Minkoff Editeur, 1985), vol. 2, pp. 35-36 (trans. Donald V. Paschke, *A Complete Treatise on the Art of Singing: Part Two by Manuel Garcia II* [New York: Da Capo Press, 1975], 103).

⁵³ García, *Traité complet*, vol. 2, pp. 35-36 (trans. Paschke, *Complete Treatise*, 104): "La fin de phrase doit toujours se maintenir dans le sentiment de la phrase, c'est-à-dire que cette fin sera douce, moyenne ou forte, seulement en raison de l'expression de la mélodie, et non toujours forte par système, ou toujours faible par mollesse, comme on peut souvent l'observer chez quelques chanteurs."

⁵⁴ García, *New Treatise*, vol. 2, p. 56. On the way in which the late 18th-century pianist Daniel Gottlob Türk taught his students to begin new members of phrases after pauses, see Rosenblum, *Performance Practices*, 92-93.

⁵⁵ Wesley, *Directions*, 9.

And Gilbert Austin maintains that even though the sound is interrupted during pauses, the speaker's gesture and countenance must indicate that something more is to be said.⁵⁶

The approach to phrasing in the late 18th century and in the early and middle 19th century was, as the sources cited here demonstrate, similar for both singing and speaking. The "dying of the voice" on the final note or notes of a phrase, period, or piece was the equivalent of letting the voice fall at a semicolon, colon, or period, and this manner of delivering unnotated pauses was one of the ways of achieving eloquence in singing. But other sorts of pauses, mainly in the form of rests already woven into the fabric of the music by the composer, provided singers with additional vehicles for delivering melodies expressively. Rests sometimes were used to represent sighs and sobs, and this practice existed in England from at least the time of Thomas Morley (1597), continuing well into the 19th century. Morley summarized the practice of his day with the following advice to composers:

when you would expresse sighes, you may use the crotchet or minime rest at the most, but a longer then a minime rest you may not use, because it will rather seeme a breth taking then a sigh.⁵⁷

When pronouncing a sigh, an audible breath needed to be taken at the rest, for in the early 17th century a sigh seems to have meant inhalation rather than exhalation. In reference to sighing, William Shakespeare wrote in *The First Part of King Henry the Fourth*, "a plague of sighing and grieffe, it blowes a man up like a Bladder" (II, iv).⁵⁸ By Manuel García's day, however, the sigh could be produced by one of two methods, inhalation or exhalation, and could be introduced in places quite apart from rests. García remarks:

Sighs, in all their variety, are produced by the friction—more or less strong, more or less prolonged—of the air against the walls of the throat, whether during inspiration or expiration of the breath. In pursuing this

⁵⁶ Austin, *Chironomia*, 52.

⁵⁷ Thomas Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke* (London, 1597; facs. ed., New York: Da Capo Press, 1969), 178.

⁵⁸ *Mr. William Shakespeares Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies* (London, 1623), 58.

first method [inspiration], the friction may be changed into sobs, or even into a rattle in the throat, if the vocal ligaments be brought into action.⁵⁹

Sighing and sobbing were, of course, important components of the orator's arsenal of persuasive devices as well. They were particularly suited to texts dealing with the passions of sorrow and grief. Sorrow, asserts John Walker, should be expressed by a plaintive voice which is frequently interrupted by sighs, and grief, insists Thomas Sheridan, should be shown by words "dragged out, rather than spoken; the accents weak, and interrupted, sighs breaking into the middle of sentences and words."⁶⁰ But when sorrow or grief is sudden or violent, it is expressed by "beating the head; groveling on the ground; tearing of garments, hair, and flesh; screaming aloud, weeping, stamping with the feet, lifting the eyes, from time to time, to heaven; hurrying to and fro, running distracted, or fainting away, sometimes without recovery."⁶¹ These descriptions of sorrow and grief not only demonstrate how vividly speakers were expected to portray strong emotions, but they also present yet another link between the arts of speaking and singing. Indeed, they help to explain why García placed sobs at certain points in his examples.

The parallel between the two arts is seen most clearly in passages where the emotional intensity of the text is enhanced by sobs which interrupt the melody in the middle of a word (see Exs. 13-14). In the excerpt from *Il turco in Italia*, the singer creates space in the vocal line for the sobs, but in the passage from *Don Giovanni*, Mozart already had incorporated rests in the melody for that purpose (or at least that is the way in which García interprets the rests). Undoubtedly, García felt that by this point in the scene Zerlina would have been in tears, sobbing as she sang the words. The rests which interrupt "care" and "manine" simply provide the opportunity for Zerlina to show her emotions powerfully.⁶²

⁵⁹ García, *New Treatise*, vol. 2, p. 64.

⁶⁰ Walker, *Elements*, vol. 2, p. 334; Sheridan, *Rhetorical Grammar*, 185.

⁶¹ Sheridan, *Rhetorical Grammar*, 184.

⁶² García may be a fairly reliable witness for singing practices in the operas of Rossini. García was taught by his father (also named Manuel García), who, in addition to frequently performing Rossini's operas, was a principal exponent of Rossini's music

Ex. 13. Sobs; Rossini, *Il turco in Italia* (1814); Garcíá, *New Treatise*, vol. 2, p. 64

Fiorilla:

Voi ve- de- te il pian- to mi- o. You see my tears.

de- te il pian- to

Ex. 14. Sobs; Mozart, *Don Giovanni* (1787); Garcíá, *New Treatise*, vol. 2, p. 64

Zerlina:

Lascierò cavarmi gli oc-chi e le ca- re tu-e ma- ni- ne li-e-ta poi sa-prò bac- ciar.

I'll let you gouge out my eyes, and still I'll happily kiss your dear hands.
[continuation of text in Ex 2]

Ex. 15. Sighs before consonants; Rossini, *Otello* (1816); Garcíá, *New Treatise*, vol. 2, p. 64

Desdemona:

L'er-ror, l'er-ror d'un in-fe-li-ce For my unhappy error,
[ah father, forgive me]

heul l'er-ror, heul l'er-ror d'un in-fe-

outside Italy. In 1815, Garcíá the Elder created the part of Norfolk in Rossini's *Elisabetta regina d'Inghilterra*, and in 1816, Rossini composed the part of Almaviva in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* for him. Garcíá the Younger's treatise probably reflects much of his father's vocal practices, and this provides us with a reasonably close view of the style of singing that one of Rossini's singers employed. Moreover, Garcíá the Younger himself must have been quite familiar with both Rossini's operas and Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, for in 1825 the elder Garcíá took his family and three other singers to New York to perform *Don Giovanni* and six of Rossini's operas. See *New Grove*, vol. 7, pp. 151-52.

When García's second method of sighing is adopted (expiration), the sigh in its proper sense is heard. If the sigh precedes a vowel, the note is aspirated, but if it precedes a consonant, then the "breathing sound" (*heu*) is heard before the note (see Ex. 15). A sigh which ends a note, however, is produced by a strong expulsion of air (see Ex. 16 where this type of forceful sighing creates the musical counterpart of the speaker's exclamation). But when this note is followed by a downward leap, the voice may fall before any of the air is expelled (see Ex. 17). And if the exclamatory sigh is produced by an ascending slur, the noise of the air being forced out almost deadens the voice at the beginning of the slur (see Ex. 18).⁶³ Moreover, sighs even form an integral part of a musical subject, transforming rests which suspend the flow of the thought into expressive accents (see Ex. 19).⁶⁴ And García, always the thorough teacher, demonstrates how singers could mix the various forms of sighing and sobbing in a passage from Rossini's *Otello* (see Ex. 20).⁶⁵ Here, both text and music provide the singer with a perfect vehicle for passionate expression to pour forth. The text, which deals with dolefulness and the sighs and tears that accompany such afflictions of the soul, is heavily aspirated at the beginnings and ends of words (shown in *italics*). These aspirated sighs dominate the first statement of the text, but on the reiteration of the thoughts and sentiments, sobs portray the emotional state most realistically. Repetition of words normally called for a more vehement style of delivery, and García aligns himself with standard rhetorical practices by intensifying the second statement of the text in a powerful way.

Ex. 16. Sigh at the end of a note; Rossini, *Otello* (1816);
García, *New Treatise*, vol. 2, p. 64

Desdemona:



⁶³ García, *New Treatise*, vol. 2, p. 64.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 47.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 65.

Ex. 17. Sigh followed by a leap; Mozart, *Don Giovanni* (1787); García, *New Treatise*, vol. 2, p. 64

Donna Anna:

Pa- dre, mio ca-ro pa- dre, ah pa- dre a- ma- to Father, my dear father,
 Ah beloved father
 a ah pa-dre a-

Ex. 18. Sigh produced by an ascending slur; García, *New Treatise*, vol. 2, p. 64

ha h!

Ex. 19. Rests as expressive accents in musical subjects; Handel, *Rinaldo* (1711); García, *New Treatise*, vol. 2, p. 47

Almirena:

Las- cia ch'io pian- ga la sor- te mi- a. Let me weep for my fate.

Ex. 20. Sighs and sobs; Rossini, *Otello* (1816); García, *New Treatise*, vol. 2, p. 65

Desdemona:

Ma stan- ca al- fin heu di spar- ge- re mes- ti sos- pi- ri e pian- to heu mo-
 ri heu l'afflit- ta ver- gi- ne ahi di quel salce ac- can- to ma stan- ca al- fin di
 pian- ge- re mo- ri l'afflit- ta ver- gi- ne mo- ri che duol l'in- gra- to ah

But weary at last of spilling doleful sighs and tears, the afflicted maiden died, ah, beside that willow.
 But weary at last of weeping, the afflicted maiden died. Died, how sad. The ungrateful man, ah.

The technique of aspiration was not new in England, of course, for it was mentioned by Anselm Bayly in 1771. Aspiration, Bayly remarks,

is a mere breathing or gentle sigh occasionally thrown in by prefixing as it were an *h* to the vowel in a word of grief, lamentation, request or surprise to make it the more plaintive and expressive. Thus in Lord, trouble, as if written *Lhord*, how are they increased that *throuble* me; the *shorrows* of death compassed me; let my *chomplaint* come before thee; *Ho* let my soul live!⁶⁶

Sighs and sobs seem to have been used for expressive purposes in English singing throughout the period from the late 16th to the middle of the 19th centuries, for in addition to Morley, Bayly, and García, Christopher Simpson, in 1667, advised composers to respect

the Points of your Ditty; not using any remarkable *Pause* or *Rest*, untill the words come to a full point or period. Neither may any *Rest*, how short soever, be interposed in the middle of a word; But a sigh or sobb is properly intimated by a *Crotchet* or *Quaver Rest*.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ Bayly, *Practical Treatise*, vol. 3, p. 49.

⁶⁷ Christopher Simpson, *A Compendium of Practical Musick* (London, 1667), 141.

And Maria Anfossi declared that audible respiration in the form of the sigh should be used to express excessive grief, agitation, depression of the mind, and any other kindred feelings.⁶⁸ We now know what sorts of effects Dome-nico Corri probably had in mind when in 1810 he commented

where Rests are marked, take particular care to stop accordingly; Singers are too apt to neglect the rests in Music, which is no doubt a palpable error [,] as being a part of the Composition, and frequently of great importance to relieve the ear from a monotony, *and are always productive of effect.*⁶⁹

The introduction of pauses into singing, then, not only articulated the sense of the text for listeners but also enlivened the discourse. Monotony in singing, it seems, was identical to monotony in speaking. John Turner makes this abundantly clear:

A person's reading is said to be *monotonous*, when he continues in one unvaried tone of voice, without paying due regard to accent, emphasis, and proper pauses, or to use such inflections of the voice as are necessary to constitute good reading; so a person is said to *sing* in a *monotonous* style, who omits, in like manner, to give due expression to the notes, or to attend to those graces which are requisite in good singing.⁷⁰

Persuasive delivery from the late 18th to the middle of the 19th centuries presupposed a knowledge of grammatical and rhetorical pauses, and singers needed to be thoroughly familiar with the techniques for differentiating one type of pause from another. Pauses made musical discourse intelligible and through their observance the sense of the words and the melody would be impressed not only on the minds of listeners but also on their hearts. The singer's art of phrasing was modeled on that of the orator, and the close relationship between speaking and singing created a style of singing that was highly articulated. Full breaths or half breaths were introduced to regulate the partial ideas which comprised both the text and melody; that is, they were introduced at all of the various stops and at other places where it was necessary to ensure that the meaning was not distorted, especially, we learn,

⁶⁸ Anfossi, *Trattato*, 12.

⁶⁹ Corri, *Preceptor*, 73; emphasis mine.

⁷⁰ Turner, *Manual*, 188.

before prepositions, conjunctions, relative pronouns, and the like, and after substantives, nominatives, and exclamations. Pauses also were inserted to clarify the sense of emphatic words, to punctuate the repetition of words or phrases, and to intensify the discourse at appropriate points with expressive sighs or sobs. Without correct utterance of stops, to paraphrase the ancient Roman orator Quintilian, all the other merits of oratory are worth nothing.⁷¹

⁷¹ *The Institutio Oratoria of Quintilian*, ed. and trans. H.E. Butler (London: William Heinemann, 1920-1922), book 11, pp. 262-63.