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*The issue of transcribing the timbre of an orchestra,
operatic voice, the melody of the language on the piano
in selected arrangements of Franz Liszt .*

Description of the artistic doctoral thesis as part of the procedure for
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Introduction

„Whoever really wants to know what Liszt has done for the piano should study his old operatic fantasies. They represent the classicism of piano technique”¹.

These words, written by Johannes Brahms, despite his well-known aversion to the Hungarian pianist and composer, prove the great respect he felt for Franz Liszt and this part of his work. And that was a big part! He wrote arrangements (fantasies/reminiscences/paraphrases...) for almost his entire life - as a thirteen-year-old, from 1824 (*Impromptu on Rossini and Spontini themes*, S. 150) until 1882, four years before his death (*Feierlicher Marsch zum heiligen Graal aus Parsifal* S. 450). He was not the only one - a very large number of Romantic composers of that time dealt with this genre, mentioning only such names as: Thalberg, Czerny, Kalkbrenner, Hummel or Herz. Chopin himself was famous for his Op. 2 - *Variations on a theme from Mozart's Don Giovanni*, and the entire middle phase of his work is stylistically very similar to *bel canto* - the leading operatic style of the time!

These approximately 50 pieces (we are talking only about works inspired by opera themes) written over the course of almost 60 years are both a mirror and a large part of the oeuvre of Franz Liszt. The following thesis aims to analyse representative arrangements, selected on the one hand from various stages of the oeuvre of one of the most important piano virtuosos of the 19th century, and on the other hand (considering the original works from which these arrangements come), coming from operas of different styles, sung in different languages, with different orchestrations etc. The album contains seven pieces, inspired by the operas of three different composers.

¹ Friedheim A., *Life and Liszt: The Recollection of a Concert Pianist*, ed. Theodore Bullock, Taplinger, New York, 1961, p. 138, cit. after: Ch. Suttoni, *Opera Paraphrases* in: ed. Arnold B., *The Liszt Companion*, Greenwood Press, London 2002, p. 179.

The first of these composers is Gaetano Donizetti (1797 - 1848). *Réminiscences de Lucia di Lammermoor de Donizetti* S. 397: *Andante final* and *Marche Funèbre et cavatine*, two arrangements (which initially constituted one work) represent the aforementioned *bel canto* style, widespread in European music of XIX century. In addition, they are examples of works stemming from the Italian culture and were written by Liszt relatively early, during his first - virtuoso - phase of oeuvre. Their careful analysis will therefore be a point of reference not only to such works as *Reminiscences on Themes from Norma and Puritans* by Bellini and Mozart's *Don Juan*, but also, among others, to the Concert Paraphrase on Verdi's famous Sextet from *Rigoletto*, a work truly arising from *bel canto*.

The second composer is Giacomo Meyerbeer (1791 - 1864) - a German artist, however, writing his works mainly in French. He was a representative of another important genre, appearing mainly in Paris - the *Grand Opéra*. Author of such works as *Huguenots*, *l'Africaine*, *Robert the Devil*, now forgotten, but extremely popular throughout the 19th century. The album includes two works by this composer - the forgotten and very rarely performed *Cavatine de Robert le diable* S. 412a and *Pastorale. Appel aux armes* (*Pastoral. A call to arms*) - the third piece from the *Illustrations* (calque from French, the term is basically the same as *reminiscences*) from the opera *The Prophet* (*Illustrations du Prophète* S. 414).

The third name definitely could not be missing here - it is Richard Wagner (1813 - 1883). Apart from his personal relationship with Liszt (he was his longtime friend and later even his son-in-law), he was one of the most important authors and reformers of opera of all time; works such as *Tristan and Isolde* or *The Ring of the Nibelungs* occupy a very important place in the history of 19th-century music and set trends for many years ahead, polarising artists into those who rejected Wagner's thought (Debussy, Ravel) and those who continued it (Richard Strauss, Arnold Schoenberg). For the program, from among 19 arrangements composed by Liszt on themes from only Wagner's operas, I chose three - *Isoldens Liebestod* from the opera: *Tristan and Isolde*

and 2 pieces from *Tannhäuser and Lohengrin* (*Zwei Stücke aus Richard Wagners Tannhäuser und Lohengrin*) S 445.

The analyses of the recorded works, constituting the main part of this work, are primarily of a practical nature. The discussed fragments (an analysis of the entire compositions would at least triple the volume of this doctoral dissertation) of the above-mentioned works were selected due to the extent to which they can enrich the performer's interpretation or bring closer the extra-musical context suggesting phrasing or help solve some problems of flow of musical drama. Of course, some facts from the history of music, composers' biographies or explanations of terms had to be mentioned in order to bring close the context, but the main goal of this thesis is the practical, performance aspect.

The first chapter contains theoretical aspects that organise the historical and conceptual context. In the second, main chapter of this doctorate, detailed analyses of selected aspects of the recorded works are presented, divided into three subgroups, depending on the author of the original - these are, in this order, arrangements from the works of Donizetti, Meyerbeer and Wagner. The third and last chapter contains a summary and conclusions.

While working on this doctorate, I tried to make the main "source" on the one hand, the musical text of Franz Liszt (I worked with the EMB - Editio Musica Budapest edition), and on the other hand, the musical text of the original works - both piano reductions and full scores. Of course, I also used biographies, books dealing with the very aspect of transcription, and several existing doctorates (mainly from American universities), but all these books were theoretical supplements (and that was the intention of all of them). Due to the practical nature of the doctorate (its main "product" is the recording), the purpose of the written thesis was to comment, analyse and explain the interpretations that are on the album.

The choice of the subject of the work was dictated by my personal artistic interests. Already during my bachelor's studies, I was fascinated by orchestral music (hence, I started my second major - conducting), and apart from solo piano playing, vocal chamber music gave me great satisfaction, which quickly turned into love for opera (the ease of learning foreign languages helped me a lot). The idea of using Franz Liszt's operatic arrangements was actually quite obvious, because you can find all these elements in them: the sound of the orchestra, the text of the libretto (and the story told in it) and the human voice. The fruit of more than three years of work on this idea is this doctorate.

I. Around the concept of arrangement

Picture No. 1



J. Danhauser - *Liszt at the piano*. 1840.

At the beginning of the considerations about transcriptions, the famous Danhauser painting could not be missing - *Liszt am Flügel phantasieren*, where the pianist, accompanied by, among others, G. Rossini and George Sand, improvises in front of a bust of Beethoven. The latter apparently does not have much to do with the topic interest to us, but one should not forget that the arrangements of all nine of Beethoven's symphonies (which Liszt wrote from 1838 to 1865) occupy a very important place in the history of the genre, along with operatic fantasies. It is this story that we will look at first.

1. The history of the concept of arranging

Franz Liszt wrote transcriptions throughout his whole life. Since the works of composers naturally reflect the events of their lives in a given period and document changes in the composition style itself, it is worth looking at what the same genre considering various stages of the author of *Mephisto Waltz* work. Due to the style of the pieces, we can divide it into three periods.

The first period (until 1847) consists of arrangements written mainly for the composer himself, when Liszt, especially at the very beginning of his career, became famous primarily as a piano virtuoso, and writing his own operatic fantasies was beneficial for two reasons. Firstly, because the genre was *a priori* virtuosic, the composer could include in it exactly such passages, chord progressions, scales, etc., which corresponded to his own technique (using its full potential and not showing lacks of it), and not the technique of other composers - virtuosos. Secondly, by performing these works in public, he made his own concerts more attractive by taking advantage of the popularity of opera titles. This is also the case with the arrangements from *Lucia di Lammermoor* by Donizetti described below; Liszt wrote it a year after its premiere (which was a huge success) and the inclusion of the most popular melodies in the form of a virtuoso paraphrase in the program was simply - using today's terminology - a marketing trick.

However, these works cannot be denied their artistic value. We will find there such masterpieces as reminiscences from Bellini's *Norma*, Meyerbeer's *Robert the Devil* and Mozart's *Don Juan (Don Giovanni)*, where Liszt not only quotes a few catchy themes, but also orients them around the central character of the opera (Bertram from *Robert the Devil*), showing full drama works in a short (compared to the original) fantasy (*Norma*), or subordinates full pianistic means to the central character (*Don Giovanni*), not using empty virtuosity as an art in itself.

The second period (1848 - 1868) is characterised by a change in the purpose of operatic transcriptions - Liszt wrote them not for himself, but for other pianists or was

commissioned by publishers. This, of course, is connected with a change in the lifestyle of the Hungarian composer - he gave up the career of a concert virtuoso and settled permanently in Weimar, where he focused on composing and on his conducting duties (he was appointed *Kapellmeister* - conductor - of the local orchestra as early as 1842). During this period, the composer's view on arrangements evolved - instead of containing the drama of the entire opera in one work, Liszt focused on the presentation of selected scenes or arias, while reducing the virtuosic element, but not completely abandoning it. These works are also closer to the originals, but still very original and marked by the style of the Hungarian artist. The authors of original works are dominated by such names as Meyerbeer (whom Liszt knew personally and had great respect for), Verdi (for example, the famous transcription of the quartet from *Rigoletto*, which was written for Hans von Büllow) and Wagner (a close friend and son-in-law of the author of *B minor Sonata*) - presented below on the canvas by W. Beckmann. The latter is - one can say - a special case, because operatic fantasies on themes from his operas were intended to popularise original works - a situation opposite to the arrangements from Donizetti's operas written a few years earlier.

Picture No. 2



W. Beckmann - *Richard and Cosima Wagner, Franz Liszt at Wanfried's house in 1880.*

During the third, late period (1869 - 1882), only a few works were written, mainly from the works of Wagner (on themes from his late operas, including *Ring of the Nibelungs* and *Parsifal*) and Verdi (*Aida* and *Simon Boccanegra*). In addition, Liszt (in the mid-1870s) re-edited many earlier works (including, for example, *Entrance of the Guests* from the *Tannhäuser* discussed in this thesis).

2. The concept and meaning of an „arrangement”

It is easy to notice the lack of uniform terminology in the nomenclature of the discussed works. Liszt himself defines them as (among others): *transcription*, *paraphrase*, *fantasy*, *fantasy/fantasy piece* (German: *Phantasiestück.*), *concert paraphrase*, *arranged for piano* (*für das Pianoforte übergragen*, *für das Pianoforte bearbeitet*, *für das Pianoforte*), *reminiscences*, *illustrations*, *dramatic fantasy*. There is an example of the title page of an arrangement from sextet from Donizetti's Lucia. In this case, the work was referred to by not one, but even two names - *reminiscences* and *fantasie dramatique* (dramatic fantasy).

Picture No. 3



Title page of Franz Liszt's *Reminiscences from Lucia di Lammermoor*, published as *Dramatic fantasy* op. 13.

Foreign-language sources suggest the terms *Arrangement* (*The New Grove*), and Egon Voss, the author quoted above, suggests: *Bearbeitung* (from German *bearbeiten* - to adapt, adopt). The common point, these sources is the difference between the transcription (German - Transkription; or also piano score - Klavierauszug), and arrangement (English) and *Bearbeitung* (German). Alan Walker, the author of an article on F. Liszt in *The New Grove*, very categorically divides these works however into arrangements and paraphrases, treating the former as a mechanical, literal transfer of musical material to another medium (we could call it a piano reduction or an arrangement for piano). while he perceives paraphrases as creative, original works in which changes in relation to the original and his own creative invention are allowed. The first group includes, for example, arrangements of Beethoven's Symphonies for piano, and the second group includes opera arrangements.

Of course, the extent to which Beethoven's symphonies for piano are devoid of fantasy can be debated for a long time (which I disagree with), but here we come to the most important point (also discussed upon by Jonathan Kregor in his excellent book: *Liszt as a Transcriber*) - to what extent the author of the transcription can be heard in the transcribed work? The less, the closer to the work to become the piano reduction. The more, the more the work becomes an arrangement, a paraphrase, a reminiscence.

In my opinion, we cannot talk about a lack of creativity in any of Franz Liszt's arrangement, and even those works in which the author of the *Transcendental Etudes* is completely faithful to the original bear the mark of the Hungarian composer's genius. Therefore, I believe that the most appropriate term for the discussed works is - despite view of A. Walker - an *arrangement* and I am going to use it primarily.

II. Analysis of operatic arrangements of Franz Liszt.

The following chapter, which is the core of this doctorate, is divided into three parts in terms of composers whose works Liszt was inspired by. They appear in chronological order (when it comes when the arrangements were written). In each case, a similar method of analysis was adopted - at the very beginning, the historical context was introduced, basic information about the original work (time and place of premiere, content of the libretto, etc.), then basic information about the arrangement, and then the analyses themselves.

It is worth noting that these are not descriptions of all elements of the work, bar by bar, but a collection of those moments that I have selected that are particularly interesting compared to the original in terms of orchestration, the text of the libretto and the line sung by the choir and soloists.

1. Arrangements from the operas of Donizetti

The early years of Franz Liszt's work coincide with the peak of the development of Italian opera, and above all the *bel canto* style, which found its representatives in three Italian composers - Rossini, Bellini and Donizetti. This period falls on the first half of the 19th century; the first of Rossini's major successes was the opera *Tancredi*, premiered in 1812, while one of Donizetti's last great works was *Don Pasquale*, composed in 1842. The same year saw the premiere of Verdi's *Nabucco*, Verdi's first international success.

Gaetano Donizetti (1797 - 1848) - was the author of about 70 operas, and his later works greatly influenced Giuseppe Verdi. Born in Bergamo, for years associated with the opera theatre in Naples (where, among others, the premiere of *Lucia di Lammermoor* took place), he spent the later years of his life in Vienna and Paris. His most famous operas, which to this day remain in the repertoire of opera houses around the world, are: *Elisir d'Amore*, *La Fille de Regiment*, *Don Pasquale* and *Lucia di Lammermoor*. The premiere of the latter work in 1835 coincided with the peak of the composer's fame; After the success of *William Tell* in 1829, Rossini withdrew from composing, and Bellini died in the year of *Lucia's* premiere, making Donizetti the greatest active composer of Italian opera.

The author of *Elisir d'Amore* had no close relationship with Liszt (unlike the Hungarian composer's acquaintance with Meyerbeer or his long-term friendship with Richard Wagner), and the arrangements described below, based on motifs from *Lucia*, was created for purely practical reasons. In the years 1830 - 1860, almost every concert included either singers' performances or solo works based on opera motifs (it was no different in the case of Fryderyk Chopin's concerts both in Warsaw and later in Paris). And so, reaching for fantasies based on themes from operas popular at the time was a way for virtuoso pianists to attract additional audiences and to make their own concert programs more attractive. These pianists - virtuosos also included Franz Liszt.

During this period, the author of *Mephisto Waltz* reached not only for Donizetti's works, but also for many other composers. Here are a few selected titles based on which Liszt composed his concert arrangements:

1835 - *La Juive* - Halévy

1835-36 - *Lucia di Lammermoor* - Donizetti

1836 - *Les Huguenots* - Meyerbeer

1836 - *I Puritani* - Bellini

1839 - *La Sonnambula* - Bellini

1840 - *Lucrezia Borgia* - Donizetti

1841 - *Robert le diable* - Meyerbeer

1841 - *Norma* - Bellini

1841 - *Don Giovanni* - Mozart

All operatic fantasies from the above list were written mainly with the intention of performing them during one's own concerts, and not (as in the case of later works) to promote the works of other composers. It was no different in the case of *Reminiscences from Lucia di Lammermoor* - they were one of the most frequently performed works by the Hungarian pianist during his concerts.

***Lucia di Lammermoor*²**

Lucia di Lammermoor (the Polish version of the title is: *Łucja z Lammermooru*), is an opera seria (literally: dramma tragico) created in 1835. The premiere took place on September 26, 1835 at the San Carlo Theater in Naples, and the libretto by Salvatore Cammarano was based on Walter Scott's novel *The Bride of Lammermoor* from 1819. It is one of the composer's most popular operas, along with *Love Potion* (1832), *Daughter of the Regiment* (1840) and *Don Pasquale* (1842).

The libretto of the opera takes place in Scotland in the 16th century. Two quarreling families, Ashton and Ravenswood, had a fierce fight for years, which was won by the Ashton family. Enrico Ashton, wanting to strengthen his position, wants his sister, the titular Lucy, to marry a powerful and influential lord - Arturo Bucklaw. Lucy, however, is in love with Edgardo Ravenswood, a member of a hostile family. The couple even exchanges wedding rings before Edgardo leaves for Paris (second scene of the first act). In the second act we see the preparations for Lucia and Arturo's wedding. The heroine's brother convinces her to the ceremony, showing her a forged letter from her fiancé, which proves Edgardo's alleged betrayal in France. In despair, after talking to her confidant and priest - Raimondo, she succumbs and agrees to the wedding. During the ceremony, right after Lucia and Arturo signed the document, the fiancé of the main character, Edgardo, unexpectedly appears. Seeing the signature on the document, he angrily throws the wedding ring at his beloved and runs out of the room.

The third act opens with a duet of representatives of the feuding families - Edgardo and Enrico. Rivals, in the midst of a raging storm, decide to have a duel at the Ravenswood graveyard. Then (scene two), Raimondo interrupts the wedding festivities to announce to everyone that Lucy has killed her new husband, Arturo. The heroine appears a moment later and, as if in a dream, imagines her wedding with Edgardo, singing the famous aria of madness (*Il dolce suono*). In the last (third) scene we see Edgardo waiting for the duel with Enrico among the graves of his family. However, Ashton is

² Written on the basis of: P. Kamiński, *Tysiąc i jedna opera*, PWN, Cracow 2015 (1. edition 2008). And R. Klobier, *Handbuch der Oper*, Bärenreiter - Verlag, Kassel 2016 (1. Edition: 1985).

replaced by a funeral procession carrying the corpse of his beloved. Upon learning of Lucia's death, the hero stabs himself with a dagger and dies..

1. Andante Final

Réminiscences de Lucia di Lammermoor de Donizetti were created in the years 1835 - 1836, on the wave of popularity of the opera itself. Initially conceived as one work (also performed by the composer at his concerts), they were - at the publisher's suggestion - divided into two separate works: *Andante final* and *Marche funèbre et cavatine*. They were also published separately - in 1840 (*Andante final*) and 1841 (*Marche funèbre et cavatine*).

The first of the two pieces is based on a sextet from the finale of the second act: *Chi mi frena in tal momento* (hence the subtitle of the transcription: *Andante final*). Liszt begins his work with a 13-bar introduction, based on the accompaniment of the orchestra and the melody from the second part (bar 48) of the work:

Example No. 1.1

84

A Madame Vanotti
RÉMINISCENCES DE LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR DE DONIZETTI
 pour le piano composée par F. Liszt
1. ANDANTE FINAL
R 151, SW 397, NG2 A22

The musical score is presented in three systems. The first system (bars 1-4) begins with 'Andantino *)' and 'a capriccio marcato' in the left hand, while the right hand has a recitative-like melody. The second system (bars 5-8) continues the recitative melody with 'dim.' and 'rfz' markings. The third system (bars 9-13) shows the recitative melody concluding with a 'dim.' marking and a 'pp' (pianissimo) dynamic at the end.

F. Liszt, *Rémiscences de Lucia di Lammermoor de Donizetti*. 1. Andante Final, bars 1-13.

The character of this fragment, first of all, introduces the mood of a sextet, being a kind of fantasy, an improvisation of a recitative nature. Secondly, which I think is much more important, through articulation (spiccato and simultaneously marcato in the left hand at the beginning), accents and dynamic differences in the right hand - it kind of sums up for us musically the tension we see on stage just before the sextet. Lucia, forced by her brother Enrico, has just signed a marriage certificate with Lord Arturo at an official ceremony attended by representatives of the Ashton family. Immediately afterwards,

Edgardo runs into the wedding hall and Lucy faints; the beginning of the sextet (bar 14) is exactly the moment of the main character's arrival in the room and his reaction to the whole situation.

Apart from the introduction composed by himself, Liszt departs from the original only twice, adding two large, virtuosic cadenzas. The first one is right in the middle of the song:

Example No. 1.2

87

The musical score is presented in four systems. The first system starts at bar 47 and includes a trill (tr) marking. A dashed line labeled 'Cadenza' and '8' indicates a specific section. The second system continues the cadenza with a forte (rf) dynamic. The third system shows a continuation of the cadenza. The fourth system ends with a ritardando (rit.) and a diminuendo (dim.) marking, leading to a final chord.

F. Liszt: *Réminiscences de Lucia di Lammermoor* de Donizetti. 1. Andante Final, bar 47.

It is worth noting a very intelligent device on the part of the composer - what we today call the bel canto tradition, and what was obvious to his contemporaries, is the addition of signature cadences at the end of a phrase; these places were usually marked by composers with fermata. Until Verdi's early works, the course of these cadenzas remained entirely arbitrary for the singers, who composed their own vocal performances; in the composer's later operas - Aida, Othello, Falstaff, the artists should perform the cadences written by Verdi. Liszt, basically following the style, composed a showpiece cadenza in a place intended for it, but not for the singer, but for the pianist.

The second departure from the original mentioned earlier is the end of transcription. This time, instead of the cadenza, Donizetti himself proposed a two-bar phrase, but not for one, but for two singers:

Example No. 1.3

168

262

Luc. *ff* an - cor! _____

Al. *ff* il cor.) _____

Ed. *ff* in-gra-ta, t'amo ancor, ah, sì, an - cor!) _____

Ar. *ff* il cor.) _____

En. *ff* ah, spegner non li pos - so, ahi - mè!) _____

Rai. *ff* il cor.) _____

D. *ff* il cor.) _____

O
M
T. *ff* il cor.) _____

O
C
B. *ff* il cor.) _____

ff

138003

G. Donizetti, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, act II (piano score), No. 6, bars 262-266.

Liszt extended not only this two-bar phrase, but instead of the final chord in the opera, he composed an extensive coda based on the accompaniment motif from the beginning of the sextet:

Example No. 1.4

The image shows two systems of musical notation for piano. The first system begins at bar 72 and includes the instruction "con Ped.". The second system also begins at bar 72 and includes the instruction "marcato." followed by "m. s." (meno mosso) twice. The notation is dense, with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes, and includes various musical markings such as slurs and accents.

*) Die Vierzehntongruppen der linken Hand sind nur in dem kleineren Teil der Quellen zu finden, deshalb sind sie nach belieben wegzulassen, wenn im Takt 38 der Haupttext gespielt wird.

*) The 14-note groups in the left hand are to be found in only a minority of the sources, and may therefore be omitted, if the player wishes, when the main text in bar 38 is played.

Z. 8767

F. Liszt, *Réminiscences de Lucia di Lammermoor de Donizetti*. 1. Andante Final, bar 72.

Example No. 1.5

93

The musical score is presented in five systems, each with a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and the time signature is 4/4.

- System 1 (Measures 73-74):** The right hand features a rapid, ascending and descending chromatic scale. The left hand has a tremolo on a single note, marked "tremolando".
- System 2 (Measures 75-76):** The right hand plays a series of eighth-note chords, marked "8^a" and "mf". The left hand plays a descending eighth-note line, marked "marcatissimo".
- System 3 (Measures 76-77):** The right hand continues with eighth-note chords, marked "mf sempre". The left hand has a descending eighth-note line with "Red." (Reduction) markings and asterisks.
- System 4 (Measures 78-79):** The right hand has a descending eighth-note line, marked "8^a". The left hand has a descending eighth-note line, marked "largamente".
- System 5 (Measures 81-82):** The right hand has a descending eighth-note line, marked "8^a". The left hand has a descending eighth-note line, marked "Red." and "Z. 8767".

F. Liszt, *Réminiscences de Lucia di Lammermoor* de Donizetti. 1. Andante Final, bars 73-82.

The awareness of the fact that the fragments of the transcription described above are cadences somewhat consistent with the bel canto style is of great importance to the pianist who reaches for this work; the author of the Sonata in B minor very consciously distinguished those moments in which he followed Donizetti's original and those in which he let his own imagination run wild and wrote passages full of brilliance, virtuosity and bravado; not only pianistic, as at the end of the arrangement, but also compositional, such as a recitative, fanciful introduction (the word reminiscence in this case is the most accurate term). Understanding this distinction from the performer's perspective, one gains very precise knowledge about where one can afford more freedom in shaping the phrase and tempo, and where one should be faithful to the composer's text.

Speaking of traditions, it is worth explaining the conscious departure from the musical text, which I decided on in bar 14 of the transcription:

Example No. 1.6

14 m. d. mf accentuato assai

m. s. mp ma sempre marcato

*) „Die Akkorde links ganz kurz und gleichmässig, das Tempo des Sextettes nicht langsam.“ (L-K, 129)

Z. 8767

*) "The chords in the left hand should be short and evenly played; the tempo of the Sextet should not be slow." (L-K, 129)

F. Liszt, *Réminiscences de Lucia di Lammermoor de Donizetti*. 1. Andante
Final, bars 14-17.

Despite the pianissimo dynamics (the composer does not change it from measure 12), Luigi Ricci (1893 - 1981; Italian pianist and tutor) in his book: *Variazioni - Cadenze - Tradizioni* (a collection of written cadences, changes in the musical text and performance traditions) proposes the following performance phrase familiar in the corresponding place in the opera (corresponding bars in Liszt: 14 - 15):

Example No. 1.7



L. Ricci, *Variazioni - Cadenze - Tradizioni per canto. Appendice (Voci miste)*,
p. 33.

Such an extreme dynamic difference on the piano would of course be almost a caricature, but the elegant echo effect (difference - mezzoforte - piano) is in my opinion a very interesting solution, which I also decided on when recording the album.

Another important element of this accompaniment is the articulation. Liszt's remark: *die Akkorde Links ganz kurz und gleichmäßig* - (German) left-hand chords short and evenly - is of course very important and corresponds to the effect that Donizetti foresaw, but it does not give a complete picture of the situation. In the orchestral version, this accompaniment is played by the entire string quintet pizzicato:

Example No. 1.8

278

40 Larghetto

Cl. Sib

EDGARDO

(da sè) *p*

Chi mi fre - naintal mo-men - to?... chi tron.

ENRICO

(da sè) *p*

Chi raf.fre - nallmio fu-ro - re, e la

40 Larghetto

Vni

pizz. *p*

Vle

pizz. *p*

Vc.

pizz. *p*

Cb.

pizz. *p*

G. Donizetti, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, act II (full score), p. 278.

The use of the pedal in this place is certainly not forbidden, but it should be primarily dictated by the acoustics of the hall.

In the example above, it is worth paying attention to a very important element - the entrance of the singers. In transcription, it causes a great deal of difficulty, primarily through the register (visible in the musical example 1.6) - the accompaniment of the left hand and the melody are in exactly the same octave, which causes technical difficulties with hand coordination and good operation of the musical planes. Liszt - aware of these problems - helps the performer by changing the original dynamics of the right hand (from piano to mezzoforte), adding additional dynamic markings and accents that are missing in the original. They are quite logical and consistent with the musical leading of the phrase - in practice, they should certainly be performed by the pianist. A very interesting study of voice-to-instrument translation!

Knowing the context of the situation (libretto), it is also worth taking a closer look at the text sung by the soloists. It is, incidentally, an Italian text - the French version of the opera was written in 1839, three years after the transcription.

ENRICO:

*Chi raffrena il mio furore,
e la man che al brando corse?
Della misera in favore
nel mio petto un grido sorse!
È il mio sangue! io l'ho tradita!
Ella sta fra morte e vita!...
Ah! che spegnere non posso
un rimorso nel mio cor!*

ENRICO:

*Who stops my fury
and the hand that rushed to the sword?
For the unhappy
A cry rose in my chest!
It's my blood! I betrayed her (blood)!
(Lucia) is between death and life!...
Ah! I can't suppress
remorse in my heart!*

EDGARDO:

*Chi mi frena in tal momento? ...
chi troncò dell'ire il corso?
Il suo duolo, il suo spavento
son la prova d'un rimorso!
Ma, qual rosa inaridita,
ella sta fra morte e vita!...
Io son vinto... son commosso...
t'amo, ingrata, t'amo ancor!*

EDGARDO:

*Who's stopping me at a time like this? ...
that stemmed the flood of my anger?
Her pain, her terror
they are proof of repentance!
However, this withered rose,
she is between death and life!...
I give up... I'm touched...
I love you, soulless one, I love you still!*

LUCIA:

*Io sperai che a me la vita
tronca avesse il mio spavento,
ma la morte non m'aita,
vivo ancor per mio tormento!
Da' miei lumi cadde il velo,
mi tradì la terra e il cielo
vorrei piangere, e non posso...
m'abbandona il pianto ancor!*

LUCIA:

*I hoped my life
I will be cut short by fright,
but death won't help me
I'm still living through my torments!
The veil fell from my eyes,
earth and sky betrayed me
I want to cry but I can't
even crying leaves me!*

ARTURO, RAIMONDO, ALISA,
CORO:

*Qual terribile momento!
più formar non so parole!...
densa nube di spavento
par che copra i rai del sole!
Come rosa inaridita
ella sta fra morte e vita!...
chi per lei non è commosso
ha di tigre in petto il cor.*

ARTURO, RAIMONDO, ALISA,
CHOIR:

*What a terrible moment!
I can't find the words anymore!...
a thick cloud of terror
seems to cover the rays of the sun!
Like a withered rose
she is between death and life!...
who is not moved by it
he has the heart of a tiger in his chest.*

Each of these texts, or rather monologues (all the characters are in a dialogue with themselves, maybe with the exception of Arturo, Raimondo, Alisa and the choir, who comment on the event, as in an ancient tragedy) is very dramatic and emotional. It is practically impossible to render the textual nuances of each melodic line (and the orchestra part) on one instrument, but the performer should be aware of the intensity of the state of all the characters, and thus the tension of the whole situation. Liszt's work should therefore not be played comfortably, cheerfully and as it might sound to some, without knowledge of the context of the situation in the opera.

Apart from the introduction, the middle cadenza and the extended coda, Liszt is very faithful to the original. There are, however, a few exceptions to this, one of them in bar 219 of the opera: at the end of the bar, the tenor part (and the first violin part) looks like this:

Example No. 1.9

217

Ed. vi - ta!... lo son vin - to... son com - mos - so...t'amo, in-

En. vi - ta!... Ah! che spe - - gne-re non pos - so

G. Donizetti, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, act II (piano score), No. 6, bars 217-219.

Liszt, however, decided to change the rhythm (corresponding measure: 29):

Example No. 1.10

28

cresc.

con molta passione

string.

Z. 8767

F. Liszt, *Réminiscences de Lucia di Lammermoor de Donizetti*. 1. Andante Final, bars 27-29.

At first glance, this could be a mistake, but it is worth paying attention to what is happening in the score: we see Edgardo singing the following words: son commosso... t'amo, ingrata, t'amo ancor! (Italian: I am moved... I love you, soulless soul, I still love you!); moreover, Liszt adds the term: *con molta passione*. Knowing the tendencies of singers (which apparently have not changed for 200 years), and especially of tenors, the exaltation of the soloist is very likely to have ultimately influenced the rhythm in this way (to emphasize the word: t'amo - I love you) - so it is not a mistake of the Hungarian composer, but an extremely correct and probable transfer of the voice to the piano.

A word of commentary should explain the choice of one of the two versions that the composer allows during the performance of bar 38:

Example No. 1.11



F. Liszt, *Réminiscences de Lucia di Lammermoor de Donizetti*. 1. *Andante Final*, bars 38-40.

In the recording I decided to play the main version - the more virtuosio variant disturbs the natural course of the phrase in my opinion and is only a bravura show, and this element is definitely not missing in the analysed transcriptions.

A much more interesting application of pianistic virtuosity can be found in measure 48 (and later) of the piece. The author of the Transcendental Etudes, being faithful to the

original (or faithfully reflecting the effect Donizetti achieved in the orchestra), introduced the following figuration (main version):

Example No.1.12

48

leggiero armonioso

con anima

N.B. 21

tr

421

tr

21

tr

Ossia più facile

N.B. Il trillo deve esser tenuto tutto il valore della nota.*)

*) Der Triller soll die ganze Länge des Tones ausfüllen.

Z. 8767 *) The trill should be sustained for the full value of the note.

F. Liszt, *Réminiscences de Lucia di Lammermoor de Donizetti*. 1. *Andante Final*, bars 48-49.

By performing the left-hand part with the pedal, lightly (*leggiero armonioso*) and evenly (*Il trillo deve esser tenuto tutto il valore della nota* - the trill should fill the entire rhythmic value), you can achieve a similar effect that we hear in an orchestra - namely, various types of accompaniment, superimposed: the long-held notes of the French horn (pedal), the tremolo of the violas and second violins (the trill), and the pizzicato of the cellos and double basses together with the supplementary quavers of the bassoons (the first four notes before the trill).

Example No. 1.13

284

42

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.
Sib

Fg.

Mt.
Cor.
Reb

Trbn.

Lucia
ALISA - do - na, m'ab - ben - dona il pian - to an - cor, vor - rei

Edg.
ARTURO t'a - mo an - cor, si, t'a - mo an - cor. Co - me ro - sa in a - ri di - ta

Eur.
pos - so ri - mor - si. Ah, Qual ter - ri - bi - le momen - to, è mio san - gue, l'ho tra -

Edm.
ha di ti - gre in pet - to l'oor. Co - me

Don.
Co - me ro - sa i -

Don.
Co - me ro - sa i -

42

Vni.
DIV. ARCO
pizzicato

Vle.
ARCO
pizzicato

Vc.
pizzicato

Cb.
pizzicato

G. Donizetti, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, act II (full score), p. 284.

2. Marche Funèbre et cavatine

The second part of *Reminiscences from Lucia di Lamermoor* is a very typical example of Franz Liszt's early operatic transcriptions. Of the works discussed in this work, it departs the farthest from the original in principle - various fragments of the opera are quoted in (seemingly) arbitrary order, until about halfway through the work, when Liszt decides to abandon his fidelity to Donizetti's work and lets his own imagination run wild, intertwining the previous themes in a virtuosic coda, to end with a quote from the first part of *Reminiscence* - *Andante final* (which is also an additional argument that these two pieces were one whole before).

The very beginning of the work may pose considerable difficulties in execution; inspired (but only inspired!) by the prelude to the opera, it puts the listener in the mood of a gloomy cemetery, heralding the coming catastrophe:

Example No. 1.14

94

2. MARCHE FUNÈBRE ET CAVATINE

R 152, SW 398, NG2 A23

The musical score is for the second part of Liszt's transcription, '2. MARCHE FUNÈBRE ET CAVATINE'. It is in E-flat major (three flats) and common time (C). The tempo is marked 'Adagio'. The score consists of two systems. The first system (measures 1-6) features a piano (p) tremolo in the bass clef and a crescendo (cresc.) in the treble clef. The second system (measures 7-9) features a rinforzo (rinforz.) in the bass clef and a smorzando (smorz.) in the treble clef. The notation includes various musical symbols such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings.

F. Liszt, *Réminiscences de Lucia di Lamermoor de Donizetti*. 2. Marche Funèbre et Cavatine, bars 1-9.

The seemingly ordinary tremolo in the left hand actually reflects a very original, dark and ominous timbre created by combining the timpani and the gran cassa:

Example No. 1.15

LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR

PARTE PRIMA - LA PARTENZA

ATTO UNICO

GIARDINO NEL CASTELLO DI RAVENSWOOD

N° 1. PRELUDIO E CORO D'INTRODUZIONE

SCENA I.
Larghetto

G. Donizetti, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, act I (full score), p. 1.

When performing the transcription, it is worth bearing in mind the original - awareness of the opera's instrumentation will certainly help in the search for the right timbre and inspire experimentation with the instrument.

Immediately after a short introduction, the Hungarian composer takes the listener to the very end of the opera - the sounds of the piano depict a scene in which the main character - Edgardo is in the cemetery, waiting for a duel with a representative of the enemy family - Enrico, but instead of his mortal enemy - he encounters a funeral procession carrying dead body of his beloved. Here is an excerpt from the libretto of the fragment in question:

CORO

Oh, meschina! Oh, fato orrendo!

Più sperar non giova omai!

Questo dì che sta sorgendo

tramontar più non vedrà.

CHOIR

O wretched one! O terrible fate!

Vain hope now!

On the day that rises

she will no longer see the sunset.

EDGARDO

Giusto cielo, rispondete, rispondete! Ah!

EDGARDO

Great heavens, answer! Ah!

CORO

Oh, meschina!

CHOIR

O wretched one!

EDGARDO

Di chi mai, di chi piangete?

Rispondete, rispondete per pietà!

EDGARDO

Who are you mourning?

Answer me, for God's sake!

CORO

Di Lucia.

CHOIR

Lucia.

EDGARDO

Lucia diceste!

EDGARDO

Lucia, you say!

CORO

La meschina...

CHOIR

Oh, unfortunate...

EDGARDO

Su, parlate.

EDGARDO

Now, talk.

CORO

Sì, la misera sen muore.

CHOIR

Yes, the poor thing is dying.

While the nature of the funeral march is quite bright and clear, the realization of the main character's personal tragedy through specific words, spoken (sung) in a specific place (to a specific melody) gives the interpretation depth and an almost additional dimension.

Apart from the text itself and its weight, attention should be paid to chord repetitions (bars 11, 13, 15 and later):

Example No. 1.16



F. Liszt, *Réminiscences de Lucia di Lammermoor de Donizetti*. 2. Marche Funèbre et Cavatine, bars 9-16.

They not only give the marching step a specific energy and determination, like a fate that inexorably moves forward; they also refer to the very beginning of the opera - in the first two bars of the prelude discussed above, one can see the same marching step. Apart from these - quite philosophical (but nevertheless important) - considerations, the instrumentation of this figure in Donizetti's opera is interesting (the different key of the original is due to Liszt's need to maintain a similarity of key within the first part of his one - sic! - work; the sextet in D flat major , funeral march in B flat minor and cavatina in G flat major):

Example No. 1.17

SCENA VIII.
50 Maestoso 491

The musical score is arranged in systems. The first system includes Oboe (Ob.), Bassoon (Fg.), Clarinet (Cl.), Horns (Cor.), Trumpets (Trb.), Trombones (Trbn.), and Tuba (Tp.). The second system includes Tenor (Ten.), Bass (Bassi), and Chorus (CORO). The third system includes Violins (Vni), Violas (Vla), Cellos (Vc.), and Double Basses (Cb.). The score is marked with '50' and 'Maestoso' at the beginning of the section. The vocal parts have lyrics: 'Oh me, schi - na!' and 'Oh me, schi - na!'. The instrumental parts include various woodwinds, brass, and strings, with some parts marked 'UNITE' and 'ARCO'.

G. Donizetti, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, act III (full score), p. 491.

The combination of string quintet and timpani seems strange and unusual at first glance, but after a short analysis it is - in my opinion - brilliant! The sound of the strings gives the figure a rich and beautiful timbre (the conductor's task is to make sure that the musicians play not too short and deep in the string; the first violin should use the G string, instead of the more comfortable D string, in order to achieve a dark, full timbre) and timpani, firstly, give a clear rhythmic outline, and secondly, they refer to the beginning of the opera. In addition, they evoke in the listener the right connotations right away - they are an instrument used during marches! Even on a subconscious level, they give the right tone and atmosphere to the music.

Is it possible to present the sound of a string quintet (first violin on the G string) and timpani on the piano? Directly - no, but the knowledge of the richness of colors in the instrumental version of the march shows the color possibilities that can be achieved to some extent on the piano with articulation, subtle pedaling and the appropriate balance of individual chord components.

After the cavatina (which in the opera follows the march directly), Liszt unexpectedly "regresses" in the action of the opera, reaching for the stretta from the finale of the second act - *esci, fuggi*. Below is a fragment of the libretto, and then the beginning of the discussed fragment (from bar 96).

ARTURO, ENRICO, RAIMODNO,
CORO:

(ad Edgardo):

*Esci, fuggi il furor che m'accende
Solo un punto i suoi colpi sospende...*

*Ma fra poco piu atroce, più fiero
Sul tuo capo abborrito cadrà .*

EDGARDO

*Trucidatemi, e pronubo rito
sia la scempio d' un cor tradito.
Del mio sangue coperta la soglia
dolce vista per l'empia sarà!
Calpestando l'esangue mia spoglia
all' altare più lieta ne cadrà!*

LUCIA

*Dio lo salva, in sì fiero momento,
D'una misera ascolta il lamento.
E la prece d' immenso dolore
che più in terra speranza non ha ...
è l' estrema domanda del core
che sul labbro spirando mi sta!*

RAIMONDO

*Infelice, t' invola, t' affretta ...
i tuoi giorni, il suo stato rispetta.
Vivi e forse il tuo duolo fia spento:
tutto è lieve all'eterna pietà.*

ARTURO, ENRICO, RAIMONDO,
CHORUS

(to Edgardo):

*Get out, run, the fury that ignites me
He only holds back his power for a
moment...*

*But in a moment, more monstrous, violent
It will fall on your disgusting face.*

EDGARDO

*Kill me and the wedding groomsman
will be the victim of a betrayed heart.
Threshold covered with my blood
will be a sweet sight for the wicked!
Walking on my dead body
will walk down the aisle happier!*

LUCIA

*God save him in this cruel moment
Hear the poor girl's prayer.
And a prayer of great sorrow
who has no hope on earth,
is a great request of the heart
that stays on my lips!*

RAIMONDO

*Unhappy, run away, hurry up...
respect your days, your condition.
Live and perhaps your pain will pass:
everything is light before eternal mercy.*

Example No. 1.18

99

The musical score is presented in two systems. The first system covers bars 96 to 99, and the second system covers bars 100 to 106. The tempo is marked 'Allegro molto agitato' and the dynamic is 'p sotto voce'. The music is in a minor key, indicated by three flats in the key signature. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

F. Liszt, *Réminiscences de Lucia di Lammermoor de Donizetti. 2. Marche Funèbre et Cavatine*, bars 96-106.

However, this sudden shift to earlier chronological events is not accidental - the finale of the second act is the moment when Edgardo saw his beloved for the last time. Arriving at the cemetery, he did not know about her madness and was still convinced of the betrayal of his fiancée. So we can see a certain hidden program in the choice of themes by the Hungarian composer - the love story of Edgardo and Lucia.

In the stretta in question, the composer leaves the performer to choose between two versions: the main, more virtuosio version, and the ossia, almost identical to Donizetti's original. During the recording, I decided to play the second version because of a more natural connection with the fragment following the ossia and precisely because of this more faithful rendering of the sound of the original version:

Example No. 1.19

Ossia

Animato

6/8

p agitato ed appassionato assai

170

Animato

p leggiero e delicato

sempre staccatiss.

176

Z. 8767

F. Liszt, *Réminiscences de Lucia di Lammermoor de Donizetti. 2. Marche Funèbre et Cavatine*, bars 170-181.

An interesting moment in formal terms is the passage in bars 205 - 206 of the transcription:

Example No. 1.20

103

202

208

cresc.

rfz

cresc. molto

sf

sf

p

F. Liszt, *Réminiscences de Lucia di Lammermoor de Donizetti*. 2. Marche Funèbre et Cavatine, bars 202-210.

It is precisely at this point that Liszt departs from Donizetti's original and continues his original composition, based on themes from the opera, but their course is completely independent of the Italian composer's work (it is true that both the funeral march and the cavatina do not correspond to one hundred percent original - both are longer - but the changes consist only in the literal repetition of a few phrases). The author of the Sonata in B minor, after the aforementioned measure 206, introduces the previous theme from Edgardo's aria, but in a new character, first in a virtuosic, chordal version, then, like a new variation, in minor, and then goes to the grand finale, in which he returns to motif

from the first transcription - Andante final. This is significant because the performer should ensure that this transition (bars 205 - 206) is as imperceptible as possible, and more specifically - the phrases before and after should be logically connected with each other in terms of phrasing, tempo and character.

A detail that I initially treated as a publisher's error, but in the course of working on the work I leaned more towards Liszt's malice or wit, is the high note in Edgardo's cavatina. Donizetti proposes, as ossia (in the example in Italian - oppure - or) a high C sharp (another version of bar 213):

Example No. 1.21

* rG: "oppure": ; idem I-Mc, dove però la seconda nota è un quarto.
 ** rG: accordo di Sol# minore (250=212). Vedi Note.

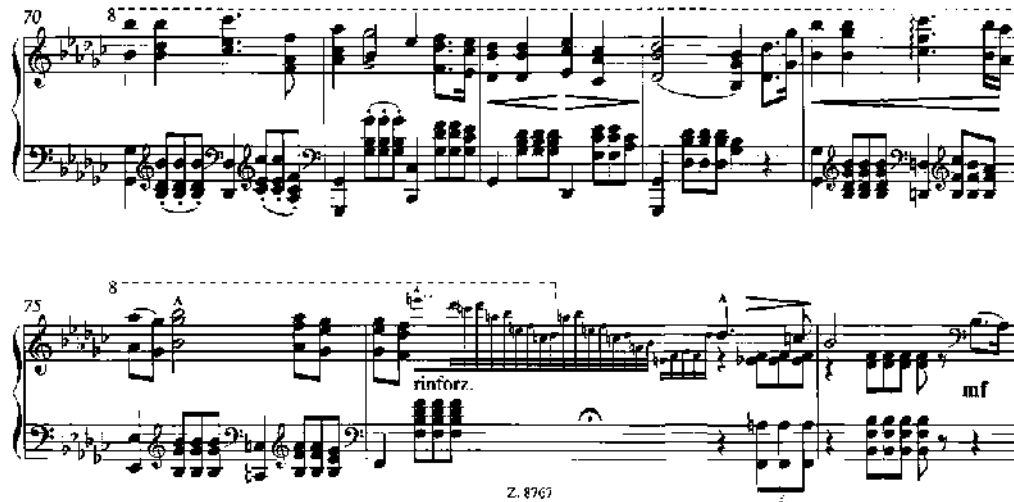
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G. Donizetti, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, act III (piano score), bars 212-217.

The corresponding place in the transcription is bar 76: due to the key change mentioned earlier in D major - G-sharp major, instead of the C sharp note, the highest note should

be f. Instead, there is an e - sharply dissonant with the bass (major seventh interval) and additionally accentuated:

Example No. 1.22



F. Liszt, *Réminiscences de Lucia di Lammermoor de Donizetti. 2. Marche Funèbre et Cavatine*, bars 70-77.

A parody of a tenor trying to sing a very high note, but instead landing almost a semitone too low, seems to me the only logical explanation for this "mistake".

At the end of my reflections on this transcription, there is one "exception" in which - also in my recording - I consciously decided not to render the human voice as faithfully as possible, but to use the phrasing proposed by Liszt, which differs significantly from the original. Here is Donizetti's version (it is worth paying attention to the composer's very detailed instructions marked in the vocal line), and below the text of the aria and its translation:

Example No. 1.23

511

Cor. E♭ **55** a tempo I. II. *p*

EDGARDO (*scuotendosi*) *p*

55 a tempo Tu che a Dios pla - ga - sti Ya - li, o bell'alma in namo - ra - ta, ti ri.

Vni *p*

Vla *p*

Vo. *p*

Cb. *p*

Ob. *col canto* a tempo *p*

Cl. Do *p*

opp. *scende, teo ascenda il tuo fe.*

rall.

Sdg. *volgia me pla - cata, te co a. scenda, teo ascenda il tuo fe - del. Ah! se l'i - ra del mor.*

Vni *col canto* a tempo

Vla *col canto* a tempo

Vo. *col canto* a tempo

Cb. *col canto* a tempo

G. Donizetti, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, act III (full score), p. 511.

EDGARDO

*Tu che a Dio spiegasti l'ali,
o bell'alma innamorata,
ti rivolgi a me placata,
teco ascenda il tuo fedel.
Ah, se l'ira dei mortali
fece a noi sì cruda guerra,
se divisi fummo in terra,
ne congiunga il Nume in ciel.*

EDGARDO

*You who spread your wings to Heaven,
oh beautiful, dear soul,
look at me gentle
with you rises faithful to you.
Ah, even though the wrath of mortals
gave us so many cruel troubles,
though we were separated on earth,
may God bring us together in heaven.*

Donizetti, a composer who writes brilliantly for voice, proposes a phrasing that fully corresponds to the melody of the language - in addition to slurs that coincide with the logic of the aria's text, accents are interesting to emphasize important words (Italian *teco* - with you; *l'ira* - anger), emphasizing the highest note in the phrase (*spiegasti, a me*) and draw the performer's attention to careful singing of the last note in the phrase and continuation of the musical thought (the third bar of the above example, the second note - it would be the opposite, in the case of most likely not only sung softer, but even shortened by the tenor).

The Hungarian composer not only does not take these hints into account, but also suggests in some cases with articulation contrary to the original (e.g. bars 63, 64):

Example No. 1.24

(61) **Quasi adagio espressivo assai**

l'accompagnamento sempre pp

66

70

F. Liszt, *Réminiscences de Lucia di Lammermoor de Donizetti. 2. Marche Funèbre et Cavatine*, bars 62-74.

What are the reasons for these differences? Was Franz Liszt unaware of the original? I very much doubt it. It seems to me that he came to the conclusion that after abandoning the additional medium, which is not even the human voice, but above all the text of the aria, Donizetti's phrasing ceased to be so important and logical; therefore he decided to propose his own, equally interesting version of the same phrase (which for a person not familiar with opera would be completely "unsuspected"). And here one thing should be emphasized - the above transcriptions are separate works of art; yes, inspired in this case by opera music, but intended to be performed on the piano. They are not piano reductions and are not intended to fill the evening in the event of the singer's illness, but they are full-fledged, independent concert pieces.

2. Arrangements from the operas of Meyerbeer

The second composer, whose arrangements of works we will discuss, is Giacomo Meyerbeer (1791 - 1864) - a German (sic!) composer, one of the greatest creators of the so-called Grand Opera. Starting with his first great success, i.e. the premiere of *Robert the Devil* in 1831, he became Europe's leading opera composer. His subsequent works: *The Huguenots* (1836), *The Prophet* (1849) and *L'Africaine* (first performed after his death in 1865) were among the most frequently staged works of the 19th century. *Le Prophète* was a great inspiration for Wagner, but because of the latter, Meyerbeer's works fell into oblivion in the second half of the 20th century. The reason was the infamous essay by the author of *Tannhäuser*: *Jewry in Music* (*Das Judentum in der Musik*) from 1850 (later often used by the Nazis for propaganda purposes), in which the author - apart from Meyerbeer - attacked mainly Mendelssohn (for personal reasons) and argued that Jews have a destructive influence on Art in general.

Although the current interest in the work of the author of *The Huguenots* is small, his influence on his contemporaries cannot be overestimated. Paris (including the cultural elites, among others Chopin and Słowacki!), then the main cultural capital of Europe, was delighted with Meyerbeer and, not without reason, Franz Liszt was also delighted with it. His fascination did not end with writing the transcripts; being Kapellmeister in Weimar, he led to the staging of *Robert the Devil* there. He personally conducted the performances.

Robert le diable³

Robert le diable - G. Meyerbeer's Robert the Devil is the composer's first such great success (the previous opera, *The Crusaders in Egypt*, brought him many offers from Italian and French theaters and an established position, but it was Robert that was the turning point in his career). During the premiere in Paris on November 21, 1831, the aforementioned Chopin was present (the result is the *Grand duo concertant sur des thèmes de Robert le diable*, B.70 for piano and cello). It was also the beginning of the composer's cooperation with the playwright and librettist - Eugène Scribe; their partnership will result in such titles as: *The Huguenots*, *The Prophet* - discussed below - and *The African Woman* in the following years.

Robert le diable is also the beginning of the so-called Grand Opéra - a new genre of opera, initiated three years earlier by Auber (*The Mute of Portici* - 1828) and Rossini (*Guillaume Tell* - 1829). It was created after the French Revolution, replacing the Baroque *Tragédie lyrique*. The characteristics of the grand opera are:

- five-act construction
- climax in the fourth act
- the presence of the ballet (a necessity in Paris) usually in the third act
- spectacular visual effects, mainly through impressive sets
- reaching out to the local and historical color of the places of action

The opera's libretto is set in Sicily, in medieval times. The titular Robert and his friend Bertram (who later turns out to be his father) arrive in Palermo. In a ballad sung by a troubadour in a nearby inn, the story of Robert is brought closer - years ago, Berta gave birth to him after an affair with the devil himself, Bertram. Then, the troubadour's fiancée, Alice, informs the main character of the death of Berta, his mother, and gives him her will. The protagonist then confides in Alice about his love for Princess Isabella. However, Robert is unable - at the request of his beloved - to take part in the tournament

³ Written on the basis of: P. Kamiński, *Tysiąc i jedna opera...* and R. Kloiber, *Handbuch...*

taking place in the city due to Bertram's intrigue - he convinces his son to appear in a nearby grove instead of the tournament, in order to repel the duel with the prince of Granada, Bertram's henchman . For this reason, Isabella must honor Prince Bertram during the tournament. In the third act, Bertram urges his son to take revenge on the prince by plucking a twig from the tomb of St. Rozalia (thanks to which she will gain magical power). In the evening, after obtaining the holy twig, Robert appears in Isabella's bedroom and wakes her up with his infernal power (gained from the twig). However, Izabella breaks the spell with her prayer and makes her beloved break the artefact. Then we see Robert with Bertram, when the latter gives an ultimatum to his son - until midnight, either he will sign the pact and thus win Isabella's hand and achieve revenge on the prince of Granada, or his fate will rest in the hands of Providence. Eventually, Robert hesitates so long that midnight strikes, Bertram sinks into the ground, and the walls of Palermo Cathedral miraculously part, revealing Isabella praying at the altar and an empty chair next to her, waiting for Robert.

Cavatine de Robert le diable

The musical fragment of Robert the Devil that interests us is the cavatina - a short arioso, in the A or AB form (as opposed to the da capo aria - ABA) - by Isabella from the fourth act (in the opera - No. 18c). The heroine begs God for mercy for her beloved, the eponymous Robert, who - tempted by a demon and at the same time his father, Bertram - sacrilegiously tore off the holy branch of St. Rozalia, for which he is threatened with condemnation. The heroine sings:

<i>Robert, toi que j'aime</i>	<i>Robert, it's you I love</i>
<i>et qui reçus ma foi,</i>	<i>and it's in you that I hope</i>
<i>tu vois mon effroi!</i>	<i>you see my torment!</i>
<i>Grâce pour toi-même,</i>	<i>Grace (blessing) to you</i>
<i>et grâce pour moi.</i>	<i>and grace for me.</i>
<i>Grâce pour moi, grâce pour toi.</i>	<i>Grace for me, grace for you.</i>
<i>Quoi! Ton coeur se dégage</i>	<i>what is it! Your heart is freed</i>
<i>des serments les plus doux.</i>	<i>from the sweetest oaths.</i>
<i>Tu me rendis hommage,</i>	<i>You pay homage to me</i>
<i>je suis à tes genoux.</i>	<i>I am at your feet.</i>
<i>Grâce, grâce pour toi même,</i>	<i>Grace, grace for you,</i>
<i>et grâce pour moi.</i>	<i>and grace for me.</i>
<i>Grâce pour toi, grâce pour moi.</i>	<i>Grace for you, grace for me.</i>
<i>Oh, mon bien suprême,</i>	<i>Ah, my good sir,</i>
<i>Toi que j'aime, tu vois mon effroi!</i>	<i>It's you I love, you see my torment!</i>
<i>Ah grâce pour toi même,</i>	<i>Ah, grace to you</i>
<i>et grâce pour moi</i>	<i>and grace for me.</i>

Liszt's transcription - apart from the change of key (originally F minor, the transposition to F sharp minor can be explained by close affinity with the key of B minor, in which

Réminiscences de 'Robert le diable', S.413, another Liszt work on themes from this opera, which the author performed at concerts together with Cavatina) - is very close to the original. One can even risk a statement that among all the works discussed in the following work, Liszt tries to reproduce the sound of the orchestra and the voice as faithfully as possible. At the very beginning of the transcription, the composer strictly follows Meyerbeer's instructions - determining the tempo, dynamics, indications for the English horn (*marcato*) and for the soprano (*un tono supplichevole - d'un ton suppliant*):

Example No. 2.1

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a piano piece. The first system, consisting of four measures, is marked 'Poco andantino' at the top. The right-hand part (treble clef) begins with a half note G4, followed by a quarter rest, then a half note A4, and a quarter rest. The left-hand part (bass clef) plays a series of chords: G2-B2, G2-B2, G2-B2, and G2-B2. Dynamics include 'f marcato' in the first measure and 'pp' in the fourth. The second system, starting at measure 5, is marked 'un tono supplichevole'. The right-hand part continues with half notes G4, A4, B4, and A4. The left-hand part continues with the same chordal pattern. The dynamic 'un poco cresc.' is indicated at the end of the system.

F. Liszt, *Cavatine de Robert le diable*, bars 1-9.

Example No. 2.2

998

18c. Cavatine

Poco andantino

Flûtes

Hautbois

Cor anglais

Clarinettes en Sib

Bassons

2 Cors en Fa

1 Cor en Ut

1 Cor en Mib

Trompettes en Fa

3 Trombones et Ophicléide

Timbales en Fa Sib

Grosse Caisse et Cymbales

Tam-tam

1^{re} Harpe

2^e Harpe

Isabelle

Robert

Poco andantino

1^{ers} Violons

2^{es} Violons

Altos

Violoncelles

Contrebasses

Sy. 5601

G. Meyerbeer, *Robert le diable*, No. 18C: *Cavatine* (full score), bars 1-8.

An interesting detail, testifying to the intelligence and awareness of the author of the transcription, is the way of transferring the harp part to the piano. In the example above (in the score) we see the rhythmic values indicated by Meyerbeer - these are quarter notes, arpeggiato, forte. Liszt, however, wanting to achieve a clearer sound of the upper melodic line (English horn), resigns from arpeggios and consciously shortens the rhythmic values of the harp, which - being a plucked string instrument - has no way to influence the sound after it is extracted, unlike the English horn. Thus, sacrificing academic fidelity to the notation, he remains completely faithful to the sound of the orchestra, while taking into account the specificity of the piano, the target instrument.

It is also worth noting an error (probably the publisher's fault?) in the transcription in the melody line, marked below:

Example No. 2.3



F. Liszt, *Cavatine de Robert le diable*, bars 15-18.

The erroneous note marked in the example above is not B, but c sharp (c before transposition):

Example No. 2.4

13
Isa. - çus ma foi, tu vois mon ef - froi, tu vois mon ef - froi:
cresc. molto
cresc.

G. Meyerbeer, *Robert le diable*, No. 18C: *Cavatine* (piano score), bars. 13-18.

From a linguistic point of view, the main difficulty for singers in French is the so-called *e* silent, (also known as unstable, feminine and the most popular: "szua"), in IPA/MAF (International Phonetic Alphabet) written as follows: / ə /. In spoken language, it is not pronounced, but when singing, composers writing to French texts (up to Ravel and Poulenc) added a separate syllable to words ending in *e* muet. Example: the word *grâce* (grace, mercy, blessing) in spoken language would have only one syllable, according to the MAF: /gʁas/. On stage, however, the same word will be /gʁasə/. We can see it very clearly in Meyerbeer's work:

Example No. 2.5

ca
cl (Sib)
c (Pa)
1^{re} harp
2^e harp
ten.
Rob.
a

avec angossez

Cri - co, gri - co pour toi - me, pour toi -

G. Meyerbeer, *Robert le diable*, No. 18C: *Cavatine* (full score), bars 19-21.

Corresponding place in the arrangement:

Example No. 2.6

136
19 con angoscia
dolcissimo quasi arpa
21

F. Liszt, *Cavatine de Robert le diable*, bars 19-22.

A certain linguistic subtlety is important - due to the fact that the mentioned *e muet* is not pronounced while speaking, but is audible while singing, its syllabic function is somewhat disturbed. It should be pronounced very lightly and slightly shorter than the "ordinary" syllable, giving the impression of a kind of French "elegant nonchalance". Practical conclusion: whenever *e muet* should be sung (played), it should be performed without an accent, slightly shorter and later than it would result from the notation.

There are two aspects worth noting in the passage discussed above. Firstly, the above-mentioned fidelity to the original is even implied by Liszt directly, referring directly to the sound of the orchestra in the musical text: he requires the pianist to play the left hand: *dolcissimo quasi arpa*. Secondly: it is worth noting the rhythmic inconsistency between the original (the second note of the melody is a sixteenth note, not an eighth note) and the transcription. In my opinion, however, this does not result from the carelessness or oversight of the author of the piano work, but once again from his practical approach - the character of the phrase in question is very lyrical, religious, pastoral, not military or dance. It is therefore natural to soften the rhythm. It can be assumed that Meyerbeer did not want the singers to sing this rhythm too broadly, therefore - already anticipating their timeless and transnational tendency to protract - he recorded this rhythm as double-pointed, in order to achieve something in between, i.e. the intended effect.

Another element of the transfer of French to the sound of the piano that requires commentary is Robert's answer to Isabelle's prayer in measure 26: Robert sings: *Non, non, non, non!* (fr. *No, no, no, no!*). In French, "on" is a nasal vowel, written in MAF as: /ɔ̃/. In Polish, its equivalent is: ą (the spelling of which is misleading, as it is the equivalent of the sound o after the so-called nasalization, not a). As we can see, the articulation (in the first phrase) predicted by Meyerbeer is legato in the orchestra, while the cue for the singer is: *presque parlé* (French: almost spoken). Liszt, who is fluent in French, translated the French language into the sound of the piano as follows:

Example No. 2.7

25 *un poco rallentando* *a Tempo* *doux*

Isa. *grâ - ce pour moi! Grâ-ce pour toi! Grâ-ce pour*

Rob. d'une voix suffoquée: presque parlé
Non, non, non, non! Non, non, non, non!

un poco rallentando *a Tempo* *cresc.* *p* *pp*

Sy. 5601/03

G. Meyerbeer, *Robert le diable*, No. 18C: *Cavatine* (piano score), bars 25-29.

Example No. 2.8

25 *un poco rall.*

F. Liszt, *Cavatine de Robert le diable*, bars 25-29.

Portato is by far the most appropriate transcription of the phrase in question, limited, of course, by the imperfect notation, but it is not perfect. So what would the ideal be? It is difficult to say whether it exists, but the lack of awareness of the problem certainly distances us from the truth. Of course, Meyerbeer's indication that the singer should almost speak only emphasizes this aspect, making the elements typical of language all the more audible. The aforementioned articulation in the transcription should therefore, in my opinion, imitate the sound of the word non as much as possible, but secondly, the

performer should take into account Robert's emotional state in this scene - despair, sadness, desperation mixed with disbelief and hope. These two elements are certainly the most important steps towards achieving a perfect performance (in the Platonic sense), but the third important factor is also the taste of music...

An issue that often arises during concert performances of fragments of larger works is the beginning and ending. When we are not dealing with the so-called numbers (as, for example, in operas written in the 17th and 18th centuries - e.g. Mozart's operas or Haydn's oratorios), only with recomposed works (which became a standard in the second half of the 19th century, e.g. in Wagner's or later in Puccini's), where individual arias flow (musically) smoothly into further musical fragments. In the transcription in question, the problem in question occurs at the end:

Example No. 2.9



- *) Der Takt ist um zwei Triolenachtel länger als 4/4. / This bar is two quavers longer than 4/4. / Az ütem két triolanyolcadal hosszabb 4/4-nél.
 **) In der rechten Hand teilt die Quelle einen Akkord weniger mit als in der linken Hand. Die Grundlage des Vorschlages der Herausgeber ist das Original von Meyerbeer.
 The source has one chord fewer in the right hand than in the left. The editorial suggestion is based on Meyerbeer's original.
 Jobb kézben a forrás egyet kevesebb akkordot közöl, mint a bal kézben. A közreadók javaslatának alapja Meyerbeer eredetije.
 ***) Der Entwurf bricht an dieser Stelle ab. Der Schlussakkord ist ein Vorschlag der Herausgeber auf Grund des Originals von Meyerbeer.
 Here the draft breaks off. The closing chord is an editorial suggestion based on Meyerbeer's original.
 A fogalmazvány itt megszakad. A záróakkord közreadói javaslat Meyerbeer eredetije nyomán.

Z. 14 504

F. Liszt, *Cavatine de Robert le diable*, bars 98-99.

As we read in the commentary, the composer's sketch ends at bar 98, bar 99 is the publisher's suggestion, based on the original (bar 99 of the transcription corresponds to bar 97 of the original):

Example No. 2.10

530

97 **Allegro agitato**

Isa. *moi!*

Rob. *Mon cœur s'é -*

Allegro agitato

pp

p

G. Meyerbeer, *Robert le diable*, No. 18C: *Cavatine* (piano score), bars 97-100.

Unfortunately, this suggestion is wrong in my opinion. Yes, keynotes change, but we can clearly see a major third in the piano part in bar 99. Therefore, a more appropriate ending would be to play a major chord, which can also be heard on my recording..

Le Prophète⁴

Le Prophète (The Prophet) by Giacomo Meyerbeer to a libretto by Eugène Scribe and Émile Deschamps based on Voltaire's *Essai sur les mœurs et l'esprit des nations* (Essay on the morality and spirit of nations) had its world premiere in Paris on April 16, 1849. The Polish premiere took place in Warsaw on April 11, 1867. It is a five-act grand opéra describing historical events from the 16th century - the fall of the Anabaptist commune in Münster and the life of one of its leaders (the title prophet) - John of Leyde (Jean de Leyde).

The opera's libretto is set around 1530 in the Low Countries and Westphalia (today's western Germany and the Netherlands). Near Count Oberthal's castle, Berta and her future mother-in-law, Fides, go to the Count to obtain permission for Bertha to marry Fides' son, John of Leiden. On the way, they pass three Anabaptists - Jonas, Mathisen and Zacharias, who call for conversion, but in fact incite the people to rebel against their masters. The Count rejects the women's request and locks both of them in a chamber. Then we see John waiting for his mother and his beloved to return. However, only a very shaken Berta appears, who managed to escape the count. In a moment, Oberthal himself arrives, who orders the hero to give him his beloved, threatening to execute his mother. Eventually John agrees to it. In despair, he remembers three agitating men who saw him as their leader - he joins them and declares himself a Prophet. In the following days, the Anabaptists slaughter the lords and storm the cathedral in Münster. As a result of rebellions, John becomes emperor, and the city falls under the control of the Anabaptists. Berta, having learned about the terrible deeds of her beloved, commits suicide, and Jonas, Mathisen and Zacharias eventually betray Jan, wanting to kill him and take over power. In the last scene, we see the titular Prophet, hidden together with his mother in the palace basement, who commits suicide by blowing up the entire cathedral along with the Anabaptists storming it.

⁴ Opracowano na podstawie: P. Kamiński, *Tysiąc i jedna opera...* oraz R. Kloiber, *Handbuch...*

Pastorale. Appel aux armes

Liszt reached for Giacomo Meyerbeer's work shortly after the world premiere of the opera in Paris (at which Chopin and Verdi, Gautier, Delacroix and Berlioz were also present once again) and based on it in the years 1849 - 1850 a three-part transcription (actually three separate transcriptions) was written). They are as follows:

1. Prière. Hymne triomphal. Marche du sacre (Prayer. Triumphal Hymn. Coronation March)
2. Patineurs. Scherzo (Skaters. Scherzo)
3. Pastorals. Appel aux armes (Pastoral. A call to arms)

A separate work composed by Liszt on themes from this opera is Fantazja i fugue on the theme of chorale: "Ad nos, ad salutarem undam" S. 259 for organ (the theme of this chorale also resounds in the transcription discussed by us), it was published by the publisher however, also as the fourth transcription (S. 624) in 1852 in an arrangement for piano four hands.

For reasons of volume, unfortunately, it is not possible to discuss all three transcriptions from the Prophet, which is why we will focus on the third one, which in my opinion is the most representative of the entire opera. The first (Prière. Hymne triomphal. Marche du sacre) focuses on the middle part of the opera (Liszt uses motifs from the third and fourth acts), the second (Les patineurs. Scherzo) is only one fragment of the ballet from the third act, while the third is based both on the opening fragments of the opera (Nos. 1 and 3), the middle ones (act three) and the final ones (the last scene of the fifth act) and thus it is the best musical summary of the whole opera.

The arrangement can be divided into four fragments:

Bars 1 - 160 (Liszt's original transcription)

Bars 161 - 208

Bars 209 - 287

Bars 288 - 410

A. Introduction, *pastorale*

The beginning of Liszt's piece is also the beginning of Meyerbeer's opera; the title *Pastorale* refers to this fragment. In the original it is exactly No. 1 (A): *Prélude et chœur pastoral*. Bars 1 - 66 of the transcription (that is, the main thematic ideas of the section) correspond to bars 22 - 56 and 78 - 107 of the opera score. The remaining bars (67 - 160) are music composed by Liszt, but based entirely on Meyerbeer's themes.

The very beginning of the work forces the first artistic decisions. Liszt allows for two versions of the following passage:

Example No. 2.11

3. PASTORALE, APPEL AUX ARMES

The musical score is written for piano and consists of 17 measures. It is divided into two systems. The first system contains measures 1 through 10, and the second system contains measures 11 through 17. The tempo is marked 'Andantino pastorale' at the beginning and 'accelerando' towards the end. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, echoes, and dynamic markings. The dynamics range from *pp* (pianissimo) to *f* (forte). The tempo markings include 'Andantino pastorale', 'accelerando', 'f marcato', 'f rallent.', and 'pp più rall.'. The score also includes the instruction 'Ossia' at the beginning of the first system. The first system ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign. The second system begins with a measure rest for 12 measures, followed by measures 13 through 17. The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, echoes, and dynamic markings. The dynamics range from *pp* (pianissimo) to *f* (forte). The tempo markings include 'Andantino pastorale', 'accelerando', 'f marcato', 'f rallent.', and 'pp più rall.'. The score also includes the instruction 'Ossia' at the beginning of the first system. The first system ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign. The second system begins with a measure rest for 12 measures, followed by measures 13 through 17.

Andantino pastorale
Ossia
f
(Echo)
pp
accelerando
f
Andantino pastorale
f marcato
pp
(Echo)
una corda
accelerando
f
tre corde
pp
(Echo)
pp
una corda
f
tre corde
pp
f rallent.
pp più rall.
12
pp una corda
f rallent.
tre corde
pp

F. Liszt, *Illustrations du Prophète*. 3. Pastorale. Appel aux armes, bars 1-17.

The answer to the above question is to compare the arrangement with the original score:

Example No. 2.12

(Au lever du rideau, le théâtre est vide. Le berger arrive, et avec son chapeau donne l'éveil. Un autre berger, seul dans les coulisses, lui répond de loin. Alors les portes des cabanes s'ouvrent, les paysans sortent avec leurs outils, les meuniers avec des sacs de farine sur le dos, les moulins commencent à tourner etc.)

Andantino pastorale quasi Allegretto (♩ = 92)

22 (dans l'orchestre) *long* *presser un peu*
Cl en Sib
(sur le théâtre dans les coulisses) *long* *pp*

31 *ralentissez un peu* *presser un peu*
Cl en Sib
(sur le théâtre) *ralentissez un peu* *pp*

41 *ralentissez un peu* *presser un peu* *ralentissez un peu*
Cl en Sib
(sur le théâtre) *p* *La clarinette sur le théâtre tacet.* *pp*

G. Meyerbeer, *Le Prophète*, No. 1(A): *Prélude et chœur pastoral* (full score), bars 22-51.

As you can see, Liszt's ossia is nothing more than an original clarinet solo (sounding, of course, in the original key of G minor, written only a whole tone higher due to the transposition of the instrument) enriched with a harmonic interpretation. Interestingly, Liszt no longer gives freedom in choosing the version from bar 17, departing slightly from the original. In my opinion, a pianist aware of the historical context of the performed work should definitely reach for the unanimous, main version of the beginning of the work. Despite some severity, it is, in my opinion, more compelling and interesting; through its undefinedness, it announces an epic story without revealing what will happen next.

The dynamics visible in the example above (bars 22 - 51 from the score) fully correspond to the dynamics in the transcription. However, it should be taken into account that the first clarinet (a shepherd's instrument, announcing or creating the

pastorals of the title!), on the upper staff does not play from the orchestra channel, but from behind the scenes (*sur le théâtre dans les coulisses*), which means that the sound that reaches the audience sounds *de facto* much quieter. Of course, the timbre of the instrument is definitely different than if the clarinet player were to play the same dynamics closer to the audience, but it does not change the fact that the instrument simply sounds quieter. How to achieve such an effect on the piano? My suggestion (which I implement on the recording) is to use the left pedal (*una corda*) from the first bar, and not from the second, as Liszt suggests, and to modify the dynamics from *forte* to maximum *mezzopiano*.

In the further musical fragment of the first scene, an important element, very important for the pianist, is the entry of the choir in measure 38:

Example No. 2.13

The image shows a musical score for F. Liszt's *Illustrations du Prophète*, 3. *Pastorale. Appel aux armes*, bars 32-48. The score is in G major and 2/4 time. It features a piano accompaniment and a vocal line. The piano part starts at bar 32 with a 'dolce' marking. The vocal line enters at bar 38, marked with a red bracket and a '4' above it. The piano part continues with a 'pp' marking at bar 42. The score ends at bar 48.

F. Liszt, *Illustrations du Prophète*. 3. *Pastorale. Appel aux armes*, bars 32-48.

The fragment marked in red is the melodic line of the choir (bars 46 - 53 are instrumental). Corresponding moment in the original:

Example No. 2.14

58

The musical score is for Example No. 2.14, starting at measure 74. It features two vocal groups: Coryphées and Chœur, each with Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B) parts. The piano accompaniment is at the bottom.

Coryphées:

- Soprano (S):** *p très doux*. Lyrics: La bri - se est mu - et - te, la
- Alto (A):** *p staccato*. Lyrics: La bri - se est mu - et - te,
- Tenor (T):** *p staccato*. Lyrics: La bri - se est mu - et - te,
- Bass (B):** *p staccato*. Includes the instruction "(Les basses tailles par les garçons meuniers)". Lyrics: La bri - se est mu - et - te,

Chœur:

- Soprano (S):** *p très doux*. Lyrics: La bri - se est mu - et - te, la
- Alto (A):** *p staccato*. Lyrics: La bri - se est mu - et - te,
- Tenor (T):** *p staccato*. Lyrics: La bri - se est mu - et - te,
- Bass (B):** *p staccato*. Includes the instruction "(Les basses tailles par les garçons meuniers)". Lyrics: La bri - se est mu - et - te,

Piano Accompaniment:

- Marked *p louré*.
- The right hand plays a melody of eighth notes, while the left hand provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords.

Sy. 5602/03

G. Meyerbeer, *Le Prophète*, No. 1(A): *Prélude et chœur pastoral* (piano score), bars 74-82.

The entire text sung by the choir in the fragment used by F. Liszt reads as follows:

<i>La brise est muette,</i>	<i>The wind dies down</i>
<i>Le jour est serein.</i>	<i>The day is calm.</i>
<i>D'échos en échos,</i>	<i>Like a repeated echo</i>
<i>Sonne clochette, de nos gais troupeaux.</i>	<i>The bells of our joyful herd ring.</i>

The meaning of the text closely corresponds to the genre scene taking place on the stage - peasants grazing cattle greet the new day of work in the field with singing (hence the use of the clarinet - a shepherd's instrument - in the earlier fragment).

While in terms of language (at this tempo) the presence of the choir's singing does not significantly affect the phrasing, the awareness of the presence of the choir significantly affects the timbre of the sound. It should be played cantabile and legato, and each note should have its time (it is unrealistic and musically illogical to treat the sixteenth notes of the choir melody as grace notes).

B. Ballet music

The next fragment of the transcription (bars 161 - 208) corresponds to the ballet music from the third act: No. 15 (C). Troisième Air de ballet. Quadrille des patineurs (third ballet music, skaters' quadrille).

In this purely instrumental segment, three elements are very important for the performer: timbre (through the instrumentation used), plot context (who is dancing and why) and dramaturgy (maintaining tension with high repetition of musical material).

In terms of timbre, Liszt very accurately notes the accompaniment of the left hand in three voices and at the very beginning leaves notes for the pianist: *con pedale* and *una corda* (bar 161):

Example No. 2.15

155

(Echo) *riten.* *espressivo*

pp

con ped.
una corda

Z. 12 398

F. Liszt, *Illustrations du Prophète*. 3. Pastorale. Appel aux armes, bars 155-161.

But what does Liszt want to achieve with such a record? It is worth bearing in mind that the original accompaniment is not three, but five voices:

Example No. 2.16

615

Tous les soufflets (sforzati) ne doivent être que légèrement accentués.

64

Fl

Hfb

Cl 1 en La

Cl 2 en La

Bn 1, 2

Bn 3, 4

Cor 1, 2 en Sol

Cpi 1, 2 en Mi

Trp 1, 2 en Ut

Trbn 1, 2

Trbn 3 Oph

Timb

V 1

V 2

Al

Vc

Cb

doux et légèrement

à demi voix

à demi voix

à demi voix

à demi voix

à demi voix

à 2

p

fp

fp

fp

Tous les soufflets (sforzati) ne doivent être que légèrement accentués.

doux et légèrement

à demi voix

à demi voix

à demi voix

à demi voix

à demi voix

G. Meyerbeer, *Le Prophète*, No. 15(C): *Troisième Air de ballet. Quadrille des patineurs* (full score), bars 64-67.

The first voice is a double bass line played portato, with both notes marked by the articulation: tenuto. Second voice - third and fourth French horn (there was an error in the score, instead of "Cpi 1.2" it should be written: "Cor 3.4"), playing longer notes in *fp* dynamics. Third. - first and second French horn, second violin and first bassoon repeating the syncopated B sound. The fourth voice is the cellos and violas, and the fifth voice is the second bassoon and both clarinets. When we also take into account the composer's hint: *Tout les soufflets (sforzati) ne doivent être que légèrement accentués* (all accents (*sforzata*) should be only slightly accentuated), we get a full picture of what Liszt wanted to achieve. After such analysis, the pianist performing the fragment in question will certainly spend a lot of time practicing only the left hand at the beginning.

The opera's libretto provides us with completely unexpected information. The music, seemingly innocent, very harmonious, devoid of dissonances, presents a very tragic moment. In the preceding scene, there was a massacre of the lords by the Anabaptists, who, by persuading them to change their religion, also incited the people to revolt. Peasant women from the surrounding villages bring food to the insurgents as gratitude, carrying it across a frozen (there is a harsh winter) lake. The insurgents, seeing women with food, ask them to dance for them. Hence the ballet's name: the skater's quadrille. Awareness of the above fact, in my opinion, completely changes the attitude towards this music. Instead of a gentle, pastoral figuration on short sigh motifs, we are dealing with music lined with great tension, irony and tragedy.

The dramatic aspect results from the relationship between the transcription and the original. Bars 160 - 182 in Liszt correspond to bars 64 - 85 in Meyerbeer's original composition. The continuation, however (i.e. bars 183 - 208), is not covered by the original. It is true that this is only a two-time repetition of the same material in a different key, but due to this repetition, musically, this fragment is quite difficult - in order to avoid boredom due to constantly the same motifs, you need to plan the tension in the entire segment very well. This should be achieved not only through dynamics, but also through the differentiation of phrases in terms of timbre, articulation and tempo

(stringendo written by Liszt!). The whole thing should lead very clearly to the climax beginning in bar 209.

C. Appel aux armes

When composing his transcriptions, Franz Liszt did not always follow the libretto chronology (for example, the transcript from Lucia di Lammermoor discussed earlier or the great fantasy from themes from Mozart's Don Giovanni). And so it is in this case. We were at the beginning of the opera, then we saw the ballet music from act three, then we go back to act one, more precisely to No. 3B: La Prêche anabaptiste. (Morceau d'ensemble) - Anabaptist sermon.

The fragment in question is a relatively faithful representation of the original in terms of construction, but it is not a (mindless) copy. Liszt composes nine bars of an additional phrase, intended to combine the previous (ballet) music with a quote from an Anabaptist chant. This is the "call to arms" of the title, an introduction to Meyerbeer's musical material, which has no equivalent in the original, but is an extremely legible fanfare imitating trumpets (bars 209 - 217):

Example No. 2.17

154

Allegro

Ossia **f energico**

la melodia accentato assai

al segno § (batt. 238)

209 Allegro

f energico

214

marcato

accelerando

F. Liszt, *Illustrations du Prophète. 3. Pastorale. Appel aux armes*, bars 209-218.

As we can see in the musical example above, Liszt allows for an abbreviation in which the performer skips about 25 bars of music altogether. Of course, the practicality of the era is one thing, but in my opinion it is a highly inadvisable idea (which I also do not do in my recording). The following fragment (from bar 225) is an Anabaptist prayer - a hymn composed by Meyerbeer, based on the Protestant chant *Wer nur den lieben Gott lässt walten* (Who only lets the merciful God reign) from 1641. It is sung in the opera by three characters: Jonas, Mathisen (historical figure: Jan Matthijs) and Zachariasz, black silhouettes, decidedly negative characters. This time the music fits very well with what is happening on stage:

Example No. 2.18

113

121 **molto rallentando**

Jonas *ff*
Ad

Mathisen *ff*
Ad

Zacharie *ff*
Ad

S
- nous, le - vons - nous, le - vons - nous! *ff* Mal -

A
- nous, le - vons - nous, le - vons - nous! *ff* Mal -

T
- nous, le - vons - nous, le - vons - nous! *ff* Mal -

B
- nous, le - vons - nous, le - vons - nous! *ff* Mal -

molto rallentando
ff *marquez chaque note*

G. Meyerbeer, *Le Prophète*, No. 3B: *La Prêche anabaptiste*. (Morceau d'ensemble) (piano score), bars 121-122.

Example No. 2.19

114

a tempo molto moderato (♩ = 92)
(Tous se précipitent sur le bord de la scène avec des gestes menaçants.)

123

Jonas
 nos, ad sa - lu - ta - rem un - - - -

Mathisen
 nos, ad sa - lu - ta - rem un - - - -

Zacharie
 nos, ad sa - lu - ta - rem un - - - -

S
 - heur à qui nous com - bat - trait, mal - heur, mal - heur, mal -

A
 - heur à qui nous com - bat - trait, mal - heur, mal - heur, mal -

T
 - heur à qui nous com - bat - trait, mal - heur, mal - heur, mal -

B
 - heur à qui nous com - bat - trait, mal - heur, mal - heur, mal -

a tempo molto moderato (♩ = 92)

Ped.

G. Meyerbeer, *Le Prophète*, No. 3B: *La Prêche anabaptiste*. (Morceau d'ensemble) (piano score), bars 123-125.

In the passage quoted above, Jonah, Mathisen and Zechariah, seemingly converting the people, agitate them to revolt against the so-called gentlemen, i.e. to the upper social stratum, singing (from measure 225 in Liszt's piece):

<i>Ad nos, ad salutarem undam</i>	<i>To us, on a salutary wave</i>
<i>Iterum venite [miseri!]</i>	<i>Come again [poor!]</i>
<i>Ad nos, ad nos venite, populi!]</i>	<i>To us, come to us, people!]</i>

At the same time, the so-called the common people sing:

<i>Malheur à qui combattrait, ,malheur!</i>	<i>Woe to those who fight, woe!</i>
<i>Son supplice est tout prêt,</i>	<i>His anguish is near</i>
<i>Dieu signe l'arrêt!</i>	<i>God will give a sign to stop!</i>

After a short virtuosic link modified by Liszt (bars 231 - 234), we come to the main part of the Anabaptist agitation:

Example No. 2.20

117

138 *f avec enthousiasme*

Mathisen

Zacharie

O roi des

f avec enthousiasme

O roi des

p détaché

p doux

Red. *

141

Mathisen

Zacharie

cieux, c'est ta vic - toi - - re! Dieu des com -

cieux, c'est ta vic - toi - - re! Dieu des com -

143

Jonas

sur nous!

Mathisen

Zacharie

-bats, veil - le sur nous, sur nous! Les na-ti - ons ver - ront ta

-bats, veil - le sur nous, sur nous! Les na-ti - ons ver - ront ta

f

p

Red. *

Sy. 5602/03

G. Meyerbeer, *Le Prophète*, No. 3B: *La Prêche anabaptiste*. (Morceau d'ensemble) (piano score), bars 138-145.

For the performer, the text sung by the Anabaptists (from bar 237) is very important due to two aspects:

<i>O roi des cieux, c'est ta victoire!</i>	<i>O king of heaven, here is your victory!</i>
<i>Dieu des combats, veille sur nous!</i>	<i>God of battles, take care of us!</i>
<i>Les nations verront ta gloire,</i>	<i>Nations will see your glory</i>
<i>Ta sainte loi, luira pour tous!</i>	<i>Your holy law will shine for all!</i>
<i>Suivez-nous amis,</i>	<i>Follow us, friends,</i>
<i>Dieu le veut!</i>	<i>God wants it!</i>
<i>C'est le grand jour!</i>	<i>It's a great day!</i>
<i>Que la liberté,</i>	<i>let freedom</i>
<i>Dieu le veut,</i>	<i>God wants it</i>
<i>Soit notre amour ,</i>	<i>Will be our love</i>
<i>Et du monde entier,</i>	<i>And the whole world</i>
<i>Dieu le veut,</i>	<i>God wants it</i>
<i>Son drapeau fera le tour</i>	<i>His flag will circle</i>
<i>Dieu le veut!</i>	<i>God wants it!</i>
<i>Suivez-nous,</i>	<i>follow us</i>
<i>Chers compagnons!</i>	<i>Dear friends!</i>
 <u><i>Aux armes!</i></u>	 <u><i>To arms!</i></u>
<i>Ad nos venite populi!</i>	<i>Come to us people</i>
<i>Suivez-nous! Oui!</i>	<i>Follow us! Yes!</i>
<i>Mort aux tyrans! Oui! Mort!</i>	<i>Death to tyrants! Yes! Death!</i>

First of all - the awareness of the content of their agitation should enrich the inner imagination of the artist and the performance is therefore much more interesting. Besides, it is in this fragment that the famous phrase is said: Aux armes! (fr. To arms!), included in the very title of the transcript. And since it is included in the title, it is also important for the composer himself!

Secondly, it is worth paying attention to the following measures:

Example No. 2.21

148

Jonas
pour tous!...

Mathisen
tous, pour tous!... Sui - vez - nous a - mis, Dieu le veut, Dieu le

Zacharie
tous, pour tous!... Sui - vez - nous a - mis, Dieu le veut, Dieu le

p

Deo

G. Meyerbeer, *Le Prophète*, No. 3B: *La Prêche anabaptiste*. (Morceau d'ensemble) (piano score), bars 148-149.

This is, in my opinion, the perfect place to set the right tempo for this passage; the Liszt equivalent is bar 245:

Example No. 2.22

244

f

p

7 12 308

F. Liszt, *Illustrations du Prophète*. 3. Pastorale. Appel aux armes, bars 244-245.

It is enough to try to sing (not just say) the second part of bar 148 with the words: suivez - nous amis (follow us, friends) so that all pitches are intoned precisely and the text (mainly consonants) is completely understandable.

For the awareness of the construction of the form's architecture, it is important to know that Liszt follows the original only up to bar 267. Bars 268 - 269 of the original transcription:

Example No. 2.23



F. Liszt, *Illustrations du Prophète*. 3. Pastorale. Appel aux armes, bars 268-269.

correspond to the following excerpt from the opera:

Example No. 2.24

131

182

Jonas

ad nos, ad nos, ad nos, ad nos, ad nos, ve - ni - te

Mathisen

ad nos, ad nos, ad nos, ad nos, ad nos, ve - ni - te

Zacharie

ad nos, ad nos, ad nos, ad nos, ad nos, ve - ni - te

S

Ah! viens nous se - cou - rir, Nous t'in - vo - quons, pour ton saint

A

Ah! viens nous se - cou - rir, Nous t'in - vo - quons, pour ton saint

T

Ah! viens nous se - cou - rir, Nous t'in - vo - quons, pour ton saint

B

Ah! viens nous se - cou - rir, Nous t'in - vo - quons, pour ton saint

Sv. 5602/03

G. Meyerbeer, *Le Prophète*, No. 3 (piano score), bars 182-184.

The next two pages (bars 270 - 285) of the transcription are basically a loose variation on this theme. Therefore, the following fragment can be treated more virtuosically.

D. Finale.

The final segment was called Finale for a reason. On the one hand, it is a summary of all three Liszt transcriptions on themes from Meyerbeer's *Le Propète*, it is also the finale of the opera itself: No. 29. Finale B: - Couplets bachiques (in Liszt from bar 286 to the very end).

For this scene, the main emphasis should definitely be on knowing the libretto. We are at a crucial moment in the historical suppression of the Anabaptist commune (1535). In the basement of the Cathedral of St. Paul in Münster. John of Leiden, historically - Jan van Leiden (Hol.) or Jan (Johan) van Leyden (1509 - 1536) - the title Prophet and false emperor (crowned in the fourth act) decides to blow up the entire cathedral, including three conspirators (Jonas , Mathisen and Zachariah from the first act), who turned against him. After giving his last orders (the fuse for the gunpowder barrels has already been ignited, it's only a matter of time before it explodes), he intones a drunken song, awaiting certain death:

Versez! que tout respire

L'ivresse et le délire!

Que tout cède à l'empire

De ce nectar brûlant!

O la céleste fête!

O la triomphe si brillant!

Compagnons du Prophète

La récompense vous attend!

Venez!

Versez!

Pour, let everyone breathe

Drunkenness and delirium!

Let everyone give up the empire

That burning nectar!

O heavenly feast!

O fantastic triumph!

The Prophet's Company

The reward is waiting for you!

Come!

Pour!

*Ah! Viens! Divine flamme
Vers Dieu qui nous réclame,
Ah! Viens! porter notre âme,
Libre de ses erreurs!
Ah! Viens! Divine flamme
Vers Dieu qui nous réclame,
Ah! viens porter notre âme au ciel!*

*Ah! come! divine fire
To God who calls us
Ah! come! Take our soul
Free of the errors!
Ah! come! divine fire
To God who calls us
Ah! come and take our soul to heaven!*

Example No. 2.25

21 (avec force et une gaieté sauvage)

Jean

Ver - sez! que tout res - pi - re

pp f p

24

Jean

L'i - vres - se et le dé - li - re! Que tout cède

f p

27

Jean

à l'em - pi - re De ce nec - tar brû - lant!

cresc.

G. Meyerbeer, *Le Prophète*, No. 29. Finale B: *Couplets bachiques* (piano score), bars 21-29.

The main question is the question of speed. The indications of Liszt (*Allegro vivace*) and Meyerbeer (*Allegretto ben marcato*) differ significantly from each other. On the one hand, one can imagine that Liszt wanted a faster tempo than the original, but what is the real tempo? In my opinion, the right answer is a practical approach (and Liszt was

definitely a practitioner) and analysis of the melodic line sung by the tenor. Just try to imagine (or sing yourself) bars 21 (the first two sixteenth notes) and 22 (the ornament at the beginning of the bar). In my opinion, the tempo at which the character required by Meyerbeer has already been achieved (*avec force et une gaieté sauvage* - with wild strength and joy) and at which the tenor is still able to sing the aforementioned sixteenth notes and the ornament is the right tempo. It may not be *Allegro vivace* or *Allegretto ben marcato*, but it is definitely *tempo giusto*.

One linguistic detail deserves special attention. At the beginning of bar 21 of the above musical example (similar places: bars 24 and 26), Meyerbeer explicitly wishes for an accent on the first sixteenth:

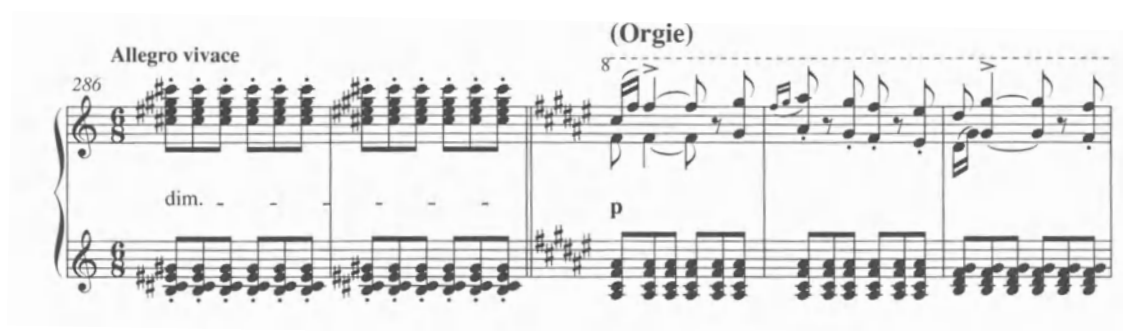
Example No. 2.26

The musical score for Example No. 2.26 shows three measures of music. The top staff is for the voice, labeled 'Jean' with a vocal range of 8. The bottom staff is for the piano. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The time signature is 4/4. The tempo/mood is indicated as '(avec force et une gaieté sauvage)'. The lyrics are 'Ver - sez! que tout res - pi - re'. The piano accompaniment includes dynamics *pp*, *f*, and *p*, and a triplet in the second measure. The first measure of the piano part has a *pp* dynamic. The second measure has a *f* dynamic and a triplet. The third measure has a *p* dynamic. The piano part ends with a *Red.* (Reduction) and an asterisk.

G. Meyerbeer, *Le Prophète*, No. 29. Finale B: *Couplets bachiques* (piano score), bars 21-23.

Liszt, however, decides to accentuate the third note in the measure, the crotchet:

Example No. 2.27



F. Liszt, *Illustrations du Prophète. 3. Pastorale. Appel aux armes*, bars 286-290.

The reason is the language accent. The word: verzez (fr. pour), is stressed on the second syllable: versez. It was obvious to Meyerbeer, the accent is just a reminder not to sing the beginning of the bar without energy (especially the first consonant). Liszt (a practitioner!), who had an excellent command of French, knew perfectly well how this motif sounded in effect, and this time he made the task easier for future generations of pianists by noting the accent where it actually sounds. Reliable notation is therefore in this case completely correct and, in principle, sufficient, but the awareness of the original text will certainly significantly enrich the interpretation of the transcription.

In the vide recording, bars 267 - 384 were realized this time, according to Liszt's suggestion. The aforementioned fragment has no equivalent in Meyerbeer's score, and in my opinion it is a better solution in terms of drama (the climax reached in bar 253 is no longer disturbed by 20 repetitions of the same bar and two returns to the piano in bars 367 and 376).

3. Arrangements from the operas of Wagner

A lot has been written about the acquaintance of Franz Liszt and Richard Wagner, and for good reason; it was a very unusual, long friendship, a unique relationship of this kind between composers in the 19th century (perhaps comparable only with Clara Schumann and Johannes Brahms). The composers had known each other since 1842, when Wagner settled in Dresden as the conductor of the local opera, and they kept in contact practically throughout their lives. Later, through Wagner's wedding to Liszt's daughter, Cosima, they even bonded as a family. In addition, the Hungarian pianist greatly supported the German composer of musical drama; psychologically (their extensive correspondence has been preserved) and financially (it was he who got him a new passport and made it possible to escape to Switzerland after the May Uprising in Dresden in 1849, in which Wagner took part); he helped him by recommending him to important personalities in Europe, he advised on publishing works. However, the most important element of their relationship for us is their artistic bond.

Wagner himself stated that if it had not been for Liszt, the festival (and, above all, the opera theatre) in Bayreuth would not have been created. It is also possible that if it had not been for Liszt, Wagner's works would not have been so popular then (and today). Not only did he conduct most of the German composer's early operas in Weimar - The Flying Dutchman, Tannhäuser, Lohengrin (he premiered these operas, by the way) - he used no other composer's works as often as Wagner's operas; As many as 19 transcriptions for piano, based on compositions by the author of Parsifal, have been preserved (Verdi took second place)! In this chapter, we will deal with three of them: 2 pieces from Tannhäuser and Lohengrin (2 Stücke aus Richard Wagners Tannhäuser und Lohengrin) and Isolde's Liebestod from the opera: Tristan and Isolde.

***Tannhäuser und der Sängerkrieg auf Wartburg*⁵**

The second of the so-called Wagner's romantic operas (after *The Flying Dutchman*), *Tannhäuser* and Singers' Tournament at the Wartburg, was written in the years 1843 - 1845, premiered in Dresden on October 19, 1845 (at the Semperoper, i.e. Königlich-sächsisches Hoftheater - Royal Court Theatre). The opera's libretto was written by the composer himself, inspired by two legends; the first is *Tannhäuser*, a story about a mythologized medieval minnesinger and poet of the 16th century; the second is a legend (from the 13th century) about the Singing Tournament at the Wartburg. The text of the opera itself was created before the music, in the years 1842 - 1843.

It is also worth mentioning the different versions of the work. Never in any of his works did Wagner make so many changes as in *Tannhäuser*. However, he himself was dissatisfied with it until the very end of his life. Cosima's diary states: "I still owe *Tannhäuser* to the world." After its premiere in 1845, subsequent versions of the opera include:

- 1847 - new musical rehearsals of soloists and orchestra; changed end of the opera, staged still in Dresden
- 1861 - so-called the Paris version of the opera (with French text) - was created at the invitation of the French king, Napoleon III, staged at the Paris Opera, but due to the intrigue of the so-called Jockey Club (caused by Wagner's reluctance to include ballet music so favored by Parisian audiences in the second act), the show was canceled after three performances
- 1867 - Parisian version, sung in German, with minor changes for the opera in Munich
- 1875 - Munich version with further changes for the opera house in Vienna

Currently, the Viennese version is most often performed (this one is also played at the Bayreuth Festival), but some theaters decide to combine the Dresden and Paris versions according to their own concept.

⁵ Written on the basis of: P. Kamiński, *Tysiąc i jedna opera...* and R. Kloiber, *Handbuch...*

The action of the opera takes place at the beginning of the 13th century. The poet and singer, the titular Tannhäuser, has been staying in the temple of bodily pleasures, the semi-mythical grotto of the goddess Venus, for many years. However, he is weary and misses the real world. Wanting to get out, he invokes the name of the Blessed Virgin Mary; the grotto disappears and the hero suddenly finds himself in a clearing near Wartburg Castle (above the city of Eisenach in Germany). He immediately meets his old companions, minnesingers (German aristocrats dealing with poetry and music, they were the equivalent of French troubadours), who are heading to the castle for a tournament to select the best of them. Wolfram von Eschenbach, a friend of Tannhäuser, convinces him to join them, telling him about Elisabeth's unrelenting love, his former love.

Then, at the beginning of the second act, we see Elisabeth running into the hall where singing tournaments were held years ago, the winner of which was many times Tannhäuser. The singer arrives moments later and throws himself at his beloved's feet. After the couple's duet, the landgrave (Elisabeth's father), who has seen the whole scene, invites the guests (including the main character's companions) and then explains to everyone the rules of the upcoming competition: the singers are to describe the power of love and whoever does it most beautiful will win. The first to appear is Wolfram, which celebrates discreet adoration, where the object of affection is distant and inaccessible. In response, Tannhäuser compares love to a source that soothes thirst, rejecting the vision of his friend. Another participant in the tournament is Walther von der Vogelweide, praising love as a source of pure virtue, which loses its magical properties when someone dips their mouth in it. The nervous Tannhäuser mocks his opponents without any inhibitions; begins to glorify the delights of the accursed grotto of Venus. In reaction to these blasphemies, the ladies gathered in the hall run away, and the men draw their swords to attack the singer. Only Elisabeth stands up for her beloved, despite his betrayal (with Venus). Finally, the Landgrave sends Tannhäuser on a pilgrimage to Rome and forbids him from returning without obtaining the Pope's absolution.

At the beginning of the third act, we see Elisabeth praying. Wolfram watching her knows that she is looking for her beloved among the pilgrims. She finally dismisses Eschenbach and returns to the castle. Then we see the main character, who has already returned from his pilgrimage, unfortunately ineffective - the Pope refused to grant absolution, adding that sooner leaves will grow from the wood of the papal staff than such a spoiled soul will receive redemption. Tannhäuser is distraught and is looking for the grotto of the goddess Venus again. At the last moment, however, the singer's friend pronounces the name of his beloved and dismisses the goddess' spells. Meanwhile, a funeral procession leaves the castle with the corpse of Elisabeth, who redeemed her beloved's guilt with her death. Tannhäuser, falling to his knees in front of the body of his chosen one, dies. At the same time, we see pilgrims carrying the Pope's staff covered with fresh foliage above their heads.

Einzug der Gäste auf Wartburg. Marche du Tannhäuser de Richard Wagner

Franz Liszt knew Wagner's entire opera very well - after performances in Dresden (1845, 1847) conducted by the composer, Liszt himself conducted the work in Weimar in 1849. The transcription was created shortly later, in 1852, published in 1853 as: *Zwei Stücke aus Richard Wagners Tannhäuser und Lohengrin* (together with the piece from Lohengrin discussed in the next chapter: *Elsas Brautgang zum Münster*). There is a second version of the Tannhäuser arrangement, revised by the composer, published in 1874, but it is less useful for us - the author departs from the original in it, changing the structure of individual fragments, mainly in favor of the soloist's show.

During the analysis, we will use the Dresden version of the score, but this is of no importance in this case, because the scene we are discussing has not been changed in any subsequent version of the work; Wagner refined mainly the first scene in the grotto of Venus (and therefore also the ending of the overture) and some fragments in the finale of the second act.

The music that Liszt used when developing his transcription can be found in the second act of the opera. After the duet by Elisabeth and Tannhäuser (in the second scene), the hero leaves his beloved and her father, the landgrave, appears behind him. After their short conversation (scene three), trumpets sound in the courtyard of the castle announcing the arrival of guests. Then, exactly at the beginning of the fourth scene, the fragment of interest to us begins. Liszt transfers the part of the orchestra (and partly of the choir, as discussed below) to his transcription, up to a certain point in practically unchanged form, only in the later part of the work deciding to make some modifications.

Bars 204 - 212 of the transcription, which Liszt "adapted" to the possibilities of the piano, changed significantly; he changed neither the harmony nor the expression, only the texture and rhythm to a more virtuosic one.

Below is a piano cut of the fragment in question, showing a direct transfer of the orchestral texture:

Example No. 3.1

121

Thü - ringens Für - sten, Her - - mann, Heil!

Thü - ringens Für - sten, Her - - mann, Heil!

Thü - ringens Für - sten, Her - - mann, Heil!

Thü - ringens Für - sten, Her - - mann, Heil!

Die Versammelten haben alle die ihnen angewiesenen, einen großen Halbkreis bildenden Plätze eingenommen.

Trp. (a.d.B.)

ritard.
W. poco rit.

R. Wagner, *Tannhäuser und der Sängerkrieg auf Wartburg*, act II, scene IV (piano score), p. 121.

For comparison, it is worth noting in the original how exactly Liszt kept the duration of the above fragment (for orientation - the second line of the piano reduction above corresponds to bars 208 - 211 of the transcription). The most important changes are the use of the full register of the piano, a greater role of the pedal (above, in the piano reduction, frequent pedal changes would not significantly change the sound of the fragment, with Liszt - yes), more articulation details (staccato, accents, sforzati) and a different texture - parallel octaves and chords, richer rhythms.

Example No. 3.2

The musical score is a piano reduction of Liszt's transcription of Wagner's 'Einzug der Gäste auf Wartburg'. It is written in G major and 2/4 time. The score is divided into four systems of staves. The first system (bars 204-207) shows a treble staff with a melodic line and a bass staff with chords and octaves. The second system (bars 208-211) features a more complex texture with many chords and octaves in both staves. The third system (bars 212-215) continues with similar textures. The fourth system (bars 216-219) includes a 'ritard.' marking and a tempo change to 'Un poco più moderato'. The final bars (218-219) end with a 'tr' (trill) marking.

F. Liszt, *Einzug der Gäste auf Wartburg. Marche du Tannhäuser de Richard Wagner*, bars 204-219.

Bars 184 - 187 are also slightly changed; due to the length of the cadenza (Liszt extends the original two bars by another two), but this modification has no major significance in the dramaturgy of the work.

More structural changes were made by Liszt in the slow middle part of his transcription. Firstly, bars 218 - 225 in the original are repeated (unaltered). The second major change is the complete abandonment of Elisabeth's father's recitative, which would have taken place between bars 240 and 241 in the transcription. This is the most understandable procedure - the lack of the ability to manipulate the text (voice) on the piano would completely deprive the literal transfer of the entire scene to the piano. In the abandoned fragment, the landgrave welcomes the newcomers and tells them the rules of the upcoming tournament. It is only later that Wagner continues the musical thought, this time in E flat major (Liszt's measure 241):

Example No. 3.3

127

Die vier Edelknaben treten hervor; sie sammeln in einem goldenen Becher von jedem der Sänger seinen auf ein zusammengerolltes Blättchen gezeichneten Namen; darauf reichen sie den Becher Elisabeth, welche eines der Blättchen herauszieht und es wiederum den Edelknaben reicht; diese lesen den Namen und treten dann feierlich in die Mitte.

Moderato. $\text{♩} = 60$.

The musical score consists of three systems. The first system features a vocal line for 'Hr. Er.' (Landgrave) and piano accompaniment. The piano part has markings for 'Str. pizz' (string pizzicato) and 'Ped. simile' (pedal simile). The second and third systems continue the piano accompaniment with complex chordal textures and melodic lines.

R. Wagner, *Tannhäuser und der Sängerkrieg auf Wartburg*, act II, scene IV (piano score), p. 127.

Liszt continues the above thought until the third bar of the last line, then stops on the D major chord and modulates smoothly into the recapitulation:

Example No. 3.4

The image displays a musical score for piano, consisting of three systems of staves. The first system begins at measure 264 and ends at measure 266. It features a treble staff with a melodic line containing eighth-note runs and a bass staff with a steady accompaniment. The second system starts at measure 267 and ends at measure 269. It continues the melodic development in the treble and includes a 'cresc.' (crescendo) marking in the bass. The third system begins at measure 270 and ends at measure 273. It features a 'ff' (fortissimo) dynamic marking and concludes with a series of chords in the bass staff. The score is written in D major and 2/4 time.

F. Liszt, *Einzug der Gäste auf Wartburg. Marche du Tannhäuser* de Richard Wagner, bars 264-273.

Here we are dealing with a procedure that the author of the transcription will also use in the next discussed work from the same opus (*Elsas Brautgang* from *Lohengrin*) - where the opera scene is continued, the action changes, and thus - the music, the composer in a certain at this point, he changes the ending and, using the previous musical material, ends the piece with a short reprise (in the case of *Tannhäuser* - a repeated climax from the first part of the work, in the case of *Lohengrin* - a fragment from another part of the opera, i.e. the overture).

We encounter a very important performance problem at the very beginning of the work - Liszt helps the performer only partially, giving a hint: quasi trombe (thanks to which we know the instrumentation), but the dynamics of the forte and the pedal marking can be at least confusing for the performer.

Example No. 3.5

96

EINZUG DER GÄSTE AUF WARTBURG MARCH FROM RICHARD WAGNER'S OPERA: TANNHÄUSER MARCHE DU TANNHÄUSER DE RICHARD WAGNER

Neue revidierte Ausgabe 1874

The musical score shows the beginning of the piece. The piano part (top staff) begins with a forte (f) dynamic and the instruction 'quasi trombe'. It features a series of chords and a staccato (p stacc.) section. The bass part (bottom staff) also begins with a staccato (p stacc.) section, followed by a marcato (f marcato) section. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

F. Liszt, *Einzug der Gäste auf Wartburg. Marche du Tannhäuser de Richard Wagner*, bars 1-6.

As for the dynamics - an interesting detail is that when we look at the score, Wagner's three trumpets have no indication of how loud they should play:

Example No. 3.6

191

Szene IV

Der Landgraf, Elisabeth, Die Sänger, Grafen, Ritter und Edelfrauen.

Allegro. $\text{♩} = 72$.

in H. Fis.

Pk. *pp*

12 Trompeten in H. (auf dem Theater.)
(nur 3)

Trp. F. in H. *pp*

Allegro. $\text{♩} = 72$.
*W. Sehr lebhaft.
Immer alla breve.*

I. *p stacc.*
pizz.

Viol. II. *p*

Br. *p stacc.*

L. *seist.*

(Der Landgraf und Elisabeth treten an den Balkon, um nach der Ankunft der Gäste zu sehen. Vier Edelknaben treten auf und melden an. Sie erhalten vom Landgrafen Befehl für den Empfang u.s.w.)

Vcl. *pizz.*
p

K. B.

R. Wagner, *Tannhäuser und der Sängerkrieg auf Wartburg*, act II, scene IV (full score), p. 191.

An additional factor is the placement of the instruments; they are not in the orchestra pit, but behind the stage (German: auf dem Theater). The lack of definition of dynamics (and supplemented by Liszt's forte) can be explained by the nature of the phrase (the solemn signal to announce the arrival of guests cannot be played softly), but the timbre itself is an important factor - not quite sharp, but slightly muffled due to the distance. Similarly, as already discussed in the previous chapter (transcripts from Meyerbeer operas), this effect can be achieved either with the left pedal or (which in this case would be more effective in my opinion) with a slightly softer attack.

The right pedal notated by the composer causes even more trouble - trumpets are in no way able to play this signal in the same way as a pianist holding the right pedal for the entire three bars. In my opinion, the explanation may be the specificity of the instrument

on which the Hungarian composer composed. Pianos in the 19th century, due to their construction, were not as loud as today's and the right pedal gave the impression of greater dynamics and at the same time did not blend individual sounds together so much. Therefore, the above effect was most likely a dynamic procedure, not an articulatory one. However, it is worth considering using the pedal in this case and adapting it to the capabilities of the instrument and the acoustics of the hall.

The next important fragment worth looking at is the main theme of the march, i.e. bars 25 - 32:

Example No. 3.7

F. Liszt, *Einzug der Gäste auf Wartburg. Marche du Tannhäuser de Richard Wagner*, bars 22-33.

The piano and sostenuto coming from the composer are true to the original, but completely insufficient. Wagner instruments the discussed melody in a very interesting way - a full string quintet and two clarinets, four horns and bassoons, playing *sehr gehalten* (German: very restraining, i.e. if *sostenuto*, then at least *molto*). Wind instruments performing four bars in one breath, all (except the first French horn) in a low, dark register, *molto legato*. String quintet, and above all the first and second violins, also *legato*, four bars on one bow (whether played in this way or not is the concertmaster's decision, but the effect intended by Wagner is clear and legible), in addition everything on the G string, guaranteeing a dark, rich color.

Example No. 3.8

The image displays a musical score for a passage from Richard Wagner's *Tannhäuser und der Sängerkrieg auf Wartburg*, act II, scene IV. The score is for a full orchestra and includes the following parts: Klarinetten (Klar. in A.), Violinen (Vh. in E., Vh. in H.), Fagott (Fag.), Kontrabaß (Pk.), Violinen I und II (Viol. I., Viol. II.), Bratschen (Br.), Violen (Vcl.), and Kontrabaß (K.B.). The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo/mood marking is "(sehr gehalten.)". The score shows a unison passage where the woodwinds and strings play the same melody. The woodwinds are marked "p" (piano) and "zu 2" (second ending). The strings are marked "arco" (arco) and "p" (piano). The score is for a full orchestra and includes the following parts: Klarinetten (Klar. in A.), Violinen (Vh. in E., Vh. in H.), Fagott (Fag.), Kontrabaß (Pk.), Violinen I und II (Viol. I., Viol. II.), Bratschen (Br.), Violen (Vcl.), and Kontrabaß (K.B.). The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo/mood marking is "(sehr gehalten.)". The score shows a unison passage where the woodwinds and strings play the same melody. The woodwinds are marked "p" (piano) and "zu 2" (second ending). The strings are marked "arco" (arco) and "p" (piano). The score is for a full orchestra and includes the following parts: Klarinetten (Klar. in A.), Violinen (Vh. in E., Vh. in H.), Fagott (Fag.), Kontrabaß (Pk.), Violinen I und II (Viol. I., Viol. II.), Bratschen (Br.), Violen (Vcl.), and Kontrabaß (K.B.). The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo/mood marking is "(sehr gehalten.)". The score shows a unison passage where the woodwinds and strings play the same melody. The woodwinds are marked "p" (piano) and "zu 2" (second ending). The strings are marked "arco" (arco) and "p" (piano).

R. Wagner, *Tannhäuser und der Sängerkrieg auf Wartburg*, act II, scene IV (full score), p. 193.

When we hear about 25 people (first, second violins, first clarinet, first French horn) playing the same melody in unison, our sonic image will change completely. Reproducing this effect on the piano is certainly difficult, but not impossible - it requires perfect legato, good balance in chords (all components, especially the lower ones, should be played with a lean, singing sound), a stable melodic line, not too fast ornamentation and, above all, above all a very accurate, deep and precise pedal.

The next appearance of the same theme is also the entrance of the choir, the text of which very vividly describes the nature of the resounding music - solemnity, seriousness and adoration of art.

<i>Freudig begrüßen wir die edle Halle,</i>	<i>We gladly welcome noble chambers,</i>
<i>wo Kunst und Frieden immer nur verweil,</i>	<i>Where art and peace always reign,</i>
<i>wo lange noch der frohe Ruf erschalle:</i>	<i>Where the joyful call still resounds for a</i>
	<i>long time:</i>
<i>Thüringens Fürsten, Landgraf Hermann,</i>	<i>Duke of Thuringia, Landgrave Hermann,</i>
<i>Heil!</i>	<i>glory!</i>

As you can see in the example below, the choir sings the same melodic material that we will hear in the orchestra:

Example No. 3.9

114

Chor der Ritter und Edlen.

The musical score for Example No. 3.9, page 114 of R. Wagner's *Tannhäuser*, shows the vocal parts for the "Chor der Ritter und Edlen." The score includes parts for Tenors I and II, Basses I and II, and a string section. The lyrics are in German and English. The music is in D major and 4/4 time. The vocal parts sing the same melodic material as the string section.

Lyrics (German):
 wir die ed - le -
 Freu - dig be - grü - ßen wir die Hal - le, wo Kunst und Frie - den
 Freu - dig be - grü - ßen wir die Hal - le, wo Kunst und Frie - den
 im - mer nur ver - weil, -
 nur ver - - weil, - wo lan - ge noch der Ruf er -
 nur ver - - weil, wo lan - ge noch der Ruf er -

Lyrics (English):
 We gladly welcome noble chambers,
 Where art and peace always reign,
 Where the joyful call still resounds for a
 long time:
 Duke of Thuringia, Landgrave Hermann,
 glory!

R. Wagner, *Tannhäuser und der Sängerkrieg auf Wartburg*, act II, scene IV (piano score), p. 114.

Interestingly, in his transcription, Liszt did not want to repeat the same phrase (bars 25 - 32 and the following ones discussed earlier) and introduced an eighth note

accompaniment in the left hand, which occurs in the opera only for the third time, in fortissimo:

Example No. 3.10



F. Liszt, *Einzug der Gäste auf Wartburg. Marche du Tannhäuser de Richard Wagner*, bars 93-102.

This is, of course, a very intelligent procedure - the orchestra part sounds completely identical the second time, during the entry of the choir, and the first time. However, what Liszt does with the next fragment is fascinating. From measure 109 (example no. 3.11), instead of continuing to imitate the chorus, the composer decides to abandon the melodic line of the original and introduces a piano variation. The structure of the original is preserved - the harmony and timing are identical, but the right hand leads a figurative, virtuosic melody, full of embellishments, passages, scales, repetitions; it is only from bar 117 that the left hand discreetly recalls the "correct", lost, but still remaining in the head, as it were, "implicitly" melody.

100 dolce con grazia

108

111

114

117

Ossia

120

Z. 12 399

106

How much more interesting is this than the static, marching texture of the orchestra, which without the choir, text and stage would be banal and boring, almost unbearably devoid of music:

Example No. 3.12

The image displays a musical score for Example No. 3.12, featuring vocal and piano parts. The top system includes two vocal staves (Soprano and Alto) and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics for the vocal parts are: "schal - le, Thü - rin - gens Für - sten, Landgraf Her - mann, Heil!". The piano part features a complex, rhythmic accompaniment with a triplets in the right hand and a steady bass line in the left hand. The bottom system is for the "Chor der Edelfrauen" (Chorus of Noble Women), with parts for Soprano, Alto, and Violoncello. The lyrics for the chorus are: "Freu - dig be - grü - ßen wir die ed - le Hal - le, wo Kunst und". The piano part continues with a similar rhythmic texture. The score is published by Edition Peters, No. 9817.

R. Wagner, *Tannhäuser und der Sängerkrieg auf Wartburg*, act II, scene IV (piano score), p. 114.

An extremely important factor in the middle part is the right choice of tempo. Fortunately, a closer look at the score and the piano reduction provides us with enough clues. In the stage directions (by Wagner), we read:

Die Sänger treten auf, begrüßen feierlich die Versammlung und werden von den Edelknaben nach ihren Setzen geleitet.

(The singers appear, greet the solemn assembly, and are led to their seats by the pages.)

In addition, Wagner himself, during rehearsals for this opera in 1875, commented on the fragment in question as follows:

Nicht schleppen; immer Marschtempo
(Don't get slower; keep marching pace)

All this information (as in the case of *Lohengrin*, as we will see in the next chapter) is very evocative. Of course, you can use the metronomic tempo (example below), but imagining a large hall full of people watching the arrival of the most important - guests, i.e. singers - poets, participants of the tournament, is much more meaningful. According to Wagner, they are to continue marching, but dignified, majestic, without haste, adequate to their (the highest in this opera) status - artists.

Example No. 3.13

Moderato. $\text{♩} = 60$. *W. Nicht schleppen; immer Marschtempo.*
Die Sänger traten auf, begrüßten feierlich die Versammlung und werden von den Edelknaben nach ihren Sitzen geleitet.



Str.
p sehr gebunden
Edition Peters. 9817

R. Wagner, *Tannhäuser und der Sängerkrieg auf Wartburg*, act II, scene IV (piano score), p. 121.

*Lohengrin*⁶

The last of the so-called romantic operas by Richard Wagner (the next work is *The Rheingold*, the first work of the tetralogy: *The Ring of the Nibelung*) was written in the years 1845 - 1848, and premiered on August 28, 1850 in Weimar under the direction of Franz Liszt. The libretto was written by the composer himself, based on Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Parzival* and on an anonymous medieval poem, *Lohengrin*.

The action of the opera takes place in the 10th century. The German King Henry the Fowler (German: Heinrich der Vogler) arrives in Brabant to gather knights for an expedition to Hungary. Count Friedrich von Telramund explains to the king the reasons for the current local dispute; the recently deceased prince of this region appointed Count Telramund protector of his two children - Gottfried and Elsa. The latter was even intended for the count's wife, but after Gottfried disappeared in unexplained circumstances, Friedrich refused to marry Elsa (she was suspected of murdering her brother) and married Ortrud. Elsa, when questioned by the king, refuses to explain the whole situation (she is accused of fratricide). Shocked, Telramund is ready to defend his good name in a duel, but the king decides to summon the accused to the court of God. After three calls, Elsa's mysterious protector, a character from her dreams, unexpectedly appears - a knight dressed in silver armor who came in a boat drawn by a swan. Defending the heroine's good name, the knight defeats Telramund in a duel and agrees to marry Elsa on one condition - no one must know his name. Then the king announces the exile of the count and the nuptials of the mysterious Knight with his chosen one. While the wedding procession with Elsa heads to the cathedral (the moment described in this chapter), Ortrud and Telramund appear, wanting to prevent the couple from getting married; the evil Ortrud sows a seed of doubt in the future bride's heart - why can't she know the name of her chosen one? However, the situation is brought under control by the king and the wedding takes place. Later, however, the Count appears in the young couple's alcove to murder the Knight. There is a duel in which Friedrich dies

⁶Written on the basis of: P. Kamiński, *Tysiąc i jedna opera...* and R. Kloiber, *Handbuch...*

and as a result the Knight (also because of his wife who asked him about his identity) is forced to reveal his name - Lohengrin. He came from Montsalvat Castle, where his father, Parsifal, guards the Holy Grail - the cup in which the blood of Jesus dying on the cross was collected. Because of revealing a secret, Lohengrin has to leave Brabant. However, he will still be able to solve the mystery of the disappearance of Elsa's brother, Gottfried. It was the evil Ortrud who enchanted the young man into a swan that sailed with Lohengrin. Eventually, Gottfried is disenchanted, Lohengrin returns to where he came from, and the main character falls lifeless into her brother's arms.

***Elsas Brautgang zum Münster. Marche Religieuse de Lohengrin de
Richard Wagner***

The fragment of the opera that interests us is exactly the fourth scene of the second act, when Elsa, together with her wedding retinue, heads to the cathedral, where she is to be married by a mysterious Knight. In stage directions (by the composer), we read:

Ein langer Zug von Frauen in prächtigen Gewändern schreitet aus der Pforte der Kemenate auf den Söller; er wendet sich links auf dem Hauptwege am Palast vorbei und von da wieder nach vorn dem Münster zu, auf dessen Stufen die Zuerstgekommen sich aufstellen.

(A long procession of women in rich robes proceeds from the door of the women's bedroom on the balcony; it heads left onto the main path past the Palace and from there forward to the cathedral, on the steps of which those who arrive first line up.)

It is very important to realize how important this description is. Opera as a genre at that time assumed in the ideal case (and even more so in Wagner's vision) a perfect symbiosis of verbal, visual (theatrical) and musical layers. This is why Wagner wrote his librettos and stage directions himself - his vision of the final "product" was so clear that he wanted to control all aspects of it himself. Therefore, in order to be able to perform his works well, one should also be aware of the tips for screenwriters and directors.

When we are not only guided by the undefined idea of a march (which, to put it simply, this piece is), but we imagine exactly this procession of beautifully dressed women, going up the stairs from the bride's balcony, heading to the cathedral, when we see with the eyes of our imagination the first, perhaps for those most uncontrollable (probably the youngest) girls who have already sat on the steps of the cathedral and are now watching the rest of the procession proudly striding towards the altar, the question of the right pace is no longer a problem.

The best example of such a place in Liszt's work is measure 33 and the following:

Example No. 3.15

The image displays a musical score for piano, consisting of two systems of staves. The first system covers measures 32 to 36, and the second system covers measures 37 to 41. The right hand (treble clef) features a calm, dignified melody with various phrasing slurs and dynamic markings including *mf*, *dimin.*, and *p*. The left hand (bass clef) provides a regular accompaniment with chords and single notes, some marked with a flower symbol. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is common time (C).

F. Liszt, *Elsas Brautgang zum Münster. Marche religieuse de Lohengrin de Richard Wagner*, bars 32-41.

The regular accompaniment of the left hand and the calm, dignified melody of the right perfectly reflect the moment of the procession, which may be passing by the picturesque view of the valley in the distance.

While the main part of the transcription is an attempt to render this procession, Liszt's work is preceded by an introduction that may seem very strange to those unfamiliar with the opera:

Example No. 3.16

The image displays a musical score for piano, consisting of three systems of staves. The first system begins with the tempo marking 'Lento' and the dynamic 'ppp'. The second system continues the piece with 'ppp' dynamics. The third system includes the instruction 'rallentando' and ends with a 'p' dynamic. The score features complex chordal textures with many octaves indicated by '8' and '8va' markings. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is common time (C). The notation includes various musical symbols such as slurs, ties, and articulation marks.

F. Liszt, *Elsas Brautgang zum Münster. Marche religieuse de Lohengrin de Richard Wagner*, bars 1-20.

Within the 17 bars shown above, there are only two chords (A - major and B - major), repeated many times in different registers. This is a reference to the introduction to this scene, originally in the opera:

Example No. 3.17

354

Allmählich etwas langsamer werdend
1330

Fl 1,2
Ob 1,2
Klar (A) 1,2
Fag 1,2
Hr (D) 1,2

(Sie schreiten nach vorn, indem sie durch die willig zurückweichenden Edlen eine breite Gasse bis zu den Stufen des Münsters bilden, wo sie dann sich selbst aufstellen.)

S 1
S 2
A 1
A 2

Allmählich etwas langsamer werdend
1330

Viol I
Viol II
Br
Vc
Kb

Bogen p
pizz
133

R. Wagner, *Lohengrin*, act II, scene III (full score), bars 1326-1333.

Example No. 3.18

355

Bereits ziemlich langsam

1335

p *più p*

Fl 1,2

Ob 1,2

EH (F)

Klar (A) 1,2

Fag 1

Hr (D) 1,2

Hfe

Viol I

Viol II

Br

geteilt *p* *più p*

(in B)

(in Es)

(Vier andere Edel-)

Bereits ziemlich langsam

1340

1345

Fl 2,3

Ob 1,2

EH (F)

Fag 1

Hr (Es) 1,2

Hfe

p *pp* *più p*

knaben treten gemessen und feierlich aus der Tür der Kemenate auf den Söller und stellen sich daselbst auf, um den Zug der Frauen, den sie erwarten, zu geleiten.)

1340

1345

Viol I

Viol II

Br

R. Wagner, *Lohengrin*, act II, scene III (full score), bars 1334-1345.

Bars 1332 - 1337 of the score correspond to bars 2 - 3 and 7 - 8 of the transcription (in the key of A - major). Liszt repeats the same phrase in a semitone higher in order to modulate it to the appropriate key, like Wagner, but he is not completely faithful to the original - in the next phrase he uses the initial 6 bars to achieve greater logic and consistency in the architecture of the introduction. Bars 1 - 2 (in Liszt) have no equivalent in this fragment of the opera, but refer to the introduction (described by the composer as: Vorspiel, i.e. something that is before (Ger.: vor) the action (Ger.: Spiel):

LOHENGRIN

Richard Wagner
(1813-1883)

1,2
Flöten

3

Oboen 1,2

Englischhorn (F)

Klarinetten (A) 1,2

Baßklarinette (A)

Fagotte 1,2,3

1,2 (E)
Hörner

3,4 (D)

Trompeten (D) 1,2,3

1,2 Tenor
Posaunen

3 Baß

Baßtuba

Pauken

Becken

4 einzelne Violinen

Langsam

Durch Flageo-
lett hervorzu-
bringen

sämtliche
übrigen Violinen
in 4 gleich stark
besetzten Partien

Bratschen

Violoncelli

Kontrabässe

Edited by John Deathridge and Klaus Döge
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The bars of the score we are interested in are 1 - 2 (3 - 4 is a repetition of the previous phrase). Liszt precisely transcribed the rhythm and the corresponding chord registers, but this is unfortunately all that can be done with the notation when writing for the piano. The rest is up to the artist's imagination. And how much to imagine! Purely analytically, the first chord is played by the violins, both first and second, but without the four soloists, in four evenly divided voices. They start very gently, in *pp* dynamics, at the same time starting a crescendo from *pp* dynamics to (only!) *pp*. For the third measure in the first bar they are joined by flutes and oboes, also starting from *pp* dynamics (so a bit quieter than the violins, because they are already in the middle of the crescendo between *pp* and *p*!). Wind instruments should also play with a crescendo, but we do not know to what dynamics (*p*? *mp*?). In the second measure they are joined by four violinists - soloists (usually the first stands of the first and second violins), playing notes an octave higher, using harmonics. For the first eighth note, the rest of the violins should continue to sound, and the brass instruments stay until the third beat.

So much happens in two bars! It is definitely not an easy task for a pianist to be able to at least come close to what Wagner achieves in the orchestra, but knowing how many colors and details are hidden in these three chords, you can spend long hours discovering the color possibilities of the piano and acoustics of the hall .

Another important element that may cause some difficulties for the performer throughout the piece is the rendering of the appropriate tension despite the slow tempo. As we can see in the musical example below, Wagner suggested a tempo to Liszt: a quarter note equal to 63 beats per minute. I myself, during the recording, opted for a slightly more lively tempo, due to the obvious limitations of the piano; the biggest problem is to keep the singing, plastic phrase, played legato and cantabile. In the orchestra, Wagner entrusted it to wind instruments, which have a large impact on the sound after it is extracted. Unfortunately, the piano does not have such possibilities (such as, for example, the realization of dynamic markings in the first measure of the

score, i.e. a crescendo on a long note), so the performer only has to make such an impression on the listener, while maintaining the calm and dignified nature of the piece.

Example No. 3.19

Vierte Szene
(Ein langer Zug von Frauen in prächtigen Gewändern schreitet langsam aus der Pforte der Kemenate auf den Söller; er wendet sich links auf dem Hauptwege am Palas vorbei und von da wieder nach vorn dem Münster zu, auf dessen Stufen die Zuerstgekommenen sich aufstellen.)

Langsam und feierlich *

1350

Fl 1 2 3

Ob 1 2

EH (F)

Klar (B) 1 2

Baßkl (B)

Fag 1 2

Hr 1 (Es) 3 (B)

R. Wagner, *Lohengrin*, act II, scene IV (full score), bars 1346-1353.

It is worth noting that in the original work, Wagner also introduces a chorus which Liszt ignored (from measure 50 in the transcription):

Example No. 3.20

147

Chor I. Ge - seg - net soll sie schrei - ten, die lang in

Chor II. Ge - seg - net soll sie

De - - mut litt; Gott mö - ge sie ge - lei - ten,

schrei - ten, die lang in De - mut litt; Gott

R. Wagner, *Lohengrin*, act II, scene IV (piano score), p. 147.

In addition to the "instrumental" role, complementing the timbre (the main melodic thought is in the orchestra), the choir also comments on the events taking place on stage:

Gesegnet soll sie schreiten

Die lang in Demut litt!

Gott möge sie geleiten

Und hüten ihren Schritt! -

Sie naht, die Engelgleiche,

Von keuscher Glut entbrannt!

Heil dir, du Tugendreiche!

Heil Elsa von Brabant!

May she be blessed

Who long suffered in humility!

Let God guide her

And protects her steps!

Approaches like angels

Burning with virtuous heat!

Glory to you, O rich in virtue!

Good luck to Elsa from Brabant!

Liszt, in order to achieve the dramatic unity of the work, also changed the ending of his work - where Wagner interrupts the procession with the appearance of Ortrud with new, dramatic music (the story itself is completed, but at the very end of the second act, after the appearance of the king who takes control of the situation), Liszt continues the story, "adhering" to Elsa's procession the end of the Introduction (German: Vorspiel) to the opera (from the third bar of the example below):

Example No. 3.21

8

Trp. Pos.

dim.

p sehr ruhig

pizz p

Str.

W. Ganz zart; ohne Ausdruck.

Trp. Pos.

Str.

pp

Trp. Pos.

VI.

VI. u. Fl.

VI. allein.

W. Ohne Pause weitergehen.

Edition Peters

9522

R. Wagner, *Lohengrin*, Vorspiel (piano score), p. 7.

The only difference is the key - the overture is in the key of A major, the key of Lohengrin. Liszt transposes it to the key of Elsa - E - major (in this key Elsa sings her famous first aria: Einsam in trüben Tagen).

*Tristan und Isolde*⁷

Tristan und Isolde (Tristan and Isolde) by Richard Wagner is one of the most important works for the development of European music in the second half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. First of all, due to its complicated harmony (already included in the introduction), it was an inspiration for such composers as Richard Strauss, Gustav Mahler, Arnold Schoenberg and Alban Berg. Other artists (e.g. Debussy, Ravel, Stravinsky) who rejected this style did so consciously. One can even risk a statement that the vast majority of artists of the second half of the 19th century had to somehow take a stance on this work; either accept them or reject them.

The opera (or, as the composer himself described it, the plot in three scenes - *Handlung in drei Aufzügen*) was created in the years 1857 - 1859, premiered on June 10, 1865 in Munich, mainly thanks to the support of the Bavarian king, Ludwig II Wittelsbach (who later financially supported the uprising Bayreuth Festival Palace. The libretto was based on the medieval legend of Tristan and Isolde by Gottfried of Strasbourg (who died around 1210).

The action of the opera takes place in an unspecified time in the Middle Ages. The ship of Tristan, vassal of King Mark of Cornwall, sails from Ireland back to Cornwall. On board, in addition to Tristan, there are also the Irish princess Isolde, destined for the king, and her confidante, Brangena. Isolde is distraught over her fate and decides to commit suicide, killing Tristan as well; her mother prepared for her a box full of magical potions before the journey, among them - the potion of death. Isolde offers Tristan the "cup of reconciliation"; the couple drinks the magic liquid, but does not die - it was Brangena, out of pity for her mistress, who replaced the poison with a love potion.

In the second act, already at the court of King Mark, Isolde waits for the night to come to meet her beloved. While Brangena watches in the tower, watching for intruders, the

⁷ Written on the basis of P. Kamiński, *Tysiąc i jedna opera...* and R. Kloiber, *Handbuch...*

couple can finally be together; the lovers throw themselves into each other's arms and sing one of the most famous love duets in the history of opera. Their meeting is interrupted by the arrival of the entire court, including King Mark. It was Melot (another vassal of the king), secretly in love with Isolde, who betrayed his best friend Tristan and revealed their secret to everyone. There is a fight between the young vassals, in which the badly wounded Tristan falls on the shoulders of his companion, Kurwenal. In the third act, in Tristan's castle in Karol, we see a dying hero and Kurwenal watching over him. The latter sent for Isolde to Cornwall to brighten up her lover's last moments. After a long time, the ship with Isolde arrives; enthusiastic Tristan cannot contain himself, he gets up, tears his bandages in ecstasy and when his beloved appears in the chamber, he falls lifeless into her arms. But Isolde's ship was followed by King Mark's ship; which has just landed; Kurwenal, learning about this, runs out of the room and kills Melot, who came with the king, in a fight; but eventually it falls. Meanwhile, Marek, having learned the truth about the love potion from Brangena, was going to agree to the relationship between his vassal and the Irish princess, but he arrives too late. Isolde, no longer aware of what is happening around, confesses her love to Tristan in front of his dead body and slumps to the ground (lays down next to her beloved's body and probably dies).

Isoldens Liebestod. Schluss - Szene aus Richard Wagners „Tristan und Isolde“

Transcription of Franz Liszt, Isoldens Liebestod. Schluss - Szene aus Richard Wagners "Tristan und Isolde" (Isolde's love death. The final scene from Richard Wagner's Tristan and Isolde) was probably created in 1867, and was published in 1868 (and again in 1875 in the collection of the Breitkopf & Härtel publishing house together with seven other transcriptions from Wagner's operas).

Interestingly, even before the premiere in 1865, in order to popularize the opera, Wagner often performed fragments of the work; first the prelude itself, and then (for the first time on February 26, 1863) in the form we know today - the Introduction and The Death of Isolde (Vorspiel und Isoldens Liebestod). Interestingly, the orchestral part completely coincides with the original, but the part of Isolde is missing - this piece in the concert version was (and usually is now) completely instrumental .

The very beginning of Liszt's transcription poses some difficulties, both analytically and musically. While in the previously mentioned concert version, Wagner changes the ending of the prelude in order to be able to go directly to the end of the opera in a more logical way, Liszt in the opening four bars of the work does not use either the original version of the opera or the concert version, they are a completely original idea Hungarian composer.

Example No. 3.22

Isoldens Liebestod

Schluss-Szene aus Richard Wagners „Tristan und Isolde“

Erschienen 1868 · Revidierte Ausgabe 1875

F. Liszt, *Isoldens Liebestod*, bars 1-7.

On the other hand, however, the discussed bars cannot be denied stylistic cohesion with the rest of the work: determining the tempo (*sehr langsam* - very slow), register, dynamics, accents, harmony (at the very beginning minor chords with a sixth - very common in this opera), far-reaching modulations (an unusual combination of chords in B minor, F minor and D minor, a tritone relation often found in the famous duet from the second act) perfectly imitate Wagner's style and are both a very good gesture that opens the transcription and an excellent introduction to the mood of the work .

As in the abridged concert version of the opera mentioned earlier, Liszt uses only the instrumental, orchestral layer of the work, with one exception.

Example No. 3.23

The image shows a musical score for F. Liszt's 'Isoldens Liebestod', measures 8-10. The score is in B minor, 3/4 time. It features a piano (ppp) and a crescendo (cresc.) marking. The right hand has a melodic line with a red bracket highlighting measures 9 and 10. The left hand has a tremolo (sempre trem.) marking. The score is numbered 8, 9, and 10.

F. Liszt, *Isoldens Liebestod*, t. 8-10.

The notes marked in red above (we see them in bars 9 - 10) are the moment when Liszt reaches for the notes appearing only in the soprano part (for comparison, the orchestral score below; text: Seht ihr, Freunde, Säht ihr's nicht?) . One wonders why Liszt reaches the part of Isolde only at this point, and in the rest of the transcription he focuses on the orchestra, as if the vocal line could not exist? The almost entirely instrumental treatment of the work (as in the concert version) by the author of the Sonata in B minor can be easily explained by the character of the soprano part; it is relatively uninteresting, rarely contains the most important melodic line (which is always in the orchestra), and when it does, it is doubled instrumentally. However, Liszt used this part for a short time as - in my opinion - a diversification of the melodic line; so far (from the fifth bar), Wagner used only a two-bar melody, which he repeated many times. The next, third time was too monotonous for Liszt (and rightly so), which is why he decided to depart from the rule for a moment in favor of a beautiful, varied phrase.

684

R. Wagner, *Tristan und Isolde*, act III (full score), p. 634.

Despite the resignation from presenting the vocal line in the transcription, its text is - as in the previously analyzed transcriptions, an indispensable element of the work, no less important than determining the tempo or dynamics:

<i>Mild und leise</i>	<i>How gentle and quiet</i>
<i>Wie er lächelt,</i>	<i>He is smiling,</i>
<i>Wie das Auge</i>	<i>What an eye</i>
<i>Hold er öffnet:</i>	<i>Beautifully opens:</i>
<i>seht ihr, Freunde?</i>	<i>do you see this, friends?</i>
<i>Säht ihr's nicht?</i>	<i>Can't you see it?</i>
<i>Immer lichter</i>	<i>How brighter it is</i>
<i>wie er leuchtet,</i>	<i>he shines</i>
<i>Stern-umstrahlet</i>	<i>A star shining around him</i>
<i>hoch sich hebt?</i>	<i>Does it float high?</i>
<i>Seht ihr's nicht?</i>	<i>Can't you see it?</i>
<i>Wie das Herz ihm</i>	<i>Like his heart to him</i>
<i>mutig schwillt,</i>	<i>boldly swells,</i>
<i>voll und hehr</i>	<i>full and sublime</i>
<i>im Busen quillt?</i>	<i>does the breast swell?</i>
<i>Wie den Lippen,</i>	<i>Like lips</i>
<i>wonnig mild,</i>	<i>deliciously gentle,</i>
<i>süßer Atem</i>	<i>sweet breath</i>
<i>sanft entweht?</i>	<i>softly flies away?</i>
<i>Freunde! Seht!</i>	<i>Friends! look!</i>
<i>Fühlt und seht ihr's nicht?</i>	<i>Can't you feel and see it?</i>
<i>Höre ich nur</i>	<i>Can only I hear</i>
<i>diese Weise,</i>	<i>this melody</i>
<i>die so wunder-</i>	<i>which so</i>
<i>voll und leise,</i>	<i>silently and quietly,</i>
<i>Wonne klagend,</i>	<i>mourning bliss,</i>
<i>Alles sagend,</i>	<i>saying everything</i>

*mild versöhnend
aus ihm tönend,
in mich dringet,
auf sich schwinget,
hold erhallend
um mich klinget?
Heller schallend,
mich umwallend,
sind es Wellen
sanfter Lüfte ?
Sind es Wolken
wonniger Düfte?
Wie sie schwellen,
mich umrauschen,
Soll ich atmen,
soll ich lauschen?
Soll ich schlürfen,
untertauchen?
Süß in Düften
Mich verhauchen?
In dem wogenden Schwall,
in dem tönenden Schall,
in des Welt - Atems
wehendem All -,
ertrinken -,
versinken-,
unbewußt -,
höchste Lust!*

*gently reconciling,
sounding from him
presses on me
ascends
it sounds just as good
and resounds around me?
sounding brighter
walking around me
are they waves?
mild air?
Are they clouds
delicious smell?
When they swell
are buzzing around me
I should breathe them
should i listen to them?
I should drink them
dive?
Sweet in fragrances
die?
In this rippling sound
in that sound of sound
in the breath of the world
fluttering cosmos-,
drown-,
sink-,
unconsciously-,
ultimate passion!*

Even a cursory reading of the libretto gives us a very good idea of the nature of the music. Once again, it is worth recalling that in all his stage works, Wagner first wrote

the lyrics and only then composed the music for them. Also in this case, he composed exactly the music that the mood of the text conveys - passionate, irregular, hysterical, full of expression, almost without respite. The words translated above are so poetically nuanced that in many places they allow for "support" from the music, i.e. - as very often in songs - certain phrasal, dynamic, agogic treatments that follow the meaning of the text.

One of them, chosen from many, is a completely trivial dynamic effect (which I also consciously take into account when performing this piece). It is - despite the duration of the diminuendo - playing a subito pianissimo chord in the second part of the bar (example 3.25) on the word *leise*, which in Polish means: quietly:

Example No. 3.25

317

The musical score for Example No. 3.25 is from R. Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*, act III, page 317. It features a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line includes the lyrics "voll und lei- - - - se, Won -" and "ne - - - kla - - gend, al - - les -". The piano accompaniment features various dynamics and markings such as "dim.", "pizz p", "pp", "V. Orch.", "Harfe.", "Viol. II", "Hob.", "Str. Holzbl. u. Hörn.", "Viol. I", "Viol. II", "Well.", "Bkl. u. Kb.", and "sempre pp". The score is written in G major and 3/4 time.

R. Wagner, *Tristan und Isolde*, act III (piano score), p. 317.

The above example from the piano reduction corresponds to measures 36 - 39 of the transcription:

Example No. 3.26

The musical score for F. Liszt's 'Isoldens Liebestod' (measures 36-40) is presented in a piano reduction format. The score is written for voice and piano. The key signature is G major (one sharp) and the time signature is 4/4. The vocal line is in the treble clef, and the piano accompaniment is in the bass clef. The score includes various dynamics and articulations: 'diminuendo' and 'più piano' in measure 36; 'ppp' and 'un poco espressivo' in measure 37; 'pp' and 'sempre dolcissimo' in measure 38; and 'ppp' in measure 39. The score also includes fingerings, slurs, and a repeat sign in measure 39.

F. Liszt, *Isoldens Liebestod*, bars 36-40.

Another immediately noticeable detail to consider when playing a piece originally intended for singers is the breath. In the above example, it is unacceptable to take a breath during the words. You can choose the air after singing the word: Wonne, and preferably after Wonne klagend (i.e. only after the comma). Therefore, the performer, in my opinion also in the transcription, should in no case slow down in this fragment (bars 37 - 39), but on the contrary - slightly and very subtly speed up to make it easier for the singer to sing this phrase freely.

Liszt leaves the performer to choose the version (ossia) in two places in his transcription. It is worth taking a look at them, so that this choice is dictated by the fidelity to the score, and not the pianist's convenience. The first one is measure 32:

Example No. 3.27

The image displays a musical score for Franz Liszt's 'Isoldens Liebestod', specifically bars 30 through 33. The score is written for piano and is in G major (indicated by two sharps). The first system covers bars 30 and 31, showing a treble staff with a melodic line and a bass staff with a tremolo accompaniment. The second system covers bars 32 and 33, featuring a more complex texture with multiple voices in both hands. Performance markings include 'p trem.' in bar 30, 'tre corde' in bar 31, 'una corda' and 'pp' in bar 32, and 'arpeggiando' in bar 33. An 'Ossia' section is provided for bar 32, featuring a tremolo in the left hand. The score also includes dynamic markings like 'rinforz.' and 'do molto'.

F. Liszt, *Isoldens Liebestod*, bars 30-33.

In the following example of the score (the presented fragment corresponds to bars 29 - 32 of the transcription) we can see that the left-hand passages proposed by Liszt have no basis in the original - they can of course be treated as a color element, but in my opinion it would be an abuse. The second version, ossia with a tremolo in the left hand, corresponds much more to reality; besides, it allows for a better emphasis on the change of harmony at the end of the bar and a better crescendo until the last moment. That is why I decided to choose this version.

Example No. 3.28

639

Gr. Fl. I.

Hob.

Klar. in A.

Engl. H. in F.

Hr. in E.

Fag.

Basskl. in A.

Pos.

Pk.

Hrfo.

Viol. I.

Viol. II.

Br.

I.

Vol.

K.B.

From - do! Seht! Führt und seht ihr's nicht?

R. Wagner, *Tristan und Isolde*, act III (full score), p. 639.

Another place where Liszt leaves the choice of performer are bars 65 - 68 (the place in the score below corresponds to bars 64 - 66 of the transcription), which was changed

during the revision of the work in 1874. This is the most important climax of the piece (also because of the lyrics: in des Welt Athems wehendem All - in the breath of the world, the fluttering cosmos) and the difference between the ossia and the main version is (each time) the beginning of the bar. A look at the score reveals that the main version is much closer to the truth, and that's what I would stay with. Admittedly, additional virtuosity, especially at such a moment, would be perfectly justified, but the repeated chords correspond rhythmically directly to the parts of the first and second violins. In addition, the second version (ossia) rhythmically disturbs the entire skeleton, which is not found in the score, which clearly indicates the first option.

Example No. 3.29

The image displays a musical score for Example No. 3.29, which corresponds to bars 65-68 of F. Liszt's *Isoldens Liebestod*. The score is presented in two systems, each containing a vocal line (labeled 'Ossia') and a piano accompaniment. The key signature is G major (one sharp) and the time signature is 2/4. The piano part is characterized by dense, rapid chordal textures, often marked with 'sf' (sforzando) and '8' (octave). The vocal line features a 'ten.' (tenor) part and includes a 'sf' marking. The score includes various performance instructions such as '8 ad lib.' and '8' markings, indicating specific rhythmic or articulation changes. The notation is complex, with many beamed notes and dynamic markings.

F. Liszt, *Isoldens Liebestod*, bars 65-68.

Example No. 3.30

651

Kl. Fl.

I.

Gr. Fl.

II.

Hob.

Klar. in A.

Engl. H.

in F.

Hr.

in E.

Fag.

Ba. Skl. in A.

Trp. I in E.

Pos.

E. T.

Yk.

Hrfe.

I.

Viol.

II.

Br.

I.

Viol.

K.B.

B. Mächtigste Bewegung beider Arme nach oben und in die Weite, während der Körper zu sinken beginnt.

Schall, in der Welt. A - - - - - tem

R. Wagner, *Tristan und Isolde*, act III (full score), p. 651.

As a conclusion, it is worth recalling a detail which - despite being aware of it - I did not decide on when creating this work. These are the last two bars of the transcription (chords in bars 82 - 83):

Example No. 3.31

The image displays a musical score for Example No. 3.31, which corresponds to bars 79-83 of F. Liszt's 'Isoldens Liebestod'. The score is written for piano and features a treble and bass staff. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#), and the time signature is 4/4. The notation includes various musical markings: 'trem.' (tremolo) in bar 79, 'pp' (pianissimo) in bar 80, 'morendo' (diminuendo) in bar 81, and 'ppp' (pianississimo) in bar 82. The score concludes with a double bar line in bar 83. The bass staff in bar 82 shows a complex chordal structure with a tremolo effect, while the treble staff shows a series of chords and a final cadence in bar 83.

F. Liszt, *Isoldens Liebestod*, bars 79-83.

Example No. 3.32

rallent. 655

The musical score is for R. Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*, act III, page 655. It features a full orchestra and vocal parts. The woodwind section includes Flutes I and II, Oboes, Clarinet in A, English Horn, Bassoon, Bass Clarinet in A, Trumpet in E, Horn in F, Horn in E, Trombone, Bass Trombone, and Percussion. The string section includes Violins I and II, Viola, Cello, and Double Bass. The score includes various dynamics such as *pp* (pianissimo) and *morendo* (fading). A red circle highlights a specific passage in the oboe part, indicating a bowing technique. The score includes the tempo marking *rallent.* (rallentando) and the page number 655.

R. Wagner - *Tristan und Isolde*, act III (full score), p. 655.

In the score, these two chords should be separated from each other by the breath of wind instruments, but not all - Wagner writes very clearly (marked in red) the bows in oboes,

which should sound during the resulting short rest between bars. This is a very beautiful effect and, although feasible on the piano, it is not as attractive as in the orchestra. And this should also be emphasized at the very end of the considerations about transcriptions - the piano, objectively speaking, does not have as many articulation, dynamic or color means as the orchestra (i.e. all instruments at once that are in the composition). This should always be taken into account when dealing with transcriptions and be able to draw a line at the right moment when you should try to reflect a given effect, and when something is theoretically correct and faithful to the original, but sounds definitely worse.

III. Conclusion and recapitulation

Having looked at individual works in such detail, it is very easy to feel overwhelmed by such a large variety of material, although the analyzed works do not only belong to one era, they were even created in a relatively short time interval! The premiere of Lucia took place in 1835, and less than 25 years later (1859), Richard Wagner finished writing his musical drama - Tristan and Isolde. Of course, such a great diversity of the described operas results from the different cultural circles from which the authors themselves came (the bel canto tradition, the French Grand Opéra and the German romantic opera, and then musical drama), but it is certainly astonishing that these styles coexisted in this same time (after all, one generation in the history of music can be described as a short time).

Despite this diversity, some general conclusions can be drawn from the analyses. All the works in question are characterized, on the one hand, by fidelity to the original (although to a different degree), and on the other, we can easily find in them the originality and personal style of Franz Liszt. Yes, Cavatina and the Funeral March from Lucia di Lammermoor are much more distant from the original than Isolde's Death of Amor from Tristan and Isolde (these works were created in different periods of his work, as mentioned in chapter one), but in both cases we can see the incredible respect that Liszt felt towards the authors of the original works. Both transcriptions from Donizetti's opera are maintained entirely in a bel canto style, even the virtuoso cadenzas added by Liszt are in the places intended for this purpose, and the introduction to the sextet (Andante final) is so confusingly similar to Italian recitative that it could easily be attributed to Donizetti.

At the same time, works in which the text of the original is treated very literally, such as Meyerbeer's Pastorale or Isolde's Amorous Death, are also idiomatically pianistic works - it is enough to mention the clarinet introduction in the former and Liszt's pedaling and dynamic hints or the chord culmination in Isoldens Liebestod (bars 65 - 68) - both

convenient for the pianist and excellently using the instrument's capabilities and reflecting the power of the orchestra's sound. There are, of course, many more examples of fidelity to the original and originality: the elegant, closed form of *The Entrance of the Guests* from *Tannhäuser* and *Elsas Brautgang zum Münster* from Wagner's *Lohengrin*, while the musical thought (due to the opera's libretto) is interrupted and directed in a completely new direction; literal definitions of the instrumentation - quasi trombe in *The Entrance of the Guests* and quasi arpa in *Cavatina* from Robert Devl; a dramatic, four-bar introduction to *The Death of Isolde*, not taken directly from the opera, yet fulfilling the function of an overture and imitating the style of the opera so perfectly; virtuosic and at the same time well-rendering the sound of the orchestra accompaniment in the second part of the *Andante* final (after the middle term of the term), etc. This combination of respect for fellow composers by preserving the style of the original (and of course knowledge of the orchestra and voice) and at the same time intelligent, creative, the imaginative and imaginative approach to the transcription process itself meant that the works in question are not only arrangements or piano extracts of operas, but independent works of art.

While working on these pieces, I also noticed a few regularities that later helped me to develop the next musical material faster and more effectively. Due to the nature of the genre (and the fact that the original is orchestral music, most often accompanied by a human voice, and thus - the libretto), there are several important elements that are very important in the work on the preparation of the work. To a very small extent (but only at the research/analytical level!) one can even talk about a kind of scheme.

First of all, familiarization with the original should not take place only at the level of superficial familiarization with the fragment of the scene or aria that interests us. Of course, general knowledge of the history of music is important, but it is the penetration into the libretto and the discovery of the meaning behind the work that significantly deepens the understanding of the style and character of the works. For example, I cannot imagine a pianist's responsible approach to *The Death of Isolde* without not only knowing the entire libretto of the opera (especially the famous love duet from the

second act), but without at least a minimal understanding of Schopenhauer's philosophy! The same applies to the form - in the case of Andante final from Lucia di Lammermoor, the knowledge that the introduction to the sextet is by Liszt, but refers to motifs from the opera, will make the performer consciously treat this fragment with greater "theatrical fantasy" (which in my opinion, in that case it is definitely musically appropriate).

Secondly, very often the indicator of a good tempo in a vocal piece is the analysis of the singer's part in terms of breath and text. If a phrase is clearly intended to be sung without additional air-breathing (we saw this with Isoldens Liebestod), or a certain passage cannot be sung too quickly for reasons of intelligibility (e.g. Pastorale. Appel aux armes), then there are clear limits to feasibility, both from the lower (breath) and upper (text) pages. Of course, some performers have an incredibly long breath, and others have an exceptionally efficient articulation apparatus, but a certain "common sense" or intuition will certainly suffice in most cases.

The third important element is the instrumentation. Here, careful and careful listening to the recording is the right idea, especially for people who do not deal with scores on a daily basis - imagining the sound of an orchestra without many years of practice is rather difficult for inexperienced musicians. The analysis of good workmanship not only solves this problem, it also suggests the right proportions of the sound. Some obvious suggestions were included in the score by Liszt himself (the aforementioned quasi arpa and quasi trombe), but other details (e.g. the accompaniment in the sextet from Lucia or the introduction to Elsas Brautgang from Lohengrin) require some awareness on the part of the performer (preferably with the help of a recording and score).

At the very end, a general (perhaps the most important) remark, also explaining those details which - despite being aware of them - I did not decide on. For when we undertake the transcription of Franz Liszt (opera or otherwise), we perform a work by Franz Liszt all the time. Yes, inspired or written on the basis of another work, but it is still this transcription, not that or that opera. Having a lot of knowledge about the

elements listed above, you can very easily fall into exaggeration and - instead of artistically performing a piece of music - scientifically present your knowledge about the work. Of course, this knowledge is important because it enriches the interpretation and broadens the context, but in the end it is the good taste (fr. *bon goût*) of the performer that should determine the final shape of the piece. Yes, it will be a kind of compromise between the Urtext approach to the musical text (so common today) and the artist's sensitivity, but ultimately, during a concert, the listener is less interested in the number of treatises on articulation read by the pianist, and more in what he hears, i.e. the music .

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