

**LISZT'S SONGS:
A REFLECTION OF THE MAN
AND
A MICROCOSM OF HIS MUSICAL STYLE**

by

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SUMMARY

“Liszt’s music, unlike that of Mozart, projects the man.

With rare immediacy, it gives away the character
of the composer....”

(Brendel 1986, 3)

The purpose of this study is to examine Liszt’s song genre from an historical and stylistic standpoint as a reflection of Liszt’s ongoing personality and style development.

To this end the following will be presented:

- an overview of Liszt’s life circumstances which reflect his personality development
- a chronological classification of Liszt’s song genre
- the songs viewed historically as a reflection of the man
- characteristics in the revisions of the songs which reveal Liszt’s ongoing developing style
- a study of the development of Liszt’s harmonic and tonal language as agents of colour and textual imagery

Liszt’s song oeuvre will be studied in relation to the man himself in order to reveal his motives, his values, the experiences that moved him, and the ways in which he reproduced them in music.

Key terms:

Liszt’s songs; chronological classification; historical perspective; character of each song; revisions; ossia passages; style development; tone painting; harmonic features; tonal development;

INTRODUCTION

Liszt's life is perhaps the most colourful of the romantic composers, and has supplied material for countless factual and fictional biographical studies. Most of the accounts of Liszt which were written during and for long after his lifetime "seem to have been written with great subjectivity and inaccuracy born of too hasty statement" (Howard 1976, 2). My aim is firstly to present a brief biographical portrait of Liszt, embodying sketches of his personality and intellectual interests which I have drawn from musicologists' accounts written within the last few decades and devoid of subjective bias which did much to discredit Liszt during and for long after his lifetime. Reference is made to Alan Walker's two-volume biography which is the most comprehensive account presently available of Liszt's life until 1861. My intention is to show that the picture which emerges of the man Liszt, is reflected in his numerous songs which have been disregarded for so long.

In order to see any correlation, a classification of the songs must be set out in as strict a chronological order as possible. My classification includes alternative versions, transcription and arrangements of songs and dates of publication, together with each song's reference to the volume number of the Breitkopf & Härtel edition of Liszt's works (Facsimile ed. 1966). Based on Humphrey Searle's classification in the Grove catalogue (Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 5th and 6th editions) and on Derek Watson's catalogue (Watson 1989, 343-347), this classification is intended for easy access to the chronology of Liszt's numerous songs and their publication.

A separate section details as much historical information regarding the composition of each song as could be gathered from the many and varied sources available and includes the theme of each text and the mood of each song. My aim here is to reveal the extent to which extra-musical circumstances and factors in Liszt's life determined the qualities of each song.

A section is devoted to Liszt's compositional and stylistic development based on the examination of the revisions of his songs in comparison with the originals, and some views of the rationale behind the revisions of Liszt's songs are discussed in order to reveal his intentions.

Liszt's individual and much discussed approach to harmony and tonality is clearly evident in his songs as is his technique of tone painting. A section devoted to his harmonic tone painting in the songs is approached from a chronological perspective to reveal Liszt's ongoing harmonic development within his tone painting technique. This process of growth occurs within extended tonality in which chromatic elements appear freely.

By discussing the style development of the songs through the study of their revisions and by focusing on the ways in which Liszt's harmonies are used in his tone painting, my aim is to show a correlation between my findings and musicologists' accounts of Liszt's general style development. This will demonstrate the songs representativeness of Liszt's general musical style development.

The conclusion integrates the picture of Liszt, the man and his music, as seen in his songs.

CHAPTER 1

LISZT - THE MAN

Some historians deduce a composer's personality from his music, while others place most of the emphasis on the life rather than the music. With Liszt a paradox emerges on both sides. Historical accounts reveal a complex character, created by what Whittall (1987, 84) describes as an evident conflict of ideals and instincts "of the kind that is difficult for the historian to reconstruct without creating an atmosphere of pure melodrama". These accounts reveal another conflict in his life - that between performance and composition. The deeply committed artist, the flamboyant showman and Romantic hero, the lover of women and connoisseur of aristocratic company, the charitable supporter of struggling artists, the contemplative deeply religious seeker after humility and truth, all describe Liszt. "Do not confuse yourself with too many details", said Liszt to Lina Ramann, his first thorough biographer, (in Taylor 1986, xiii) "the story of my life is far more a matter of invention than of documentation."

His works, ranging from "the ascetic to the sumptuous, from the trivial and profane to the sublime and spiritual" (Watson 1989, 167), display his sheer productivity as a composer. Coupled with the prominence of transcriptions and paraphrases of other men's music, his works have, according to Whittall (1987, 86), served to reinforce suspicions of many historians and critics, that he could not have been either very serious or very discriminating in his creative work. Liszt's work might also be described as the fragments of a diary jotted down from life, writes Walker (1989, 22), with life and music engaged in constant, creative dialogue. "From this confusion of opposites descends the bewildering contradiction of verdict on the man and his music" (Taylor 1986, xiii).

Judging by the diversity of styles in his works, it seems that Liszt must have expressed all the aspects of his personality in his music. Searle (in Sadie 1980, Vol.11, 33) describes Liszt as being “certainly a mass of contradictions, but he nevertheless remained a unique and comprehensive personality with a strength of vision that lasted all his life”. He points out that it has become increasingly clear that, in spite of his inconsistencies, he remained the same character throughout, one of a unique power, strength and originality.(ibid.)

Research on Liszt focuses mainly on three main areas about which much has been written.

- Liszt’s personal life; dominated by his relationships with Countess Marie d’Agoult, from whom he finally separated in 1847 after she bore him three children, and Princess Carolyne Marie Sayn-Wittgenstein; punctuated by relationships with other women.
- Liszt’s life as the professional performer, both as virtuoso pianist and later as conductor.
- Liszt’s works and the circumstances surrounding them.

Careful study of historical accounts reveals a clearer picture of Liszt’s personality development to which his periods and style of composition correspond. His life and his creation are described as being inseparable from each other. As long as he toured Europe as a concert pianist he composed mostly piano music designed as a vehicle for his virtuosity. These virtuoso years until 1847, reveal a man of quite extraordinary beauty as we can see from his portraits, a hero of the Parisian salons since childhood. He was dazzlingly successful, earning enormous revenues and spending them as lavishly. However, according to Brendel (1986, 6), although modern historians like to call Liszt a showman, “capable of behaving ostentatiously during the most hectic years of his virtuoso career, throwing his kid gloves to the floor of the stage, and staring at the ladies while playing”, this label is undeserved as a general characterisation of his art and personality.

From his mid-teens Liszt began an extensive self-improvement programme in order to overcome his lack of any formal education and to make himself into something more than a pianist. Young Liszt 'devoured' at random everything that he heard discussed. He had an insatiable thirst for knowledge. He could converse on almost all subjects. France's renowned popular poet and songwriter, Pierre-Jean de Béranger (1780 - 1857), who provided the text for one of Liszt's songs, is quoted as saying (in Suttoni 1989, xxviii-xxix) "There was nothing which he had not touched and tried; there was a luminous spirit which enchanted me, whether it rose to fervent and mystical eloquence on the highest themes, or sparkled in the pleasantries of social life."

Liszt had no lack of female admirers, and at the age of twenty three he began an affair with Marie d'Agoult which produced three children. When this ended he began a second serious relationship with Princess Carolyne Sayn-Wittgenstein which was to last for many years. Liszt continued to flout conventional morality throughout his life, enjoying short-lived relationships with many women, earning the title of lady-killer. But Walker (in Rosen 1984, 17) defends Liszt against this charge. He believes that Liszt genuinely liked female company, and had a great respect for female intuition and intelligence. He suggests that this is perhaps why Liszt was surrounded by so many female admirers, both young and old, throughout his long life. Liszt treated women as his intellectual equals. It is the conviction of one Liszt scholar, Emile Haraszti (in Lowens 1979, 5), that Liszt's intellectual life was always subservient to his passions throughout his long career. Not surprising then, that his two distinct periods of literary activity happen to coincide with his two liaisons with literary ladies, Marie d'Agoult and the Princess Carolyne Sayn-Wittenstein. Except for his enormous correspondence, which makes him, according to Lowens (id., 4), one of the most prolific letter-writers of all time, "he seems to have occupied himself with words as a medium of expression only between 1834 and 1840, when he was a frequent contributor to Schlesinger's Revue et gazette musicale de Paris, and from 1849 to 1859, when he was once again quite active as a feuilletonist. Except for a few items in Eduard Bernstein's Neues Universal-Lexicon der Tonkunst (1856-65), he apparently wrote nothing until his death in 1886".

In 1848, at the age of 46, Liszt retired from the concert stage and accepted a full-time position as the Director of Music in Weimar. The prestige and renown of Liszt as virtuoso were enormous, yet he abandoned his performing career and embarked upon another. Sitwell (1955, 150) writes "The greatest of all virtuosos, who had been earning thousands of pounds a year and whose financial prospects may be said to have been unlimited with another forty years of public career still before him, gave all his services and all his energy to Weimar for the paltry salary of two hundred pounds per year..... He effected in this way, a complete alteration in his own life." For the next twelve years he wrote and revised most of the major works for which he is known. He established Weimar as the centre for new music in Germany and was responsible for many world premieres, including some of the operas of Wagner, with whom he formed a close and lasting friendship. His search for the new in music is well documented and is reflected in the increasing tendency towards chromaticism in his own compositions and in his support for others as conductor, arranger, pianist or writer. At Weimar his generosity towards others became evident. Sitwell (1955, 150) writes that from this time onwards all the force of his personality was directed upon unselfish ends, as he devoted himself to furthering the music of others. Paul Bekker, writing in 1942, (Bekker, 180), describes him as follows:

"Liszt, the man - it was characteristic of Liszt to be of service to others right up to the last moment, at the expense of his own interests, and without any desire for acknowledgement from those whom he was helping. He was glad to let himself be made use of, for he felt that he owed what help he could give. He never asked that his own wishes would be taken into account, nor ever sought to advance his own personal interest. He always extended a helping hand to others, whenever and wherever the opportunity presented itself, but his own work he felt, must take care of itself. Without a trace of envy, he always recognised greatness in others and never worried whether they returned his admiration, he knew no principle of reciprocity in these matters. He gave with a lavish hand - money, support in the advancement of other men's careers, help of every sort, wherever he saw something that he could do."

The younger generation of composers now looked to Weimar and Liszt for leadership which was quickly forthcoming. However Liszt's accomplishments at Weimar led to

increasing hostility from “enemy” camps in Leipzig and Vienna and in Weimar itself against his so-called “music of the future”. Liszt’s position was continually undermined by vicious gossip surrounding his association with Princess Sayn-Wittgenstein, his mistress and companion, who lived with him at the Altenburg. Also his relationship with Wagner invoked criticism. By 1858 the situation was tense. Liszt became increasingly discouraged and resigned from his position. Depression set in, which was aggravated further by the death of his son in 1859. Liszt finally left Weimar and settled in Rome where he devoted himself to religion and composition for the next eight years.

Nixon (1985, 18) reports that Liszt had to cope with periods of depression throughout his life and that he made use of the Christian religion to help him.

According to Nixon, Liszt’s life was one of high emotional intensity, and it is therefore not surprising that it was always lived on the crest of the wave. Walker (1987, 11) quotes Joachin Raff, one of Liszt’s close colleagues during the Weimar period, who said that the religious streak in Liszt was so pronounced that whenever he was overtaken by moods of contrition, “he would prostrate himself on the flagstones before a Muttersgottesbild and remain like that for extended periods, oblivious to whatever was going on around him.” But the religious and worldly coexisted in Liszt’s life in an untidy way, writes Nixon (1985, 15). During his time at Rome in the 1860’s and ‘70’s Liszt’s routine was to attend mass at 6 a.m. every day, to read and study, and to enjoy wine and good company and play the piano for friends in the evening. Nixon (id., 17) quotes one biographer as saying, “As the day wore on, this feeling of sanctity seems to have diminished.”

In 1865 he received the four minor orders of the Church. His friend Mgr. (later Cardinal) Hohenlohe admitted him to the orders of doorkeeper, reader, acolyte and exorcist, “and he henceforth wore a clerical cassock and the tonsure; though his hair still fell as luxuriantly as ever. Many were cynical: Gregorovius described him at the time as ‘Mephistopheles disguised as an abbe’”(id., 16).

After Liszt left Weimar and led a more secluded life for a time in Rome, comparatively few important or influential accounts of him and his works appeared in print during those years. Sitwell (1955, 236) notes a definite change in his character in 1886. He became increasingly convinced of the futility of so much effort on his part until he reached a state of what he himself termed “santa indifferenza”. Sitwell (id., 240) quotes one of his letters to Mme. Jessie Laussot as follows:

“Knowing by experience how little favour my works meet with, I have been obliged to force upon myself a compulsory disregard of them and a passive resignation.”

This feeling continued in him for some time, reaching its climax about two years later. He then roused himself out of that lethargy in order to place his knowledge at the disposal of others as if he felt this was a duty. “But his music became henceforth, not a purpose, but a recreation”(ibid.).

In 1869 Liszt was invited back to Weimar to give master classes in piano playing and two years later he was asked to do the same in Budapest. From then on until the end of his life he made regular journeys between Rome, Weimar and Budapest - his ‘vie trifurquée’ as he described it. Taylor (1986, 19-20), believes there is a sad symbolism in the restless wandering of the last fifteen years of his life - “everywhere welcomed, everywhere fêted, but nowhere absolutely, unreservedly at home”. Liszt’s description - his ‘vie trifurquée’ - “conceals a rootlessness, a state of permanent migration, an admission that while to the outside world he was the hero, everywhere in demand, in reality he was the homeless visitor, the man in permanent transit”(id., 204).

He was visited by a number of composers, including Anton Rubinstein, Albeniz, Borodin, Saint-Saëns and Faure, and taught many students. Sitwell writes (1955, 266) that no one came away from seeing him who was not the richer for the experience. “He would criticise, he would comment, and there was always the hope that he would

play.....His pupils, of whom there were sometimes twenty or thirty in town, would bring him their pieces to play every afternoon, while on Sunday mornings, between eleven and one o'clock, there were regular concerts amounting sometimes to a whole piano recital by Liszt, according to his mood". Sitwell (id., 267) quotes Amy Fay, a young student of Liszt at this time:

"But the most extraordinary thing about Liszt is his wonderful variety of expression and play of feature. One moment his face will look dreamy, shadowy, tragic. The next he will be insinuating, amiable, ironic, sardonic; but always the same captivating grace of manner".

Old age brought Liszt increased respect from the Western world as a teacher and supporter of artists everywhere. Yet the last 17 years of his life have been described as being not particularly happy ones. Plagued by deteriorating health and continuing disillusionment about the neglect with which his own works were treated by others, he repeatedly fell prey to doubt and discouragement. But he bore the bitterness of heart and the personal and artistic disappointment with imposing self-control, according to Brendel (1986, 8). Not surprising then, that in this, his third and late period of composition from 1861 until his death in 1886, his works reveal a certain control and restraint in style. He was "carrying music, in his uncompromising and sparse late pieces, to the brink of silence"(ibid.). He died on July 31, 1886, of pneumonia, in the home of his daughter, Cosima, and son-in-law, Richard Wagner. Searle (in Sadie 1980, 33) writes that very few of Liszt's later experimental works were published in his lifetime - "he seems to have wished not to annoy his public further". There is little brilliance, and often a curiously resigned atmosphere prevails, as he was writing for himself and no longer for his public (id., 38). There is a sense of being forsaken, and of being caught in a web of depression, reflecting the soul of a man who is seeking the sense and meaning of his life.

Searle (id., 29) summarises Liszt's personality and his position in history as follows:

“Personally torn between a longing for spiritual security, a love of worldly sensation and an idealistic belief in the future of music, he contained in his character more of the ambitions - and contradictions - of the 19th century than any other major musician”.

CHAPTER 2

THE SONGS: A CHRONOLOGICAL CLASSIFICATION

Liszt's song genre is one area of his musical activity which has been virtually unexplored as well as unperformed until recently (Watson 1989, 304). Liszt wrote some 80 songs in the course of his life, many of which he subsequently revised or rewrote; about half of them have their origins in the 1840's, during the period of his virtuoso tours, and the remainder were written between 1848 and 1886.

The many versions greatly increase the actual number of published songs. Searle (in Sadie 1980, Vol.11, 64-65) lists revisions of thirty of the songs written up to 1848, three versions of another four songs, and eight transcriptions of his songs for voice and orchestra. Piano arrangements of numerous songs are also listed as well as a few arrangements for instrumental combinations. The original Breitkopf and Härtel edition (Facsimile ed. 1966) contains a total of a hundred and two songs for solo voice and piano which includes alternative versions, yet Humphrey Searle's catalogue prepared for Grove's Dictionary (5th and 6th eds.) identifies a hundred and twenty songs together with the alternative versions, and seventy eight different titles. Watson's list (1989, 347) includes an additional title written in 1886, the year of Liszt's death. If additional transcriptions and arrangements of the songs are included, the total number exceeds a hundred and sixty different compositions which are derived from an original seventy eight/seventy nine songs.

The following list, arranged as far as possible in chronological order, is based on Searle's catalogue (in Sadie 1980, Vol. 11, 64-65), with Watson's revisions included in parenthesis. Alternative versions, transcriptions and arrangements of songs are also listed together with the original composition in each case. In the right-hand column is a

reference to the volume number of the Breitkopf & Härtel edition of Liszt's works
(Facsimile ed. 1966).

	TITLE	COMPOSED	PUBLISHED	EDITION
1.	<i>Angiolin dal biondo crin</i> (C. Bocella)			
	1st Version	1839	Berlin 1843	
	Piano arrangement		Berlin and Milan 1844	
	2nd version		Berlin 1856	BHvii/2
2.	<i>Tre Sonetti di Petrarca</i>			
	i) <i>Pace non trovo</i> (no. 104)			
	ii) <i>Benedetto sia 'l giorno</i> (no. 47)			
	iii) <i>Il vidi in terra angelici</i> <i>costumi</i> (no. 123)			
	1st version	1838-39	Berlin 1846	BHvii/1
	Piano arrangement	?1839-46	Vienna and elsewhere 1846	
	2nd piano arrangement in this version i) and ii) are in reverse order.	1848-54	Mainz 1855	
	Revised edition	1861	Mainz 1883	BHvii/3
3.	<i>Il m'aimait tant</i> (Delphine Gay)	c1840	Mainz 1843	BHvii/1
	Piano arrangement	c1843	Mainz 1843	
4.	<i>Im Rhein, im schönen Strome</i> (Heine)			
	1st version	c1840	Berlin 1843	BHvii/1
	Piano arrangement	c1843	Berlin and Milan 1844	
	2nd version		Berlin 1856	BHvii/2
5.	<i>Die Lorelei</i> (Heine)			
	1st version	1841	Berlin 1843	
	Piano arrangement	c1843	Berlin and Milan 1844	
	2nd version		Berlin 1856	BHvii/2
	Voice and orch. arrangement	1860	1863	
	2nd piano arrangement	1861	1862	

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|----|--|-------------|---|---------|
| 6. | <i>Die Zelle in Nonnenwerth</i>
(Lichnowsky) | | | |
| | 1st version | before 1842 | Cologne 1843
Berlin and
elsewhere
1844 | |
| | Piano arrangement
(as Elegie) | c1843 | 1843
the last 1880
1860 | |
| | Piano arrangement
(as Feuille d'album) | c1843 | [1862] | BHvii/3 |
| | Several later arrangements | 1860 | | |
| | 2nd version | [1857] | Unpublished | |
| | Arrangements for violin or cello +
piano, and for piano (4 hands) | | | |
| 7. | <i>Mignons Lied</i>
(Goethe) | | | |
| | 1st version | 1842 | Berlin 1843 | |
| | Piano arrangement | c1843 | Berlin and
Milan 1844 | |
| | 2nd version | | Berlin 1856 | BHvii/2 |
| | 3rd version | 1860 | 1863 | BHvii/2 |
| | Arrangement for voice and
orchestra | 1860 | | |
| 8. | <i>Der du von dem Himmel bist</i>
(Goethe) | | | |
| | 1st version | 1842 | Berlin 1843 | BHvii/1 |
| | Piano arrangement | c1843 | Berlin and
Milan 1844 | |
| | 2nd version, published as
Invocation | | Berlin 1851 | BHvii/2 |
| | 3rd version | 1860 | | BHvii/2 |
| | Fragment of another version | | 1918 | |
| 9. | <i>Es wär ein König in Thule</i>
(Goethe) | | | |
| | 1st version | 1842 | Berlin 1844 | |
| | Piano arrangement | c1843 | Berlin and
Milan 1844 | |
| | 2nd version | | Berlin 1856 | BHvii/1 |

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|-----|--|-----------------|------------------|---------|
| 10. | <i>Oh, quand je dors</i>
(Hugo) | | | |
| | 1st version | 1842 | Berlin 1844 | BHvii/1 |
| | Piano arrangement | ?1847 | Unpublished | |
| | 2nd version | | Berlin 1859 | BHvii/2 |
| 11. | <i>Comment, disaient-ils</i>
(Hugo) | | | |
| | 1st version | 1842 | Berlin 1844 | BHvii/1 |
| | Piano arrangement | ?1847 | Unpublished | |
| | 2nd version | | Berlin 1859 | BHvii/2 |
| 12. | <i>Vergiftet sind meine Lieder</i>
(Heine) | | | |
| | 1st version | 1842 | Cologne 1844 | BHvii/2 |
| | [Revised version] | | [1859] | |
| 13. | <i>Du bist wie eine Blume</i>
(Heine) | c1843 | Cologne 1844 | BHvii/2 |
| 14. | <i>Bist du</i>
(Prince E. Metschersky) | | | |
| | 1st version | 1843 | Cologne 1844 | |
| | Revised version | c1877-8 | 1879 | BHvii/3 |
| 15. | <i>Was Liebe sei?</i>
(C. von Hagn) | | | |
| | 1st version | c1843 | Cologne 1844 | BHvii/1 |
| | 2nd version | c1855 | 1879 | BHvii/2 |
| | 3rd version | c1878 | | BHvii/3 |
| 16. | <i>Die tote Nachtigall</i>
(Kaufmann) | | | |
| | 1st version | c1843 | Cologne 1844 | BHvii/1 |
| | Revised version | 1878 | 1879 | BHvii/3 |
| 17. | <i>Morgens steh ich auf und frage</i>
(Heine) | | | |
| | 1st version | c1843 | Cologne 1844 | BHvii/1 |
| | Revised version | c1855 | Berlin 1859 | BHvii/2 |
| 18. | <i>Quand tu chantes bercée</i>
(Hugo) | 1849
[1843] | Budapest
1973 | |
| 19. | <i>Nimm einen Strahl der Sonne</i>
[1hr Auge] (Rellstab) | c1855
[1843] | 1860 | BHvii/2 |

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|-----|--|----------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| 20. | <i>Oh, pourquoi donc?</i>
(Mme. Pavloff)
Published in Moscow 1844 as Les
Pleurs des femmes | ?1844
[1843] | Moscow 1844 | |
| 21. | <i>Die Vätergruft</i>
(Uhland)
Arrangement for voice + orch. | 1844
1866 | Berlin 1860
London and
Leipzig 1866 | BHvii/2 |
| 22. | <i>Freudvoll und liedvoll</i>
(Goethe)
1st setting, 1st version
2nd setting
1st setting, 2nd version | 1844
1848
1860 | Vienna 1847 | BHvii/1
BHvii/1
BHvii/2 |
| 23. | <i>Enfant, si j'étais roi</i>
(Hugo)
1st version
Piano arrangement
Revised version | c1844
?1847 | Berlin 1844
Unpublished
Berlin 1859 | BHvii/1

BHvii/2 |
| 24. | <i>S'il est un charmant gazon</i>
(Hugo)
1st version
Piano arrangement
Revised version | c1844
?1847 | Berlin 1844
Unpublished
Berlin 1859 | BHvii/1

BHvii/2 |
| 25. | <i>La tombe et la rose</i>
(Hugo)
Piano arrangement | c1844
?1847 | Berlin 1844
Unpublished | BHvii/1 |
| 26. | <i>Gastibelza</i>
(Hugo)
Bolero
Piano arrangement | c1844
?1847 | Berlin 1844
Unpublished | BHvii/1 |
| 27. | <i>En ces lieux</i>
(E. Monnier)
Élégie (new text to the music of
20) | | Paris before
1855 | |
| 28. | <i>Wo weilt er?</i>
(Rellstab) | 1845 | 1860
[1844] | BHvii/2 |

29. *Es rauschen die Winde*
(Rellstab)
1st version c1845 Unpublished
Revised before 1856 BHvii/2
2nd version 1860 BHvii/2
30. *Songs from 'Wilhelm Tell'*
(Schiller)
i) *Der Fischerknabe*
ii) *Der Hirt*
iii) *Der Alpenjäger*
1st version 1845 Vienna 1847 BHvii/1
Revised version 1859 BHvii/2
Arrangement for voice + orch. c1855
later revised and published in 1872
31. *Jeanne d'Arc au bûcher*
(Dumas)
1st version 1845 Mainz 1846
Revised edition Berlin 1860 BHvii/3
Arrangement for voice + orch. 1858
later revised and published 1874 Mainz 1872
32. *Ich möchte hingehn*
(Herwegh)
1st version 1845
Revised version c1860 Berlin 1860 BHvii/2
33. *Wer nie sein Brot mit Tränen ass*
(Goethe)
1st version
Revised version ?1845 BHvii/2
c1860 1860 BHvii/3
34. *O Lieb, so lang du lieben kannst*
(Freiligrath) c1845 1847 BHvii/2
Piano arrangement (no. 3 of
Liebesträume - Drei Nottornos) c1850 1850

- | | | | | |
|-----|---|------------------|--------------|---------|
| 35. | <i>Schwebe, schwebe, blaues Auge</i>
(Dingelstedt) | | | |
| | 1st version | | | |
| | Revised version | 1845 | | BHvii/2 |
| | | 1860 | | BHvii/2 |
| 36. | <i>Ein Fichtenbaum steht einsam</i>
(Heine) | | | |
| | 1st version | c1845 | 1860 | BHvii/2 |
| | Revised version | [1854] | 1860 | BHvii/2 |
| 37. | <i>Isten veled</i> (Farewell)
(Horvath) | | | |
| | 1st version | 1846-7 | Prague 1847 | |
| | Revised version | | Leipzig 1879 | BHvii/3 |
| 38. | <i>Über allen Gipfeln ist Ruh</i>
(Goethe) | | | |
| | 1st version | c1848
[?1847] | 1847 | |
| | Revised version | | Berlin 1859 | BHvii/2 |
| 39. | <i>Le juif errant</i>
(Béranger) | [1847] | Unpublished | |
| 40. | <i>Weimars Toten</i>
(F. von Schober) | 1848 | | BHvii/1 |
| 41. | <i>Le vieux vagabond</i>
(Béranger) | before 1849 | [by 1848] | BHvii/1 |
| 42. | <i>Kling leise, meine Lied</i>
(Nordmann) | | | |
| | 1st version | 1848 | | BHvii/1 |
| | Revised version | 1860 | | Bhvii/2 |
| 43. | <i>Die macht der Musik</i>
(Duchess Helen of Orleans) | 1848-9 | 1849 | Bhvii/1 |
| 44. | <i>Anfangs wollt ich fast verzagen</i>
(Heine) | 1849 | 1860 | BHvii/2 |
| | [Version with new ending] | [c1880] | | |

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|-----|---|----------------------|-------------------------|---------|
| 45. | Hohe liebe
(Uhland)
Piano arrangement (no. 1 of
<i>Liebesträume</i> - Drei Nottornos) | 1850
c1850 | 1850 | BHvii/2 |
| 46. | Gestorben war ich
(Uhland)
Piano arrangement (no 2 of
<i>Liebesträume</i> - Drei Nottornos)
[2 versions] | c1849 | 1850 | BHvii/2 |
| 47. | Ess muss ein Wunderbares sein
(Redwitz) | 1857 | 1859
[1852] | BHvii/2 |
| 48. | Ich scheid
(Hoffmann von Fallersleben) | 1857 | 1859
[1854] | BHvii/2 |
| 49. | Blume und Duft
(Hebbel) | c1860 | 1860 | BHvii/3 |
| 50. | Wie singt die Lerche schön
(Hoffmann von Fallersleben) | ?1856 | Würzburg
1856 | BHvii/2 |
| 51. | Weimars Volkslied
(Cornelius) | 1857 | Leipzig 1857 | BHvii/2 |
| 52. | Ich liebe dich
(Rückert)
Piano arrangement | 1857 | 1860

Unpublished | BHvii/3 |
| 53. | Muttergottes - Sträusslein zum
Maimonate
(Muller)
i) <i>Das Veilchen</i>
ii) <i>Die Schlüsselblumen</i> | 1857 | Berlin 1859 | BHvii/2 |
| 54. | Lasst mich ruhen
(Hoffmann von Fallersleben) | ?c1858 | Berlin 1859 | BHvii/2 |
| 55. | In Liebeslust
(Hoffmann von Fallersleben) | ?c1858 | Beerlin 1859 | BHvii/2 |
| 56. | Die drei Zigeuner
(Lenau)
Arrangement for voice + orch.
Arrangement for violin + piano | 1860
1860
1864 | 1860
1872
1896 | BHvii/3 |

57.	<i>Wieder möcht ich dir begegnen</i> (Cornelius)	1860	1860	BHvii/3
58.	<i>Die stille Wasserrose</i> (Geibel)	?1860	1860	BHvii/3
59.	<i>Jugendglück</i> (Pohl)	c1860	1860	BHvii/3
60.	<i>Die Fischerstogter</i> (Count C. Coronini)	1871	1879	BHvii/3
61.	<i>La Perla</i> (Princess Therese von Hohenlohe)	1872	Rome No date	BHvii/3
62.	<i>J'ai perdu ma force et ma vie</i> 'Tristesse' (De Musset)	1872	1879	BHvii/3
63.	<i>Ihr Glocken von Marling</i> (Emil Kuh)	1874	1879	BHvii/3
64.	<i>Und Sprich</i> (Biegeleben) Revised	1874 1878	1879	BHvii/3
65.	<i>Sei stil</i> (Nordheim, pseud. of H. von Schorn)	1877	1879	BHvii/3
66.	<i>An Edlitam</i> (Bodenstedt)	?1878	1879	BHvii/3
67.	<i>Einst</i> (Bodenstedt)	?1878	1879	BHvii/3
68.	<i>Gebet</i> (Bodenstedt)	?1878	1879	BHvii/3
69.	<i>Der Glückliche</i> (Wilbrandt)	?1878	1879	BHvii/3
70.	<i>Go not happy day</i> (Tennyson)	1879	London No date	BHvii/3
71.	<i>Verlassen</i> (G. Michell)	1880	1880	BHvii/3

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|-----|--|-------|--------|---------|
| 72. | <i>Des Tages laute Stimmen
schweigen</i>
(F. von Saar) | 1880 | [1880] | BHvii/3 |
| 73. | <i>Und wir dachten der Toten</i>
(Freiligrath) | ?1880 | [1880] | BHvii/3 |
| 74. | <i>Ne brani menya, moy drug</i>
(‘Do not reproach me, my friend)
(Tolstoy) | | [1886] | |

CHAPTER 3

THE SONGS: A REFLECTION OF THE MAN

The historical perspective

Liszt wrote an extremely varied collection of songs for an equally varied number of reasons. He wrote songs for particular occasions, others were written at the request of female friends, and yet others were settings of poems of acquaintances which he wrote as gestures of friendship. Sometimes a single poem inspired him to set it to music. However Liszt did not always make his reasons known, so the origins and motives are not always known, nor is there always agreement about the exact dates of composition. But the character of the songs and themes of the texts chosen often reveal Liszt's prevailing moods and reflect the various facets of his personality.

Liszt's choice of poets are included in this discussion as many of them were personally involved with the origins and motives of the songs. Charlotte von Hagn, for example, a pretty German actress with whom Liszt had a short dalliance, wrote a flirtatious poem to Liszt on a fan. Liszt responded by setting the poem to music with the title *Was Liebe sei?* Liszt chose his texts for a variety of reasons, and it is important to know which poets interacted with him on a social level, which might have influenced his choice of texts, and which texts he chose for their content value alone.

Liszt's circle of acquaintances in Paris during the early 1830's included a number of famous poets such as Hugo, Nerval, de Musset, Sand, Gautier, Saint-Beuve and Heine, and although our view of Liszt's early period in Paris remains regrettably incomplete (Todd 1988, 94), these poets and their works must have had a tremendous influence on the young Liszt (Douglas 1987, 5).

It is surprising that even though for his entire adult life Liszt preferred to write and speak French, fifty seven of the seventy four separate songs he wrote are in German, only fourteen are French, five are Italian, one is Hungarian, one Russian and one English. In the 1840's Liszt turned to the texts of Goethe and Heine, and with few exceptions German poetry was to inspire the majority of his songs. Goethe and Heine, Schiller, Uhland, Burger, Hebbel and Lenau, as well as Hoffman von Fallersleben, Rellstab, Rückert, Freiligrath and Herwegh, the young generation of revolutionary poets to whom Liszt was especially attracted (*ibid.*), represent the high standard of German literature, writes Hamburger (1980, 51). Hugo, Dumas and Béranger represent the French, Tennyson was used for the only English setting, Tolstoy for the only Russian, and three of Petrarch's sonnets were set in Italian.

Yet Liszt's choice of texts has been described as "strangely indiscriminate" (Taylor 1986, 94), and "not always equally scrupulous" (Hamburger 1980, 51), largely because the authors of the rest of the texts included friends, "literati, theatrical people, in many instances dilettantes, and on more than one occasion a princess" (*ibid.*), who provided texts of mixed quality. Rosen (1984, 20) writes, "beautifully sensitive to the character of his musical material and deeply indifferent to its quality, all Liszt's genius is turned onto the realisation in sound". Nothing seemed ever too bad or too good to serve as material for Liszt's compositions. He had little feeling for the quality of his musical material, although he showed an extraordinary perception of its nature and of what could be done with it (*ibid.*). Watson's conclusion (1989, 307), that the poetry he selected may be of mixed quality, but that most of it is highly successful in making its effect, may also be applied to the man Liszt. His personality characteristics were of mixed quality, but most of them were highly successful in making their effect. "Liszt in his fullness can be grasped only as an agglomerate of characteristics whose apparent irreconcilability must be accepted" (Taylor 1986, xiv).

The following presentation of the songs in chronological order include

- the dates of composition
- the poets used
- the origin and motive of each song, where known
- descriptions of the character of each song and theme of each text which are based on a table by Douglas (1987, 14-15).

They reveal the motives and experiences that moved Liszt, the values he cherished, and the poets in whose texts he found these values enshrined. The intimate musical means by which he sought to reproduce them in his own terms, is revealed by his musical style which is the focus of discussion in Chapter four.

1. *Angiolin dal biondo crin* (1st version -1839)

(2nd version - published in 1856)

Text: The Italian poet, Marchese Cesare Bocella

Theme of text: love

Character of the song: playful

This is listed as Liszt's first song, composed in Geneva in 1839 for his daughter, Blandine, who was born there in 1835. It was published in 1843. *Angiolin dal biondo crin* reflects the mood of the new father responding to the birth of his new-born daughter.

The Breitkopf & Härtel edition of Liszt's works (Facsimile ed., 1966) contains only the second version of the song, which was published in 1856. The first version is seldom referred to by musicologists. The date of composition of Liszt's songs still seem to be a matter of debate, according to Walker (1989, 502n). In reply to one of the questionnaires submitted to him by his first biographer Lina Ramann, Liszt told her that *Angiolin dal biondo crin* was composed during the summer of 1839. Elsewhere, however, he told Ramann that the first songs he ever wrote were *Die Lorelei* and *Mignon*. All three songs were first published in 1843.

Taylor (1986, 119) cogently points out the difficulty in ascribing a single date to Liszt's works. "A sketch may lie for years in a drawer before being brought out and worked into a definitive form; a published piece may be reworked, sometimes substantially, then reissued in its new, revalidated guise, or guises, since there may be more than one such revision; a work may be recast for a different medium with the addition of second and third thoughts. Some pieces may even have a history that embraces all these contingencies. The basic question of when the opus, as we have it, was conceived, may receive no final answer - or several final answers, according to the way we choose to view the evidence."

2. *Tre Sonetti di Petrarca* (1st version - 1838-39)

(revised version - 1861)

Text: The Italian poet, Petrarch

i) *Pace non trovo* (no.104)

Theme of text: love

Character of the song (1st version): dramatic

(2nd version): passionate (but more restrained -

Dart 1987, 48)

ii) *Benedetto sia 'l giorno* (no.47)

Theme of text: love

Character of the song (1st version): reverent

(2nd version): reverent

iii) *I vidi in terra angelici costumi* (no.123)

Theme of text: love

Character of the song (1st version): expansive

(2nd version): reverent

The Petrarch sonnets were written in Italy in 1838-1839 while Liszt was on his second “year of pilgrimage”. He and Marie d’Agoult had settled temporarily near Lake Como and Liszt immersed himself in Italian culture, reading Dante and Petrarch (Douglas 1987, 5). In nearby Milan he met Ricordi and then Rossini, who introduced him to the world of Italian opera. Walker (1989, 502) writes that the *Tre sonetti di Petrarca* were composed as “a direct result of Liszt’s sojourn in Italy during the years 1838-39”. They are operatic arias in the expressive, embellished bel canto style and are effective evidence that Liszt had absorbed the essentials of the prevailing taste in Italian opera (Neumeyer 1979, 2). The revisions contain so much new material, and there is such drastic simplification and other stylistic changes, which point to Liszt’s late period, that these must be regarded as essentially new (ibid.). Completed in 1861, soon after Liszt had left Weimar and had settled in Rome, the revisions reflect Liszt’s prevailing mood at that time. The mood of reverence reveals his devotion to religion in Rome and the restraint in style reveals a self-control which he developed to deal with the personal and artistic disappointment of his last years in Weimar.

3. *Il m’aimait tant!* (c1840)

Text: Delphine Gay, poetess and wife of Emile de Girardin, the editor of La Presse. She had known Marie d’Agoult long before Marie’s liaison with Liszt had begun.

Theme of text: love

Character of the song: passionate

The title and the mood of the song suggests Liszt’s emotional state at the time of writing - c1840. Liszt had returned to concert touring and “during his separations from Marie letters flowed virorously between them” (Watson, 1989, 53). However she began to realise that “a blissful episode, a moment of brilliance which had brought new meaning to her life but which she was powerless to prolong, was slowly, inexorably slipping past” (Taylor 1986, 56). Until the final break between them in 1847, they still shared happy times together, although these were to become fewer and fewer.

4. *Im Rhein, im schöne Strome* (1st version - c1840)

(2nd version - published in 1856)

Text: The German poet, Heinrich Heine, and one of Liszt's acquaintances
in Paris during early 1830's.

Theme of text: love

Character of the song (1st version): expansive
(2nd version): lyrical

Liszt rented a house on the island of Nonnenwerth, situated in the middle of the Rhine, a little above Bonn, for a summer retreat. Here, in these peaceful surroundings during the summers of 1841, '42 and '43, he and Marie d'Agoult were able to recapture some of their earlier happiness. Notable is the change of mood in the second version of the song, published in 1856, long after his relationship with Marie had ended.

5. *Die Lorelei* (1st version - 1841)

(2nd version - published in 1856)

Text: Heine

Theme of text: story, legend

Character of the song: dramatic

Die Lorelei is a steep rock that rises perpendicularly on the right bank of the Rhine. It is located at a point on the river which is difficult to navigate and is celebrated for its echo. Legend has it that a beautiful siren sat on the rock and lured sailors to their death with her enchanted song, which caused them to wreck their ships. Liszt dedicated this setting of Heine's poem to Marie d'Agoult. It was written during their summer sojourn on the Rhine in 1841.

6. *Die Zelle in Nonnenwerth* (1st version - before 1842)

(2nd version - 1860 [1857])

Text: Count Felix Lichnowsky, one of Liszt's closest companions during 1841.

Theme of text: lost love

Character of the song: romantic

It was during a trip through the Rhineland when Liszt and Lichnowsky came across the near-deserted island on the Rhine, called Nonnenwerth, which appealed to Liszt as an ideal summer retreat. Felix Lichnowsky became a frequent visitor to Nonnenwerth during the summers of 1841, '42 and '43. Inspired by one such visit, he wrote a poem called *Die Zelle in Nonnenwerth*, which Liszt set to music (Walker 1987, 366).

Taylor notes (1986, 77) that these settings, of slight importance in themselves, have a symbolic interest in that they intimate an extension of Liszt's thought from the Romance to the Germanic world. "Paris had been his spiritual home: the salon atmosphere, his life with Marie d'Agoult, his sojourns in French Switzerland and in Italy, his readings in Lamennais, Saint-Simon and the French Romantics, in Dante and Petrarch - all this had cocooned him in Romance values.....Partly, perhaps, through having put down roots, however slender, in German soil by choosing the abode of Nonnenwerth, partly as a result of the remorselessly widening spiritual gap between him and his mistress, partly also because of his awareness that Germany offered many challenging cultural centres yet to conquer, he began to turn his gaze elsewhere."

7. *Mignons Lied* (1st version - 1842)

(2nd version - published in 1856)

(3rd version - 1860)

Text: Goethe

Theme of text: memory, longing

Character of the song (1st version): yearning

(2nd version): restless

Douglas (1987, 14) describes only two of the three versions of *Mignons Lied*, which Liszt set to Goethe's *Kennst du das Land*, and only the second and third version appear in the Breitkopf & Härtel edition (Facsimile ed. 1966) of Liszt's works.

The opening line of this song is often quoted to demonstrate Liszt's poor word-setting, particularly of the German poems. Radcliffe (in Dart 1975, 43) writes that despite Liszt's intense interest in words, his stressing of the syllables sometimes shows that German was not his native language. Dart (ibid.) adds that Liszt was well aware of his limitations in the German language and throughout the revisions there is ample evidence that he gave the matter considerable thought.

8. *Es war ein König in Thule* (1st version - 1842)

(2nd version - published in 1856)

Text: Goethe

Theme of text: story, death

Character of the song: dramatic

Of Liszt's seven Goethe settings, only the first two, *Mignons Lied* and *Es war ein König in Thule* are not pictures of the inner mood (Hughes 1917, 401). *Es war ein König in Thule* is one of only four ballads in Liszt's song oeuvre, the other three being *Die Lorelei*, *Die Vätergruft* and *Die Fischerstochter*.

9. *Der du von dem Himmel bist* (1st version - 1842)

(2nd version - published in 1851)

(3rd version - 1860)

Text: Goethe

Theme of text: death

Character of the song (1st, 2nd and 3rd version): reverent

The battle between Liszt's artistic and religious natures, which lasted with more or less violence during the whole of his life, makes itself manifest in this song. Hughes (1917, 396) believes that the deeply-felt religious sentiment of several of the songs was without doubt genuine with Liszt, in spite of the fact that some of his detractors have endeavoured to place him in a false light with regard to this side of his character.

10. *O quand je dors* (1st version - 1842)

(2nd version - published in 1859)

Text: Victor Hugo, the French poet, and personal acquaintance of Liszt and Marie d'Agoult in Paris during the 1830's.

Theme of text: love

Character of the song (1st and 2nd version): dreamy

11. *Comment, disaient-ils* (1st version - 1842)

(2nd version - published in 1859)

Text: Hugo

Theme of text: love, escape

Character of the song (1st and 2nd version): lively

Liszt wrote 6 songs with texts by Victor Hugo between 1842 and c1844. These were published as Poésies Lyriques pour une voix avec accompagnement de Piano, Texte de Victor Hugo, Musique de F. Liszt. This volume was Liszt's second published collection. Four revisions were made after 1855, and published in 1859/1860 as a part of Liszt's fourth song volume. Both editions were issued with German translations by Peter Cornelius, better known as a song composer himself.

Turner (1979, 31) writes that if one were to search for simple descriptive words with which to label the four early versions of the Hugo-Liszt songs, *O quand je dors*, *Comment, disaient-ils*, *Enfant, si j'étais roi*, and *S'il est un charmant gazon*, good choices would be "agitated", "exciting", "virtuosic", or "pianistic". In contrast, one may describe the more mature set of Hugo-Liszt songs as "sensitive" or "subtle". Each set

represents a different facet of Liszt, one young and impetuous, the other mature and reflective.

12. *Vergiftet sind meine Lieder* (1842)

Text: Heine

Theme of Text: love

Character of the song: passionate

Written in 1842, when the passionate relationship between Liszt and Marie d'Agoult was cooling off, this song contains the violent contrast between the bitterness of the present and the nostalgia of the lover for his past happiness.

Searle (in Sadie 1980, Vol. 11, 48) is of the opinion that Liszt interpreted Heine with particular feeling and subtlety. Cooper (1938, 176) confirms this. He writes that the beauty of Liszt's settings of Heine lies in their complete aptness, in their catching and heightening every shade of the poems emotions.

13. *Du bist wie eine Blume* (c1843)

Text: Heine

Theme of text: love

Character of the song: lyrical

Raabe (in Breitkopf & Härtel 1966, VII 2, XIII) writes that the first publication of this song in 1844 by Eck & Co., bore its dedication to the Grand Duchess Sophie von Sachsen. However a later publication of the same version in 1860 omitted the dedication. It is possible that the omission was requested by Liszt.

14 *Bist du* (1st version - 1843)

(revised version - c1877-78)

Text: Prince E. MetscherskyTheme of text: worshipCharacter of the song: adoring**15. *Was Liebe sei* (1st version - c1843)**

(2nd version - c1855)

(3rd version - c1878)

Text: Charlotte von HagnTheme of text: loveCharacter of the song (1st version): pensive, cute

(2nd version): playful and charming

(3rd version): pensive - questions asked, unresolved

At the end of 1841 Liszt went to Berlin to perform. His sojourn there was marked by a close friendship with Charlotte von Hagn, the finest actress in Germany and one of the great beauties of her time (Walker 1987, 373). In response to Liszt's attentions, Charlotte scribbled a love poem on the corner of her fan for him. Liszt set the words to music.

16. *Die tote Nachtigall* (1st version - c1843)

(revised version - 1878)

Text: Philip Kaufmann, a relatively unknown poet who was born in 1802

in Keuznach and committed suicide in the Bois de Boulogne in Paris

in August 1846 .

Theme of text: death, loveCharacter of the song (1st version): mournful

(2nd version): sad

At the beginning and end of the original manuscript stands "Gelegenheitsgedicht von Kaufmann". (Raabe in Breitkopf & Härtel 1966, VII 3, IX)

17. *Morgens steh ich auf und frage* (1st version - c1843)

(revised version - c1855)

Text: Heine

Theme of text: love

Character of the song (1st version): lively - romantic, waiting for love

(2nd version): lyrical, delicate

18. *Quand tu chantes bercée* (1849 [1843])

Text: Hugo

Searle gives the date of composition as 1849, yet Watson's date is 1843 (1989, 344). Douglas (1987, 14) does not list the song at all nor does it appear in the Breitkopf & Härtel edition of Liszt's works (Facsimile ed. 1966).

19. *Nimm einen Strahl der Sonne (Ihr Auge)* (c1855 [1843])

Text: Rellstab, the Berlin critic and editor who held sway in musical affairs there for many decades. Some of his lyric poems were set by Schubert and Liszt.

Theme of text: love

Character of the song: passionate

Only the later published version bears the title *Ihr Auge*. Raabe (in Breitkopf & Härtel 1966, VII 2, XI) comments that without this title the content of the song is meaningless, as the poet is actually comparing his loved one's eyes with a ray of sunshine, with the lights of the evening stars and with the fiery glow of Etna. Liszt does not draw this comparison in the song itself.

20. *Oh pourquoi donc* (?1844 [1843])

Text: Mme. Karolina Pavlova, a Russian writer and translator.

Friedrich Schnapp (Szitha 1987, 280) was the first to draw attention to this song, which was written in 1843 during Liszt's concert tour of Russia and published in Moscow in 1844 under the title *Les Pleurs des Femmes*. It is not included in the Breitkopf & Härtel edition of Liszt's works (Facsimile ed. 1966). The manuscript is written in another hand on decorated music paper, as was fashionable in musical albums a hundred years ago, and signed "Fr. Liszt" in the same hand at the end (Schnapp 1953, 233). Liszt himself has corrected the musical text, crossed out the name at the end and added instead the following dedication in his own hand: "respectueux hommage au gracieux *Poète* par le musicien disgracié F. Liszt". The song is dedicated to Madame Koscielska, who was, according to Schnapp (id., 234), probably the wife of the elegant adventurer August von Koscielski. She was described by Liszt in a letter from Posnan to Wilhelm Speyer, dated 1 March 1843, as "a very charming young Pole with whom I have lived very intimately for a fortnight".

21. *Die Vätergruft* (1844)

Text: The Swabian poet, J.L. Uhland

Theme of text: story, death

Character of the song: dramatic

This song accompanied Liszt from 1844 until his death. Although he wrote the original version in 1844, he made changes to it throughout the 1850's before it was published in 1860 (Raabe in Breitkopf & Härtel 1966, VII 2, XI). An arrangement for voice and orchestra was Liszt's last work before he died. It is significant that the title of the song refers to Liszt's relationship to God, the theme of the text reflects his preoccupation with death, and the dramatic character of the song is a reflection of his dramatic lifestyle.

22. *Freudvoll und leidvoll* (1st version - 1844)
 (2nd version - 1848)
 (3rd version - 1860)

Text: Goethe

Theme of text: love

Character of the song (1st version): flowing
 (2nd version): agitated
 (3rd setting): lyrical

Walker comments (1989, 507) that the remarkable thing about the songs is the speed with which some of them were composed. *Freudvoll und leidvoll* bears the inscription “composed March 30 1848”, and the first and second version display the following dedication: “Ary Scheffer in innigste Verehrung und sympatischer Bewunderung gewidmet.” Ary Scheffer painted a portrait of Liszt.

23. *Enfant, si j'étais roi* (1st version - c1844)
 (revised version - published in 1859/60)

Text: Hugo

Theme of text: love

Character of the song (1st and 2nd versions): boastful

24. *S'il est un charmant gazon* (1st version - c1844)
 (revised version - published in 1859/60)

Text: Hugo

Theme of text: love

Character of the song (1st and 2nd versions): flowing

This song has a Spanish quality - the accompaniment is marked “*quasi chitarra*” and there is reference to *alguazils* (Spanish warrant officers). Liszt set only two of the stanzas of the poem to music.

Watson (1989, 305) writes that Liszt was intensely interested in the national music of many groups and peoples. His writings on Jewish and Gypsy music bear this out, and so do his numerous compositions on national themes which range from the *Spanish Rhapsody* to *God Save the Queen*. His national adaptability comes out in the songs, and he creates a local atmosphere through appropriateness in style (Headington in Walker 1976, 236).

25. *La tombe et la rose* (c1844)

Text: Hugo

Theme of text: death

Character of the song: pensive

26. *Gastibelza* (c1844)

Text: Hugo

Theme of text: love, betrayal

Character of the song: forceful.

Gastibelza is a bolero and the Spanish quality is prominent. Liszt set only six of the eleven stanzas of the poem to music. It was written during or just after his six month tour of the Iberian peninsula where he met local musicians and absorbed many Spanish musical folk idioms at his accustomed round of private soirées and banquets. (Watson 1989, 72)

27. *En ces lieux* (published before 1855)

Text: Etienne Monnier, an amateur poet whose poems were set by various composers in the 1840's, such as Donizetti (Szitha 1987, 260).

En ces Lieux was discovered in the early 1950's (id., 280). The date of composition can only be inferred from the date of publication in 1845. It is in fact merely a new text to the music of *Die Zelle in Nonnenwerth*. It is not tabled by Douglas (1987) nor is it included in the Breifkopf & Härtel edition of Liszt's works (Facsimile ed. 1966).

28. *Wo weilt er?* (1845)Text: RellstabTheme of text: a distant oneCharacter of the song: restless

In November 1845, Liszt met Marie Duplessis, the beautiful but tragic model for Dumas' *La Dame aux camelias*. She was already very ill, but she begged Liszt to take her away with him. To console her, Liszt encouraged her to dream of a trip to Constantinople but left in the spring of 1846 on his Eastern tour. Written around this time the content and character of both *Wo weilt er?* and *Es rauschen die Winde* can be seen as autobiographical.

29. *Es rauschen die Winde* (1st unpublished version -1845)

(2nd version -1860)

Text: RellstabTheme of text: loss of loveCharacter of the song (1st and 2nd versions): bitter, agitated30. *Songs from 'Wilhelm Tell'* (1st version - 1845);

(2nd version - 1859)

Text: Schilleri) *Der Fischerknabe*Theme of text: dream, deathCharacter of the song (1st version): flowing

(2nd version): dreamy

ii) *Der Hirt*

Theme of text: nature, farewell

Character of the song (1st version): lyrical

(2nd version): reverent

iii) *Der Alpenjäger*

Theme of text: hunter, nature

Character of the song (1st version): agitated

(2nd version): scary

As a contrast to the Goethe poems, in the Schiller songs “we are transported into the big out-doors, into the midst of the blue skies and the keen, cool air of Alpine highlands. Here there is fine, free landscape painting - the fisher boy, the herdsman and the Alpine huntsman”(Hughes 1917, 401). Watson (1989, 307) writes that these three songs from Schiller’s *Willhelm Tell* capture the feeling of Alpine freshness in a way that matches the Swiss book of *Années de Pèlerinage*. Here again we are reminded of the autobiographical nature of Liszt’s songs.

31. *Jeanne d’Arc au bûcher* (1st unpublished version - 1845)

(revised edition - published in 1860)

Text: Dumas

Theme of text: heroic

Character of the song: dramatic

This song displays Liszt’s operatic conception in terms of recitative and aria. The language of Italian opera affected him deeply in the early years, writes Watson (1989, 305), and its influence continued to be found in his French and German songs.

32. *Ich möchte hingehn* (1st unpublished version - 1845)

(revised version - published in 1860)

Text: Herwegh

Theme of text: death

Character of the song: dramatic

Between October 1844 and January 1845 Liszt embarked on a six-month tour of the Iberian Peninsula. Walker (1987, 408) writes that it was in Pau, near the Spanish frontier, that Liszt had a nostalgic reunion with Caroline de Saint-Cricq, the first love of his youth. He and Caroline had last seen each other in 1827, before her forced marriage to Bertrand d'Artigaux. Liszt visited her several times during his two-week stay, and they reminisced about their love-affair and the hand that fate had dealt them. In memory of their reunion, Liszt composed the song "*Ich möchte hingehn wie das Abendroth*". It is a song of farewell; neither would ever see the other again. On a manuscript copy, now in the Weimar archives, Liszt had scribbled the words: "The song is the testament of my youth - therefore no better, and also no worse." After leaving Pau, Liszt sent Caroline a talisman bracelet, containing a valuable turquoise which he had brought back from his trip to St. Petersburg the previous year.

33. *Wer nie sein Brot mit Tränen ass* (1st version - ?1845)

(revised version - c1860)

Text: Goethe

Theme of text: God, pain, guilt

Character of the song (1st version): angry

(2nd version): heavy

In the two settings of this song, Liszt's ongoing personality development is reflected. The youthful first version is dramatic and overemphasised with a sensuous beauty while the later second version is less theatrical and more economical (Cooper, 1938, 178). This version is quoted by Hughes (1917, 397) to illustrate his belief that "no one has sounded the note of poignant grief in music more deeply than Liszt."

It is significant that this second version was written around the time of Liszt's move from Weimar to Rome when he was feeling particularly depressed and disheartened.

34. *O Lieb* (c1845)

Text: Freiligrath

Theme of text: love

Character of the song: passionate

35. *Schwebe, schwebe, blaues Auge* (1st version - 1845)

(2nd version - published in 1860)

Text: The playwright, Franz von Dingelstedt, active in Weimar during the 1850's.

Theme of text: love

Character of the song (1st version): wispy

(2nd version): languid

This song was written during the years when Liszt was courting Weimar most intensely, prior to his taking up residence there (Baron1993, 96).

36. *Ein Fichtenbaum steht einsam* (1st version - c1845)

(2nd version - published in 1860)

Text: Heine

Theme of text: loneliness

Character of the song (1st version): restless

(2nd version): plaintive

Liszt contrasts the image of the windswept, desolate northern pine with the lyrical music of the luxuriant oriental palm to express in music the theme of mourning for lost love. Written in c1845 during which time Liszt's relationship with Marie d'Agoult was finally coming to an end, the song may be perceived as autobiographical.

37. *Isten Veled (Farewell)* (1st unpublished version - 1846-7)

(revised version - published in 1879)

Text: The Hungarian poet, Horvath

Theme of text: love

Character of the song : pedantic

The only setting of original Hungarian verses, it is characteristically Hungarian with a melody heavy with the sorrow of parting (Hughes 1917, 404)

38. *Über allen Gipfeln ist Ruh* (1st version - c1848)

(revised version - 1859)

Text: Goethe

Theme of text: death

Character of the song (revised version): insistent, hymnlike

The Breitkopf & Härtel volume of Liszt's works (Facsimile ed. 1966) contains only the revised version of this song.

39. *Le juif errant* (1847-unpublished)

Text: Béranger

This song dates from 1847, the last of Liszt's years of wandering. It remained unpublished in the composer's lifetime and has not been published since, although the manuscript of this piece is available in Weimar to this day. A German translation of the poem also features in the manuscript in a different hand.

40. *Weimars Toten* (1848)

Text: F. von Schober, an old Viennese acquaintance of Liszt, who became a political attaché in Weimar.

Theme of text: poetry

Character of the song: heavy

Weimars Toten is a dithyramb, characteristically full of wild emotion and enthusiasm. It was composed for the festivities celebrating the Goethe centenary.

41. *Le vieux vagabond* (before 1849)

Text: Béranger

Theme of text: old age, suicide

Character of the song: angry

Here Béranger's text provides one of many death-laden themes which Liszt used throughout his songwriting career.

42. *Kling leise, meine Lied* (1st version - 1848)

(revised version - published in 1860)

Text: Nordmann

Theme of text: love, lullaby

Character of the song (1st and 2nd versions): dreamy

Written soon after his relationship with Princess Carolyne Sayn-Wittgenstein had begun, this song reflects Liszt's prevailing mood at this time. Baron writes (1993, 114) that it was probably finished by Liszt at Felix Lichnowsky's estate while waiting for the Princess to join him.

43. *Die Macht der Musik* (1848-49)

Text: Duchess Helen of Orléans

Theme of text: power of music

Character of the song: dramatic

One of Liszt's character traits was a never-failing gratefulness to anyone to whom he felt himself in the slightest degree indebted, even for a passing pleasure or a

momentary sign of distinction, and it is no doubt on this account that a number of his Lieder are set to the verses of aristocratic dilettantes and mediocre poets. *Die Macht der Musik* is a case in point.

44. *Anfangs wollt ich fast versagen* (c1849)

Text: Heine

Theme of text: suffering

Character of the song: despairing

This song was written at the time of the crisis involving Princess Carolyne's protracted divorce proceedings. Although Liszt was "wearied by the protracted dispute" (Watson 1989, 87), Carolyne had won first place in his heart. This song reflects Liszt's prevailing mood at that time.

45. *Hohe Liebe* (1850)

Text: The Swabian poet, J.L. Uhland.

Theme of text: love, Heaven

Character of the song: lyrical

This song was written at the time when Liszt was sincerely devoted to Princess Carolyne, when she was the central being in his life.

46. *Gestorben war ich* (c1849)

Text: Uhland - the title of the work is "*Seliger Tod*".

Theme of text: love, bliss

Character of the song: dreamy

Cook (1988, 170) writes that the song re-enacts the narrative and emotional progression of Uhland's poem but the tone is sensuous rather than spiritual, secular rather than religious. This is in keeping with the general tone of Liszt's early songs and with the general tone of Liszt's life at this time.

From the records it appears that Liszt wrote no new songs between 1850 and 1857. The revisions date from the period after 1855 (he had at that time written no songs for about five years). From the late 1850's and the year 1860 date sixteen new songs and then comes another gap. The remaining songs date from 1871 - 1886. It is thus possible to divide the songs into three groups, just as it is possible to divide Liszt's life into three periods - the virtuoso years, the Weimar years and the late years. On yet another level the songs reflect Liszt's life. The early songs, most of which were written during the virtuoso years and very early Weimar years reflect the youthful Liszt. The character of the songs and the musical style attest to this. When he settled in Weimar he realised that most of his earlier songs were "too inflated and sentimental" (Watson 1989, 306). Now, older and wiser, he reviewed his earlier works and decided to change them (Headington in Walker 1976, 223). The songs from these years generally show more restraint and control. Watson (1989, 306) writes that it is fascinating to follow Liszt's songs in chronological order, as he finds new solutions to his problems, and corrects the mistakes of earlier years. Again a parallel can be drawn to his life.

47. *Es muss ein Wunderbares sein* (1857)

Text: Redwitz

Theme of text: love

Character of the song: pensive

Although Searle (in Sadie 1980, Vol.11, 65) dates this song 1857, Walker writes (1989, 507) that it bears the inscription "composed March 30, 1852." Watson (1989, 308) also gives the date as 1852, composed between lunch and supper for Princess Augusta of Prussia at Ettersburg near Weimar. Watson believes that it justifies its popularity as a simple love lyric.

Between 1850 and 1856 Liszt was mainly occupied with the composition and performance of his symphonic poems and other large orchestral works, and championing Wagner's operas and the works of his contemporaries. During these years he was also occupied with revisions of his early piano works and the completion of his opera.

In 1856 Liszt began writing new songs once again.. A letter to Josef Dessauer is interesting in that it dates from the early 1850's, when there was a break in his output of songs: 'Perhaps you'll put me once again in a song mood, which will prompt me to write in this form. My earlier songs are mostly too inflated and sentimental' (Headington in Walker 1976, 246). The new songs, as well as the revisions, reveal a more modest Liszt, more cautious, more self-restrained and more respectful. However Headington continues, "It is always fairly obvious that the same composer is at work... and not necessarily finding brand-new solutions in the light of increasing experience."

48. *Ich scheide* (1857)

Text: The poet, Hoffmann von Fallersleben, who made frequent visits to the Altenburg after moving to Weimar in 1854. Walker (1987, 243), writes that he and his wife were treated as members of the family and there was hardly an event of any significance at the Altenburg to which he was not invited. His many odes, declamations, speeches and toasts became an essential element in the proceedings there.

Theme of text: farewell, nature

Character of the song: romantic

Headington (in Walker 1976, 246) refers to a letter Liszt wrote to Princess Sayn-Wittgenstein in which he told her of his troubles in setting *Ich scheide*:

"I did three or four different versions, torn up one after another - and, tired out with the struggle, I finished it last night. It's nothing very special - and I certainly swore that I wouldn't get involved like that again".

Although Searle gives the date of composition as 1857, this song bears the inscription “composed May 27, 1860” according to Walker (1989, 507).

The many discrepancies that occur in the dating of Liszt’s songs draw attention to the difficulty facing musicologists in this area. Hughes (1917, 407) refers to the unreliability of sources which give the exact date of composition of many of the songs. In many instances the original manuscript had been lost. (Legany 1986, 128). It also happened more than once that Liszt erroneously dated a song by mistakenly writing the incorrect year, and the publisher made the same mistake.

49. *Wie singt die Lerche schön* (?1856)

Text: Hoffmann von Fallersleben

Theme of text: nature, beauty

Character of the song: lively, joyful

In setting this poem Liszt adopted a descriptive style which suggests the song of the lark - reminiscent of the early nature songs. Watson notes (1989, 221) that in his preface to the 1842 publication of his *Album d’un Voyager*, Liszt wrote of the deep sensations he experienced while travelling through different landscapes, the rapport he felt with ‘the varied phenomena of nature’ and of how, on coming to represent these in music, his “recollections intensified”.

50. *Weimars Volkslied* (1857)

Text: Peter Cornelius, known today as a composer. He moved into the Altenburg as a permanent resident in 1853, and Liszt employed him as a transcriber and translator of his articles. Cornelius also provided German translations of a number of Liszt’s song texts which are perhaps his most sensitive work in this area, according to Walker (1987, 194).

Theme of text: war, God, country

Character of the song: martial

This song was written at the request of Carl Alexander for the 1857 Festival at Weimar.

51. *Ich liebe dich* (1857)

Text: Rückert

Theme of text: love

Character of the song: tender, lyrical

This song may have also been set at a request or as a gesture of friendship, writes Baron (1993, 135). The original manuscripts of this song were owned by the Marchese della Valle di Casanova and the Princess Olga von Meyendorff. The princess was an especially intimate acquaintance of Liszt. This is the only song which Liszt set to a poem of the German romantic poet Friedrich Rückert.

52. *Muttergottes - Sträusslein im Maimonate* (1857)

Text: Müller

i) ***Das Veilchen***

Theme of text: worship, sacred

Character of the song: light

ii) ***Die Schlüsselblumen***

Theme of text: nature, spring

Character of the song: lively

Hughes writes (1917, 396) that the battle between Liszt's artistic and religious natures, which lasted with more or less violence during the whole of his life, makes itself manifest in these two Müller lieder. Cooper (1938, 180) describes the songs as follows:

“With Josef Müller’s *Muttergottes Sträusslein zum Maimonate* we are on the borderland between the religious and the amorous. The poems are coquettish little verses to Our Lady, with a vein of real piety in them. Liszt catches this mood perfectly and the two songs *Das Veilchen* and *Die Schlüsselblumen* are models of their not very attractive genre.”

53. *Lasst mich ruhen* (?c1858)

Text: von Fallersleben

Theme of text: rest

Character of the song: placid

This song express the need for rest, perhaps a similar need to that which Liszt was beginning to experience in Weimar at that time.

54. *In Liebeslust* (?c1858)

Text: von Fallersleben

Theme of text: love

Character of the song: passionate, agitated at times

55. *Blume und Duft* (c1860)

Text: The poet and dramatist, Friedrich Hebbel, who visited the Altenburg in 1858, and who declared that, while he could pass no judgement on Liszt’s music, Liszt “had gathered round him a circle the like of which I had seen nowhere else on earth, with the most original of ideas and emotions”.(Taylor 1986, 130)

Theme of text: decay, flower

Character of the song: hesitant

This was the last song that Liszt wrote while at Weimar, according to Baron (1993, 141). It is not surprising then that it is known as one of his most moving songs.

56. *Die drei Zigeuner* (1860)

Text: The poet, Lenau, who, like Liszt, was a Hungarian expatriate. He wrote in a foreign language with nostalgic memories of the country in which they were both born.

Theme of text: story, gypsies

Character of the song: dramatic

Gorrell (1993, 245) believes that Liszt's background as a virtuoso and dramatic personality is mirrored in *Die drei Zigeuner*. The song reveals Liszt's known love for gypsy music. In the same letter to Princess Sayn-Wittgenstein, in which he discusses the song, *Ich scheide*, Liszt wrote that he had started on *Die Drei Zigeuner* and "found the general outline very quickly at the piano. If it goes naturally, so to speak, I'll write it. But otherwise not for the moment, for I was too stupidly bothered for days over that musical inflection twenty times found - and yet remaining unfindable - of Hoffman's 'Scheiden'" (Headington in Walker 1976, 246).

57. *Wieder möcht ich dir begegnen* (1860)

Text: Cornelius

Theme of text: love

Character of the song: passionate, romantic

Raabe (Breitkopf & Härtel 1966, VII 3, VI) writes that this song was completed on October 9 1860, on which day Liszt wrote to Emilie Merian-Genast as follows: "Ein Lied ist mir auch wieder gestern vom Herzen geflossen. Das Gedicht von Cornelius kennen Sie, glaube ich."

58. *Die stille Wasserrose* (?1860)

Text: Geibel

Theme of text: flower (?)

Character of the song: lyrical

Raabe reports (Breitkopf & Härtel, Vol. VII 3, VI) that on July 2 1860, Liszt wrote to Emilie Merian Genast (in his unpublished letters) “Die stille Wasserrose ist nicht ganz still verblieben - und der Schwan kreist und singt hin und her”. Written after Liszt’s departure from Weimar for a more peaceful existence in Rome, this song suggests Liszt’s emotional state at that time

59. *Jugendglück* (c1860)

Text: Richard Pohl, a theory teacher and friend of Liszt in Weimar. He was introduced to Liszt in 1852. From the start Liszt saw in Pohl a potential crusader in the cause of new music, and invited him to settle in Weimar, which he and his wife did in 1854. He wrote many pioneering articles in defence of Liszt, the composer. Liszt always remained grateful to Pohl for “the faithful, noble devotion which you always so courageously and emphatically showed to Weimar’s Progressive Period”(Taylor 1986, 364).

Theme of text: youth

Character of the song: exuberant

This song was perhaps set during one of Liszt’s happier moments (Baron 1993, 141). It could also have been composed in gratitude to Pohl to whom he felt indebted.

60. *Die Fischertochter* (1871)

Text: Count C. Coronini

Theme of text: story, storm

Character of the song: dramatic

After a break of almost ten years, Liszt began to write songs again in 1871 and he continued to produce a more or less steady output until the end of his life. The ballad, *Die Fischertochter*, is the first song in his late output. Liszt sent the song from Pest to Princess Carolyne for her birthday on 8th Feb. 1871.

61. *La Perla* (1872)

Text: Princess Therese von Hohenlohe

Theme of text: pearl - maiden

Character of the song: flowing

Raabe (in Breitkopf & Härtel 1966, Vol. VII 3, p. VIII) is of the opinion that the song was written around 1876 when Liszt was a guest of the poetess and was composed perhaps as a favour.

62. *J'ai perdu ma force et ma vie (Tristesse)* (1872)

Text: De Musset

Theme of text: despair, God

Character of the song: pensive

Watson writes (1989, 309) that this song has been seen as a symbol of Liszt's last period: it is a sad reflection on the weariness and resignation of an old man, full of poignant grief. He has lost everything but the belief in his own genius to which he must be true. One can easily see the implications in this for Liszt.

63. *Ihr Glocken von Marling* (1874)

Text: Emil Kuh

Theme of text: bell, protecting

Character of the song: dreamy

Nugent (1986, 81) reports that Liszt worked at setting the text intermittently in the spring and summer of 1874, completing the final draft at the Villa d'Este, Tivoli. Evidently Liszt thought highly of the work and mentioned it frequently in correspondence. Headington (in Walker 1976, 246) quotes one of Liszt's letters to Princess Sayn-Wittgenstein in which he discusses this song: "a little, innocent, dreamy Lied.....which cost me more trouble than I expected. I had to do it three times over.....If my little 'Bells of Marling' tinkle agreeable in Magne's ears, that will be a very sweet

compensation for me". Magne was Liszt's nickname for the Princess's small daughter Marie.

**64. *Und Sprich* (1st version - 1874)
(2nd version - 1878)**

Text: Biegeleben

Theme of text: nature

Character of the song: ethereal

According to Raabe (Breitkopf & Härtel 1966, Vol. VII 3, VIII) the song was presented to the Princess on New Year's Day, 1875.

65. *Sei stil* (1877)

Text: Nordheim, pseudonym. of H. von Schorn

Theme of text: death, love

Character of the song: plaintive

In 1877 Liszt set to music the poem *Sei stil*, written by Adelheid von Schorn's mother. Baron (1993, 178) quotes a letter Liszt wrote to Adelheid on September, 1877: "when one is at a loss what to say, to write, well - one tries to help oneself with music.

Enclosed I forward you the song of your noblehearted mother 'Ach, was ist Leben doch so schwer!' My setting is managed that you will easily master it, as well in the singing as in the accompaniment."

66. *An Edlitam* (?1878)

Text: Bodenstedt

Theme of text: love

Character of the song: boastful

67. *Einst* (?1878)

Text: Bodenstedt, written for his wife Matilde for their silver wedding anniversary.

Theme of text: love, marriage

Character of the song: lyrical, sad

68. *Gebet* (?1878)

Text: Bodenstedt

Theme of text: thanks

Character of the song: reverent

69. *Der Gluckliche* (?1878)

Text: Wilbrandt

Theme of text: love

Character of the song: exuberant, ends tenderly

70. *Go not happy day* (1879)

Text: Tennyson

Theme of text: passing of time

Character of the song: flowing

Liszt set the English text of the Tennyson poem, *Go Not, Happy Day*, at the request of an English friend.

71. *Verlassen* (1880)

Text: G. Michell

Theme of text: tears, solitude

Character of the song: melancholic

Liszt writes of his song, *Verlassen*, in a letter to Princess Carolyne dated August 12, 1880 as follows:

“.....voici un petit commentaire sur un Lied, que j’ai écrit entièrement pour une actrice, qui ne sait guère chanter. La poésie me plaisait - les 3 strophes se terminent par ‘Ich wein, ach muss weinen!’ Le ton élégiaque m’est assez familier - mais je cache d’ordinaire à mes connaissances!”

72. *Des Tages laute Stimmen schweigen* (1880)

Text: F. von Saar

Theme of text: nightfall

Character of the song: peaceful, silences

The manuscript of this song carries the following dedication : “Très humble hommage à Madame la Princess Marie de Hoheloche de son vieux serviteur F. Liszt (Villa d’Este 18 Octobre 80).” This song was not published during Liszt’s lifetime.

73. *Und wir dachten der Toten* (?1880)

Text: Freiligrath

Theme of text: death

Character of the song: dark

Liszt set only the last stanza of the Freiligrath poem. The text must have had personal significance for him.

74. *Ne brani menya, moy drug* (1886)

Text: Tolstoy

Liszt’s last song, *Do not reproach me, my friend*, was written in the year of his death, and the title can be seen as a symbolic message from Liszt to his world.

Liszt's songs and his revisions admit us into his private world of conflicting ideals and instincts. Not surprising that "the moods of his songs are manifold and Liszt is at home in all of them" (Hughes 1917, 396). The songs reflect the stimuli that worked upon Liszt's mind and the terms in which he saw his life. His personality and prevailing moods often influenced the character of the songs and the themes of the poetry he chose to set to music and external circumstances suggested and sometimes even dictated the kind of songs he wrote.

Irwin (1993, 17) writes that the most consistent qualities to be found are spontaneity and beauty especially in the earlier songs, with his later songs tending towards austerity - yet another reminder of their autobiographical nature.

CHAPTER 4

THE REVISIONS

Liszt's style development

Liszt continually revised his earlier compositions and his songs were no exception. Most of his early songs - those written before 1850 - were revised, and some very drastically. Douglas (1987, 6) believes that most of the later versions improve upon their earlier settings.

The revisions date from the period after 1855. Liszt had at that time written no songs for about five years. Headington (in Walker 1976, 223) writes that "an older and perhaps wiser composer was reconsidering his work in the light of preparation for publication of a collected edition of songs, the main part of which appeared in 1859".

Comparative studies of the originals and their revisions reveal certain general characteristics which reflect Liszt's ongoing developing style, although the extent of alteration varies considerably in individual songs. Although the stylistic characteristics are interrelated, it is possible to single out certain more obvious features.

- **Simplification of style**

Simplification of style is often interrelated with the treatment of the original texts in Liszt's songs. In many instances, especially in the early songs, Liszt treated his texts freely - just as Liszt the performer treated the composer's instructions for performance - adding his own embellishments. His regular repetition of certain lines of the poetry in a song as well as certain words within the line, obscure the poet's message and weaken the impact of the poems. But, as Watson (1989, 306) notes, his treatment of words grew more cautious, modest and respectful as his later music became simpler in texture.

This is well illustrated by the song, *Der du von dem Himmel bist*, of which Liszt made three versions. Goethe's original text is eight lines in length as follows:

Der du von dem Himmel bist
 alles Leid und Schmerzen stillest,
 Den, der doppelt ellend ist,
 Doppelt mit Erquickung füllest.
 Ach! ich bin des Treibens müde!
 Was soll all der Schmerz und Lust?
 Süßer Friede, komm, -
 Ach, komm in meine Brust!

Liszt's text of version one is full of repetition. He adheres to the first six lines of Goethe's original and then adds his own repetitions; the phrase "in meinem Brust", for instance, appears no less than seven times:

Text of Version 1 - Composed: 1842 Published: Berlin 1843

Der du von dem Himmel bist,
 alles Leid und Schmerzen stillest,
 den, der doppelt ellend ist,
 doppelt mit Erquickung füllest.
 Ach! ich bin des Treibens müde!
 Was soll all der Schmerz und Lust?
 Ach! ich bin des Treibens müde!
 Was soll, was soll all der Schmerz,
 all der Schmerz und Lust?
 Was soll all der Schmerz und Lust?
 Süßer Friede, süßer Friede,
 komm, ach komm, in meine Brust.
 Süßer Friede, komm, ach komm,
 komm, ach komm in meine Brust,
 komm, ach komm in meine Brust,
 komm, ach komm in meine Brust!
 Ach, ich bin des Treibens müde.
 Der du im Himmel bist,
 süßer Friede, komm, ach komm
 in meine Brust, in meine Brust,
 komm, ach komm in meine Brust!
 Ach, komm in meine Brust!

In Liszt's second version his textual repetition is somewhat reduced as follows:

Text of Version 2 - Published: Berlin 1856

Der du von dem Himmel bist,
 alles Leid und Schmerzen stillest,
 den, der doppelt ellend ist,
 doppelt mit Erquickung füllest.
 Ach! ich bin des Treibens müde!
 Was soll all der Schmerz und Lust?
 Ach! ich bin des Treibens müde!
 Was soll all der Schmerz,
 all der Schmerz und Lust,
 all der Schmerz und Lust?
 Süsßer Friede, süsßer Friede,
 komm, ach komm in meine Brust!
 Süsßer Friede, komm, ach, komm,
 komm, ach komm in meine Brust!
 Süsßer Friede,
 ach, komm in meine Brust,
 ach komm in meine Brust,
 komm in meine Brust, in meine Brust!

In the third version Liszt's text is edited almost to Goethe's original. Goethe's last two lines, so heavily embellished by Liszt in versions one and two, are left exactly as Goethe wrote them.

Text of Version 3 - Published: 1860

Der du von dem Himmel bist,
 alles Leid und Schmerzen stillest,
 den, der doppelt ellend ist,
 doppelt mit Erquickung füllest.
 Ach! ich bin des Treibens müde!
 Ach! ich bin des Treibens müde!
 Was soll all der Schmerz und Lust?
 Was soll all der Schmerz und Lust?
 Süsßer Friede, komm, -
 ach, komm in meine Brust!

Comparing the score of the second version (1856) with the first (1843), it can be seen that the accompaniment is slightly altered at places; the piano introduction is shortened and simplified; interludes are either shortened or eliminated and there is no postlude; instead there is extensive alteration in the last ten bars of the second version.

The melodic line is essentially unchanged throughout. In version three of the same song (1860) where the text is edited almost to Goethe's original, the music is completely rewritten in a more concise form and simple style, embodying a much simpler texture and a pronounced economy of means. The busy, thicker texture of the first and second versions is replaced by unhurried chords where every note is of importance and has its function, and nothing is put to waste or used for mere effect - a characteristic of Liszt's later style. A comparison of the opening bars of all three versions shows how a quite elaborate eight-bar piano introduction in the original (Ex. 1) is reduced to six bars and a thinner texture in version two (Ex. 2), and finally becomes simply a series of rich resonant chords for 6 bars in version three (Ex. 3).

Ex. 1 *Der du von dem Himmel bist* (1st version: 1843) - introduction

Der du von dem Himmel bist

Gedicht von Goethe.

Der Prinzessin Augusta von Preußen gewidmet.

Franz Liszt.

(Erste Fassung, veröffentlicht 1843.)

Langsam.

Singstimme.
Mzzo-Sopran oder
Tenor-Bariton.

Klavier.

sotto voce *cresc...*

Der du von dem

pp
dolcissimo
smorz. e rit.

Ex. 2 *Der du von dem Himmel bist* (2nd version: 1856) - introduction

Der du von dem Himmel bist

Gedicht von Goethe.

Franz Liszt.
(Zweite Fassung, erschienen Juli 1856.)

Singstimme.
Mezzo-Sopran oder
Tenor.

Klavier.

Langsam.

p

Der du von dem Him - mel bist,

Der du von dem Him - mel bist,

dolce

Ex. 3 *Der du von dem Himmel bist* (3rd version: 1860) - introduction**Der du von dem Himmel bist**

Gedicht von Goethe.

Franz Liszt.
(Letzte Fassung, veröffentlicht 1860.)

Langsam.

Singstimme.
(Mezzosopran oder Bariton.)

Klavier.

Der du von dem

Freudvoll und Leidvoll, in its three versions and settings, provides further examples of Liszt's handling of a single text. Frequency of text repetition and the extended piano postlude of the first setting in 1844 account for its length. The second setting, written four years later in 1848, shows Liszt "starting from scratch with a new interpretation of text, composing an entirely new song" (Douglas 1987, 4). Here again, there is much text repetition of the last line. But the third version of 1860 is more compact, with a simpler accompaniment and vocal line. In this version the prelude, postlude and the number of words are all shortened and Liszt repeats the last line of the text only once.

- **More faithful depiction of the text**

The two settings of *Comment, disaient-ils* (1842 and 1859) show the development of a keener awareness of the true nature of Hugo's poem, *Autre Guitare*. The accompaniment in the later version is more guitar-like, both in range and scoring. The dynamic indication at the beginning of the first version is a pianistic *leggiero*, and this is replaced by *staccato, quasi Chitarra* in the later version. A comparison of the opening bars of both versions in Ex. 4 and Ex. 5 makes these differences clear.

Ex. 4 *Comment, disaient-ils* (1st Version: 1842)-introduction

Was tun?
Comment, disaient-ils
Gedicht von Victor Hugo. Deutsche Übersetzung von Th. Rehbaum.

Franz Liszt.
(Vertont 1843, veröffentlicht 1844.)

Singstimme.
Sopran oder Tenor.

Klavier.

Animato. *declamato*

p leggiero

Wie
Com.

Ex. 5 *Comment, disaient-ils* (2nd Version: 1859)- introduction

Comment, disaient-ils
Gedicht von Victor Hugo.

Franz Liszt.
(Spätere Fassung, veröffentlicht 1860.)

Singstimme.
Sopran oder Tenor.

Klavier.

Très animé. *parlé*

p staccato, quasi Chitarra

Comment, disaient-ils, a .

The final version of Goethe's *Über allen Gipfeln ist Ruh* mirrors exactly the enchantment and simplicity of the poetry with unhurried, pictorially effective chords, and Watson (1989, 308) notes that similar economy and concentration and a finely gauged independence of voice and piano distinguish *Mignons Lied* and *Wer nie sein Brot mit Tränen ass* in their last revisions as more faithful depictions of the text.

- More subtlety of the piano part

Searle writes (in Sadie 1980, Vol.11, 49) that the earlier versions of Liszt's songs tend to overemphasise the piano part at the expense of the simpler poems but these defects mostly disappear in the later versions. In a letter dated 1 August, 1853, to Louis Köhler (in La Mara, ed. 1894, 172), Liszt himself referred to the predominance of the piano part in his earlier songs as follows: "Later on, when I bring out a couple more numbers, I must make a somewhat remodelled edition of these earlier songs. There must, in particular, be some simplification to the accompaniment."

The relentless flowing accompaniment which continues into a sixteen-bar postlude in the original setting of *Im Rhein, im schönen Strome* is a characteristic example. The revised version contains a completely new accompaniment, which is more subtle and more subservient to the text. Similarly in the second version of *Enfant, si j'étais roi*, composed fifteen years after the original, the accompaniment is reduced in power, as Headington notes (in Walker 1976, 229), "it is after all a love song". The left-hand chromatic broken octaves in bars 50-60 in the original are *ff crescendo tumultuoso*, three semitones to a beat, and culminate in a thunderous tremolando (*fff*) and an upward flourish in bars 60-63. In the revised version, the text at the same point is accompanied by octaves which are marked only *f*, *un peu plus animé*, two semitones to a beat, while the tremolando is replaced by staccato chords (*ff*) and the final flourish is omitted (bars 40-52). The two passages are quoted in full in Ex. 6 and Ex. 7.

Ex. 6 *Enfant, si j'étais roi* (1st version: 1844) - bars 50-63

The image displays a musical score for the first version of 'Enfant, si j'étais roi' (1844), specifically bars 50-63. It consists of three staves: a vocal line at the top, a right-hand piano line in the middle, and a left-hand piano line at the bottom. The vocal line includes the lyrics: 'mir, / loi, / näch - ti - gen / et le pro.' The piano accompaniment is characterized by a chromatic broken octave pattern in the left hand, marked with 'ff tumultuoso' and 'arpeggiando'. The right hand features a melody marked 'f marcato assai'. The score is set in a key with two flats and a common time signature.

53

Cha - os Grund, von Ge - bur - ten durch -
 fond cha - os aux en - trail - les fé -

sempre ff e marcato assai

56

zo - gen, die E - wig - keit, die
 con - des, l'é - ter - ni - té, l'es -

mf

sf

59

Wel - ten, den Him - mels - bo - gen
 pa - ce et les cioux et les mon - des

fff

sf

Ex. 7 *Enfant, si j'étais roi* (2nd version: 1860) - bars 40-52

40

mir,
toi,
un peu plus animé

41

näch - ti - gen Cha - os
et le pro - fond cia -

44

Grund, von Ge - bur - - ten durch - zo - gen,
os aux en - trail - - les fé - - con - - des,

47

die E - - wig - keit, die Wel - - ten, den
l'é - - ter - - ni - té, l'es - pace et les

50

Him - - mels - bo - - - gen
cieux et les mon - - - des

Douglas (1987, 7) describes the overemphasis of the piano part in many of Liszt's early songs as the influence of his "transcendental technique". He posits that the piano accompaniment in *Der Fischerknabe*, composed in 1845, could easily be mistaken for a "transcendental étude" which overpowers the voice (Ex. 8). However the 1859 version shows Liszt's attempt to make the song more balanced between the voice and piano, as well as between the text and the music (Ex. 9).

Ex. 8 *Der Fischerknabe* (1st version: 1845) bars 74-79

74 *f marcato*
Und es ruft.

77
aus den Tiefen:

poco rit.
cresc. molto

Ex. 9 *Der Fischerknabe* (2nd version: 1859) - bars 60-63

60 *rit.* 63
Und es ruft aus den Tiefen:

rit.
p

- **Formal tightening**

Liszt's use of form in his songs was highly variant. Diverse phrase lengths and frequent text repetition may produce an episodic effect in one song, while repeated melodies and recurrent passages are used as a binding force in another. Still others may be in ABA, quasi-strophic or free form. "Liszt's songs thus defy neat formal schemes which are quickly observable at a glance or easily fixed in one hearing" (Irwin 1993, 11).

However, an interesting aspect of Liszt's revisions is the manner in which they often improve the actual formal substance of the original setting by way of formal tightening. An effective example of this can be found in two of the versions of *Freudvoll und leidvoll* (c1844 and 1860). By simplifying the piano accompaniment, thinning the general texture, eliminating the extravagant textual repetitions, shortening the piano introduction and the postlude, the rather loose musical framework of the 1844 version is tightened to become a concise ternary form in the 1860 setting.

Formal tightening occurs in the second setting of Goethe's *Wer nie sein Brot mit Tränen ass*". In the first version (?1845) the poem is broken up into a number of "minute dramas" (Cooper 1938, 178), and in spite of the textual aptness of each individual phrase by itself, it is almost impossible to perceive the song as a unified whole. In the second setting (1860), the piano part is smaller, the long piano postlude is reduced to two chords, and there is less splintering of the poem into diverse phrase lengths, which results in more formal concentration.

A formal device which Liszt used increasingly in his works was the motivic development by means of thematic transformation. Short motives pervade a song in various guises, acting as form building devices which express the various moods of a poem and at the same time retain unity. Watson (1989, 188) believes that by making economic use of motives Liszt found the means of strengthening form. A comparison of the three settings of *Der du von dem Himmel bist* reveals how Liszt's command of thematic transformation in the third setting achieves a more highly organised and concise formal design in contrast to the first two settings. The third revision consists of terse phrases

and motivic fragments which are developed and expanded also to provide material for the accompaniment and transitional passages.

- **Harmonic changes**

Liszt's harmonic changes in his revisions vary from small alterations to considerable recastings. According to Watson (1989, 189) there is no better illustration of Liszt's imaginative and innovative approach to harmony than a study of his final cadences, which reflect his ongoing purpose to weaken the bonds of tonality. An examination of the final cadences in the two versions of *Pace non trovo* (1838 and 1861), Ex. 10 and Ex. 11 show his developing chromatic style as follows:

Ex. 10 *Pace non trovo* (1st Version: 1838)

Ex. 11 *Pace non trovo* (2nd Version: 1861)

Example 8 approaches the tonic via a major chord on the mediant which assumes a dominant function and thereby creates a perfect cadence. Example 9 closes on an unresolved chord of the dominant ninth, and Dart believes (1975, 47) that such a treatment of the final chord in the second version should be taken as an expression of Liszt's own self-doubts in this period.

Liszt's harmonic evolution can best be seen by comparing the final bars of the three settings of *Was Liebe sei?* (c1843, c1855 and c1878), (Ex. 12, Ex. 13, and Ex. 14).

Ex. 12 *Was Liebe sei?* (1st Version: c1843)

A: I IV₄ I

Ex. 13 *Was Liebe sei?* (2nd Version: c1855)

A: II⁷ V⁹ (V⁷) I

Ex. 14 *Was Liebe sei?* (3rd Version: c1878)

f#: vii^{o7}

In Ex. 12 Liszt employs a traditional plagal cadence in A major, using the minor mode of IV. Ex. 13, also in A major, closes with a traditional perfect cadence, but this time the tonic is approached by a dominant ninth where the ninth does not resolve onto the fifth of the tonic chord, but moves upwards to the third of the dominant seventh before reaching the tonic. As well the harmony note, G# of V7 is carried over the barline forming a dissonance with I before it resolves upwards by step to A. Ex. 14 ends on an unresolved diminished seventh in the home key of F # minor, which is implied rather than clearly stated throughout the song.

Headington (in Walker 1976, 244) calls the endings to some of the songs daring in the extreme. He writes, "To use a musically incomplete ending requires special expressive circumstances and a great deal of judgement. Liszt, when at the top of his form, had that judgement in full measure."

- **Changes to the vocal line**

Technical simplification of the vocal line towards narrow melodic contours and vocal range is evident in Liszt's later songs. The two settings of *S'il est un charmant gazon* (1844 and 1859) show Liszt's tendency towards this simplification. The greatest difference in vocal writing of these two settings occurs at the end of each stanza, writes Turner (1979, 21). "The early version uses an angular, essentially non-vocal melody" which moves through a cycle of fourths and fifths, while the later setting uses a single leap to a 6-5 appoggiatura which resolves into an unaccompanied scale downward (Ex. 15 and 16).

Ex. 15. *S'il est un charmant gazon* (1844) bars 19 - 22

19

dir zum Pfad gäb' ich ihn gleich, dei - nen Fuß - zu
j'en veux fai - re le che - min où ton pied - se

p dolce egualmente

22

he . . . - gen,
po . . . - se,

Ex. 16 *S'il est un charmant gazon* (1859) bars 16-20

16 *con grazia*

dir zum
j'en veux

17 *dolce*

Pfad gäb ich ihn gleich, dei.nen Fuß zu he . . . - gen,
fai . re le che . min où ton pied se po . . . - se,

20 *p*

Particularly striking in Liszt's later songs is the large number of unaccompanied vocal recitativo passages sparsely accompanied by "unhurried pictorially effective chords" (Watson 1989, 304), including occasional sections without pianoforte or barlines. Liszt's development in this area can be seen in the comparison of the opening of the two settings of *Wer nie sein Brot mit Tränen ass* (c1845 and c1860). In the first version the opening accompaniment is indicated *quasi' arpa* with arpeggio figures in the right hand accompanying a lyrical vocal line which continues throughout the first section (Ex. 17). In the later version the vocal line is far more declamatory and is sparsely accompanied by syncopated chords which creates a reflective dialogue between voice and piano (Ex. 18).

Ex. 17 *Wer nie sein Brot mit Tränen ass* (c1845) bars 1-15**Wer nie sein Brot mit Tränen aß**

Gedicht von Goethe.

Franz Liszt.

(Erste Vertonung. Zuerst veröffentlicht 1848,
in dieser Form 1860.)

Andante mesto.

Singstimme.
Mezzosopran.

Wer nie sein Brot mit

Klavier.

*quasi Arpa**p un poco pesante*

5

Trä - - nen aß, wer nie die kummervol - len

10

Näch - - te auf sei - nem Bet - - te wei - - nend, wei - - nend -

*rit. smorz.**poco rinforz.**rit.**smorz.*

15

saß,

Ex. 18 *Wer nie sein Brod mit Tränen ass* (c1860) bars 1-11

Wer nie sein Brod mit Tränen aß

Gedicht von Goethe.

Franz Liszt.
(Zweite Vertonung,
veröffentlicht 1862.)

1 **Langsam, mit äußerst starker Empfindung und Betonung.** 6

Singstimme.
(Bariton oder Alt.)

Wer nie sein Brod mit Tränen aß, wer

Klavier.

p pesante

7 10 *rit.*

nie die kummervollen Nächte auf seinem Bette weinend saß,

p *rit.*

Liszt's occasionally operatic approach to song is seen clearly in the early Petrarch settings (1838-9), which Dart (1975, 48) describes as "superb examples of the grand Romantic style - rhapsodic in form and boasting quite demanding accompaniments". In these settings, operatic phrases, fioritura, which were designed to create effect, and cadenzas in his melodies, are profuse. In the revisions (1861), the melodies become smoother and more expressive and the melodic contours appear to follow more natural speech patterns rather than the rhapsodic style of the originals. In the original *I vidi in terra angelici costumi*, (1838-9), the passionate treatment of the words "Amor, senso, valor", (bars 40ff), with the dynamic indication of 'poco forte, con esaltazione', is toned down to 'piano dolcissimo' and a considerably subdued vocal line in the 1861 version (Ex.19 and Ex.20).

Ex. 19 *I vidi in terra angelici costumi* (1st Version: 1838-9) bars 40-43

40 *poco forte, con esaltazione* 43

A. - mor! sen - no! va - lor,

Ex. 20 *I vidi in terra angelici costumi* (2nd Version: 1861) bars 34-39

Un poco meno lento. 34 *p*

Es
A. -

p dolcissimo

una corda

35 39

klang so tief, so voll
mor, sen - no, va - lor,

Goode (1966, 69) notes that in some of Liszt's late works two somewhat related tendencies become apparent; a tendency towards brief, close-lying almost laconic melodic utterances, and a tendency toward sequential repetition of some of these brief phrases. Both are evident in the third setting of *Der du von dem Himmel bist* (1860).

Some revised songs, such as *Morgens steh ich auf und frage* (1844/1860) merely suggest the original settings in all aspects, and yet others, such as *Kling leise, mein Lied* (1848/1860) show minimal changes of musical content or overall length in their second versions. In general, the later the revisions appeared in Liszt's life, the more they "showed that Liszt could be sensitive to textual subtleties and that his musical imagination was equal to them", achieving a new intimacy of words and music (Watson 1989, 306). The revisions reveal a progression in Liszt's compositional style toward more brevity, less ornate accompaniments, less repetition of textual phrases, and greater care in the musical handling of textual accents.

Liszt's later versions, together with original settings he composed from 1870 until his death, also reflect similar tendencies to his other works of this period - austerity, restraint and a certain worldly -weariness: songs like *J'ai perdu ma force et ma vie* have been seen as a symbol of Liszt's last period; "it is a sad, affecting reflection on the weariness and resignation of an old man" (id., 309).

• THE OSSIA PASSAGES

The term *ossia* is used to introduce an alternative to a passage (in Sadie 1980, Vol.14, 6). *Ossia* passages differ from revisions in that they provide alternatives within one version of one work.

Just as there are numerous *ossia* passages to be found throughout his piano music, so Liszt included *ossia* passages throughout his songs. Some offer the performer choices of difficulty for a few bars as in the first setting of *Die tote Nachtigall* (Ex.21). Only the first few bars of the passage are given here.

Ex.21 *Die tote Nachtigall* (1st Version: c1843) bars 45ff

45 *Ossia più facile*
dolce con grazia

wenn der Früh . ling nun er . wacht

dolce con grazia

wenn der Früh . ling nun er . wacht

p dolce

poco a poco crescendo

mit sei . ner Nach . ti . gal . len Lie . der,

poco a poco crescendo

mit sei . ner Nach . ti . gal . len

poco a poco crescendo

Also more difficult are the ossia passages with top D flats in the first versions of *Pace non trovo* and *Benedetto sia 'l giorno* (Ex.22).

Ex.22 *Benedetto sia 'l giorno* (1st Version:1839) bars 88-92

Ossia *lei, di lei . . . ch'al.tro non v'ha.*

88 *rit.*
v'ha parte, il pensier mio, ch'è sol di lei, — ch'al - tro non v'ha

92
par - te.
sempre dolce

Other ossia passages actually supply different musical interpretations of the text, as in *Ich liebe dich*, which has three possible endings; the first two are soft and introspective, and the third *fortissimo* (Ex.23).

Ex.23 *Ich liebe dich* (1862) bars 54-58

oder Sein. —

50 hauch; 52 *ff* dich lieb' ich, 54 *rit.* weil dich lie - ben ist mein Sein. —

oder *molto rit.*
weil dich lie - ben ist mein Sein.

In *Im Rhein, im schönen Strome* (1840) a complete alternative accompaniment appears bar for bar with the original throughout the songs, which is presented as an “Ossia più difficile (Ex.24). Only the introduction is illustrated here.

Ex. 24 *Im Rhein, im schönen Strome* (1st Version: 1840) introduction

Bewegt.

Singstimme.
Mezzo-Sopran oder
Tenor-Bariton.

Klavier.

**Ossia
più difficile.**

Im

p dolce

dolce legato, lispelnd

THE RATIONALE BEHIND LISZT'S REVISIONS OF HIS SONGS

- Some views

The rationale behind Liszt's revisions and ossia passages has been interpreted in many ways. Walker (1987, 306) writes the following:

“For Liszt, however, a composition was rarely finished. All his life he went on reshaping, reworking, adding, subtracting; sometimes a composition exists in four or five different versions simultaneously. To say that it progresses towards a ‘final’ form, is to misunderstand Liszt’s art. Entire works are ‘metamorphosed’ across a span of twenty-five years or more, accumulating and shedding detail along the way”.

Taylor (1986, 88), on the other hand, dismisses Liszt's “predilection” as a narcissistic preoccupation with the creatures of his own world, implying “a lack of creative stamina, a repeated drying-up of the wells of inventiveness”. Hamburger (1980, 40) describes “the intentionally not finished, incomplete, uncertain, unresolved state “so characteristic of Liszt’s composing technique”, as a stylistic trait so typical of romanticism, and also a reflection of Liszt’s personality. Liszt himself wrote in a letter to George Sand (*Revue et Gazette Musicale*, Feb. 2, 1837 [in Hamburger 1980, 40]):

“Don’t you believe that when the truth-seeking artist has allowed the first fever of excitement over his work to calm down, and has recovered from the headiness of triumph or the disappointment of defeat, he becomes far better than the art critic in seeing the deficiencies of his composition? Nevertheless he retains a certain pride, which, though free of vanity, shows itself openly and bravely to the public.”

Hamburger(*ibid.*) sees the above statement as a reference to his revisions; she writes that it is by comparing such revisions, which, according to her, were not in every instance of absolute benefit to the composition, that the development of the composer can be assessed.

Then again, one should take note of the following extract from a literary article written by Liszt and published in *Revue et Gazette Musicale*, July 16, 1837 (in Rostand 1972, 162):

“Like a bird breaking the bars of its restricting prison, fancy shakes out its stiff feathers and takes wing.....Happy the man who never does the same thing twice, who never follows the same track twice”.

The above comment by Liszt could be linked to Friedheim’s speculation (1983, 200) that the wealth of music included within the revisions of his own music - both the brief ossia passages as well as alterations of complete compositions, the improvised elaborations of piano music in his performance, and the transcriptions of his own and of other composers’ music, were not intended to be improvements but simply explorations of different possibilities: and that if these merely provide different versions for their own sake, then it could be suggested that the philosophy of the revision is that there is no such thing as an ultimate interpretation or final version of any composition. It would then seem that the audience went to the concert, not to hear specific compositions, but to hear what would happen to them.

As such, Liszt’s seemingly endless revisions of his own, as well as everyone else’s music, represent in one sense, the composer acting as performer. Could this have been an element of chance which Liszt was providing in his works, which today could even be interpreted as pointing the way towards twentieth century indeterminacy? Perhaps so. Whittall (1987, 88-89) believes that in order for any music to be seriously regarded as direct ancestors of twentieth century indeterminate forms, inter-changeability must be built into the composer’s basic conception and the order of appearance can change from performance to performance. This could provide the explanation for the rationale behind Liszt’s revisions of his songs.

The speculations and verdicts differ, but the fact remains that as Liszt continued composing, transcribing and rewriting over the years, performers were offered more and more alternatives for each composition.

CHAPTER 5

LISZT AS A TONE PAINTER

The harmonic features of the songs

Hughes (1917, 395) writes that Liszt used the same compositional methods in his songs in miniature that he employed on a large scale in his symphonic poems in order to produce a musical paraphrase of the thought, feeling and colour of a poem. With the use of melody, harmony, rhythm and timbre as a palette, he created sonorities to paint in tone what the poet said in words. Watson (1989, 187) writes that Liszt achieved in the musical equivalent of a “few chalk strokes”, the depiction of a character or situation with extraordinary ability and exactness. From the broadest level - the mood, or subject matter of the poem as a whole - to the fine detail of a phrase or word, the songs display Liszt’s art as a tone painter. In many songs Liszt combines an overall descriptive atmosphere (mood painting) with representation in music of individual words and phrases (word painting) by voice and piano. His use of chromaticism to paint words of sadness, anguish, night, death, along with his use of tonality to create changing moods, can be found in all his songs.

The harmonic devices Liszt used in his songs to express emotional states and specific aspects of a given text are widely variant, according to Irwin (1993, 17), and they demonstrate an ongoing systematic expansion of harmonic models that incorporates as basic harmonies, “sonorities that are not part of the central syntax of tonal music” (Forte 1987, 227). Todd (1988, 94) highlights the following aspects of Liszt’s harmonic development:

- his innovative approach to tonal planning that led to powerful excursions into atonality
- his extension of the major-minor tonal system through a variety of non-diatonic scales
- his development of progressions with quartal and other non third-based harmonies
- striking applications of diminished-seventh chords, augmented triads and other chromatic harmonies.

The Early Songs 1839 - 1847

Frequent and abrupt modulation, chromaticism, tonal planning and tonal ambiguity are used primarily as a means of adding harmonic colour to his early songs. Examples abound in most of the songs, and the following instances are singled out:

1838-1839: *Tre Sonetti di Petrarca*

i) *Pace non trovo* (1st version)

The opening passage is not in the tonic, but consists of a series of chromatic syncopated modulations. This is followed by the opening vocal phrase, *Pace non trovo* in bar 6 which is harmonised by a dominant ninth chord in E flat major and a dominant seventh in A flat major, followed by *e non ho da far guerra*, harmonised by f: II7_b and V7.

These harmonies create an unsettled effect for textual emphasis (Ex. 1). The initial confusion of the tonal basis reflects the confusion and contradiction of the agonies of love which continues to be reflected by harmonic fluctuation and modulation and frequent use of diminished chords, particularly diminished sevenths throughout the song.

Ex. 1 *Pace non trovo* (1st version: 1838-1839) introduction

Agitato assai.

Singstimme.
Tenor.

Klavier.

precipitato

Lento. **Tempo ad lib.**
declamato

Pa. ce non tro. vo, e non ho da far guerra,

Eb: \bar{V}_c^9 Ab: \bar{V}^7 f: \bar{ii}_b^7 \bar{V}^7

Todd (1988, 97) names *Pace non trovo* as a pivotal work in marking a turning point in Liszt's perception of the augmented triad. He quotes a statement by Liszt "The augmented triad was then still something remarkable. Wagner had used these chords in his *Venusberg*, that is around 1845, but they were written for the first time by me here (in the Petrarch Sonnet)." Todd (id., 98) comments that the alternation between calming consonant triads and ambivalent augmented triads captures quite beautifully the essence of Petrarch's sonnet.

1842: *Comment, disaient-ils* (1st version)

In this song Liszt uses tonality as a means of reinforcing the mood. There are three stanzas plus a coda, and each stanza consists of two musical sections, corresponding to the poem's dialogue between a male suitor and his lady love. Liszt uses four changes of key signature to unrelated keys to create contrast between questions and responses. In each stanza the male suitor asks a question, to which his love responds with a single word. Turner's translation (1979, 24) is as follows:

1. (He) How can we escape (the police) in this light boat?
(She) Row.....
2. (He) How can you, in the midst of our troubles, forget your grief and misery?
(She) Sleep.....
3. (He) And how (can I) win this maid without magic charms?
(She) Love.....

A coda repeats her responses: *ramez....dormez....aimez.....*

From the home key of B major for the first question and response and second question, Liszt moves to F major for the second response. The third question is in A flat major and the third response begins in A major and moves to A flat major for the coda to intensify the meaning of the single words, *ramez*, *dormez* and *aimez*. The shifts of the tonal centres and shifts in tonal focus direct the attention to the various poetic lines and to the single words.

c1843: *Morgens steh ich auf und frage*

In this song Liszt uses the chromatic change at *klage* (bar 11) to depict a change of mood to a more intense *aus blieb sie auch heut* in G sharp minor. This change of mood is strengthened by the fact that it occurs within the third repetition of a motive in the accompaniment used also in bars 4-5 and bars 6-7 (Ex.2). This two-bar motive ends on

the second inversion of the tonic, A major, the first and second time it appears, but moves instead to the diminished seventh chord of G sharp minor in the following repetition. This is an example of Liszt's renowned technique of thematic transformation; in this instance a short motive of characteristic significance is harmonically transformed to depict a textual mood change.

Ex. 2 *Morgens steh ich auf und frage* (c 1843) bars 1-13

Morgens steh ich auf und frage

Gedicht von Heinrich Heine.

Der Erbgroßherzogin Sophie von Sachsen-Weimar-Eisenach gewidmet.

Franz Liszt.

(Erste Fassung, veröffentlicht 1844.)

Allegretto con grazia. 4

Singstimme.
(Tenor.)

Klavier.

p dolce

Morgens steh ich auf und fra - ge: kommt Feinslieb - chen heut?

Abends sink ich hin und kla - ge: aus blieb sie auch heut.
blieb sie auch

poco rit. 13

agitato

A g#: vii^{o7} d i c v⁷ i

c1844: *Enfant, si j'étais roi* (1st version)

Turner (1979, 30) writes that the tremendous feeling of energy and motion which this song conveys is enhanced greatly by Liszt's use of each chord as a potential pivot-chord or chromatic entrance into a new tonality. While retaining one or more notes of a chord, he moves others about chromatically, shifting again and again to reach completely new harmonies smoothly. In bar 10, $G\flat$ is added to $A\flat$: I to become $D\flat$: V7. The $G\flat$ resolves to F in bar 11 and $A\flat$ and $E\flat$ are retained, forming $E\flat$: ii7. The $E\flat$ moves to D on the third beat, while F and $A\flat$ are retained, which creates a new harmony of $E\flat$: vii^oc (Ex. 3). This technique builds excitement "from suavity and cool passion ...to unbridled, unrelenting passion" (id., 27).

Ex. 3 *Enfant, si j'étais roi* (1st version: c 1844) bars 6-12

6 *mf* *poco marcato*

Mein Kind, wär ich Kö - nig, glän - zend und reich vor
 En - fant, si j'étais roi je don.nerais l'em .

sotto voce *simile*

Ab: I Db: V7

11

Al - - - len, gäb ich
 pi - - - re et mon

Eb: ii7 vii^oc

1844: *Freudvoll und leidvoll*

Mourning for lost love is the theme of this song and Liszt's use of harmony and tonality contributes to its portrayal in musical imagery. The second half of the song is subdivided into two separate parts; *Himmelhoch jauchzend, zum Tode betrubt* is set dramatically over alternating B: I and D: I triads which form a third relationship. The common note F-sharp functions both to connect the two tonalities and to intensify the ambiguity between them. The resulting tonal ambiguity conveys the ambivalence of the phrases in bars 31-46. Of particular significance is Liszt's use of the chromatic augmented triad VI⁷_b/B to highlight the word *Tode*. Thereafter follows a contrasting lyrical piano interlude in the tonic key of A flat major from bar 47 which introduces the next vocal section, *glücklich allein ist die Seele, die liebt* (Ex.4). Here, alternating dominant and tonic harmonies in A flat major highlight the 'joyful' aspect of the text.

Ex. 4 *Freudvoll und leidvoll* (1st version: 1844) bars 31-57

smorz. 31
ben . der Pein, poco più mosso e rinforz.

35
B:I accentato assai D:I
him . melhoch jauch zend,

B:I D:I B:I

40 *riten.*
zum To - - - de, zum

45 *piu riten. assas* D: I B: VI 7 50
To - - - de be - trübt;

piu riten. in tempo *grazioso con anima*
dolce

51 55
glück - lich al - lein - ist die

56 60 *poco rit.*
See - le, die liebt, ja, glück - lich al - lein - ist die See - le, die

poco rit.

1845: *Ein Fichtenbaum steht einsam* (1st version)

In this song Liszt uses adventurous tonal and harmonic successions to achieve the contrast between the image of a windswept, desolate northern pine and the idealised vision of a warm southern palm. Although C minor appears to be the key of the first stanza, D flat major is established in bars 3 and 4, moving through C minor in bars 5-7, to G major in bars 8-9, back to D flat major in bar 12, then to D major (bar 15), to E flat minor (bars 16-17) and onto the second inversion tonic triad of C flat major (bars 18-19), the bass of which is then enharmonically altered to F# and chromatic harmonisation is added to highlight the words *Eis und Schnee* (bars 20-21) (Ex.5). The contrasting lyrical mood representing the idealised vision of a southern palm is illustrated by peaceful repeated chords in A flat major in the piano in the second stanza (bar 25-32) (Ex.5). Symbolism can be observed in the contrasted passages of chromaticism and diatonicism in this song, representing striving and resolution.

Ex. 5 *Ein Fichtenbaum steht einsam* (1st version:1845) bars 1-31

Langsam- düster.

Singstimme.
Bariton oder Mezzosopran.

Ein Fichtenbaum steht

Klavier.

mf pesante

Db: I I⁷ c: vii⁷

ein - sam im Nor - den auf kah - . . ler Höh;

pp

p

ii⁷ c V⁹ G: vii⁹ I

11 *p*
ihn schlä . fert; mit wei . ßer Dek . .
poco a poco cresc.
Db: I D: I Eb: V⁷

17 *rinforz.*
ke um . . hül . . len ihn Eis und
rinforz. rinforz.
Cb: I_c

21 24 *Etwas bewegter, aber sehr ruhig.*
Schnee.
lang
marcato *pp dolciss.*
una corda

27 *pp*
Er träumt
una corda

1845: *Schwebe, schwebe, blaues Auge* (1st version)

Written prior to Liszt's taking up residence in Weimar, this song demonstrates by his use of harmony and tonality, his increasing preoccupation with reflecting every textual nuance in the music. Every phrase in the second stanza appears in a new key, moving from a sad *Jungst noch Nacht und Winter war es* in F minor in bar 27-29 to a happier mood of *nun ists plötzlich Tag geworden* in D flat major (bar 30). From there it moves to A major for *Tag und Mai, ja, Tag und Mai*, as the mood becomes more excited. This is followed by chromatic harmony in bars 35-36 to highlight the text, *ein wunderbares Sein*. Two consecutive diminished seventh chords on the word *Sein* in bar 36 create more excitement. A repeat of the phrase *ein wunderbares Sein* is lengthened and there is a key change in every bar, moving from C major to E major then to A major. The section ends with an exultant *in Strahlen und Akkorden!* accompanied by A: I_c followed by V⁷. A piano interlude follows ending on Ab : I in bar 48 (Ex.6).

Ex. 6 *Schwebe, schwebe, blaues Auge* (1st version:1845) bars 27-48

The musical score for Ex. 6 consists of two systems of vocal and piano parts. The first system covers bars 25-29, and the second system covers bars 28-36. The piano accompaniment is characterized by chromatic harmony and frequent key changes. The key signature changes from F minor (three flats) in bar 27 to D flat major (two flats) in bar 30, and then to A major (no flats) in bar 35. The piano part includes dynamic markings such as *p* (piano) and *f* (forte), and a key signature change from F minor to D flat major at bar 30. The vocal lines include the lyrics: "Him.mel. Jüngst noch Nacht und Win.ter war es; nun ists plötzlich Tag ge . wor . den,". The piano part includes a key signature change from F minor to D flat major at bar 30, and a key signature change from D flat major to A major at bar 35.

32 *(p)* *cresc. molto*
 Tag und Mai, ja, Tag und Mai, ein wunder - ba - res -
cresc. molto
 B: $\text{vii}^7_c \quad \text{V}^7$

36 Sein in Strah - len und Ak - kor - den,
(dim.)
 E: vii^7 A: vii^7_c Eb: iii^9_d I: c

40 *(p)* *(cresc.)*
 ein wun - der - ba - res Sein in
(cresc.)
 C: I: Eb: A:

44 *(p)* *(dim.)*
 Strah - len und Ak - kor - den!
 I: Ab: V^7

48
 Ab: I

The Weimar songs i)1848-1850 (and one song written in 1852)

Liszt's increasing preoccupation with reflecting every textual nuance in his songs paralleled his growing interest in programmatic music. His attempts to find just the right harmonic figuration for the relevant portion of the text led to more adventurous harmonic successions. The earliest songs fall more regularly into self-enclosed sections, but in the Weimar years Liszt became more interested in connecting these sections harmonically with, for example, seventh chords, to give the song the aspect of a single uninterrupted movement. Key relations of the various sections tended less and less to be the traditional ones. Not surprising are the references made in the 1890 edition of Grove's Dictionary about the songs; "Form escapes him because he endeavours to render every word effectively and dramatically." Todd (1988, 109) writes that during Liszt's tenure in Weimar, the augmented triad became a highly visible part of his harmonic palette.

"His frequency of use, in fact, now began to rival appearances of the diminished seventh chord. This decisive turn was owing in no small way to Liszt's new concentration on programmatic music; as he fully realised, the triad was one effective agent of transmitting those extramusical, poetic ideas."

Just as Liszt's compositional processes underwent a definite amount of refinement during these years, so did he develop a tendency towards succinctness in his harmonic and tonal language in his songs.

1848: *Weimars Toten*

Liszt's growing interest in harmonically creating an exact musical counterpart for each portion of the text led to frequent modulations in his songs. In this song there are seven changes of key-signature to illustrate the different moods, and each phrase of the text which suggests a meaning different from the preceding, is set to music reflecting its peculiarities as closely as possible. The introduction is in E major but ends on V/ g#. After a pause the voice enters in A flat major with a stately *Weimars Toten*. This is

followed by *will ich's bringen, lasst die vollen Gläser klingen* in F minor, which is marked *staccato* to reflect the meaning of the text. The staccato piano accompaniment emphasises the textual meaning. (Ex.7)

Ex.7 *Weimars Toten* (1848) bars 17-31

17

Weimars To - ten

dim. p

25

will ich's brin - gen, laßt die vol - len Glä - ser

f marcato

29

klingen,

ten. f

1848 - *Freudvoll und Leidvoll* (2nd version)

In this version, Liszt anticipates the mood changes he creates harmonically for the words *freudvoll*, *leidvoll*, *gedankenvoll* and *langen*, by presenting them in a four bar motive in

the piano introduction. Liszt repeats the motive twice, cleverly co-ordinating the changes of chord colours and the relevant words. He begins with E: I and moves to E: vii^o/III, to E: I, to E: vii^o, and finally to E: V⁷ before resolving on the tonic chord, E: I to begin the motive again as the voice enters with *Freudvoll* (Ex. 8). According to Gorrell (1993, 251) the reflective, fragile inwardness of this song within Liszt's extravagant harmonic vocabulary is an astounding achievement.

Ex. 8. *Freudvoll und leidvoll* (1848: 2nd version) bars 10-21

10

14

Freud . voll und leid . . . voll, ge .

I

18

dan . . . ken . . voll sein,

c1849 : *Gestorben war ich*

Thematically this short song is based on the falling opening motive, *Gestorben war ich vor Liebeswonne*, and the rising motive, *erwekket ward ich*, which captures the textual meaning. The motives are also developed in the piano accompaniment to create formal unity. Here Liszt's tendency towards succinct harmonies, both diatonic and chromatic, is demonstrated, which interact in the simple accompaniment to portray every nuance of the text.

1850: *O Lieb, so lang du lieben kannst*

This song is the original setting from which the famous *Liebesträume* was transcribed for piano. The main melody is repeated many times but Liszt's effects mood changes by skillful key changes. For example in the first piano interlude he uses the repeated pitch, Eb enharmonically as a bridge from A flat major to B major in bars 28-29 (Ex.9). The brightness of the new key parallels a positive quality in the new textual phrase: *Und sorge, dass dein Herze glühtund Liebe tragt.*

Ex. 9 *O Lieb, so lang du lieben kannst* (1850) bars 26-32

The musical score for Ex. 9 consists of two systems. The first system covers bars 26-32. The vocal line begins at bar 26 with the lyrics ". bern stehst und klagst." and continues through bar 32 with "Und sor . . ge, daß dein Her . ze glüht — und". The piano accompaniment starts at bar 26 with a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. A dynamic marking of *p* is present. A key signature change is indicated by a large *Ab* below the piano part at the start of bar 29. The tempo and mood are marked *a tempo* and *armonioso*. The second system covers bars 29-32. The piano part features a *dolce* marking and a *sempre legato* instruction. The key signature changes to B major at the start of bar 32, indicated by a large *B* below the piano part.

1852: *Es muss ein Wunderbares sein* (1852 appears on the original manuscript although Searle gives the date as 1857).

In this simple lyrical song succinct harmonies are used to render certain words and phrases effectively and dramatically. In the following example the phrase *in den Tod* is treated in this way (bars 24-26) (Ex.10). For the phrases *so mit einander tragen vom ersten Kuss bis in den Tod* Liszt uses pivot notes to connect harmonies (bars 20-26). Symbolically this creates a smooth continuity but at the same time the tonal ambiguity creates increased tension until the chromatic chord at the word *Tod* is reached.

Ex.10 *Es muss ein Wunderbares sein* (1852) bars 18-26

The image shows a musical score for the song "Es muss ein Wunderbares sein" (bars 18-26). The score is in G minor (three flats) and 4/4 time. It consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment.

Bar 18: The vocal line begins with the lyrics "an - der tra - gen,". The piano accompaniment features a *poco rit.* marking. A "Pivot note" is indicated on the vocal line at the end of the phrase.

Bar 19: The vocal line continues with "so mit ein - an - der tra - gen;". The piano accompaniment includes a *poco rit.* and *cresc.* marking. A "Pivot note" is indicated on the vocal line.

Bar 20: The vocal line begins with "vom er - sten Kuß bis in den Tod". The piano accompaniment features a *dolce* marking. A "Pivot note" is indicated on the vocal line.

Bar 21: The vocal line continues with "den Tod". The piano accompaniment features a *dolce* marking. A "Pivot note" is indicated on the vocal line.

Bar 22: The vocal line ends with "sich". The piano accompaniment features a *dolce* marking. A "Pivot note" is indicated on the vocal line.

Harmonic Analysis:

- Bar 18: $b: \bar{V}^7_b$
- Bar 19: i
- Bar 20: $G: I_b$
- Bar 21: $E_b: I_c$
- Bar 22: vi'_d
- Bar 23: I_c
- Bar 24: $Bb: vii^{*7}$
- Bar 25: \bar{V}^7_b
- Bar 26: \bar{V}^7_b

A "Tonic pedal bass" is indicated in the piano accompaniment for bars 24-26.

The Weimar Songs ii) 1855 - 1860

After a few years break Liszt once again turned to song writing and also revised some of his earlier songs. Baron (1993, 154) writes that just as he had done with the early piano pieces, he attempted with varying successes to bring the early songs into line with his compositional practices of the late 1850's. Harmonies become structurally more meaningful as well as being a source of colour. Todd (1988, 109) notes that by the end of the 1840's Liszt had made several advances in developing the augmented triad. It now appears in a wider range of applications, including melodic outlines, enharmonic progressions and modulations and cadential passages. "Simply put, the triad begins to affect in more profound ways Liszt's compositional logic." Liszt's tendency towards succinct expression continues and the harmonies become more uncluttered, contributing to a sparser texture. Classical key relationships are further weakened during this period and keys are sometimes difficult to ascertain due to non-functional harmonies.

1854 (acc. to Watson 1988, 345): *Ein Fichtenbaum steht einsam*

(2nd version)

In this song Liszt uses the augmented triad to generate the entire opening piano introduction as well as the interlude and postlude, which creates and strengthens the mood of desolation (Ex. 11, 12 & 13).

Ex. 11 *Ein Fichtenbaum steht einsam* (2nd version: 1854)-introduction

Langsam.

Singstimme.
Bariton oder
Mezzosopran.

Klavier.

pesante

Ein

c: i III⁺ III⁺ III⁺ i_b i III_b⁺ III⁺

Ex.11 *Ein Fichtenbaum steht einsam* bars 15-18

15

Schnee. Er

dim.

av:i III^+_{c} III^+_{b} III^+ *i*

Ex.13 *Ein Fichtenbaum steht einsam* bars 39-47

39

ein . sam und schweigend trau . ert auf bren . nender Fel . sen .

rit.

43

wand.

c:i III^+_{c} III^+_{b} III^+_{b} VI^+_{c} *i* III^+_{c} III^+_{b} C^+_{c} *i*

Liszt adds an augmented triad to the final cadence to further strengthen the mood of desolation (Ex 13).

1856: *Die Lorelei* (2nd version)

The song's musical structure follows the content of the poem rather than strictly observing its stanzaic structure. The harmonic style and language vary with the content of the poetic stanzas. Frequent changes of key signature and further modulations, creating shifts of tonal centres and shifts in tonal focus, reflect the changing mood of the text and direct our attention to the various poetic lines. The opening motive in the piano introduction encompasses a diminished seventh which sets the prevailing tone of melancholy and nostalgia in the song (Ex.14).

Ex. 14 *Die Lorelei* (2nd version:1856) - introduction

Nicht schleppend.

Singstimme.
Mezzosopran oder
Tenor.

Klavier.

G: vii

In contrast, the harmonic structure of the second and third sections are more diatonic to express the lyrical nature of the poetic lines. A musically descriptive passage, with a chromatically descending melodic line and harmonic instability in the piano with descending chromatic runs and a tremolo effect, suggest the turbulent waters that ultimately engulf and destroy the boatman (bars 85-92) (Ex.15).

Ex. 15 *Die Lorelei* bars 85-92

85

in die Höh! Ich glau - be, die

(trem.)

ff

G: vii

88
Wel - len ver - schlin - gen am En - de

91 *stringendo*
Schif - fer und Kahn,

stringendo

Then the harmonic centre gradually moves to the home key of G major for the last diatonic lyrical section. Liszt uses the minor mode of the subdominant triad in bars 129-130 at the final plagal cadence, which strengthens an overall mood of sadness in the song (Ex. 16).

Ex. 16 *Die Lorelei* bars 126-131

126 *p* *pp* *smorz.* 130

die Lo.re.ley ge . tan.

ppp

Chromatic passing notes

G:I IV^b IV^A_b c I

1856 - *Wie singt die Lerche schon*

Liszt's descriptive style is strongly evident in this song as frequent modulations express the sense and inflections of single words. The key of the song appears to be G major but the harmonies centre around the dominant key until the tonic triad occurs in the last bar. The vagueness of the home key throughout the song and the delay of its confirmation until the very end of the work build up a tension and an aural longing, implying a deeper message than the beautiful lark's song alone. Towards the end of the song the words convey the message as follows: *Hast du auch gewacht unter Gram und Pein diese Nacht - dein auch harrt ein Sonnenschein. Und Pein diese Nacht* is poignantly depicted by alternating vii^{o7} and i in E minor and *dein auch harrt ein Sonnenschein* which is repeated, is accompanied by alternating vii^{o7} and V in D major (Ex. 17). In bar 32⁴ Liszt cleverly combines notes of D: vii^{o7} and V^7 in one chord, after using the chords consecutively in bar 32^{1,2}. The tension continues until, at the dramatically late stage of the last three bars, Liszt gives maximum weight and effect to the long anticipated confirmation of the tonic with a perfect cadence in G major.

Ex. 17 *Wie singt die Lerche schon* (1856) - bars 27-37

27 *poco rit.*
auch. Hast du

28 *cresc.* auch ge-wacht un-ter Gram und Pein die-se Nacht- dein auch harrt ein Sonnen- *Langsamer.*

b: V i e: V⁷ iv_b a: i b vii⁷ i vii⁷ i b D: vii⁷ V⁷ vii⁷ V

The figure is sometimes used only as a rhythmic motive (e.g. bar 17), and is also harmonically linked with 7th chords in bars 62 and 64 to create tension as the king drinks from the goblet, before he hurls it into the sea (Ex. 19). Here the motive is presented by the voice and harmonised by f , IV^7 , ii^7 , V^7 and i .

Ex.19 *Es war ein König in Thule* bars 61-65

61 *accentuirt*
Dort

65 *rinforz.*

stand der al . te . Ze . cher, trank letz . te Le . bens . glut und

$f: IV^7_b \quad ii^7_b \quad V^7_b \quad i$ $iv^7_b \quad ii^7_b \quad V^7_b \quad i$

Liszt's increasing tendency to use third relationships is demonstrated by his use of A major for a short sequence in bars 38-42, which is a third away from the tonic key of F minor, before returning to the tonic key signature once again in bar 43 and moving almost immediately to D flat major in bar 45 and thence to B flat minor in bar 50 (Ex. 20). This method of emphasising subtle changes of mood in the text by key changes was used frequently by Liszt.

Ex. 20 *Es war ein König in Thule* bars 38-53

38

gönnt al.les sei.nen Er . ben, den Be.cher nicht zu .

dolce

A:

42

gleich, gönnt al.les sei.nen Er . . ben,den Be.cher nicht zu .

cresc.

46

gleich. Er saß beim Königs.mahle, die Ritter um ihn

f: *Db:*

50

her, auf hohem Vä.ter.saa.le, dort auf dem Schloß am

1858: *Lasst mich ruhen*

Irwin (1993, 14) writes that the final cadence in this song illustrates how the extension of a diminished chord structure prolongs the tension within the text. Here the first syllable of *lange* in bar 41 is extended on a semibreve within a diminished ninth chord in G sharp minor which resolves to I in G sharp major for the vocal ending. A short piano postlude extends the diminished ninth chord structure in bars 42-43 to prolong the tension within the text, before resolving onto G#: I to end the song (Ex.21).

Ex.21 *Lasst mich ruhen* (1858) bars 38-44

The musical score for Ex.21 consists of two staves. The top staff is the vocal line, starting at bar 38 with the lyrics "Lan - ge - lan - ge - lan - ge - lan - ge!". The vocal line features a long note on "ge!" in bar 41. The bottom staff is the piano accompaniment, starting at bar 38. The piano part includes markings for "ritenuto", "pp", "smorz.", and "perdendo". Handwritten annotations below the piano part indicate chords: G#:vii⁹, G#:I, G#:vii⁹, and G#:I.

1859: *Über allen Gipfeln ist Ruh*

The harmony permeates the structure of this song. The four sustained chords in the piano introduction are all a third apart and Liszt continues to use these third relationships between chords until bar 9 (Ex.22), and again from bar 33 to the end of the song (Ex.23), which creates tonal ambivalence. Liszt's chordal accompaniment in the piano in these sections creates a subtle hymnlike impression, which illustrates the text.

Ex. 22 *Über allen Gipfeln ist Ruh* bars 1-10

Langsam, sehr ruhig. p sotto voce

Singstimme.
Tenor oder
Mezzosopran.

Ü-ber al-len Gip-feln ist Ruh,

Klavier.

pp

6 E: I ^{una corda} VI IV ii VII I *pp*

in al-len Wip-feln spürest du kaum ei-nen Hauch; die

pp *smorz.*

Ex. 23 *Über allen Gipfeln ist Ruh* bars 30-43

30 *rit. poco a poco rall.*

bal-de ru-hest du auch, du auch, war-te

ppp

E: I VI IV ii VII

36 *ma non troppo riten. pp*

nur, war-te nur, bal-de ru-hest du auch, du auch!

ppp pppp

ma non troppo riten.

1859: *Comment, disaient-ils* (2nd version)

The second version of the song is marked “staccato quasi Chitarra”, and the accompaniment in quartal harmony depicts a serenading guitarist playing on open strings. This contributes greatly to the picturesque, slightly Spanish flavour of the song (Ex.24).

Ex.24 *Comment, disaient-ils* (2nd version) introduction

The musical score for the introduction of "Comment, disaient-ils" (2nd version) is presented in two staves. The top staff is for the voice, labeled "Singstimme. Sopran oder Tenor.", and the bottom staff is for the piano, labeled "Klavier.". The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The tempo/mood marking is "Très animé." above the vocal staff. The piano part is marked "p staccato, quasi Chitarra". The lyrics "Comment, disaient-ils, a." are written below the vocal staff. The piano accompaniment consists of a series of quarter notes in the right hand and quarter notes in the left hand, creating a quartal harmony.

1860: *Pace non trovo* (no.104 of the Petrarch Sonnets) (2nd version)

In this second version of the song ambiguous harmonic language and tonal ambivalence again emphasise the confusion and the agonies of love. However, more succinct harmonies and the simplification of the piano part point towards Liszt's late period when his style became extremely stark, austere and very chromatic. The song has no firm final cadence, but closes instead with a melodic gesture directed towards an unharmonised G#, which is preceded by a chord of the dominant ninth in C sharp minor. (Ex.25). Dart (1975, 48) believes that such treatment of the final chord could be taken as an expression of Liszt's own self-doubts in this period.

Ex.25 *Pace non trovo* (2nd version:1860) postlude

The musical score for the postlude of "Pace non trovo" (2nd version, 1860) is shown. It consists of a piano accompaniment with a treble and bass clef. The melody is in the treble clef. The piece is marked "ritenuto" and "perdendo". A handwritten annotation "c#:V 9" is present below the bass line.

c1860: *Blume und Duft*

In this song the illusive and ethereal imagery of the text is reflected in its musical setting (Hantz, 1982, 3). The highly ambiguous chord-to-chord progressions create a tonal ambivalence and provide an unsettling quality of the music. Hantz believes this can be attributed to three properties:

- the piece contains few functional dominants although there is such an abundance of dominant seventh sounding harmonies. Rather, chromatic-linear relationships predominate.
- structural fifth relationships have been replaced by third relationships.
- there is strong evidence that the home chord of the song is an augmented triad.

Hantz concludes that *Blume und Duft* is a “remarkable example of a tonal piece turned inside out”(id., 11)

1860: *Ich mochte hingehn*

According to Baron (1993, 91) this song summarises the hallmarks of Liszt's style up to this time. It is very long and contains a rapidly changing succession of mood pictures, characterised by seven changes of key signature. They also tend to be a pretext for minimising the number of accidentals within modulations rather than for establishing long-lived tonal centres, a characteristic prevalent in many of Liszt's songs (Irwin 1993, 16). That the setting "...maintains a high degree of unity while mirroring the most minute inflections of the text is a credit to its composer" (Baron 1993, 92). Reuss (in Baron id., 93) sees this song as a symphonic poem in miniature due largely to what he sees as "the symphonic style of the accompaniment". Liszt uses pivot-notes combined with enharmonic changes to effect modulations to unrelated keys - from the augmented triad on F at *Schoss* to the C sharp major harmony at *Ewigen* he lowers the A of the augmented chord on F to the fifth of the C sharp major chord, keeps the C# and changes F enharmonically to E# (Ex.26).

Ex. 26 *Ich mochte hingehn* (1860) bars 16-21

16

Tod- mich in den Schoß des E-wigen ver-biu-

cresc. *rinz.*

cresc. *rinz.*

Ped Ped Ped Ped Ped Ped

d: III⁺ c#:I_c

The late songs 1870-1886

During the period between 1861 and 1870, when Liszt wrote no songs, his harmonic and tonal language and his style in general underwent further development until in Searle's words (in Baron id., 169) "the style has become extremely stark and austere, there are long passages in single notes, and a considerable use of whole-tone chords, and anything resembling a cadence is avoided; in fact, if a work does end with a common chord, it is more often in an inversion than in root position. The result is a curiously indefinite feeling, as if Liszt was launching out into a new world the possibilities of which he was not quite sure". Todd (1988, 112) believes that the freely atonal formations of Liszt's radical late music grew out of chromatic embellishments to the augmented triad. Certainly, as Walker confirms (1976, 354) the augmented triad is derived artificially from the whole-tone scale which, by definition, is keyless. Liszt created other extensions of the major/minor tonal system by using the pentatonic scale, the gypsy scale and church modes, but he adapted all to his own purpose, using patterns without restrictions.

So the final period of Liszt's creative life is characterised by a marked change in his style of composition. According to Goode (1965, 88) this reflected Liszt's main purpose - to weaken the bonds of tonality. Szabolcsi (1959, 55) describes this music as follows: "We perceive in these works a breakdown of that almost naive, straightforward élan which characterised the romantic music of the first half of the century, and so also Liszt's art". Baron (1993, 166) sees a connection between Liszt's later compositions and his personal life. Cook (1986, 372) believes that at the heart of Liszt's modernity lies his conception of music being essentially psychological. "To Liszt, music was either expressive, embodying some state of mind, or meaningless".

Liszt's new harmonic and tonal language permeates the very essence of his late songs, working on many intricate levels "in a highly sophisticated network of associations - motivic, thematic, harmonic, tonal and programmatic" (Todd 1988, 112). We can trace a change in Liszt's intentions in the later songs - although each song has its own distinctive harmonic treatment, they each form part of a broader framework of late

compositions which reflect his wish to weaken the bonds of tonality. In order to isolate salient characteristics of Liszt's so called "experimental idiom" (Forte 1987, 209) in his late songs, it would be more revealing to analyse one complete song. The following harmonic analysis of *Und sprich*, composed in 1874, will reveal characteristics of Liszt's style which embody techniques that display his "questing drive toward the unknown" (Goode 1965, 91).

1874: *Und sprich*

This song, which is very simple in texture, with atmospheric use of harmony and passages of unaccompanied vocal line, is binary in shape without the conventional key change from tonic to dominant and back.

Section A - bars 1-14: The poet asks us to look on the lake at the innumerable lights and shadows, constantly changing, caused by the high shining sun.

Section B - bars 15-43: Here the poet addresses the waves, the sunlight which lights up places temporarily, and finally the eternally shining sun itself; and he asks each to address and admit to grief, to happiness and to God.

Within the binary form of the song, Liszt uses the technique of thematic transformation - where an idea pervades the song in various guises. The thematic figure consists of two short primary motifs in bars 1 -2 in the accompaniment, and in bars 3 -6 in the vocal line, which together proceed to express the subtle nuances of mood in the poem by their rhythmic, melodic, harmonic and tonal transformations, retaining the unity at the same time within the binary shape (Ex. 27).

Ex. 27 *Und Sprich* (1874)

Und sprich

Gedicht von Freiherr Rüdiger v. Biegeleben.

Fürstin Carolyne Wittgenstein gewidmet.

Franz Liszt.
(Vertont 1874.)

1 *Langsam.*

Singstimme.
Mezzosopran.

Klavier.

Sich auf dem Meer den Glanz der ho. hen Son. ne

6 *dim.* *pp*

lie. gen, sieh ü. ber die Wo. gen hin, die lei. sen Spiels sich

11 *pp 3*

wie. gen, zahl. lo. se Lich. ter und zahl. lo. se Schat. ten flie. gen,

15 *mf* *p* *mf*

und sprich zu dei. nem Leid: Du klei. ne, dunke Wel. le, und

19
sprich zu dei.nem Glück: Du Glanz an flüchtger Stel.le.

22
und sprich zu dei . . nem Gott: Du ew . . ge—

28
Son . nen . hel . . le, du ew . ge

36
Son . . nen . . hel . . le!

Harmonic vocabulary

Use is made of implied harmony in the unaccompanied vocal passages, which together with unhurried, pictorially effective chords, make up the entire song.

Bar and pulse number	Chord combination	Key and figuring	Chord type	Non-chordal notes	General comments and discussion
1-4	Db F Ab	Db : I _c	a		The chord is in 2nd inversion - Ab forms a dominant pedal bass.
3 ⁴				Gb	Passing note
5-6					The unaccompanied vocal line moves from Bb → Ab → Bb → Ab → Ab → F, implying a perfect cadence in Db between bar 5 and 6, or in bar 6
7 ^{1,2}	Db F Ab	Db : I _c	a		Same harmony as that of the previous accompanying chord in bar 4, and used to effect a sudden and striking modulation by stepwise motion of Db → C, Ab → A, with F remaining to become
7 ³ -9	F A C	F : I _b	a		I in Fmaj - in chromatic mediant relationship with Db: I
8 ⁴				G	Passing note
10-11					The unaccompanied vocal line moves from Bb → A → C → Bb → A → A → F. This melodic movement can imply a perfect cadence in F. If so, the non-chordal note A, in 10 ^{4b} , would be an anticipation of implied tonic harmony in 11 ^{1,2} on A.

Bar and pulse number	Chord combination	Key and figuring	Chord type	Non-chordal notes	General comments and discussion
12 ^{1,2}	F A C	F : I _b	a		Same technique is used here as in bar 7 ^{1,2} to effect modulation with the use of A as a pivot note to become
12 ³ - 13	B D# F# A	E : V ⁷	a II		V ⁷ in E major
13 ⁴				G#	Lower auxiliary note
14					The vocal line moves from B → F# → E# → F# → G# → F, implying dominant 7th harmony in E, which does not resolve; instead it is followed by a rest (14 ^{4b}), then a pause, which ends Section A.
14 ³				E# G#	Lower chromatic auxiliary note Upper auxiliary note
15	<u>R.H.</u> A E _b A <u>L.H.</u> B F#	Bbmin : vii E : V ⁷	implied d implied a II		Bar 15 contains the same harmony as bar 13, but the D# in bar 13 is changed enharmonically in the R.H. accompaniment to E _b , implying vii in Bb minor in the R.H. B and F# in the L.H. still belong to the E:V ⁷ of bar 13.
16	B _b D _b F	Bbmin:i _c	b		F# and B in the L.H. of bar 15 moves down by semitonal shift to F and B _b to become part of Bbmin.: I. The <u>R.H.</u> : A E _b A resolves to D _b and B _b as vii → i in Bbmin.

Bar and pulse number	Chord combination	Key and figuring	Chord type	Non-chordal notes	General comments and discussion
17					The unaccompanied vocal line moves from C → B \flat → F → G \flat → F → D \flat , implying possible tonic, supertonic and dominant harmony and a perfect cadence in B \flat minor.
18	B \flat D \flat F	B \flat min: _c	b		
19	C \flat E \flat G \flat	C \flat : I B \flat min: II \flat			B \flat D \flat F moves by stepwise motion to C \flat E \flat G \flat to become I \flat in C \flat major.
20					The unaccompanied vocal line moves from D \flat → C \flat → G \flat → A \flat → G \flat → E \flat , implying a perfect cadence in C \flat major.
21 ^{2,3,4a}	C \flat E \flat G \flat	C \flat : I \flat	a		
21 ^{4b}	A \flat C E \flat G \flat	D \flat : V ⁷	a II		E \flat and G \flat are maintained, C \flat moves down by semitonal motion, and A \flat is added to become V ⁷ /D \flat .
22	A \flat C E \flat G \flat	D \flat : V ⁷	a II	B \flat	Passing note
23	Implied A \flat C E \flat G \flat	D \flat : V ⁷	a II	B \flat D \flat	Passing note Anticipation
24	B $\flat\flat$ D \flat F \flat	D \flat : VI \flat	a		Again a stepwise motion from A \flat C E \flat G \flat to B $\flat\flat$ D \flat F \flat , which can be interpreted as an interrupted cadence in the expanded scale of D \flat with B $\flat\flat$ D \flat F \flat forming a chromatic 3rd relationship with D \flat F A \flat C \flat in bar 25 ^{1,2} .

Bar and pulse number	Chord combination	Key and figuring	Chord type	Non-chordal notes	General comments and discussion
25 ^{1,2}	Db F Ab Cb	Db: V ⁷ /IV	aII		Here the tonic harmony serves a secondary dominant function with the added Cb. Instead of resolving immediately, it first moves to
25 ³	Bb Db F	Db : vi _b	b		vi, forming a diatonic 3rd relationship,
25 ⁴	Db F Ab Cb	Db : V ⁷ /IV	aII		then back to its secondary dominant function,
26	Gb Bb Db	Db : IV	a	Eb	resolving onto IV. Prepared appoggiatura
27		Implied Db : IV		Ab, F	The unaccompanied vocal line moves from Bb → Ab → Gb → F, implying sub-dominant harmony with Ab as a passing note and F as an anticipation.
28		Implied Db : I		Eb	The unaccompanied vocal line has F - implied tonic harmony, and Eb, which can be interpreted as a lower auxiliary note.
29 ^{1,2}		Implied Db : I		Eb	The unaccompanied vocal line has Eb, implying an appoggiatura, → F, implying Db : I, and becomes a suspension falling to Eb on 29 ⁴
29 ^{3,4}	Ab C Eb Gb	Db : V ⁷	aII	F	Under F in the vocal line (29 ³), which acts as a suspension falling to Eb (29 ⁴), there occurs the dominant 7th of Db, which forms
30	Db F Ab	Db : I	a	Eb	a perfect cadence in Db.
30 ^{1,2,3}				Eb	Appoggiatura
31 ^{1,2}	Db F Ab	Db : I	a	Bb	Appoggiatura

Bar and pulse number	Chord combination	Key and figuring	Chord type	Non-chordal notes	General comments and discussion
31 ^{3,4}	Db F Ab	Db : I _c	a	Gb	Accented passing note
32	Db F Ab	Db : I _b	a	Eb	Accented passing note
33 ^{1,2}	Db F Ab	Db : I		Bb	Appoggiatura
33 ^{3,4}	Db F Ab	Db : I _c		Gb	Accented passing note
34	Fb Ab Cb	Db : III _c	a		Stepwise motion of Db F → Cb Fb, with Ab maintained to form III _b , creating a chromatic 3rd relationship with Db : I (bar 33). III assumes a dominant function, thereby creating a half close in Db.
35				Gb	Unaccompanied vocal line implies the same harmony as that in bar 34 with Fb, which then moves to Gb, a passing note.
36 37 ^{1,2} 37 ^{3,4}	Fb Ab Cb Fb Ab Cb Fb Ab Cb	Db : III Db : III _c Db : III _b			Continuation of mediant harmony of the expanded Db major scale, assuming the dominant function, resolving to Db : I to end the song.
38 - 39	Db F Ab	Db : I	a		
39 ² -43	Db F Ab	Db : I			The tonic chord appears consecutively in 1st inversion, 2nd inversion, root, 1st, 2nd inversion, root and ending in 1st inversion to form an instrumental coda.

Und sprich is tonal in the sense that it is rooted in diatonic keys, but each tonality gives way abruptly to the next in a way that is described as being one of Liszt's favourite techniques - maintaining one or two elements of a chord and moving the remaining notes in a stepwise fashion without particular concern for classical harmonic practice.

Although there is one common tone between each sudden change of key, the effect of modulation is not present, only the effect of suddenly changed, almost dislocated tonality. In this way Liszt moves from D flat major to F major in bar 7 (Ex. 28a) and from F major to E major in bar 12 (Ex. 28b).

Ex. 28a

Db major →

← F major

F is maintained
Db moves stepwise
to C, and Ab moves
stepwise to A

Bar 7-8

Ex. 28b

F major →

← E major

A is maintained
F moves stepwise
to F# and C moves
to D#

Bar 12

The home key of D flat major is not clearly stated in the first thematic group of the song in that the accompaniment consists of tonic harmony in second inversion with A flat creating a dominant pedal bass (Ex.27). The roll on the chord in bar 2 ends on an added Ab, which stresses the dominant aspect of the triad. The tonic harmony of D \flat appears in root position for the first time in bar 30, near the end of the song. This technique of delaying the confirmation of the tonic to near the end of the work is seen in many of Liszt's songs. It builds up tension throughout the song, giving maximum weight and effect to the long anticipated affirmation of the tonic (Watson 1989, 188). Liszt's suggestion of bitonality in bar 15 is created by an enharmonic change from D \sharp in bar 13 to E \flat in bar 15 in the R.H. accompaniment to become part of vii in B flat minor, and resolving conventionally to B flat minor: I in bar 16, while the L.H. continues with the E: V 7 harmony of bar 13, and moves unconventionally by semitonal shift of B flat minor: I in bar 16 (Ex.29).

Ex. 29 *Und sprich* bars 11-16

The image shows a musical score for the song "Und sprich" by Liszt, covering bars 11 to 16. The score is written for voice and piano. The key signature is D-flat major (two flats). The time signature is 3/4. The vocal line is in the upper staff, and the piano accompaniment is in the lower staff. The lyrics are: "wie - gen, zahl - lo - se Lich - ter und zahl - lo - se Schat - ten flie - gen, und sprich zu dei - nem Leid:". The score includes dynamic markings such as *pp*, *p*, and *mf*. There are annotations for harmonic changes: "Enharmonic change" pointing to a change in the right-hand accompaniment, "Resolution to B \flat min: i" pointing to the left-hand accompaniment, and "Semitonal shift to B \flat min: i" pointing to the right-hand accompaniment. The score also includes a double bar line at the beginning of bar 11 and a repeat sign at the end of bar 16.

The introduction of Bbb Db Fb in bar 24 (Ex.30) at the climax point in the song as a resolution to Db : V⁷ in bars 22 - 23, creates a sudden striking effect and gives stress to the word *Gott*. The tension continues throughout bars 24, 25 and 26, created by the harmony (Ex. 30) and through bars 27, 28 and 29, where Db : V⁷ occurs. Finally a resolution in the home key, Db : I in root position occurs for the first time in the song in bar 30, depicting the word *Sonnenhelle*. The bright contrast is strengthened by the following instrumental passage which repeats the vocal line of bars 26 - 30 an octave higher over tonic harmony. The contrasting passages of tension and resolution are symbolic in *Und sprich*, depicting tension and resolution in the text and particular emphasis is achieved by the sudden striking modulations.

A move to Db : III_b in Bar 34 (Ex.30) introduces tonal ambiguity and announces the final vocal phrase, resolving to Db : I as a cadence to accompany the conclusion of the vocal line of the song. The III → I cadence is evidence of Liszt's attraction to the third degree of the scale in the majority of his late compositions. An instrumental coda follows, using only tonic harmony, which confirms the home key of D flat major.

Ex. 30 *Und Sprich* Bars 22-35

The image displays a musical score for the song 'Und Sprich' from Liszt's 'Und Sprich' (Op. 10, No. 10). The score is divided into two systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The key signature is D-flat major (three flats: B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). The time signature is 2/4.

System 1 (Bars 22-27):

- Vocal Line:** "und sprich zu dei - - nem Gott: Du ew - - ge -"
- Piano Accompaniment:** Features a prominent chord in bar 24, marked with a forte dynamic (*f*) and *espress.* (espressivo). The harmony is analyzed as Db:V⁷ in bar 22, and continues through bars 23, 24, 25, and 26.

System 2 (Bars 28-35):

- Vocal Line:** "Son - nen - hel - - le, du ew - ge"
- Piano Accompaniment:** Features a melodic line with triplets and a bass line. The harmony is analyzed as Db:V⁷ in bar 28, and continues through bars 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, and 35. The final chord in bar 35 is analyzed as Db:I.

The score includes various musical notations such as dynamics (*f*, *p*), articulation (*espress.*), and phrasing slurs. The harmonic analysis is provided below the piano accompaniment.

The harmonic analysis of *Und sprich* reveals chord progressions and chord types, modulations, key transitions, cadences and manifestation and use of thematic material, which not only realise the textual content of the poem in its musical setting, but also place the song firmly in the category of Liszt's late works.

Watson (1989, 189) describes Liszt's late works as sketches for a music of the future as follows:

“There is pronounced economy of means. Every note is of importance and has its function: nothing is put to waste or used for mere effect. Much use is made of declamatory phrases, both in vocal and instrumental writing, and floating, transparent harmonies, a sense of striving, of longing or of fading away. Drastic shortening of melodic phrase lengths led to an increased emphasis on the importance of short motives. In turn this put greater stress on harmonic and textural elements, and, in the many passages of monody, considerable use of implied harmony. Motivic development is often through cumulative imitation.”

Liszt's ongoing perceptual development of the role of harmony and tonality as agents of colour and musical imagery represents his search for suitably romantic imagery and its transformation from the poetic text to music. Walker, however, does caution against believing that Liszt fostered the notion of music being a “representational” art, that it can depict a poem, or a picture (1989, 358). “What it does is more subtle. It expresses the mood that such a poem or picture evokes in the heart of the recipient, and transmutes it into musical experience, an experience to be perceived on a purely musical level.”

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

- Liszt the man and the musician -

Walker (1989, 22) writes that in few other creators “is the mysterious link between life and art so clearly revealed as in Liszt....Liszt’s work...might almost be described as the fragments of a diary jotted down from life, and they clamour for biographical narrative...Liszt’s biography, in short, forms a vibrant whole, with life and music engaged in constant, creative dialogue.” This view determined the structure of this study.

This study of Liszt’s song oeuvre revealed both a reflection of Liszt the man, and a microcosm of his ongoing musical style development. It has been shown that the circumstances of Liszt’s life, his character and his intellectual interests played important roles in his development as a song composer, both in the creation of many of his songs as well as in the evolution of his compositional style. External circumstances sometimes suggested and sometimes even dictated the kind of song he wrote and the style in which he composed. The cosmopolitan nature of Liszt’s life is reflected in the breadth of his song output, which includes settings in five languages: German, French, Italian, Hungarian and English, with texts drawn from at least fifty four poets, many of whom were contemporaries of Liszt and whom Liszt knew personally.

Liszt, in his lifetime, was nearly always the centre of attention - as a pianist, conductor, composer, teacher, writer, lover. His career is perhaps the most colourful of the Romantic composers and it is only in the last few decades that an accurate picture of his life and personality has emerged.

Liszt's enigmatic character has always attracted much interest. His personality - a fascinating mixture of the deeply committed artist, the flamboyant showman and Romantic hero, the lover of women and connoisseur of aristocratic company, the charitable supporter of other artists, the contemplative, deeply religious seeker after humility and truth - pushed and pulled him in conflicting directions throughout his long multifaceted life. Liszt once described himself as "half Franciscan, half Zigeuner". Many of Liszt's contemporaries praised his personal warmth, generosity and his -if somewhat erratic- religious devotion. Others again described him as confused and unhappy, and yet others believed him to be vain and hypocritical. These characteristics have been traced in the themes and moods of his songs, creating a tremendous variety, which confirm Brendel's statement (1986, 3) that with rare immediacy Liszt's music gives away the character of the composer.

Liszt did try to turn his best face to the world on every possible occasion, and he rarely admitted to suffering from weaknesses which divided his attention and sapped his strength. Although Liszt grew more honest with age, he apparently died weary and disheartened. It has been shown that his songs attest to this.

In order to get a clear look at the number of versions and settings and the overall song output, a classification of the songs has been set out, which gathers all the versions, settings, transcriptions and arrangements of a text in chronological order. Establishing the chronological ordering of Liszt's songs presents problems because of the lack of knowledge of the exact dates of some original versions and revisions. This is complicated by the fact that some songs are available for study only in considerably later published versions. However a comprehensive chronological catalogue was arrived at, providing the important reference source for the present study.

Liszt wrote an extremely varied collection of songs for an equally varied number of reasons, and it has been shown that although he did not always make his reasons known, the character of the songs and themes of the texts he chose, together with the origins

and motives of the songs where known, often reveal Liszt's prevailing moods and reflect the various facets of his personality.

Liszt's songs can be divided into 3 chronologically distinct stylistically interrelated periods of compositional activity:

- The early songs 1839-1847
- The Weimar songs i) 1848-1850
ii) 1855-1860
- The late songs 1870-1886

As Liszt's personal and professional life reflect these divisions, it is not surprising that most of the songs completed during one of these three periods should possess musical characteristics reflecting the dates and circumstances of their creation. External historical circumstances influenced the kinds of compositions he wrote and the media for which he wrote them. Watson (1989, 220) notes that in his preface to the 1842 publication of the *Album d'un Voyager*, Liszt wrote of the deep sensations he experienced while travelling through 'different landscapes and places consecrated by history and poetry', the rapport he felt with 'the varied phenomena of nature' and of how, on coming to represent these in music, his 'recollections intensified'.

The inspiration for the *Songs from 'Wilhelm Tell'* (1845) was the journey Liszt made through Switzerland with Countess d'Agoult in the first months of their elopement in 1835. The realisation of his first spontaneous feelings in song took place after a long span of time. The three songs from Schiller's *Wilhelm Tell* capture the feeling of Alpine freshness. Hughes (1917, 401) writes:

"In the Schiller songs we are transported into the big out-doors, into the midst of the blue skies and the keen, cool air of Alpine highlands. Here there is fine, free landscape painting. All the healthy joy of life in the boundless open is reflected in the fresh inspiration of these songs, in which Liszt has so delightfully characterised the fisher boy, the herdsman and the Alpine huntsman among the high airs of their native hills"

Liszt's *Petrarch Sonnets* were written in Italy in 1838-9 while he was on his second "year of pilgrimage" with the Countess where he immersed himself in Italian culture. In Milan he met Rossini who introduced him to the world of Italian opera. This had a direct influence on the style of the first versions of the *Petrarch Sonnets* - operatic arias in the expressive, embellished bel canto style.

Im Rhein, im schönen Strome, Die Lorelei, and Die Zelle in Nonnenwerth were written between 1841 and 1843 when Liszt and the Countess spent their summers on the near-deserted island on the Rhine called Nonnenwerth. The flowing river in *Im Rhein, im schönen Strome* suggested by rolling arpeggios, and the tall mountain in *Die Lorelei* represented by an ascending arpeggio in the voice are just two examples of the many varied phenomena of nature that Liszt came to represent in his songs.

As the young Liszt was pianist first and composer second, it is not surprising that his early songs are more pianistic in conception, often with an overemphasis on the piano part at the expense of the poem. Douglas (1987, 7) writes that the influence of Liszt's "transcendental technique" can be seen in many of the early song accompaniments. In *Der Fischerknabe*, the first of the three songs in a cycle composed to Schiller texts in 1845, the piano accompaniment could easily be mistaken for a "transcendental étude". The early versions of Liszt's songs with texts by Victor Hugo, *Oh, Quand je dors, S'il est un charmant gazon, Comment, disaient-ils* and *Enfant, si j'étais roi* can be said to reflect the great virtuoso pianist Liszt writing flamboyant piano pieces with vocal accompaniments (Turner 1979, 18).

Liszt's desire to wander, his sense of not belonging to any one place, and his search for the ideal set him on a journey inwards, and this is reflected in his choice of poetry and the musical response to that poetry. The pathos of life called up Liszt's most sincere feeling. *Ich scheid, Blume und Duft* and *Die stille Wasserrose* are examples of the expression of this emotion. The religious element was strong but very mixed in Liszt's character, and although "charlatism, pose and a dreadful piosity intermingled with moments of real devotion and intense feeling" (Cooper 1938, 179) the deeply-felt

religious sentiment of several of the songs was without doubt genuine with Liszt. This is demonstrated in songs such as *Der du von dem Himmel bist*, *Wer nie sein Brot mit Tränen ass* and *Das Veilchen*.

Liszt's personality influenced not only the character and themes of the songs he set, but various aspects of his complex character - especially his frequent feelings of insecurity, restlessness, and dissatisfaction - also influenced his compositional development in a number of ways. It was his interest in and his devotion to improving and refining compositional processes and structure which led him to revise so many of his works, particularly his songs. It was one of his great achievements during his Weimar years to have refined the musical purpose of many of his earlier songs, when his sensitivity to lyrical poetry had greatly matured.

The revisions play a major role in determining to what extent each of the three periods of Liszt's song composition was accompanied by significant changes in his compositional activities and style. A comparative study of the originals and their revisions revealed certain general characteristics which reflect Liszt's ongoing developing style, although the extent of alteration varies considerably in individual songs. Certain more obvious features such as simplification of style, more subtlety in the piano writing, formal tightening, harmonic changes and changes to the vocal line characterise the revisions and correlate with Liszt's general style development. His tendency toward more brevity and concise expression can be seen in a comparison of the three different versions of *Der du von dem Himmel bist*". Version one (1843) is six pages in length; version two (1856), four; version three (1860), only two. There is a great deal of text repetition in the version of 1843, less in the 1856 version and the 1860 version has limited repetition of text. *Freudvoll und leidvoll* in its three versions provides further examples of contrasts in Liszt's musical handling of a single texts. The third version is typical of the resettings that he did for the 1860 anthology of his songs, according to Douglas (1987, 6). He wanted to write songs with simpler accompaniments and vocal lines. Most of the later versions improve upon their earlier settings. The changes made in Liszt's second setting of *Comment, disaient-ils* reflects

well his growth as a song composer. “The piano writing is more economical and more descriptive, the delineation of form clearer, and the declamation and setting of the text more sensitive and delicate” (Turner 1979, 24)

The fact that his songs were revised in much the same way as most of his symphonic poems were tried out and then reorchestrated, further emphasises the song oeuvre’s representativeness of Liszt’s general compositional style development. As well, Liszt provided numerous ossia, or alternative notes and passages for voice and piano, making the songs adaptable to varying levels of skill on the part of the performers. Some are less demanding, while others are more difficult. Musicologists’ views about the rationale behind the revisions of Liszt’s songs vary, but all cite feelings of restlessness and/or dissatisfaction which motivated him to write more than one version.

The role of poetry in the creation of Liszt’s songs and in his symphonic poems was somewhat unique. His main tendency when setting a poem to music, was to exploit its general dramatic sense and pictorial features. He used poetry primarily to stimulate his musical imagination in order to produce a musical paraphrase of the thought, feeling and colour of a poem. With the use of melody, harmony, rhythm and timbre as a palette, he created sonorities to paint in tone what the poet said in words. The sense of the poem determined the structure of his songs and the musical phrases were formed to highlight the meaning of the separate words of the text. Any phrase of text which suggested a meaning different from the preceding one was set to music reflecting its mood as closely as possible. Liszt’s increasing preoccupation with reflecting every textual nuance in his songs paralleled his growing interest in programmatic music. To this end, his well-known technique of ‘thematic transformation’ is used throughout his song oeuvre. A short motive of characteristic significance is altered or undergoes a metamorphosis without loss of its identity, to express the varying moods of the text.

Es war ein König in Thule, Ich möchte hingehn and *Die Fishertochter* are just three songs that contain examples of this treatment.