

SAŽECI DOKTORSKIH RADOVA U MUZIKOLOGIJI – SUMMARIES OF DOCTORAL THESES IN MUSICOLOGY

GIUSEPPE MICHELE STRATICO'S TREATISES ON MUSIC BETWEEN THEORY AND PRACTICE: EDITION AND COMMENTARY¹

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Giuseppe Michele Stratico (Zadar, July 31st, 1728 – Sanguinetto, January 31st, 1783), Tartini's student in violin and composition, dealt also with music theory. He started to form his thought in this area already within Tartini's school, influenced by his teacher but also by Francescantonio Vallotti, another important figure of the 18th-century Paduan musical milieu, which afterwards resulted in the development of his own ideas on the subject. In the area of music theory Stratico wrote three treatises, all preserved as manuscripts in Biblioteca Marciana in Venice (Ms. It. Cl. IV, 341 [=5294], 342 [=5347], 343 [=5348]):

1. *Trattato di musica* (in 10 versions);
2. *Nuovo sistema musicale* (1 version);
3. *Lo spirito Tartiniano* (1 version).

Lo spirito Tartiniano, written after Tartini's death in 1770, reflects Stratico's standpoint on his teacher's musical system, expressed as a presentation and a critique of Tartini's treatise *De' principj dell'armonia musicale contenuta nel diatonico ge-*

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nere. On the other hand, both the *Nuovo sistema musicale*, and *Trattato di musica* are presentations of Stratico's own musical system, with the first treatise intended for practical musicians and the second for more learned readers.

The main task of this thesis was to make a transcription of Stratico's manuscripts, which would enable further analysis of and research into Stratico's music theory. The next task was to make a study and critical analysis of Stratico's treatises in order to determine more precisely their content and to specify Stratico's interests and orientations in the field of music theory. Following this line, it was necessary to identify and single out which subjects were of particular interest to Stratico, the way in which he approached specific topics and how deep he elaborated the issue/s. Furthermore, on the basis of the current knowledge on the subject and the conducted analysis, the comparative method was used to identify some potential relations to Stratico's predecessors and contemporaries, focusing in particular on possible sources of his writings, and the influences to which he was exposed.

The foundation of Stratico's system lies in two proportional series – the harmonic and the arithmetic. Beside his obvious mathematical approach, the psycho-acoustical moment has a prominent place in Stratico's writings – the sensory (aural) effect that the ear receives and recognizes in a certain way, which in many cases is of decisive importance in his theoretical elaborations. All horizontal and vertical relationships in Stratico's system are deduced using proportional relations, both harmonic and arithmetic, with the goal to maintain all the relations as pure/natural as possible. Since the proportions are crucial to form the relationship of the low tones to the high, which is the manner in which the melody and the bass correspond, Stratico found this correspondence between the proportion of the octave, which is the representative of the natural bass (low), and the major third, which represents the melody (high), both in harmonic and the arithmetic system. In order to mark more precisely the natural ratios he uses, Stratico adapts the existing markings by introducing new signs which indicate the relations that are smaller or larger than the usual ones. Although many music theorists of the 17th and the 18th centuries 'balanced' with the seventh harmonic, Stratico was among the few who went all out declaring the seventh to be a consonance. We can find here the relation with Tartini, Riccati and especially with Euler who considered the role of the seventh. However with his system Stratico made a breakthrough which – if published – would certainly provoke loud criticism and rejection. This attitude towards the consonant seventh resulted in its insertion into the scale and the obtaining of the nine-tone scale which has proportional construction and form, as well as symmetry of ascending and descending motion, which is one of Stratico's characteristics that differed from the common practice. Another characteristic of Stratico's system is the explanation of the minor scale deriving from the arithmetic series. Its natural form is thus descending, and bearing all minor thirds, as an op-

posite of the major mode which is ascending and with major thirds. The minor scale, as commonly understood in Stratico's system, is called the mixed scale (derived from the harmonic series but with applied arithmetical divisions), and, given its variety in combinations of minor and major thirds, has a wider use than the arithmetic one. Additional scales or progressions are derived (the nine-tone and eleven-tone derived scale) to demonstrate different effects that a melody can form with a bass, caused by the change of proportions. Regarding this issue it is important to emphasize Stratico's proposal for the mobility of the tones of the scale to maintain the natural proportions in the scale when changing the mode, i.e. when modulating.

The analyses of Stratico's theoretical writings offered us the possibility to consider it in the context of other writings on music in the 18th century. It is firstly done by examining the relationship between Stratico and his teacher Tartini. It was possible to determine two directions of that relationship: to consider Stratico as a critic of Tartini's system (comparing Stratico's standpoint with the comments on Tartini's theoretical works written by Euler, d'Alembert, Serre, Blainville, Rousseau, Eximeno and Riccati), as well as to consider Tartini as a starting point of Stratico's own theoretical system (since Tartini's work gave Stratico an impetus in several subjects, for example in the forming of the nine-tone scale, in the inclusion of the term $1/7$ into the consonant system, etc.).

At the end of the text, some possibilities of comparison of Stratico's texts with other theorists of his time are offered based on several key aspects of Stratico's theory: the basis of the system, the issue of temperament; the openness to the seventh harmonic; the origin of the major scale; and the origin of the minor scale. In addition to relying on the North-Italian theoretical school, we were able to find some connections of Stratico's thought with Euler's theory and with some ideas of French music theorists (Rameau, Serre, Blainville), reading Stratico's writings as a contribution to the defence of music as science.

Altogether, Stratico formed his theoretical music system somewhat outside of the framework of the theoretical authorities of his time. His efforts certainly were not isolated and unique as such, but one of many approaches to music theory and practice of the time, with some original contributions. Thus, Stratico's musical system can be considered as an interesting and valuable contribution to theoretical discussions of his time.