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contents

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articles

The Song Sketches of Hugo Wolf

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Hugo Wolf's name does not usually come to mind when one thinks of studies in compositional process. The Wolf legend, when not preoccupied with the composer's eccentric behavior and eventual tragic insanity, tells of great speed of composition during the "days of Lodi,"[1] Wolf's own designation for his intermittent periods of creativity. He was indeed often amazingly facile. From early youth, Wolf carefully dated most of his manuscripts, sometimes twice, both at the beginning and end of his labors;[2] those dates and Wolf's exuberant, telegraphic letters, announcing new compositions to his friends, are ample evidence of his facility. Jubilant over two Lieder—"gemörikelt," the composer's delightful neologism for settings of Eduard Mörike— composed in a single day in 1888, he wrote to Edmund Lang, promising to trumpet the news should a third song strike him that same day. "Despise me! The hat-trick is completed!" he crowed in the postscript.[3] It is not surprising to find sketches for the larger instrumental works, choruses, and operas,[4] but what of sketches for the songs?

Only a few are extant, and they afford a fascinating glimpse into Wolf's working methods. Despite his frequent changes of address (though not as many as Beethoven's), Wolf preserved the manuscripts of early compositions that were never completed, much less published, for a variety of reasons,[5] but he was not similarly scrupulous about retaining his sketches. Earlier biographers such as Newman and Decsey denied that Wolf ever sketched his compositions,[6] but later writers acknowledged the composer's habitual method of working from preliminary sketches to the mechanical labor of copying a *Reinschrift*. One of Wolf's close youthful friends, a student of Bruckner named Friedrich Eckstein ("Lieber Eck!" as Wolf called him), later wrote in his reminiscences of the composer's practice of sketching and performing for his friends from those initial sketches. "For Wolf, it was always a great joy when he could play and sing me a composition *from the first sketch* [italics added] and thereby awake my stormy enthusiasm," Eckstein writes in his memoirs, *Alte unnennbare Tage;* shortly thereafter, he invokes the same memory in more detail, mentioning pencil sketches for many of the Mörike and Eichendorff songs, for Goethe's "Prometheus" and "Grenzen der Menschheit," and for songs from the Italian and Spanish Songbooks of Paul Heyse and Emanuel Geibel.[7] Eckstein, unfortunately, does not describe these performances in

more detail, although he implies that such occasions were a frequent occurrence. One wishes more information: was the work Wolf performed different from the final version and if so, in what ways? Did Wolf assess or evaluate the work-in-progress, and if so, what did he say about it? Other nineteenth-century composers, Schubert among them, performed compositions for their inner circle of friends before the works were published, but performance from sketches for the delectation of another composer is a somewhat different matter.

Eckstein was not the only one to observe Wolf's practice of working from sketches. Wolf himself wrote in a letter of 31 March 1896 to Melanie Köchert of having first sketched, then worked out and completed (*ausgeführt*) the song "Lass sie nur gehn" from the *Italienisches Liederbuch* the preceding day; because the accompaniment required especially precise, scrupulous treatment, he tells her, he had to spend several hours the next morning to make the work "fix und fertig."[8] Wolf was not Brahms's equal in the destruction of sketches and works he deemed unsatisfactory, but the sketches mentioned by Eckstein and by Wolf himself for settings of Goethe's Greek odes and for the songs from the Italian and Spanish Songbooks can no longer be found. There are, however, a few remaining pencil sketches for a number of the Mörike, Eichendorff, and Goethe songs, among others, in the music collections of Vienna libraries. For example, the Stadtbibliothek Wien owns a *Konvolut von Skizzen* (MS 6773/c), which is a heterogeneous compilation of (1) title pages for individual songs and for projected collections of songs to texts by one or two poets, without any music, and (2) fragmentary sketches, including (as no. 12) the first five bars of Nikolaus Lenau's "Nächtliche Wanderung," dated "Wien am 21/2.11/3 [1]878."[9] The Österreichische Nationalbibliothek also owns a sheaf of sketches (MS 19.573), as well as individual sketches for the Viktor Scheffel song "Biterolf," the "Gesellenlied" of Robert Reinick, the Harper's songs from the *Goethe-Lieder*, and others.[10] Erik Werba, who characterizes Wolf malapropos as "der zornige Romantiker," writes of sketches notated on any available scrap of paper after the entire composition had already been formulated in the composer's mind ("Die ganze Komposition baute sich so allmählich in seinem Kopf auf und wurde auf einzelnen Manuskriptblättern skizziert")[11] without analyzing the sketch-sources. Examination of those sources both supports Werba's generalized description of Wolf's creative process and augments it with specific details of the composer's sketching practices.

Hans Eppstein has recently investigated Wolf's compositional process on the basis both of the published music and of the sketches. In two articles from 1984, Eppstein writes that what distinguishes Wolf's mature Lieder is a characteristic predominance of the piano part—often the locus of the most significant motivic and harmonic developments—and its independence from

an arioso-like, declamatory vocal line. Eppstein believes that the importance accorded the instrumental part and the post-Wagnerian nature of the vocal lines are evidence of successive compositional stages: the writing of the piano part was followed by that of the vocal part.[12] Wolf's note to Melanie Köchert about the extra labor necessary to complete the accompaniment of "Lass sie nur gehn" seems to confirm this. And yet, the manuscripts that survived Wolf's possible periodic destruction and careless discarding of the sketches seem to contradict the thesis of successive composition. In several of these, the composer notated only the vocal line and the incomplete principal motivic-melodic line of the piano on a series of single staves, leaving no room for the accompaniment underneath, only the sketchiest indications of piano interludes, occasional harmonies or abbreviations to signify harmonies, and voice-leading fragments; the autograph sketches of "Der Schreckenberger" and "Heimweh" from the Eichendorff songs, Robert Reinick's "Gesellenlied," Heinrich Heine's "Wo wird einst des Wandermüden," the Harper's songs, "Philine," "Spottlied" from *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre,* and "Anakreons Grab" all belong to this type. Although these manuscripts appear simply to contradict Eppstein's theory that Wolf began by sketching the vocal line before adding the accompaniment, closer examination of the sketches suggests a third explanation.

What is possibly the earliest extant sketch lacks any reference to the accompaniment and may have been preserved simply because it is notated on the other side of a leaf belonging to an early and important cycle of Heine settings. No. 29 of the *Konvolut von Skizzen* in the Stadtbibliothek Wien is a single leaf of 14-stave music paper that contains a title and key signature for a planned Heine setting on one side and a partial sketch of the vocal line for Joseph von Eichendorff's "Verschwiegene Liebe" on the other; there may well have been other sketches for the Eichendorff song in which the accompaniment was included, but if so, they are lost, and the one fragmentary sketch that remains is an enigmatic curiosity. The title of the Heine setting is "Aus dem Liederstrauss / von H. Heine / XIII"—no more is specified. This is followed by a single three-stave system notated with nothing apart from its five-sharp key signature. The Eichendorff sketch begins on the bottommost staff and then continues on the staff system just above, consistent with Wolf's frequent gravitation to the bottom of the page for similarly hasty sketches. Since the heading "Aus dem Liederstrauss / von H. Heine" associates it with the other songs of Wolf's projected two-volume *Liederstrauss* of 1878—the composer's first year "of Lodi"—I surmise that the leaf can be attributed to a date late in that year.[13] But a completed song "no. XIII" is neither extant nor referred to; we do not even know which poem from Heine's *Neue Gedichte*— the source of texts for the second *Liederstrauss* volume—Wolf intended to set. Wolf may have saved the leaf in the hope of renewed inspiration for the

second volume and then, at some unknown later date, used the reverse side of the leaf for the Eichendorff sketch instead. This can have happened at any time between 1878 and the completion of the song in 1888.

The sketch includes only the second verse of Eichendorff's poem and seems devoted to the solution of a local compositional problem: the vocal line for the second stanza. He appears to have been, for the moment, unsuccessful. The vocal line is quite unlike the later setting and evidently troubled Wolf a great deal (example 1). The prosody is flawed and there is little textual justification for the brief implied modulation to the mediant at the words "wer an sie gedacht beim." (The bar contains more than six eighthnote beats.) The sketch is reminiscent of Wolf's adolescent efforts from 1875–77: simple diatonicism for long stretches, followed abruptly by short passages of intense, but awkward, chromaticism.[14] When Wolf returned to Eichendorff's poem ten years later, the result was far happier (example 2).

The later sketches for his mature songs reveal a great deal more than the early sketch for "Verschwiegene Liebe." I wish to add to the few existing studies of Wolf's sketches and variants[15] a particular consideration of the sketches for three of these later songs. The materials (located in the Österrei-

Example 1. "Verschwiegene Liebe." Sketch from the *Konvolut von Skizzen,* no. 29. Österreichische Nationalbibliothek MS 6773/c. Transcribed by the author.

Er - rät' es nur Ei - ne,   wer   an   sie ge - dacht beim

Rau - schen der   Hai - ne wenn   Nie - mand er   wacht   als die

Wol - ken die   flie - gen, die   Nacht   ist ver - schwie - gen und

Es oder g

schön   wie   die Nacht,   und schön   wie   die Nacht

Example 2. "Verschwiegene Liebe" (voice, mm. 13–22).

Er - rät' es nur Ei - ne, wer an Sie ge- dacht, beim

Rau schen der Hai - ne, wenn nie - mand mehr wacht ____

____ als die Wol - ken die flie - gen, mein

Lieb' ist ver schwie - gen und schön   wie die Nacht.

chische Nationalbibliothek) and the order of their discussion is as follows.

1. MS 19.550 includes among its contents a sketch of Robert Reinick's "Gesellenlied," dated "Perchtoldsdorf 24. Januar [1]888 morgens." Like most of Wolf's song sketches, this was probably a mnemonic aid for writing out the fair copy. Some details were subsequently altered in the fair copy, evidence of the persistence with which Wolf revised and refined the songs throughout the compositional process.

2. MS 19.573 includes a single leaf of manuscript paper containing an incomplete sketch for the setting of Goethe's "Anakreons Grab." This is among the most important of the extant sketches. The song typifies better than the "Gesellenlied" Wolf's customary emphasis on the role of the piano and his quasi-declamatory prosody. But the sketch is similarly constituted: the vocal line, the piano interludes, and a few fragmentary indications of voice-leading in the accompaniment. Wolf had considerable difficulty with the composition of this song and probably abandoned the sketch in order to revise the problematical passages before writing the fair copy on 4 November 1888.

3. On the verso side of item (2) is an incomplete sketch (twenty-eight bars) of Goethe's "Spottlied aus Wilhelm Meister." Once again, the

sketch consists primarily of the vocal part and the principal melodic line
of the piano interludes. The recto of the same sheet contains a sketch of
the Eichendorff song "Der Schreckenberger"; although the leaf is dated
"14. Septb. [1]888 Rettenbach," this is almost certainly not the date on
which the Goethe sketch was made. The fair copy of the "Spottlied" is
dated 2 November 1888.

The evidence of MS 19.550 suggests that Wolf had little difficulty compos-
ing his setting of Robert Reinick's "Gesellenlied"[16] in 1888. The subject mat-
ter and form of the poem virtually dictate the varied strophic musical form,
and Wolf accordingly follows suit. Each of the four seven-line stanzas begins
with a proverb-like refrain repeated by the poetic persona, an apprentice:
"Kein Meister fällt vom Himmel." The saying has clearly been dunned in his
ear by his own master, but the apprentice reinterprets it in light of his desire
for independence, for freedom from all masters and masters' wives, and for
liberty to find a bride. Wolf's choice of this poem at the end of January 1888
seems symbolic, even premonitory, of his own condition. He was only three
weeks away from the mastery evident in the outpouring of Mörike songs, his
own apprenticeship period almost over. Reinick's invocation of masters and
apprentices must have had additional resonance for a disciple of Wagner so
devoted as Wolf; the unnamed apprentice is an amusingly cheeky predecessor
of Wagner's David, not yet arrived at mastery in act 3, scene 4 of *Die Meister-
singer von Nürnberg*—"'s geht der Kopf mir wie im Kreis', dass ich Meister
bald heiss!"—but surely not far from it. The longing for liberation from mas-
ters, the stuff of humor in Reinick, had as well an oppressive connotation for
Wolf, who worshipped Wagner but, on occasion, wondered what was left for
Wagner's descendants after the advent of such an *Obergott*.[17] An earthly para-
dise without masters, in which an erstwhile apprentice could create his own
masterpieces, would be a world without Bayreuth. The interpretation of "Ge-
sellenlied" as a jest-solution to the anxiety caused by Wagner's influence
might explain in part Wolf's attraction to this poem.

"The old magician," as Wolf called Wagner, may well have left his mark on
the "Gesellenlied." While each stanza has its own harmonic and tonal par-
ticularities, its own changes to both the vocal line and the piano accompani-
ment (severally appropriate for complaining wives, cute daughters, and a
finale of achieved wish-fulfillment), each is bound to the same C-major re-
frain. This may be a nod to the Meistersinger prelude. The rich chord dou-
blings, the 4/4 march meter, and the processional theme in conjunct motion
together constitute a humorous, miniaturized allusion to the earlier work
about masters and apprentices. Nor is this the only evident Wagnerism: the
contrary motion in m. 11 ["unserm Meisterstück!"], the grace-note figures in
mm. 9–10 (reminiscent of the orchestral figures prominent in David's enu-
meration in act 1 of the tasks an apprentice must master), and the successive

evaded cadences within each musical strophe are all evocations of Wagner (example 3).

The "Gesellenlied" manuscript is far from Wagnerian in its scope, however. Very little of the accompaniment is visible here. Wolf sketches each of the brief piano interludes between stanzas, specifies repeated G-major sixth chords in the fourth bar, and twice notates a particular conjunction of the vocal line and an accompanying voice: at the initial appearance of the refrain in mm. 1–2 and as a reminder of contrary motion in mm. 21–22, a stylized and witty representation of the contrariety of the "brummendes" (complaining) Masters' wives. Within the sketch itself, Wolf decided to alter the refrain, "Kein Meister fällt vom Himmel," on its second occurrence and thereafter retained this latter version, perhaps an exceptional instance of revision within a principally mnemonic guide.

Perhaps Wolf decided that it would be inappropriate for a master to fall such a height—here, a major seventh—when the words expressly deny the possibility. Furthermore, the phrase ending on F in m. 2 of the sketch implies nontonic harmony in the accompaniment, rather than the C-major chord found in the fair copy and in the published score. The mock-stentorian refrain is made even stronger by the enclosure of the phrase in tonic harmonies

Example 3. "Gesellenlied." Sketch. Österreichische Nationalbibliothek MS 19.573. Transcribed by the author.

Example 3 (continued).

uns - erm Meis - ter - stückl   "Kein

Meis - ter fällt vom Him - mell" Gott - lob, auch kein - e Meis - ter -

in! Ach lieb - er Him - mel, sei so gut,— wenn dro - ben ei - ne brum - men

tut, —— be - hal - te_sie in Gna - den, dass

sie zu__uns - erm Scha - den nicht_ fall'_ zur_ Er - den

tr

hin!   "Kein

Meis - ter fällt vom Him - mell" Auch kein - es Meis - ters Töch - ter -

lein! Zwar hab' ich das schon lang ge - wusst, und

Example 3 (continued).

doch, was wär' das ei - ne Lust,   wenn jung und—hübsch und

mun - ter solch Mä - del fiel' her - un   - ter und wollt' mein

Herz   -   lieb— sein!

f

"Kein   Meis - ter fällt   vom Him - mel!"   das

ist mein Trost aus die - ser   Welt;   drum   mach' ich, dass ich Meis - ter

werd'   und   wird mir dann ein Weib be - schert,   dann

soll aus— die - ser   Er - den, mir   schon ein— Him - mel wer - den, aus—

dem—kein—Meis - ter   fällt   aus— dem—kein—Meis - ter   fällt!

at its beginning and end; this comically differentiates the masters, who speak with diatonic surety, from their rebellious apprentices, who grumble in a more contemporary chromatic idiom.

There were remarkably few changes made between the sketch and the finished song, and several of these changes are refinements of rhythmic features, such as the double-dotting in mm. 23–26 and the eighth-note rest inserted for the singer's breath in m. 22. Comparing the sketch and the final version, I am struck especially by two features. Foremost is the surety of tonal design; Wolf, who associated particular tonalities with certain themes and emotions, never, so far as we know, altered his original choice of key between the sketch and the final version (C major is used infrequently in Wolf's mature Lieder, although one does find it in the comic songs "Ihr jungen Leute" and "Ein Ständchen Euch zu bringen" from the *Italienisches Liederbuch* and in "Königlich Gebet" from the Gedichte von Goethe, among others[18]). In this sketch for the "Gesellenlied," he did not even alter his choices of subsequent key areas and passing tonicizations. For example, the intensification of the VII (B major) chord in mm. 11–12 at the end of the first stanza is already established in the sketch. This is a characteristically witty harmonic detail since B major is tonally far removed from the C major of the master's proverb; the apprentice rebelliously asserts his wish to move far from his master's example. Similarly, the A-minor passage at the end of the second verse in mm. 27–30 (A minor is associated with the complaining wives) is established in the sketch, as is the cadence on E minor in mm. 17–18.

The single substantive change between sketch and finished song is the replacement of the interlude originally located between the third and fourth verses with a new interlude related to (and perhaps derived from) Wolf's later conception of the piano accompaniment to the final vocal phrase of stanza 3 ("Und wollt' mein Herzlieb' sein!"). The contrary motion in mm. 44–46 of the sketch (the descending chromatic motif in the soprano voice might be a Tristan-esque reminiscence following upon the apprentice's fantasy of a "Herzlieb'") is replaced in the subsequent and final version by a continuation of the dolcissimo chains of harmonic thirds in the accompaniment to stanza 3 and the addition of two more measures. The thirds, which constitute triads and seventh chords, are an almost saccharine characterization of the "young, cute, and merry maiden" the apprentice wishes might fall from Heaven and become his beloved; those thirds were evidently not yet conceived when Wolf wrote the sketch, nor were the multiple appoggiaturas to the sustained dominant-seventh harmony in mm. 46–47 (example 4). The changed vocal part for the last line of stanza 3 is also notable: the first-beat stress falls on the verb "wollt" rather than the sustained initial syllable of "Herzlieb'." There is nothing wrong with the prosody in the sketch; the rest

Example 4. "Gesellenlied" (mm. 42–47). Reprinted from Hugo Wolf, *Sämtliche Werke* (Vienna: Musikwissenschaftlicher Verlag). Reproduced with permission.

that Wolf added between the words "unter" and "und" in the final version gives the singer time for a needed breath.

The "Gesellenlied" sketch, like several of the other extant sketches (e.g., those for "Philine," for the "Spottlied aus Wilhelm Meister," and for "Der Schreckenberger"), gives every indication of being a mnemonic aid for the accurate recording of a fair copy. Like another sketch written that same day for a setting of Heine's "Wo wird einst des Wandermüden,"[19] the vocal line is texted, thus helping to ensure the correct text-underlay in the fair copy. The inclusion one or more principal melodic lines for the piano interludes, occasional fragments of voice leading for one of the accompaniment voices, and slur markings and accents are also indications, not of a true working draft but of a memory aid. It seems that Wolf composed both the vocal line and the accompaniments of his songs in his head and only then wrote down sketches such as this as an intermediate step between the conception of the Lied and its fair copy, and perhaps did so with the additional aid of actual working sketches of particular passages. If the latter speculation is true—and the sketch from "Verschwiegene Liebe" suggests so—then almost all of such

sketch materials were subsequently lost or destroyed.

Although it shares most of the characteristics of the "Gesellenlied" sketch, the sketch of the Goethe song "Anakreons Grab" shows the composer encountering difficulties with the compositional process outlined above. This manuscript too was probably intended as a mnemonic aid for the *Reinschrift*, but Wolf never finished the sketch. Instead, he appears to have become dissatisfied with the work in this form and abandoned it before the moment at which the text would have been added. This manuscript, which contains only the vocal line and the sketchiest indications for the piano accompaniment, tells, more than the other sketches of this type, of exertions greater than the early twentieth-century Wolf legends would allow, of the labor he performed to render a work "fix und fertig." Before he could prepare a fair copy of the song in ink, he rewrote much of what appears in this manuscript. A comparison of the preliminary version with the revised, completed song is instructive. We can see what dissatisfied him and what replaced those passages; we can trace the extension of the piano interludes and an altered tonal plan—a unique occurrence in the sketches; and we can see the refinement of Wolf's prosody. Unlike most of the song sketches, this one is witness to the composer's self-critical rejection of much of the sketched music. It is a rare, valuable glimpse into his workshop (example 5).

Goethe's poem in free verse—what the poet described as "Antiker Form sich nähernd"[20]—is an elegiac farewell to the Ionian poet Anacreon of Teos (died ca. 490 B.C.), the distant *fons et origo* of the neo-anacreontic eighteenth-century German poetry from which derives the style of Goethe's early poetry.[21] The *Anakreontiker* of the 1740s and 1750s, purveyors of French-influenced rococo classicism, were attracted to the *vie en rose* of Anacreon's poetic world, with its cicadas, roses, lovers, and wine. But most of them lacked Anacreon's irony and sophisticated detachment, his obsession with death and the passage of time. Instead, they were concerned mostly with form, and their fictive Greek personae tended to be flower-wreathed hedonists with a gift for *galant* compliments. By the time Goethe wrote "Anakreons Grab," he had rejected this sentimentalized, rococo antiquity in favor of a monumental conception of a Greece whose spiritual dimensions were far more vast than those perceived by the *Anakreontiker*. When the problem of tragic violence in the life and literature of the ancient Greeks oppressed Goethe in the 1770s, he turned to their plastic arts and epigrams as testaments to antique formal perfection and intellectual refinement. Only then could the Anacreontic again be held in honor and Anacreon himself be paid the reverent and affectionate tribute of this poem, in which the gods themselves adorn the poet's grave and apotheosis through poetry overcomes the mortal death Anacreon so feared. For all the brevity and delicacy of the poem, its poetic rhythms and structure are complex; this goes some way toward explaining why Wolf was

apparently the first composer to set the poem to music, despite the great popularity of Goethe's poetry as a source of Lieder texts throughout the nineteenth century.[22] Taking up the challenge, Wolf discovered difficulties in setting the fluent rhythmic patterns of this quasi-free verse.

Characteristically, Wolf retains the D-major tonality and compound meter of the sketch in the final version, although the 6/8 of the sketch is broadened to 12/8 in the final version. Whatever subsequent alterations there were, he seems always to have been remarkably decisive about matters of key and

Example 5. "Anakreons Grab." Sketch. Österreichische Nationalbibliothek MS 19.573. Transcribed by the author.

meter (quite unlike Schubert, who frequently wrote several different versions of a song in different keys.[23]) Comparing the sketch and the published song, one observes the absence of a piano introduction in the sketch. Furthermore, the piano interlude in mm. 23–26 of the sketch is entirely unlike the transposed variant of the introduction that one finds at the corresponding location in the final version. Hans Eppstein asserts that the sparseness of the piano part in these sketches does not necessarily imply that Wolf had not already conceived the accompaniment in full. He points to such places as the D sustained over the barline in mm. 12–13 of the sketch at the word "Leben" and speculates that the contrapuntal motion in the piano beneath that D was already established in the composer's mind.[24] A characteristic shared by "Anakreons Grab" with many of Wolf's mature Lieder is the concentration of the motivic development in the piano part; the arioso-like vocal line is at times conjunct with the accompaniment, at times divergent from it. It is plausible that the composition of such an important piano part would not be the second step in a successive process of composition, but rather simultaneous with that of the vocal line.

Characteristically, there are only sparse indications of the accompaniment beneath the vocal line. On the first beat of m. 1, just before the first vocal phrase, Wolf writes an incomplete tonic harmony—the third and fifth of the chord—followed by a fragment of voice-leading in the piano in conjunction with the singer's melody. When the high F♯ descends to F♮ above a G♯ for the word "blüht," the composer specifies F♮ and G♯ as constituents of a ♯iv°[7] chord. There are no other such indications of the conjunction of accompaniment and vocal line elsewhere in the sketch. The melodic semitone F♯–F♮ is not retained in a single voice in the final version, as it is in the sketch, but instead shifts from the tenor to the alto lines of the accompaniment; nor does it appear in the high register, although octave transposition is possible in order to place the figure where it would be most visible.

Wolf, it seems, did not have much trouble setting the beginning of the poem (mm. 1–8 of the sketch). In the first two lines, Goethe balances tranquility with muted tension, the former engendered both by the measured sequence of parallel *wo* clauses and the placid images, the latter by delay: what indeed is this special place?

Wo die Rose hier blüht, wo Reben um Lorbeer sich schlingen,
Wo das Turtelchen lockt, wo sich das Grillchen ergötzt,
welch ein Grab ist hier, das alle Götter mit Leben
schön gepflanzt und geziert? Es ist Anakreons Ruh'.
Frühling, Sommer und Herbst genoß der glückliche Dichter;
vor dem Winter hat ihn endlich der Hügel geschützt.[25]

The *wo* clauses are almost equal in length; they contain six or seven sylla-bles, with the exception of the second, which expands to nine syllables in order to accommodate its paired elements, the laurel of poetic accomplish-ment and grapes for the wine that Anacreon so often celebrated in his poems. The symmetries that link the short syntactical units at the start were an invitation to correspondingly balanced melodic phrases in 6/8 meter that Wolf would find to be inadequate for the longer poetic lines to follow. Even in the setting of the *wo* clauses, the subsequent choice of 12/8 meter forestalls any temptation to over-emphasize the verbs (blüht, schlingen lockt, ergötzt) that fall on the first beat of the 6/8 bar in the sketch. The symmetrical order-ing of the text resembles that of conventional verse, despite the absence of rhyme; particularly noticeable are the similar verse lengths—from twelve to fifteen syllables—and the unique, centrally placed enjambment that acts to underscore both "Leben" and "schön."

Wolf's later changes to the vocal line for these balanced *wo* clauses were small but telling in effect, testaments to the power of such details. For exam-ple, one instance of dotted rhythm was added to the first phrase in order to shorten the duration of the second, weaker syllable of "Rose" and to create a rhythmic link among the first three *wo* clauses. As a result, the lack of that dotted pattern in the fourth phrase, in which the second syllable of "Grill-chen" is appropriately de-emphasized by the descent in pitch level, more effectively paves the way for a subsequent B section without the dotted eighth-note–sixteenth-note figure. The gradual melodic descent to the super-tonic E is especially serene by contrast with the repeated dotted rhythmic figures preceding it. Wolf also revised the second phrase—"wo Reben um Lorbeer sich schlingen"—so that the sequence of ascending thirds—F♯–A, G–B (mm. 1–2)—is more readily audible. The compass of this phrase is expanded by the addition of the upper neighbor-note C♯ and now comprises a tritone span contained in the ♯iv^{o7} chord. Finally, Wolf altered the inflection of the word "lockt" from a single sustained C♯ to the appoggiatural figure C♯–B. The change is more evocative of the verb "locken," but its significance in the melodic design is more important: it links the ending of the third vocal phrase more closely with the beginning of the fourth (example 6).

Wolf's problems in the sketch began where Goethe departs from the obvi-ous symmetry of the shorter parallel clauses and composes longer, more rhythmically complex poetic formulations; the evident correlation between poetico-rhythmic complexity and compositional difficulty suggests a great deal about this composer's absorption in the poetry. The trochaic meter of the initial clause, "Welch ein Grab ist hier," gave him no trouble, but the varying poetic feet that follow did. The rhythmic and prosodic faults of the sketch require some comment: Wolf atypically continued the trochaic quar-ter-note–eighth-note patterns through the grammatical articulation separat-

ing one clause from its successor ("hier, das"). He later revised the passage to provide a rest between the clauses and to prolong the first word of the second clause ("das"). In order to place more durational emphasis on the first syllable of "Götter" in the sketch, he stressed the adjective "alle" more than the noun it modifies. The prolongation of "das" in the final version exemplifies the difference between mere rhythmic rectitude in musical prosody and the authentic response to the interplay of poetic and musical rhythms. While setting "das" as a shorter note value in the sketch is certainly a justifiable treatment for a subordinate word, the tied eighth-notes of the published song both break the chain of trochaic figures and prepare the subsequent ties across the barline; as the more important initial syllable of "alle" is set to a longer note value than "das," the relative word and syllable stresses are still correct. The rhythmic elongations result in an increased intensity of expression that is easily heard if one but sings the melodic lines of the sketch and final version in succession. Prosody in music, even the choice of alternative note values for a single word, is poetic interpretation.

The changes of pitch for Goethe's central question, part query and part *mise-en-scène*, are even more interesting. Wolf was evidently dissatisfied with his original diatonic pitch choices as unequal to the heightened sense of wonder—the gods themselves have adorned this grave—and revised the passage. Wolf either omitted the G♯ at the word "Götter" in m. 11 of the sketch or he later altered the diatonic pitch to the raised fourth degree G♯. Wolf at first set the entire question "Welch ein Grab . . . und geziert?" as a seamless melodic line in a tamely diatonic scalar contour with only two chromatic inflections: the F♯–F semitone descent in m. 9 and the D–C♯–C motion at the words "Leben schön."

The re-composition of the central passage further necessitated the replacement of the original piano interlude that fell between the question and answer in the poem. In the first stage of composition, Wolf delayed the answer to Goethe's question by means of a four-bar interlude for the piano. Only what is presumably the principal melodic line is notated, the stems turned down to differentiate it from the vocal part; the F♯s from m. 9 ("Grab") are renotated as E♯s, and the eighth-note rising scalar figure G–a–b from mm. 3 and 11 reappears as the approach to the cadence. With the subsequent changes of melodic line and tonal design, the sketch interlude was replaced by a shorter passage for the piano.

The prosody (as well as one can infer it in the absence of text) of the remaining phrases is uncharacteristically awkward. Wolf evidently intended from the beginning to separate the answer into two fragments ("Es ist . . . Anakreons Ruh") although he omitted the tie that would extend over the barline the A at the verb "ist" (The answer is strikingly brief given the lengthy question that precedes it; this simplicity underscores the peaceful-

Example 6. "Anakreons Grab." Sketch and published versions of the melody.

Österreichische Nationalbibliothek MS. 19.573

Wo die Ro-se hier blüht, wo Re-ben um Lor-beer sich schlin-gen,

Published version

Wo die Ro - se Hier blüht,___ wo Re-ben um Lor-beer sich schlin-gen,

wo das Tur - tel-chen locht, wo sich das Grill-chen er-götzt,

wo das Tur - tel-chen lockt,___ wo sich das Grill-chen er-götzt,___

welch ein Grab ist hier, das al_____ le Göt-ter mit Le_____

welch ein Grab ist hier, das__ al_____ le Göt - ter mit Le -
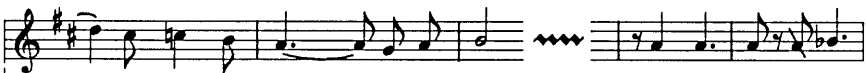
___ ben schön be-pflanzt_____ und ge - ziert? Es ist [?] A -

- ben schön be-pflanzt__ und ge - ziert?___ Es ist A - na__

na - kre - ons Ruh Früh - ling, Som - mer und Herbst _ ge -

___ kre - ons Ruh Früh - ling, Som - mer und Herbst ge-noß

ness of the site. Goethe pointedly uses the word *Ruhe* rather than the antici-
pated *Grab*). The prosody of the words "Anakreons Ruh'" in mm. 20–22 of
the sketch is poor; specifically, in the excessive prolongation of the first and
third syllables of "Anakreons." If the eighth-note A that is crossed out in m.
20 was originally intended as the first syllable of the poet's name and the B♭
subsequently tied across the barline as the second and strongest syllable, the
prosody would have been better, but Wolf rejected those pitches. He would
later reject also the harmonic implications of his original divided phrase. In
the sketch, Wolf seems to delay modulation until the significance of the
grave-site is revealed. In the final version, the farthest tonal distance from
the tonic D major appears as the culmination of the question: C minor. The
answer subsequently stands in a dominant relationship to the question and
in a subdominant relationship to the G-major tonal center of m. 12 (the end
of the B section). Structurally, the placement of modulation earlier in the
song corrects an imbalance in the tonal design of the sketch: the crowding of
the most intense chromaticism into a short segment past the midpoint. Poeti-
cally, this new placement corrects a musical mis-analogy between tonal mo-
tion and *Ruhe*. The brief resting-point on G major in the final version is the
tonal fulfillment of the *Ruhe* already promised harmonically in the A section.

Both in the sketch and the final version, Wolf composes an interlude (four
bars of 6/8 in the sketch, two bars of 12/8 in the published Lied) before the
encomium ("Frühling, Sommer und Herbst genoß . . . "). Those interludes
are possibly similar in purpose—the return to tonic before the final elegiac
words—though they are distinguished by the means employed. In the
sketch, Wolf implies a relatively quick and easy return to tonic by way of the
common-tone D of B♭ major and D major; in the final version, a transposed
variant of the piano introduction leads from G back to the tonic and to a
varied return of the A section. There, the earlier piano part recurs almost
literally, but the vocal line is changed to meet different prosodic require-
ments, including the lengthier poetic line. A similar intent seems to have
prompted the incomplete melody found in the last three bars of the sketch.
But here too, the prosody is faulty, the weak second syllables of "Frühling"
and "Sommer" prolonged beyond their due on the same pitches as the first
syllables. Perhaps Wolf wished to heighten the reflective mood by elongating
the words in this fashion; if so, it was a miscalculation, and he did not pursue
the attempt. It is likely that Wolf, having recognized the difficulties, simply
abandoned the sketch. Ironically, he did this in the middle of the verb
"genoß" (he was himself not "delighted"), and waited until his muse Poly-
hymnia could offer him something better, as she soon did.

In sum, the final version is far more effective on account of a modulation to
B♭ (mm. 8–9); the subsequent turn towards C minor at the end of the ques-
tion (m. 10); the greatest distance from tonic coincident with the moment of

greatest mystery in the text; the leap downward of a fifth to underscore the word "schön" rather than the descending semitone inflection; the appoggiatura on the last syllable of "bepflanzt;" the pause before the last two words "und geziert"; and the tritone leap at the verb "geziert" back to the climactic D of "Leben" (the G#–D-to-A♭–D enharmonic relationship between the start and close of the question is an element of melodic unification in the B section). Where the sketch is metrically bound to 6/8 and does not appear to stray far from the tonic key, the final version is more chromatic, tightly-constructed, and compelling. Wolf replaced the tonal simplicity and prosodic faults of the sketch with a more sophisticated design, with melodic lines whose pliancy preserves Goethe's fluent rhythms. In this instance, Wolf's justly-famed refinement of declamation was not won without effort.

The sketch for the "Spottlied" is incomplete like that of "Anakreons Grab," but for a different reason. Wolf sketched only as far as the end of the second stanza, the B section of the completed Lied (example 7). If he knew at that time that the setting of the third stanza would be a varied restatement of the first, he might simply have waited to write it down until the notation of the fair copy. Although he did not have as much trouble here as he had with the sketch of "Anakreons Grab," he indeed made significant alterations between the initial and final versions. Since the "Spottlied" is less well-known than "Anakreons Grab"—perhaps deservedly so, as it is a much slighter song—a brief digression about its background will be useful before turning to a discussion of the sketch.

Wolf began the collection *Gedichte von Goethe* with the Harper's songs "Philine" and "Spottlied" from *Wilhelm Meister;* by 22 December 1888, he set ten of the poems interpolated in Goethe's novel. The Harper's and Mignon's songs attracted composers early on; but not so "Spottlied"; one rare setting is the op. 91, no. 5 of Anton Rubinstein.[26] Eduard Hanslick considered the prolific Rubinstein one of the most important of those composers who held out against Wagnerism. This alone might have provoked Wolf, ever the passionate Wagnerite, but in fact Wolf respected Rubinstein. Wolf probably knew the op. 91 setting of the "Spottlied" and may even have recalled it in the first vocal phrase of his own setting (example 8).

Both settings are in F major and the descending melodic chromaticism and melodic arch are similar, but the accompaniments are entirely different, and Wolf's melody diverges from Rubinstein's dull production after an initial resemblance. Wolf was not above a spot of malicious quotation on occasion: another of his Goethe songs, "Ritter Kurts Brautfahrt," includes mocking references to the music of Adalbert von Goldschmidt and Carl Goldmark, both of these Viennese enjoying at the time greater success than Wolf.[28] It is possible that Wolf was indulging in some musical mockery beyond that contained in Goethe's text. One wonders what Wolf must have

Example 7. "Spottlied." Sketch. Österreichische Nationalbibliothek MS. 19.573. Transcribed by the author.

Example 8. Anton Rubinstein, "Ich armer Teufel, Herr Baron" (mm. 1–6). Reprinted from *Die Gedichte und das Requiem für Mignon, aus Goethe's "Wilhelm Meister's Lehrjahre"* (Leipzig: Bartholf Senff, n.d.).

thought of the thirteenth and final Wilhelm Meister setting in Rubinstein's op. 91: a lengthy, lugubrious, and dull "Requiem für Mignon" for mixed choir, four boy sopranos, piano, and phisharmonica (the scoring is derived from Goethe's description of the funeral obsequies in the novel).

The text of the "Spottlied" is an anti-aristocratic *pasquinade* directed against a Baron who is host, financier, and playwright for the theatrical troupe that Wilhelm Meister joins in book 2 of the novel. The Baron is, on the whole, a generous and committed patron, but his favoring of certain actors above others arouses resentment and prompts the anonymous composition of this scurrilous, mocking song. Its author contrasts the baron's aristocratic advantages of inherited (i.e., unearned) money and estates with his own wit; the latter is a gift of nature, the former implicitly unnatural. To be a "poor devil," lacking money and prestige, is preferable to being a "poor booby," destitute of artistic creativity. The balladeer implies that the two conditions are mutually exclusive. Though the singer will never find his name entered in the *Kapitel* (the register of the nobility), the Baron will discover that Parnassus, a far greater estate than any to be found on earth, is barred to him. Its Rousseauian premise—that the mother's child is better than the father's son when the Mother is Nature and the father a mere mortal nobleman—brands the "Spottlied" as more than a thrust of personal malice. The winds of revolution blow through the small poem, which is a descendant of eighteenth-century Enlightenment debates about Nature, aristocracy, authority, and the right to govern. In the novel, however, Goethe promptly counterbalances the "Spottlied" with the Baron's reasoned rejoinder, an in-

dictment of such revolutionary dichotomies:

> We Germans . . . deserve to have our Muses still held in contempt
> wherein they have languished so long, since we cannot value men of
> rank who take a share in our literature, no matter how gifted. Birth,
> rank, and fortune are not incompatible with genius and taste.[29]

After the setting of Mörike's "Mausfallensprüchlein" in 1882, Wolf showed a
special gift for comic songs, especially settings of texts such as the "Spott-
lied," in which humor is spiced with malice, anger, or condemnation.[30]

The sketch of the "Spottlied" suggests that, unlike in the case of the sketch
of "Anakreons Grab," Wolf conceived and notated the principal features of
the finished Lied here and thereafter only revised one or two brief passages
and composed an accompaniment based on the piano interlude already
sketched in mm. 12–16.

Perhaps because propagandistic, polemical, political poetry is often
strongly rhythmical, Wolf seems to have deliberately denied himself a full
deployment of declamatory subtleties. Rather than articulating different
clauses or phrases in the text and weighing the relative durational values of
stressed and unstressed syllables and notes, he literally marches through the
poem in 4/4 meter with a minimum of prosodic nicety. For example, instead
of articulating the two self-designations in the first line, "Ich, armer Teufel,"
by means of a registral shift or a brief pause, Wolf proceeds by equal quarter
note values and subjugates individual nuances to the forward progression of
his descending chromatic line. The same is true of the successive *um* clauses,
the catalogue of possessions and privileges that constitutes the first stanza. In
the sketch, Wolf indicates eighth-note rests between the first three lines of
stanza 1 and then composes a nonstop march of quarter notes through mm.
5–12. Because of pitch alterations that result in a higher overall tessitura in
the second half of the stanza, Wolf indicates breaks there, rather than the
beginning, in order to assist the singer. By the end of the verse, the listener
has presumably gotten the point: in contempt, one need not even pause for
breath in cataloguing advantages one holds in low esteem.

The pitch alterations between the sketch and the final version change as
well the large-scale melodic design. This change exchanges one kind of musi-
cal mockery for another. For the third and fourth lines of text ("Um Ihren
Platz so nah dem Thron / und um manch schön Stück Akkerland"), Wolf
again used the chromatic descent of the first two phrases, each phrase rising
sequentially by whole-steps, and then leapt upwards a minor seventh to the
tonic pitch F for the first time (mm. 5–8), placing the *manch* of "manch schön
Stück" in comic relief. (Goethe emphasizes those words by means of clotted
sch and *ch* sounds in close proximity.) In the revision, Wolf maintains the

higher tessitura rather than descending back to the original median level between G and C and, like a taunting child, repeats the same descending chromatic motive between and C♯ and D♭. This prompted in turn the pitch changes in the following phrase at the words "um ihres Vaters festes Schloss"; in the final version, Wolf continues in the same higher tessitura (example 9). Unlike the sketch, the vocal line for the first stanza rises gradually and balances the descending chromatic motion of the earlier phrases with ascending intervallic motion, a stronger compositional plan than the up-and-down meandering of the sketch.

Perhaps the most interesting feature of the sketch is the two-part counterpoint of the interlude between stanzas 1 and 2 (mm. 12–16). The Scotch-snap rhythmic patterns and the syncopation across the barline are overt gestures of mockery, in sharp contrast to the straightforward rhythms of the vocal line. Whether Wolf always intended the Scotch-snap figures as the accompaniment to the words is not knowable from the sketch, although the nearly-complete form of the sketch-interlude and the rhythmic simplicity of the vocal part might suggest that he had indeed already formulated the accompaniment—would Wolf have notated such a lengthy succession of quarter notes in the vocal part if he had not already created in his mind a piano part of greater rhythmic complexity than this? He subsequently revised and completed the fourth and fifth bars of the interlude (mm. 15–16 of the sketch, mm. 19–20 of the published song); added the left-hand harmonization with its motivically important D♭–C approach to the cadence; doubled the final right hand figure in octaves; and altered the rhythmic pattern of the right hand motives in mm. 13–14 of the sketch. Only in the sketch can one see and hear that dissonance is a principal ingredient of musical malice in the "Spott-lied"; in the final version, Wolf set much of the song—all three stanzas—over a dominant-chord ostinato in the left hand that at times generates astringent dissonances, such as the stressed [first-beat] conjunctions of a major seventh C–B between soprano and bass at the words "armer Teufel" and an augmented octave C–C♯ at "beneiden Sie." The dissonances lend the words an additional mule's kick that is hardly subtle; subtlety, though, is not what the poetic persona seeks.

The sketch for stanza 2 (mm. 17–28) begins and ends with the vocal line found in the final version. There are no indications for the piano part. Before establishing the final text, Wolf would make several substantial changes. The first trouble spot in m. 20 is evident in the sketch, wherein Wolf scratched out his first idea for the end of verse 2 ("Beneiden Sie, so wie es scheint ") and replaced the three pitches E–F♯–G with their transposition a third higher, G–A–B♭. A later decision regarding the accompaniment might have impelled a series of changes to the vocal line: in the final version, Wolf takes his cue from the text and writes an accompaniment lacking the nearly omnipres-

ent linear chromaticism of the right hand part. Since the poetic persona congratulates himself in this stanza on his closeness to nature since boyhood ("Weil die Natur vom Knaben schon / mit mir es mütterlich gemeint"), Wolf writes a more "natural" accompaniment for all but the last two lines that consists mostly of tonic, dominant, and subdominant harmonies within C major, the key of the dominant. Accordingly, Wolf altered the three notes for the interior phrase-ending in m. 20 to G–B–C and replaced the original melodic phrase for the third line of text. Where he had formerly characterized "die Natur" with a wide-ranging diatonic figure, beginning with an arpeggiation of the tonic F-major triad, he chose later to retain the dominant-

Example 9. "Spottlied aus *Wilhelm Meister*" (mm. 1–9). Reprinted from Hugo Wolf, *Sämtliche Werke* (Vienna: Musikwissenschaftlicher Verlag). Reproduced with permission.

based harmonies and to repeat the initial melodic phrase. This decision impelled other changes in turn, in particular, the appearance of F major later in the final version than in the sketch.

The sketched melody for the words "Ich ward, mit leichtem Mut und Kopf, zwar arm," is far simpler than that of the final version, as it lacks both the emphasized submediant and subdominant and the dotted rhythmic figure that invests "leichtem" with appropriate liveliness. At the end of the stanza, when the singer calls the Baron "ein armer Tropf," Wolf adds to the final version two further prosodic refinements that heighten the malice: an eighth-note rest before "zwar arm" and a longer expectant pause before call-

Example 9 (continued).

Ih - ren   Platz   so   nah   dem   Thron   und   um   manch   schön   Stück

Ak - ker - land,   um   Ih - res   Va - ters   fe - stes   Schloss,   um

sei - ne   Wild - bahn   und   Ge - schoss.

ing the Baron a simpleton. (The threefold *ar* alliteration [i.e., "ward . . . zwar arm"] further emphasizes the point.)

A fascinating detail concerning Wolf's choices of pitch is related to the sarcasm of the comparison. In setting the singer's self-description in stanza 1—"armer Teufel"—Wolf made use of the raised fourth degree B♮, followed by the diatonic fourth scale degree. When the singer later describes the Baron as an "armer Tropf," Wolf brings back those same pitches in a precadential grace-note figure. Grace-notes, which are a frequent Wolfian comic gesture, are reserved in the "Spottlied" for this single occasion.

Wolf broke off the sketch with the end of stanza 2. He wanted perhaps to complete the necessary revisions of the setting of the first two stanzas before proceeding, and felt no need to notate stanza 3 because it would be a varied repetition of stanza 1. One wonders if he had already composed in his mind the last eight bars of stanza 3 as they appear, extensively varied from the corresponding measures of the first stanza, in the final version. The music that was used earlier to catalogue the nobleman's possessions could not return unaltered to shut the Baron out of Parnassus ("Wir leben ohne Neid und Haß, / Begehren nicht des andern Titel, / Sie keinen Platz auf dem Parnass, / Und keinen ich in dem Kapitel"). As in stanzas 1 and 2, the Scotch-snap figures are replaced by a succession of march-like dotted rhythms, and the quarter-note bass ostinato on C in mm. 37–44 gives way to a root-position tonic F-major chord and a moving bass line, but the continuation is thereafter varied and extended. The variations are delightful: the intensification of the major mediant in mm. 47–48 ("des andern Titel"); the V–I–III progression at m. 48, ascending into the upper register as if to airily dismiss all aristocratic privilege; the vengefully accented declamation of the words "Sie keinen Platz auf dem Parnass" above a ♭ii^{o7} chord; and the fact that a final cadence in the tonic is made only by the piano in m. 52, the singer's last phrase ending just before. There is no way to know, however, whether Wolf had already shaped this ending in his mind when he wrote the sketch and merely left its notation to a later time, or whether it was conceived later. The sketch tells us only the shape of the vocal line for stanzas 1 and 2; the state of the piano interludes suggests as well that Wolf had already conceived much of the piano part when he penciled this as a skeletal draft for an anticipated fair copy.

What do these sketches reveal? Sketches, unless bound in some fashion, are easily dispersed and lost; many of Wolf's have clearly suffered this fate. The three that I have discussed from among the few that survive tell similar stories. These sketches do not record Wolf's first inventions. Wolf did not write these down in order to test different formulations of the melodic, harmonic, rhythmic, or formal design of the songs, nor did he use them as working drafts; they lack the numerous revisions, deletions, or additions that are

evidence of successive stages of compositional labor. It is possible that the sketch for "Verschwiegene Liebe" is a melodic trial, but the sketches of "Gesellenlied," "Anakreons Grab," and "Spottlied" were not intended as such. These sketches seem instead to be an intermediate step between the conception of the song—the initial choices of meter, tonality, tonal plan, melodic organization, etc.—and Wolf's preparation of an ink *Reinschrift*. They are penciled reminders of the complete song, both its vocal and piano parts. Even though the indications of the piano part in these leaves are very sparse, those that are found suggest that a more complete piano part had already been conceived. For example, Wolf might have intended the repeated G-major chords at m. 24 of the "Gesellenlied" sketch to be continued in the later *Reinschrift*, and the fragmentary voice-leading indications in mm. 21–22 of the same sketch belong to an already conceived, but unnotated contrapuntal context. In light of Wolf's well-known scrupulousness in his treatment of texts, one might wish to attribute the prominence of the vocal part in these sketches to a relatively greater concern for the poetry-bearing melody, but this would be an error.

Refuting the romanticizing legend of Wolf composing in a manic frenzy, without need of sketching, of revision, or compositional labor of any kind, these sketches are evidence of one stage in a painstaking compositional process. Musical decisions both pre- and postdated these sketches. The changes between the sketches and the final versions testify to Wolf's continuous refinement of each work. There were also occasions when further revisions—Wolf termed these brief passages *Varianten*—were made after the publication of a song.[31] While no sketches can lay bare the fundamental mystery of creativity, these shed some light on its processes. The glimpse that these sketches offer of Wolf at work is more compelling and provocative than the romantic evocation of mystical, unmediated inspiration.

NOTES

[1] What Wolf meant by the "days of Lodi" is unclear. The reference is found in a letter of 22 February 1888 to his friend Edmund Lang: "Die Tage von Lodi scheinen sich in der Tat erneuern zu wollen. Meine Lodi im Lied ist bekanntlich das Jahr 78 gewesen; damals komponierte ich fast jeden Tag ein gutes Lied, mitunter auch zwei." Quoted in Heinrich Werner, *Hugo Wolf in Perchtoldsdorf* (Regensburg: Gustav Bosse Verlag, 1925), 34.

[2] A small, black-bound, oblong music notebook, about $3\frac{1}{2}'' \times 5''$ (Österreichische Nationalbibliothek MS. 3252), contains Lieder and sketches from 1876–1877. The first five pages of the notebook contain the completed setting of Friedrich Matthisson's "Andenken," begun "Montag, 23/4 877" and completed "Mittwoch, 25/4 877." The manuscript of Adalbert von Chamisso's "Was soll ich sagen?" (in the Stadtbibliothek Wien) was begun on 1 April 1878 and abandoned unfinished on 4 May. Wolf scrawled the reason for leaving the song unfinished on the back of the single leaf of music paper: "zu viel schumannisch—deshalb nicht vollendet."

[3] Werner, *Hugo Wolf in Perchtoldsdorf*, 35, a letter of 22 February 1888. "Sollte mir Polyhymnia auffässig genug sein, mit einem dritten Liede zu drohen, werde ich diese Schreckensnachricht

persönlich morgen in aller Frühe überbringen." He did not wait until the next morning. "Verachten Sie mich. Das Bubenstück ist vollbracht." The three Mörike songs composed that day were "Der Knabe und das Immlein," "Jägerlied," and "Ein Stündlein wohl vor Tag." (See note 1 above.)

[4] The Österreichische Nationalbibliothek owns sketches for the "Italienische Serenade," sketches and fragments of Viktor Scheffel's "Wächterlied auf der Wartburg" for male chorus and orchestra (unfinished), and sketches for *Der Corregidor* and for the incidental music to Ibsen's *Das Fest auf Solhaug.*

[5] Frank Walker reports an earlier rumor that Wolf destroyed vast quantities of music with which he was not satisfied. Walker suggests, however, that the evidence contradicts any such statement: "How explain, in that case, the continued existence in the composer's possession of manuscripts with 'Rubbish!', 'Bad!', 'Worse!', etc., scrawled by himself across them?" (*Hugo Wolf: A Biography,* rev. and augmented ed. [London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1968], 36). It seems certain that he kept most of his unfinished songs, including the manuscripts of the unfinished Heine songs of 1878, "Manch Bild vergessener Zeiten" and "Das gelbe Laub erzittert", and Nikolaus Lenau's "Herbstklage" of 1879 (now in the Stadtbibliothek Wien). Perhaps the rumor that Walker cites originated not with the composer's destruction of advanced composition drafts, but specifically the destruction of sketches.

[6] According to Ernest Newman, Wolf "would read the poem one day, and reflect upon it until it had entered into every nerve-cell of his system, but think very little or not at all of how he would set it. He would go to sleep, and in the morning the song would be already made by some mysterious alchemy,—so full-formed that in noting it down his pen could hardly keep pace with his brain, while scarcely a note or a rest of it required to be altered afterwards. The poems literally set themselves" (*Hugo Wolf* [1907; reprint, New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1966], 182). In a footnote to this passage, Newman adds: "He made no sketches. The first draft was the last." Ernst Decsey, a principal source for Newman, wrote much the same account of Wolf's compositional process (*Hugo Wolf,* 4 vols. [Berlin & Leipzig: Schuster & Loeffler, 1903–6], 2:22).

[7] "Für Wolf war es immer wieder eine grosse Freude, wenn er mir soeben Komponiertes aus der ersten Skizze vorspielen und vorsingen könnte und damit immer wieder meinen störmischen Enthusiasmus erweckte" (Friedrich Eckstein, "Hugo Wolf und Friedrich Nietzsche," in *Alte unnennbare Tage: Erinnerungen aus siebzig Lehr- und Wanderjahren* [Vienna: Herbert Reichner Verlag, 1936], 193). In the chapter "Hugo Wolf als Klavierstimmer" (*Alte unnennbare Tage,* 109), Eckstein writes: "Oft hat er mir soeben zu Papier gebrachte Kompositionen aus der ersten Bleistiftskizze singend vorgespielt; manche Lieder nach Gedichten von Moerike und Eichendorff; später auch Goethes 'Prometheus,' 'Grenzen der Menschheit' und vieles aus dem italienischen und dem spanischen Liederbuch."

[8] "Gestern habe ich gegen Abend hin ein neues Lied flüchtig skizzirt u[nd] dasselbe heute ausgeführt; da die Begleitung eine äusserst sorgfältige Behandlung verlangte, habe ich die heutigen Morgenstunden benützt, das Stücklein fix u[nd] fertig zu machen" (*Hugo Wolf: Briefe an Melanie Köchert,* ed. Franz Grasberger [Tutzing: Hans Schneider, 1964], 165–66).

[9] Among the title pages (no. 35 in the Konvolut) is the "Reiseblätter / nach Gedichte v. N. Lenau. / für das Pianoforte / compo. v. / Hugo Wolff" and the "Acht Lieder / von / Heinrich Heine / für eine Singstimme mit Piano-Forte. / componirt [*sic*] von / Hugo Wolf. / 1878." The latter refers to Wolf's plans for what eventually became the seven songs of the Heine *Liederstrauss,* vol. 1, offered unsuccessfully to various publishers and so published only posthumously. Given Wolf's self-proclaimed "anti-Brahmimentum," a special curiosity in the *Konvolut* is an otherwise blank page (no. 16) with the heading "Wiegenlied von Johannes Brahms, Op. 49, no. 4" in Wolf's handwriting.

[10] Ms. 19.573 also includes six pages of sketches for "Christnacht" (1886–89), a setting for soloists, chorus, and orchestra of a text by Count August von Platen-Hallermünde.

[11] Erik Werba, *Hugo Wolf, oder der zorniger Romantiker* (Vienna: Molden, 1971), 244.

[12] Hans Eppstein, "Zum Schaffensprozess bei Hugo Wolf," *Die Musikforschung* 32 (1984): 4–20 and "Zu Hugo Wolfs Liedskizzen," *Österreichische Musikzeitschrift* 39 (1984): 645–56.

[13] Wolf learned his craft in part by imitating others' styles for a time, primarily Schumann's. In December 1876 and again during summer and autumn 1878, Wolf selected texts from Heinrich Heine's *Buch der Lieder* and *Neue Gedichte* and set them to music in a style derivative of Schumann, but occasionally revealing traces of his own developing mannerisms. I am currently preparing a study of these Heine settings ("The Apprenticeship of a Song Composer") for publication.

[14] Examples include the setting of Heinrich Zschokke's "Nacht und Grab," op. 3, no. 1; Goethe's "Sehnsucht," op. 3, no. 2 (September 1875); Nikolaus Lenau's "Meeresstille," op. 9, no. 1 (January 1876); and "Der goldene Morgen," op. 9, no. 6, to a text by an unknown poet. The treatment of chromaticism in these songs is very awkward at times, but is also evidence of Wolf's willingness to experiment. All of the above songs are published in *Hugo Wolf Gesamtausgabe*, ed. Hans Jancik (Vienna: Musikwissenschaftlicher Verlag, 1976), vol. 3, *Nachgelassene Lieder.*

[15] Hans Eppstein's "Zu Hugo Wolfs Liedskizzen" (see note 12 above) is the only other published study of the sketches. Here, he reproduces and discusses briefly the following: the first sixteen measures of the vocal line of both the sketch and the final version of the Eichendorff song "Heimweh"; the sketches for the third Harper song, "An die Tören"; two sketches for "Cophtisches Lied II"; the words, "Dahin! dahin!" from Mignon's "Kennst du das Land"; the first five measures of the sketch for the 1888 Heine song "Wo wird einst des Wandermüden"; and m. 9 to the end of the sketch of "Anakreons Grab." See also Hans Jancik, "Die Hugo Wolf–Autographen in der Musiksammlung der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek," in *Beiträge zur Musikdokumentation: Franz Grasberger zum 60. Geburtstag,* ed. Günter Brosche (Tutzing: Schneider, 1975), 131f. Walter Legge discusses briefly a copy of the first edition of the *Mörike-Lieder* to which Wolf made numerous emendations—mostly deletions or additions of dynamic markings, crescendo and decrescendo indications, and the like ("Hugo Wolf's Afterthoughts on his Moerike-Lieder," *The Music Review* 2 (1941): 211–14). The emendations cease with the thirty-ninth song, the "Lied vom Winde"; Wolf appears not to have finished his self-imposed task.

[16] Artist, poet, writer of children's tales, and librettist, Robert Reinick (1805–52) is remembered today primarily for the settings of his poetry by Schumann, Brahms, Wolf, Reinick's friend Ferdinand Hiller, Heinrich Marschner, Carl Gottlieb Reissiger, Ludwig Sphor, and others. Ernst Challier lists only one other setting of the "Gesellenlied" before Wolf's: C. Grammann's op. 6, no. 4 (*Grosser Lieder-Katalog: Ein alphabetisch geordnetes Verzeichniss sämmtlicher einstimmiger Lieder* [Berlin: Ernst Challier's Selbstverlag, 1885], 310). Wolf published the "Gesellenlied" in the *Drei Lieder von Robert Reinick* of 1897, along with "Skolie" (composed 1 August 1889) and "Morgenstimmung" (composed 8 September–23 October 1896).

[17] The reference to Wagner as an *Obergott* is made in a letter dated 5 August 1893; see *Hugo Wolf's Briefe an Emil Kauffmann,* ed. by Edmund Hellmer (Berlin: S. Fischer, 1903), 104. The passage as a whole reveals Wolf's complex feelings toward Wagner:

Nach der berauschenden Narkose Wagner'scher Kunst dünkt mich Beethoven'sche Musik wie Himmelsäther und Waldesluft. Jene benimmt mir den Atem und schmettert mich zu Boden, dieser aber erweitert die Lungen und befreit den Geist, und macht einen förmlich zum guten Menschen, wie die Wagner'sche Kunst in ihrer Ueberfälle einen zum Wurm degradiert. Deshalb aber dürfen sie nicht annehmen, daß ich plötzlich unter die Anti-Wagnerianer gegangen, wogegen ich mich allerdings ernstlich zu verwahren hätte, wäre es auch nur, um meine eigene künstlerische Existenz zu rechtfertigen. Wagner ist und bleibt doch der Obergott, wenn er seinen Anbetern vielleicht auch mehr Furcht, oder wenn Sie wollen, Ehrfurcht als Liebe einflößt.

[18] Wolf, however, also used C major for the entirely serious song "Wohl kenn' ich Euren Stand" in the *Italienisches Liederbuch.*

[19] The sketch of "Wo wird einst des Wandermüden" (Österreichische Nationalbibliothek MS. 19.550) is entitled "Frage (Heine)." Frank Walker writes that "Wo wird einst" represents "neither Wolf nor Heine at his best," but the sketch seems to have come to him quite easily (*Hugo Wolf*, 201).

[20] When Goethe turned to Pindar as a model in the 1770s, he realized that the quantitative Greek verse was not transferrable into German and that one could only devise an approximation of Greek poetic forms and meters in other languages. Thereafter, his verse from the 1780s— "Antiker Form sich nähernd"—"approached" but did not replicate classical form. The result is a kind of free verse articulated by many of the devices of more conventional rhyming verse.

[21] Very little is known of Anakreon's life, other than his birth in Asia Minor ca. 572 B.C. and his occasional presence in Thrace, Samos, and finally Athens, where he died, according to legend, from choking on a grape pip. Between the first century B.C. and the sixth century A.D., his imitators pursued the same images, themes, forms, and meters; these are preserved in a group of some sixty lyric poems known as the *Anakreonteia.* For a study of Goethe's early anacreontic verse, see Herbert Zeman, *Die deutsche anakreontische Dichtung* (Stuttgart: J.B. Metzlersche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1972), 266–314.

The *Anakreontiker* of eighteenth-century Germany included Johann Nikolaus Götz (1721–81), Friedrich von Hagedorn (1708–54), Salomon Gessner (1730–88), Johann Peter Uz (1720–96), Johann Ludwig Wilhelm Gleim (1719–1803), and Johann Georg Jacobi (1740–1814); their works belong to a "schwache Zeit" for poetry, lacking both the objective-metaphysical background of the baroque and the subjective-metaphysical foundation of German idealism. In "Anakreons Grab," Goethe invested his elegy with a heartfelt expression and psychological profundity that was lacking in the *Rokokogesellschaft*, which had borrowed the ancient poet's images but not his deepest substance.

[22] Although "Anakreons Grab" was not set to music before Wolf, other Anacreontic poems were. Among the curiosities are three settings of the original Greek by the young Carl Loewe: the first Anacreontic, "Ich will von den Atriden, ich will von Kadmus singen"; the eleventh, "Es sagen mir die Weiber"; and the twenty-fourth, "Weil ich sterblich bin geboren." Wolf could not have known these songs, as they were only published in 1899, in *Carl Loewes Werke*, vol. 1, ed. Max Runze (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel), 6–11. Runze cites a letter written by Loewe on 20 July 1816 to the Peters firm in Leipzig regarding his six Anacreontic songs (three were subsequently lost): "Ich glaube, daß dieses eine neue Idee und der erste Versuch dieser Art ist, wenigstens wüsste ich aus keiner litterarischen Notiz, daß jemals eine Ode von diesem bezaubernden Sänger des grauen klassischen Altertums im Originale komponiert wäre. Ich habe überdem gute Übersetzungen gewählt, von Stolberg und anderen, in denen die muntere Laune und der Witz des Dichters ausserordentlich gut aufgefasst ist" (ibid., viii). The three extant settings are extremely simple; the first does not bear comparison with Schubert's dramatic setting of the same text.

[23] Hans Holländer points out that the composer's revisions and multiple settings reveal a consistent and recurring process of self-criticism ("Franz Schubert's Repeated Settings of the Same Song-Texts," *Musical Quarterly* 14 (1928): 563–74). See also Marius Flothuis, "Schubert Revises Schubert" in *Schubert Studies: Problems of Style and Chronology*, ed. Eva Badura-Skoda and Peter Branscombe (Cambridge University Press, 1982), 61–84.

Although there are no multiple settings of entire songs in his oeuvre, Wolf occasionally returned to completed and even published works in order to revise them (see note 15 above, Legge, "Hugo Wolf's Afterthoughts"). In 1881, Wolf began, but did not finish, a "Variante" of the middle section of the 1878 Heine setting "Mir träumte von einem Königskind." Characteristically, he preserved the torn-off scrap of music paper among his other manuscripts of uncompleted songs and sketches.

[24] Eppstein, "Zu Hugo Wolfs Liedskizzen," 655.

[25] *Goethes Werke,* 9th ed., ed. by Erich Trunz (Hamburg: Christian Wegner Verlag, 1969), vol. 1, "Vermischte Epigramme," 205.

[26] Challier, *Grosser Lieder-Katalog,* 384.

[27] His admiration was won in largest part by Rubinstein's skills as a performer. In a review for the *Wiener Salonblatt,* however, he describes Rubinstein's Lied "Es blinkt der Thau" as "charming," this praise perhaps tinged with condescension for a composer whose idiom was so much more conservative than Wolf's. In another review of 17 February 1884, Wolf compared Rubinstein in Vienna to "Gulliver among the Liliputians . . . when it comes to sheer beauty of sound no one among living pianists can touch him"; but Wolf criticized the liberties Rubinstein took with Beethoven's sonatas (*The Music Criticism of Hugo Wolf,* trans. and ed. Henry Pleasants [New York and London: Holmes & Meier Publishers, Inc., 1978], 13). On another occasion, Wolf wrote, "Anton Rubinstein's 'Es blinkt der Tau' has already won an enduring little spot in the hearts of the public and in the programs of those who sing" (ibid., 278). However, he condemned Rubinstein's 1885 opera *Nero* as "among the sorriest phenomena since the creation of the world . . . this music could kill the Wandering Jew from sheer boredom" (ibid., 139). Hanslick, in a favorable review of Rubinstein's oriental opera *Feramors,* wrote, "In Wahrheit könnte der Feramors Note für Note componirt sein, ohne dass je ein Richard Wagner gelebt hatte . . . ich halte übrigens Rubinstein für das grössere musikalische Talent, wenngleich Wagner als dramatischem Componisten eine ungleich höhere culturhistorische Bedeutung zukommt" (*Die moderne Oper: Kritiken und Studien* [Berlin: Allgemeiner Verein für deutsche Literatur, 1885], 332).

[28] Edmund Hellmer, the sculptor of Wolf's tomb monument in the Vienna Central Cemetery, tells in his memoir an anecdote about Wolf performing "Ritter Kurts Brautfahrt" (*Hugo Wolf, Erlebtes und Erlauschtes* [Vienna: Wiener Literarischer Anstalt, 1921]):

Immer vergnügter wurde der Spieler und Sänger. Und als er mit der Moral von der Geschicht:

Widersacher, Weiber, Schulden,
Ach, kein Ritter wird sie los . . . '

geschlossen, liess er die Hände in den Schoss sinken und brach in ein herzliches Lachen aus. 'Das eine [Thema] hab' ich von Goldmark,' sicherte er, sich noch immer schüttelnd vor Lachen, 'es ist aus seiner Sakuntala; das andere ist aus den Sieben Todsünden, die ich seinerzeit nur zu gut kennengelernt habe.'

The *Sakuntala* Overture, op. 13 (1865) by Goldmark was one of the most popular and well-known works by this esteemed composer. In 1877, Wolf copied orchestral parts for the oratorio, *Die sieben Todsünden* by Adalbert von Goldschmidt, a wealthy dilettante composer who studied composition briefly with Liszt, to whom the work is dedicated. The oratorio is pure camp, with a "Fürst der Finsterniss," "Chor der Krieger," "Chor der Reichen," all the demons of the seven deadly sins, and a muddy, pseudo-Lisztian chromatic idiom throughout.

[29] "'Wir Deutschen,' rief er aus, 'verdienten, dass unsere Musen in der Verachtung blieben, in der sie so lange geschmachtet haben, da wir nicht Männer vom Stande zu schützen wissen, die sich mit unserer Literatur auf irgendeine Weise abgeben mögen. Geburt, Stand, und Vermögen stehen in keinem Widerspruch mit Genie und Geschmack . . .'" (*Goethes Werke,* ed. Erich Trunz [Hamburg: Christian Wegner Verlag, 1950], 7:182–82).

[30] The humor in this song, Wolf's first masterpiece, is psychologically true in its portrayal of a child's streak of playful cruelty. Upon his compositional maturity in 1888, Wolf began to write one comic song after another, even claiming in 1896 in a letter to Melanie Köchert that humor in music had first entered the world with his music (*Briefe an Melanie Köchert,* 165). In a study

entitled "Wolf, Freud, and Humor in Music" (to be included in my forthcoming *Studies in the Music of Hugo Wolf* [UMI Research Press, 1990]), I have discussed Wolf's choice of comic texts in light of Freud's theories regarding "tendentious jokes" as psychic mechanisms—as momentary victories over aggressive impulses and hostility—and his use of post-Wagnerian third relations, harmonic substitutions, intensive chromatic alterations, elisions, etc., for comic effect.

[31] Österreichische Nationalbibliothek MS. 29.310 contains only a three-stave system, comprising the first 7½ measures of the song, which is carefully labelled by Wolf "Variante zur Christblume No 2 Mörike-Band pag. 77." Differences between the "Variante" and the published version are found between both the piano parts and the vocal lines, but the motivation for the changes seems to have been prosodic. In the "Variante," Wolf separates each group of words bordered by commas—"Im Winterboden schläft, / ein Blumenkeim, / der Schmetterling, / dereinst um Busch und Hügel"—and changes the word or syllable emphasis from the published version for greater refinement of the declamation. At the word "Blumenkeim" in the "Variante"—used for a delicate analogy between the sleeping butterfly chrysalis and the bud of a flower—Wolf places greater stress on the third syllable (*keim*) rather than the first, on the bud or chrysalis rather than the full-blown flower or butterfly, doing so by means both of durational emphasis and the upwards turn of the melody. The altered rhythmic configuration for the word "Schmetterling" is also a slight improvement over the published version, because Wolf does not call for the singer to remain as long on the short *e* vowel of "Schmetterling" and because the succession of sixteenth notes more aptly suggests the fluttering motion of the butterfly-to-be. Sustaining the second, accented syllable of "dereinst" over the barline, giving that word more prominence than it has in the published version, brings to the fore Mörike's beautiful meditation on time, on spiritual experience that transcends the bounds of time and the seasons. The butterfly that is now dormant in its chrysalis will never physically taste the nectar of the Christmas rose—the two seasonal creatures belong to different times of the year—but their affinities of tenderness and beauty may bring the butterfly's spirit to hover about the rose when summer is past. I have never heard the "Variante" in performance. Perhaps some enterprising singer will experiment in the future with the substitution.

Variant on "Christblume No. 2." Österreichische Nationalbibliothek MS. 29.310.

"Christblume No. 2" (mm. 1–9). Reprinted from Hugo Wolf, *Sämtliche Werke* (Vienna: Musik-
    wissenschaftlicher Verlag). Reproduced with permission.

From a God to a Servant:
The Bass Voice in Seventeenth-Century Venetian Opera

By Olga Termini

> As much as I love singing bass—after all, it's the only sound I make—
> it would be nice to be a tenor. . . who has the bulk of leading roles and
> usually gets the girl and is paid considerably more.[1]

How many basses throughout the history of opera would not have echoed this remark? While there are many outstanding and memorable bass roles, they have always occupied a secondary place in opera, both vocally and dramatically. In familiar operas of the nineteenth century, the protoganists are usually young lovers associated with the tessituras of the male tenor and female soprano; this association grew out of concepts fundamental to the earliest operas. In Verdi's *Don Carlo,* for instance, the title hero is a tenor and his beloved Elizabeth of Valois a soprano, whereas two of the most impressive bass roles in the repertoire are those of the Grand Inquisitor and the King, the representatives of church and state. This characterization of the bass resembles generally that found in later seventeenth-century opera, but in fact the role of the bass voice had already changed during that century just as the representation of the youthful lover and opera as a whole had changed—from the early pastoral type to the historical or pseudohistorical type. The divinities who populated early operas yielded to human potentates—the kings, counselors, and military figures of later works. In addition, the nature of the vocal parts written for the bass changed, first, because different character traits required different musical portrayals and, second, because of the evolution of operatic vocal conventions and musical forms. Preference shifted away from the *basso profondo* toward the baritone range and its own new characteristic style. This move toward the upper registers can be comprehended within the general seventeenth-century tendency to place operatic voice parts in higher registers than before; this catered to the Italian preference for high tessituras, a preference that contributed to the ascendancy of the soprano, especially the castrato. Parallel to this development was the appearance of small comic roles for servants. These had emerged in Venetian operas before the Arcadian reform and subsequently were brought to the stage in Naples, where they established the domain of the *basso buffo*. In this essay I shall trace the changing function of the bass voice in the seventeenth century and closely describe some of those factors that encouraged it.

It is unnecessary to rehearse the understanding that the seventeenth century was a singer's age, and that the development of operatic forms was determined at least in part by the requirements of singers and the manner in which composers, librettists, and audiences responded to them. Innumerable comments on singers in seventeenth-century Italy were made both by Italians and by foreigners—whether enthusiasts or critics—that demonstrate their preoccupation with the qualities of singers. De Vaumière, for instance, described as "bright, clear, firm, and assured" the voices that he heard in Venetian opera houses.[2] Praising the castrato Baldassare Ferri, Bontempi singled out his limpid tone, his extraordinary facility of vocal production, the brilliance of his trills, and his perfect breath control and intonation.[3] Later, in one of the most important treatises on singing of the late eighteenth century, the castrato Giambattista Mancini enumerated the qualities of Francesca Cuzzoni's singing in strikingly similar terms: "an angelic voice, both in clarity and in sweetness as well as an exquisite style . . . she had ample agility."[4] The most prized attributes of singing were repeatedly given to be lightness, clarity, transparency, flexibility, and elegance in executing ornaments. Very few listeners seem to have valued, as we often do today, sheer vocal power or the other qualities of "big" operatic voices. Denis Arnold came to the same conclusion after studying the vocal requirements for Monteverdi's operas of the early 1600s.[5] What is known of the training received by seventeenth-century singers corroborates this view.

The implicit vocal ideal of the seventeenth century has roots in the later sixteenth century. In his study of Italian vocal techniques of those earlier decades, Mauro Uberti showed that "the older techniques favoured suppleness and agility rather than power," especially in *camera* singing.[6] Although the theorists he cites (Vicentino, Zarlino, Maffei, and Zacconi) advocate various specific techniques, they leave no doubt that the larynx was not deliberately lowered to produce the large, dark, voluminous sound so dear to the ears of nineteenth-century audiences.[7] Another aspect of the seventeenth-century vocal ideal was expressiveness—the ability to "move the affections." Curiously, Caccini regarded the bass voice as inherently less expressive than the higher range voices. In the preface to the 1614 edition of *Le nuove musiche*, he remarks: "In the bass [sections] of these, one must make tremolos occasionally on some of the quarter-notes and dotted eighths in descending scales in order to give them greater grace, force, spirit, and, so to speak, bravura and boldness that are required for considerably less [sheer] expressiveness than does the tenor."[8]

Increasingly during the course of the century, Italian commentators favored the higher voice types, whether male or female. Around 1580, Count Bardi had advised Caccini "never to pass from [the] tenor to [the] bass, seeing that with its passages the bass takes away whatever magnificence and

gravity the tenor, with its majesty, has bestowed."[9] And though Giovanni
Battista Doni expressed a preference for the lower voices over the treble
ranges, he made clear his preference for tenors over basses.[10]

Especially in operatic roles, the Italians increasingly favored the higher
voices, both male and female. In 1702, Francois Raguenet compared Italian
and French opera, commenting as follows:

> Besides our Operas have a farther advantage over the Italian, in respect
> of the Voice, and that is the Base [sic] which is so frequent among us,
> and so rarely to be met in Italy. . . . For every Man, that has an Ear, will
> witness with me that nothing can be more Charming than a good Base;
> the simple sound of these Bases, which sometimes seems to sink into a
> profound Abyss, has something wonderfully Charming in it.[11]

In 1700, the *Mercure de France* observed that "the Italians dearly love high
voices and have not so much taste for basses."[12] The translator of Raguenet's
Paralèle annotated this quoted passage to remark that "Italy does not want
those basses, particularly at Rome," but offers that "these basses are peculiar
to the churches, being very improper for the theatre, where instead of becom-
ing the part of an hero they would set the audience a-laughing."[13]

If indeed Raguenet's notion that simplicity, depth, richness, and power are
the principal qualities associated with the bass voice, and if these qualities
were increasingly less valued than lightness, flexibility, and delicacy, then the
ascendant preference for the higher voices is explicable. These were not,
however, the only factors that militated against a more prominent use of the
bass in opera. Since voices were representative of character, the association of
the bass voice with maturity also contributed to the determination of its place
in the vocal hierarchy. In his study of the correlation between vocal register
and characterization, Roger Covell attributes the association of age with
wisdom or knowledge to the influence of the Old Testament and indicates its
representation in Renaissance art, in which the image of a male, "white-
bearded" deity dominates. Therefore, Covell argues, the deepening of a boy's
voice at puberty symbolizes his age, experience, and "initiated wisdom."[14]
This argument is plausible, but it might be noted that during the later seven-
teenth and early eighteenth centuries other "natural" or traditional corre-
spondences—such as that between voice part and sexual characterization, or
between mature male voices and virility or heroism—are often disregarded
in opera casting. In fact, these character associations of the bass usually
excluded him from the role of a *primo uomo*, whose chief function was that of a
young lover; youth and love were generally associated with the higher voices.
It is clear that a long tradition was established in the seventeenth century
that cast the bass in the role of the sage, his wisdom founded on the accumu-

lated experience of the mature, be he god, priest, judge, king, or councillor. Interestingly, the bass may also play the fool who merely believes himself to be wise, transgressing the narrow boundary between the sublime and the ridiculous.[15] Indeed, in his classification of character types in subsequent opera history, Martin Kunath indicated that the *basso serioso* and the *basso buffo*—the sage and the fool—are really two faces of the same character.[16]

When opera first took to the stage, virtuosic singing had already been in vogue for some time. The improvised ornamentation of polyphonic compositions endured in early seventeenth-century monodies. Although most monodies were written for the higher voices, some were written for the bass and might also be quite florid. Some of these featured divisions on the continuo line, whereas in others, the solo part is independent of the instrumental bass line.[17] In Venice, the exploration of the bass range goes back at least to the sixteenth century (e.g., in Willaert's polyphonic motets) and continues in the concertato and solo works of the early seventeenth century. During this latter period the cappella at San Marco had an especially large number of tenors and basses.[18] Ironically, the reason for this changed from preference to necessity because, as the Venetian tradition developed, the competition between church and theater for higher voices (i.e., castrati) grew keener than that for the low-range types. In his *Trattato della musica scenica* (1640), Doni comments on the proper character assignment of the bass voice as follows:

> To the Prince of Demons, because ordinarily he appears in gross and bearded form, it is best to assign a basso profondo, which will suit him better when he sings to the accompaniment of some low instruments with an extravangant sound . . . Saturn, Jove, Neptune, Vulcan, Janus, Hercules, and such fabulous gods should receive deep voices, that is, bass or baritone, with tones even below the tuning note when possible, as the Ancients did.[19]

Florid bass parts in secular and sacred music of the early seventeenth century contrast markedly with those of the early operas. The reason doubtless lies in the new character associations of the bass voice: in the pastoral play, wherein shepherds and nymphs were the principals, the bass represented two basic paradigms: the divine and the infernal.

Even before 1600 the bass voice appears in operatic forerunners such as Alfonso della Viola's setting of Agostino Beccari's pastoral play *Il sacrificio d'Abramo* (Ferrara, 1554), where a strophic monologue for bass, reminiscent of a psalm tone, but punctuated by a choral refrain, occurs in act 3, scene 3.[20]

Of the four surviving brief excerpts of the earliest opera, *Dafne* (1594), one, a short quasi-monody designated "aria d'Apollo," is notated in the bass clef.[21] Peri's *Euridice* subsequently set an important precedent by casting both the

god Pluto and the ferryman Charon as basses. Although the ranges are modest (an octave and a ninth, respectively), the recitatives are musically differentiated from the intense affective declamation of the heroic Orpheus; resembling arioso, they move in constant, longer note values. In his typology of dramatic monodies, Giovanni Battista Doni termed this style "recitativo speciale" and illustrated it with the Prologue of Peri's *Euridice* (his other two categories are *recitativo narrativo* and *recitativo espressivo*).[22] Because *recitativo speciale* was used for the recitation of heroic poetry, I shall use as a corresponding term "epic recitative style." It is predominantly diatonic and harmonically simple; its stolid triadic melodic design represents the inexorability of the god's words (example 1). In *Orfeo* (1607), Monteverdi

Example 1. Peri, *Euridice* (mm. 200–212).

reinforced the association of the bass voice with the divine. Pluto and Charon sing predominantly epic recitative, but their declamation is rhythmically more animated and Charon's range has expanded downward to an eleventh (example 2). There is additionally a short bass part for a Spirit, who announces in epic recitative style that Orpheus has transgressed against divine law.

For the Pluto of *Il ballo delle ingrate* (1608), Monteverdi wrote a bass part that is still more extensive both in range and in length than that in *Orfeo*. A central figure in the action, Pluto speaks an animated and varied musical language, moving from regular narrative recitative to epic when juxtaposing human with divine elements in the text (examples 3a and 3b). This example

Example 2. *Orfeo,* act 3.

Caronte:

O tu__ ch'in-nan-zi mor - t'a que-ste ri - ve   te-me-ra-rio t'en vie-

- ni ar-re-sta i pas - si   sol-car quest'on de   ad huom mor-tal non das-si

Example 3a. *Il ballo delle ingrate* (mm. 147–153).

Plutone:

Mal si sprez-za d'a-mor la fa - ce el te lo   fal-lo la ter - ra   el

mar   l'in - fer-no   el Cie   -   lo.

includes what by 1608 were rather old-fashioned madrigalisms such as those on *terra* and *inferno*, which are placed on low pitches, and flights of coloratura such as that depicting Love's darts (*gli strali*).

Example 3b. *Il ballo delle ingrate* (mm. 256–264).

Since the preeminence of virtuosic opera roles lay as yet in the future when Monteverdi wrote *Il ballo*, the composer probably addressed the weighty demands of the role of Pluto to a specific singer, with whose talents he was already familiar. The bass who performed this role must have been able to produce ringing tones and negotiate huge leaps, coloratura, and expressive syllabic declamation—all over a two-octave range. It appears likely that the singer was Melchior Palandrotti. During these early years, Palandrotti, who had begun his career in Rome, became the leading operatic bass in Florence and Mantua. He sang in Caccini's *Rapimento di Cefalo* (1600), which was part of the same Florentine wedding festivities as Peri's *Euridice*. Because an excerpt of the *Rapimento* ("Muove si dolce") is preserved in *Le nuove musiche*, we can observe the striking coincidence of vocal demands both in this music and in that of Pluto in Monteverdi's *Ballo delle ingrate*. Both are demanding bass roles of great compass that require advanced technique.[23] It therefore may be possible for us to trace the inspiration for these remarkable bass parts of the early seventeenth century to the qualities of specific, exceptionally gifted

singers.[24]

The roots of Venetian opera lay in Rome. Francesco Manelli, composer of the first two operas publicly performed at San Cassiano in Venice (1637 and 1638), himself sang the bass roles of Neptune and Astarco in *L'Andromeda* and of Pluto and Jupiter in *La maga fulminata*. The former had at least two additional bass parts, those of Jupiter and Proteus, which were sung on that occasion by Giovanni Battista Bisucci. Bisucci also appeared in the latter opera. In these works, basses still appear as divinities, rulers of the heavens and the sea. There are minor deities as well; for instance, Proteus, and magicians, like Astarco, who draw their powers from the supernatural. More significant and symptomatic changes occurred in the casting of the other roles. These occurred because of the casting of *castrati* (in *L'Andromeda*, a male assumed the part of Venus). But as opera in Venice moved away from the pastoral-mythological to historical or historicist subjects, divinities diminished in number and dramatic importance.

Librettists embellished formerly historical plots with fictitious characters and events in order to generate intrigues of love and politics, to balance the palette of character types, and to satisfy a number of emerging operatic conventions.[25] The new category of royal potentate opened up for the bass. An example is found in Francesco Sacrati's *Il Bellerofonte* (Teatro Novissimo, 1642), which featured a "bass from Siena" in the role of King Iolo.[26]

Monteverdi's last two operas, written for Venice, demonstrate the transition to the modern type. *Il ritorno d'Ulisse* (1641) does not yet dispense with the usual divine and allegorical roles for the bass. Among the latter is the magnificent part of Il Tempo. The recitative of the Prologue (example 4) clearly derives from the part of Pluto from *Il ballo*: it opens in "epic" style with the words "Nothing escapes my gnawing tooth" ("Salvo niente dal mio dente") switching to narrative recitative when the character turns his attention to the human realm with the words "you can't escape me, o mortals" ("non fuggite, o mortali"). But there is a long fioritura on the word *non*, that is, the type of virtuosic, nondescriptive coloratura so typical of later Venetian opera.[27] A few madrigalisms embellish the rest of the voice part in an almost manneristic juxtaposition of effects: the music of "for though I limp" describes the limp (*zoppo*) with rests, and contrasts strikingly with the portrayal of wings (*l'ali*) by runs of sixteenth-notes.

The Neptune in this opera is a varied and impressive bass part with an even more formidable range of more than two octaves. Interestingly, Jupiter is a tenor, and so contrasts registrally with Neptune. Perhaps this distinction alludes to Neptune's undersea domain. But it may also be symptomatic of the gradual ascent of divine roles into higher registers and reflect their corresponding loss of stature (Sacrati's Neptune in *Il Bellerofonte* is also a tenor). A third, purely practical reason may simply have been the lack of yet another

Example 4. *Il ritorno d'Ulisse,* prologue.

Il Tempo:

Sal - vo è nien - te   dal mio den - te   ei   ro - de, ei

go - de, ei   go-de, ei   ro - de   non fug-gi-te, non fug - gi-te, o mor-ta-li

o mor-ta-li,   non _____

__ fug-gi - te, non fug-gi-te, o mor-ta   -   li   che se   ben zop - po,

se   ben   zop - po   ho l'a   -   li, ho l'a -   li.

bass of sufficient skill to sing a florid role.[28] In any case, Monteverdi's Neptune needed superior vocal skill to negotiate intervallic leaps like the one on the descriptive setting of the word "lontana" (far) (example 5).

Example 5. *Il ritorno d'Ulisse,* act 1, scene 5.

Among Monteverdi's mortal characters, all lovers are tenors (Ulisse, Telemaco, Eurimaco, Eumeto) and all sopranos represent females, perhaps for the last time in Venetian opera (Penelope, Melanto and Ericlea). One of Penelope's suitors, Antinoo, is a bass. He represents a new element in bass characterization, that of evil. Antinoo is a villain as well as a coward whose ineffectual plotting is almost comedic. Monteverdi expresses the hypocrisy of Antinoo by assigning him phrases of epic recitative for dialogues with Penelope, but narrative declamation for conspiring with his companions (examples 6a and 6b).

Example 6a. *Il ritorno d'Ulisse,* act 2, scene 12.

Example 6b. *Il ritorno d'Ulisse,* act 2, scene 8.

Antinoo:

e pria ch'U - lis - se ar - ri - vi   Te -

le - ma - co vi - cin togl - iam dai vi   -   vi

In this remarkable opera, Iro, the gluttonous servant of the suitors, is a true comic character. Although written in the tenor range, his wordplays, exclamations, laughter, stuttering and parodistic effects provide a prototype for later *basso buffo* parts. On the whole, there is an even balance of vocal registers in this opera: seven treble parts and eight tenors and basses. Monteverdi's last opera, *L'incoronazione di Poppea* (1642), is of the modern Venetian type: the plot, based on Roman history rather than mythology, almost entirely eliminates divine characters from the action. The part of Mercury, the messenger-god who announces Seneca's impending death, is notated in the bass clef, but the marking *alla quinta alta* (at a fifth higher) places it in the tenor range. Although he belongs to a new category of character association, Seneca is clearly related to the bass pantheon of the composer's previous works. When he advises Ottavia to accept her tragic fate, he sings in epic recitative style with wide intervals at cadence points, but declaims quickly, with agitation, as he contemplates his own fear of death. What formerly denoted divine law in the god's recitatives now describes the very human stoicism of the philosopher. The marvelous opposition of nobility and human fear is reflected in the repetition of words (vincerò, vincerò . . .); short metrical values, rests, breathless phrasing, and striking modulations all point out the mortality of the character (examples 7a and 7b).

Monteverdi also makes impressive use of the lower voices in the two-part chorus (tenors and basses) of the consuls and tribunes in the coronation scene. The impressive nobility of their sonority is ironic; they act only to satisfy the caprice of the Emperor.

In *L'incoronazione*, the overall distribution of voice types is weighted toward the higher registers: there are nine sopranos and altos, compared to four tenors and basses in the solo parts. As Covell has pointed out, the fact that Nero is a soprano makes it, in a sense, the first in nearly a century of *opera*

Example 7a. *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, act 1, scene 6.

Seneca:

Rin - gra - tia, rin - gra - tia la for - tun - na   che con i col - pi, i

col - pi   suo - i   Ti ac - cre - sce gl'or - na men - ti.

Example 7b. *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, act 1, scene 8.

Seneca:

Ven - ga, ven - ga la mor - te pur co - stan - te e for - te,   e

for - te   Vin - cer - ò, vin - ce - rò,   vin - ce - rò gl'ac - ci-

den - ti   e le   pau - re

seria casting where "the principle at work is simply that reciprocated love inhabits the highest vocal registers available."[29] The ascent of the lover into the soprano range is paralleled by the rise of the bass out of the deepest register, as will be seen.

This change in role types and in their associations with vocal registers depended on the development of the opera libretto. The mid-seventeenth-century Venetian opera plot, whether based on the history of ancient Rome or that of barbarian realms, now becomes infused with intrigue and comedy. Giacinto Andrea Cicognini's libretti for *Il Giasone* (1649) and *Orontea* (1649) (set by Cavalli and Cesti, respectively) are examples of a new type which dominated Venetian opera for several decades. William Holmes called *L'Orontea* the first "true romantic comedy" in which satire and ridicule act

only as subsidiary comic techniques.[30]

Because all the characters of *L'Orontea* interact with one another, comic elements are necessarily injected into scenes between the principals; they are not confined merely to purely humorous scenes between the page Tibrino and the drunken servant Gelone (a bass). The servant and the old nurse Aristea (an alto) became familiar stereotypes in seventeenth-century opera. In Holmes's words, Gelone's final solo scene "is among the earliest in a long line of *basso buffo* scenes which characterized one facet of Italian opera until the eighteenth century. The servant is alone on stage and, for a time at least, he rises above his menial position in life. He becomes philosopher, adviser and king."[31] The second face of the bass character thus made its appearance in Venetian opera.

Like Gelone in *L'Orontea*, the servant often has a dual function in the plot: first, as a comic character interacting with other comic characters or acting alone in *buffo* scenes and, second, as a servant, messenger, or assistant to a principal character. Musically, the comic scenes no doubt promoted the use of *secco* recitative, which became an excellent vehicle for rapid dialogue and wordplays, puns, and other diverse comic elements of the text. The comic song or aria cultivated the *parlando* style for the same reasons. Servants might be altos or tenors, or even sopranos like Demo in *Il Giasone*, but the bass register is the most frequently employed. The dual function, mentioned above, invites the element of parody to enter the servant's role because, after being subservient to his master in a principal scene, he has a chance in a comic scene to voice his opinion about him or about his social class as a whole. For example, in the first scene of Pollarolo's *Il Roderico* (1686), the title hero sings a rage-and-revenge aria ("Guerra, guerra, son tutto furor") and exits. Left alone on stage, Bubo, his servant and a bass, mimicks him in a little aria on similar, but now ridiculous words ("Guerra, guerra, son tutto velen"). Instead of the coloratura patterns of his master's aria, Bubo sings a banal triadic tune, itself a travesty of the heroic battle theme. Through the rest of the opera this servant proves to be the quintessential coward, and this gives rise to more comic situations in the midst of an otherwise battle-filled plot (example 8).

If the servant of lower-class character is the title hero, as in Antonio Pistocchi's *Il Girello* (Bologna, 1669, and Venice, 1682), the part becomes more extensive. Girello, a bass, is the gardener at court, his wife Pasquella is the familiar *vecchia*, sung by a tenor. In this *drama burlesco*, the language leans toward the vulgar and the musical style toward the simple, even trite. In contrast, the extensive comic bass part of Momo in Antonio Cesti's festival opera *Il pomo d'oro* (Vienna, 1667?) is interesting for its virtuosity (example 9).

The text of this excerpt invites comparison with Seneca's "death wish" (cf.

Example 8. C. F. Pollarolo, *Il Roderico*, act 1, scene 2.

Bubo:

Guer - ra, guer - ra, guer - ra, guer - ra

guer - ra, guer - ra   guer - ra, guer - ra

Example 9. Cesti, *Il pomo d'oro*, act 3, scene 4 (mm. 61–66).

Momo:

Ven - ga pur fie - ra tem -

pe - sta, Che di que-sta Io non ho pun - to pa-u - ra.

7   6

example 7b) because of the textual parallelism: compare "Venga la morte pur. . . ." and "Venga pur fiera tempesta. . . ." Just as the tragic Seneca ex-

presses his fear of death in a highly concentrated dramatic recitative, out-
wardly asserting his strength in the face of death, the comic figure asserts his
fearlessness in the face of a fierce storm in a bombastic descriptive coloratura
phrase, which is immediately contrasted with a syllabic line descending
through a tenth. This illustrates a gesture later typical of comic characters:
the exaggeration of otherwise serious stylistic and descriptive devices in or-
der to bring out the hypocrisy or underlying cowardice of a character.

The comic scenes in seventeenth-century operas, usually featuring stereo-
types of the servant and the old nurse, were the forerunners of the comic
intermezzo. In Venice, interestingly, the comic element began to disappear
from opera plots around 1670. Charles Troy has shown that in the late seven-
teenth century the main thrust of the development of the comic element shift-
ed to Naples: in the 1670s and '80s operas premiered in Venice were adapted
for Naples with added *scene buffe*, and in the 1690s and early 1700s Neapolitan
operas continued and further developed the comic aspect.[32]

In Venice, opera plots indeed became more serious, especially in the 1690s
when reform-minded librettists like Domenico David, Girolamo Frigimelica
Roberti and Apostolo Zeno foreshadowed the Metastasian reform. Among
their objectives were the elimination of comic characters and the streamlin-
ing of the plot to the exclusion of subplots. In effect, the servant was reduced
to a very minor figure; he might be servant, messenger, commentator or ad-
viser. Zeno's Brenno, the servant in his earliest libretto *Gl'inganni felici*
(1695), is still a comic figure, but David's Padiglio in *La forza della virtù*
(1693) is a sinister character, an extension of his master's personality. Occa-
sional glimpses of humor remain even in this servant's asides—which the
master, though on stage, haughtily ignores. In *Onorio in Roma* (1692), an ex-
change between the title-hero, Onorio, and Prince Lucillo is followed by
irreverent comment from the servant, Lindo:[33]

Onorio.	E gran fortuna, o Prence, nascer di Regia Pianta.
Lucillo.	De gl'Astri e Dono
Lindo.	Io non so da chi nasco e gli el perdono. (3.4)

Onorio.	It is a great fortune, O prince, to be born of a royal house.
Lucillo.	It is a gift of the the Stars.
Lindo.	I don't know whose son I am, and I forgive him.

Thus was the servant role reduced to an only faintly humorous or to a com-
pletely humorless role, with few or no arias.

The bass voice continued to figure in Venetian opera in serious though
relatively minor parts. Since the removal of the gods from plots, their attri-

butes were transferred to certain human characters, a procedure already sug-
gested by Monteverdi's role of Seneca. Maturity and wisdom, for example,
might be personified in the role of the father. This is the case in Giovanni
Legrenzi's *Totila* (Venice, 1677), in which one of three bass parts is the hero-
ine's father Servio. Servio combines paternal dignity with that of a Roman
patrician. In his brief aria "Nudo spettro d'un morto impero," Servio ex-
presses his desolation at the impending downfall of the empire. This aria,
although much more modest and less virtuosic than anything found in Mon-
teverdi's divine roles, clearly took over some traits of the latter (example 10).

Example 10. Legrenzi, *Totila,* act 1, scene 20.

The same opera casts Teodato, the hero's adviser, as a bass of less impres-
sive stamp. His call for the navy to embark is a dainty boatsong in 6/8 time,
the tone of which is suggested by an allusion in the aria text to gentle winds
(example 11).

As one might expect, other character types possessed of the wisdom, matu-
rity, and dignity due their exalted position—such as kings, emperors, gener-
als, captains, or councillors—are basses. Cavalli's *Scipione africano* (Venice,
1664) has three such roles: Catone, Roman nobleman and adviser to Sci-
pione; Massanissa, captain to Scipione; and a Captain of the Guards. Includ-
ing a bass servant, there are four bass roles in this opera, but they are all very
restricted, limited to recitative or participation in duets and trios.

Some of the trusted advisers are traitors as well. In *Scipione africano*, Mas-
sanissa is the villain, although he is forgiven in the end. Another rebellious

Example 11. *Totila,* act 2, scene 5.

figure cast as a bass is Stilicone in Pollarolo's *Onorio in Roma* (1692). This role is very important because Stilicone's intrigue- and romance-filled plot to overthrow Onorio, Emperor of Western Rome, is the main action of the op-era. Moreover, Stilicone has four arias, an unusually large number for a character of this type.

Tindaro, King of Greece in Giacomo Perti's *Oreste in Argo* (Modena, 1685), is a bass, the philosopher Socrates in Marco Antonio Ziani's *L'Alcibiade* (Ven-ice, 1680) and Ugone, prime minister in Pollarolo's *Ottone* (Venice, 1694), are basses—there are many more. Sometimes these parts are elevated to some importance by being title roles, as in Sartorio's *Il Seleuco* (Venice, 1666), Pallavicino's *Vespasiano* (Venice, 1690) and Gabrielli's *Carlo il Grande* (Venice, 1688). Even though they are title roles, they are not necessarily assigned more music than other *bassi seriosi*. The bass role is often striking simply because it is the first to appear on stage, as is that of Goffredo, Leader of the Crusaders, in Pallavicino's *Gerusalemme liberata* (Dresden and Venice, 1687), who commences with the aria "Un'acerba rimembranza."

In these roles, it is apparent that the unique character of the *basso profondo*, so evident in Monteverdi's operas, gradually disappears; basses more fre-quently sing arias that are indistinguishable in style from those of their high-er-voiced colleagues. This development is due chiefly to the standardization of the aria itself into categories. The baroque tendency to portray a single affect in an aria promoted the association of styles with specific kinds of aria

texts. These discrete musical styles demanded in turn specific manners of performance. The categories that were devised by eighteenth-century writers were not uniform and therefore frequently varied or overlapped. In his *Letter on the Italian Opera* (2nd ed., London, 1791), John Brown described five aria types that included generally accepted types such as the *aria di bravura* and *aria di agilità*.[34] Increasingly popular was the metaphor aria, in which a poetic metaphor, rather than the character singing it, determined the aria style. This practice was advocated by some, like Jacopo Martello, who instructs librettists to include "in the aria a few comparisons with little butterflies, boats, birds, or brooks,"[35] because they suggest pleasing images to the listener and inspire the composer to write lovely music. It had detractors also; Benedetto Marcello, in a famous satire, pours sarcasm on the metaphor aria. He addresses his librettists as follows: "The aria must in no way be related to the preceding recitative but it should be full of such things as sweet little butterflies, bouquets, nightingales, quails, little boats, little huts, jasmine, violets, copper basins, little pots, tigers, lions, whales, crabs, turkeys, cold capon, etc."[36]

Kings and military leaders sang about nightingales and butterflies in the style appropriate to such birds and insects, just as young ladies sang battle arias, whether involved in military exploits or conflicts of the heart. In hand with this trend went the increased pervasiveness of virtuosity throughout all the voice types and an emphasis on coloratura. Runs, trills, and turns, however, were most congenial to the light, high voices and left operatic basses at a disadvantage. As Henry Pleasants puts it, "Basses, governed by the requirements of florid song, were condemned pretty much to rumbling . . . "; however, "some basses rumbled better than others and more musically."[37]

In seventeenth-century Venetian opera, bass roles retreated from the vast depths of its earlier range as divine characters receded from the central position of plots. If there were a direct correlation between the lower part of the bass range and divine attributes, the habitation of the upper part of the bass range by mortal kings and their servants would be reasonable. But in fact gods and men often do move in the same general vocal range, as, for instance, do Neptune and Servio in Legrenzi's *Totila*. The god is not only unimportant, appearing only in the final scene, a sort of epilogue, he is also demystified, now behaving rather like any mortal stage character. Later, the gods begin the ascent into the treble range, as in the anonymous *Proserpina* (date unknown) in which Neptune is a soprano and Pluto an alto. Pollarolo's serenata *Litiggio amoroso* (date unknown) also has a soprano part for Neptune. Since treble voices were associated with youth, did the Greek concept of the gods representing eternal youth now supersede the Old Testament virtues of divine wisdom and maturity? Or are the gods, now moving among mortals, simply joining the general upward tendency of the vocal registers, already

noticeable in the later seventeenth century? The latter explanation seems a more plausible one.

More and more bass parts in the later seventeenth century lie in the baritone and tenor ranges (according to contemporary classifications like Giamberti's of 1689).[38] This is especially striking if we examine the most frequently used tessitura of a singer's total range. Minor characters who have only recitative tend to move within an octave or ninth in the upper portion of their range. Ugone's part in Pollarola's *Ottone* (1694) remains within the d–d' octave in all of his recitative; it is only in his single aria that the fourth below this (A–d) is added to the span, and there only occasionally. Some arias are restricted to only an octave or ninth (excepting cadential octave leaps, which usually extend the range by a fourth).

Relatively narrow ranges of minor roles written in the bass clef (or other clefs, for that matter) may help to explain confusing multiple designations for the voices of some singers of Venetian opera. While some singers' voices changed with advancing age (for example, Antonio Pistocchi from soprano to alto), other voices apparently encompassed several vocal ranges at once. Nicola Tricarico, for instance, appeared in Perti's *Oreste in Argo* (Modena, 1685)[39] in the part of Gelone, notated in the bass clef; he was hired at San Marco in 1687 as a "contralto,"[40] but called a soprano when he was dismissed two years later,[41] and sang parts notated in the alto clef in *Ottone* (Venice, 1694) and in *Il color fa la regina* (Venice, 1700). Tommaso Boni, a singer of minor roles who was a fixture in Venetian opera casts throughout the 1680s and '90s, has been variously called contralto, tenor, or bass according to the clefs in which his parts are notated. Four examples from his repertoire show that his parts move within the same octave (g–g') when he had no arias, but that he could also span the lower octave so that the total range covered at least baritone and tenor ranges, as given in Giamberti.[42] In view of the fact that composers wrote for specific singers, it is strange that they did not always take advantage of their ranges but remained confined to the notated clef's normative range. To be sure, there are notable exceptions; for example, in Cavalli's *Scipione africano* the extraordinary wide ranges of Massanissa and the servant Lesbo (GG–f♯ and GG–d', respectively) result from the use of several clefs: tenor, baritone, and bass for Massanissa, and alto, baritone, and bass for Lesbo. In another of Lesbo's arias, the alto range extending to b' is employed, rather than his usual range G–d'.

It is clear from the examples above that one cannot with assurance classify a singer solely according to the clef in which one of his parts is written. Unless his range is unambiguously described in other sources, a composite range must be inferred by analyzing several of his known roles, taking into consideration the type of role, the distribution of arias, tessitura, and style. It is one of the striking differences between seventeenth- and eighteenth-cen-

tury opera that, in the former, most singers' parts required modest ranges, whereas, in the latter, ever-wider ranges were sought, especially in the upper registers. Eighteenth-century *virtuosi* possessed remarkable ranges. Farinelli's voice, for example, encompassed alto and soprano registers up to d".[43] There is even evidence of female basses; one such case was reported in the March 1688 issue of the Venetian journal *Pallade Veneta*. Under the direction of Maestro Legrenzi, three sisters from France performed music by Lully. The first was a soprano, the second a contralto, and "the third, ten years of age (and this is the miracle) sang bass, as well as one could have wished, with a voice which those who hear her sing and don't see her face, do not judge to come from that chest and that throat."[44]

Opera began as the musical setting of pastoral-mythological plots. It numbered among its characters Olympian gods who were quite distinct from mortals. Traditional associations of the bass voice with maturity and wisdom lead in turn to its additional association with these divinities. The evolution of all musical and dramaturgical elements of opera affected the function and use of the bass voice in specific ways. First, pseudo-historical plots and characters reduced, diminished, or eliminated gods, and with them the impressive *basso profondo* roles. Some of their characteristics were transferred to paternal or dominating human figures, such as kings, emperors, generals, councillors, villains, traitors, and fathers. Second, an emphasis on intrigue, incidental complications, and love triangles resulted in a demoralization of the bass character. Wisdom in the guise of folly emerged in the figure of the comic servant, who was often a bass. At the same time, there was a suppression of the musical distinction of character types because of the ascendancy of the aria with its universalized affects. Third, during the entire seventeenth century, there was an upward movement of all ranges in operatic casts, propelled by the Italian preference for high tessituras; this increasingly restricted the use of the bass range, especially in secondary roles.

In the eighteenth century, the shift upward of all the operatic vocal registers accelerated, and many archetypical bass roles were assumed by the tenor, when this was not already de facto the case.[45] Extreme instances are found; Pollarolo's *Faramondo* of 1699 calls for five sopranos, one alto, and one tenor in the cast. Thirty years later, his son Antonio Pollarolo's *L'abbandono d'Armida,* required five sopranos and one alto—no tenors or basses at all. It is no wonder that Raguenet considered the bass the missing element in Italian opera.

Nonetheless, the eighteenth century liberated the *basso buffo* from his subservient position in the comic scenes of serious operas by making him the leading character of the *opera buffa.* Here, all the characteristics of the *buffo* style came into full bloom in a separate genre that held no reminder of the exalted deities the bass voice once portrayed.

NOTES

Earlier versions of this paper were read at the E. Nakamichi Baroque Festival at the University of California at Los Angeles (26 June 1986) and at a meeting of the Pacific Southwest Chapter of the American Musicological Society (22 November 1986) at the University of California at Riverside.

[1] Samuel Ramey, quoted in Donna Perlmutter, "Basso Samuel Ramey Is Singing the Deep-Voiced Roles of Operatic Success," *Los Angeles Times*, 31 December 1986, Calendar section, 11.

[2] "claires, nettes, fermes, et assurées" (*Lettera che descrive li Teatri e li Carnoval di Venezia circa l'anno 1690*, MS. Cod. Cic. 3282/III, Museo Correr, Venice, 6).

[3] Quoted in Robert Haas, *Aufführungspraxis der Musik* (Potsdam: Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft Athenaion, 1931), 178.

[4] "una voce angelica, si per la chiarezza e soavità che per lo scelto suo stile . . . poessedeva sufficiente agilità" (*Pensieri e riflessioni pratiche sopra il canto figurato* [Vienna: Stamparia di Ghelen, 1774], 23).

[5] Denis Arnold, "Monteverdi's Singers," *Musical Times* 111 (1970): 982. Arnold quotes Monteverdi's description of a certain singer at St. Peter's in Rome being "none too clear, hard in *gorgie* and not having much of a *trillo*."

[6] "Vocal Techniques in Italy in the Second Half of the 16th Century," *Early Music* 9 (1981): 489.

[7] Ibid., 487–88.

[8] *Nuove Musiche e Nuova Maniera di Scriverle* (1614), ed. H. Wiley Hitchcock, Recent Researches in Music of the Baroque Era, no. 28 (Madison, Wis.: A-R Editions, 1978), preface, n.p.

[9] Cited in Nigel Fortune, "Italian Seventeenth-Century Singing," *Music and Letters* 35 (1954): 209. Fortune (p. 206) cites Bardi's letter, *Discorso mandato . . . a Giulio Caccini detto Romano sopra la musica antica e'l cantar bene*, ca. 1580. Caccini includes songs covering the combined tenor and bass ranges (e.g., "Reggiami, per pieta").

[10] Ibid., 208.

[11] François Raguenet, *A Comparison Between the French and Italian Musick and Operas*, trans. anon. (London, 1709), 5–6. Originally published as *Paralèle des Italiens et des François en ce qui regarde la musique et les opéras* (Paris: J. Moreau, 1702).

[12] Cited in William James Henderson, *Early History of Singing* (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1921), 124.

[13] Raguenet, *Comparison*, 6.

[14] "Voice Register as an Index of Age and Status in Opera Seria," in *Opera and Vivaldi* (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1984), 94.

[15] It is interesting that as early as 1709 Raguenet's English translator (possibly John Galliard) associated the bass with comic effects (*Comparison*, 197). Covell thinks that this association may have contributed to the preference for higher voices.

[16] "Die Charakterologie der stimmlichen Einheiten in der Oper," *Zeitschrift für Musikwissenschaft* 8 (1925/26): 403–404.

[17] For an easily accessible example, see Stefano Landi's "Superbe colli" (1620) reproduced in Owen Janders's article "Bass," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2:249.

[18] Olga Termini, "Singers at San Marco in Venice—The Competition between Church and Theatre (ca. 1675–ca. 1725)," *RMA Research Chronicle* 17 (1981): 68.

[19] *Readings in the History of Music in Performance*, sel., trans., and ed. Carol MacClintock (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), 203.

[20] Donald J. Grout, *A Short History of Opera*, 2nd ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965), 32.

[21] "Non curi la mia piant' o fiamm' o gelo," by Jacopo Corsi. See M. Schneider, *Die Anfänge des Basso Continuo und seiner Bezifferung* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1918), 109.

[22] *Annotazioni sopra il Compendio de' generi, e de' modi della musica* (Rome, 1640), quoted in Claude

V. Palisca, *Baroque Music* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1968), 33.

[23] Fortune, "Italian Seventeenth-Century Singing," 209.

[24] There appear to have been rather few oustanding basses available when the earliest operas were composed. Palandrotti had to be brought from Rome to sing in Florence and Mantua. The Frenchman André Maugars comments on the scarcity of low basses in Rome: "There are a large number of castrati for the Dessus and the Haute-Contre, very beautiful and natural tenors, and very few Basses" (*Readings in the History of Music*, 122). What singers there were might be extraordinary, as, for example, one singer mentioned in Tinghi's *Diario* (Florence, 1620 [as quoted in Solerti's *Musica, ballo e drammatica* (Florence: R. Bemporad, 1905), 152]), whose range extended from contralto through bass.

[25] Libretti invariably summarize the historical plot; freely invented elements (*accidenti verissimi*) are added in a paragraph that typically begins with the formula "si finge . . ." (It is pretended that . . .).

[26] Thus according to Caffi's cast list; see S. T. Worsthorne, "Some Early Venetian Productions," *Music and Letters* 30 (1949): 147.

[27] Olga Termini, "The Transformation of Madrigalisms in Venetian Operas of the Later Seventeenth Century," *The Music Review* 39 (1978): 14.

[28] Covell alludes to tenor substitution, "when there is no bass voice" ("Voice Register as an Index," 194).

[29] Ibid., 203.

[30] "Comedy-Opera—Comic Opera," *Analecta Musicologica* 5 (1968): 96.

[31] "Giacinto Andrea Cicognini's and Antonio Cesti's *Orontea* (1649)," in *New Looks at Italian Opera*, ed. William Austin (New York: Cornell University Press, 1968), 130.

[32] *The Comic Intermezzo* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1979): 35ff.

[33] Carlo Francesco Pollarolo, *Onorio in Roma* [libretto by Gianni], Regierungsbibliothek Ansbach, MS VI g 39.

[34] See Grout, *A Short History of Opera*, 187–89 for several such categorizations. Those of John Brown may be compared with Caffi's, which are found in *Storia della Musica Teatrale*, vol. I, MS Cod.It.IV, 747 (Venice: Biblioteca Marciana), 263.

[35] *Della Tragedia antica e moderna* (Rome: Francesco Gonzaga, 1715), 187. See also Piero Weiss, "Pier Jacopo Martello on Opera (1715): An Annotated Translation," *Musical Quarterly* 66 (1980): 378–403.

[36] *Il Teatro alla Moda* (1726). For an excerpt in English, see *The Essence of Opera*, ed. Ulrich Weisstein (New York: W. W. Norton, 1964), 59.

[37] *The Great Singers: From the Dawn of Opera to Our Own Time* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1966), 120.

[38] Giuseppe Giamberti, *Due Tessuti con diversi solfeggiamenti, scherzi, ecc.* (Rome, 1689), quoted in Henderson, *Early History of Singing*, 126. Giamberti defines the ranges as follows: bass, DD–d; baritone, AA–e; tenor, BB–g.

[39] Kindly communicated to me by Thomas Walker of the University of Ferrara.

[40] *Procuratoria de Supra, Decreti e Terminazioni* (Venice: Archivio di Stato), R.147r, 245v.

[41] Ibid., 294r.

[42] Pollarolo, *Ottone* (Venice, 1694) MS score, Frank de Bellis Collection, San Francisco State University, San Francisco, Calif.; *L'Irene* (Venice, 1695) MS score, Česky Krumlov Archive, Prague, Czechoslovakia; *La Rosimonda* (Venice, 1696), MS score Česky Krumlov Archive; *Il color fa la regina* (Venice, 1700), MS score, Česky Krumlov Archive. Boni's parts in three of these operas include no arias. For these, the following ranges are called for: Adolfo in *Ottone*, G–g; Olobolo in *L'Irene*, G–g; Eurillo in *Il color fa la regine*, G–f♯. As Cleffo in *La Rosimonde*, which part does include an aria, the required range was AA–d (see also note 38 above).

[43] According to Helmut Christian Wolff, Farinelli also sang in the baritone range ("Gesangs-

improvisationen der Barockzeit," *Das Musikleben* 6 [1953]: 254).

[44] "la terza, d'anni dieci (e questo e il miracolo), canta di basso, quanto possa desiderarsi bene, con una voce che chi la sente cantare e non la vede in faccia non la stima di quel petto, ne di quella gola . . . ." (Eleanor Selfridge-Field, *Pallade Veneta: Writings on Music in Venetian Society 1650–1750* [Venice: Fondazione Levi, 1985], 214–15).

[45] I do not address the question of the baritone voice in this study, but it is symptomatic of this shift that the first singer with that designation was hired at San Marco in 1705. See Termini, "Singers," 87.

review

Karol Berger. *Musica ficta: Theories of Accidental Inflections in Vocal Polyphony from Marchetto da Padova to Gioseffo Zarlino.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987.

"[I]t is the medieval view that we want to understand. We know how we conceive it; what we need to know is how they conceived it. To do this, we must take hold of their theory books with both hands and read." [1] In the decades since Richard Crocker's admonition, musicologists and theorists have tried increasingly to enter the mental world of their subjects, to achieve a contextual understanding of ancient treatises, and to apply concepts contemporaneous with a given musical repertoire.

The subject of *musica ficta* in particular continues to attract inquiry on account of its importance to performers, editors, and scholars, and on account of the elusiveness of its principles. It was not originally treated as a separate, integral discipline (like counterpoint), nor can it now be dismissed as merely a matter of performance practice. It demands a thorough understanding of notation, tuning, mode, counterpoint, imitative techniques, and even rhetoric. For these reasons Karol Berger's recent book is a tremendous accomplishment. His professed aim is "a comprehensive study of the entire surviving theoretical evidence concerning *musica ficta*" as a "prerequisite for an examination of practical sources" (p. xiii). Berger has taken hold, with both hands, of all the books he could find, and read them carefully and sympathetically.

All the well known theorists are here, and many less familiar ones, several of whom are cited often: Johannes Boen, Domingo Marcos Durán, Gonzalo Martínez de Bizcargui, and Petrus frater dictus Palma ociosa. In each chapter the reader is led through a rich array of quotations, and many changes in theory and practice are noted and dated. While not every theorist is represented on every issue, the reader is gratified to be presented with all the evidence Berger has used in drawing his generalizations, and his discursive style is well suited to his lucid accounts of correspondence, influences, and differences of opinion among theorists.

One of the chief problems in a book of this kind is the ordering and division of the primary material. A survey of historical writings can be organized chronologically or geographically or by various issues; these last may appear

as originally set forth by the theorists themselves or may be designed by the author, as is largely true in the present case. The problem with any division is that some connections between issues may be overlooked.

One group of issues difficult to organize revolves around the apparent priority of B♭ over other "accidental" notes. A variety of evidence from both musical repertoire and theoretical writings points to this central concern: B♭ is not considered by most theorists to be *musica ficta,* although its status changes around 1500;[2] B♭ is the accidental most often used in signatures; and the augmented fourth F–B (melodic or vertical) is most often "corrected" by B♭, not F♯. In addition, the effect of B♭ on mode is special: theorists disagree as to whether the Lydian and Dorian are altered with the use of B♭, and whether it makes a difference if the B♭ is in the signature or is introduced in the course of the melody. (A famous example of Tinctoris shows a B♭, introduced in the bass in order to correct a vertical diminished fifth, causing a change of mode in that voice.[3])

Berger never singles out the hub of this wheel of topics for discussion, but treats each spoke separately: he gives *musica vera,* signatures, melodic factors, and vertical factors their own chapters, and in each offers different remarks and evidence relating to the priority of B♭. This arrangement may result from his decision to stay close to his sources. Because the theorists rarely explain their deepest, most global assumptions, no explicit connection between the various uses of B♭ is to be found in their writings, and Berger does not assert one. The issues that are the subject of each chapter are easily followed, but their artificial separation means that the reader must synthesize the broader assumptions of the period for himself. Likewise, mode enters many discussions, but is never treated singly.

The gradual increase of commonly accepted accidentals is a subject that Berger organizes not in terms of abstract principles but in terms of a historical trend. This subject gets close to the medieval notion of pitch and its transformations in the renaissance, concepts that are particularly problematic for the present-day reader.

The original accidentals were not signs of inflection applied to letter-named notes, but were themselves alternative shapes for the letter B: round ♭ and square ♮.[4] The former indicated that the B was *fa,* a semitone above A; the latter that it was *mi,* a semitone below C. These letter-signs came to be added to those of other notes, giving them different functions analogous to those of B. For instance, "B *fa* placed in E" means that the round B sign is attached to E, and E will be sung as fa. Most often, this means inflecting the E by flatting it. But "B *fa*" does not always have this effect. For instance, "B *fa*" could be placed before F to insure that E♮ was sung below it, or before G to show that F♯ was to be sung below.

So "B *fa* placed in E" might imply E double-flat in a hexachord with B

double-flat as ut (as it does in the Willaert duo), or, conceivably, E♮ in a hexachord on B♮. All the "B *fa*" signifies is the function of E with respect to a note below: it is the upper note of the *mi–fa* semitone—its actual pitch is not specified by the sign. From this it can be seen that accidentals can be used to change a syllable *and/or* to inflect a pitch.

Berger leads the reader along the trail of evidence showing how accidentals came to be used more for inflection than for syllable-changing, framing his discussion in terms of the "expanding limits of *musica ficta*" (ch. 2/iv). He observes that the limits to syllable-changing were that *mi* could not become more *mi* nor *fa* more *fa*. That is, the notes A, E, and B (each *mi* in one of the hexachords) could never have "B *mi*" applied to them, and the notes B♭, F, and C (each *fa* in one of the hexachords) could never have "B *fa*" applied to them (pp. 30, 42).

Berger cites two fourteenth-century authors who exceeded those limits: Boen, who uses A♯, and Nicolaus of Luduno, who uses C♭. Yet he concludes that it is the subsequent acceptance of only the former (A♯) that "represents the first crack in the supremacy of thinking about the accidentals primarily in terms of the syllables and the beginning of the shift toward thinking primarily in terms of the inflections they produce" (p. 32). In valuing one source over the other, Berger shows the bias of the historian: he has found several subsequent sources (beginning with Prosdocimus) proposing gamuts containing A♯ and none (until the sixteenth century) containing C♭, so he reads the fourteenth-century development in terms of the fifteenth-century trend.

From a theoretical point of view, C♭ is as valid a development as A♯, and even if *no one* had come up with a gamut containing C♭, Berger's insightful delineation of the issue (in terms of the impossibility of a note becoming more *mi* or more *fa*) would stand. Instead of letting that analysis speak for itself, however, or seizing on Nicolaus of Luduno as corroborating it, Berger buries Nicolaus in an aside so as not to disturb the march of A♯.[5]

More wide-ranging speculation is needed that embraces the crackpot, the experimenter, the dead end; in order to understand what happened, it is necessary to take into account what was considered but rejected, what was never considered, and what could not have been imagined. The reasons for things not happening may reveal assumptions that the mainstream theorists left unsaid.

Further, the principles by which changes took place are rendered less clear when muddled with historical trends. (Berger indicates that the principle by which Prosdocimus generated the A♯, for instance, differs from that used by Boen, but offers no comment on this important point.) The line between systematic generalization and historical fact needs to be more clearly drawn. In order to make clean systematic statements about the principles and issues in music theory of any period, the concepts must be abstractly considered

apart from the mass of evidence that engendered them.

Berger's discursive style and constant references to primary sources make this distancing difficult for him. Many important interpretive concepts are here, but the issues themselves are difficult to isolate. Berger's points could perhaps be rendered more lucid through the use of explanatory, interpretive diagrams or tables (there are only four figures in the book, all reproductions of historical documents).

By and large, Berger is extremely cautious in his interpretations. For instance, in his discussion of the gamut and the origins of the hexachord, he cites Guido's demonstration (in *Micrologus*) of the affinity between D, E, and F on the one hand and A, B, and C on the other. Guido did this, he explains,

> by indicating that the intervallic patterns around the corresponding steps were identical so long as one compared the patterns within the ranges C–a and Γ–E (or G–e). . . . Guido observed additionally that when ♭ was used instead of ♮, G sounded as protus, a as deuterus, and ♭ as tritus. Thus he indirectly suggested one more range within which the intervallic patterns could be compared, F–d with ♭ instead of ♮ (p. 5).

Having established a relationship between modal scale patterns and segments of the diatonic system, Berger expresses wonder that Guido invented only six note-names for teaching sight-singing:

> The most interesting puzzle about Guido's invention [the "ut queant laxis" mnemonic] is why he limited himself to only six steps when the gamut—as he repeatedly stressed—contained seven different ones. A heptachord would provide a much simpler aid to sight-singers and it is as easy to learn by heart as the hexachord. We shall never know for sure whether Guido's limitation of the segment of the gamut to be fixed in memory to C–a was connected to the similar ranges he compared in *Micrologus*, but this seems to be the only alternative to thinking that the limitation was an insignificant accident. . . . (p. 8)

Because Berger finds no explicit connection in Guido between the six-note spans of the affinities and those of the mnemonic, he does not assert one. (Later, however, Guido aside, he says the value of the solmization hexachord is in terms of the modal system; it is "necessary to demonstrate the affinities.")

In the passing comments quoted above, Berger's sympathy with his subject fails him. In suggesting that Guido could have acted otherwise, he abandons the attempt to find out what assumptions underlay Guido's invention, much less what its value was. In proposing a seven-note pattern instead, he succumbs to an evolutionary bias.

One might point out that the TTSTT hexachord is the longest segment that contains no augmented fourth or diminished fifth. If Guido had chosen a seven-note segment or any of the other six-note segments he would have had an augmented fourth or a diminished fifth *at one end* and/or he would have had a span containing two semitones. Given the mass of evidence on the difficulty of singing the tritone and diminished fifth, it is not likely that a span with one of these at an end would have been considered a good tune to memorize. If Guido had included in his span the octave above the lowest note he would have eliminated these intervals at the ends, but the resulting span would contain two semitones.

If Guido had chosen a span containing two semitones, how would he have named them? If he had given them different names, (*mi–fa* and *ti–ut,* say) there would have been two names for a single sound, and the sight-singer would have had to distinguish them not by sound but by placement on the staff. As it is, Guido gave them the same name; each of the two semitones in the natural diatonic system defines a span in a different location. This span then sounds exactly the same intervallically in these two locations.

The fact that there is only one semitone in Guido's mnemonic span provides not only an acoustical simplification (one name for a single type of sound) but a visual one: a novice who has never seen a staff before need only focus on one of the notes forming the semitone and all the nearby notes in the hexachord will be fairly easy to find. One of the most basic elements of Guidonian notation is the identification of the position of the semitone, either by a C-clef (or yellow line) for C in the hard hexachord, or an F-clef (or red line) for F in the natural hexachord. The hexachords contain only two notes above and three notes below these referential *fas*.[6]

The length of the span is determined by the number of notes that can be named correspondingly around the two defining semitones. Crocker has pointed out the need for a "scalar module of manageable size" (smaller than an octave)[7]. Of the possible spans in the diatonic system, Guido's TTSTT hexachord is the longest that can be transposed without the use of accidentals.[8] This feature of transposability underlies Guido's choice of the mnemonic span, his description of the affinities, and his notational system.[9]

<div style="text-align:center">*   *   *</div>

This is a book for experts. Berger's work is built on much prior musicological research and speculation. The contributions of Margaret Bent, Howard Mayer Brown, Richard Crocker, Carl Dahlhaus, Willem Elders, Richard Hoppin, Joseph Levitan, Lewis Lockwood, Edward Lowinsky, Don Randel, and Gustave Reese are all woven in and expanded, reinterpreted, or refuted.

In his discussion of signatures, Berger offers evidence that the diatonic system transposed by flats in the signature is not *musica vera* (pp. 64–65). This discussion is brief, but forms the basis for a rejection of the popular "*recta*

preference" theory (described on pp. 83–84). His discussion of conflicting signatures is also especially valuable, drawing in contrapuntal and modal factors (pp. 65–69).

Examples from Durán and Aron (on melodic tritones, pp. 88–90) and Tinctoris (on the priority of correcting vertical as opposed to melodic tritones, pp. 119–120) lead to Berger's rejection of "chain reactions." These are cases in which accidentals introduced to correct one problem generate another problem appearing to demand yet more accidentals, often leading to a circle of fifths toward the flats (as exemplified in Lowinsky's "secret chromatic art" theory).

Substantial exceptions to prohibitions against vertical tritones and diminished fifths are offered. Berger cites Tinctoris' criticism of composers who use these intervals, but does not take it at face value. Tinctoris mentions that "false concords" are found in the works of even the "most famous" composers, and so Berger is able to infer that he is dealing with Tinctoris the reformer, and that the use of these intervals was in fact widespread (pp. 95–100). The musical examples and commentary of del Lago, Ramos, Gaffurius, Aron, Coclico, and Zarlino confirm that in certain voice leading situations these intervals were not only used, but often sanctioned (pp. 101–110). This discussion should serve as a valuable counterbalance to the powerful present-day tendency, in applying *ficta*, to adhere to the principle of avoidance of nonharmonic intervals.

A few of the instances of anachronistic terminology seem unnecessary or misleading. Berger uses the term "'white-key' steps" to mean the seven natural notes and "'black-key' steps" (p. 4) to describe the other five regardless of whether sharp or flat. The term is used repeatedly, whether in connection with "the image of the keyboard" or not, and may draw attention away from the importance of natural as opposed to accidental.[10] Berger also argues for the anachronistic term "key signature" (p. 58), although he proceeds to use "signature" alone far more times. Clearly the latter term is adequate, and the argument for the former is unnecessary. Finally, the term "triad" adds nothing to his description of the opening motif of Dufay's "Navré je sui."

Berger's discussion of that Dufay chanson (pp. 177–188) is the delicious topping on this rather heavy cake. Here Berger proposes how an editor might deal with the problems of implied accidentals and written accidentals occurring differently in different sources. "The accidentals not written but implied by the musical text of the piece clearly belong in the text of the edited work, where they should be distinguished from the written source accidentals," he says, and distinguishes two classes of accidentals that *had* to be notated: "unconventional" ones (not covered by the evidence in the rest of the book) and signature accidentals. His explanation of the unconventional accidentals in the Dufay is engaging and persuasive. He brings to this brief discussion not

only the evidence that he has gathered, but his knowledge of rhetoric and his musical good sense.

The publisher's claim that the book "lays an indispensable foundation for any future work in this area" is not exaggerated. Future work could go in at least two directions: towards the application of this work to renaissance and medieval repertoire (either analytically or editorially), or towards the development of formulations of the principles used by early writers on music. It is overall a firm span in the lengthening bridge between present-day thinkers on music and their forebears.

—*Peter N. Schubert*

NOTES

[1] Richard L. Crocker, "Discant, Counterpoint, and Harmony," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 15 (1962): 2.

[2] See Margaret Bent, "Diatonic *ficta*," *Early Music History* 4 (1984): 11.

[3] Johannes Tinctoris, *Liber de natura et proprietate tonorum* (Nov. 6, 1476), ed. Albert Seay, Corpus Scriptorum de Musica, vol. 22 ([Rome:] American Institute of Musicology, 1975), chap. 18. The example is cited in Harold S. Powers, "Mode," in *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 6th ed., (London, 1980): 406.

[4] Our sharp sign ($\sharp$) has a separate history; see Berger, pp. 20–29.

[5] Berger never speculates as to why, given the limits he has defined in terms of *mi* and *fa*, it is A that is the first *mi* to be inflected up, not B or E, and C the first *fa* to be inflected down, not B♭ or F.

[6] See Joseph Smits van Waesberghe, "The Musical Notation of Guido of Arezzo," *Musica Disciplina* 5 (1951): 15–53, for a discussion of clefs and colored lines and spaces. The reasons for the preference for indicating the lines for middle C and the F below are discussed on p. 30.

In this article Smits van Waesberghe makes no connection between hexachordal theory and notation; in fact, he refers to the yellow line as the "*do* line" (p. 18).

[7] Richard L. Crocker, "Hermann's Major Sixth," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 25 (1972): 29.

[8] That such a transposition without accidentals is in some way primary is attested to indirectly by Guido's characterization of ".b. vero rotundum, quod minus est regulare" in chapter 8 of *Micrologus*, ed. Joseph Smits van Waesberghe, Corpus scriptorum de musica, vol. 4 ([Rome:] American Institute of Musicology, 1955), 124.

[9] Some problems relating to the notion of transposability are adumbrated by Richard L. Crocker ("Hermann's Major Sixth," pp. 32, 35–37).

[10] Berger adduces two theorists who do seem to have been thinking in terms of the keyboard: Giorgio Anselmi and Henri Arnaut de Zwolle, whose writings explicitly involve tuning (p. 34); but his repeated assertion that Hothby's "orders" reflect the same influence is supported only by the superficial correspondence of white keys to natural notes, not by any explicit interest of Hothby's in the keyboard. Compare Joseph S. Levitan's treatment of Hothby's "orders" in his pioneering article, "Adrian Willaert's Famous Duo," *Tijdschrift der vereeniging voor Nederl. Muziekgeschiedenis* 15/3 (1939): 193, 197, 201. The primacy of natural over accidental notes needs more investigation.