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## **Towards a New Edition of Liszt's Sonata in B minor: A Sequel (Sources, Editorial History, Symbolic issues)**

Tibor Szász (with Gerard Carter and Martin Adler)

This essay is a sequel in three parts to “Towards a New Edition of Liszt's Sonata in B minor”:<sup>1</sup>

1. Szász presents fresh insights after viewing the Sonata's autograph manuscript (“Lehman Manuscript”) in the context of Liszt's only extant Sonata sketch GSA 60/N 2.
2. Adler deciphers Liszt's autograph siglum at the beginning of the Sonata.
3. Liszt's suggestion for the performance of the Sonata as communicated to Alexander Siloti.

### **Topic 1. Fresh Insights After Viewing the “Lehman Manuscript” of the Liszt Sonata**

Tibor Szász (with Martin Adler and Gerard Carter)

This essay is the result of my perusing the autograph manuscript of the Liszt Sonata deposited at the Morgan Library & Museum in New York City.<sup>2</sup> Known as the “Lehman Manuscript” (Lehman MS) after the name of its owner Robert Owen Lehman, the autograph retains traces of Liszt's erasures and revisions of the opening measures.<sup>3</sup> These erasures drew my attention to the original version of the *Lento* / *Allegro energico* on page 1 which could be recreated because Liszt used a sharp blade rather than a rubber eraser to modify the manuscript (Example 1):

The original version of mm. 1–6 (Example 1) consisted of a two-voiced polyphony generated by a stationary, syncopated soprano paired with chromatically expanding upward leaps in the bass. Given the technical difficulty of performing accurately the quick octave leaps in m. 8 (Example 1, *Allegro energico*), Liszt facilitated them (Example 2):

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<sup>1</sup> Tibor Szász (with Gerard Carter and Martin Adler), “Towards a New Edition of Liszt's Sonata in B minor: Sources, Editorial History, Symbolic Issues,” *Journal of the American Liszt Society* 68 (2017): 57–108.

<sup>2</sup> My visit on 16 March 2018 was greatly facilitated by Frances Barulich (at that time Mary Flagler Cary Curator and Department Head, Music Manuscripts and Printed Music).

<sup>3</sup> The traces of Liszt's erasures are better discernible in the second facsimile edition of the Lehman MS (Munich: Henle, HN 3227 “Lehman MS,” 2015), “Foreword” by Claudio Arrau, “Introduction” by Mária Eckhardt.

**Example 1: Transcription of the original version of the escalating upward leaps, mm. 2, 5, and 8.**

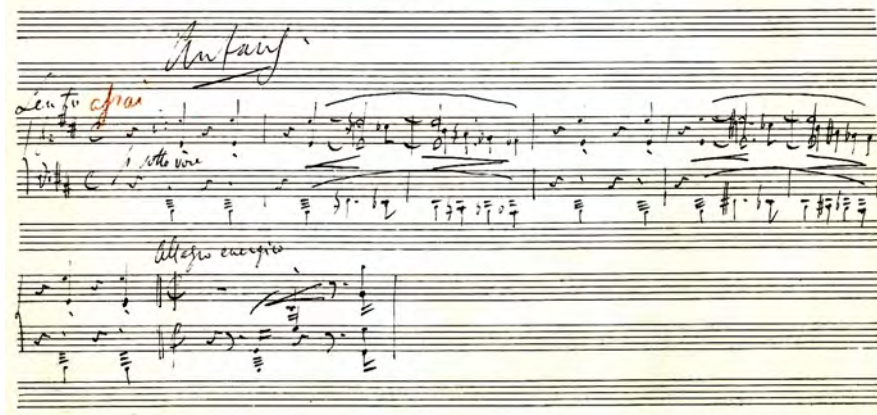
The musical score for Example 1 is presented in three systems. The first system (measures 2-4) is marked *Lento* and features a [C#] chord. The second system (measures 5-7) is marked *Lento* and features an [A#] chord. The third system (measures 8-10) is marked *Allegro energico* and shows a significant increase in tempo and energy, with a final chord marked with a fermata.

**Example 2: The erased jumps in m. 8 (above, x) and their technically facilitated version (below).**

The musical score for Example 2 is presented in two systems. The first system (measures 7-9) is marked *Lento* and features an [Lento \_] chord. The second system (measures 10-12) is marked *Allegro energico* and shows a significant increase in tempo and energy, with a final chord marked with a fermata. Editorial arrows indicate the redistribution of notes between the hands in measure 8.

Ultimately, Liszt revised the already facilitated “octave leaps” (Example 2, at the editorial arrows) by redistributing their notes between the hands on the empty opposite page of the Lehman MS:

Example 3, Lehman MS: Liszt's revisions of mm. 1–8 on the opposite page (*Anfang*).



Thus, Liszt retained the two-part polyphony of the Sonata's original version (Example 1) yet darkened and thinned it from five to four parts, with both the soprano's repeated notes and the leaps of the rising bass with their descending scales now notated in the bass clef (Example 4):

Example 4: *Anfang*, mm. 1–9 reformatted to show the polyphonic interaction of the two voices.

My reformatted text of the Lehman MS (Example 4 above) elicited the following comment from Charles Rosen<sup>4</sup> (1927–2012): “Dear Prof. Szasz, I found your observations on the orthography of the opening bars particularly cogent. Many thanks, all best, Charles Rosen.” Rosen agreed with my insistence that the details of Liszt’s orthography preserved in the Lehman MS must be retained in every edition of the Sonata. Regrettably, Liszt’s handwritten notation became distorted in the preparation of the *Stichvorlage* (engraver’s model) for the 1854 edition.<sup>5</sup>

Liszt’s notation (Example 3) clarifies the two-voiced structure of this unusual beginning even in instances when the two voices cross each other’s paths. Such notational accuracy was reserved for works requiring polyphonic clarity in performance (as in J. S. Bach’s fugues). Evidently, Liszt’s unconventional, Baroque-type notation was detected by the copyist who

<sup>4</sup> Charles Rosen, Correspondent, email message to author, 1 March 2011.

<sup>5</sup> Franz Liszt, *Sonate*, 1st ed. (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1854), plate no. 8877.

prepared the now lost *Stichvorlage* of the Sonata. Eager to produce a layout compatible with the engraving practices of the 1850s, Liszt's copyist regretfully changed the composer's carefully planned polyphonic orthography to make it agree with the printing conventions of the time.

Hence, the main problem with the Sonata's 1854 edition does not consist of wrong notes but of small inaccuracies which derail the structural relationships of the entire composition in directions that the composer never intended; incidentally, the copyist's good intentions tainted a perfect, two-voiced graphic design, in which the bass parts were systematically assigned downward-pointed stems, and the soprano parts upwards-pointed ones.<sup>6</sup> The misleading text of Breitkopf & Härtel's first edition (1854) gave rise to the faulty concept of "the two descending scales" still heard—after nearly 170 years since the Sonata's publication—in nearly all performances<sup>7</sup> (Example 5 below):

**Example 5: Liszt Sonata, the misleading text<sup>8</sup> of mm. 1–6, Breitkopf & Härtel (B. & H.), 1854.**



Fortunately, Liszt's copyist was not ultimately consistent at modernizing the composer's graphic layout, as we can discover at the return of the thematic exposition at the thematic re-exposition (m. 453), which retains Liszt's downward pointing stems in the left hand. This detail highlights the unreliability of the 1854 edition when used as the sole primary source:

<sup>6</sup> See Tibor Szász: W. A. Mozart's *Fantaisie et Sonate*, Opus XI (K.475 / K.457), Examples 48 and 49, p. 88): [https://mozartstudies.edituramediamusica.ro/numere/03/MS\\_03\\_pag\\_061-110.pdf](https://mozartstudies.edituramediamusica.ro/numere/03/MS_03_pag_061-110.pdf) (accessed 4 August 2023).

<sup>7</sup> Pianist Marc-André Hamelin is convinced that there is only one correct interpretation of the Liszt Sonata's chromatically expanding upward leaps in the bass: an ascending minor seventh (m. 2), then a major seventh (m. 5) followed by descending scales: "As to the ascending seventh, I've never doubted that that is the way it should be played melodically, not as an 8-note descending scale, and I sincerely hope I was able to make that clear in my recording. (I have yet to listen to the finished product (!) so I can't ascertain whether I made the voice leading as clear as I intended.)" [This text constitutes a fragment of Hamelin's email addressed to the author on 22 September 2011].

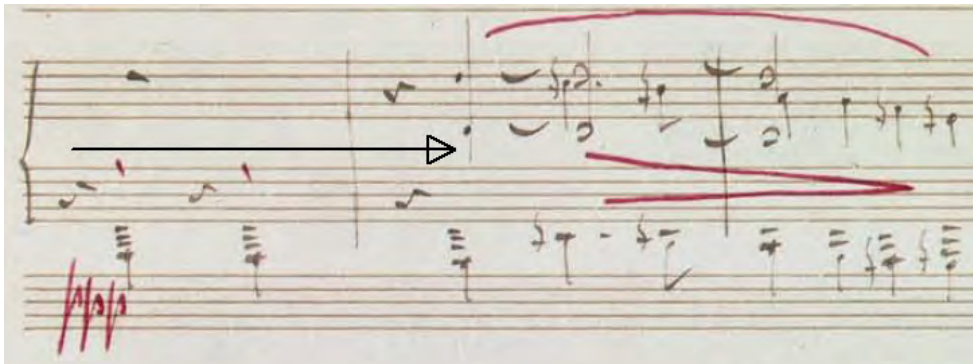
<sup>8</sup> Typically, the opening *Lento assai* is misinterpreted as unisons (*staccatos* on G, mm. 1, 4, and 7) broken up in mm. 2–3 and 5–6 by descending scales starting on the highest pitch G and by drones starting on the same high pitch G.

**Example 6:** Sonata, B. & H. 1854, mm. 453–457, with correct downward stems in the left hand.



Nevertheless, m. 454 (Example 6) does not fully comply with Liszt's notation (Example 7):

**Example 7:** Lehman MS, mm. 453–455; note Liszt's polyphonically clarifying, downward pointed stem at the editorial arrow in m. 454—a detail absent in the 1854 edition (Example 6).



Liszt notated the downward pointing stem in m. 454 (Example 7) as a separate stroke; its angle differs from that of the stem connecting the octave above it. In a conversation with Szász, Adler pointed out that since the repeated notes in m. 453 are reduced to single pitches (compare m. 453 with the Sonata's m. 1), the polyphonic voice crossing in mm. 454–455 may be misinterpreted as a “descending scale.” To preempt such a misinterpretation, Liszt clarified with the extra downward pointing stem that it is the lower F# which initiates the upward jump of the minor seventh interval F# – ↑E♭ (followed in turn by its descending scale).

Albeit the added stem would be placed on the opposite side of the note in most printed editions published around 1854, Liszt's stem makes the individual threading of the crossing voices clearly identifiable not only because of the added stem but also because of the consistently downwards pointing stems entered in the lower staff. (Liszt's orthography will be discussed in greater detail at the end of this essay.)

Liszt's pupil José Vianna da Motta must have realized that without the transfer of Liszt's crucial extra stem to the Sonata's similar structures, their polyphonic voice crossings might be misinterpreted. To avert this potential misinterpretation, Vianna da Motta implemented Liszt's

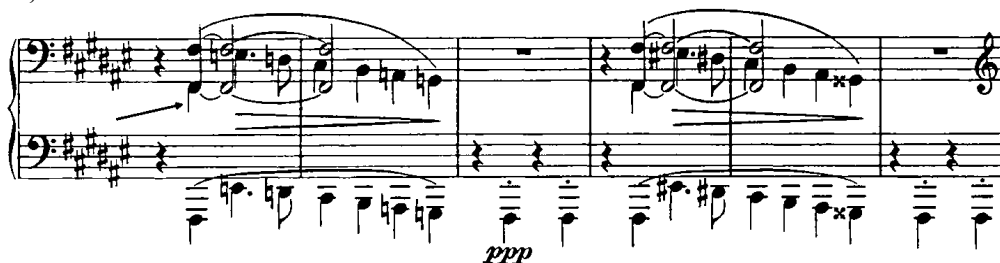


added stem in m. 454 as the textual norm for all similar occurrences of this structure (mm. 2–3 // 5–6 in the thematic exposition; and mm. 454–455 // 457–458 in the thematic re-exposition).

**Example 8: Liszt Sonata, mm. 2–3 // 5–6, B. & H. 1924, plate no. F. L. 61, Vianna da Motta, editor.**



**Example 9: Liszt Sonata, mm. 454–459 in the revised B. & H. edition of 1924, Vianna da Motta, editor.**



Vianna da Motta’s downward pointing stems added in the right-hand system (Example 8) are, alas, confused by the flawed upward pointing stems in the left-hand system taken over from the 1854 first edition. The rising leaps of the bass parts with their scalar descents received watchful attention also in the editions prepared by Liszt’s pupils Arthur Friedheim, Alexander Siloti, and Moriz Rosenthal.

**Example 10: Liszt Sonata, Friedheim editor, accents on the “rising landing notes” F and F#.**

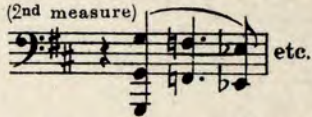


The Liszt Sonata edition by Friedheim (Example 10) was published in facsimile by Gerard Carter and Martin Adler during the Liszt Bicentennial.<sup>9</sup> Friedheim entered his handwritten edition into the score edited by Liszt's pupil Rafael Joseffy (Schirmer edition) which retained the *crescendo* and *diminuendo* hairpins of the B. & H. edition of 1854. Having studied the Sonata privately under Liszt, Friedheim disagreed with the length of the printed hairpins and corrected them with accents meant to identify the dynamically loudest "landing notes" of the *cresc.* upward leaps G–↑F $\sharp$  (m. 2) and G–↑F $\sharp$  (m. 5).

Nevertheless, Friedheim's clarifying accents added in both systems (Example 10) are, alas, confused by the flawed upward pointing stems taken over from the 1854 first edition of B. & H. Friedheim's autograph suggestions (Example 10) implicitly agree with Alexander Siloti's explicitly printed suggestions published by B. & H. in 1935 (Example 11):

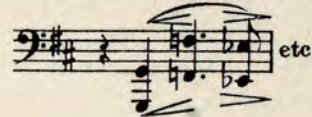
**Example 11: Facsimile extracted from Siloti's "Suggestions regarding execution" (m. 2).<sup>10</sup>**

1. Frequently one hears the following voice-leading in a performance of this Sonata:



(2nd measure)

However, in accordance with the wish of Franz Liszt, the lovely ascending progression (jump) of the seventh should be clearly brought forth:



Siloti's polyphonically layered text below (Example 12) was a significant attempt towards rectifying the "descending scales" misinterpretation of the Sonata already in vogue by 1935.

<sup>9</sup> Gerard Carter and Martin Adler, *Facsimile of Arthur Friedheim's Edition of Franz Liszt's Sonata in B Minor, Liszt Piano Sonata Monographs*, Sydney: Wensleydale Press, 2011. Friedheim used, as textual prop for his own edition of the Sonata, Schirmer's printed score edited by another pupil of Liszt, Rafael Joseffy. See also Gordon Rumson, "Arthur Friedheim's Edition of the Liszt B minor Sonata," *Liszt Society Journal* 26 (2001): 17–59.

<sup>10</sup> Alexander Siloti, "Suggestions regarding execution and cuts" to Vianna da Motta's edition of 1924, Breitkopf & Härtel, E. B. 3388, plate no. F. L. 61., Leipzig (1935).



**Example 12: Liszt Sonata, facsimile of Siloti's layered polyphonic suggestions, mm. 2–3 // 5–6.**



The most deplorable omission of Liszt Sonata editors is that they suppressed or ignored—in scores and in their critical apparatus—Liszt's final version of the beginning (*Anfang*) which adds augmentation dots meant to change substantially the tonal perception of mm. 1–6. Szász, Carter, and Adler restored Liszt's intended text of the Sonata's opening measures based on Liszt's piecemeal revisions preserved in the Lehman MS<sup>11</sup>:

**Example 13: The opening nine measures of the Sonata reconstructed by Szász/Carter/Adler based on Liszt's final version of the opening measures as preserved in the Lehman MS.<sup>12</sup>**

<sup>11</sup> Szász (with Gerard Carter and Martin Adler), "Towards a New Edition of Liszt's *Sonata in B minor*," 84.

<sup>12</sup> The shared pitch G (6<sup>th</sup> scale degree of B minor) is the communication window between soprano and bass.

Example 13 typifies Liszt's signature compositional technique referred to as "inflected repetition" by the noted American music theorist Ramon Satyendra.<sup>13</sup> Liszt's inflected repetition procedure is simplicity itself: the pitches marked with arrows in mm. 1–3 (the three-measure long *Urmotiv* or generative motive) are raised by one half step in mm. 4–6, thus generating a chromatically expanding "melodic" rise in the bass parts: from F $\sharp$  in m. 2 to  $\uparrow$ F $\sharp$  in m. 5, from C $\sharp$  in m. 3 to  $\uparrow$ C $\sharp$  in m. 6, and from A $\flat$  in m. 3 to  $\uparrow$ A $\flat$  in m. 6.

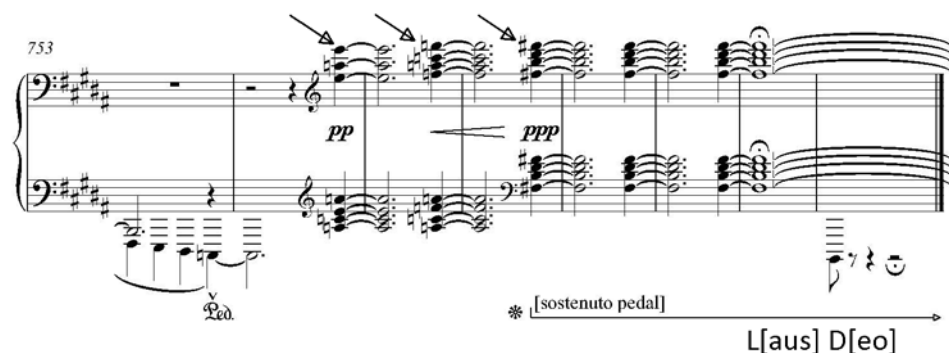
A striking thematic variant of the *Urmotiv* (mm. 1–3, Example 3) makes its entrance at mm. 277–279 (Example 14). Whereas m. 2 featured the  $\uparrow$ **ascending seventh interval G– $\uparrow$ F $\sharp$** , m. 278 features the  $\downarrow$ **descending second interval G– $\downarrow$ F $\sharp$** . By swapping the conduct of soprano and bass, the *Urmotiv* gains a polar opposite identity. Its chromatically rising soprano (*tremolando*, D $\sharp$ /E $\flat$ / E $\sharp$  in mm. 277–285) featured over a plummeting yet quasi non-variant bass *Orgelpunkt* G (drone) recalls the Sonata's mock opening tonality of G minor:

**Example 14: The Sonata's "Anti-*Urmotiv*," apex of a Lisztian type "thematic transformation," mm. 277–296.**

<sup>13</sup> See Ramon Satyendra, "Conceptualising Expressive Chromaticism in Liszt's Music," *Music Analysis* 16, no. 2 (July 1997): 219–252, see especially 219, 221, 236, 240, and 241.

If pianists were to learn the Sonata from flawless texts (like the one seen in Example 13), they would discover never before suspected thematic relations (see Example 15 below):

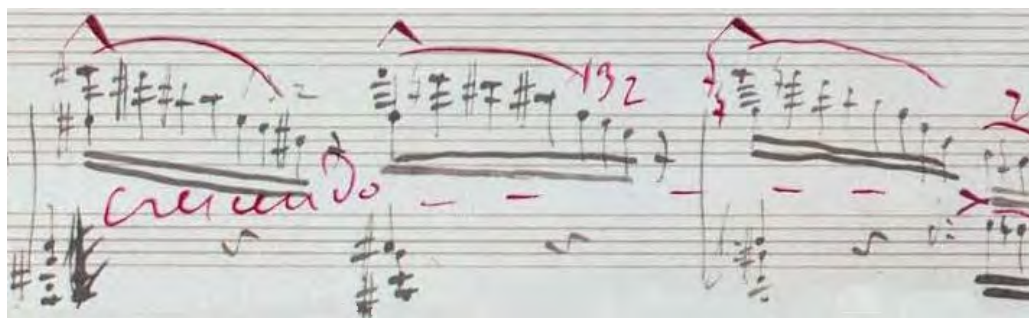
**Example 15: The Sonata's spiritual transcendence with the chromatic rise  $E - \uparrow F^{\flat} - \uparrow F^{\sharp}$  (marked with arrows) followed by repeated six-four chords (*Quartsextakkord*, mm. 756ff).**



The aging Liszt stated, “I am a poor proof-reader for my own compositions; for others I can proof-read correctly, but not so for my own.”<sup>14</sup> His statement can be verified, among others, by his own deficient notation of the chromatic lead-in that prepares the Sonata’s tonal re-exposition. Evidently, Liszt had forgotten that there were no sharps in the local key signature at m. 528.

Example 16 illustrates Liszt’s mental anticipation of the B-minor key signature of two sharps (m. 531) that had obscured the intended chromatic rise “ $E^{\sharp}-F^{\sharp}-G^{\flat}$ ” in mm. 528–529 which repeats exactly, albeit in enharmonic notation, the chromatic rise “ $F^{\flat}-F^{\sharp}-G$ ” heard in mm. 2, 5, and 8 (also, please review the Lehman MS’s reformatted version shown in Example 4).

**Example 16: Liszt’s mental anticipation of the B-minor key signature, m. 531.**



<sup>14</sup> Carl Lachmund, *Living with Liszt: From the Diary of Carl Lachmund, an American Pupil of Liszt, 1882–1884*, ed. Alan Walker (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1995), 160.

Liszt's apparently intended, but unfortunately omitted, F# from m. 528 of the Lehman MS and of the 1854 first edition was inserted by his pupil Vianna da Motta in the revised 1924 B. & H. edition (Example 17). Vianna da Motta's correction should be reproduced in all future editions of the Sonata:

**Example 17: Liszt Sonata, B. & H. 1924, a tonally and contextually flawless text (Vianna da Motta editor).**



Let us now attempt to reconstruct the Sonata's probable genesis based on the only surviving sketch, nicknamed by the present authors "the mock G minor in B minor Sonata sketch" GSA 60/N 2:

**Example 18: "The mock G minor in B minor Sonata sketch," *Klassik Stiftung Weimar, Goethe- und Schiller-Archiv*, GSA 60/N 2 sketchbook, p. 75 (87) [no further music entries on this page]**



**Example 19: Transcription by Szász of the entire Sonata sketch GSA 60/N 2.****Example 20: Transcription by Adler<sup>15</sup> of mm. 1–6 of the Sonata sketch GSA 60/N 2 [The five layered numbers in Example 20 were added specifically for use in the current essay].**

Liszt's sketch prefigures the Sonata's tonal move from G minor to B minor via an enharmonic link between the rising interval  $G - \uparrow Bb$  and the falling seventh  $G - \downarrow A\#$  (Example 21):

**Example 21: The rising third  $G - \uparrow Bb$  engenders its own falling melodic profile  $G - \downarrow A\#$ .**

Given the elegant musical logic of the Sonata sketch GSA 60/N 2, why did Liszt revise it with the more complex structures (Examples 3 and 4) preserved in the Lehman MS? This was probably done because the rising minor third interval  $G - \uparrow Bb$  did not match the superior expressive power of its own inverted, enharmonic “hard leap”: the tragic  $G - \downarrow A\#$  *saltus duriusculus*. Thus may have been born the Sonata's *Urmotiv*—a dynamic interplay between two beings absorbed in a mutual exchange of emissive, receptive, and reactive gestures (*piano*, *sotto voce*):

<sup>15</sup> The five-part structure in mm. 1–2 of the Sonata sketch GSA 60/N 2 was incorrectly reduced to a three-part structure in the digital transcription published in March 2016 by Editio Musica Budapest Zeneműkiadó in the Separate Edition from the New Liszt Complete Critical Edition edited by Antal Pál Boronkay and prefaced by Adrienne Kaczmarczyk (item number 12900, ISMN: 9790080129005), <https://www.kotta.info/en/product/12900/LISZT-FERENC-Sonata> (accessed 4 August 2023).

**Example 22: Interplay of the *Urmotiv*'s Hammer (soprano) / Leap (bass) motives, mm. 1–3.<sup>16</sup>**

The two-voiced *Urmotiv* (Example 22) generates two sub-motives (mm. 1–17): its “Leap” component (bass) turns into the “Leap” sub-motive (mm. 9–13, soprano register), whereas its “Hammer” component (soprano) turns into the hammer sub-motive (mm. 14–17, bass register):

**Example 23: Liszt Sonata (thematic exposition, fragment) with its Leap/Hammer sub-motives, mm. 7–17.**

The two sub-motives are then jointly featured in the Sonata’s B minor exposition/re-exposition:

<sup>16</sup> The shared pitch G (6<sup>th</sup> scale degree of B minor) is the communication window between soprano and bass.



**Example 24:** The *Urmotiv*'s two sub-motives functioning as the tonal exposition/re-exposition.

LEAP = falling 7th | rising 2nd  
m. 32 = tritone  
m. 533 = tritone  
Liszt: Sonata in B minor  
[diminished seventh chords]  
marcato  
HAMMER tonic tritone  
sempre forte e agitato  
m. 32 = tonal exposition  
m. 533 = tonal re-exposition  
[cadential 6-5-1]

In his edition of the Sonata, Liszt's pupil Moriz Rosenthal characterized the rising leaps as *zögernd* (hesitantly, *p sotto voce*, with *cresc.* in m. 8), and their falling counterparts in mm. 9–13 as *Entschlossen!* (Resolutely!, with *f* starting in m. 9).<sup>17</sup> Rosenthal's verbal additions suggest that the subversive activity of soprano and bass aimed at conquering the heights (mm. 1–8) are countered by an opposing force which hurls both of them into the abyss (Example 25).<sup>18</sup>

**Example 25:** Sonata (fragment), the thematic exposition edited by Rosenthal: *zögernd* (rising leap in m. 2), *Entschlossen!* (falling leap in m. 9).

Lento assai  
p sotto voce  
zögernd  
Allegro energico Entschlossen! c)  
II.  
f  
3

<sup>17</sup> Franz Liszt Klavier-Sonate H-Moll, herausgegeben von Moriz Rosenthal, Ullstein, Tonmeister-Ausgabe Nr. 293, Plate no. T. A. Nr. 293, Berlin (1927).

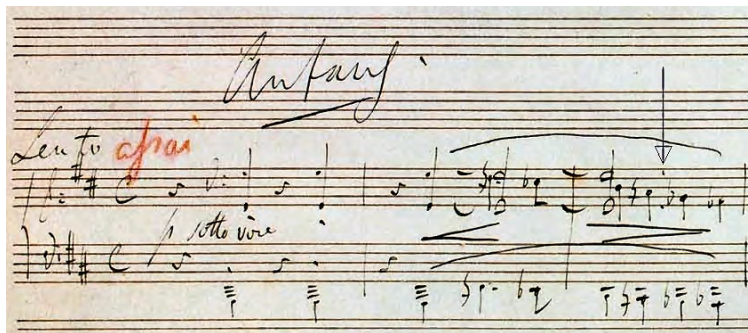
<sup>18</sup> Perhaps the musical representation of a covert seduction (*sotto voce*) nipped in the bud a little too late (m. 9).

Rosenthal aligned his own comment *Entschlossen!* with the *forte* downbeat of m. 9 and not with the onset of the *Allegro energico* traditionally distorted by pianists as an unprepared *f*. When performed correctly, a slowly escalating yet still hesitant angst consisting of emissive, receptive, and reactive gestures enacted by soprano and bass (Example 22) must rise to an agonized yearning to attain the prepared *cresc. forte* on the downbeat of m. 9 (Example 25).

Editors leave performers uninformed not only about the *f*, which Liszt originally inserted in m. 8 and which he subsequently deleted with red ink—and then transferred to the downbeat of m. 9 also with red ink—but about a host of other essential aspects of the Sonata. The cause of this complacency among editors is probably based on their unsubstantiated assumption that the 1854 B. & H. edition constitutes Liszt's true musical legacy—a demonstrably faulty evaluation of both the Lehman MS and the 1854 edition.

Let us now look closely at Liszt's augmentation dots preserved in m. 3 of the Lehman MS.

**Example 26: Sonata, Lehman MS, *Anfang* (Beginning), Liszt's augmentation dots, m. 3.**



Liszt's two augmentation dots in m. 3 are perfectly aligned both horizontally and vertically with the half-note value of the octave G in the right hand—an indication that Liszt was in full control of his creative abilities when finalizing the Sonata's beginning (*Anfang*). The prolongation dots were meant to extend by one quarter-note value the octave G, thereby making the synchronized occurrence of pitches G (soprano) and B $\flat$  (bass) clearly perceptible (Example 4).<sup>19</sup> Liszt apportions plenty of space between his augmentation dots whereas those used in the 1854 B. & H. edition are “glued” next to the note heads to be augmented (Example 27):

<sup>19</sup> The repeated then sustained octave G in the soprano appears to usurp the dominance of the home key of B minor, while the recurrence of pitch B $\flat$  in mm. 3 and 6 suggest the consolidating grip of the mock tonality of G minor. Placing G-minor pitches within the context of the B-minor key signature of two sharps links the final version of the Liszt Sonata with “the mock G minor in B minor Sonata sketch GSA 60/N 2.”

**Example 27: Modern augmentation dots used in the 1854 edition and in all subsequent ones.**



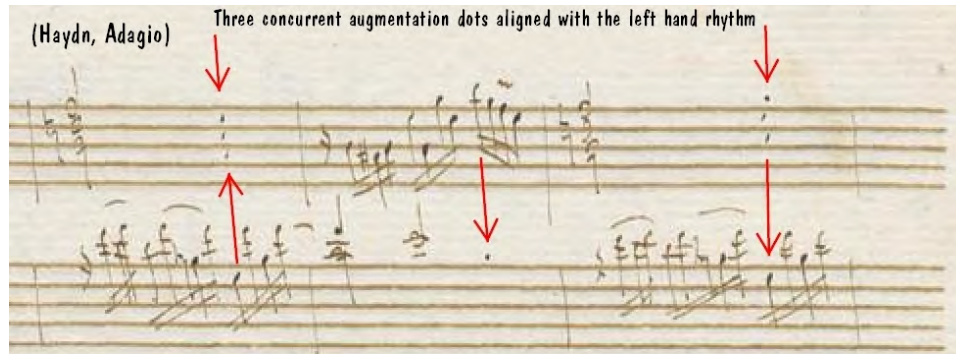
Liszt was consistent in his habit of apportioning plenty of horizontal space between the dots:

**Example 28: Liszt Sonata, Lehman MS, triple / duple augmentation dots in m. 351 / m. 523.**



What is the source of Liszt's habit of apportioning so much "air" between his augmentation dots? When investigated by pianists, editors, and analysts, this habit reveals that Liszt emulated in his orthography the augmentation dot system used by Joseph Haydn and by Ludwig van Beethoven:

**Example 29: Joseph Haydn's autograph manuscript of his Piano Sonata in C Major, Hob. XVI: 21.**



**Example 30: Beethoven, Piano Sonata Op. 109, 2<sup>nd</sup> movement, mm. 70–83, Schlesinger, 1088.**



What happened, however, with Liszt's augmentation dot intended for m. 6 but placed in m. 5?

**Example 31: Liszt's hurriedly notated augmentation dot intended for m. 6 but placed in m. 5.**

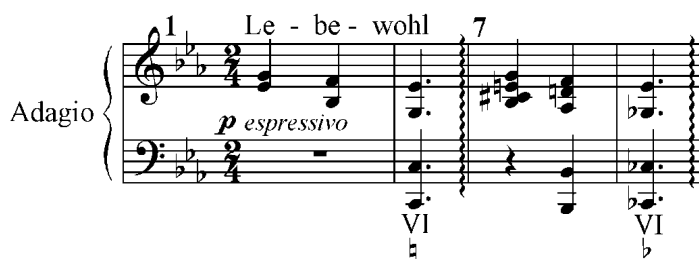


After adding two augmentation dots in m. 3 of the three-measure-long *Urmotiv* (Example 26), Liszt intended to add similar dots in m. 6 of the chromatically inflected *Urmotiv* (Example 31). While searching for the sustained octave G in the right-hand staff of mm. 4–6, Liszt's eyes must have scanned m. 5 which already had in place an augmentation dot. Apparently in a hurry, Liszt failed to associate the augmentation dot with the pitch F# to which that dot truly belongs

(Example 31). Believing that he was staring at m. 6, Liszt entered an augmentation dot in m. 5 for the lower pitch G; however, this particular pitch G could not accommodate grammatically an extra dot. Undoubtedly, Liszt's superfluous dot in m. 5 (Example 31, at the arrow) was intended to prolong by a quarter-note value the lower pitch G of the inflected *Urmotiv* (Example 4, m. 6).

Why are Liszt's augmentation dots crucial for a correct perception of the *Urmotiv* (mm. 1–3) and of its chromatically inflected repetition (mm. 4–6)? Liszt extended the note value of octave G (soprano) until the arrival of octave B $\flat$  (bass) to pinpoint with the synchronized occurrence of pitches G and B $\flat$  “the mock G minor tonality” which initiates the Liszt Sonata. Starting a piano sonata on the 6<sup>th</sup> scale degree of the home key was a tonal procedure introduced by Beethoven in his quasi “programmatic” Sonata Op. 81a *Das Lebwohl* inspired by the horrors of war.

**Example 32: Beethoven, Piano Sonata in E $\flat$  Major, Op. 81a, *Das Lebwohl* [The Farewell].<sup>20</sup>**



Impressed by Beethoven's inflected repetition (Example 32, bass descent C / $\downarrow$ C $\flat$ ), Liszt's *Urmotiv* in G minor (Example 4) ushers in the fugato with pitch G $\flat$  (m. 460, not reproduced). As to Liszt's habit of placing the stems on the “wrong side” of a note, see Examples 33 and 34:

**Example 33: Jan Ladislav Dussek, Sonata I (in B-flat Major), Pianoforte & Violin, London, 1<sup>st</sup> movement.**



<sup>20</sup> L. Poundie Burstein, “‘Lebe wohl tönt überall’ and a ‘Reunion after So Much Sorrow’: Beethoven’s Op. 81a and the Journeys of 1809,” *The Musical Quarterly* 93, no. 3/4 (Fall/Winter 2010): 366–413, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41060777>.



Example 34: Sonata, Lehman MS, *Andante sostenuto*, mm. 711–715, Maria Pavlovna theme.<sup>21</sup>

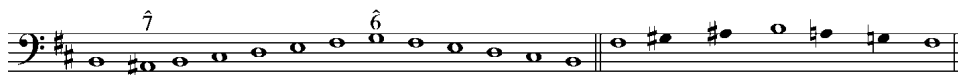


The Liszt Sonata may also be considered as a tribute to theorist Johann David Heinichen who, in his *Schemata Modorum* of 1728, systematized the “modern” use of minor and major tonalities.

Example 35: The tonal system’s minor/major modes systematized by Heinichen.<sup>22</sup>



Example 36: Heinichen’s *Schemata Modorum* (1728), tonal spine of Liszt’s Sonata in B minor.



Example 37: Liszt, Sonata, *Presto, fortissimo*, mm. 673–676, B minor / B Major diatonic modes



<sup>21</sup> Placing the stem on the “wrong side” of the note head was a common practice in “old editions.”

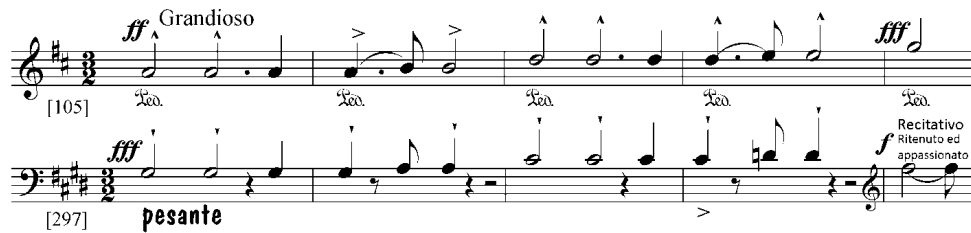
<sup>22</sup> Johann David Heinichen (1683–1729), *Der General-Bass in der Composition*, Dresden, 1728.



Before concluding Topic 1, I would like to respond to a question raised by Ben Arnold who heard my lecture and performance of the Liszt Sonata presented at the Atlanta Meeting of the American Liszt Society in 1983. Ben phrased his recent question as follows: “Do you believe Liszt’s program that you have investigated in such detail [since 1983] was clear from the start?”<sup>23</sup> My answer today is the same as the one that I gave in 1983: “I do not think that Liszt had either the final structural or the final programmatic clarity from the very beginning.” I still hear the Liszt Sonata as an improvised composition—a *continuum in statu nascendi* (“in the state of being born”) featuring a few musical themes known to Liszt by 1849.

Musical structures and programmatic hints are inseparably intertwined yet clearly differentiated in the Liszt Sonata. Fittingly, the recurrence of the Sonata’s *Urmotiv* (mm. 1–3) in its descending variant (Example 14, the “Anti-Christ”) foreshadows the crucifixion portrayed in the transposed *Grandioso* theme (mm. 297–301), its major second intervals inflected chromatically as minor seconds:<sup>24</sup>

**Example 38: Liszt, Sonata, B. & H. 1854, from the *Grandioso*’s “pentatonic major” melody A, ↑B, ↑D, ↑E, ↑G to the *Grandioso*’s “minor” variant G#, ↑A, ↑C#, ↑D, ↑F#.**



Liszt’s review of the printer’s model was probably cursory. The present authors are, however, of the opinion that some of the textual details found in the B. & H. 1854 edition do, in fact, represent Liszt’s considered, albeit, last minute, revisions (Example 38). Editors should inform performers of all the textual divergences between the Lehman MS and the first edition:

<sup>23</sup> Both the question raised, and the answers given constitute transcriptions of words exchanged by email.

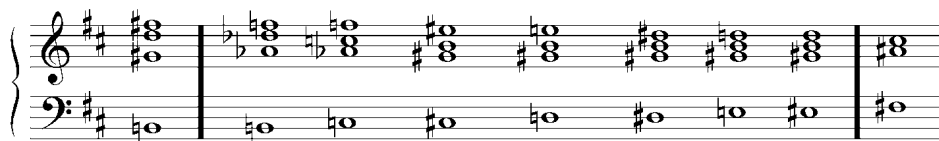
<sup>24</sup> “Liszt Sonata in B minor, Tibor Szasz, Carnegie Recital Hall, Nov. 6, 1977,” <https://youtu.be/KZCTVOd6T1g> (accessed 4 August 2023).

**Example 39: Sonata, mm. 251–254, text by Szász/Carter/Adler based on the Lehman MS.<sup>25</sup>**



The rectified text above is a Baroque harmonic sequence known as the *Teufelsmühle* [The Devil's Mill].<sup>26</sup> The A $\natural$  in m. 251 of the first edition is probably a wrong note unauthorized by Liszt. Example 40 below shows a typical occurrence within *Teufelsmühle* harmonies: the uninterrupted presence of an enharmonically notated “drone G-sharp = A-flat” in mm. 250–254:

**Example 40: Liszt Sonata, *Teufelsmühle*, harmonic reduction of mm. 250–255 by Szász.**



Evidently, bridging the Sonata's “crucifixion” music (mm. 297–330) with that of the *Consolation* No. 4 theme borrowed from Maria Pavlovna (mm. 335–338) was a problematic task for Liszt:

<sup>25</sup> The A $\natural$  in m. 251 was rectified to A $\flat$  in Camille Saint-Saëns, *Transcription for two pianos*, ed. Sabina Teller Ratner, Paris: Durand, 1914/2004, plate no. D. & F. 15316. Similarly, the A $\natural$  in m. 251 was rectified to A $\flat$  in the March 2016 score published by EMB (Editio Musica Budapest, Zeneműkiadó, edited by Antal Pál Boronkay and prefaced by Adrienne Kaczmarczyk), Item number: 12900, ISMN: 9790080129005. The A $\natural$  in m. 251 was not, however, rectified to A $\flat$  in the revised 1924 B. & H. edition of the Sonata (Vianna da Motta, editor).

<sup>26</sup> See Marie-Agnes Dittrich, ›Teufelsmühle‹ und ›Omnibus.‹ *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Musiktheorie* 4/1–2 (2007): 107–121. <https://doi.org/10.31751/247> (accessed 4 August 2023).

**Example 41: Transcription<sup>27</sup> of the original bridge to the *Andante sostenuto*<sup>28</sup> corrected by Szász.**



The ultra-chromatic, avant-gardistic opening of the original bridge (Example 41) goes much beyond Wagner (*Tristan*) and resembles late Liszt and even Scriabin. It is undoubtedly great music, yet Liszt discarded it probably because it did not match the diatonic simplicity of the Pavlovna theme (Consolation No. 4). The Sonata's final bridge—a Chorale-type harmonization of mm. 330–333—demonstrates Liszt's chromatic restraint in setting up the religious mood of the Pavlovna Lied.

**Example 42: Bridging the *Grandioso*'s “minor” variant (mm. 297–330) and Consolation No. 4.<sup>29</sup>**



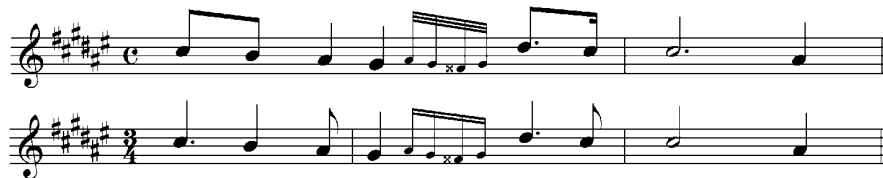
<sup>27</sup> Flawed transcription by Alfredo Arjona, “Learning from the Autograph: A New Critical Approach to Performing Liszt’s Sonata in B Minor,” D.M.A. University of North Texas, 2015 (Collette 5, verso, MS16), 61 & 92.

<sup>28</sup> Sharon Winkhofer also incorrectly transcribed Liszt’s autograph bridge (cf. p. XVII in G. Henle’s second (2015) facsimile edition of the Lehman MS). View Liszt’s autograph at Fig. 7: Reverse side of the paste-over on p. 16.

<sup>29</sup> This example reproduces the Liszt Sonata score published by Edition Musica Budapest, 1973 (Boronykay editor).

Although Pavlovna's original Lied appears to be lost, Szász succeeded in reconstructing its poetic background. Liszt retained the opening pitches of the Pavlovna melody in his *Consolation* No. 4 (known as *Stern-Consolation* = Star Consolation) marked *Quasi Adagio, cantabile con divozione*:

**Example 43: Liszt, *Consolation* No. 4 (1850, mm. 1–2; transposed) and Sonata (mm. 332–334).**



Szász discovered in 2011 the identity of the poet whose words served as lyrics for a different Pavlovna Lied—*Es hat geflammt* (S.685 = LW N47 = R644b)—preserved in the *Klassik Stiftung Weimar, Goethe- und Schiller-Archiv* under GSA 60/D 69. *Es hat geflammt* quotes words from the poem *Die Brautnacht* by the same Wilhelm Müller who inspired Franz Schubert's celebrated Lieder.<sup>30</sup> Since the "Pavlovna Lied" has not come down to us, Szász determined that the only poem by Müller to fit the melody of Liszt's *Consolation* No. 4 of 1849 is *Seefahrers Abschied* (Sailor's Farewell)—a poem set also by Fanny Mendelssohn in 1823 in an astonishingly similar manner (Example 44):<sup>31</sup>

**Example 44: Similarities between the Lieder of Maria Pavlovna and of Fanny Mendelssohn.**

[Above] Maria Pavlovna - Liszt: *Consolation* IV (1849); lyrics by Wilhelm Müller

Die du fliegst in ho - hen Lüf - ten, Klei - ne Schwal - be, komm her - ab, Weil ich

Die du fliegst in ho - hen Lüf - ten, Klei - ne Schwal - be, komm - her - ab, Weil ich

[Below] Fanny Mendelssohn: *Seefahrers Abschied* (1823); lyrics by Wilhelm Müller

<sup>30</sup> Szász's article on the Maria Pavlovna Lied *Es hat geflammt* has appeared—along with a first edition of that Lied—as “Franz Liszt's arrangement of Maria Pavlovna's Lied *Es hat geflammt* and large-scale structures of Liszt's *Sonata in B minor* and *Faust-Symphonie*,” in *Les grands topoï du XIXe siècle et la musique de Franz Liszt*, ed. Márta Grabócz (Paris: Editions Hermann, 2018), 333–357.

<sup>31</sup> The Fanny Mendelssohn Lied has remained unpublished until recently; it is now available at <https://furore-verlag.de/en/produkt/acht-lieder-fuer-hohe-stimme-nach-texten-von-wilhelm-mueller-2/> (accessed 4 August 2023).

The poem is about a sailor ready to undertake a dangerous voyage on sea from which he may never return to see his beloved. The sailor asks a swallow for the gift of a feather to write a letter to his beloved. Müller's poem reveals the missing link between Pavlovna's setting of *Seefahrers Abschied* and the radiant Star printed above the 1850 German edition of Liszt's Consolation No. 4. To this day, Müller's poem is invoked in maritime organizations<sup>32</sup> in line with the old Gregorian tradition of *Stella maris*—"Our Lady, Star of the Sea"—reverent title given to the Virgin Mary, guardian of human beings sailing on the stormy sea of earthly life. Concurrently, the radiant star refers to her namesake Maria Pavlovna whom Liszt identified with his autograph acronym « *D'après un L.D.S.A.I.M.P...* » (« *D'après un Lied de Son Altesse Impériale Maria Paulowna* »).

For the above reasons, the decision of the Henle editorial board to expurgate the radiating star of their all-inclusive *Urtext* edition of the Liszt *Consolations* (Munich, 1992) was a serious mistake. A radiating star of one shape or another was included not only in many early editions, but also in the first German edition of 1850 Liszt authorized himself, in which the radiating star had a six-pointed shape.<sup>33</sup>

Turning to other matters, in their joint Sonata article published in this journal in 2017, the present authors suggested that Liszt's recommendation for the D $\flat$  (instead of the D $\sharp$ ) shown in Example 45 below, made to his pupil Karl Klindworth (1830–1916), should be included as the Sonata's final text (*Fassung letzter Hand*) in all future editions of the Sonata:

**Example 45: Correct text of the "Klindworth D $\flat$ " in Moszkowski's Sonata edition.<sup>34</sup>**



The present authors are grateful to composer Piotr Kasiłowski who pointed out that m. 615 of the Liszt Sonata, with its melodic/harmonic sequence D $\flat$ /C $\sharp$  (Example 46), constitutes a preparation for the Sonata's final tonal cadence (Example 45):

<sup>32</sup> See [www.mkmuelheim.de/pdf/Jun16-Aug16.pdf](http://www.mkmuelheim.de/pdf/Jun16-Aug16.pdf) [p. 9] (accessed 4 August 2023).

<sup>33</sup> The Star was reprinted in the first edition of Jules de Swert's transcription of *Consolation* No. 4 for cello and piano (Breitkopf & Härtel, 1871). That first edition included the Star in both the piano and the cello parts, together with a lead-in that Liszt composed. Liszt's lead-in included a self-quotation in the cello part, in a prominent position, of the chromatically adjusted first five notes of the *Consolation* No. 4.

<sup>34</sup> Moritz Moszkowski, *Liszt Sonata* (Paris: Heugel Édition Française de Musique Classique, 1925), no. 326, plate no. E. F. 326.

**Example 46: Liszt Sonata, enharmonic notation D $\sharp$  to C $\natural$  in mm. 612 ff.**

Following the concluding chromatic rise seen in Example 15, we are lifted into Eternity through three identical *Quartsextakkord* harmonies (tonic six-four chords). Nothing better illustrates Liszt's mastery of thematic transformation than his transfiguring of the three disconnected, "diabolic" Gs heard in mm. 1–3 into the three connected, "divine" F#s beginning in m. 756.

Once, while discussing the Sonata with Vitaly Margulis,<sup>35</sup> I mentioned that countless pianists cut off the pedal in m. 760, thereby "executing" the Sonata with a non-pedaled, short thud in low register; Margulis commented with an impish smile: *Der Teufel gewinnt?* ["Is the Devil winning?"]—a conclusion hardly compatible with Liszt's mindset.<sup>36</sup> Does the Sonata's "last heartbeat" (m. 760) truly suggest a diabolic victory?

An open-minded artist, Liszt viewed light and darkness as distinct yet inseparable. Hence, Szász had striven to find an audible solution<sup>37</sup> for realizing the concurrent occurrences of the tonic six-four chords (symbol for Eternity) and of the "last heartbeat" (symbol for the passing moment)—an orchestral effect made possible with the use of the Steinway *sostenuto* pedal (Example 15).

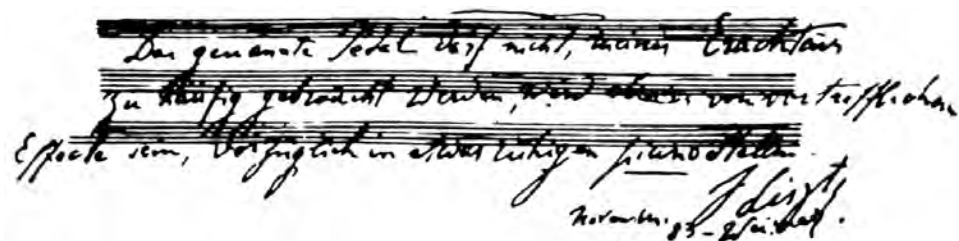
<sup>35</sup> Witalij Iossifowytsh Margulis (1928–2011), <http://old.conservatory.ru/node/428/> (accessed 4 August 2023).

<sup>36</sup> Tibor Szász, "Liszt's Symbols for the Divine and Diabolical: Their Revelation of a Program in the B minor Sonata," *Journal of the American Liszt Society* 15 (1984): 39–95.

<sup>37</sup> Through an email exchange initiated by Szász, Paul McNulty (<http://www.fortepiano.eu>) (accessed 4 August 2023) revealed that the Boisselot grand piano #2800 was delivered to Liszt in Odessa in 1847; this piano accompanied Liszt on his European concert tour, and was mentioned in an 1861 letter to Xavier Boisselot as having long been Liszt's daily partner; in one email addressed to Szász, McNulty stated: "I replicated this broken instrument in 2009, but, although I know Louis Constantin Boisselot to have invented the *sostenuto* before #2800 was built, this piano has only two pedals—due corde verschiebung & damper sustain [sic]."



**Example 47: Liszt's recommendation for the ideal application of the Steinway *sostenuto* pedal.**



Liszt specified the ideal application of the Steinway *sostenuto* pedal as follows: “The aforementioned [middle] pedal must not, in my opinion, be used too often, but will be of excellent effect, especially in somewhat tranquil, *piano* passages.”<sup>38</sup>

Liszt’s condition for the ideal application of the tone-sustaining Steinway pedal is eminently satisfied by the Sonata’s open-ended *triple piano* B-Major tonic six-four chords (Example 15). By depressing the third (“Steinway”) pedal *after* playing the first B-Major six-four chord in m. 756—but without depressing the “right pedal” at the same time—the **third pedal guarantees the short note value of pitch “B” in m. 760 while prolonging the six-four chord past that short note.**<sup>39</sup>

In Szász’s opinion, the use of the Steinway *sostenuto* pedal is an indispensable tool for realizing the polarization of Liszt’s divine and diabolical suggestions at the end of the Sonata in B minor. To preserve the full range of the Steinway instrument’s overtones, Szász never uses the left pedal in the last measures of the Sonata.

<sup>38</sup> “Das genannte Pedal darf nicht, meines Erachtens zu häufig gebraucht werden, wird aber von vortrefflichem Effecte sein, vorzüglich in etwas ruhigen *piano* Stellen.” See Joseph Banowetz, *The Pianist’s Guide to Pedaling* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1985), 218. (Liszt used the word *piano* in lieu of Banowetz’s translation “soft.”)

<sup>39</sup> Liszt’s letter is reproduced in Banowetz, *The Pianist’s Guide to Pedaling*, 217–219. With it, Liszt apparently thanked the Steinway Company for the gift of a new grand piano (serial number 49382, currently housed in the Museo teatrale alla Scala in Milan). Banowetz states that this instrument was equipped with a *sostenuto* pedal, a still novel invention at that time. There exists a second letter by Liszt also dated November 1883, a photograph of which is exhibited on the Steinway website alongside a translation: <https://www.steinway.com/artists/franz-liszt> (click on the right arrow to view Liszt’s letter). Although worded slightly differently, Liszt praises the Steinway instruments in both letters, and offers piano solo and piano transcriptions of works by Liszt and Berlioz to demonstrate the advantageous use of the *sostenuto* pedal. It cannot be determined currently why there are two versions of the same letter, if both were sent off, and who the recipients were. It is also unclear if the second letter contained individual musical examples, since only the letter itself is reproduced on the Steinway website. At least one of the letters seems to have been received by Steinway, because William Steinway mentions in his diary entry of 20 and 21 December 1883 that he is working on a “Liszt letter.” If this letter was a reply to one of Liszt’s letters cannot, however, be ascertained. <https://americanhistory.si.edu/steinwaydiary/diary/?entry=8503>.

Franz Liszt's Piano Sonata embodied conservative orthography and tonality<sup>40</sup> and followed J.S. Bach's tonal system as summarized in Johann David Heinichen's *Schemata Modorum* (1728).<sup>41</sup> In addition, Liszt's themes all seem to have been borrowed from programmatic and texted musical sources originated by his predecessors and contemporaries, as detailed in the final appendix to this topic.<sup>42</sup> In the light of these circumstances it is even more remarkable that Liszt's Sonata has achieved a vast audience as the most progressive expression of the romantic spirit and as the most romantically glowing piano composition of the nineteenth century.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> The *Urmotiv* (Example 22) can be misinterpreted not only by disregarding the accepted rule of reading scores from the bass upwards, but also by reading it with a mind prejudiced by pitch-class type analyses. An ascending seventh may never be shortchanged for a descending second interval in the Liszt Sonata, nor is a B $\flat$  the tonal equivalent of an A $\sharp$ . When subjected to pitch-class type reductionism, Liszt's Sonata is robbed of its essential means of pitch variation, namely, diversification of the "backbone" of diatonic sets through chromatic inflection.


<sup>41</sup> According to Ludwig Holtmeier, Heinichen's *Schemata Modorum* codifies, in fact, the concept of "modern tonality." See Holtmeier, "Heinichen, Rameau, and the Italian Thoroughbass Tradition: Concepts of Tonality and Chord in the Rule of the Octave," *Journal of Music Theory* 51, no. 1 (2007): 11.

<sup>42</sup> Szász, "Liszt's Symbols for the Divine and Diabolical," see Set 19, 80.

<sup>43</sup> The present authors would like to thank composer and music designer József Reményi (Hungary) for his digitally prepared Examples 14, 15, 23, 24, 39 and 42 included in this article.


## Probable sources of Lisztian symbolism.


## Set 19.

1.  [264] *pp* [Samiel from] Weber: *Freischütz*  
[Wolf's Glen scene]

2.  [1] *pp legato* [Lucifer's temptation from] Liszt: *Sonata*  
[Garden of Eden]

3.  [1] *f* [Man and Lucifer's Fall]


4.  [204] *f* Alkan: *Grande Sonate*  
"Quasi Faust". The motif is labeled "Satanique" [Fugato] [Lucifer motif] Liszt: *Grande Sonate*

5.  [3] *f* Alkan: *Grande Sonate*  
"Quasi Faust". The motif is labeled "Satanique" [3] and "Diabolique" [190]

6.  [14] *f marcato* Liszt: *Grande Sonate*  
[Satan motif]

7.  [54] *ff grandioso* Weber: *Freischütz*  
[Kaspar pleads with Samiel]

8.  [16] *cantabile con divozione* Maria Pavlovna [-Liszt]: *Lied*  
Identified as such by Liszt in *Consolation* No. 4.  
Liszt-Museum Weimar / Ms / 22 [1849]

9.  [335] *dolce* Liszt: *Sonata* [Pavlovna's song: in the Sonata,  
the motif of devotion to Christ]

## Topic 2: Deciphering the autograph siglum at the beginning of the Liszt Sonata

Martin Adler (with Tibor Szász and Gerard Carter)

The topic focuses on another aspect of the Lehman Manuscript which to date remains mysterious. Liszt sometimes added sigla to his manuscripts. A well-known example is his use of the characters “L” and “D,” an abbreviation of the Latin expression “Laus Deo” (Praise be to God). There are several manuscripts with this siglum, one being the manuscript of the Liszt Sonata in B minor.<sup>44</sup> In the three examples shown in Fig. 1, the arrangement of the two characters is not standardized, but their meaning is always the same.

**Fig. 1: Examples of Liszt’s siglum for “Laus Deo”:**

- a) B minor Sonata, R21/S178, Lehman MS (completed 1853)
- b) Weimar sketchbook GSA 60/N 9 (ca. 1847/48)
- c) Requiem, R488/S12, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Département de la Musique, Ms. 183 (ca. 1867/68)



Liszt put the “Laus Deo” siglum at the end of the Sonata manuscript, but he also put another siglum immediately above the original beginning on page “1” (Liszt’s pagination), which is shown in Fig. 2. It seems that these two sigla frame the Sonata, and the meaning of each one

<sup>44</sup> Leslie Howard writes in the Preface to his 2011 edition of the Sonata (Edition Peters): “It is true that Liszt’s usual later additions of dynamics and other markings in red ink are found in the cancelled ending, but the piece continues as we know it on the very next stave, with possibly the same pen and ink, and likely within a very short time, and thence onto the verso of the same page, finishing with Liszt’s familiar siglum of an intertwined L and D (Laus Deo) indicating quite clearly that this is the true and only ending!”

should be equally important. As far as we know, the first siglum has never been deciphered; we present here the first attempt to decipher that siglum and, at the same time, we invite the scholarly community to join in the discussion.

The siglum in Fig. 2 can be deconstructed as two basic characters (see Fig. 3), which resemble the character “M” (incomplete) or “N,” and the character “D” (see Fig. 4). Although it cannot be ruled out completely that the circular figure is another letter or just a flourish, we chose the latter, seemingly more probable, interpretation. A new decision on this matter might be possible, however, if further autographs could be found bearing the same siglum.

Fig. 2: Liszt, *B minor Sonata*, Lehman MS, top left side of page “1” (Liszt’s pagination).

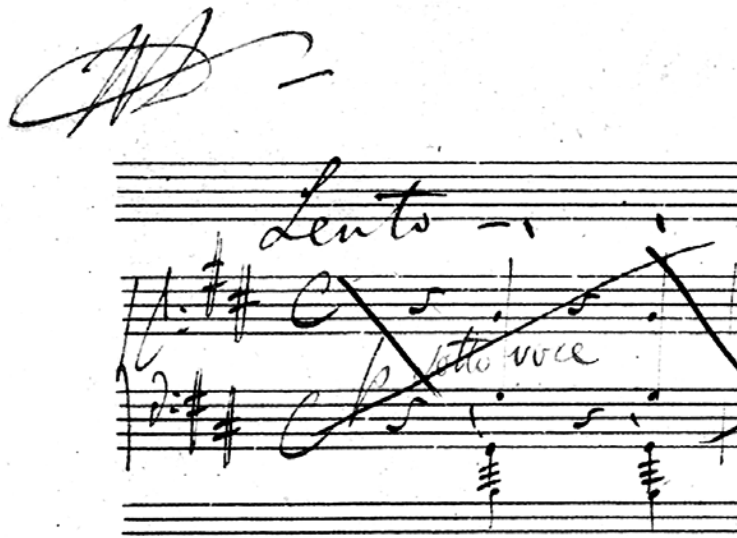
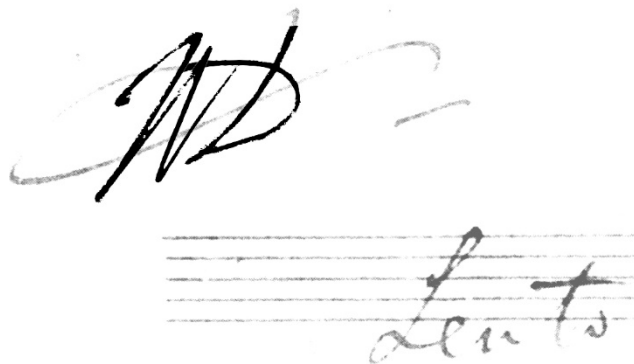


Fig. 3: Deconstruction of the siglum in Fig. 2.

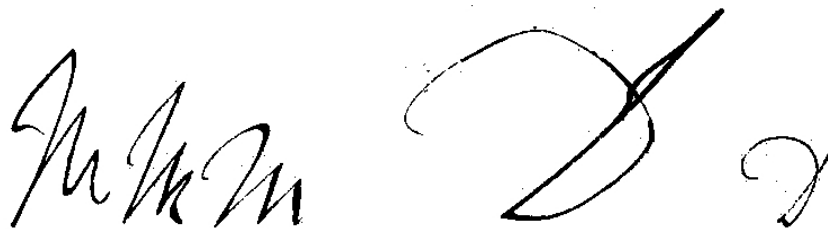


**Fig. 4: Characters extracted from the siglum in Fig. 2.**

To prove the hypothetical assignment of “N”/“M” and “D,” it is necessary to compare the extracted characters with other specimens of Liszt’s handwriting. Figs. 5–10 show examples for the characters “M” and “D” from various manuscripts (compositions and letters) in Liszt’s hand between the years 1844 and 1883. The less frequently used character “N” can be seen in Fig. 6 and Fig. 9.

Several observations can be made:

1. The basic features of Liszt’s handwriting—although varying from document to document—remain stable over the observed period.
2. The characters “M” and “N” in Liszt’s handwriting are virtually identical, except for the final hook, present only in the character “M.”
3. There is great similarity between the characters extracted from the siglum (Fig. 4) and the characters in Figs. 5–10.
4. It is not possible to tell whether the first character in Fig. 4 more closely resembles Liszt’s “N” or his “M,” as the only difference is the existence of the final hook in the character “M.” In Fig. 4, that hook is missing, but this could also be due to the flow of the intertwined letters. It may also have been greatly expanded to become the curve and the first stroke (see Fig. 2) of “D,” the second character in Fig. 4.

**Fig. 5: Liszt, *Die Vätergruft*, manuscript, 1844, characters “M” and “D”<sup>45</sup>**

<sup>45</sup> Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, Mary Flagler Cary Music Collection, Cary 452, <http://www.themorgan.org/music/manuscript/115180> (accessed 2 August 2023).



Fig. 6: Liszt, letter of 1 May 1845, characters “M,” “D,” and “N.”<sup>46</sup>



Fig. 7: Liszt, Consolation No. 4, autograph additions to copyist's manuscript of 1849, characters “M” and “D.”<sup>47</sup>



Fig. 8: Liszt, letter of 25 October 1853, characters “M” and “D.”<sup>48</sup>



Fig. 9: Liszt, letter of 8 July 1861, characters “M,” “D,” and “N.”<sup>49</sup>



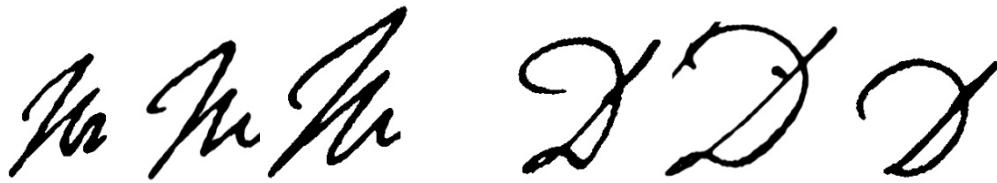
<sup>46</sup> Beethoven-Haus Bonn, BH 159, 22, <https://www.beethoven.de/de/media/view/5503527161954304> (accessed 2 August 2023).

<sup>47</sup> Goethe- und Schiller-Archiv, Weimar, GSA 60/I 22.

<sup>48</sup> Ernst Burger, *Franz Liszt. Eine Lebenschronik in Bildern und Dokumenten* (München: List Verlag, 1986), 192.

<sup>49</sup> Letter for sale online, now offline:

<http://www.historyforsale.com/html/prodetails.asp?documentid=217291> (accessed June 2016). From the vendor's description: "ALS: 'F. Liszt,' 1 page, 5½x8¾. Weimar, 1861 July 8. [...] On the blank second page of a four-page brochure in German issued in Weimar, June 24, 1861, announcing the Second Reunion of the German musical artists."

Fig. 10: Liszt, letter of 22 February 1883, characters “M” and “D.”<sup>50</sup>

The above observations support the proposition that the first siglum represents the characters “ND” or “MD.” If this is so, then what is their meaning? The closest and maybe most probable assumption is that these characters are the abbreviations of a Latin phrase, just as “LD” is an abbreviation of the Latin phrase, “Laus Deo.” The letters “ND” and “MD,” which were used in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries and were probably still being used in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, were abbreviations commonly used for the following Latin phrases:<sup>51</sup>

- N.D.
  1. numini dedicavit (has dedicated to the divinity)
  2. numini devotus (devoted to the divinity)
- M.D.
  1. Magnificus Dominus (magnificent lord)
  2. Magno Deo (to the great God)
  3. Magnus Dux (Grand Duke)
  4. manibus diis (to the souls of the deceased)
  5. matri dulcissimae (to the very dear mother)
  6. medicinae doctor (Doctor of Medicine)
  7. ministerium divinum (the [sacred] ministry)
  8. monumentum dedit/dedicavit (has endowed/dedicated the monument)

Presently it is not possible to ascertain if any one of the above meanings is the one Liszt intended.

By analogy with “Laus Deo,” a religious meaning seems possible. The letters “MD” might perhaps also stand for n° 3, “Magnus Dux” = Grand Duke, or even “Magna Ducissa” = Grand Duchess. In its dative form (“Magnae Ducissae” = To the Grand Duchess)—paying homage to the Grand Duchess Maria Pavlovna of Russia—this suggestion is consistent with Liszt’s use of a Maria Pavlovna Lied not only in the *Andante sostenuto/Quasi Adagio* section of the Sonata in B minor and as the main theme of his fourth *Consolation*, but also by his use of the same

<sup>50</sup> Lina Ramann; Arthur Seidl, ed.; Friedrich Schnapp, ed., *Lisztiana: Erinnerungen an Franz Liszt in Tagebuchblättern, Briefen und Dokumenten aus den Jahren 1873–1886/87* (Mainz: Schott, 1983), 204 ff.

<sup>51</sup> Rudolf Lenz, *Abkürzungen aus Personalschriften des XVI. bis XVIII. Jahrhunderts* (= *Marburger Personalschriften-Forschungen, Band 35*), 3rd ed. (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2002), 125 and 135.

Pavlovna theme in the late version of a *Petrarch Sonnet*.<sup>52</sup> Furthermore, Liszt used it a second time in his Sonata when he exchanged the somewhat pompous first version of the Sonata's coda by its calming and consoling final version starting with the Pavlovna theme. The aura of eternal<sup>53</sup> absolution he achieved by doing so, lifted the Sonata's philosophical message to a whole new level.<sup>54</sup>

We are looking forward to a scholarly discussion among members of the Liszt community, which may eventually lead to a consensus as to the correct interpretation of the siglum at the beginning of Liszt's Sonata in B minor.

### Topic 3: Siloti's editorial suggestions for the performance of the Liszt Sonata

Martin Adler (with Gerard Carter and Tibor Szász)

There are several editions of the Liszt Sonata by some of his most important pupils, introducing crucial corrections and clarifications of Liszt's intentions. Topic 3 centers around Alexander Siloti's take on this. In 1935, Breitkopf & Härtel reprinted José Vianna da Motta's 1924 edition of Liszt's Sonata in B minor (Plate No. F. L. 61), but with two notable additions:<sup>55</sup>

1. A facsimile of Liszt's autograph page containing his dedication to Robert Schumann (which is not part of the Lehman MS).<sup>56</sup>
2. A page with music examples and text titled "Suggestions regarding execution and cuts" by Liszt's pupil, Alexander Siloti (Fig. 11).

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<sup>52</sup> See Tibor Szász, "Liszt's Sonata in B minor and a Woman Composer's Fingerprint: The quasi Adagio theme and a Lied by Maria Pavlovna (Romanova)," *The Liszt Society Journal* 35 (2010): 3–27 [with a full-page ERRATA added in *The Liszt Society Journal* 36 (2011): 98], and the article "Franz Liszt and Maria Pavlovna Romanova: An Homage to the Grand Duchess in Liszt's Petrarch Sonnet No. 47," by Martin Adler (with Tibor Szász and Gerard Carter), *Journal of the American Liszt Society* 66 (2015): 23–33.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. our discussion in Topic 1.

<sup>54</sup> Ben Arnold writes: "The Sonata would not have earned the respect it has today had Liszt not changed the ending. His original thought, as noble as it was, would have been a grandioso overkill that could never have competed with this beatific ending." In Ben Arnold, *The Liszt Companion* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002), 126.

<sup>55</sup> A copy is preserved at The Royal Library, Copenhagen, U24, mu 8309.1364, [http://img.kb.dk/ma/uklav/liszt\\_son\\_siloti.pdf](http://img.kb.dk/ma/uklav/liszt_son_siloti.pdf) (accessed 2 August 2023).

<sup>56</sup> The actual text of the dedication (without the facsimile) was reproduced on the title page of the original edition of 1854 (Plate No. 8877). The 1910 *Volksausgabe* (V. A. 3388.) printed the facsimile of Liszt's autograph dedication. Vianna da Motta's edition mentions the dedication only as a subtitle to the heading "Sonate."

Fig. 11: Siloti's editorial suggestions for Liszt's Sonata, Breitkopf &amp; Härtel, 1935.

## Vorschläge für Vortrag und Kürzungen von Alexander Siloti

Conseils pour l'exécution et pour les abréviations

Suggestions regarding execution and cuts

1. Oft hört man beim Vortrage dieser Sonata nachstehende Stimmführung:



Nach dem Wunsche Franz Liszts aber soll der schöne Septimensprung deutlich herausgehoben werden:



1. O entend fréquemment exécuter la 2<sup>e</sup> mesure ainsi:



Or, d'après l'intention de Liszt, ce saut de 7<sup>e</sup>, d'un bel effet, doit ressortir nettement:



1. Frequently one hears the following voice-leading in a performance of this Sonata:



However, in accordance with the wish of Franz Liszt, the lovely ascending progression (jump) of the seventh should be clearly brought forth:



Es empfiehlt sich deshalb alle ähnlichen Stellen in dieser Weise auszuführen:

a) R. 1, Takt 2 u. 3    b) F. 1, mes. 2 et 3    Takt 5 u. 6    mes. 5 et 6    mes. 5 and 6

c) F. 1, mes. 2 and 3    d) R. 5, Zeile 3, Takt 2 u. 3    Takt 8 u. 9    mes. 8 et 9    mes. 8 and 9

e) F. 5, syst. 3, mes. 2 et 3    f) F. 5, line 3, mes. 2 and 3



Par conséquent, il faut exécuter de cette manière tous les passages similaires.

g) R. 22, Zeile 2    h) F. 22, syst. 2    i) F. 22, line 2

j) R. 36, Zeile 4, Takt 7    k) F. 36, syst. 4, mes. 7    l) F. 36, line 4, mes. 7

m) R. 36, line 4, mes. 7



It should be recommended, therefore, to execute all similar episodes in this manner:

n) R. 36, line 4, mes. 7    o) F. 36, line 4, mes. 7

p) F. 36, line 4, mes. 7

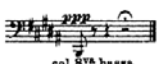
q) F. 36, line 4, mes. 7



2. Die letzte Note der Sonata muß *colli'sva* bassa gespielt werden:



2. La dernière note de la Sonata doit être jouée *colli'sva* bassa:



2. The last note of the Sonata must be played *"colli'sva bassa"*:



3. Sprung vom 2. Takt der letzten Zeile auf Seite 14 zum, nachstehend geänderten, vorletzten Takt auf Seite 15:



3. Sauter de la 2<sup>e</sup> mesure du dernier système p. 14, à l'avant-dernière mesure, p. 15, modifiée ainsi:



3. Abbreviate (cut) from the 2<sup>nd</sup> measure of the last line on page 14, to the next to the last measure on page 15, amended as follows:



4. Sprung von der 2. Zeile auf Seite 18 zum, nachstehend geänderten, vorletzten Takt der 1. Zeile auf Seite 20:



4. Sauter du 2<sup>me</sup> système, p. 18 à l'avant-dernière mesure du 1<sup>er</sup> système, p. 20, modifiée ainsi:



4. Abbreviate (cut) from the 2<sup>nd</sup> line on page 18, to the next to the last measure of the 1<sup>st</sup> line on page 20, amended as follows:



5. 3. und 4. Takt der Seite 22 streichen.

6. Sprung vom 1. Takt der letzten Zeile auf Seite 25, der *poco ritenuto* zu spielen ist, zum 1. Takt der 2. Zeile auf Seite 29.

7. Sprung vom 3. Takt der 2. Zeile auf Seite 34, der *poco ritenuto* zu spielen ist, zum 1. Takt auf Seite 35.

5. Biffer les mesures 3 et 4 de la p. 22.

6. Sauter de la 1<sup>re</sup> mesure du dernier système p. 25 qu'il faut jouer *poco ritenuto*, à la 1<sup>re</sup> mesure du 2<sup>me</sup> système, p. 29.

7. Sauter de la 3<sup>me</sup> mesure du 2<sup>me</sup> système, qu'il faut jouer *poco ritenuto*, à la 1<sup>re</sup> mesure, p. 35.

5. Omit 3<sup>d</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> measures of page 22.

6. Abbreviate (cut) from the 1<sup>st</sup> measure (to be played *poco ritenuto*) of the last line on page 25, to the 1<sup>st</sup> measure of the 2<sup>nd</sup> line on page 29.

7. Abbreviate (cut) from the 3<sup>d</sup> measure (to be played *poco ritenuto*) of the 2<sup>d</sup> line on page 34, to the 1<sup>st</sup> measure on page 35.

The actual score was identical to Vianna da Motta's score (including Plate No. F. L. 61.), but the 1935 reprint was assigned catalogue number E. B. 3388. As Siloti had been living permanently in New York since the 1920s, we wondered how any editorial cooperation between Siloti and Breitkopf & Härtel came to be established.

Staff members of Breitkopf & Härtel, Wiesbaden, Germany, informed us that they had no relevant records, but that most of their early correspondence was deposited in the Staatsarchiv Leipzig. A subsequent search carried out in Leipzig, on our behalf, located a significant cache of relevant material. The entire exchange between Siloti and Breitkopf & Härtel took place by letter, and we received facsimiles of the preserved correspondence for the period between 5 December 1933 and 27 December 1935.<sup>57</sup> This considerable amount of archival material revealed several noteworthy details.<sup>58</sup>

Siloti began his editorial project with a letter dated 5 December 1933, addressed to the publishing house Breitkopf & Härtel in Leipzig. The first page is reproduced in facsimile as Fig. 12.<sup>59</sup> A translation of the letter follows:

5. XII. 33., Hotel Ansonia, N. Y. City

Highly honored gentlemen,

For many, many years—when I listened to the Sonata by Liszt—I always wondered if and how the Sonata could be somewhat abridged—and my pondering was always without a result, but the idea haunted me. Now, however, it seems to me that I am able to make serious “suggestions” for cuts. This does not mean a new print, but “annotations” as to where and how cuts could be made.

Of the 33 pages of the Sonata—I suggest—a cut of about 6½ pages; it is not much, but it helps, and maybe pianists will play the Sonata more often! [...]

I dare to make such a suggestion, because Liszt told me that I may amend everything and may say that Liszt wanted it that way; such unheard-of faith gives me the courage to make a “suggestion” without reprinting the whole piece in another version. [...]

With best regards, yours faithfully,

A. Siloti

<sup>57</sup> Sächsisches Staatsarchiv, Staatsarchiv Leipzig, 21081 Breitkopf & Härtel, Leipzig, Nos. 4457, 4460, 4462. The correspondence consists of more than twenty hand- and type-written documents.

<sup>58</sup> We wish to thank Dr. Andreas Sopart, Matthias Otto, and Anita Wilke of Breitkopf & Härtel, and Dr. Thekla Kluttig of the Staatsarchiv Leipzig, for their kind assistance and for permission to reproduce the facsimiles of Siloti's correspondence with Breitkopf & Härtel.

<sup>59</sup> All these letters were written in German; the English translations are proposed by the authors of this article.

Fig. 12: Siloti's letter to Breitkopf &amp; Härtel of 5 December 1933, first page.

U. Siloti Verlag d. / andere 5. XII. 33.  
 Sonate, Op. 10, No. 3.  
 A.S. / H. da Motta  
 N.Y. City  
 Hochw. Lehrstuhl Kernen,  
 Leipzig, lang. Jahren - man  
 ich die Sonata. Esst harte - habe  
 ich immer nachgedacht ob und wie  
 man die Sonate doch was hie  
 könnte - u. mein Nachdenken  
 war immer resultatlos, aber die  
 Theo. verlagte mich. Jetzt scheint  
 es mir, dass ich doch einige  
 Vorschläge zur Kürzung machen  
 kann. Es handelt sich nicht  
 um Neudruck, aber um Änderungen.  
 Wo u. wie man es kürzen könnte.  
 Von 33 Seiten u. Sonate - schlage ich

Siloti's first intent, evidently, was to abridge the Sonata solely because he felt that the reason it was not played often at the time had to do with its length.

On 4 January 1934, Breitkopf & Härtel replied expressing their interest in Siloti's suggested cuts. They attached a copy of Vianna da Motta's edition (containing his editorial comments) and asked Siloti to have a closer look at the score, enter his cuts and, significantly, provide any further instructive remarks. This was a wise idea from the publishers, which has benefited succeeding generations of musicians, as it inspired Siloti to go beyond his original idea of merely making cuts to Liszt's text.

Siloti's response of 26 January 1934 was enthusiastic, especially concerning Vianna da Motta's edition:

Enclosed I send you my suggestions for cuts, together with my only performance suggestion.

You will see from these that it is absolutely unnecessary to undertake any new print of the whole [score]!..

This edition (by the F. L. Stiftung) [Vianna da Motta's 1924 edition] is incredibly beautiful (it bears no comparison to your edition N 3388 [reprint of the first edition of 1854])—and I devoutly believe that Liszt would be delighted to see such a beautiful edition of his Sonata!

A handwritten version of Siloti's editorial suggestions is shown in Fig. 13. This version does not appear to be in Siloti's hand and, perhaps significantly, was not archived with his letter





After publication, some further correspondence ensued about mistakes in the printed version of Siloti's editorial suggestions. There was also a reference to suspected mistakes in the score of the Sonata itself, which Siloti pointed out. These mistakes were corrected by Breitkopf & Härtel, and the corrections are now part of their current edition, No. 7474. Regrettably, the 1935 reprint, containing Siloti's editorial suggestions and the autograph page with Liszt's dedication to Schumann, was withdrawn in 1940.<sup>60</sup>

Siloti, in his letter of 12 September 1934, had indicated that he wanted to send copies of the new edition (which was, of course, at that time still a work in progress) to "Rachmaninoff, Orloff, Friedberg, Mrs. Samaroff, Hutchesons." Ernest Hutcheson probably received a copy of the new edition because, among all the scholars, he was one of the few who correctly identified the polyphony of the *Urmotiv* (as shown in our article of 2017).<sup>61</sup>

Sergei Rachmaninoff, who was Siloti's younger cousin, was probably informed about Siloti's editorial plans because, in 1932, Liszt's pupil Adele aus der Ohe wrote in a letter to Rachmaninoff, dated "June 24, 1932, Feast of St. John":<sup>62</sup>

You say that Sasha [Siloti] prepared a version of the Master's Sonata for you. But I ask you to be careful—and between us, now; we loved dear Sasha immensely, as you well know, but he always thought that he could still improve what was already done and accomplished.

Aus der Ohe's comment must refer to Siloti's view, as stated in his letter of 5 December 1933 (see above), that Siloti, by making the changes he himself considered suitable, was actually implementing Liszt's intentions. In his memoirs of 1911, Siloti recalls the following event:

Liszt's confidence in me as a musician was not confined to the present but extended to the future. I once brought the 14th Rhapsody to play to him, telling him beforehand that I had dared to make some alterations in it, and even to omit certain passages, and that I wanted his opinion on it. After I had played it, he said: "I not only acquiesce in, but thoroughly approve of what you have done, in proof whereof I give you my permission to make any alterations and omissions you wish—and this at any time, even after I am gone; for I know that

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<sup>60</sup> According to information provided by Dr. Sopart of Breitkopf & Härtel, this edition was available from 1935 to 1940. After this time, Breitkopf & Härtel did not have the Liszt Sonata in their publishing program until 1988, when Vianna da Motta's edition of 1924 was republished by VEB Breitkopf & Härtel Musikverlag Leipzig (former GDR). The current edition at Breitkopf & Härtel is based on the 1988 edition.

<sup>61</sup> Ernest Hutcheson, *The Literature of the Piano*, 2nd rev. ed. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1949), 261, example 265.

<sup>62</sup> This letter was published in the above translation as part of the first biography of Adele aus der Ohe: LaWayne Leno, *The Untold Story of Adele aus der Ohe: From a Liszt Student to a Virtuoso* (Edina, MN: Beaver's Pond Press, 2012), 238–241.

what you consider necessary will not be detrimental to the music—indeed you may say in such cases that it is as *I* wished it. You have my sanction in advance to anything you may do in my name; only,” he added with a smile, “please don’t sign my cheques.”<sup>63</sup>

Vladimir Horowitz recorded the Liszt Sonata several times, and it may not be surprising that his 1932 recording<sup>64</sup> does not contain any cuts, whereas his live recording of 1949<sup>65</sup> does contain (almost exactly) one of Siloti’s suggested cuts, shown in Fig. 11 (suggestion 3). Horowitz leaves out bars 290 (starting at the second beat) to 313 (including the third beat). Siloti’s cut spans from bars 290 (starting at the second beat) to 310 (including the third beat). The difference between Siloti’s suggestion and Horowitz’s realization might be accounted for by a mistake on Siloti’s part, because his cut does not, from a musical standpoint, seem as convincing as the cut by Horowitz. It seems reasonable that Horowitz got the idea for the cut from Siloti’s edition, all the more so as the collection of “Papers of Vladimir and Wanda Toscanini Horowitz,” deposited at the Yale University Library,<sup>66</sup> contains a copy of the Siloti edition formerly in the possession of Horowitz. The library entry for the item reads:

Box 92, Folder 88

Liszt, Franz. [Sonata, piano, B minor] Sonate H Moll für Klavier zu zwei Händen. Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, n.d., 36 p., Plate number: F.L. 61, (Edition Breitkopf Nr. 3388.)

Inscription in ink on reverse of title page to Vladimir Horowitz from unidentified person (Svo-?), 1935 Mar. 9.

This copy seems to be one of the twenty printed copies of the new edition that Breitkopf & Härtel sent to Siloti on 21 February 1935. At the present time, it is not possible to know who gave Horowitz the score, and when this happened, but it seems likely that Horowitz was aware of the information concerning Siloti’s cuts when he performed the Sonata at Carnegie Hall in 1949.

Modern pianists reject any cuts to the Sonata because such cuts are not motivated by musical needs. Siloti’s motivation, as expressed in his correspondence with Breitkopf & Härtel, was to make the Sonata more attractive to the pianists of his time by abridging it.

<sup>63</sup> See: Alexander Siloti, *My Memories of Liszt*, in: Mark N. Grant (ed.), *Remembering Franz Liszt*, Limelight Editions, New York (1986), 359. For a German version, see: *Meine Erinnerungen an Franz Liszt*, in: *Zeitschrift der Internationalen Musikgesellschaft (e. V.)*, Vierzehnter Jahrgang 1912–1913, Heft 10/11 (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel), 306 f.

<sup>64</sup> His Master’s Voice, D.B.1855–57, recorded on 12 November 1932 at Abbey Road Studio no. 3, London.

<sup>65</sup> Recording made for Horowitz privately, recorded on 21 March 1949 at Carnegie Hall, New York. Released on CD as RCA Red Seal (Sony Music) no. 88697538852.

<sup>66</sup> <http://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/music.mss.0055> (section VII, accessed 2 August 2023).

Siloti's remarks concerning the execution of the two-voice polyphony embedded in the *Urmotiv* of the Sonata (mm. 2–3, 5–6 / mm. 83–84, 89–90 / mm. 454–455, 457–458) are of an entirely different character. They are certainly traceable to Liszt himself, as is corroborated by the editions of two other distinguished Liszt pupils: Vianna da Motta (1924 edition) and Friedheim (unpublished edition, ca. 1926).<sup>67</sup> We came to similar conclusions in our exhaustive article of 2017,<sup>68</sup> which also explains why one of Siloti's suggestions concerning the *Urmotiv* (Fig. 11, suggestion 1d) results in an overcorrection, destroying the musical logic by introducing ascending sevenths not present in Liszt's score.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Gerard Carter and Martin Adler, *Facsimile of Arthur Friedheim's Edition of Franz Liszt's Sonata in B Minor*, Liszt Piano Sonata Monographs, Wensleydale Press, Sydney (2011). See also: Gordon Rumson, "Arthur Friedheim's Edition of the Liszt B minor Sonata," *Liszt Society Journal* 26 (2001): 17–59.

<sup>68</sup> Tibor Szász (with Gerard Carter and Martin Adler), "Towards a New Edition of Liszt's *Sonata in B minor*: Sources, Editorial History, Symbolic Issues," *Journal of the American Liszt Society* (2017): 57–108.

<sup>69</sup> We stated in our article of 2017: "However, Siloti's suggestion that the rising leaps in mm. 2 and 5 should also be applied to mm. 750 and 752 . . . must be categorically rejected. Mm. 750–53 do not constitute a 'similar episode' but a 'dissimilar' one which begins, not with ascending seventh leaps, but with descending second intervals in mm. 750 and 752."



Franz Liszt als Abbé