

Heroic Masculinity in Franz Liszt's Symphonic Poems *Tasso: Lamento e Trionfo* and *Mazeppa*

by

Jamie Meyers-Riczu

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Music
University of Alberta

© Jamie Meyers-Riczu, 2021

Abstract

Heroic Masculinity in Franz Liszt's Symphonic Poems *Tasso: Lamento e Trionfo* and *Mazeppa*

Franz Liszt's symphonic poems *Tasso: Lamento e Trionfo* and *Mazeppa* portray expressions of heroic masculinity and creative genius in the nineteenth century. Both compositions are based on historical figures whose lives were reimagined to emphasize the larger socio-cultural meanings of what it means to be a man, a hero, and a genius in the Romantic era.

In the introduction, I contextualize my examination of how Liszt's *Tasso* and *Mazeppa* emerged within the nineteenth-century debates over the meaning and merits of program music. This discussion leads to my methodological approach, which draws from Lydia Goehr's concept of doubleness. I specifically adopt from this theoretical framework the idea that tensions and contradictions retain power by remaining unresolved. I then relate this to Liszt's writings on program music, which emphasize the need for both formalist musical structures (e.g., form, thematic material, harmony) and extra-musical content.

Chapter one continues with the idea of doubleness by closely examining how tensions exist in discourses of masculinity and genius. I show that the men who were considered great and heroic during the Romantic era often exhibit traits of passive suffering, a concept that also relates to perceptions of the creative genius and his relationship to the whims of inspiration.

Chapters two and three centre on the tension in Romantic-era reimagining(s) of Torquato Tasso's legend. While Tasso's poetry remained important—and relevant from the Renaissance to the nineteenth century and beyond—the myth surrounding his suffering, incarceration, and posthumous recognition became a potent theme to Romantic artists. Chapter two considers the biographies of Tasso that emphasize the tension in his character. He is a genius: both weak and exhibiting joy and

melancholy. I then take these double relationships and show how Goethe and Byron portray the pitfalls and strengths of existing with such tension. Chapter three builds upon my discussion in chapter two and offers an interpretation of Liszt's symphonic poem. I provide a close reading of the accompanying preface, which outlines the same tensions other writers of the period identify. My close reading of the preface guides my analysis of *Tasso*, where I focus on the tension that exists through form, harmony, thematic material and motive gestures. This close reading provides an interpretation that emphasizes the tension between suffering, triumph, and heroic legacy.

Chapters four and five examine doubleness in the popular Mazeppa legend. In chapter four, I introduce “the” historic Mazeppa to contrast it to the legend that grew around him. Mazeppa was a Cossack Hetman known for switching his allegiance to Peter the Great. Yet in western Europe, Mazeppa was known for his legendary ride across the steppes of the Ukraine. His legend became solidified through the writings of Voltaire and, especially, Lord Byron. Over the course of the nineteenth-century, Mazeppa came to symbolize the heroic suffering of the genius. Central to my interpretation of this legend is the idea of tension: Mazeppa is physically bound but mentally free. I include a close reading of Victor Hugo's “Mazeppa,” the poem Liszt uses as the program, to show how sensitive Liszt was to the symbolic meanings of the legend. Musically, I examine how form, thematic transformation, musical gestures, and harmony help contribute to an interpretation of Mazeppa that exists in tension: bound and free.

The summary and conclusion provide a brief description of the dissertation, returning to the key points that emphasize Liszt's use of doubleness as a way to interpret the legends of Tasso and Mazeppa.

Dedication

To my Mother and Father
Who offered me the world.

And to my children—
May you have the courage to make your world.

Acknowledgments

The heroic efforts of writing this dissertation have been shared among many people: mentors, colleagues, friends, and family. I would not have finished—and succeeded—without their support and encouragement.

There is not enough space here to adequately thank my amazing supervisor, David Gramit. Your thoughtful comments have challenged me to think through some difficult subjects and your patience and attentiveness have shaped the writer and researcher I am today. David, you have been a key support to me far beyond the writing of this dissertation. The opportunities you have given me as a research assistant, and your support of my teaching has been invaluable. David, you are exceptional. I could not have made it through without your care.

Thank you to the members of my supervisory committee. It has been a privilege to count Mary Ingraham among my mentors. You have continually challenged me to push my limits as a thinker and writer. The opportunities you have given me to expand my teaching, both in content and in pedagogical methods, and your support of my growing interest in topics outside of this dissertation has meant the world to me. Katherine Binhammer, I am grateful for your interest in my project and your enthusiasm to help, particularly with ideas around masculinity and narrative. I am only sorry you had to step down as a member of my committee. Your presence was deeply missed. Thank you to Alexander Carpenter for stepping in at the end to help me complete my journey. But beyond your role as a member of my supervisory committee, you have been a tremendous support in my teaching, and you were kind enough to offer me the chance to learn a little about Schoenberg and Beethoven as your research assistant.

To Brian Fauteux, thank you for your willingness to serve on my examining committee. Your support and frequent offers to help me with teaching and publishing are deeply appreciated. Finally, I want to thank my external examiner James Deaville. Your knowledge of Liszt helped forge my understanding of him early in my project. Your encouragement and contribution to this dissertation will undoubtedly shape the future work that will develop from this project. It has been a true honour to have you a part of my journey.

I would like to thank the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) for providing such generous funding in support of this project. I could not have completed without their financial support. I would also like to thank both the University of Alberta and the Government of Alberta for their financial support.

I have had the good fortune to become friends with a number of brilliant people over the course of my program. Morteza Abedinifard, you have been one of my closest colleagues and friends. I am thankful for your encouragement, your willingness to read drafts of my work, and for our candid conversations in the office. Jennifer Messelink, how often have I turned to you for advice, phone calls, and cocktails? I am so thankful that we have developed such a deep friendship and I look forward to celebrating your defense. I count it as good fortune that Nicholas Rheubottom and I took our first class together in 2013. I have learned so much about gender theory and musical analysis through our conversations and in many ways, this project developed from our coffee dates in HUB mall.

I would be remiss if I didn't offer a special thanks to my friends Brenda Dalen, Carolee Pollock, and Joyce Yu. I cannot thank Brenda enough for being such a guiding light. You have mentored me as an instructor and offered invaluable advice on how to create a safe learning environment. But beyond classroom tips, you have been a dear friend to me throughout my program. Brenda has been there to lend an ear during some of the more difficult stages of my program...and life. Thank you for your love, kindness, and friendship. Carolee, you volunteered to read through my entire dissertation—twice!—in order to make sure that every word made sense, that everything was spelled correctly, and that my ideas were expressed in the clearest possible way. You are a miracle. Your edits and, most importantly, your excitement about my project helped me to press on in those moments when I really just did not want to. Joyce, you have always been an encouragement to me in all walks of my life. You have such deep love and compassion for those lucky enough to call you a friend. I could go on (and on), but I want to especially thank you for your willingness to help me with my French, specifically the French translations of Hugo's poem.

Amanda Burger, you are one of my dearest friends and a steadfast support. I could not have finished this degree without your willingness to provide childcare for my children, or your scrumptious cakes and pastries.

My mother and father were the first to encourage my music-making. While they likely did not imagine I would be in school *this* long, their unwavering support ultimately guided my path to this moment. My mama is not here to see what I have accomplished, but I know she would be cheering the loudest for me.

To my family. My beloved Shane. This journey has been as much yours as it has mine. You have been there from the first day of this PhD. You have encouraged me when I felt I had nothing to give. You acknowledged my tears when things got too hard. You held me through moments of intense grief, both personal and academic. I love you. To my beautiful, intelligent, wonderful, and outstanding babies, Iver and Violet. You have shown me why it was important to complete difficult tasks. You have grounded me, and provided me comfort and joy beyond measure. Mama loves you to the Andromeda galaxy and back.

Table of Contents

<i>Abstract</i>	<i>ii</i>
<i>Dedication</i>	<i>iv</i>
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	<i>v</i>
<i>List of Tables</i>	<i>ix</i>
<i>List of Figures</i>	<i>x</i>
<i>List of Musical Examples</i>	<i>xi</i>
<i>Introduction</i>	1
I.1 The Debate about the Extra-Musical	5
I.2 Liszt’s Use of Program Music	12
I.3 Breakdown of Chapters	17
<i>Chapter One: Theoretical Framework, Methods, and Concepts</i>	20
1.1 Preamble	20
1.2 “Arguments of Doubleness”	22
1.3 Men, Masculinity, and the Romantic Hero: A History.....	28
1.4 Genius	39
1.5 Concluding Remarks.....	46
<i>Chapter Two: Tasso, Poetic Genius, Weak Man</i>	47
2.1 Preamble	47
2.2 Who is Tasso? Biography, Imaginings, and Romantic Re-Imaginings	50
2.3 Tasso’s Expression of Masculine Heroic Genius.....	59
2.4 Liszt’s Inspirations: Historical Ventriloquizing and the Spirit of Tasso	63
2.5 Concluding Remarks	73
<i>Chapter Three: Liszt’s Tasso: Lamento e Trionfo</i>	74
3.1 Preamble	74
3.2 Interpretations of Liszt’s <i>Tasso</i>	75
3.3 Interpreting the Program	81
3.4 Place, Spirit, and Tension—Toward a Reading of the Music	96
3.4 (a): Form	96
3.4 (b): Musical Motives, Gestures, Topoi, and Themes.....	101
3.5 Concluding Remarks	119

<i>Chapter Four: Mazeppa's Wild Ride and the Bonds of Freedom</i>	121
4.1 Preamble. Doubleness of Pinion(s)[-ed]	121
4.2 Mazeppa in History and the Making of a Legend.....	125
4.3 A Horse, a Man, and a Wild Ride: Mazeppa's Expression of Heroic Masculinity	132
4.4 Concluding Remarks	143
<i>Chapter Five: Always, Away: Liszt's Mazeppa and the Fire of Inspiration</i>	145
5.1 Preamble: Mazeppa's Symbolic Genius	145
5.2 Liszt's <i>Mazeppa</i> in Musicological Scholarship	148
5.3 Liszt's Heroic Inspirations: Reading Boulanger, Reading Hugo, Reading Genius	153
5.4 (Always, Away): Liszt's <i>Mazeppa</i> and Masculine Heroic Genius	167
5.5 Concluding Remarks	186
<i>Summary and Conclusion</i>	187
Concluding Remarks	194
<i>Bibliography</i>	196

List of Tables

Table 1 Structure of Victor Hugo’s “Mazeppa”	156
Table 2 Breakdown of the Transformation of the Mazeppa theme and the key areas of the Ride...	172
Table 3 Large-scale formal structure of Liszt’s <i>Mazeppa</i>	182

List of Figures

Figure 1 Franz Liszt Preface to <i>Album d'un Voyageur</i> (1842)	14
Figure 2 Stefano Tofanelli; Raffaello Morghen, <i>Torquato Tasso</i> , ca. 1826, Engraving on Paper	51
Figure 3 Nicolas Poussin (1594-1665), <i>Rinaldo and Armida</i> (ca. 1630), Oil on Canvas	52
Figure 4 Eugène Delacroix, <i>Tasso à l'hôpital de St. Anne Ferrara</i> , 1839, Oil on Canvas	72
Figure 5 Preface to Liszt's <i>Tasso: Lamento e Trionfo</i>	84
Figure 6 Form of <i>Tasso</i>	99
Figure 7 "Hetman Mazeppa with Mace," ca. 1703, Portrait by Unknown Artist, 18 th Century Museum of the History of Zaporozhye (Museum of the History of Weapons), Zaporizhia, Ukraine	127
Figure 8 Advertisement to Byron's <i>Mazeppa</i>	131
Figure 9 Jacques-Louis David, <i>Napoleon Crossing the Saint Bernhard Pass</i> (1801-02), oil on canvas, Château de Versailles	135
Figure 10 Géricault, <i>Mazeppa</i> , early 1820s, oil on paper applied to canvas, Private Collection.....	139
Figure 11 Louis Boulanger, <i>Le Supplice de Mazeppa</i> (1827), oil on canvas, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Rouen	155
Figure 12 Hugo's "Mazeppa" in original French with German and English Translations	161

List of Musical Examples

Example 1 <i>Tasso</i> , transformation of the triplet motive	101
Example 2 <i>Tasso</i> , Tasso’s Lament, mm. 1-11	103
Example 3 <i>Tasso</i> , <i>Allegro strepitoso</i> , mm. 27-37	104
Example 4 <i>Tasso</i> , Tasso-Gondolier theme, opening, mm. 62-66	106
Example 5 <i>Tasso</i> , Tasso-Gondolier Theme, <i>espressivo molto</i> , mm. 91-97.....	108
Example 6 <i>Tasso</i> , minuet section, mm. 167-200.....	110
Example 7 <i>Tasso</i> , Apotheosis, mm. 533-544.....	114
Example 8 <i>Tasso</i> , approach to Apotheosis, mm. 500-532	115
Example 9 <i>Mazeppa</i> , Cry Motive, m. 1.....	169
Example 10 <i>Mazeppa</i> “Horse” motive, mm. 1-2.....	170
Example 11 <i>Mazeppa</i> , Cry Motive, Horse Motive, and Suffering Motive, mm. 1-5,.....	171
Example 12 <i>Mazeppa</i> , Mazeppa theme and Cry motive, mm. 36-47	174
Example 13 <i>Mazeppa</i> , Mazeppa theme and Suffering motive (descending), mm. 45-50	175
Example 14 <i>Mazeppa</i> , transition to Secondary Thematic Group, mm. 108-121	176
Example 15 <i>Mazeppa</i> , Mazeppa theme and Lamenting “Sigh” gesture, mm. 135-144	177
Example 16 <i>Mazeppa</i> , Death Passage, mm. 403-420	179
Example 17 <i>Mazeppa</i> , Bb“frame” and Cry Motive, mm. 598-610.....	183

Introduction

In spring 1854, Franz Liszt put the final revisions on his first collection of symphonic poems. Yet before his works hit the publisher's press, critics from Vienna, Berlin, St. Petersburg, and Leipzig attacked—and effectively questioned—the merits of Liszt's new programmatic compositions. Liszt anticipated this opposition, as his letter to Antal Augusz in March 1854 sarcastically stated: “To approve of my works, or even to hear them without condemning them in advance, is a crime.”¹ Sarcasm aside, music historians have shown that Liszt faced criticism in the reception of his programmatic works—character pieces, symphonic poems, symphonies—for most of his career.² Before he turned to orchestral composition in earnest, Liszt was known primarily as a piano virtuoso. He was an exceptional entertainer. Yet for some, Liszt's musical talents did not extend beyond the keyboard. His fame and success as a performer failed to translate into his role as a serious composer. Nevertheless, in the autumn of 1847, Liszt retired from the stage to become *Kapellmeister* for the Weimar court. This new position afforded him the opportunity to focus more intently on composition.³ Among the works to appear from this period, along with large-scale works like the Piano Sonata in B minor and the *Faust* and *Dante* symphonies, are his first twelve symphonic poems, single-movement instrumental compositions that are well-known examples of mid-nineteenth-century program music.

¹ Franz Liszt, letter to Antal Augusz, March 1854. Quoted in Alan Walker, *Franz Liszt: The Weimar Years* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1988), 300.

² Alan Walker indicates that Liszt maintained that the criticism of his work was primarily due to the general lack of performance of any modern works. In the nineteenth century, most of the concert repertoire consisted of works composed at least one generation earlier, with a particular focus on Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven. If modern works were performed, they were typically among the last works on the program, thus placing works in chronological composition order. It would be difficult to follow a Beethoven symphony.

³ For a detailed discussion of Liszt's compositional activities in Weimar, with a particular focus on his more dramatic symphonic poems, see Joanne Cormac, *Liszt and the Symphonic Poem* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

The antagonism that Liszt faced was a result of his role as a champion of program music, a genre that combines formalist musical structures (form, theme, harmony) and extra-musical “texts” in order to comment on complex ideas.⁴ As a celebrity, Liszt’s name carried certain weight in the growing debate between formalist and progressive composers. The conflict hinged on difficult questions: what makes music musical? Can music properly signify anything beyond itself? If so, how can it express something discrete and meaningful through a non-verbal, non-visual medium? Liszt argued that music *could* express something beyond itself, and he made it his project to bind his music to extra-musical texts in order to make that meaning more explicit. The debate over the meaningfulness of music predates the Romantic era, but it took on new urgency after Beethoven’s death. Both formalist and progressive composers staked claims on his legacy and the future direction of instrumental music. Variations on this debate have persisted since the mid nineteenth century, with the balance often tipping in favour of formalism. Even in Liszt scholarship, few musicologists examine extra-musical content as part of analyzing a *programmatic* piece.⁵ This lack of attention to Liszt’s programs is ultimately what makes them fascinating to me. What could be learned by taking them as seriously as the score? Moreover, what could be learned by adding to the text a fuller understanding of the culture that produced them?

Liszt sought to express specific ideas or narratives through his symphonic poems. He carefully considered his choices for subject matter, generally choosing familiar and impactful characters and/or subjects. He frequently returned to heroic subjects, and a number of his symphonic poems tell narratives of “great men” in history. Yet, Liszt was hardly alone in this trend. Heroic figures fascinated many artists of the period across literature, art, music, and more. In studying the texts and

⁴ My use of the word “text” is meant to describe any object that can be read or produce meaning.

⁵ A notable exception is Felix Draeseke. In the 1840s and 1850s, Draeseke defended Liszt’s Weimar compositions, especially his symphonic poems. For a discussion of Draeseke’s role in the conflict between the conservatives and progressives, see James Deaville, ed. “Defending Liszt: Felix Draeske on the Symphonic Poems,” trans. Susan Hohl. In *Franz Liszt and His World*, ed. Christopher Howard Gibbs and Dana Gooley (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 485–514.

contexts of Liszt's symphonic works in depth, it is possible to proceed beyond merely noticing that a piece revolves around a hero to ask what the piece—both music *and* text—might mean concerning heroism.

In this dissertation, I examine two of these heroic works: *Tasso: Lamento e Trionfo* (1854) and *Mazeppa* (1854). My analysis discerns a commentary on the heroic nature of creative genius that, as a consequence of men aspiring to greatness by writing about men they perceived as great—"great men" writing about great men—has implications for the representation and expression of masculinity in the nineteenth century. Both Renaissance poet Torquato Tasso (1544-1595) and Ukrainian Hetman, leader of the Cossack army, Ivan Mazeppa (1639-1709) are actual historical figures with lives, experiences, and emotions. Subsequent accounts of their struggles and triumphs tell the story of who they are and what they *came* to mean. Both men are subjects of poems, plays, portraits, and musical compositions. These creative works contain socio-cultural associations that draw from accounts of Tasso's and Mazeppa's lived experiences. Over time, their stories of suffering transformed into legend, and their heroic legacies were reimagined by artists who found in Tasso and Mazeppa a reflection of their own struggles.

When I chose these two heroic symphonic poems as the objects of research, my initial question was simple: what was it about Tasso and Mazeppa that captured Liszt's imagination and what does it say about broader nineteenth-century culture? As I explored this question of what—by incorporating scholarship from various intersecting fields—it struck me that both men embody nineteenth-century perceptions of masculinity, Romantic heroism, and creative genius. Initially, I discerned this as a problem. Music historians often described *the composer* as a genius, a creator of "works of genius," someone whose "heroic" creative plight implies an overt masculinity. Beethoven, for instance, is often portrayed in musicological discourse as the preeminent nineteenth-century composer to embody all three qualities. He is a creative genius who writes heroic music conceived as

masculine partially by virtue of its canonicity. These aspects of Beethoven's larger cultural symbolism, depicted by his famous scowl, have recently been explored in an episode of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's podcast *Ideas*.⁶ His influence was so powerful that composers of the post-Beethovenian generation wrestled with his legacy. Liszt was no exception and while the legend of Beethoven's monumental kiss of consecration on the young Liszt is undoubtedly fictional, legends—as I discuss in this dissertation—are powerful. While I am not interested in scrutinizing the validity of these claims, I do contend that because these terms are so ubiquitous as descriptions of character, they have lost much of their meaning. Nevertheless, this sparked my curiosity. I wanted to know *what* it meant to be masculine, heroic, and a genius.

To answer this query, I turn to Tasso and Mazeppa as representatives of Romantic-era discourses of masculinity, heroism, and genius. Both are undoubtedly great men in history, but in several creative works of the period they are also depicted as passive and immobile. Both reflect Romantic heroism in their suffering, but in that suffering they attain a form of triumph. Both are symbols of creative genius, but their status as such is contingent on painful, laborious struggle. The contrasts in Tasso's and Mazeppa's legendary status reflect how subjective (masculine) agency and passive suffering exist in tension. Like other creative artists of the period, Liszt also engaged in the complex tensions of Tasso's and Mazeppa's legends. He foregrounds these tensions in his programs

⁶ There is a large corpus of musicological research that addresses Beethoven's indomitable influence, particularly in relation to the Romantic masculine-heroic-genius paradigm. For Beethoven's genius see Tia DeNora, *Beethoven and the Construction of Genius: Musical Politics in Vienna, 1792-1803* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997); for his heroic presence see Scott Burnham, *Beethoven Hero* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995); and for Beethoven's masculine expression, see Sanna Pederson, "Beethoven and Masculinity," in *Beethoven and His World*, ed. Scott Burnham and Michael P Steinberg (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 313–331. For a discussion that contrasts Beethoven's violent heroic masculinity against Schubert's presumed "effeminate" and "victimized" sexuality, see Susan McClary, "Constructions of Subjectivity in Franz Schubert's Music," in *Queering the Pitch: The New Gay and Lesbian Musicology*, ed. Philip Brett, Elizabeth Wood, and Thomas Gary, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2006), 205–234. In a recent episode of the CBC's *Ideas* series, Nahlah Ayed discusses how Beethoven's scowl influences how we hear his works. Ayed interviews Evan Bonds, Annemarie Sammartino, and Leah Broad. One of the more relevant aspects of this episode is the idea of Beethoven as a "true" Romantic hero, defined by his suffering and alienation. But these aspects of Beethoven's life are likely myths and legends. See Nahlah Ayed, "Beethoven's Scowl," *Ideas*, September 21, 2020, <https://www.cbc.ca/radio/ideas/beethoven-s-iconic-scowl-influences-how-we-hear-his-work-musicologist-1.5732631>.

and builds them into the structure of his symphonic poems. Thus, my initial question of *what* extends to *how*: how does Liszt represent the existing tensions of masculine heroic genius in his symphonic poems *Tasso* and *Mazeppa*?

I answer this question by exploring the ways Liszt combines musical structures with texted prefaces that, in turn, reflect larger socio-cultural trends related to heroic masculinity and creative genius. To think through these aspects clearly in my interpretation, I adapt my analytical framework from Lydia Goehr's concept of *doubleness*. This idea provides a critical approach that stresses the power of letting conflicting or contradictory elements stand in tension with each other. By preserving "the two or more sides of conflicts," *doubleness* resists the impulse to resolve tensions.⁷ Goehr contends that sustaining a "desirable antagonistic relationship" among elements preserves a "plurality of claims, values and ideals" and engenders an openness to how conflict among these claims and ideas can "move in progressive ways" towards new insights.⁸ While *doubleness* does not require that conflicts and contradictions remain unresolved, Goehr writes that some conflicts cannot and *should not* resolve, suggesting an openness to what can be learned from holding ideas in tension. I will elaborate on how *doubleness* and the interplay of tension exists in my understanding of heroic masculinity and creative genius in chapter one. For the remainder of this introduction, and in order to establish a framework for the specific discussions to follow, I consider *doubleness* in relation to the musical and extra-musical elements of program music.

I.1 The Debate about the Extra-Musical

Liszt's style and compositional strategy did not appeal to the musical conservatives who distinguished themselves from the so-called progressives. As such, he became a part of a cultural

⁷ Lydia Goehr, *The Quest for Voice: Music, Politics, and the Limits of Philosophy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 5.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 14.

conflict between two aesthetic camps deliberating what it meant for music to be musical. Formalists argued that instrumental music should adhere to the established symphonic traditions of the Viennese classical style, exemplified by Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven. The proponents of this aesthetic idea, including Johannes Brahms, Robert and Clara Schumann, and pre-eminent music critic Eduard Hanslick, believed musical meaning was expressed predominantly, if not solely, by its “tonally moving forms.”⁹ Music, according to the formalists, should be self-contained: it does not require outside content to make it meaningful. Musical progressives, coined as the “New German School” by journalist Franz Brendel, argued for a future of music that expressed meaning in conjunction with the extra-musical. The inclusion of an extra-musical text as an integral compositional component led formalists to question the legitimacy of program music. Yet for the progressives, an extra-musical text adds precision in deciphering musical meaning.

Liszt, of course, subscribed to progressive ideals. His essay, *Berlioz and His “Harold” Symphony*, outlines the core of his compositional aesthetic.¹⁰ By evoking Hector Berlioz—the “subject” of his essay—as an innovative and misunderstood composer of programmatic works, Liszt simultaneously promoted and defended his symphonic poems from formalist critics.¹¹ Liszt defends program music

⁹ Edward Hanslick, *On the Musically Beautiful: A Contribution Towards the Revision of the Aesthetics of Music*, trans. Geoffrey Payzant (Indianapolis, Ind.: Hackett Pub. Co., 1986), 29. Anthony Pryer’s essay offers a more in-depth discussion of Hanslick’s musical epistemology. Pryer notes that Hanslick discusses music in terms of positive and negative theses. The positive is concerned with what music *is* (content as tonally moving forms). The negative explores what music *is not*: distinct emotions cannot be a part of the content of music, and neither are feelings portrayed by the composer, performer, or listener. See Pryer, “Hanslick, Legal Processes, and Scientific Methodologies: How Not to Construct an Ontology of Music,” in *Rethinking Hanslick: Music, Formalism, and Expression*, ed. Nicole Grimes, Siobhán Donovan, and Wolfgang Marx (Rochester: Rochester Press, 2013), 52–69.

¹⁰ Liszt’s essay is divided into four sections. The first and the fourth deal with Berlioz, outlining and assessing the controversies surrounding his early compositional career and his *Harold* symphony respectively. The third section places program music into historical perspective. The second section is the aesthetic epicenter. Liszt questions why self-sufficiency and the exploration of new forms/genres must necessarily mean renouncing tradition. Liszt emphasizes four points in this section: musical form, elaboration of thematic material (and to what end), the representation of the main character’s inner soul (as opposed to his outward actions), and the use of “exceptional figures” as the subject for musico-poetic elaboration.

¹¹ The publication date of Liszt’s famous essay on Berlioz appeared in connection with the “Berlioz week” in Weimar (February 1855). Liszt’s promotion of Berlioz was not out of the ordinary; he frequently offered assistance to a number of composers, through the performance of their work and via reviews, letters, essays, and other written texts. Liszt spoke highly of composers and/or works that did not receive positive reviews by formalist critics, including Berlioz and Wagner. It is worthwhile to note the publication of Liszt’s essay appeared shortly after Hanslick published the first

against the formalist's claim that it "surrenders its own individual characters" and loses its claim to an "independent existence within the art."¹² He frames the joining of music and extra-musical elements as a path toward renewal, not diminished purity, and crafts an extended meditation on the connection between nature and art to explain how diverse and contrary forms create new life. He writes:

[w]hole arts die out, their former life in time recognizable only from the skeletons they leave behind...through crossbreeding and blending new and hitherto unknown arts spring up, which, as a result of their expansion and intermingling, will perhaps someday be impelled toward their end...¹³

Liszt frequently returns to the theme of bringing together a plurality of diverse and sometimes contrary elements. He writes that art, like nature, "link[s] together the remotest classes and the most dissimilar species;" it is "rich in variously formed and dissimilar phenomena;" it "weds related or contradictory forms and impressions" within the soul; and it "arise[s] from cross currents of diverse impulses."¹⁴ Liszt describes how "endlessly diverse forms" propagate new forms "through contact with another, acquir[ing] new properties in losing old ones."¹⁵ As he concludes this section of his essay, Liszt elevates "diverse unity" as the governing principle of "the All" and calls it the "destiny of art."¹⁶ Liszt casts all of this comingling of diverse forms as not only natural but life-giving, the basis for any forward progress.

Liszt's essay is not entirely a defense against the established Viennese symphonic tradition, but an attempt to show that instrumental program music is an organic progression developing *from* that

edition of his book *On the Musically Beautiful* in 1854. Liszt's essay, then, is part of the larger debate in the "War of the Romantics." Furthermore, Liszt's verbose and flashy performance style was the issue and not his programmatic compositions.

¹² Franz Liszt and Carolyne Sayn-Wittgenstein, "Berlioz and His 'Harold' Symphony," in *Strunk's Source Readings in Music History*, ed. Leo Treitler, Second Revised (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1998), 1161.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 1163.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 1161-1162.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 1162.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

tradition.¹⁷ Treatment of form, thematic material, and harmony are central to classical style. While mid nineteenth-century musical formalists considered Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven as progenitors of *their* tradition, Liszt, too, incorporated the musical language of the Viennese classicists in his symphonic poems. But unlike the musical formalists, extra-musical content was equally integral to Liszt's compositional vision.

The debates over the merits of program music extended well into the twentieth century. For instance, the aesthetic opposition between Igor Stravinsky and Arnold Schoenberg encapsulates the ongoing “issue” in deciphering musical meaning, particularly whether music is capable of expressing anything outside itself. Stravinsky's position is negative, as he asserts in his autobiography:

music, by its very nature, is essentially powerless to *express* anything at all, whether a feeling, an attitude of mind, a psychological mood, a phenomenon of nature etc. ... *Expression* has never been an inherent property of music... If, as is nearly always the case, music appears to express something, this is only an illusion and not a reality. It is simply an additional attribute which, by tacit and inveterate agreement, we have lent it, thrust upon it, as a label, a convention—in short, an aspect which unconsciously or by force of habit, we have often come to confuse with its essential being.¹⁸

Stravinsky places form and genre, music's “essential being,” at the forefront of his musical ideology. Therefore, any mental or narrative associations *with* music go against its intended purpose, or essential being. Schoenberg, on the other hand, asserts a more pluralistic understanding of music's expressive capabilities:

from the viewpoint of *pure aesthetics*, music does not express the extramusical. But from the viewpoint of psychology, our capacity for mental and emotional associations is as unlimited as our capacity for repudiating them is limited. Thus every ordinary object can provoke musical associations, and, conversely, music can evoke associations with extramusical objects.¹⁹

¹⁷ The idea of composition as an organic phenomenon was a larger theme in musical composition and music criticism of the nineteenth century. Significantly, organicism was something both the musical conservatives and the New German School promoted in their works.

¹⁸ Igor Stravinsky, *Chronicles of My Life*, trans. Anon. (London: Victor Gollancz, 1936), 91-92. Emphasis in the original.

¹⁹ Arnold Schoenberg, *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*, ed. Gerald Strang and Leonard Stein. (London: Faber & Faber, 1967), 93. My emphasis. As a side note, I have chosen to write extra-musical with a hyphen rather than as one word.

Schoenberg affirms two ideas regarding his views on musical content. First, pure aesthetics refers to music as a self-sufficient art that derives meaning from formalist musical properties.²⁰ Form, theme, and harmony are entities that do not express anything beyond themselves. Second, and unlike Stravinsky, he takes into account—even welcomes—the interpreter’s psychological and emotional experiences that music creates. This subjective engagement leads to extra-musical associations (extrinsic to music) that create meaning. Musical semiotics, like any language, has the capacity to express meaning through imagery, symbolism, and metaphor. Schoenberg does not suggest one viewpoint is superior, but rather acknowledges that music garners meaning as both an object in itself and a subjective experience.

Goehr introduces into this debate the concept that the purely musical cannot be separated from the extra-musical. She asserts that music does not exist solely within its formalist function, writing that the “concept of the purely musical can be interpreted to include the extramusical without compromising the formalist claim that music is, and is fundamentally about, its tonally moving forms.”²¹ To reach this conclusion, she starts from the premise “that music means *something*,” both as a symbolic language and a social practice that expresses some aspect of humanity through our engagement with that language.²² The quest for meaning leads to *Das Aussermusikalische*, or those musical aspects typically contrasted to objective, self-contained musical content (*das rein Musikalische*). The prefix *ausser* carries connotations of “non” or “extraneous,” but also “beyond” or “extra.”²³

²⁰ This is more closely associated with Stravinsky’s views, which derive from a long tradition of aesthetic thought arguing that music is non-expressive. Hanslick believed the content of music derives from its movement of sound. E.T.A. Hoffmann, writing in the early nineteenth century, preferred instrumental music because it “scorns all aid, all admixture of other arts—and gives pure expression to its own peculiar artistic nature... [Instrumental music] leaves behind all feelings circumscribed by intellect in order to embrace the inexpressible.” Quoted in Julian Rushton, “Music and the Poetic,” in *Cambridge History of Nineteenth-Century Music*, ed. Jim Samson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 151.

²¹ Goehr, *The Quest for Voice*, 19.

²² *Ibid.*, 1. Emphasis mine.

²³ *Ibid.*, 10. The ambiguity of *ausser*, as Goehr writes, “has enabled the formalist claim to function in a paradoxical state” (10).

These extra-musical associations, as Goehr outlines, contain “properties of the musical world that are not specifically musical, yet have given to pure music its broader human and expressive significance.”²⁴ Similar to Schoenberg’s view, the extra-musical is not supplemental but rather an inevitable outcome of how humans experience music.

The desire to express and perceive significance clouds the water between ideas of formalist art for art’s sake and the socio-cultural mission of art with the extra-musical. Nevertheless, Goehr navigates the contention between the musical and the extra-musical by describing its perceived opposition as doubleness. This leads her to see “necessary but irreconcilable opposition” in the Romantic era between the empirical aesthetic that captures the formalistic dimensions of music’s significance, and the metaphysical aesthetic that captures its extra-musical or transcendental dimension.²⁵ Both aesthetics tend towards abstracting musical meaning without it becoming a dialectic endpoint. This tendency for abstraction emerged from an effort in the nineteenth century to separate the aesthetic domain of music from the social domain as a means to assert autonomy and freedom as artistic expression, to dodge political censors, and to resist constraint by social forces. Securing that autonomy required the composer to transmute or convert “non-musical [content] into the purely musical whereby the music will be purely formal in its musical means and purely aesthetic in its effect.”²⁶ For Goehr, this supposed separation between the aesthetic and social gives composers cover to be “concerned about the *extramusical* matters, but purely in musical or aesthetic terms.”²⁷ In other words, formalists allowed music to express some extra-musical content *only* through purely musical structures. The inclusion of extra-musical significance—through abstraction

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid., 14.

²⁶ Ibid., 16.

²⁷ Ibid. Emphasis in original.

within pure music—creates a doubleness where the composition might be a “purely musical work of art at the same time that, transcendently, it can show the (extra-musical) world ‘in its entirety.’”²⁸

Goehr refers to this insistence of the extra-musical on purely musical forms as “*enhanced formalism...enhanced by an ‘extra’ or transcendental ‘musical’ moment.*”²⁹ Although she focuses on absolute music in examining how the extra-musical relates to musical forms, these ideas also have importance for program music. In absolute music, the extra-musical significance is abstract and implicit; and in program music the significance is made particular, discrete, and explicit through the incorporation of a program.

Returning to Liszt’s defense of program music, the doubleness Goehr identifies between the purely musical and the extra-musical shares some key similarities with his argument for bringing diverse and contrasting forms together. First, despite all the crossbreeding and blending he describes, Liszt persistently emphasises the combination of dissimilar and diverse elements. There is no end to the variety and juxtapositions of forms in his analogy. Second, the process of mingling he describes never comes to an end. New forms always emerge from the contact of dissimilar elements. Finally, and most importantly, this process of constant interaction of dissimilar elements produces a progressive vitality. Liszt’s response to the central ideologies in the conflict between conservatives and progressives reveals a combining of autonomous musical structures (*das rein Musikalische*)³⁰ and extra-musical content. His symphonic poems combine formalist musical structures *and* individual engagement with extra-musical content: “subjective freedom expressed *within* and *against* objective constraints.”³¹

²⁸ Ibid., 15.

²⁹ Ibid., 19. Emphasis in original.

³⁰ *Das rein Musikalische* means “the purely musical.” This concept derives from Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, trans. T.M. Knox, vol. II (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), 899. The term is quoted in Goehr, *The Quest for Voice*, 8-9. Music theorists, including Eduard Hanslick, adopted Hegel’s term as a way to describe music’s technical aspects—something absolutely unique to music.

³¹ Ibid., 1. Emphasis mine.

I.2 Liszt's Use of Program Music

Program music is both an idea and a specific repertory. In broad terms, program music attempts to represent extra-musical narratives, concepts, characters, and/or emotions without the aid of a sung text. While definitions of program music were introduced, discarded, and reinvented over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the main features of a programmatic work remained, and contain any combination of the following:

- titles depicting non-musical referents (e.g., Mendelssohn's *Die Hebriden*);
- texted prefaces;
- references to literary and/or visual art (e.g., Schumann's *Manfred*/Liszt's *Die Hunnenschlacht*);
- biography (e.g., Liszt's *Tasso: Lamento e Trionfo*);
- musical archetypes, topics, stylized dances, and/or narrative;
- innovative musical form and harmony;
- legends around performance reception/reviews (e.g., Beethoven's Symphony no. 3, *Eroica*).

This list is extensive, ranging from references to literary and visual arts to musical forms, gestures, archetypes, and narratives. Given these varied approaches to deciphering what program music is, it is unsurprising that interpretations of program music evoke the same plurality. Musical meaning is deciphered through an engagement with genre-specific discourses that include associations with musical style and genre, music and its relationship to the program, the composer's interpretation of the extra-musical source material, and the interpreter's associative values and subjective engagement. Like any cultural artefact, program music includes varying degrees of socio-cultural associations from literature, fine art, or even other musical works. But given the culturally mediated significance applied to program music, additional associations appear from realms like politics, economics, history, and gender and sexuality.

Textual prefaces exist in the larger corpus of programmatic works and range from poetic epigrams, stand-alone poems, and the composer's own interpretations of poetry, to references to historical figures or mythological heroes from ancient, early modern, and modern literature. Liszt identified the purpose of the preface in instrumental music as a way for the composer to "guard the listener against a wrong poetical interpretation, and to direct his attention to the poetical idea of the whole or to a particular part of it."³² Not every preface is long and detailed. While some are stories written by the composer (e.g., Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*), others may include just a title that infers specific characters and/or narratives typically taken from famous literary works. Sometimes a program could be nothing more than a popular tradition of performance and reception that grows around a piece independently of the composer's intent. The infamous Napoleon connection with Beethoven's *Eroica* or the association of the theme from his Fifth Symphony with fate knocking at the door are just two examples. Despite the source of the preface, program music sought a "dialogue with other arts, especially literature, a pursuit that led to depictive character pieces, programmatic symphonies, symphonic poems, and tone paintings."³³ Program music, therefore, points to something outside of itself. It is intertextual and multimodal, which often leads to an array of interpretations, meanings, and understandings.

Liszt explored ideas of program music as early as the 1820s while he spent the majority of his time touring across Europe as a virtuoso performer. The schedule was arduous, and to escape the pressures of performing, Liszt frequently made sojourns to the countryside for rest. The landscape captivated his imagination, and he composed works that reflected both his surroundings and his impressions while experiencing nature first hand. His first programmatic collection was the musical

³² Liszt and Sayn-Wittgenstein, "Berlioz and His 'Harold' Symphony." Cited in Roger Scruton, "Programme Music" in *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), accessed February 28, 2017, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/subscriber/article/grove/music/22394>.

³³ Jonathan Kregor, *Program Music*, Cambridge Introductions to Music (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 1.

travelogue, *Album d'un voyageur* (later published as *Années de pèlerinage*), a series of piano compositions divided into three books: “Impressions and Poetry,” “Melodic Flowers of the Alps,” and “Paraphrases.” When Liszt published the collection in 1842, he included a preface outlining his inspiration and motivation (see figure 1). This proto-program remained an essential kernel to his lifelong ideas of the purpose and meaning of the program.

I have recently travelled through many new countries, have seen many different places, and visited many a spot hallowed by history and poetry; I have felt that the varied aspects of nature, and the different incidents associated with them, did not pass before my eyes like meaningless pictures, but that they evoked profound emotions within my soul; that a vague but direct affinity was established between them and myself, a real, though indefinable understanding, a sure but inexplicable means of communication, and *I have tried to give musical utterance to some of my strongest sensations, some of my liveliest impressions...*

The intrinsic and poetic meaning of things, the inherent ideal of everything, seems to manifest itself preeminently in such artistic creations as, by their beauty of form, give rise to emotions and ideas in the soul. Although music is the least plastic of the arts, it nevertheless possesses a form of its own, and has not unreasonably been defined as an architecture of sounds...

As instrumental musical progresses, develops, and emerges from its early limitations, it will tend more and more to bear the imprint of this ideal, which constitutes the perfection of the plastic arts. It will cease to be a mere combination of sounds and will become a poetic language more apt than poetry itself, may be, at expressing that within our souls which transcends the common horizon, all that eludes analysis, all that moves in hidden depths of imperishable desire and infinite intuition.

FIGURE 1 FRANZ LISZT PREFACE TO *ALBUM D'UN VOYAGEUR* (1842)³⁴

Liszt's burgeoning conception of the extra-musical in his early piano works reached its full meaning in his symphonic poems composed during his tenure in Weimar. His compositional interest ultimately renews music “through its more intimate connection with poetry.”³⁵ Although Liszt employs poems for some of his programs and draws on poetic terms to explain his ideas, the

³⁴ Translation adapted from Franz Liszt, *Franz Liszt's Musikalische Werke*, ed. José Vianna da Motta, vol. IV, II (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1916), 3.

³⁵ Liszt, quoted in Walker, *Franz Liszt: The Weimar Years*, 339.

connection to poetry he seeks is the development of a poetic language of music itself. He desires a language where music's meaningfulness extends beyond its forms and "combination of sounds" to communicate something ineffable—our essential being, our soul.

Liszt elaborates on his conception of program music in *Berlioz and His "Harold" Symphony*. As defense against formalist criticism of program music, the essay outlines Liszt's arguments for, among other things, the role the program plays in producing meaning in instrumental music beyond its forms and structure. He argues that programs clarify meaning(s) expressed in instrumental music by introducing "the approximation of certain ideas, the affinity of certain figures, the separation or combination, juxtaposition or fusion of certain poetic images."³⁶ He defends the idea that a composer can create through a composition "definite impressions which he wishes to bring to full and complete realization in the listener."³⁷ To illustrate the difference, Liszt sets up a contrast between two types of instrumental composers: the musical symphonist and the painter-symphonist. The musical symphonist takes the formalist approach to carry "his listeners with him into ideal regions,"³⁸ inside which their impressions should not be constrained by the composer. The painter-symphonist, in contrast, strives to make his idea "fully intelligible" through the program. Liszt writes:

[t]he painter-symphonist, however, setting himself the task of reproducing with equal clarity a picture clearly present in his mind, of developing a series of emotional states which are unequivocally and definitely latent in his consciousness — why may he not, through a program, strive to make himself fully intelligible?³⁹

Understood in these terms, the program guides the listener's experience. Programs do not describe or explain the music but instead exist to prepare the listener to experience *through* music what the

³⁶ Liszt and Sayn-Wittgenstein, "Berlioz and His 'Harold' Symphony," 1170.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 1168-1169.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 1169.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

subjects of the program experience. When program music does depict certain objects in mimetic ways, it is done in service of placing the listener within the emotional states of the work's subject.

According to Liszt, the program is ultimately more than a text to aid in interpreting music; but it also conveys the “*psychological moment* which prompts the composer to create his work and of the *thought* to which he gives outward form.”⁴⁰ Liszt implies that program music is not merely the result of musical representation of a text's meaning, but it also maps the composer's subjective experience of the text (along with *those* meanings) onto his creative work. Or to frame it in line with Liszt's desire for poetical language, program music seeks to communicate the ineffable, from soul to soul, through the expressive qualities of both its musical forms and its extra-musical content. Although the interpretation of such works could be boundless because they evoke within the analyst associations unique to their experiences, Liszt intends and hopes that the program would keep the interpretation within a set of ideas, concepts, and feelings close to the meaning the composer seeks to express.

In outlining his conception of program music, I do not suggest that listeners need to agree with all or any of Liszt's claims about his own music to understand it. Nor do I think that interpretation of his work should be constrained by Liszt's intended meaning for his pieces. Instead, I want to stress how strongly Liszt sought to convey meaning in his work and how closely he integrated the program and the musical forms in an effort to express that meaning. I propose that, in light of the emphasis he places on the program, any thorough analysis and interpretation of his programmatic music is best served by a full engagement with his accompanying prefaces as well as the score. To that end, the breakdown of chapters describe how I aim to do that myself in discussing the portrayal of heroic masculinity and creative genius in *Tasso* and *Mazepa*.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 1168. Emphasis mine.

I.3 Breakdown of Chapters

This dissertation traces Liszt's themes of heroic masculinity and creative genius by combining chapters providing historical perspectives with musical case studies. I structured my dissertation this way in order to evoke the historical, literary, and cultural contexts from which Liszt's musical interpretation emerged. The first chapter outlines my guiding theoretical framework,⁴¹ terms, and concepts from which I analyze Liszt's *Tasso* and *Mazeppa*. I begin with an outline of my analytical approach, which draws from Goehr's concept of doubleness. This idea serves as the starting point for my discussion of gender identity, specifically heroic masculinity, and the gendered implications of creative genius. Following this foundational discussion, I outline my methodological approach. Because this project incorporates various fields and disciplines (e.g., musicology, masculinity studies, literary history and criticism, and cultural theory), my method is intersectional. I focus on interpretive measures related to the socio-cultural sphere: comparative discourses in masculinity studies, heroism, and genius; philosophical and aesthetic trends; and musical narrative and narratology. My project is deeply influenced by historical, literary, and musicological scholarship. I introduce Liszt's heroic symphonic poems *Tasso* and *Mazeppa* as musical and cultural objects that not only exemplify, but also express the monumentality associated with heroic masculinity and creative genius.

Chapter two examines the poet Torquato Tasso's rise to legendary (heroic) status. I begin with Charles Brand's assertion that Tasso, while undoubtedly a poetic genius, also displays qualities associated with masculine weakness. While Brand seeks to reconcile this tension, I argue that the juxtaposition of genius and weakness shaped the way Romantic-era authors and artists approached Tasso's life and legend.⁴² The second chapter is broken into three main sections. In the first, I

⁴¹ Although my dissertation engages with theories of gender and sexuality, I do not consider it overly theoretical. My interests, and therefore focus, is primarily socio-cultural.

⁴² Interestingly, Romantic biographers and artists were more interested in Tasso's life than his poetry, which was a trend that began as early as the eighteenth century.

introduce the legend of Tasso from the late Renaissance era to the Romantic period and outline how Tasso's legendary status was frequently reimagined. The second section examines Tasso's heroic masculinity and his relation to Romantic creative genius. For the third section, I discuss how the works of Goethe, Byron, and Delacroix are representative of the socio-cultural trends that helped shape the legend of Tasso. The works of these acknowledged Romantic geniuses were part of the aesthetic milieu that shaped Liszt's reading of the Tasso legend.

My third chapter is an analysis of Liszt's *Tasso*. Building on previous scholarship that engages with *Tasso*, I argue for an approach that acknowledges the doubleness of program and musical process. This allows for an interpretation that views Liszt's preface, and the broader socio-cultural associations Liszt draws from, as essential to determining musical meaning. Aspects of Tasso's masculine-heroic character and experiences are imbedded in Liszt's form and thematic gestures. When critical interpretation combines serious attention to the extra-musical and compositional, new possible meanings emerge. Liszt's narrative touches on three places that are particularly relevant to his reimagining of Tasso's legend: (1) Venice, an evocation of Tasso's legacy portrayed by his heroic spirit; (2) Ferrara, the place of both his greatest fame and misery; and (3) Rome, a representation of Tasso's triumph and immortality as creative genius. Liszt musically moves between each place through formal, thematic, and harmonic shifts. I argue these shifts contribute to Liszt's musical narrative as more than a sense of place, but an evocation of the tension inherent in Tasso's creative genius and masculine expression. Tasso is simultaneously passive and active; suffering and triumphant. These tensions, I argue, are the driving force behind Liszt's (re-)imagining of Tasso.

In chapter four, I discuss the heroic legend of Ukrainian Hetman Ivan Mazepa. I begin with Mazepa's expression of doubleness, communicated in the formula pinion(s)-[ed] as the simultaneous representation of freedom and binding. The chapter is divided into two sections. The first introduces Mazepa as a historically significant military hero. The circumstances around

Mazeppa's historical fight and death eventually lead to his *even greater* significance as a folk hero. The legendary status of his life reached new heights in the Romantic period, when his suffering at the hands of noble oppressors reached a heroic apex. The second section examines the socio-cultural significance of the Mazeppa myth by drawing from Byron and Géricault, both of whom fixated on Mazeppa's relationship with the wild horse. I examine specifically how Mazeppa's relationship to the horse, his nakedness and posture, and suffering contribute to his unique expression of heroic masculinity. I argue that Mazeppa's evolution from Ukrainian folk-hero to Romantic hero reveals how nineteenth-century artists idealized suffering as opposed to triumph.

My final chapter explores the significance of Mazeppa's ride as a symbol of heroic masculinity and creative genius in Liszt's symphonic poem *Mazeppa*. My analysis hinges on a close reading of the accompanying preface in which Hugo presents the hero as a symbol of the suffering yet triumphant masculine artist-hero who embodies genius—an inexplicable force that perpetuates suffering. I divide the chapter into three main sections. The first consists of a brief overview of relevant musicological scholarship that examines *Mazeppa* within the context of Liszt's other symphonic poems. The second explores Victor Hugo's poem "Mazeppa," which draws on Louis Boulanger's painting *Le Supplice de Mazeppa*. Finally, the third section offers my analysis of Liszt's *Mazeppa*. I focus my analysis on specific musical motives that reflect Mazeppa's relationship to the horse, which in turn, amplifies Mazeppa's stature as a symbol of heroic masculinity and unbridled genius.

The conclusion offers a brief summary of my approach and interpretation of Liszt's *Tasso* and *Mazeppa* within the context of mid nineteenth-century conception of heroic masculinity and creative genius.

Chapter One: Theoretical Framework, Methods, and Concepts

1.1 Preamble

Liszt's formal compositional strategies in *Tasso* and *Mazeppa* are intertwined with then-current socio-cultural associations. Symphonic poems stand at an intersection of Liszt's subjective experience of an extra-musical text and the audience's engagement with both the structural foundations (e.g., pre-existing musical models) and the non-musical content that generates the soul of the composition. The net effects are several ways to engage and interpret larger socio-cultural connections. James Hepokoski calls the interaction between composer and audience "dialogical acts of perception and construal" in which program music reflects on a "familiar, pre-established category of (actual or anticipated) apprehension concerned with the interpretation of meaning."¹ This is one of the defining features of program music. Meaning is established through its hermeneutic qualities—a dialogue between an experience of music and an expression of what those experiences embody. The horizon of interpretation blends the composer's and interpreter's engagement with culturally mediated musical structures and texts. Liszt's heroic symphonic poems, for instance, tell stories of legendary characters imbued with cultural significance: the universality of the human spirit in *Prometheus*, the moralizing aspects of music associated with *Orpheus*, and the monumentality of canonic literary figures conveyed in *Hamlet* are just three examples. Yet, ultimately the communication of these ideas are accomplished through musical devices—the semantics and semiotics of musical language.

¹ James Hepokoski, "Program Music," in *Aesthetics of Music: Musicological Perspectives*, ed. Stephen Downes (New York: Routledge, 2014), 64.

Liszt's reinterpretation of the Tasso and Mazeppa myths also contain socio-cultural associations. Both men suffered: Tasso from presumed poor mental health and Mazeppa from the painful punishment due to an illicit sexual encounter. By the time Liszt composed *Tasso* and *Mazeppa*, the legend of their heroic journeys symbolized the painful labour associated with being a creative genius. Tasso struggled to publish his epic *La Gerusalemme liberata* because of his anxiety and alienation in the Ferrarese court. Mazeppa was punished for his crime by being bound naked to a wild horse for a three-day journey. Tasso and Mazeppa portray genius as hard-won, born from pain and suffering. The implications of genius extend beyond the struggle to create. Imbedded within the figure of genius, particularly in the Romantic period, are expressions of heroic masculinity. Thus, genius and *his* gendered implications depict a specific socio-cultural context. Expressions of heroic masculinity within the symbolically potent genius illuminate certain cultural attributes. My interests lie in an examination of how Liszt's reinterpretation of the Tasso and Mazeppa myths also engage with the gendered, masculine-heroic implications of creative genius.

This chapter outlines my theoretical approach and methodological framework. I begin with a discussion of Lydia Goehr's concept of "doubleness," which forms the core of my interpretation of Liszt's *Tasso* and *Mazeppa*. Structures of doubleness—tension, both/and—create interpretive opportunities that take into account the tension in the histories of genius and heroic masculinity. Gender is central to my interpretation of *Tasso* and *Mazeppa*. My engagement with Romantic-era masculine expression derives from John Tosh's and Jeffrey Kallberg's assertion that gender identity derives from both socio-cultural constructions and subjective expressions. My methodology focuses on an exploration of the connection between the larger discourses of genius and heroic masculinity within the context of late eighteenth and nineteenth-century culture and society. I draw predominantly from discourses in gender histories, cultural studies, and literature to inform my understanding of how gender was constructed and experienced. Ultimately, heroic masculinity, as

both a social construct and a subjective experience, is manifest in the figure of the artist-genius. Liszt capitalized on this, and his portrayal of heroic masculinity and creative genius in *Tasso* and *Mazeppa* responds to the doubleness inherent in his socio-cultural and aesthetic milieu. Liszt aligns his works with other creative portrayals of his heroes. The writings of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Lord Byron are central to his preface for *Tasso*, whereas Victor Hugo's poem, "Mazeppa," is reproduced in its entirety as the programmatic source text for *Mazeppa*. The narrative core of both symphonic poems revolves around suffering and triumph. In order to portray this, Liszt uses musical archetypes—small gestures that evoke larger musico-narrative meanings. The concepts and discourses I introduce here will be applied more specifically to *Tasso* and *Mazeppa* in my subsequent chapters.

1.2 “Arguments of Doubleness”

Doubleness is the framework guiding my analysis of *Tasso* and *Mazeppa*. My engagement with the concept derives from Lydia Goehr's use of the idea in *The Quest for Voice*. Her book is a philosophical inquiry into some of the most debated questions in German Romanticism: Is all music musical? Is “texted” music less musical than “pure” music? What is musical autonomy and can it truly exist? Goehr attempts to answer these questions by focussing specifically on the music, politics, and philosophy of Richard Wagner. Her analysis is equally appropriate for interpreting Liszt's work within the context of his aesthetic, social, and cultural milieu. “Arguments of doubleness” derive from the complex relationship between musical aesthetics and the socio-cultural aspects of music creation, engagement, and enjoyment. The premise of Goehr's book recalls the dialectical debates at the core of Romantic-era musical aesthetics. Yet, as she rightly suggests, “double” is preferable to “dialectical” because it

stresses that the *contradictions* and *conflicts* in which elements or claims stand to one another are not always resolved (*a*) by picking one element at the expense of the other, (*b*) by reducing one

element to a function of the other, or (c) as traditional dialectics dictates by allowing a synthetic or higher third element to emerge according to a logic of historical development.²

This core definition of doubleness offers three possibilities for interpreting Liszt's *Tasso* and *Mazeppa*. First, doubleness allows me to draw on the aesthetic insights from both sides of the Romantic debate. Liszt treats formalist structure and extra-musical texts as equal. Therefore, adopting doubleness creates a guard against the temptation to fall back on criticism based in purely formalist musical structures *or* culturally-informed analytical apparatus. Second, doubleness aids in revealing that Liszt often presents concepts and themes in tension without necessarily collapsing into a clear resolution. Third, doubleness provides a philosophical framework for working with these tensions and their effects when left unresolved. Using this framework, I can offer an interpretation of Liszt's *Tasso* and *Mazeppa* that incorporates other contradictory themes.

Doubleness touches every aspect of this dissertation, from the musico-literary features of programmatic genres, to understanding the general characteristics of heroic masculinity and creative genius, to the ways Liszt reinterprets Tasso and Mazeppa within the context of nineteenth-century culture and musical style. Determining musical meaning in program music consists of formalist structures and extra-musical texts in equal measure; and neither component is privileged over the other. Heroic masculinity also exists within the tensions of doubleness. My views of this masculine-heroic expression derive from historian John Tosh and musicologist Jeffrey Kallberg, both of whom question theoretical trends in gender representation. Tosh argues that the "cultural turn" in gender history privileges representation over experience, blurs individual identity, and disconnects symbolic ideas of power relations from lived social relations.³ Tosh asks for a *double* approach that incorporates

² Lydia Goehr, *The Quest for Voice: Music, Politics, and the Limits of Philosophy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 14. Emphasis mine.

³ John Tosh, "The History of Masculinity: An Outdated Concept?," in *What Is Masculinity? Historical Dynamics from Antiquity to the Contemporary World*, ed. John H. Arnold and Sean Brady, *Gender and Sexualities in History* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 17–34. Joan Scott offers a useful statement on the use of gender as

individual experience and subjectivity mediated through cultural forms—“a culturally inflected social history which keeps its moorings in social experience.”⁴ Tosh’s conclusions are based upon his reading of primary source material (e.g., letters, journals, etc.); therefore, he has a particular vantage point when it comes to analyzing gender expression. The result of his work is an acknowledgement that the subject’s experience is shaped by forces in which they live out their experiences.

Kallberg takes a similar stance, though his object of scrutiny is the piano nocturne and its associative socio-cultural meanings.⁵ From the opening of his article on the gendering of the piano nocturne, he outlines the difficulty in analyzing constructions of gender in instrumental music. Analysis from a gendered perspective typically focuses on opera and song because of its semantic content. Text is apparently concrete and therefore interpretation can seem more precise. Kallberg also indicates that opera and song have specific purposes in the socio-cultural sphere (e.g., grand entertainment; cultivation of the domestic).⁶ Instrumental music, on the other hand, requires different approaches to present how it might be representative—or express issues—of gender. Kallberg insists on dismantling semantic approaches to musical analysis, which he describes as an “autonomous” and “powerful ideological force,” in favour of a cultural analysis of genre.⁷ In the context of his article, Kallberg shifts from taking the nocturne as a genre “located solely in

an analytical category. According to Scott, gender is “the knowledge that establishes meanings for bodily differences” (2). See Joan Wallach Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988). Meaning is derived from images, texts, and larger socio-cultural practices, which then shape how individuals experience gender.

⁴ Tosh, “The History of Masculinity,” 31.

⁵ Jeffrey Kallberg, “The Harmony of the Tea Table: Gender and Ideology in the Piano Nocturne,” *Representations* 39 (Summer 1992): 102–133. Kallberg’s article appears as a response to the works of Susan McClary and others whose research appeared as part of a new trend in music scholarship. The proponents of “New Musicology” were concerned with whether music could convey social meaning, specifically around gender and sexuality. While Kallberg’s article is a product of that particular controversy, his ideas are still relevant to my project.

⁶ Kallberg cites Teresa de Lauretis in his conception of gender within society as well as a series of signs that represent an already ascribed meaning. See Kallberg, “The Harmony of the Tea Table: Gender and Ideology in the Piano Nocturne,” 102.

⁷ *Ibid.* Kallberg goes into some specific details regarding Susan McClary’s writings in one of his footnotes. Kallberg’s interpretation of McClary’s writing is that she firmly stresses the semiotics of music as a way to interpret gendered meanings: “this is to ground her criticism in what seems to me to be an unstoppable belief in the immutable nature of semiotic codes” (Kallberg, footnote 3, page 127). Kallberg goes on to write that “the appeal to semiotic codes of any sort is worrisome, for in most critical applications these codes turn out to represent a kind of deep structural analysis once removed, and therefore no more societally based than any other reductive theory” (footnote 3, 127).

compositions” to genre as a “communicative concept shared by composers and listeners alike, one that actively informs the *experience* of a musical work.”⁸ An experience of the nocturne correlates to its function in the domestic sphere as a particular space and a work enjoyed and performed predominantly by women.⁹ By contrast, to experience a Lisztian symphonic poem means to delve into its masculine-heroic monumentality. Kallberg’s focus on genre and his inclusion of experience as an integral part of a composition offers a fresh perspective for deciphering musical meaning. Yet, musical semantics and semiotics play an equally important role in the engagement of program music because of the textual component. My approach to *Tasso* and *Mazeppa* includes both the idea that cultural values, social relations, and ideologies give those structures meaning and that they shape our ideas of musical structure itself.

Like the role of musical structure and its associated (gendered) cultural values, Liszt’s portrayal of the masculine is at the intersection of social construction and subjective expression. While nineteenth-century reinterpretations of Tasso and Mazeppa fall more naturally into the category of fictional or literary heroes, they nevertheless say something about masculine experience in the mid-nineteenth century: masculinity, they collectively suggest, is bound to expressions of profound suffering and eventual, albeit posthumous, triumph. Tasso’s and Mazeppa’s individual experiences, along with the socio-cultural associations embodied within them, give them distinct identities predicated on the doubleness of their characters. Both men exist in a state of tension. Tasso’s heroic masculinity is conveyed through lament and triumph. He suffered in life and while recognition of his genius is an evocation of triumph, it was awarded posthumously. As a result, Tasso’s legacy is determined by a simultaneous expression of triumph and suffering. Mazeppa’s wild ride, though conceived as a form of torture, reflects that he is both bound and free, vulnerable and

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ This also blurs the masculine/feminine dichotomy if we consider that Chopin’s canonical works (and *his* place in the masculine-dominated creation of canon formation) make up a large portion of the nocturne repertoire.

transcendental. His masculine-heroic autonomy therefore exhibits tension and fluidity. Likewise, Tasso's and Mazeppa's culturally symbolic status as creative geniuses takes on the doubleness of their masculine expression: suffering—triumph; passive—active; labour—reward. These characteristics qualify their heroic masculinity. Liszt capitalized on this ambiguity, opting to suspend conventional musical forms and styles to suit the complexity of his characters. Rather than resolve the tension, Liszt amplifies it and makes it a central component of these works.

Liszt's *Tasso* and *Mazeppa* are about two heroic characters and their subjectivities, experiences, and expressions. Their heroic narratives existed as part of a long tradition of mythmaking. The stories of Tasso and Mazeppa are built on historical materials, such as letters, letters, and biographies. Over time, their lives and deaths were re-imagined in more fictional and more heroic ways. Plays, poems, visual art, and musical compositions emerged in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. These works of fiction, though based loosely on received histories, encapsulate the characteristics of the Romantic hero—and his gendered implications—while commenting on the symbolic value of creative genius. Liszt capitalized on the narrative function of the heroic journey he forged in *Tasso* and *Mazeppa*.¹⁰ My interpretation, therefore, integrates in-depth analyses of the

¹⁰ My interpretive strategy draws from long-standing musicological studies that allow me to explore Liszt's symphonic poems through the lens of narrative and topic theory. Two discourses of musico-narrative scholarship evolved. Those who are positive ask "in which ways does music meet the basic requirements for narrative?" whereas skeptics ask, "what are the precise limitations that prevent music from achieving narrativity...[and] may music operate as 'narrative' at a metaphorical level?" (Yen-Ling (Annie) Liu, "Text, Topics, and Formal Language: Musical Narrativity in Franz Liszt's Prometheus and Tasso," *Language and Semiotic Studies* 1, no. 3 (Autumn 2015): 143). Anthony Newcomb asserts that music is narrative in construction and "is subjective in that it depends on the education, intuition, and talent of the individual critic-interpreters" (164). On the other hand, Jean-Jacques Nattiez and Carolyn Abbate question whether music can successfully convey a narrative. Nattiez agrees that there is a "narrative impulse" but, drawing from musical semiotics, he doubts whether music can successfully refer to ideas outside of established musical archetypes" (240-257). For Nattiez, analyzing music as a narrative in the same way as a novel or poem is difficult because music cannot directly convey text. Similarly, Abbate questions whether approaching music as a narrative is useful. For her, however, musical narrativity is ultimately unsuccessful because a narrator cannot be present. See Anthony Newcomb, "Schumann and Late Eighteenth-Century Narrative Strategies," *19th-Century Music* 11, no. 2 (Autumn 1987): 164; Jean-Jacques Nattiez, "Can One Speak of Narrativity in Music?," trans. Katharine Ellis, *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 115 (1990): 240–257; and Carolyn Abbate, *Unsung Voices: Opera and Musical Narrative in the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991). For scholarship on Mendelssohn and Schumann, see Scott Burnham, "Novel Symphonies and Dramatic Overtures," in *The Cambridge Companion to Schumann*, ed. Beate Perrey (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 148–172. For information on Berlioz, see Laudon's *The Dramatic Symphony: Issues and Explorations from Berlioz to Liszt* (Hillsdale: Pendragon Press), 2012.

accompanying prefaces in conjunction with Liszt's innovative musical forms, themes, and gestures. I draw on musico-narrative and topic theory to examine how Liszt incorporates literary texts and musical semantics to tell a story of heroic masculinity and creative genius in program music.¹¹ Tasso's heroic character is created through tension and disequilibrium whereas Mazeppa's heroism depicts a suffering, yet defiant, hero who is simultaneously bound and free. Ultimately, I am interested not only in the literary narratives Liszt employs—whether directly stated or implied by associations within the text—but also in how considering socio-cultural associations contributes to a deeper narrative. Little scholarship specifically analyzes Liszt's symphonic poems with narrative theory, and even less examines his symphonic poems to reveal the integration of heroic masculinity and genius within them.¹² I am interested in what meaning(s) the compositions are trying to express through these functions, and how those meanings correspond to cultural constructions and subjective experience.

My overall methodological approach is a discussion of the expression of heroic masculinity and the symbolic value of the creative genius. My discussion relates predominantly to late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century meanings of both terms, though the existing scholarship I draw upon consists mostly of twentieth-century discourses in history, cultural studies, literature, and musicology. After a general discussion of these terms and concepts, I examine Tasso's and Mazeppa's specific expressions of heroic masculinity and genius.

¹¹ Márta Grabócz draws from musical semiotics as a method for analyzing narrative structures in Liszt's piano music. See her chapter, "Common Narrative Structures in Music and Literature: A Semiostylistic Investigation into the Arts of the 19th Century (Liszt and Goethe)," in *Selected Proceedings of the 10th International Conference of 19th Century Music*, ed. Jim Samson and Bennett Zon (London: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2002), 155–168. Keith Johns and Eero Tarasti offer the same approach of musical semiotics to Liszt's symphonic poems. See Keith T. Johns, *The Symphonic Poems of Franz Liszt* (Stuyvesant: Pendragon Press, 1997) and Eero Tarasti, *A Theory of Musical Semiotics* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994).

¹² I will discuss some of the current scholarship that explores Liszt's symphonic poems from a musical narrative perspective in chapters three and five. I will note, however, one article that examines Liszt as a preeminent masculine hero. See Dana Gooley, "Warhorses: Liszt, Weber's *Konzertstück*, and the Cult of Napoléon," *19th-Century Music* 24, no. 1 (Summer 2000): 62–88.

1.3 Men, Masculinity, and the Romantic Hero: A History

The study of men and masculinities, and their corresponding identities, is an extension of pioneering efforts in feminism, queer studies, and post-colonial studies. The initial goal of this early work was to break the hegemonic norms associated with white male masculinity in Western culture. The result was the creation of the scholarly discipline of gender studies, an intersectional field that draws upon cultural, historical, political, psychological, economic, and artistic analysis in order to interrogate both constructions and experiences of gender in various communities and cultures across time and space.¹³ Historians of masculinity typically acknowledge that the increasing popularity of this subfield derives from the cultural turn in the humanities and social science.¹⁴ This field of study is diverse. Michael Kimmel and Amy Aronson write that the study of men and masculinities uses

gender as a way to understand men's lives—both the quotidian experiences of men in various environments, as well as shedding a new and different light on the lives of men whose accomplishments in some field have already distinguished them.¹⁵

Gender theory adds dimension to the familiar. Men in Western culture have been the keepers of power, the agents of historical, social, and cultural change. Every facet of civilization, from politics and culture to art and science, has been represented as being shaped predominantly by the men who

¹³ Historically, gender studies as an academic discipline, primarily focused on feminism, queer identities, and masculinity.

¹⁴ As with any new form of historiography, there are detractors that voice their concern over the subject in question. The relatively new studies of men and masculinities met with opposition, particularly from feminist historians. Some forms of gender history are regarded as “a male tool used in an attempt to dissipate women’s power whereby women become historically viable subjects only when placed alongside men, thus reinforcing their position as ‘other.’” See June Purvis and Amanda Weatherill, “Playing the Gender History Game: A Reply to Penelope J. Corfield,” *Rethinking History* 3, no. 3 (1999): 335. Furthermore, gender history often focuses on representations of femininity and masculinity, but this approach can neglect individuals with their own agency. The real issue, as Karen Harvey writes, centers around depoliticization and anti-feminist approaches to gender history that forget “the material workings of power in the past.” See Harvey, “The History of Masculinity, circa 1650-1800,” *Journal of British Studies* 44 (April 2005), 296.

¹⁵ Michael Kimmel and Amy Aronson, eds., *Men and Masculinities: A Social, Cultural, and Historical Encyclopedia* (ABC-Clío: Oxford, 2004), xvi.

determine its values. Furthermore, given their privileged place in society, men are historically free from scrutiny because they are the invisible standard according to which everyone else is measured.

Only in the last thirty years have men and their corresponding masculinities become objects of study.¹⁶ Sociologist R.W. Connell's theory derives from Antonio Gramsci's use of "hegemony" as a way to examine how "patterns of practice (i.e., things done, not just a set of role expectations or an identity)...allowed men's dominance" over both women and other masculine identities to exist.¹⁷

Normative masculinity is the dominant ideology while the subordination of Others is determined by their relation to dominant masculine traits. As ground-breaking as Connell's theory is, it is problematic. Henry French and Mark Rothery explore the narrowness of Connell's theory, specifically in the "inflexibility of the conception of authority rooted in the notion of hegemony itself."¹⁸ Connell, as French and Rothery continue, "assumes that all are oriented towards a *single* [masculine] archetype, whereas the historical evidence seems to show the existence of several viable normative models *at the same time*."¹⁹ Masculine identity simultaneously negotiates between two layers. The bottom represents centuries-long, deep currents of "hegemonic dominance and patriarchal gender relations between men and women, or between different types of men."²⁰ The second layer portrays the evolution of gender stereotypes, which are produced in tandem with "societal norms,

¹⁶ The earliest efforts to study men have historically used three general models. Biological models focus on how the essential differences between males and females affect social behaviours. However, essentialism does not take into account the construction of such behaviours within a specific culture in certain historical periods. Anthropological models explore masculinity as a cross-cultural phenomenon. The strength of anthropological models is that gender means different things to different people depending on cultural norms. This model presents an inherently fluid perspective on gender, if we acknowledge an equality between cultures world-wide. Sociological models attempt to synthesize the above perspectives into a systematic explanation of "sex roles"—the "collection of attitudes, attributes, and behaviours that are seen as appropriate for males and appropriate for females" (see Michael Kimmel and Amy Aronson, eds., *Men and Masculinities*, xxi). All three models were challenged by feminist scholars primarily because each reiterates the dominance of men within the social sphere and masculinity as a rubric to express gender identity. Men and masculinity, along with their associated ideologies, still hold the dominant position.

¹⁷ R.W. Connell and W. Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept," *Gender and Society* 19, no. 6 (December 2005): 832.

¹⁸ Henry French and Mark Rothery, *Man's Estate: Landed Gentry Masculinities, 1660-1900* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 11.

¹⁹ Ibid. Emphasis in original.

²⁰ Ibid.

political rhetoric, moral knowledge, economic circumstance, and discourses of custom, identity, and fashion.”²¹ These stereotypes contain inherent tensions and contradictions because they are not grounded solely in hegemony, but are always “contested, resisted, evaded, or ignored.”²² Recognizing that individual expressions of masculinity are constantly changing is crucial for understanding how gender relations existed throughout history. Manhood exists in a state of doubleness, revealing the complexity in masculine expression. Masculinity is a structure of tension, a simultaneous expression of both/and, that negotiates these two layers. Men are always in a position of power over others, but their masculine expression is fluid depending on their socio-cultural circumstances. Jennifer Low concludes that historically, manhood was understood

...in complex ways and along several different axes...gentlemanliness as opposed to commonness, manliness as opposed to womanliness, maturity as opposed to boyishness, family representation as opposed to unaffiliated individualism, or victory as opposed to failure. It could be defined in spatial terms, social terms, or developmental terms...[i]t functioned differently *even for the same people in different contexts*.²³

Low understands masculinity as incorporating both the social construction of gender and the experience of masculinity. Men are made, and the process of their construction is shaped by the socio-cultural contexts in which their lived experience occurs.

In this project, I engage in masculinity studies from period-specific discourses in cultural, historical, literary, and musicological fields.²⁴ Rather than scrutinizing what masculinity *is*, I consider

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ Jennifer A. Low, *Manhood and the Duel: Masculinity in Early Modern Drama and Culture* (New York and Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 170. Emphasis mine.

²⁴ Similar to sociological, historical, and literary scholarship, engagement with masculinities in music emerged as a complement to critical discourses in feminist, LGBTQ+, and lesbian musicology. See, for instance, Susan McClary, *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender & Sexuality* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991); Ruth Solie, ed., *Musicology and Difference: Gender and Sexuality in Music Scholarship* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993); Philip Brett, Elizabeth Wood, and Gary C. Thomas, eds., *Queering the Pitch: The New Gay and Lesbian Musicology*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2006). In the last decade, musicologists and music theorists have engaged with concepts of masculinity in Western European classical music. This scholarship serves as a model for my research and it offers valuable new insights into the music and larger socio-cultural fabric of Europe. Opera studies accounts for the largest body of scholarship on men and masculinity. For instance, Philip Purvis's collection examines how masculinity is

what masculinity has *been*.²⁵ As the above considerations imply, this question is more complicated than it seems because gender, as both an expression of larger socio-cultural processes and of lived experience, is prone to change depending on social circumstance along with the larger cultural, economic, political, and/or domestic atmosphere. Tosh identifies this complexity when he writes that masculinity is historically expressed in

complex and confusing variety, with comparable dangers to conceptual coherence. But there is a further problem which applies to masculinity specifically. Because men have historically been dominant in the public sphere, masculinity carries public meanings of great political moment, in addition to its bearing on personal conduct and self-imagining...representations of masculinity have necessarily straddled the public/private divide, covering the entire spectrum from men's domestic conduct at one extreme, to the manly virtues which should characterize the body politic at the other. In tackling the subject of masculinity in such different ways, historians have shown no less respect for its complexity....²⁶

negotiated, constructed, represented, and problematized within operatic music and performance practice. See Purvis, ed., *Masculinity in Opera: Gender, History, and New Musicology* (New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2013). Scrutinizing phallogocentric musical practices creates a perspective on the cultural significance and overall musical meaning associated with the male operatic subject. Heather Hadlock and Matthew Head examine how masculinities interact with authority and power in nineteenth-century opera. Drawing from representations of heroic masculinity in Rossini's opera *La donna del Lago* (1819), Hadlock notes that the unusual vocal parts of *musico*-tenor-tenor deconstruct the expected love triangle of heroine-hero-rival. Rossini's opera presents three love interests vying for Elena and each one conveys varying degrees of masculinity based on voice type. These characters are the effeminate Malcolm Graeme (*musico*, contralto), the excessively masculine outlaw Roderick Dhu (tenor), and finally the masculine ideal of James V (tenor). This complication to expectation is an example of how stage conventions for presenting gender are inextricably linked with vocal conventions of the period. See Heather Hadlock, "Different Masculinities: Androgyny, Effeminacy, and Sentiment in Rossini's *La Donna Del Lago*," in *Rethinking Difference in Music Scholarship*, ed. Olivia Bloechl, Melanie Lowe, and Jeffrey Kallberg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 170–213. Head explores the construction of the heroic in Beethoven's *Egmont*, but rather than focus on a male hero, he draws attention to Beethoven's feminine heroine, an androgynous figure who exhibits flexibility in the construction of sex/gender. Although it does not explicitly mention the term masculinity, Head's article questions assumptions of heroic masculinity as an expression of virile energy. See Matthew Head, "Beethoven Heroine: A Female Allegory of Music and Authorship in *Egmont*," *19th-Century Music* 30, no. 2 (2006): 97–132. *Egmont* is not the only composition by Beethoven that explores opposite gender roles. His opera *Fidelio* also exhibits gender-bending. Leonore (*Fidelio*, in her masculine guise) is a cross-dressing role. The premise of Beethoven's opera is that Leonore/*Fidelio* dresses as a guard where her husband, Florestan, is imprisoned. The narrative depicts political struggles for liberty and justice, but within the ideas of sacrifice, heroism, and triumph.

²⁵ This question derives from John Arnold's and Sean Brady's edited collection *What Is Masculinity? Historical Dynamics from Antiquity to the Contemporary World*, *Gender and Sexualities in History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 2. The essays in this edited collection consider the various nuances associated with the term "masculinity" within different fields of study, including history, philosophy, sociology, literary criticism, and anthropology. In doing so, the articles explore how masculine traits differed throughout history as they appeared in relation to different systems of power. By focusing on the ways masculinity changed, the essays attempt to answer the question, "what has masculinity *been*?" rather than attempting to find an ever-present idea associated with what masculinity *is*?

²⁶ John Tosh, *Manliness and Masculinities in Nineteenth-Century Britain*, (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2005), 61-62.

Doubleness is a core value that constitutes masculinity in perpetual motion with different gendered expressions moving simultaneously. My understanding of masculinity aligns with these more open definitions because they suggest a more fluid interpretation of what is considered masculine. This is why Tasso and Mazeppa, for instance, are considered heroic even though they passively suffer buffeting by external forces. Furthermore, doubleness within the idea of masculinity not only allows us to recognize the multiplicity of masculine identities within a given culture, but also shows that within a single man—even a hero—masculine expression can exist in tension, changing depending on his circumstances.

My focus is on late-eighteenth and nineteenth-century expressions of masculinity. The shifting tides of Enlightenment-era thought brought forth new, plural ways to express gender. My narrative begins circa 1770, before the words of Enlightenment philosophers yielded revolutionary actions in the United States and France. The Enlightened man exhibited a version of “ideal” masculinity for that period, centered on refinement, etiquette, and domesticity.²⁷ Historian Karen Harvey identifies three developments, or guides, in the expression of masculinity in the final decades of the eighteenth century: (1) the shift from politeness (a type of masculinity valued from circa 1720) to etiquette; (2) new ideals of masculinity formed through relationships with other men; and (3) the emergence of male domesticity. The first guide for social behaviour, as Harvey notes, moved from a “stress on easy equanimity to carefully detailed rules of etiquette.”²⁸ The second guide shows a growing belief that domesticity “threaten[s] masculinity with too close a relationship with women and led to an imperative to prove masculinity through male-only encounters.”²⁹ Finally, the third guide for

²⁷ Karen Harvey, “The History of Masculinity, circa 1650-1800,” 304. Harvey’s article outlines the typical historiography of the genesis of the Enlightenment man—or modern man—from the mid-seventeenth century to the late eighteenth century. She indicates that the “four phases of man” during this period transition from “the household patriarch,” “libertines and fops,” “the polite gentleman,” toward “etiquette, taciturnity, and domesticity.” Harvey analyzes these four phases first from cultural history, and then she re-evaluates the phases from a social history perspective.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid. See also Michèle Cohen, “Manliness, Effeminacy, and the French: Gender and the Construction of National Character in Eighteenth-Century England,” in *English Masculinities 1600-1800*, (London: Longman, 1999), 44-62.

masculinity extends into the nineteenth century and points toward a Victorian-era emphasis on domesticity, coupled with the centrality of morality and religion in the home.³⁰ These three developments appeared over the course of approximately 70 years and indicate how quickly ideals of masculinity can shift. Yet despite their constant motion, each guide represents only the dominant thread within any particular period. Masculine (and feminine) counterparts to normative gender expression always exist within a given society, and their alternative forms contribute to the larger social fabric.

The doubleness of gender discourse is not conducive to the establishment of precise definitions of masculinity. Tosh, however, is particularly useful both in terms of setting up a new form of historical discourse in masculinity studies and in offering larger, though by no means rigid, perspectives on how to analyze, interpret, and engage with the inherent doubleness of historical expressions and experiences of masculinity. Tosh indicates that attempts to identify major changes in manliness at the turn of the nineteenth century have followed two paths. The first explores changes in masculinity in relation to class structure in England, specifically the transition from the landed gentry to a more urban and commercialized society. This transition charts the rise of bourgeois masculinity. This particular version of masculinity that eclipsed, but never entirely displaced, its aristocratic predecessor.³¹ Thus, both forms of masculinity existed simultaneously, often in tension with one another. The result was a period where the values and identities of the growing middle class clashed, worked in tandem, and even subsumed the values of the diminishing aristocracy.³²

³⁰ Harvey, "The History of Masculinity, circa 1650-1800," 305. See also Leonore Davidoff's and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987).

³¹ Tosh, *Manliness and Masculinities*, 62.

³² Liszt understood the value of aligning himself with members of both classes. He was born middle class, but his talents gave him opportunities to elevate his social status. He performed for the wealthy, the titled, and the masses alike. He frequented the salons of the French aristocracy, yet his tour in England was a failure due to his growing friendship with Lady Blessington (see Gillen D'Arcy Wood, *Romanticism and Music Culture in Britain, 1770-1840: Virtue and Virtuosity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). His two famous lovers, Marie d'Agoult and Carolyn zu Sayn-Wittgenstein, had titles and privileges. Liszt's tenure in Weimar was at the behest of the ruling duke. Yet Liszt is

The reshaping of masculine identity also appeared with the introduction of a two-sex model and the symbolic meanings of the body. This model defined women as passive and domesticated, and claimed that their bodies symbolically revealed these qualities. But sex difference also found its way into larger socio-cultural discussions of values and meanings in art and in power structures such as class, race, honour, and nation.³³ George L. Mosse, an expert on central European and German history, explores this idea of sex difference in conjunction with the evolution of masculine stereotypes. From the late eighteenth to the early nineteenth centuries, Mosse indicates the stereotype of masculinity was “conceived as a totality based upon the nature of man’s body.”³⁴ At a time when symbolic expressions of nation were on the rise—exemplified through imperialism and monumentality (e.g., physical monuments to “great men”)—the human body became a potent symbol of political power. The virile, masculine body represents the strength of a nation and the fortitude uphold collective, masculine values. By the late eighteenth-century, society had become increasingly more visually oriented, exemplified not only by national symbols but also by “the effect of sciences such as physiognomy and anthropology, with their classification of men according to standards of classical beauty.”³⁵ With the introduction of the two-sex model, the male body could be contrasted with the domesticated female body and the softness of the unmanly, effeminate male body—neither masculine nor feminine. Tosh indicates that within the context of a growing polarization of sexual difference within arts and science of the nineteenth century, “embracing body, mind and the gendering of social space” contributed to the making of a “binary opposition between

perceived as a man always willing to help the struggling artist. He used his position as *Kapellmeister* to promote his colleague’s works.

³³ Harvey briefly discusses masculinity and war in her article. She indicates that military and naval campaigns had an effect on the discussion around masculinity, specifically in the context of Britain and its growing empire. War served as an important opportunity for middle-class men to rise in the ranks of masculinity since the men of polite society would likely be unable to take on the rough work. Furthermore, despite the decrease in domestic violence (see Harvey, “The History of Masculinity,” 308), the duel continued to be a measure of honour well into the 1840s.

³⁴ George L. Mosse, *The Image of Man: The Creation of Modern Masculinity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 5.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

male and female” in the dominant culture.³⁶ However, if I take ideal masculinity as one that shows self-restraint and the reining in of passion, what can be said about the cult of sentimentality in the eighteenth century and the heroic passions of Romanticism? The cult of individuality, along with the deeply emotional subjectivity of Romantic era artists (and the heroes of their imaginations), does not adhere to the strict gender roles of a two-sex model. Rather, the expression of masculinity amongst creators and their audiences conveys doubleness—masculinity in various, and often contradictory, forms and guises.

These expressions of masculinity are deeply ingrained in the cultural fabric of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. To be a man meant something different depending on social status and cultural norms. Masculine experience was contingent on interaction with others, whether in the public or private spheres. The gender theorists and cultural historians I draw from relate these experiences to real men navigating their worlds. For instance, journals and letters offer a look into the private and semi-private lives of young men and conduct manuals that address themes of etiquette, moral education, and gender roles provide a glimpse into appropriate, or “normative” constructed social roles.

The premise of my approach—an examination of men experiencing and engaging their world—serves as the starting point for my analysis of fictional heroic figures. If the well-worn adage “art imitates life” is accurate, then the features of masculine expression *should* integrate into fictional male characters. Art is a cultural artefact; and it tells something about the time it was created. The same features of masculine expression found in nineteenth-century culture and society are also found in literary and cultural heroes. These are the types of heroes Liszt chose as the subjects for several of his symphonic poems. The lives of Tasso and Mazeppa, *real* men from history, were re-imagined as

³⁶ Tosh, *Manliness and Masculinities*, 62. Although Mosse explores ideals of masculinity within a dualistic framework, he does offer many insightful ideas around the significance of the male body. His discussion is still relevant if taken from a perspective that favours pluralism.

the popular Romantic heroes. These archetypal characters, in turn, reflects the socio-cultural atmosphere related to the fluid gender experience I have outlined. The diversity of men aligned with the characteristics of the Romantic hero reflects a manifestation of the masculine.

Romantic heroes differ significantly from Aristotelian depictions of the epic and tragic heroes of antiquity.³⁷ Classical or archetypal heroes are gods, demi-gods, or men who live, fight, and suffer beyond common (e.g., nonheroic) human experience. Central to his emergence as a hero is the journey to either protect or redeem humankind from a fallen world.³⁸ For some mortal heroes, the reward for their extraordinary deeds is apotheosis—the moment of divine transfiguration. Romantic heroes differ from their predecessors: rather than undertaking a quest to overcome insuperable odds for the sake of humankind, Romantic heroes fixate on their sensibilities, innate self-awareness, and the complexities of their own being.³⁹ This focus on subjectivity results in egocentric heroes dominated by introspection and driven predominantly by inward emotion rather than outward action. Most activity resides in the mind, as the hero endures pain and suffering. Yet, I see the purpose of his journey as less as an act of honour, protection, or redemption, and more of an attempt to satisfy his subjective desires, even if it means suffering. Furthermore, the Romantic hero's preoccupation with the self typically results in his propensity for *Ichschmerz*, a malady Lilian Furst describes as a “solipsistic self-absorption that holds him in a vicious circle.”⁴⁰ His heroic journey is not an act of honour, protection, or redemption, but an escape from the burdens of society.

Despite his near passivity and melancholy, the Romantic hero was a subject of creative imagination. The power of psyche to endure the labour of creation led to the “Romantic cult of the exceptional individual.”⁴¹ While only in the past 30 years have scholars scrutinized men and

³⁷ Aristotle, *Poetics*, The Complete Works of Aristotle (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991).

³⁸ Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, 3rd ed., (Novato: New World Library, 2008).

³⁹ Frederick Garber, “Self, Society, Value, and the Romantic Hero,” *Comparative Literature* 19, no. 4 (Autumn 1967): 321

⁴⁰ Lilian Furst, “The Romantic Hero, or Is He an Anti-Hero?,” *Studies in the Literary Imagination* 9, no. 1 (Spring 1976): 57.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 56.

masculinity per se, I do note the 1960s to the 1980s produced an influx of scholarship on the Romantic hero, work that is invaluable to my research because it introduces the primary characteristics associated with Romantic heroism. My purpose, then, is to scrutinize what those characteristics say in terms of masculine-heroic expression. Walter Reed asserts that the Romantic hero is a “singular and energetic individual...[who] dominates as well as represents the society around him.”⁴² These in-born characteristics exemplify a power associated with Romantic heroism, even if that power does not derive from traditional/archetypal men of action. This perspective aligns with Thomas Carlyle, whose lecture series, *On Heroes and Hero-Worship in History*, conveys a mid-nineteenth-century cultural fascination with heroes not merely as conquerors, but as philosophers, spiritual men, and men of letters.⁴³ Not just as a protagonist in literary narratives, the concept of the Romantic hero elevated authors, artists, political and military figures, and even audiences to heroic status, which assumes a connection to the creative genius. Political and artistic heroes such as Napoleon, Beethoven, and Liszt were *real* men who “suffered” for their political ideologies, people, or their art. The myth of Beethoven, for instance, portrays him as highly individual and socially isolated. These personal characteristics, as Scott Burnham writes, found their way into Beethoven’s composition, particularly his middle-period works. Listeners found in Beethoven’s music, especially the *Eroica*, a universal reflection of human experience “cast as heroic experience.”⁴⁴ For Burnham, “Beethoven Hero” represents more than the composer as a musical hero or a composer who writes “heroic music,” but a composer whose music touches the very hearts of humanity and is often heard within the context of a *Bildungsroman*. Even Napoleon’s heroic stature as a quintessential “man of action” remained in the collective memory of those who saw his rise to power as the fulfillment of

⁴² Walter L. Reed, *Meditations on the Hero: A Study of the Romantic Hero in Nineteenth-Century Fiction* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), 1.

⁴³ Thomas Carlyle, *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History* (London: Chapman and Hall, LD, 1895).

⁴⁴ Scott Burnham, *Beethoven Hero* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), xiv.

the Romantic ideal of liberty. Napoleon's many crimes and ultimate failure did not detract from his heroic status. Rather, his suffering is understood as an integral characteristic of his heroism.

Suffering elevates men to heroic status. It allows them to encounter the terror, vastness, and most importantly, greatness of the sublime. The Romantic hero is construed as a monumental figure (with its implied masculinity) who represents both character and a *way of being*. He is a social commodity, and that which gives him value is his subjectivity.⁴⁵ However, if heroes are monumental great men who display qualities beyond the reach of the common man, how might we describe those qualities that may initially appear *unmanly*? The first Romantic hero emerged from the eighteenth-century cult of sentimentality. The characteristics of this heroic expression are

[b]uffeted by ill fortune, rejected and ignored by a callous and repressive society suffering with abuses of an *ancien régime*, the first romantic heroes are typically passive, introverted young men whose intense sensitivity and *belle âme* necessitates their own destruction.⁴⁶

The Romantic hero as passive, sensitive, and self-destructive upsets archetypal heroic expression. He exhibits "suffering masculinity," a state in which the hero-as-victim is afflicted with intense suffering and alienation.⁴⁷ Yet despite their introversion and passivity, the Romantic hero loomed large in European culture: people emulated them; and wanted to *be* them. This suggests that masculine identity in the Romantic era was shaped by its inherent doubleness. Drawing from Carlyle, I see a more fluid conception of the heroic "Great Men" of history. While characterized by their unbounded heroic masculinity, philosophers, artists, and men of letters also symbolized

[t]he most precious gift that Heaven can give to the Earth, a man of 'genius,' as we call it, the Soul of a Man actually sent down from the skies with God's message...The idea is definitely insisted that *genius* is linked to *manhood*.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ See Andrew Elfenbein, *Byron and the Victorians* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 48.

⁴⁶ James D. Wilson, *The Romantic Heroic Ideal* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982), 51.

⁴⁷ Susan Chaplin, "Gender," in *Encyclopedia of the Romantic Era, 1760-1850*, ed. Christopher John Murray (New York: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2004), 406. Consider, for example, Goethe's Werther, who is often considered a "feminine" male hero, and Coleridge's Christabel who is described as unmanly.

⁴⁸ Thomas Carlyle, *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History*, 113. Emphasis mine.

I see in Carlyle's conflation of genius and manhood an underlying connection to Romantic heroism, exemplified by his Great Men of history. Thus, genius may be considered an inherent characteristic of the Romantic hero, which in turn evokes a masculine expression that is plural, and capable of existing in tension.⁴⁹ The masculine heroic genius who suffers, therefore, is ennobled rather than feminized despite his tendency to "appear as a wounded man of sorrows, as a *solitary genius* rising to the challenge of the sublime."⁵⁰ Heroic masculinity in the nineteenth century is both passive and transcendental—a double characteristic also present in the Romantic creative genius.

1.4 Genius

While I take heroic masculinity to be an inherent component of creative genius, the concept of genius has its own robust history. In my project, genius represents a character/concept/way of *being* that occupied human imagination since Aristotle. Although the term and broader concept are ancient, the characteristics of genius changed over time. Our modern conception, however, is a product of the eighteenth century.⁵¹ Central to the change is a shift from the aesthetics of mimesis—

⁴⁹ Not surprisingly, then, attempts to identify, define, and/or interrogate attributes of the Romantic hero *in general* are nearly impossible because each hero expresses his own unique characteristics. However, some common features that appear as part of the general character of the Romantic hero include heightened sensibility and extreme self-consciousness. He may be a wanderer (Cain or Childe Harold), searching for some ideological state that does not exist, or he may be man of fate (Manfred)—either pursued by fate or fatal to others. The Romantic hero can be introspective, melancholy, passive, and alienated from society. He is a great man turned inward, fixating on himself and his struggle. Literary scholars were among the first to devote full-length studies to this complex heroic type. For instance, George Ridge and Lloyd Bishop both focus on Romantic heroes within French Romantic literature, and their primary goal is to define a Romantic heroic archetype. Ridge concludes that the Romantic hero is "essentially the same man as he moves through romantic poems, plays, stories, and novels" and any appearance of nuances in character are in fact representations of the "self-conscious hero." See George Ross Ridge, *The Hero in French Romantic Literature* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1959), x. Bishop, writing twenty years later, supplements Ridge's work by expanding the portrait of the Romantic hero and by tracing its "literary heirs" in French Romantic literature from the early nineteenth century to the mid twentieth century. See Lloyd Bishop *The Romantic Hero and His Heirs in French Literature*, vol. 10, *Romance Languages and Literature*, II (New York: Peter Lang, 1984), 1.

⁵⁰ Ibid. Emphasis mine.

⁵¹ M.H. Abrams, *The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1953). The central metaphors of the mirror and the lamp are well known and do not require a detailed analysis here. Abrams begins by explaining the significance of the mirror versus the lamp. The mirror is a reflector; it refers to both Aristotle's theories of mimesis as a way to reflect reality through imitation. The symbol of the lamp, however, represents a fundamental shift in creative aesthetics during the Romantic period. Rather than imitation, the lamp represents the insights and feelings of the author in the very act of artistic creation rather than imitation. The lamp represents creation from within.

the goal of artistic representation during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries—to a greater focus on the poet’s inner qualities as the subject of artistic creation. However, the process of mimesis did not completely disappear, resulting in a hybridity, or doubleness, where genius was “not only the *subject/artist* who was able to access his surroundings/nature and combine and recombine them to create works of genius but also an *object* that must be accessed in order to understand fully the process of representation.”⁵² By the mid-nineteenth century, the artist-genius conveyed less mimetic objectivity and more inward, transcendental expression.

To possess genius means to hold superior creative powers, but before the eighteenth century, genius as a concept meant a variety of different things. While I will not provide a detailed, diachronic summary of the history of genius, the following five points offer a glimpse into the changing meanings of the term:

- (1) genius as attendant spirit;
- (2) genius as a specific character or disposition;
- (3) genius as natural ability or innate endowment.⁵³

At the turn of the nineteenth century, two additional meanings emerged:

- (4) genius as endowed with superior faculties;
- (5) genius as superior ability to succeed in any particular art form.⁵⁴

The first sense of genius derives from the Latin *genius*, which was originally the spirit of the family (*gens*). In this usage, genius is a spirit embodied in each man (genius can *only* be male) and forms a man’s personality. This concept of the genius as a type of attendant spirit carried on into the Middle

⁵² Reeves Shulstad, “The Symbol of Genius: Franz Liszt’s Symphonic Poems and Symphonies” (PhD diss, Tallahassee, The Florida State University, 2001), 17. Emphasis mine.

⁵³ These three earlier definitions of genius are explored in several different books and articles. See Penelope Murray, ed., *Genius: The History of an Idea* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989) and Christine Battersby, *Gender and Genius* (London: The Woman’s Press, 1989).

⁵⁴ See Andrew Elfenbein, *Romantic Genius: The Prehistory of a Homosexual Role* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 27.

Ages and remained the primary concept into the eighteenth century. Though, as I discuss in chapter three, the spirit of genius forms a cornerstone in Liszt's *Tasso*. In the second half of the eighteenth century, genius came to have more complex meanings. The Latin *ingenium*, "meaning both 'natural disposition' and 'innate ability,'"⁵⁵ may be translated into English as "wit" or "genius," inborn capabilities that the average man lacks. This suggests that men who carry *ingenium* are set apart: they stand beyond the common realm of human aspiration and ability.

The more familiar use of *original* genius was first described by British critic Edward Young, whose *Conjectures on Original Composition* (1759) was influential on the philosophers and poets of the *Sturm und Drang*.⁵⁶ Young's contribution to the shifting meanings of genius centers on how the creative artist interacts with his work, rather than focusing on the work itself. In Young's ideas of original genius, man "became an element of knowledge both as knowing subject and as object [and] when this happened, two kinds of knowledge seemed to coincide: that of empirical knowledge...and that of transcendental knowledge."⁵⁷ This epistemological shift correlates with the inclusion of divinity, the superhuman, the daemonic, and/or madness often associated with the Romantic-era creative genius. This new type of genius not only has the capability to achieve a supernatural state, but also mediates a privileged, dual position between divinity and the natural world.⁵⁸

A more extreme version of the relationship between genius and divinity appears in Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Gespräche mit Eckermann: 1823-1832*. In this collection of conversations,

⁵⁵ Murray, ed., *Genius: The History of an Idea*, 3.

⁵⁶ Joseph Addison and Lord Shaftsbury also explored the idea of genius earlier in the eighteenth century and both straddled the line between temperament, character, and inclination and our common usage of genius as creative power. See Paul Bruno, *Kant's Concept of Genius*, for a concise explanation of both Addison's and Shaftsbury's views on genius. Furthermore, Bruno describes the significance of the *Sturm und Drang* period in terms of epistemological and transcendental streams of creativity. He writes that "the *Sturm und Drang* sought to eliminate any conflicts between knowledge and feeling by merging the two together: knowledge if feeling and feeling is knowledge" (48). The importance of this merge is that it accounts for both reason and feeling at a time when reason was considered the most prized form of knowledge.

⁵⁷ Shulstad, *The Symbol of Genius*, 19.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 22.

Goethe referred to the “superhuman element of artistic genius as daemonic rather than as divine” or, to be more specific, he asserts that the genius is possessed by supernatural spirits.⁵⁹ The daemonic within the artist is capable of both unfettered creativity, but also destruction, a common theme among the young Romantics. To carry such otherworldly power is a hallmark of the suffering and tortured artist. Arthur Schopenhauer explores this nihilism in *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*. He describes the Will as a knowing subject beyond human perception—the transcendental dictates the actions of men. It is inexplicable, and beyond empirical knowledge and Reason:

the kind of knowledge of the genius is essentially purified of all willing and of references to the will; and it also follows from this that the works of genius do not result from intention or arbitrary choice, but that the genius is here guided by a kind of instinctive necessity.⁶⁰

Schopenhauer’s depiction of genius shows that the earlier hybridity of Reason and the transcendental are separated. The genius occupies the unknown realm of human consciousness, and the result are works and/or actions guided by private interiority. This inward turn is deeply connected to one of the tenets of Romantic heroism: genius is inexplicable and beyond the capabilities of the average man.

The genius has always been infused with masculine gender ideologies regardless of the era. Yet, the evocation of masculine-heroic expression through the symbolic role of the genius has its own complications. Andrew Elfenbein and Christine Battersby explore this complexity in detail. Elfenbein examines the connection between genius and queerness by drawing from aesthetic issues in Romantic literature. But rather than focusing on individuals labelled as genius, he examines literary objects that influenced the history of gay perception and representation.⁶¹ Battersby takes a broader approach in which she explores connections between genius and masculinity from a philosophical

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Arthur Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation*, trans. E.F.J. Payne, vol. 2 (New York: Dover, 1969), 380.

⁶¹ See Elfenbein, *Romantic Genius: The Prehistory of a Homosexual Role*.

and socio-cultural perspective.⁶² Her study traces the relationship between men and genius throughout history in order to highlight how shifting definitions maintain a male-dominated hierarchy. Plural conceptions of the genius are always at the expense of female voices. For instance, in the nineteenth century men appropriated the feminine aspects of fertility and natural phenomenon as metaphors for genius. Male geniuses likened the creative process to conception, labour, and birth.

Not all men could be geniuses, but every man had the opportunity to aspire to the genius's privileged place. Yet despite his privileged position, the genius remained outside the dominant social sphere. Achieving genius, and by proxy a type of masculine greatness, was difficult. The shift in the meaning of "genius" from male character to gifted creator, as I outlined above, had surprising effects. For instance, men who aspired to a literary career but lacked education, social connections, or wealth "seized the role of untutored genius to justify their entitlement to authorship."⁶³ Genius was no longer associated solely with the upper class. This created opportunities for the inclusion of another (specifically bourgeois) perspective. While the genius broke away from its aristocratic inheritance, it also challenged gender stereotypes. Elfenbein encapsulates this process when he writes that the genius was an

admired cultural other [but also] male geniuses had feminine traits. This femininity had a dense web of associations, but it generally floated uneasily between older, negative associations with excess and lack of self-discipline and newer, more ambivalent ones with sensibility, imagination, and passion.⁶⁴

Elfenbein's assertion results in a vagueness of gender, often exemplified in depictions of genius as androgynous or effeminate. Yet this vagueness leads to new opportunities for masculine-heroic expression embedded within the concept of genius. For one so unmanly (a common judgement of

⁶² Christine Battersby, *Gender and Genius: Towards a Feminist Aesthetics* (London: The Woman's Press Ltd., 1989).

⁶³ Elfenbein, *Romantic Genius: The Prehistory of a Homosexual Role*, 13. This statement reminds me of the symbolic value associated with Beethoven's kiss of consecration bestowed upon a young Liszt.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 17.

the period) the masculine genius—exhibiting feminine qualities—certainly did capture the imagination of society. Those “othered” qualities were recoded as masculine. Or, as Battersby notes, the male genius was a man “full of ‘virile’ energy—who *transcended* his biology: if male genius was ‘feminine’ this merely proved his cultural superiority. Creativity displaced *male* procreativity: male sexuality made sublime.”⁶⁵ The genius contained doubleness within himself: both masculine virility and the passive (feminine) suffering associated with the painful process of creation, an act that required considerable labour. The genius can be double, masculine and feminine, and he draws from the greatness associated with the sublime to do so.

The aesthetics of the sublime serve as fertile (!) ground for exploring the deeper connection between heroic masculinity and genius. In the Romantic period, genius and heroism were almost synonymous due to the popularity of the artist—and the characters born of their imagination—as a figure of extraordinary human achievement who reinforced the myth of profound individualism. The emphasis on the individual and his subjective experiences necessitates a new way to describe the creative process. Drawing upon the concept of the sublime, and its association with greatness beyond measure, great men had a vocabulary to describe the act and product of creation, as well as their privileged place in society. Elfenbein offers an insightful perspective:

Genius had to be SUBLIME...if works of original genius were like the sublime in being characterized by their limitless power, super-human strength, and superiority to convention, it was only a small step to suggest that the content of works of genius should also be sublime. For eighteenth-century writers, it was a commonplace that the originality of genius was manifest in the sublimity of its creations, which refused all boundaries and became laws unto themselves.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Battersby, *Gender and Genius*, 3. Emphasis in original. Schopenhauer’s view is that women could not be geniuses. He writes: “The sight of the female form tells us that woman is not destined for great work, either intellectual or physical. She bears the guilt of life not by doing but by suffering; she pays the debt by the pains of childbirth, care of the child, submissiveness to her husband...[women] really and truly have no bent and receptivity either for music, poetry, or the plastic arts, but when they affect and profess to like such things, it is mere aping for the sake of their desire to please. This is why they are incapable of taking a *purely objective interest* in anything.” Arthur Schopenhauer, *Parerga and Paralipomena: Short Philosophical Essays*, trans. E.F.J. Payne, vol. 2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), 614.

⁶⁶ Quoted in Elfenbein, *Romantic Genius*, 30. See footnotes 64 and 65.

The sublime inflects expressions of masculinity and masculine power in its historical treatment. Geniuses in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries are typically described as striving for the sublime. Edmund Burke suggests the sublime is linked to the power and strength associated with male sexuality. He adopts the rhetoric of sexual power to explain the thrill that stems from the sublime, whereas the beautiful represents the small, delicate, weak, and submissive qualities associated with femininity. Although masculine power associated with the genius is linked to the sublime, his characteristics do not solely align with its gendered nuances. Genius acquired a Romantic grandeur at the expense of feminine beauty, but *he* (the genius) displays characteristics of both. Battersby argues that on the one hand “genius was described in terms of *male* sexual energies” and on the other “the genius was supposed to be *like a woman*: in tune with his emotions, sensitive, inspired—guided by instinctual forces that welled up from beyond the limits of rational consciousness.”⁶⁷ Elfenbein links the sublime to femininity because both the genius and the sublime were associated with excessive emotions, a quality commonly associated with women.⁶⁸ The language Burke and others use to describe the genius is strikingly similar to the way scholars define the characteristics of the Romantic hero. The ideas of infinity, obscurity, and the blurring of the boundaries between self and other are the core values of the genius. All three aspects are also characteristics associated with the Romantic hero, a figure and/or character who channels the qualities of the genius in a tangible way. The hero has always been an archetypal figure that captured the imagination of society. His familiarity, therefore, made him a perfect candidate for exemplifying creative genius.

⁶⁷ Battersby, *Gender and Genius*, 103. Emphasis in original.

⁶⁸ Elfenbein, *Romantic Genius*, 31.

1.5 Concluding Remarks

Expressions of heroic masculinity, like the creative genius, are nearly indefinable, but the core of its meaning(s) is pluralistic. An important characteristic of genius in the Romantic period is that *he* is both manly and heroic in his creative ventures. Likewise, the Romantic hero embodies masculine expression, even while he passively suffers to the demands of his genius. These qualities are ingrained in the milieu of the nineteenth century where the arts and humanities are informed by larger socio-cultural trends. Liszt's symphonic poems *Tasso* and *Mazeppa* are evocations of heroic masculinity and creative genius, with all the associative meanings of expression and experience. When coupled with the doubleness of program music as a genre, the plurality inherent in heroic masculinity and creative genius allows for a new interpretation of Liszt's engagement with the legends of Tasso and Mazeppa. Both heroes exist in this doubleness: tension and disequilibrium form the core of Tasso's heroism, and Liszt evokes this in his reinterpretation of the myth, both in the preface and in his compositional strategy. Mazeppa's expression of masculine doubleness appears in his representation as both bound and free, suffering yet triumphant.

Chapter Two: Tasso, Poetic Genius, Weak Man

“Byron has not been able to join to the remembrance of the bitter sorrows, so nobly and eloquently expressed in his Lamentation that of the Triumph. ...

I have wished to indicate this *contrast* even in the title of my work, and have hoped to succeed in portraying this grand *antithesis* of genius ill-treated during life, and shining after death...”
—Liszt’s preface to *Tasso: Lamento e Trionfo*

2.1 Preamble

Liszt’s *Tasso: Lamento e Trionfo* is a study in tension. His subject, a reimagined biography of Torquato Tasso, is defined by unresolved conflicts and contradictions. These qualities that Liszt draws from existed in the biographical literature that appeared shortly after Tasso’s death and continued well into the nineteenth century. Romantic-era biographers John Black and Richard Wilde, whom I discuss below, describe Tasso as a poetic genius. Yet the circumstances of his lived experiences suggest that his particular genius is achieved through suffering. Tasso exists in a state of contrast: pleasure and pain; misery and glory. Liszt’s reimagining of Tasso’s life and legend aligns with these broader Romantic reinterpretations. His compositional approach draws from the tension that shaped Tasso’s character and symbolic value. Like Romantic-era biographers, Liszt approached Tasso as an emblem of creative genius. He exhibits profound artistic capabilities while also existing as a manifestation of suffering heroic masculinity.

Charles Brand carried the history of Tasso's reception and influence into the twentieth century. His concerns are similar to the biographers who recognized the inherent tension in Tasso's character.¹ Brand acknowledges that Tasso is a creative genius, but he also explicitly calls Tasso's masculinity into question. Brand asks "how does one reconcile Tasso's *undoubted genius* as a poet with his *extreme weakness* as a man?"² This question extends beyond Tasso's poetry to include biographical details that emphasize his suffering. Brand's answer is determined by creating tension: Tasso's greatness "was all in his writings...but his life in the sense of his actions was a pathetic failure."³ This suggests an anxiety about masculine expression in the Tasso tradition, specifically in texts that focus on Tasso's life rather than his poetry. Tasso must be saved from a perceived failed masculinity and the only way to accomplish that is to elevate his poetry at the expense of lived experience.

Brand's coupling of genius and masculine weakness reveal assumptions about his conception of masculinity. He assumes the creative genius must be masculine, yet he asserts that Tasso lacks those qualities. While he never articulates what *would* constitute Tasso's masculinity, Brand does indicate that the poet's greatness is associated with work. Tasso's weakness, on the other hand, is revealed by a lack of "courage, patience, moral fibre, strength of will," and so forth.⁴ Brand's measure of a man privileges creation but disregards Tasso's lived experience, suggesting that Tasso's well-documented suffering is a contributing factor to his lack of masculine character. Brand's assumptions have associations that lie in tension. Despite Tasso's apparent masculine weakness, he still maintains his stature as a creative genius: *genius despite (non)masculinity*. Tasso remains a genius to his

¹ Along with his assessment of Tasso's life and poetry, Brand also explores the ways Tasso influenced early modern British poets, particularly Edmund Spenser and John Milton. Brand's book is broken into two sections. The first examines Tasso's life and work, with an emphasis on *Gerusalemme Liberata*. The second section deals with the mythologizing of Tasso's life and his influence in English literature: "I have tried, without omitting any items of importance, to show the nature and extent of the English interest in Tasso and to judge its significance" (vi). See Charles Peter Brand, *Torquato Tasso: A Study of the Poet and of His Contribution to English Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965).

² *Ibid.*, vi. Emphasis mine.

³ *Ibid.*, 37.

⁴ *Ibid.*

contemporaries and subsequent generations of artists regardless of his inability to protect himself from suffering. However, the second assumption suggests that men who suffer *lack* characteristics that make them masculine: *genius* ≠ *masculinity*. Both assumptions are contentious since they derive from Brand's personal ideology and assume that genius and masculinity cannot exist in tension.

Brand's question serves as the starting point for my examination of Tasso, his poetic genius, and Liszt's engagement with the legend. My approach to analyzing Tasso (poet and man) as the inspirational source of Liszt's symphonic poem centers on two ideas Brand proposes in his genius-masculinity coupling. I take the doubleness Brand alludes to as a central idea of Liszt reimagining of Tasso's life and influence: "undoubted genius" and "extreme weakness as a man."⁵ But rather than attempt to reconcile this tension, I argue doubleness offers a more accurate representation of Tasso's stature as masculine heroic genius. My approach to Liszt's *Tasso*, as I will discuss in the following chapter, centres on Liszt's compositional strategies, further develops how the legend of Tasso was viewed in the nineteenth century. My analysis draws on the idea that creative genius embodies the tension between opposing extremes. These include emotional and psychological states and cultural themes that illustrate how great men adopt feminine traits to assert their masculine independence from normative socio-cultural conventions of gender. The struggle of the creative genius involves an intense labour, but the result is the *birth* of the sublime creation. This idea of labour conflates two possible meanings: it evokes the work of the artist—an "undoubted genius"—but also suggests masculine appropriation of woman's suffering in labour, an example of extreme [masculine] weakness.⁶

⁵ Tasso's apparent madness serves as the primary point of entry for several biographers and creative artists after the mid eighteenth century. Although madness is a valuable approach to understanding Tasso's creative genius, my interpretation of Tasso's popularity and influence centers more on the inherent tension that exists in the biographical and poetic descriptions of Tasso's life. This is mirrored in the concept of the Romantic hero-genius, and his place in the Romantic-era consciousness.

⁶ The use of pregnancy as a metaphor for creative labour has a long history in western thought, dating back at least to Plato. See Plato, *Symposium*, trans. Robin Waterfield (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008). The gendered implications

This chapter is broken into three main sections. The first briefly introduces Tasso's biography-turned-legend from the late Renaissance to the Romantic period. The legend of Tasso was constantly reimagined, depending on appealing biographical details. I examine the way biographers of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries described the poet. Drawing from these biographers, I argue that doubleness and unresolved tension reflect how Tasso's character has been represented. The second section examines more closely Tasso's heroic masculinity in relation to nineteenth-century ideas of creative genius. I draw on Tasso's life to show how, despite his intense suffering, he represents traits of both creative genius and heroic masculinity. In the third section, I examine the works of Goethe, Byron, and (to a lesser extent) Delacroix as torch bearers of the Tasso myth. Their works inspired Liszt to take up Tasso's legend for his own creative work. Liszt's engagement with these artists convey historical ventriloquizing (i.e., drawing inspiration from other artists). This section also explores some of the socio-cultural trends that shaped the Tasso legend, particularly the aspects of his narrative that captured the attention of nineteenth-century artists. Based on my examination of these socio-cultural and historical materials, I suggest that Tasso *is* a genius and he *is* masculine, but his expression of both is not as clear-cut as Brand asks his readers to reconcile.

2.2 Who is Tasso? Biography, Imaginings, and Romantic Re-Imaginings

Who is Tasso? For some, Tasso conjures an image of a brilliant, late Renaissance poet. He is the author of *Gerusalemme liberata* (1581), an epic yet mythologized narrative of the First Crusade.⁷

of this idea finds particular poignancy in Romantic expressions of masculinity. Thank you to Alexander Carpenter for informing me of this history.

⁷ *Gerusalemme liberata* is a representative of the Italian Renaissance tradition of romantic epic poetry. Tasso's plot points borrow heavily from Ariosto, Homer, and Virgil. One of the most important aspects of Tasso's plot in *Gerusalemme liberata* is the tension each character faces between their duty and their heart. The poem itself was extremely successful and served as inspiration for other art forms such as music, painting, dance, and literary works.

This Tasso, the author of poetic masterpieces, was a literary icon; and he was an inspiration for artists across various creative fields.

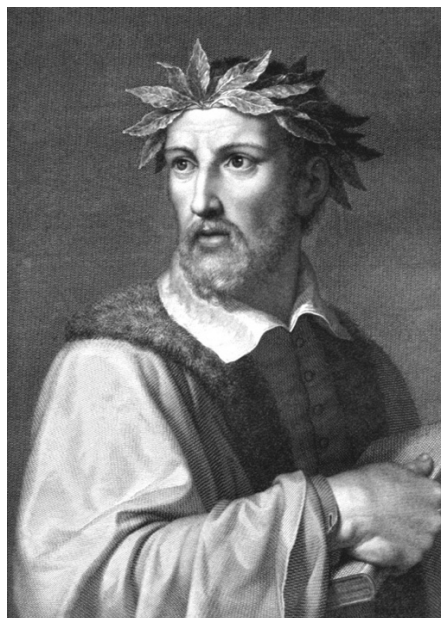


FIGURE 2 STEFANO TOFANELLI; RAFFAELLO MORGHEN, *TORQUATO TASSO*, CA. 1826, ENGRAVING ON PAPER

Edmund Spenser, who in a letter to Sir Walter Raleigh described Tasso as an “excellente poete,” modelled portions of *The Faerie Queene* (1590; 1596) on Tasso’s *Gerusalemme liberata*.⁸ John Milton’s depiction of Satan and the demons in *Paradise Lost* (1667) was also inspired by Tasso’s famous poem. Judith A. Kates asserts that “Tasso, as much as Virgil or Homer, contributes to that cosmopolitan tradition of ‘the best and sagest things,’ which Milton would strive to incorporate into his own poetic voice.”⁹ Tasso’s influence on Spenser, Milton, and other early modern authors relates to style—a perfectly composed epic modelled upon the ancients. In fine art, painters such as Anthony van Dyck and Nicolas Poussin (figure 3) depict famous scenes from *Gerusalemme liberata*, particularly the crux of the narrative when Armida finds Rinaldo and falls in love with him. Poussin’s painting evokes the

⁸ Edmund Spenser, *The Works of Edmund Spenser, With a Selection of Notes from Various Commentators; and a Glossarial Index: to which is Prefixed, Some Account of the Life of Spenser*, ed. Henry John Todd (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1872), 2.

⁹ Judith A. Kates, “The Reevaluation of the Classical Heroic in Tasso and Milton” *Comparative Literature* 26, no. 4 (Autumn 1974): 299. Kates continues to find the similarities between Tasso and Milton based on the composition of a Christian epic.

tension between internal and external expression in Armida's relationship with Rinaldo. The hero, a Christian knight, is under a spell. As he sleeps, motionless, he is unable to protect himself. Meanwhile, the sorceress Armida, with dagger in hand, attempts to murder him, but the act is foiled by Eros, who holds her right arm to prevent the violent act. But beyond the help Eros, Poussin depicts Armida's internalized tenderness through her facial expression and in the gesture of her left hand as she brushes Rinaldo's hand. The tension between the two gestures suggests an internalized desire to love and be loved.



FIGURE 3 NICOLAS POUSSIN (1594-1665), *RINALDO AND ARMIDA* (CA. 1630), OIL ON CANVAS

Music historians and theorists are likely familiar with the array of compositions based on Tasso's poetry and characters.¹⁰ Italian madrigals based on Tasso's epics and lyrics are abundant, though opera in the early seventeenth century proved the musical genre with the appropriate amount of drama and spectacle to bring Tasso's characters to life. Tasso's poetic legacy is indeed impressive,

¹⁰ The list of Italian madrigals and operas that were inspired by Tasso's poetry and famous characters are indeed extensive. Among these composers and their works are: Giaches de Wert's Madrigals *La Gerusalemme liberata* (ca. 1595); Claudio Monteverdi's *Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda* (from his eighth book of madrigals, 1624); Jean-Baptiste Lully's opera *Armide* (1686); André Campra's *Tancredi* (1702); George Frideric Handel's *Rinaldo* (1711); and Christoph Willibald Gluck's *Armide* (1777). This is by no means an exhaustive list, but it does show the continuing presence of Tasso's influence well into the eighteenth-century.

and few doubt that Tasso *is* an exceptional poet. However, by 1750 interest in Tasso expanded beyond his poetic works to his biography. Thus, the answer to the question “who is Tasso?” came to include his lived experiences: his struggles as a legendary creative genius. By the mid 1850s, when Liszt’s *Tasso* reached its final version as a symphonic poem, the figure of Tasso was an emblem of creative genius, infused with Romantic-era meaning(s) of that term.¹¹

The life of Tasso (1544-95), specifically his love for Leonora d’Este and his incarceration for presumed insanity, appealed to the Romantic imagination. His struggles formed the subject of biographical studies, poems, plays, novels, operas, and paintings, all of which established Tasso as a prototypical image of Romantic heroic suffering and creative genius.¹² For Romantic-era readers, Tasso’s life centered on his service at the Court of Ferrara (ca. 1572-79) under the patronage of Duke Alfonso d’Este. During this period, Tasso’s success as a poet reached its apex. His popularity was so significant he was given the title of gentleman and the privilege of a seat at the Duke’s table. The publication and performance of his play *Aminta* (1573) established Tasso’s reputation at the court, but the stakes of maintaining that reputation were high. Tasso’s most famous work, *Gerusalemme liberata*, was in perpetual progress: it occupied his mind for years. The anxiety and stress around its completion proved dangerous to his mental health. Following its initial draft, Tasso sent the manuscript to various critics in order to purge anything remotely heretical. He was forced to revise his work, a process that took years to complete. As a result, Tasso became more anxious, and

¹¹ It is not my intention to provide the detailed compositional history that resulted in the symphonic poem, *Tasso*. Rena Mueller’s excellent and in-depth dissertation about the *Tasso* sketchbook explores each facet of the genesis and completion of this work. See Rena Charin Mueller, “Liszt’s ‘Tasso’ Sketchbook: Studies in Sources and Revisions” (PhD diss, New York, New York University, 1986). For my purposes, I will only refer to the *Tasso* overture composed for the Goethe centenary and the final symphonic poem, published in 1854.

¹² See Brand, *Torquato Tasso*, 205 for more information about the afterlife of Tasso’s influence. Brand also refers to a number of English and non-English biographies of Tasso, which serve as the sources for my study. Late eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century published biographies of Tasso, in particular, include Pierantonio Serassi, *La Vita Di Torquato Tasso* (Bergamo, 1785); John Black, *Life of Torquato Tasso* (Edinburgh: J. Murray, 1810); and Robert Milman, *The Life of Torquato Tasso* (London: H. Colburn, 1850). Although it is unclear whether Liszt indeed read these biographical sources, they were in circulation among the intellectual elite of Liszt’s day.

his behaviour more erratic. Tasso's contentment at Ferrara started to wane because he "heard or believed that he heard malicious and envious tongues all round him and his sensitive temperament led him to magnify the slightest neglect into loss of favour and affronts to his dignity."¹³ Tasso's behaviour became more unpredictable, which led the Duke of Ferrara to first place him under surveillance and then to imprison him at the St. Anna Sanatorium.¹⁴ This biographical detail became the basis for Tasso's legendary suffering under the label of madness. Brand takes this detail further, suggesting if Tasso "was not mad when first imprisoned the terrible strain of long periods of solitary confinement and the humiliation of his detention brought him to the verge of lunacy."¹⁵ Ferrara, therefore, represents doubleness for Tasso: the place of his greatest fame and the source of his greatest misery.

The Romantics recognized the doubleness represented in Tasso's creative output and subsequent imprisonment. This was what made him such a compelling figure. Yet the tension present in Tasso's experience was the result of nearly two hundred years of biographical works that re-imagined his incarceration. Tasso the man became the subject of study, eclipsing his creative works as a measure of manliness. This shift is indicated in the number of biographies published since

¹³ Brand, *Torquato Tasso*, 16.

¹⁴ This description of Tasso's life at the court in Ferrara, along with his madness and imprisonment is extremely condensed. For a more detailed description of Tasso's life during that period (including his wandering from court to court) see Brand, *Torquato Tasso*, especially pages 18-26. One of the more interesting aspects related to Tasso's imprisonment happened after Tasso, once again, returned to Ferrara. Duke Alfonso was expecting his new bride, Margherita Gonzaga, and therefore Tasso was ignored amidst the celebrations. Tasso, according to Brand, "chafed at the humiliation and then in an outburst of anger he shouted his denunciation of the Duke and the Este family, and rushed off to the castle to demand his rights. The attempts to restrain him provoked further outbursts, until he was arrested, carried off to the hospital of St Anna close by, chained in a cell as a raving madman" (22).

¹⁵ Brand, *Torquato Tasso*, 22. Tasso's madness should be considered through the perspective of a Renaissance-era understanding of that term, and how it was presented in social settings. It is likely that Tasso was not, indeed, "mad." His bursts of anger and violence were likely the result of severe anxiety, depression, and possibly schizophrenia. Loss of composure, as Brand points out, was not considered acceptable behaviour in polite society of the Renaissance court, and therefore Tasso was punished (23).

his death.¹⁶ In the hands of early biographers, Tasso's life became more fabrication than reality.¹⁷ His first biographer, whose account served as *the* primary source for later Tasso enthusiasts, was Giovanni Battista Manso. In *Vita di Torquato Tasso*, Manso described certain aspects of Tasso's life that later became legend.¹⁸ Tasso's experiences included his illicit love for Leonora d'Este (often described in terms of the medieval chivalric tradition) and his subsequent imprisonment in an insane asylum, both which were particularly captivating. Manso indicates that Tasso was betrayed by a close friend who shared the secret of his love of Leonora with the Duke of Ferrara. An enraged Tasso struck his friend's face in front of the duke, the embarrassment of which led to a duel. As the duel began, a number of reinforcements came to the aid of the treacherous friend. Despite being outnumbered, Tasso defeated everyone singlehandedly. This chivalric depiction of Tasso contributed to his legend, although there is no evidence to suggest its authenticity. Jason Lawrence argues that this duel was fabricated by Manso to "demonstrate Tasso's skills as a courtier beyond his poetry."¹⁹ Nevertheless, the gender implications of this duel are significant, and it suggests Tasso's masculine expression extends beyond his creative works to his capabilities in a form of physical prowess.²⁰ However, according to Manso, the event of the duel set in motion the legend of Tasso's madness.

¹⁶ For a succinct history of Tasso biographies see Charles Brand's *Torquato Tasso* and Jason Lawrence's article "'When Despotism kept genius in chains': Imagining Tasso's Madness and Imprisonment, 1748-1849," *Studies in Romanticism* 50, no. 3 (Fall 2011): 475-503. Both Brand and Lawrence document, in rough chronological order, the publication history of various biographical and poetic works based on Tasso's life. There are too many works published to outline here, but nevertheless the sheer number suggests a deep preoccupation with Tasso's life and legend, something that reached its apex in the nineteenth century. It is worth mentioning that both Brand and Lawrence include obvious works of fiction—Goethe's play; Byron's poem—as part of the tradition outlining the mythology surrounding Tasso's life. Yet curiously, both Brand and Lawrence point out that several biographies treat Tasso's life not exclusively as nonfiction. In other words, details of Tasso's life, even in works of presumed nonfiction, blur the lines between fiction and nonfiction.

¹⁷ Brand's biography of Tasso has a chapter that outlines Tasso's life through an interaction with Tasso's letters (see chapter one, "Life and Letters") as well as a chapter that deals explicitly with Tasso's legend (chapter eight, "The Legend of Tasso's Life"). The inclusion of these two distinct chapters is an indication of the tension between Tasso's "true" or authentic biography and the legend that surrounds his life.

¹⁸ Giovanni Battista Manso di Villa, *La Vita Di Torquato Tasso* (Euangelista Deuchino, 1621).

¹⁹ Lawrence, "'When Despotism kept genius in chains': Imagining Tasso's Madness and Imprisonment, 1748-1849," 476.

²⁰ While it is beyond the scope of this dissertation, the cultural phenomenon of the duel—and its portrayal in literature—is deeply associated with masculinity. For an excellent book-length study of the masculine implications of the duel see Jennifer A. Low, *Manhood and the Duel: Masculinity in Early Modern Drama and Culture* (New York and Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003). Low's book articulates how the early modern duel helped shape gender assumptions specifically in the privileged upper class.

There is tension, a doubleness, between the outward physical action of the duel and the interiority of the mind. But Manso was skeptical of Tasso's alleged madness: "he did not believe that Tasso was mad, because if he had been insane he would not have been able to talk about his own insanity as he did."²¹ The perceived "deficiency" of the mind proved too enticing for Manso, and he recalled a moment when he saw Tasso speaking with an unseen spirit during a visit at St. Anna.²² Manso's biography is full of errors, misinterpretations, and misrememberings, but because he knew Tasso personally, his biography carries a sense of authenticity. Fiction became reality and his version of Tasso's story became a received "truth." Unrequited love, fantastic duels, and madness make for good fiction.

Pierantonio Serassi's *La Vita di Torquato Tasso* was the first biographical work that attempted to disprove Tasso's attachment to Leonora and to absolve Alfonso, Duke of Ferrara, from any blame associated with Tasso's imprisonment.²³ Yet despite this attempt, authors and readers clung to the legends in Manso's biography. Fiction is more interesting than fact. At the turn of the nineteenth century, a number of British biographers like Serassi continued to dispute the fabricated events of Tasso's life, especially the reasons for his imprisonment.²⁴ John Black's *The Life of Torquato Tasso* ostensibly created a new critical approach to writing a biography of Tasso. Brand describes Black's

²¹ Quoted in Brand, *Torquato Tasso*, 208.

²² John Houle, a British translator and biographer whose "The Life of Tasso," first published in 1763, paraphrases Manso's recollection: "In this place Manso had an opportunity to examine the singular effects of Tasso's melancholy; and often disputed with him concerning a familiar spirit, which he pretended to converse with. Manso endeavoured in vain to persuade his friend that the whole was the illusion of a disturbed imagination: but the latter was strenuous in maintaining the reality of what he asserted; and, to convince Manso, desired him to be present at one of those mysterious conversations. Manso had the complaisance to meet him the next day, and while they were engaged in discourse, on a sudden he observed that Tasso kept his eyes fixed upon a window, and remained in a manner immoveable: he called him by his name several times, but received no answer: at last Tasso cried out, 'There is the friendly spirit who is come to converse with me: look, and you will be convinced of the truth of all that I have said...'" See Houle, "The Life of Tasso," in *Jerusalem Delivered* (London, 1763): xxxix-xl.

²³ Pierantonio Serassi, *La Vita Di Torquato Tasso* (Bergamo, 1785).

²⁴ It is worth noting Serassi's denial that the relationship between Leonora and Tasso was anything more than friendship. However, as Brand writes, Serassi's "tone aroused the suspicion that he was deliberately shielding the good name of the Este family, whose patronage he enjoyed" (212). Thus, despite its more balanced perspective, bias is undoubtedly present.

biography as an “exceptionally mature and balanced work for its time,”²⁵ a value judgement based on perceived “facts.” Given the long history of blurred details and half-truths, Black’s biography—like Serassi’s before him—offered some semblance of balance and perspective. Yet despite Black’s attempt, the continued exploration of Tasso’s life and legend suggests that readers were “more than willing to accept as true the picture of the tormented poet...even after the legitimacy of the work itself had been seriously brought into question.”²⁶ I agree, not only because of the plethora of creative works based on Tasso’s life, but also because of the way some biographers in the nineteenth-century describe Tasso’s life in terms of the culturally prevalent ideas of heroic masculinity and creative genius. Brand, though writing from a mid-twentieth-century perspective, articulates this when he states Tasso was

a prototype of the Romantic poet, loving passionately but hopelessly and beyond his station, the *victim* of political oppression, maintaining his dignity and essential nobility of heart through intense and *prolonged suffering*, the *hypersensitive creative artist at odds with society*, wandering restlessly from court to court or chained in a lunatic’s cell.²⁷

This is biography made poetic, and the driving ideas—especially the victimized creative artist suffering within society—were explored by Romantic-era authors, painters, and composers, who found some semblance of Tasso’s struggle in their own heroic striving. The assessment that Tasso evokes characteristics common to Romantic poets reveals a tension between heroism and masculinity. Tasso is a “victim,” but still maintains “dignity and essential nobility.” In the court, nobility represents the highest form of masculine achievement, at least in terms of social structures. Tasso was initially offered the space to express this normative masculinity appropriate for Duke Alphonso’s court. Yet, according to Brand (and his deep concern over Tasso’s masculine weakness)

²⁵ Brand, *Torquato Tasso*, 213.

²⁶ Lawrence, ““When Despotism kept genius in chains,”” 1748-1849,” 482.

²⁷ Brand, *Torquato Tasso*, 205. Emphasis mine. Brand proceeds to say that much of Tasso’s legend derives from linking his poetic characters to certain aspects of his life.

the qualities of Tasso's character that center on victimization, suffering, and hypersensitivity negate those masculine norms. But this tension is precisely why Tasso is considered a prototypical Romantic poet-hero. His masculine expression has little to do with the niceties of court life and everything to do with the doubleness of living outside the boundaries of normative social structures.

Nineteenth-century biographers and poets saw Tasso's madness, or more accurately his melancholy and restlessness, as a metaphor for the creative process. British biographer John Black offers poignant insight into the Romantic artist's preoccupation with the embodiment of Tasso's inner tensions:

...few men of great eminence...have enjoyed much uniformity of happiness: and that their life is a checquered tissue of pleasure and of pain. This...seems to be principally owing to a greater delicacy of feeling, and as...they never receive a recompense proportioned to their exertions, this must increase their natural disposition to melancholy. There are some studies, too, which are naturally afflicting, as those which engage us in the spectacle of society, and of the human heart...Happiness, also, seems to consist of a kind of conformity...a kind of equilibrium between our inclinations and the means of satisfying them. But as desires of human beings are vast in proportion to the genius, the life of a great man must be spent in continual aspirations, in the ceaseless agitation of an ever active, ever insatiable passion. Thus, he will be often the most restless and dissatisfied of mankind: tormented at once by a fretful impatience, and by a vacancy of heart amidst all the puerile enjoyments of life. When a person is obliged to give up his liberty to procure subsistence, when he has to humble his genius to flatter the passions and prejudices of a patron; the mind either loses its energy, and is enfeebled by servile timidity, or it becomes suspicious and irritable, by its continual struggle between that liberty congenial to genius, and that dependence to which it is subjected.²⁸

Similarly, within the first paragraph of his biography of Tasso, Richard Wilde articulates tension in Tasso's life and legend:

[t]here is scarcely any poet whose life excites a more *profound* and *melancholy* interest...His short and brilliant career of *glory* captivates the imagination, while the heart is deeply affected by his subsequent misfortunes. *Greater fame*, and *greater misery*, have seldom been the lot of *man*.²⁹

²⁸ Black, *Life of Torquato Tasso*, 228.

²⁹ Richard Henry Wilde, *Conjectures and Researches Concerning the Love, Madness, and Imprisonment of Torquato Tasso*, vol. 1 (New York: Alexander V. Blake, 1842), 2. Emphasis mine.

The two themes Black and Wilde allude to are the effects of melancholy and (social) alienation. The *great men* of artistic merit cannot, in the Romantic consciousness, conform to complete happiness since their creative spark flows from the tension they experience between the pleasure of creativity and the pain in “continual aspirations.” Common members of society, those lacking creative genius, have the capability to live within an equilibrium of emotional states because of their conformity to social pressures. The genius, however, is always in a condition of continual aspiration and agitation—striving and suffering: the hallmarks of the Romantic hero-genius.³⁰ These qualities reflect fierce independence and self-assertion and suggest that *being* a genius reinforces the Romantic myth of individualism, a value so prized by creative artists that it has become revered and cultish. The result is a heroic figure who portrays an admired cultural Other living in society, but capable of transcending its confines.³¹ The tension of this masculine heroic quality, an emblem of the Romantic hero, manifests not wholly in triumphant resolution, but in the journey—the perpetual striving toward that resolution.

2.3 Tasso’s Expression of Masculine Heroic Genius

These biographical details not only explore Tasso’s heroic journey and the tension between emotional extremes, but also the doubleness that exists in the expression of heroic masculinity and creative genius.³² I hinted at this connection above, but I want to emphasize the way Tasso’s

³⁰ Although Black offers this insightful perspective, he often moralizes about the dangers of genius: “Let me caution therefore all young persons from considering indiscretion, or want of foresight, as a test of, or constant attendant upon genius.” See Black, *Life of Torquato Tasso*, 183. I suggest we may interpret Black’s statement as a warning to the young (and Black is likely referring to the generation of young Romantic poets) about the dangers of living a fictionalized life. Thus, there is a sense of “proper” moral conduct, which the genius, due to his increased passion and instability, does not display.

³¹ Andrew Elfenbein, *Romantic Genius: The Prehistory of a Homosexual Role* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 17. For a discussion of the genius’s self-assertion, see specifically Elfenbein’s book chapter “Mary Wollstonecraft and the Sexuality of Genius,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Mary Wollstonecraft*, ed. Claudia L. Johnson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 234.

³² Many writings from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries refer to literary characters, authors, musicians, and politicians as “great men.” Women and the idea of femininity is either seen as a domesticated other, or as a foil to the construction and/or expression of masculinity that exists in any given socio-economic sphere. Female creators are either

biographers spoke about him in terms of gender expression. Brand describes Tasso as a “victim of political oppression” who experienced “prolonged suffering” due to his being at “odds with society.”³³ These signifiers reflect Brand’s negative associations with Tasso’s experiences—victimization, suffering, and existing outside gendered social norms, perceived from a mid-twentieth-century perspective. In these experience, Brand asserts that Tasso displays “weakness as a man.” However, Brand also indicates that Tasso’s character contains “dignity and essential nobility of heart,” which is a positive perception of masculinity. Black’s description of Tasso (from the mid-nineteenth-century), then, is a doubled expression of masculinity. He describes Tasso as a “great [man] of eminence,” who is “ever active” and who attempts to live in the “liberty congenial to [his] genius.”³⁴ Yet, he goes on to write that Tasso’s character also contains a “delicacy of feeling” and a “disposition to melancholy,”³⁵ two descriptors that undercut conventional manliness. Finally, Wilde emphasizes Tasso’s “greater fame” and “greater misery,”³⁶ two ideals that reflect tension in the poet’s masculine expression. Fame represents acceptance and, quite possibly, emulation. Misery suggests an emotional state to avoid. The significance of the doubleness in Tasso’s character that Brand, Black, and Wilde describe shows that masculinity, as understood throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, is not adequately explained by binary relationships. Tasso is indeed masculine by virtue of his gender expression, but what it means to be masculine within the context of heroic genius is fluid.

In scrutinizing the Romantic era’s use of the term *genius*—and the men who exhibit the traits of genius—several figures who explicitly challenged gender stereotypes emerge. However, male geniuses still maintained a privileged place because of their gender. A “weak man” whose experience

acknowledged and then excluded from the canon or are completely invisible. Thus, there are virtually no instances of records describing “great women” in historical, or period-specific documents. Even powerful women like Cleopatra and Queen Elizabeth I, to name only two, are described in terms of feminine qualities: exotic seductress and virgin respectively.

³³ Brand, *Torquato Tasso*, 205.

³⁴ Black, *Life of Torquato Tasso*, 228.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ Wilde, *Conjectures and Researches Concerning the Love, Madness, and Imprisonment of Torquato Tasso*, 2.

is clouded by profound suffering, misery, and melancholy is still a man. Elfenbein encapsulates this cogently when he writes that although male geniuses possessed feminine traits,

[t]his femininity had a dense web of associations... [I]t generally floated uneasily between older, negative associations with *excess* and *lack* of self-discipline and newer, more ambivalent ones with sensibility, imagination, and passion.³⁷

From a socio-cultural perspective, Elfenbein proposes that gender ambiguity is embodied in the Romantic hero-genius. The traits once considered feminine were recoded, or appropriated, as masculine. This state of doubleness that “floated uneasily between,” suggests tension that does not require resolution, despite its uneasiness. This echoes the tensions Brand, Black, and Wilde set up in their descriptions of Tasso’s character: Tasso is a great man of noble heart who suffers from profound melancholy. The male Romantic genius, of which Tasso is a prototype, lives in a state of tension. This aspect places the genius in a position of privilege. To be simultaneously within and outside of social structures, specifically in expressions of masculinity, the genius can possess qualities that move in a state of flux. Tension and doubleness are not seen as faults or a lack of self-control, but rather valorized as marks of all-encompassing creative power. Christine Battersby echoes this when she writes: “if male genius was ‘feminine’ this merely proved his cultural superiority.”³⁸ His sensitivity, his tendency to retreat from society into the mind, and his inability to find an equilibrium of emotional states place the genius outside “typical” gender ideologies even if aspects of his character are shaped by feminine qualities.

Tasso is a figure of heroic genius who exhibits profound masculine creativity in connection to his extreme individualism. The concept of individuality is a mainstay in discourses of Romanticism. Personal experiences form part of a larger creative narrative that incorporates the artist into his

³⁷ Elfenbein, *Romantic Genius*, 17. Emphasis mine.

³⁸ Christine Battersby, *Gender and Genius: Towards a Feminist Aesthetics* (London: The Woman’s Press Ltd., 1989), 3. Emphasis in original.

works.³⁹ In the early nineteenth century, ideas of autonomy and individuality became the benchmarks for normative ideologies of masculinity, though not necessarily traits unique to the genius. Culturally, artistic achievement by “great men” of genius takes “maleness as the norm for artistic or creative achievement, however ‘feminine’ that male might be.”⁴⁰ Femininity, however, does not indicate inferiority, but rather an additional trait the masculine heroic genius embodies. These gendered nuances exist in nineteenth-century depictions of Tasso’s subjectivity and contribute to his creativity while also pointing to his place within social structures. Tasso’s genius and individualism reflect this specific socio-cultural moment, revealing that Romantic heroism—and the tension within the hero—functions both outside social norms and within the constraints of society. Brand articulates a negativity in the appropriation of feminine qualities in the male creative genius. Yet his quest to reconcile Tasso’s genius and “weakness as a man” is a moot point because the answer exists in the ways the masculine heroic genius negotiates the society around him. Extreme weakness as a man does not affect the qualities—or the worship—of the creative genius. On the contrary, Tasso’s character helps constitute the category of heroic masculinity and creative genius as perceived in the mid nineteenth century.

Like other forms of cultural production, Liszt’s *Tasso* and Byron’s *Lament of Tasso* contribute to the collection of “male heroes under the rubric of originality, creativity, and virility.”⁴¹ Ian Biddle and Kirsten Gibson here refer to the nineteenth-century preoccupation with hierarchizing artistic works by aligning “great men” to some form of cultural product. Despite his passivity, Tasso evokes a monumental, manly heroic character whose genius derives from both his suffering and his posthumous triumph: again, a sort of striving. Lament (*lamento*) and (e) triumph (*trionfo*)—the subtitles

³⁹ Numerous examples of this exist in Romantic artistic creation, and we only need look at influential figures such as Lord Byron, Beethoven, Berlioz, and Liszt (to name only a few) to see how personal life/experiences can be incorporated into creative works.

⁴⁰ Battersby, *Gender and Genius*, 18.

⁴¹ Ian Biddle and Kirsten Gibson, *Masculinity and Western Musical Practice* (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2009), 2.

of Liszt's symphonic poem—are the two states that describe the experiences of Tasso as reinterpreted and reimagined in the Romantic consciousness, and they also represent the tension associated with creative genius.

2.4 Liszt's Inspirations: Historical Ventriloquizing and the Spirit of Tasso

The process of aligning oneself with inspirational figures is typical of artistic creation, and often reflects associations with cultural and creative monumentality. Even in the nineteenth century, geniuses became an embodiment of the creator and inspiration from outside influences remained an important aspect of artistic creation. Tasso's life captivated late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century writers, painters, and composers. This resulted in a tradition of capturing Tasso's torment and suffering as a reflection of an individual artist's own struggles. Jason Lawrence, Mirka Horova, Jerome McGann and others describe this artistic and metaphorical act as ventriloquizing: Tasso's thoughts, actions, and inactions speak through artists who resonate with his suffering.⁴² The idea of possessing genius is linked to this act, which allows one's voice to speak through another artistic creator. In contrast, during the Classical period, the Muses represented this source of inspiration—they are the figurative voices of exterior, higher powers. Creative works did not solely belong to the artist, but to the Muses that bestowed the gift of creativity. Inspiration, as Erin Johnson-Hill writes, “came not from within the individual but from an external spring.”⁴³ This vision of genius portrays unfettered creative inspiration that inexplicably appears and disappears.

⁴² See Jason Lawrence, “‘When Despotism Kept Genius in Chains’: Imagining Tasso’s Madness and Imprisonment, 1748-1849,” 480; Mirka Horova, “Byron’s The Lament of Tasso and the Mannerism of Madness,” in *37th Annual International Byron Society Conference* (Byron and Latin Culture, University of Valladolid, Spain, 2011), 1; and Jerome McGann, *Byron and Romanticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 36-52.

⁴³ Erin Johnson-Hill, “Romanticism, the Classical Muse, and the Beethovenian Gaze: A Changing Iconography of Musical Inspiration,” *Music in Art* 33, no. 1/2 (Spring-Fall 2008), 248.

Tasso's biographical tradition portrays genius as a laborious, hard-won enterprise. This is because it involves doublenesses: misery and glory; social acceptance and alienation; heroism and weakness; masculinity and femininity. In the figure of Tasso, Romantic-era creative artists found parallels to their own struggles with creativity. The well-spring of the Muses almost completely disappeared and was replaced by individual expression. This resulted in artists more actively engaged in the creative process, even though that process involved interior and conflicting tensions. Furthermore, the doubleness that existed within the artist as a mark of character translated into the act of creation itself. In the Romantic consciousness, genius is both laborious and holy. To be a genius means to allow the inner tensions of being to spring forth into the creative work. Liszt's letter to George Sand articulates this process:

The artist lives alone, and when circumstances throw him into the middle of society, he, in the midst of discordant distractions, creates an *impenetrable solitude within his soul* that no human voice can breach. ... There he hears eternal, harmonious music whose cadence regulated the universe, and all the voices of creation are united for him in a marvellous concert. A burning fever then seizes him, his blood courses impetuously through his veins, filling his brain with a thousand compelling concepts from which there is no escape except by the *holy labour of art*.⁴⁴

The symbolic value of the isolated creative genius found its way into virtually every form of artistic enterprise in the nineteenth century. The focus on the creator, and his internal struggle to create, made art a process of self-assertion despite the labour. However, by drawing upon associations with external ideas or figures, the idea of an active, individual genius appears to counter the notion of ventriloquizing. Can we rightfully assume Tasso is some sort of Muse for artists? Consider Liszt's own words: there is an "impenetrable solitude within" but all the "voices of creation" enter his consciousness and inspire his art. Ventriloquizing in the Romantic era appears through an act of meditation, rather than solely inspiration. Regina Hewitt aptly describes this process as "the creation

⁴⁴ Franz Liszt, letter to George Sand, 30 April 1837. Quoted in Franz Liszt, *An Artist's Journey: Letters d'un bachelier ès musique, 1835-1841*, ed. and trans. Charles Suttoni (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 28-29. Emphasis mine.

of a fictional persona out of the historical person,”⁴⁵ essentially a mouthpiece for the creative artist’s own expressions of being misunderstood. The result is always achieved through “holy labour,” which implies a degree of individuality on behalf of the artist.

Doubleness and its inherent tension are at the heart of Tasso’s character as it was reimagined in the Romantic period by biographers. Black’s and Wilde’s biographies are two examples of how the idea of tension—and the fluidity that tension creates—plays out in the literary genre of biography. Yet, this tension exists in the fabric of Romantic-era culture and society, which is then expressed in the traditional forms of literary fiction. Brand’s book and Lawrence’s article trace a remarkable shift in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in the *type* of literature that explored Tasso’s life and literary output. Yet despite the desire to present Tasso’s life as accurately as possible, authors and other artists continued to present the poet-genius as a fictionalized, misunderstood martyr, unlucky in love and driven mad. This is because Tasso’s presentation as an archetypal figure legitimizes the work of those on the margins, an idea Brand conveys when he writes “Romantic writers saw in Tasso a forerunner of their own picture of the unhappy creative artist.”⁴⁶ Liszt exists within this artistic realm, which is not only apparent in his choice of subject matter but also in his writings on the struggle of the artist.⁴⁷

In the preface to his symphonic poem, Liszt indicates that his concept of *Tasso* first appeared as an incidental overture to Goethe’s play *Torquato Tasso* (1789).⁴⁸ However, during its extensive revision process, Liszt confesses that Lord Byron’s poem, *The Lament of Tasso* (1817), was ultimately more inspiring. Byron’s *Tasso*, according to Liszt, evokes a “respectful compassion...for the manes

⁴⁵ Regina Hewitt, “Torquato Tasso--A Byronic Hero?,” *Neophilologus*, no. 71 (1987): 432.

⁴⁶ Brand, *Torquato Tasso*, 218.

⁴⁷ Franz Liszt, “Liszt on the Artist in Society,” in *Liszt and His World*, ed. Christopher Howard Gibbs and Dana Gooley, trans. Ralph P. Locke (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 291–302. See also Franz Liszt and Carolyne Sayn-Wittgenstein, “Berlioz and His ‘Harold’ Symphony,” in *Strunk’s Source Readings in Music History*, ed. Leo Treitler, Second Revised (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1998), 1158–1174.

⁴⁸ The overture was first performed at Weimar’s Goethe Centenary Festival in August, 1849.

[beneficent spirit] of the *great man*.” [“...nous nous sommes plus directment inspirés de la respectueuse compatissane de Byron pour les manes du grand homme qu’il évoquait, qu de l’oeuvre du poète allemande”].⁴⁹ Liszt incorporated Byron’s poetic themes because his version of the heroic Tasso aligned more with Liszt’s vision of creative genius. Nevertheless, Goethe’s *Torquato Tasso* serves as part of Liszt’s overall creative work since it incorporates the narrative of:

[t]he unhappy destiny of the most unfortunate of poets [that] had struck and occupied the imagination of the most powerful poetic geniuses of our time...

[“Les malheurs de la destinée du plus infortuné des poètes avaient frappé et occupé l’imagination des plus puissants génies poétiques de notre temps, Goethe et Byron”].⁵⁰

Liszt’s reference to both poets suggests that he gleaned from them some larger themes that played into his overall understanding of Tasso’s heroic genius. Thus, Tasso the poet was filtered through Goethe’s, Byron’s, and Liszt’s own imagination—ventriloquism thrice enacted.

Goethe initially started his drama *Torquato Tasso* in 1780. The larger theme that occupied its earliest stages was unrequited love. However, after reading Serassi’s biography, Goethe changed the overall focus to the tensions between the socially elite statesman Antonio Montecatino and Tasso.⁵¹ The result is a dramatic narrative that centers on eighteenth-century class structure and social norms. Gender expression, like so many other works based on Tasso’s life and legend, is a less explicit theme, but it nevertheless exists as part of the narrative. Furthermore, Goethe’s Tasso, as Kari Lokke writes, “clearly exemplifies the tension between integration into an oppressive status quo and emancipation into a new social reality.”⁵² In this reimagining, Tasso is plagued by the strictures of his

⁴⁹ Franz Liszt, Preface to *Tasso: Lamento e Trionfo*, English trans. Humphrey Searle, 1. Emphasis mine. The OED defines “manes” as the “deified souls of dead ancestors as beneficent spirits” or the “spirit or shade of a dead person, considered an object of homage or reverence or as demanding to be appropriated.” Appropriated means “to make well-disposed or favourably inclined; to win or regain the favour of; to appear, conciliate.”

⁵⁰ Liszt, Preface to *Tasso*. English Translation by Humphrey Searle, 1.

⁵¹ Kari Lokke, “Weimar Classicism and Romantic Madness: Tasso in Goethe, Byron, and Shelley,” *European Romantic Review* 2, no. 2 (2008): 197-198. Lokke indicates that the character attributes of Antonio and Tasso represent the two sides of Goethe’s own personality.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 198.

social boundaries, which sought to rigidly define binaries between hero/poet, master/servant, man/woman, propriety/freedom, spirit/body, love/sex, and society/individual. Through the course of the drama, Goethe depicts Tasso's continual psychological breakdown brought on by growing anxiety and suspicion. This is portrayed by frequent soliloquies that reveal the inner tensions of Tasso's character. Goethe uses Tasso's madness to warn against deviation from social hierarchies. According to Lokke, Tasso is "associated with the women in the play who are also referred to as children... [therefore he] clearly represents a threat to such values as individual responsibility, private property, order and moderation."⁵³ Goethe knew the ramifications of stepping outside social and gender norms as they existed in the eighteenth century, and his Tasso exemplifies these dangers.

Goethe presents Tasso as a warning to those, perhaps himself included, who might stray too far outside their social position. Tasso may therefore be perceived as a threat to social order. His imprisonment is the result of a rivalry with a statesman, who represents social order, rather than the poet's passionate behaviour. Goethe's reimagining strips Tasso of heroic individuality while simultaneously emphasizing social conformity. Yet, further consideration of Goethe's reconceiving of Tasso may also suggest his deep understanding of unjust social strictures. The result remains the same, but the larger commentary that underlies Goethe's play reveals the more insidious side of social class—the detriment associated with non-normative expressions of courtly masculinity. A more nuanced perspective on Goethe's reinterpretation consists of parallels between Tasso and Goethe: "the focus of the final version of the play, then, becomes the conflict between the pragmatic statesman and the dreamy poet, two powerful sides of Goethe himself."⁵⁴ In Goethe's interpretation, Tasso's "weakness as a man" results in his imprisonment. The "dreamy poet" has no social standing

⁵³ Ibid., 199.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 198.

within the powerful courtly life of the aristocracy, and his punishment for this “crime” is incarceration.

Goethe’s Tasso, though ultimately a bastion of propriety befitting his social status, explores the personal struggles associated with creation. However, as Hewitt explains, “Goethe gives his Tasso the sensitivity to struggle against the constraints of courtly society but the grace ultimately to bow to it.”⁵⁵ Goethe was unwilling to give Tasso full autonomy. The voice of the individual is quashed by the voices of the collective.

Lord Byron, on the other hand, transformed Tasso’s masculine genius into an enigma, a sublime expression of heroic transcendence unfettered by social norms and prisoner’s chains. Byron gives his Tasso a greater sense of self-reliance that leads to the deification of the struggling artist as heroic genius. The setting of Byron’s poem also clearly reflects the separation of heroic genius from society. Rather than interacting at court, Tasso is imprisoned and isolated. Yet this isolation metaphorically portrays him as a challenger who defies social order.⁵⁶ There is a self-assertive strength at the heart of his character, a quality frequently found in Romantic—and Byronic—heroes. Furthermore, Byron’s Tasso blatantly disregards social hierarchies and boundaries, clear in the frequent reference to Leonora throughout the poem. For instance, as Tasso professes his love for Leonora, he recognizes that she out-classes him: “I knew thy state, my station, and I knew/A Princess was no love-mate for a bard.”⁵⁷ Yet in the act of asserting his individuality (and his masculine form of poetic genius), Tasso usurps Leonora’s social position by encapsulating her within his own prediction for the future:

But thou when all that Birth and Beauty throws
Of magic round thee is extinct shalt have
One half the laurel which o’ershades my grave.

⁵⁵ Regina Hewitt, “Torquato Tasso--A Byronic Hero?,” 432.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 434.

⁵⁷ Lord George Gordon Byron, “The Lament of Tasso,” in *The Complete Poetical Works of Lord Byron*, ed. Paul Elmer More, The Cambridge Poets (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1905), 438.

No power in death can tear our names apart,
 As none in life could rend thee from my heart.
 Yes, Leonora! it shall be our fate
 To be entwined forever but too late!⁵⁸

Leonora's legacy in Byron's reimagining is inextricably bound to Tasso's fate. Tasso achieves the status of a "great man" in history, honoured as a genius of epic, heroic, and individualistic proportions—signified through the crown of laurels. But his genius is also inextricably tied to the (unrequited) love of Leonora and to imprisonment. This emphasis on unrequited love and imprisonment represent the stripping of conventional/normative masculinity, at least for Brand and others who refuse to accept the doubleness in Tasso's character.⁵⁹ Tasso's forced departure from the court is not the result of his denial of social order, but is an exemplification of his defiance. For the Romantic heroic genius, rejecting and defying what society dictates is an aggressive form of individualism. Thus, despite his apparent "weakness" of the mind, submission, unhindered passion, and sensitivity, Tasso represents the deeply self-sufficient, nineteenth-century masculine heroic genius. He is neither passive nor weak in his masculine experiences. His defiance gives him the power to create and to be heard.

Byron's poem focuses on the suffering and madness of Tasso, an aspect Liszt refers to in the preface to his symphonic poem. Liszt writes that Byron makes us "feel and hear the groans of Tasso in his prison." ["Byron, en nous transmettant en quelque sorte les gémissements du Tasse dans sa prison"].⁶⁰ Unlike Goethe's drama, Byron's *The Lament of Tasso* is a lyric. While there is little action, Byron "explores the protagonist's state of mind and emotions in detail."⁶¹ It is unsurprising that Liszt

⁵⁸ Ibid., 440.

⁵⁹ The narrative of Tasso and his love for Leonora contains aspects suggestive of the chivalric tradition of courtly love. One of the major aspects of this tradition is the idea of unrequited love, in which the man of lower social standing loves a lady of the court. This tradition suggests various questions that may relate to masculine expression.

⁶⁰ Liszt, Preface to *Tasso*, English translation by Humphrey Searle, 1.

⁶¹ Joanne Cormac, *Liszt and the Symphonic Poem* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 98.

was drawn to Byron's reinterpretation of Tasso's life and legend, for in the hands of Byron, Tasso is a fully-formed Romantic hero who represents, as Liszt himself wrote, the "grand *antithesis* of *genius* ill-treated during life, and shining after death with a light which should overwhelm its persecutors."

[“Nous avons voulu indiquer ce contraste dans le titre même de notre oeuvre, et eussions souhaité réussir à formuler cette grande antithèse d'genie mal traité durant sa vie, et rayonnant après sa mort d'une lumière écrasante pour ses persécuteurs”].⁶² Tasso's lament rises from his struggle to remain autonomous. His final triumph “makes a subversive statement about the *ability of art* to challenge and overthrow any social organization.”⁶³ The triumph of genius, read through Byron's reimagining of Tasso, not only shows the positive value of striving, but it portrays victory made manifest even (or especially) in death:⁶⁴

Long years of outrage, calumny, and wrong;
Imputed madness, prison'd solitude,
And the mind's canker in its savage mood,
When the impatient thirst of light and air
Parches the heart...⁶⁵

Byron touches upon the false imputation that led to Tasso's imprisonment. His reputation is at stake, and the ramifications of that attach to his mind like a disease. This passage is so eloquent because it shows Tasso's acceptance of incarceration. Thirst for light and air, which I read as symbols of freedom in contrast to a prison cell, parch the heart: freedom creates an insatiable thirst. Byron continues the idea of necessary imprisonment when he writes “[a]ll this hath somewhat worn me, and may wear,/But must be borne.”⁶⁶ Tasso's suffering is an integral component of his heroic development: his genius depends upon it; and his masculinity is expressed through it.

⁶² Liszt, Preface to *Tasso*, English translation by Humphrey Searle, 1.

⁶³ Hewitt, “Torquato Tasso--A Byronic Hero?”, 442.

⁶⁴ See Peter L Thorslev, *The Byronic Hero: Types and Prototypes* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1962), 122.

⁶⁵ Byron, *The Lament of Tasso*, 436.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 437-438.

In Byron's representation, Tasso's madness serves as a metaphor for the creative process. Lokke indicates that Byron's lyric "represents a radical denial of any affinity between madness and the true genius."⁶⁷ Byron emphasizes Tasso's wrongful imprisonment by physically and metaphorically separating the poet from the tortured cries of the insane:

For we are crowded in our solitudes
 Many, but each divided by the wall,
 Which echoes Madness in her babbling moods;
 While all can hear, none heed his neighbour's call
 None! save that One, the veriest wretch of all,
 Who was not made to be the mate of these,
 Nor bound between Distraction and Disease.⁶⁸

Eugène Delacroix portrays this scene of the imprisoned-but-not-mad Tasso in the second version of this painting, *Tasso in the House of the Insane* (1839) [figure 4]. Delacroix was clearly inspired by Byron's depiction of Tasso and after reading Byron's *Lament of Tasso* in translation, Delacroix offered the following commentary:

N'est-ce pas que cette vie du Tasse est bien intéressant? Que cet homme a été malheureux! Qu'on est rempli d'indignation contre ces indignes protecteurs qui l'opprimaient sous le prétexte de le garantir contre ses ennemis, et qui le privaient d ses chers manuscrits! Que de pleurs de rage et d'indignation il a dû verser en voyant que pour les lui enlever plus sûrement on l'accusait de folie et d'impuissance de produire. Qu'il a dû des fois user sa tête à ses indignes barreaux, en pensant à la bassesse des hommes, et accuser l'insuffisante tendresse de celle qu'il a immortalise en son amour!

[Isn't Tasso's life truly interesting? How unhappy that man was! How one is filled with indignation against those unworthy protectors who oppressed him under the pretext of protecting him from his enemies, and who deprived him of his cherished manuscripts! How many tears of rage and indignation he must have shed in seeing that in order to take them from him more certainly they accused him of madness and creative sterility. He must have worn his head sometimes against those unworthy prison bars, thinking about the corruption of

⁶⁷ Lokke, "Weimar Classicism and Romantic Madness: Tasso in Goethe, Byron, and Shelley," 203.

⁶⁸ Byron, *The Lament of Tasso*, 437-438.

mankind, and accused the insufficient affection of the woman whom he immortalized with his love!]⁶⁹

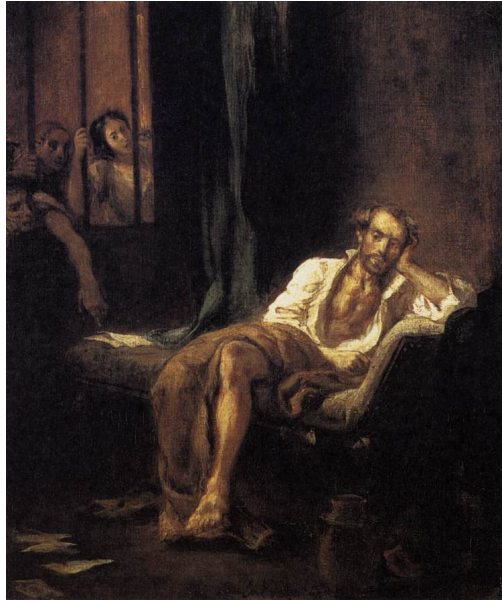


FIGURE 4 EUGÈNE DELACROIX, *TASSO À L'HÔPITAL DE ST. ANNE FERRARA*, 1839, OIL ON CANVAS

Delacroix presents the doubleness of being both within and apart. The physical distance between Tasso and the other inmates is striking. While he remains alone in his cell, the other inmates share a common space. As the other inmates bark through the bars, Tasso remains composed. Delacroix represents a “melancholy poet...[trying to] hold on to his reason by studiously ignoring and thus distancing himself from the other desperate inmates of St. Anna.”⁷⁰ Similarly, Lee Johnson describes Delacroix’s Tasso as a “spiritual and contemplative figure surrounded by coarse-grained madmen, implying that he is the only sane person in a mad world.”⁷¹ Although he appears to be dishevelled and on the brink of madness (Brand’s masculine weakness), Tasso is liberated. He is free from social constraints, free from his fellow inmates who are mad, and free any forms of social expectations. This Tasso is a representation of genius and creative immortality expressed through melancholy and

⁶⁹ See Delacroix, *Oeuvres littéraires*. (Paris: Nizet, 1923), 57. Quoted in, and translated by, Rebecca M. Pauly, “Baudelaire and Delacroix on Tasso in Prison: Romantic Reflections on a Renaissance Martyr,” *College Literature* 30, no. 2 (Spring 2003): 122.

⁷⁰ Lawrence, “Imagining Tasso’s Madness and Imprisonment,” 499.

⁷¹ Lee Johnson, *The Paintings of Eugène Delacroix: A Critical Catalogue 1816-1831*, Vol. 1 (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1981), 93.

anguish. He is the face of the Romantic heroic-genius, living in solitude and expressing deep defiance. This is the Romantic hero made immortal.

No it shall be immortal! and I make
 A future temple of my present cell,
 Which nations yet shall visit for my sake.
 While thou, Ferrara! when no longer dwell
 The ducal chiefs within thee, shalt fall down,
 And crumbling piecemeal view thy hearthless halls.
 A poet's wreath shall be thine only crown
 A poet's dungeon thy most far renown,
 While strangers wander o'er thy unpeopled walls!⁷²

Like in Delacroix's painting, Byron portrays the moment of Tasso's apotheosis, his transformation to an existence beyond his suffering. But like all heroes, he does not reach apotheosis without the necessary struggle, which is ultimately what makes him heroic.

2.5 Concluding Remarks

When Brand suggested that the tension at the heart of Tasso's character needed to be reconciled, he was writing in the mid-twentieth century from a place that valued a specific type of masculinity. His rhetoric suggests that Tasso cannot be simultaneously an exceptional poet and an exceptional, non-conforming man. Thus, the tension associated with Tasso's life and legend is truly problematic. But Tasso's legend can tell a different story. The doubleness Brand seeks to reconcile is precisely what makes Tasso an exemplary expression of heroic masculinity and creative genius. Tasso as portrayed by Black, Wilde, Byron, Delacroix, and others was sensitive, passive, and misunderstood, but he was also aggressive in his defiance. This is a heightened form of masculinity, one that was befitting a heroic genius. As such, his tension does not need to be reconciled, but rather acknowledged and accepted.

⁷² Byron, *The Lament of Tasso*, 439.

Chapter Three: Liszt's *Tasso: Lamento e Trionfo*

3.1 Preamble

As I argued in the previous chapter, the legends of Tasso's life gradually represented him as a great man of history. Yet, his life was characterized by the tensions created by continual creative aspirations, personal conflicts, and frustrations, all leading to his state of ceaseless agitation.¹ In this chapter, I will argue that Liszt capitalized on these tensions. Yet, while he depicts suffering as an aspect of heroic masculinity, suffering is only one component of Tasso's experience as Liszt presents it. Triumph, transcendence, and legacy are equally emphasized. Liszt's inclusion of Tasso's posthumous triumph as a part of his *Tasso* articulates a vision of creative genius whose triumph as a creative hero is inextricably linked to a legendary suffering.

My analysis of *Tasso* closely examines the extra-musical content of the preface in conjunction with musical form, motivic gestures, thematic development, and harmonic function. Liszt's (re-)interpretation of Tasso's legend aligns with nineteenth-century socio-cultural ideas about creative genius and expressions of heroic masculinity. Liszt embraces the doubleness of Tasso's character. In his preface, Liszt outlines how Tasso embodies suffering heroic masculinity as a man coloured by lament *and* worthy of remembrance. In Liszt's interpretation, Tasso's legacy and triumph are ennobled by his suffering: suffering is infused with triumph, triumph is an expression of suffering, and creative legacy holds both suffering and triumph in tension.

¹ John Black, *Life of Torquato Tasso* (Edinburgh: J. Murray, 1810), 228.

This chapter consists of three sections. The first outlines relevant musicological scholarship that informs my interpretation. Some of this scholarship is more general, and focuses on issues related to formal anomalies, orchestration, style, apotheosis/monumentality, and narrative within Liszt's corpus of symphonic poems. Most scholars acknowledge the extra-musical content, but few offer a substantial discussion of its possible meanings. My analysis of *Tasso* hinges on the preface since it is integral to Liszt's reinterpretation of the received legend. The second section outlines the doubleness within the major themes of time and place. In his preface, Liszt highlights Venice, Florence, and Rome as significant, and each evoke the *memory* or *spirit* of Tasso's suffering, triumph, and legacy. Furthermore, each place is revealed through Liszt's compositional choices.

In the third section, I take the doubleness of memory/spirit and place to examine Liszt's musical representation of masculine-heroic expression and creative genius. I focus on form, motivic gesture, thematic material, and harmony as contributors to the narrative of Tasso's haunting spirit. My interpretive approach derives from a close reading of the preface. That framework informs my musical analysis, which explores how Liszt conveys Tasso's heroic masculinity and genius through form, theme, and harmonic function. The result is a new interpretation that shows how Liszt amplifies the doubleness that exists in discourses of Tasso's life and legend. Overall, the tensions in Liszt's *Tasso* may be read as a larger commentary on genius and expressions of heroic masculinity.

3.2 Interpretations of Liszt's *Tasso*

Musicologists and music theorists have examined Liszt's *Tasso* since its earliest performances. Scholars generally speak about *Tasso* as part of a larger study of Liszt's orchestral works and/or stylistic features, or they explore issues in musical form, thematic material, and/or harmony. I am indebted to this scholarship despite its focus on musical elements at the expense of the program. Humphrey Searle briefly explains who Tasso was and how Liszt treated his subject musically through

the compositional evolution from overture to symphonic poem. He hardly discusses the details of the piece, however, explained perhaps by Searle's value judgement: "unfortunately, the music of *Tasso* is extremely uneven, and the final section in particular shows Liszt at his most bombastic."² A more forgiving interpretation appears in Michael Saffle's survey of Liszt's symphonic poems in *The Liszt Companion*.³ Saffle's approach derives from semiotic analysis: topic theory and the inclusion of musical archetypes suggest extra-musical associations. He argues that *Tasso* includes four topical sections: suffering, pride, courtly life, and triumph. While these sections do point to an overarching narrative that aligns with how I hear the formal structure, Saffle gives no further consideration to relationships between the preface and the music of *Tasso*.

Few scholars specifically analyze *Tasso*, and those who do focus predominantly on Liszt's engagement with pre-existing forms or his innovative departure from strict formal conventions. Richard Kaplan argues sonata form is the predominant musical structure in Liszt's symphonic poems.⁴ His interpretation derives from the belief that analysts rely too heavily on programmatic associations for formal interpretation. Kaplan provides three aspects of sonata organization that he considers fundamental to formal-historical continuity: "a tonal dichotomy which eventually is resolved, a concurrent thematic duality, and a return or recapitulation."⁵ Steven Vande Moortele offers an insightful discussion of form, particularly the significance of Liszt's idiosyncratic treatment of sonata structure. He writes that it is "generally accepted that Liszt did not refrain from recycling traditional patterns of formal organization."⁶ Vande Moortele takes the traditional formal organization at a broad level, and suggests two-dimensional sonata form is an appropriate analytical

² Humphrey Searle, *The Music of Liszt*, Second Revised Edition (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1966), 71.

³ Michael Saffle, "Orchestral Works," in *The Liszt Companion*, ed. Ben Arnold (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2002), 235–279.

⁴ Richard Kaplan, "Sonata Form in the Orchestral Works of Liszt: The Revolutionary Reconsidered," *19th-Century Music* 8, no. 2 (Autumn 1984): 142–152.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 145.

⁶ Steven Vande Moortele, "Beyond Sonata Deformation: Liszt's Symphonic Poem *Tasso* and the Concept of Two-Dimensional Sonata Form," *Current Musicology*, no. 86 (Fall 2008), 41.

method because it combines the “movements of a sonata cycle and the sections of a sonata-form at the same hierarchical level of a single-movement composition.”⁷ James Hepokoski’s concept of sonata deformation offers an additional perspective to explore Liszt’s possible use of traditional sonata-form structure. Yet, Hepokoski’s “structural deformation” approaches Liszt’s orchestral music as “in dialogue” with normative models of sonata form. He writes that this approach

is most appropriate when one encounters a strikingly nonnormative individual structure, one that contravenes some of the most central defining traditions, or default gestures, of a genre while explicitly retaining others.⁸

Sonata deformation exists when a composition sets up a pattern of expectation, only to be frustrated by different (or innovative) formal procedures. Although he does not refer explicitly to Liszt’s *Tasso*, Hepokoski’s theoretical approach is valuable because it indicates that a formal interpretation acknowledges compositional doubleness by “[s]tressing the work’s unresolved tensions.”⁹ The musical structure introduced by Kaplan, Vande Moortele, and Hepokoski take sonata form as the basic formal plan of Liszt’s symphonic poems. Programmatic narrative, on the other hand, is relegated to a secondary feature. I contend that this interpretation does not encompass the centrality of the extra-musical in Liszt’s own thinking about his symphonic poem.

Attempts to classify *Tasso* with a recognized formal structure reveals that few analysts fully integrate music, style, and the extra-musical into one interpretation. *Tasso*’s formal complexity is better described in terms of thematic development and its narrative implications derived from programmatic content. Sandra J. Fallon-Ludwig takes this approach. She outlines Liszt’s narrative in

⁷ Steven Vande Moortele, *Two-Dimensional Sonata Form: Form and Cycle in Single-Movement Instrumental Works by Liszt, Strauss, Schoenberg, and Zemlinsky* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2009), 23.

⁸ James Hepokoski, “Fiery-Pulsed Libertine or Domestic Hero? Strauss’s Don Juan Reinvestigated,” in *Richard Strauss: New Perspectives on the Composer and His Work*, ed. Bryan Gilliam (Durham: Duke University Press, 1992), 143.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 135.

relation to place, focusing on the thematic material of the transformations.¹⁰ The progression to apotheosis—the moment the theme reaches its final transformation—is so ubiquitous in Liszt’s symphonic poems that it has become a narrative archetype. Keith Johns and Alexander Rehding also articulate this interpretation, though from different perspectives. Johns interprets Liszt’s symphonic poems through topic theory. He examines the implications of what extra-musical topics represent (e.g., brass fanfares represent militarism, with associations of battles, and heroism), which he then expands to musical narrative.¹¹ Rehding explores the socio-cultural significance of the concept of apotheosis from the perspective of musical monumentality and its political meanings.¹² He interprets Liszt’s subject(s) as deliberate ideological choices, arguing that Liszt aligns himself with monumental figures to evoke their cultural power: “the great man—the strong man, intent on writing himself into history—must continually convince his audience of the greatness of his actions.”¹³ Rehding’s insight is important: Liszt’s inevitable apotheoses are ways to write himself into the narrative of his symphonic poems as a great man of history. This writing in of himself is also relevant when Liszt represents the complexities of Romantic heroism.

Fallon-Ludwig’s analysis of the music and program is more in-depth than Johns’s or Rehding’s. She plausibly concludes that the narrative is a progression from suffering *transformed* to triumph.¹⁴ However, Fallon-Ludwig does not fully consider Tasso as a culturally significant and legendary figure. The narrative of suffering and triumph is meaningless if taken merely at the level of archetype. In examining the particulars of this archetypal narrative, new interpretations and meanings emerge. Fallon-Ludwig briefly alludes to the larger cultural significance of Tasso, stating that Liszt evokes

¹⁰ Sandra J. Fallon-Ludwig, “Narrative Inspiration in Liszt’s Symphonic Poems: The Cases of ‘Hunnenschlacht’ and ‘Tasso, Lamento e Trionfo,’” *Studia Musicologica*, 54, no. 4 (December 2013): 367-378.

¹¹ Keith T. Johns, *The Symphonic Poems of Franz Liszt*, ed. Michael Saffle (Stuyvesant: Pendragon Press, 1997).

¹² Alexander Rehding, *Music and Monumentality: Commemoration and Wonderment in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

¹³ *Ibid.*, 71.

¹⁴ This narrative is achieved in the final transformation of the Gondolier’s theme, which is the original theme of the lament in the opening of the symphonic poem.

“not only a narrative of suffering and triumph in the life of the sixteenth-century poet, but a commentary on contemporary society and its treatment of the 19th-century artist.”¹⁵ This is true, but Fallon-Ludwig does not further pursue the socio-cultural associations she alludes to.

Annie Yen-Ling Liu offers an in-depth analysis of *Tasso* using topic theory and its relationship to musical narrativity.¹⁶ She argues that Liszt frequently integrates musical topics, literary programs, and innovative musical forms to guide the listener to *imagine* dramatic situations. The issue Liu raises, however, is how Liszt incorporates similar musical gestures to evoke different programmatic narratives. The themes of suffering and triumph are present in most of Liszt’s “heroic” symphonic poems. Yet Liu differentiates the journey between heroic figures through “narrative structures...[that] emerge from the interaction of program, musical topoi, and the transformation of formal paradigms,”¹⁷ suggesting that musical narrativity relies on the correlation between musical topics and form. But the imagination of the interpreter is essential to deciphering musical meaning. Liu’s innovative analysis of music and text centers on complex musico-narrative ideas of flashback. This analytical emphasis on temporality through formal and thematic techniques is no easy feat considering the teleological nature of music.

My interpretation of *Tasso* is particularly indebted to Reeves Shulstad and Jonathan Kregor, both of whom integrate musical analysis and broader socio-cultural concepts in their interpretations. Shulstad focuses on Tasso’s genius through Schopenhauerian discourses of madness.¹⁸ She argues that Liszt evokes madness via the tonal relationships between each transformation of the theme. Shulstad’s musical analysis is convincing, and its greatest strength is the engagement with the

¹⁵ Fallon-Ludwig, “Narrative Inspiration,” 378.

¹⁶ Yen-Ling (Annie) Liu, “Text, Topics, and Formal Language: Musical Narrativity in Franz Liszt’s *Prometheus and Tasso*,” *Language and Semiotic Studies* 1, no. 3 (Autumn 2015): 139-160.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 142-43.

¹⁸ Reeves Shulstad draws particularly on Schopenhauer’s discussion of the relationship between genius and madness, emphasizing that the former rarely exists without the latter. See Shulstad, “The Symbol of Genius: Franz Liszt’s *Symphonic Poems and Symphonies*” (PhD diss, Tallahassee, The Florida State University, 2001).

discourse of genius, read through Tasso's legendary status. She indicates that Tasso is "prone to alienation and melancholy because of the strictures on his creativity, real or imagined, by social mores."¹⁹ Shulstad's interpretation of Tasso's genius as a form of madness departs from my reading. Nevertheless, her engagement with the preface shows the importance of programmatic material to the composition as a whole. Shulstad's reference to social mores, for instance, opens possibilities for an analysis of *Tasso* that is not solely reliant on specific musical apparatus—topics, archetypes, and/or gestures.

Kregor extrapolates the ideology of the artist's plight through a "web of intertextual references"²⁰ that include the significance of social mores and place to creative output. Kregor's narrative approach does not depict Tasso's life as a strict chronology of events. Rather, he argues that Liszt "creates a *spiritual pilgrimage* of sorts."²¹ In Liszt's reimagining, the *cause of suffering* is unknown. Yet the *why* or *how* is unimportant because Tasso's suffering represents an ideal, transcendental state. Kregor's idea is persuasive, but I take his formulation further. Tasso reaches creative immortality through a spiritual interaction with other artists—like Liszt—who likewise reinforce Tasso's stature as genius. The transcendental state of suffering (and triumph) is given new meaning when others experience the same heroic strife as their creative gods. The implication of aligning with such geniuses extend to the broader socio-cultural meanings(s) associated with suffering and triumph: the doubleness of heroic masculinity and genius infuses the experience of the creative artist.

¹⁹ Shulstad, "The Symbol of Genius," 42.

²⁰ Jonathan Kregor, *Program Music*, Cambridge Introductions to Music (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 120.

²¹ *Ibid.*, Emphasis mine.

3.3 Interpreting the Program

My engagement with Liszt's *Tasso* offers an additional interpretation. I approach the symphonic poem from the perspective that acknowledges doubleness, highlighting the tension inherent in Tasso's legendary character. Central to my analysis is a close reading of the program to explicate the details of Tasso's expression of heroic masculinity and creative genius. The significance of place, and the associations that derive from those places, is an important feature of Liszt's reimagining. The preface, then, is an integral component of the composition, as significant to the work as the musical materials (form, theme, musical topoi, and harmonic function) that are more typically recognized as comprising it. The program to *Tasso*, therefore, is *more than* a mere pretext for formal, thematic, and harmonic experimentation. The doubleness in Tasso's character—an expression Liszt emphasizes—conveys the “universal aspects of Tasso's story...the immortality of art after the artist's death.”²² The implications of this doubleness extend beyond the archetypal narrative of lament and triumph. The power of Tasso's genius is his symbolic expression—he means something to artists striving for recognition. Tasso is a cultural monument: he is heroic in his struggle, masculine in his triumph, and a genius in his legacy of embodying both suffering and triumph.

The preface to *Tasso* (figure 5) is one of the most detailed Liszt attached to any of his compositions. In terms of its larger narrative, Liszt touches on the following events:

- (i) Tasso as spirit, hovering over the lagoons of Venice;
- (ii) Tasso at the court of Ferrara; and
- (iii) Tasso in Rome, apotheosized and transcendent.

²² Joanne Cormac, *Liszt and the Symphonic Poem* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 100.

Building on these references to place, there are five points that expand the meanings associated with the primary narrative's central interpretive features: (1) the compositional history from which Liszt's symphonic poem emerged; (2) the literary sources of inspiration, along with the reasons those works (and authors) were inspiring; (3) the significance of place in Liszt's (re-)interpretation of the Tasso legend; (4) the doubleness associated with lament and triumph in the context of Tasso's expression of heroic masculinity and creative genius; and (5) the characterization of the hero as a guiding spirit who (a) inspires art, (b) embodies the tension of creative genius, and (c) gives specific places (Venice, Ferrara, Rome) symbolic meaning. Points one and two contextualize Liszt's choice of subject matter and describe the evolution of *Tasso* from one genre (overture) to another (symphonic poem). Items three to five provide the main programmatic content that evokes Liszt's musical depiction of the tension between Tasso's lament and triumph. Within the doubleness of these contrasting states, Tasso is established as a figure imbued with an expression of heroic masculinity and genius. The preface reveals aspects of the Tasso myth Liszt considered worthy of (re-)interpretation, and they are unique to his creative sensibilities and cultural milieu. I have included the text of the preface in French, German, and English.

TASSO LAMENTO E TRIONFO.

SYMPHONISCHE DICHTUNG No. 2 VON F. LISZT.

Im Jahre 1849 wurde in ganz Deutschland der hundertjährige Geburtstag Goethes durch Feste verherrlicht; das Theater in Weimar, wo wir uns damals befanden, feierte den 28. August durch eine Darstellung des Tasso.

Das herbe Geschick dieses unglücklichen Dichters hat den beiden grössten Poeten, welche Deutschland und England im letzten Jahrhundert hervorbrachten, Stoff zu dichterischen Gebilden gegeben: Goethe und Byron. Goethe, dem das glänzendste Lebensloos fiel, Byron, welchem die Vorzüge des Ranges und der Geburt durch die tiefsten Dichterleiden verkümmert wurden. Wir wollen nicht in Abrede stellen, dass, als wir im Jahre 1849 den Auftrag bekamen, eine Ouvertüre zu Goethes Drama zu schreiben, das ehrfurchtsvolle Mitleid, mit welchem Byron die Manen des grossen Dichters beschwört, einen vorherrschend bestimmenden Einfluss auf unsere Gestaltung dieses Gegenstandes übte. Aber Byron konnte, indem er Tasso im Kerker selbstredend einführt, mit der Erinnerung der tödtlichen Schmerzen, denen er in seiner Klage eine so hinreissende Gewalt edlen Ausdrucks verleiht, nicht das Andenken des Triumphes verbinden, durch welchen dem ritterlichen Sänger des „Befreiten Jerusalem“ eine späte aber glänzende Vergeltung ward. Wir wollten diesen Gegensatz schon im Titel des Werkes klar aussprechen und unser Bestreben ging dahin, in Tönen die grosse Antithese des im Leben verkannten, im Tode aber von strahlender Glorie umgebenen Genius zu schildern, von einer Glorie, welche mit vernichtenden Strahlen in die Herzen der Verfolger trifft. Tasso liebte und litt in Ferrara, er wurde in Rom gerächt, und er lebt noch heute in den Volksgesängen Venedigs. Diese drei Momente sind von seinem unvergänglichen Ruhme untrennbar. Um sie musikalisch wiederzugeben, riefen wir zuerst seinen grossen Schatten herauf, wie er noch heute an Venedigs Lagunen wandelt; dann erschien uns sein Antlitz stolz und schwermütig den Festen Ferraras zuschauend, wo er seine Meisterwerke geschafften, und folgten wir ihm endlich nach Rom, der ewigen Stadt, die ihm die Ruhmeskrone reichte und so den Märtyrer und Dichter in ihm feierte.

TASSO LAMENTO E TRIONFO.

POÈME SYMPHONIQUE No. 2 DE F. LISZT.

En 1849 l'Allemagne entière célébra avec éclat le centième anniversaire de la naissance de Goethe. A Weimar où nous nous trouvions alors, le programme des fêtes avait marqué la représentation de son drame *Le Tasse* pour le soir du 28 Août.

Les malheurs de la destinée du plus infortuné des poètes avaient frappé et occupé l'imagination des plus puissants génies poétiques de notre temps, Goethe et Byron; Goethe dont le sort fut entouré des plus brillantes prospérités, Byron dont les avantages de naissance et de fortune furent contrebalancés par de si vives souffrances. Nous ne saurions dissimuler que lorsqu'on nous chargea, en 1849, d'écrire une ouverture pour le drame de Goethe, nous nous sommes plus directement inspirés de la respectueuse compatissance de Byron pour les mânes du grand homme qu'il évoquait, que de l'œuvre du poète allemand. Toutefois, Byron, en nous transmettant en quelque sorte les gémissements du Tasse dans sa prison, n'a pu joindre au souvenir de ses poignantes douleurs si noblement et si éloquemment exprimées en sa *Lamentation*, celui du Triomphe qui attendait, par une tardive mais éclatante justice, le chevaleresque auteur de la *«Jérusalem délivrée»*. Nous avons voulu indiquer ce contraste dans le titre même de notre œuvre, et eussions souhaité réussir à formuler cette grande antithèse du génie mal traité durant sa vie, et rayonnant après sa mort d'une lumière écrasante pour ses persécuteurs. Le Tasse a aimé et souffert à Ferrare; il a été vengé à Rome; sa gloire est encore vivante dans les chants populaires de Venise. Ces trois moments sont inséparables de son immortel souvenir. Pour les rendre en musique, nous avons d'abord fait surgir la grande ombre du héros telle qu'elle nous apparaît aujourd'hui hantant les lagunes de Venise; nous avons entrevu ensuite sa figure hautaine et attristée glisser à travers les fêtes de Ferrare où il avait donné le jour à ses chefs-d'œuvre; enfin nous l'avons suivi à Rome, la ville éternelle qui, en lui tendant sa couronne, glorifia en lui le martyr et le poète.

TASSO LAMENTO E TRIONFO.

SYMPHONIC POEM No. 2 BY F. LISZT.

In 1849 the hundredth anniversary of Goethe's birth was celebrated throughout Germany with great splendour. At Weimar, where I then resided, the occasion was marked, on the 25th of August, by a performance of Goethe's Tasso.

The unhappy destiny of the most unfortunate of poets had struck and occupied the imagination of the most powerful poetic geniuses of our time, Goethe and Byron — Goethe, whose lot it was to be surrounded with brilliant prosperity; Byron, whose advantages of birth and fortune were counterbalanced by much suffering. I shall not attempt to deny that I was more immediately inspired by the respectful compassion evoked by Byron for the manes of the great man, than by the work of the German poet. Nevertheless, while making us feel and hear the groans of Tasso in his prison, Byron has not been able to join to the remembrance of the bitter sorrows, so nobly and eloquently expressed in his *Lamentation* that of the *Triumph*, which a tardy but brilliant justice was reserving for the chivalrous author of *Jerusalem Delivered*. I have wished to indicate this contrast even in the title of my work, and have hoped to succeed in portraying this grand antithesis of genius ill-treated during life, and shining after death with a light which should overwhelm its persecutors. Tasso loved and suffered at Ferrara; he was revenged at Rome; his glory still lives in the popular songs of Venice. These three periods are inseparable from his immortal memory. To render these in music, I felt I must first call up the spirit of the hero as it now appears to us, haunting the lagunes of Venice; next, we must see his proud and sad figure, as it glides among the fêtes of Ferrara — the birthplace of his masterpieces; finally, we must follow him to Rome, the Eternal City, which, in holding forth to him his crown, glorified him as a martyr and poet.

Lamento e Trionfo: So heissen die beiden grossen Kontraste im Geschick der Poeten, von denen mit Recht gesagt wurde, dass, ob auch oft mit Fluch ihr Leben belastet werde, nimmer der Segen ausbleibe auf ihrem Grabe. Um aber unsrer Idee nicht allein die strengste Autorität, sondern auch den Glanz der Tatsachen zu verleihen, entlehnten wir selbst die Form zu ihrer künstlerischen Gestaltung aus der Wirklichkeit, und wählten deshalb zum Thema unsres musikalischen Gedichtes die Melodie, auf welche wir venetianische Lagunenschiffer drei Jahrhunderte nach des Dichters Tode die Anfangstrophen seines Jerusalems singen hörten:

Canto l'armi pietose e'l Capitano,
Che'l gran Sepolcro liberò di Cristo!

Das Motiv selbst hat eine langsame Bewegung, es teilt die Empfindung seufzender Klage, monotoner Schwermut mit; die Gondolieri geben ihm aber durch das Ziehen gewisser Töne eine ganz eigentümliche Färbung und die melancholisch gedehnten Klänge machen aus der Ferne einen Eindruck, als wenn lange Streifen verklärten Lichtes vom Wellenspiegel zurückgestrahlt würden. Dieser Gesang hatte uns einst lebhaft ergriffen, und als wir später Tasso musikalisch darstellen sollten, drängte er sich uns gebieterisch zum Text unserer Gedanken auf, als ein immer fortlebender Beweis der Huldigung seiner Nation für den Genius, dessen Treue und Anhänglichkeit Ferrara so schlecht vergalt. Die venetianische Melodie ist so voll von unheilbarer Trauer, von nagendem Schmerz, dass ihre einfache Wiedergabe genügt, um Tassos Seele zu schildern. Sie gibt sich dann, ganz wie die Einbildung des Dichters, den glänzenden Täuschungen der Welt, der trügerischen, gleissenden Koketterie jenes Lächelns hin, dessen Gift die schreckliche Katastrophe herbeiführte, für welche scheinbar keine irdische Vergütung möglich war, und welche dann doch zuletzt auf dem Capitol mit einem Mantel überdeckt wurde, der in einem reineren Purpur glänzte, als der des Alphons.

(Übersetzung v. P. Cornelius.)

Lamento e Trionfo: telles sont les deux grandes oppositions de la destinée des poètes, dont il a été justement dit, que si on fait peser parfois la malédiction sur leur vie, la bénédiction ne manque jamais à leur tombe. Afin de donner à cette idée non seulement l'autorité mais l'éclat du fait, nous avons voulu emprunter au fait sa forme même, et pour cela nous avons pris comme thème de notre poème musical, le motif sur lequel nous avons entendu les gondoliers de Venise chanter sur les lagunes les strophes du Tasse, et redire encore trois siècles après lui:

Canto l'armi pietose e'l Capitano,
Che'l gran Sepolcro liberò di Cristo!

Ce motif est en lui-même plaintif, d'une gémissante lenteur, d'un deuil monotone; mais les gondoliers lui prêtent un miroitement tout particulier en traînant certaines notes par la retenue des voix, qui à distance planent et brillent comme des traînées de gloire et de lumière. Ce chant nous avait profondément impressionnés jadis, et lorsque nous eûmes à parler du Tasse, il eût été impossible à notre sentiment ému de ne point prendre pour texte de nos pensées, cet hommage persistant rendu par sa nation à l'homme de génie dont la cour de Ferrare ne méritait ni l'attachement ni la fidélité. Le motif vénitien respire une mélancolie si navrée, une tristesse si irrémédiable, qu'il suffit de le poser pour révéler le secret des douloureuses émotions du Tasse. Il s'est prêté ensuite, tout comme l'imagination du poète, à la peinture des brillantes illusions du monde, des décevantes et fallacieuses coquetteries de ces sourires dont le perfide poison amena l'horrible catastrophe qui semblait ne pouvoir trouver de compensation en ce monde, et qui, néanmoins, fut revêtue au Capitole d'une pourpre plus pure que celle du manteau d'Alphonse!

Lamento e Trionfo: these are the two great contrasts in the destiny of poets, of whom it has been truly said that if fate curses them during life, blessing never fails them after death. In order to give to this idea not only the authority but the splendour of reality, I have endeavoured to borrow even its form from fact; and for this purpose have taken, as the theme of this musical poem, the melody to which, three hundred years after the poet's death, we have heard the gondoliers of Venice sing upon her waters the opening lines of his Jerusalem: —

"Canto l'armi pietose e'l Capitano,
Che'l gran Sepolcro liberò di Cristo!"

This melody is in itself plaintive, slow, and mournfully monotonous; but the gondoliers give it quite a special character by dragging certain notes and holding out their voices, which, heard from a distance, produce an effect similar to that of rays of light reflected from the ripple of the waves. This song had already so powerfully impressed me, that when the subject of Tasso was suggested to me for musical illustration, I could not but take for the text of my thoughts this enduring homage rendered by his nation to a genius of whom the court of Ferrare had proved itself unworthy. The Venetian melody breathes so gnawing a melancholy, so irremediable a sadness, that a mere reproduction of it seems sufficient to reveal the secret of Tasso's sad emotions. As the imagination of the poet lends itself to depict the brilliant illusions of the world, so this melody seems to express the deceptive and fallacious coquetties of those smiles, whose perfidious poison brought about the horrible catastrophe which could never find compensation in this world, but was, nevertheless, covered at the Capitol with a mantle far exceeding in splendour the purple of Alphonso.

FIGURE 5 PREFACE TO LISZT'S *TASSO: LAMENTO E TRIONFO*

Liszt begins with an explanation of how his “Tasso” overture was performed at the Goethe centenary celebrations in Weimar (1849). The overture accompanied a performance of Goethe’s five-act play *Torquato Tasso*. The centenary event was a “splendid evening” that drew a number of political figures, patrons, and artists. The inclusion of this information may appear extraneous. However, understanding Liszt’s compositional process and the reception history of his symphonic poem is relevant to his engagement with creative genius and heroic masculinity. Liszt’s referral to this *specific* event marks more than a celebration of Goethe’s life: it pays tribute to the Golden Age of Weimar Classicism and the philosophers and artists who monumentalized that place.²³ Ehrhard Bahr describes Weimar under Carl August (1757-1828) as the *Goethezeit*.²⁴ Bahr’s association of Weimar with an historical period and a significant literary figure emphasizes the conflation of Goethe with place. Liszt, by associating his *Tasso* with Goethe, symbolically places himself in the lineage of the literary and cultural hero who shaped Weimar. Rehding accuses Liszt of usurping the significance of Weimar when he became court *Kapellmeister*.²⁵ In this position, Liszt was free to compose and perform works that aligned with his creative sensibilities and ideologies. However, Liszt “was not interested in preserving Weimar’s past, but rather in establishing its rank as a cultural center of the future”—the Silver Age of Weimar.²⁶ The tension of Liszt’s relationship with Weimar may be latent, but it nevertheless exists. He draws from its importance as a historical monument—monumentalized by the great men of heroic genius who *made* that city important—while also elevating himself beyond

²³ See Detlef Altenberg, “Franz Liszt and the Legacy of the Classical Era,” *19th-Century Music* 18, no. 1 (Summer 1994): 49–63.

²⁴ Ehrhard Bahr, “The Silver Age of Weimar. Franz Liszt as Goethe’s Successor: A Study in Cultural Archaeology,” *Goethe Yearbook* 10 (2001): 191.

²⁵ Alexander Rehding devotes an entire chapter to the events leading up to the Goethe centenary in his book *Music and Monumentality*. Rehding writes that in the nineteenth-century, Weimar was going through a period known as the “Silver Age,” implying that the creative atmosphere followed the Golden Age of Weimar classicism. Rehding writes that during this period, Weimar’s “principal occupation had become the nostalgic remembrance of its glorious past” (80). Certainly, the commemorations of authors such as Goethe and a composer like Beethoven, among others, suggests this yearning for the past in which place is of central importance.

²⁶ Bahr, “The Silver Age of Weimar,” 192.

their (past) creative contributions. Weimar is not connected to the real Tasso, but Liszt nevertheless connects the spirit of Tasso's genius to Weimar by drawing on the significance of place.

Liszt's engagement with Weimar's monumental men include experiences akin to Romantic-era expressions of heroic masculinity and creative genius. His version of genius consists of intense suffering, a masculine-heroic state in which Liszt correlates Tasso's "unhappy destiny" to the "most powerful poetic geniuses of our time, Goethe and Byron."²⁷ Like the inclusion of Weimar as a place with larger meanings, literary giants such as Goethe and Byron carry cultural associations that exist outside themselves. In this context, Liszt incorporates both Goethe's and Byron's experiences into the larger framework of *Tasso*.²⁸ The struggle becomes solidified given the tension Liszt articulates between Goethe's social life and Byron's poetic standing. Liszt writes that Goethe's "lot...was to be surrounded with brilliant prosperity" whereas Byron's "advantages of birth and fortune...[led to] much suffering."²⁹ Liszt elevates Byron's status because he suffered whereas Goethe's respected position in Weimar does not reflect material or creative strife. Byron's (re-)interpretation capitalized on the symbolic value of the suffering heroic genius. Liszt, too, aligns himself with those who suffer in and for their creativity, but in Liszt's case, suffering derives from a lack of acknowledgement or understanding of his new art form, the harsh reviews by music critics, and the desire to prove himself as a composer rather than merely a performer.³⁰ Within the first few sentences of his preface,

²⁷ Franz Liszt, Preface to *Tasso: Lamento e Trionfo*, trans. Humphrey Searle (London: Eulenburg, 1976).

²⁸ Liszt's elevation of Byron's *Lament of Tasso* over Goethe's play, *Torquato Tasso*, suggests that Byron reflected Tasso's suffering to a greater extent. Goethe is mostly significant because of the Weimar connection, not because his version of Tasso elevates suffering to the realm of masculine heroic genius.

²⁹ Liszt, Preface to *Tasso: Lamento e Trionfo*. Interpreting Goethe and his understanding of creativity in this way is atypical. For instance, the suffering artist was not a part of his conception of artistic creativity and genius. Furthermore, Goethe was among the most respected artists during his lifetime. His privileged position as one of the poetic and culturally elite artists makes Liszt's view of him entirely fabricated. Nevertheless, I can understand Liszt's temptation to view Goethe's creative life through such a lens: drawing upon Goethe's value as a vastly well-known and respected artist allows the composer to align himself with the poet's successes.

³⁰ See, for instance, Dieter Torkewitz, "Liszt's *Tasso*," in *Torquato Tasso in Deutschland: Seine Wirkung in Literature, Kunst und Musik seit der Mitte des 18 Jahrhunderts*, ed. Achim Aurnhammer (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1995), 347; Fallon-Ludwig, "Narrative Inspiration in Liszt's Symphonic Poems," 378; and James Deaville, "The Making of a Myth: Liszt, the Press, and Virtuosity," in *New Light on Liszt and His Music*, *Analecta Lisztiana*, II (New York: Pendragon Press, 1997), 181–195.

Liszt portrays himself as similar to these heroic geniuses: one whose acknowledged triumphs contributed to the splendor of Weimar (Liszt's new adopted home) and one whose personal suffering allowed him to understand Tasso's experience more fully.

Goethe's presence in the program creates certain associations with the legend of Tasso's struggle. However, Liszt reveals that he was "more *immediately* inspired" by Byron, since the poet treated Tasso with more respect and compassion.³¹ Goethe's protagonist works against the social confines of the court until he can no longer stand against that pressure. Byron, on the other hand, establishes a more palpable tension between the desires of the individual and the collective social establishment. Byron's Tasso is defiant. He breaks the boundaries of social structures and shows that the mind can transcend any situation. This strength of the mind is an expression of masculine-heroic fortitude, which counters discourses that centre on Tasso's madness as the source of suffering. Regina Hewitt recognizes a doubleness in this formulation. But rather than call for its resolution, she suggests experiencing tension is an act of self-determination. Byron amplifies the tension of Tasso's character, as Hewitt explains:

despite his glorious vision, Tasso remains in prison, winning in the autonomy of his mind while his captors win in physical reality. Byron *allows the tension to continue*, indicating that the *important point is not the outcome but the tension, conflict, and opposition itself*. . . It is the function of the Byronic hero to point out the importance of actively defining the self.³²

Hewitt takes into account the doubleness of Tasso's heroic nature, which inspired Liszt precisely because "tension, conflict, and opposition" are central to Tasso's character. His physical imprisonment lies in tension with his free, autonomous mind. But rather than explore Tasso's life through an explicit chronological narrative, Liszt examines those emotions and experiences within Tasso that help *form* his character. In the case of Byron, that is both physical imprisonment and

³¹ Torkewitz, "Liszt's *Tasso*," 347.

³² Regina Hewitt, "Torquato Tasso--A Byronic Hero?," *Neophilologus*, no. 71 (1987): 443. Emphasis mine.

mental freedom. My assessment, in effect, suggests that *Tasso* is like a character piece, a study of a single mood, impression, or moment. Thus, Tasso's heroic masculinity, individuality, and constant boundary-breaking—the result of doubleness—creates Liszt's program, not any specific life-event that *caused* that tension. This is a drama of the mind, where the heroic “action” resides internally.

The tension in Tasso's legend prefigures Liszt's own creative struggles, and he employs the inherent labour of genius (and the struggle to be understood as a creative artist) in a similar way.

Dieter Torkewitz describes this relationship cogently when he writes

Liszts Beziehung zu Tasso erweist sich als seine Lebensbeziehung. Liszt könnte Parallelen zwischen dem legendarisch stilisierten Tasso und sich selbst gesehen und sich Tasso deswegen zur Identifikationsfigur auserkoren haben...die Kluft zwischen Künstler und Gesellschaft (die Liszt allerdings tätig zu überwinden suchte), die verspätete Genugtuung des schöpferischen Genies (Liszt selbst sah sich als Komponist ernsthafter Werke sein Leben lang angefeindet oder mißverstanden), der geheime Wunsch Liszts, wie Tasso im Bewußtsein der Völker zu überauern.

[Liszt's relationship with Tasso turns out to be a life relationship. Liszt was able to see parallels between the legendary stylized Tasso and himself and therefore chose Tasso as a figure to identify with...the gap between artists and society (which Liszt was actively trying to overcome), the belated recognition of creative genius (Liszt saw himself as treated with hostility or misunderstood as a composer of serious works all his life), Liszt's secret wish, like Tasso, to remain in the consciousness of everyone who came after him].³³

Torkewitz articulates Liszt's anxiety about his role as a creative artist. Geniuses, especially those who exhibit the melancholy and alienation of Romantic heroism, typically worked outside normative social confines. Liszt himself frequently wrote about the situation of artists, bemoaning that the artist “stood on the outskirts of society as a misunderstood and unappreciated genius.”³⁴ Liszt worked in an atmosphere where artists were almost completely removed from the patronage system. This fostered more individual creativity, but prevented financial stability. The pressure to have a receptive

³³ Torkewitz, “Liszts *Tasso*,” 347. Translation is mine.

³⁴ Fallon-Ludwig, “Narrative Inspiration in Liszt's Symphonic Poems,” 378.

audience and positive reviews for compositions and performances was integral to personal (and financial) success.³⁵ Liszt's personal association with a misunderstood genius is an apt metaphor for his creative struggles and desires.

The next major section of Liszt's preface moves away from compositional context to the characterization of Tasso as a beneficent spirit. By evoking spirit (ethereal, sublime, transcendental), Liszt partakes in an act of historical ventriloquizing through the "remembrance of [Tasso's] bitter sorrows."³⁶ Remembrance is key, and suggests that the *memory* of lamentation contributes to Liszt's evocation of Tasso as an attending spirit.³⁷ Indeed, Tasso-as-spirit guides the program, and the action that takes place derives from his sublime suffering. Tasso's *spirit* is symbolic of the labour associated with artistic creation, both as part of Tasso's larger cultural narrative (biography, drama, visual art, and poetry) and as a metaphor for the creation of Liszt's symphonic poem. This form of creative spirit-genius conflates the original meaning of the term (the beneficent spirit that endows genius) with the Romantic-era representation of genius possessing superior ability. Liszt's *Tasso* presents the genius as both/and, fluid, suspended. Tasso is a beneficent spirit and a reflection of the artist's individual creativity. His experiences both personally and artistically evoke the "grand *antithesis* of

³⁵ There is an extensive corpus of scholarship on Liszt and the press. While Liszt, virtuosity, and the press takes me too far afield for this dissertation, the subject nevertheless does contribute to Liszt's own myth-building. While the following sources are by no means exhaustive, I have found that they are a great starting point. James Deaville, "Liszt in the German-Language Press," in *The Liszt Companion*, ed. Ben Arnold (London: Greenwood Press, 2002), 41–54; Deaville, "Liszt's Virtuosity and His Audience: Gender, Class and Power in the Concert Hall of the Early 19th Century," in *Das Andere: Eine Spurensuche in der Musikgeschichte des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Annette Kreuziger-Herr (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1998), 281–300; Deaville, "The Making of a Myth: Liszt, the Press, and Virtuosity," in *New Light on Liszt and His Music*, *Analecta Lisztiana*, II (New York: Pendragon Press, 1997), 181–195; Christopher Howard Gibbs, "'Just Two Words. Enormous Success.' Liszt's 1838 Vienna Concerts," in *Franz Liszt and His World*, ed. Christopher Howard Gibbs and Dana Gooley, Bard Music Festival Series (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 167–230; Michael Saffle, *Liszt in Germany 1840-1845: A Study in Sources, Documents, and the History of Reception*, Franz Liszt Studies Series 2 (Stuyvesant: Pendragon Press, 1994).

³⁶ Liszt, Preface to *Tasso*, 1. The full context this citation derives from states: "Toutefois, Byron, en nous transmettant en quelque sorte les gémissements du Tasse dans sa prison, n'a pu joindre au souvenir de ses poignantes douleurs si nobles et si éloquemment exprimées en sa Lamentation, celui du Triomphe qui attendait, par une tardive mais éclatante justice, le chevaleresque auteur de la Jérusalem délivrée." Nous avons voulu indiquer ce contraste dans le titre même de notre oeuvre, et eussions souhaité réussir à formuler cette grande antithèse du génie mal traité durant sa vie, et rayonnant après sa mort d'une lumière écrasante pour ses persécuteurs." Liszt, Preface to *Tasso*, 1. Emphasis mine.

³⁷ The lament Liszt refers to is signified by the cries and groans in the prison house of the other inmates while Tasso struggles with his own individual self-reliance and poetic genius.

genius ill-treated during life, and shining after death with a light which should overwhelm its persecutors.”³⁸ The implication of focusing on Tasso’s spirit rather than biography in the strictest sense is that Liszt, like the spirit he has created, can hover above and within perceived dramatic action.

To this point in the program, Liszt provides the context from which his symphonic poem emerged, establishes the particular literary works and poets that informed his reading of the Tasso legend, and introduces his protagonist as a beneficent spirit who hovers in the antithetical spaces between memory/action and lament/triumph:

Lamento e Trionfo: these are the two great *contrasts* in the destiny of poets, of whom it has been truly said that if fate curses them during life, blessing never fails them after death.

[“Lamento e Trionfo: tells sont les deu grandes oppositions de la destinée des poètes, dont il a été justement dit, que si on fait peser parfois la malediction sur leur vie, la benediction ne manqué jamais à leur tombe”].³⁹

For the remainder of his preface, Liszt expands upon the latter point—lament and triumph. Central to Liszt’s narrative is the significance of place and how Tasso’s spirit gives those places meaning. In terms of Tasso’s life and legend, Ferrara and Rome are perhaps the most important. Ferrara is central to Tasso’s creative output: he worked under the patronage of Duke Alphonso and published his greatest literary works at the Ferrarese court. But Ferrara is also associated with Tasso’s growing emotional anxiety and physical imprisonment. Thus, the court at Ferrara and, later, the St. Anna Sanatorium, represent the nadir of Tasso’s struggle. Ferrara was so significant that it became a pilgrimage site that drew artists from across Europe.⁴⁰ Goethe’s visit in October 1786 was one of the

³⁸ Liszt, Preface to *Tasso*, 1. Emphasis mine.

³⁹ Liszt, Preface to *Tasso*, 2. By memory/action, I mean specifically the idea of remembrance (e.g., no formal action) versus drama, which would generally follow some action over the course of time. Italics mine.

⁴⁰ Jason Lawrence outlines the sheer number of tourists that visited Tasso’s supposed prison at St. Anna. He writes that “visitors to Ferrara were...shown a grated window, behind which, supposedly, was Tasso’s subterranean prison cell.” Lawrence, “‘When Despotism Kept Genius in Chains’: Imagining Tasso’s Madness and Imprisonment, 1748-1849,” *Studies in Romanticism* 50, no. 3 (Fall 2011): 487.

first such recorded. Although he questioned the authenticity of Tasso's cell, Goethe's visit reinvigorated his interest in Tasso, and he completed his play shortly thereafter. Byron visited Ferrara in April 1817.

Unlike Goethe, Byron was "struck most keenly...by the monument to Tasso's imprisonment."⁴¹ Byron was so impressed that he printed his thoughts in the "Advertisement" to *The Lament of Tasso*:

At Ferrara, in the Library, are preserved to the original MSS. of Tasso's Gierusalemme [sic] and of Guarini's Pastor Fido, with letters of Tasso, one from Titian and Ariosto, and the inkstand and chair, the tomb and the house, of the latter. But, as misfortune has a greater interest for posterity, and little or none for the contemporary, the cell where Tasso was confined in the hospital of St. Anna attracts a more fixed attention than the residence or the monument of Ariosto—at least it had this effect on me. There are two inscriptions, one on the outer gate, the second over the cell itself, inviting, unnecessarily, the wonder and indignation of the spectator.⁴²

Monumentalizing Tasso's cell, a symbol of his incarceration and suffering, contributes to the doubleness of the poet's masculine heroic identity. Tasso is portrayed as a victim, a man without the ability to overcome his sorrow. Yet, Tasso's imprisonment only fortified his heroic status. Tasso's physical imprisonment contrasts with his mental autonomy. Both reflect his heroic masculinity as fluid, both weak and strong. When Byron compares Tasso's cell to the home of Renaissance poet Ludovico Ariosto, he implies that one suffered far more greatly than the other.⁴³ Tasso's small cell becomes a monument of suffering masculinity and creative genius more powerful in its symbolic meaning than many another memorial commemorating great men.

⁴¹ Ibid., 489.

⁴² See the Advertisement to Lord George Gordon Byron, "The Lament of Tasso," in *The Complete Poetical Works of Lord Byron*, ed. Paul Elmer More, The Cambridge Poets (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1905), 436.

⁴³ The lives of Tasso and Ariosto are strikingly similar. According to Giovanni Aquilecchia, Ariosto also served at court, though his patron was Cardinal Ippolito d'Este, son of Duke Ercole I. Ariosto's most famous poem, *Orlando furioso* was a life-long project. In general, it is considered "the finest expression of the literary tendencies and spiritual attitudes of the Italian Renaissance" (1). Giovanni Aquilecchia, "Ludovico Ariosto," in *Encyclopædia Britannica*, September 4, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Ludovico-Ariosto>.

Rome represents the contrast to Tasso's suffering: creative recognition. The irony, however, is that Tasso died before he received his laurels from Pope Clement VIII.⁴⁴ Because Tasso was given his recognition posthumously, his honour is not only justified, but it makes him the ideal model of masculine heroic genius. Creative triumph after death assumes that the genius will "remain in the consciousness of everyone who came after him."⁴⁵ In Liszt's narrative, triumph as a confirmation of masculinity aligns with more archetypal depictions of heroism—apotheosis and divine recognition is the reward for creative labour. This aspect of Tasso's heroic journey is integral to Liszt's reinterpretation. Byron may be the primary source of inspiration, but he does not portray Tasso as triumphant, as Liszt points out in his preface:

[w]hile making us feel and hear the groans of Tasso in his prison, Byron has not been able to join the remembrance of bitter sorrows, so nobly and eloquently expressed in his Lamentation that of the Triumph, which a tardy but brilliant justice was reserving for the chivalrous author of 'Jerusalem Delivered.'

[Toutefois, Byron, en nous transmettant en quelque sorte les gémissements du Tasse dans sa prison, n'a pu joindre au souvenir de ses poignantes douleurs si noblement et si éloquemment exprimées en sa Lamentation, celui du Triomphe qui attendait, par une tardive mais éclatante justice, le chevaleresque auteur de la 'Jérusalem délivrée'].⁴⁶

This passage reflects Liszt's conception of suffering heroic masculinity. The reference to Tasso's groans solidifies lament: Liszt implies both Tasso's suffering and remembrance, as if he, too, feels the bitter sorrows of personal and creative strife. Liszt then shifts to the expression of Tasso's triumph, the just reward for the "chivalrous author." In this brief passage, Liszt describes the tension of his Tasso-narrative. Lament is a necessary component of the hero's masculine expression. By

⁴⁴ Pope Clement VIII ascended to the Papal chair in 1592. He and his nephew, Cardinal Aldobrandini, planned to invite Tasso to Rome, which came to fruition in 1594. Tasso arrived in November and a ceremony to bestow a crown of laurels was set in motion. However, before the first ceremony, Cardinal Aldobrandini became ill. The celebration was cancelled. Tasso, already in poor health, entered the convent of Sant'Onofrio in April 1595 and died. He received no laurels and no pension.

⁴⁵ Torkewitz, "Liszt's *Tasso*," 347.

⁴⁶ Liszt, Preface to *Tasso*, 1.

drawing from the significance of Rome to represent Tasso's magnitude, Liszt implies that future generations of creative artists draw upon the laborious creative acts as a metaphor for heroic suffering that *leads to* triumph.

In Liszt's interpretation, Venice, Ferrara, and Rome are more than settings—they give life, memory, and particular associations beyond the specifics of a chronological narrative. These places are key components of the structure of Liszt's *Tasso*. His preface clearly outlines Tasso's experiences in each place:

Tasso loved and suffered at Ferrara; he was revenged at Rome; his glory still lives in the popular songs of Venice. These three periods are inseparable from his immortal *memory*. To render these in music, I felt I must first call up the *spirit of the hero* as it now appears to us, haunting the lagunes of Venice; next, we must see his *proud and sad figure*, as it glides among the fêtes of Ferrara—the birthplace of his masterpieces; finally, we must follow him to Rome, the Eternal city, which, is holding forth to him his crown, glorified him as a *martyr and poet*.

[Le Tasse a aimé et souffert à Ferrare; il a été vengé à Rome; sa gloire est encore vivante dans les chants populaires de Venise. Ces trois moments sont inséparables de son immortel souvenir. Pour les rendre en musique, nous avons d'abord fait surgir la grande ombre du héros telle qu'elle nous apparaît aujourd'hui hantant les lagunes de Venise; nous avons entrevu ensuite sa figure hautaine et attristée glisser à travers les fêtes de Ferrare où il avait donné le jour à ses chefs-d'œuvre; enfin nous l'avons suivi à Rome, la ville éternelle qui, en lui tendant sa couronne, glorifia en lui le martyr et le poète.⁴⁷]

Liszt is aware of the main components of Tasso's life, legendary status, and the doubleness in his character. However, he relies more explicitly on how each place carries the memory of the spirit of the hero, one that encapsulates both lament and triumph. First, he describes Tasso as both “proud and sad,”⁴⁸ showing how Tasso both loved and suffered in Ferrara, the place of his greatest achievement and greatest misery. Second, Tasso receives his anticipated laurels in Rome, though only after his death. Liszt describes Tasso's final triumph as “justice” in which he is “revenged.” To me,

⁴⁷ Liszt, Preface to *Tasso*, 1. Emphasis in the English text is mine.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

these two terms evoke power, even violence, which contrasts Tasso's heroic masculinity as a representation of suffering. Rome for Byron is not important because triumph was insignificant in his rendition of the myth.⁴⁹ Finally, Tasso's eternal glory is immortalized in popular culture via the haunting songs of the Venetian gondoliers. Venice is therefore consecrated as a monumental place, even though Tasso had no real connection with the city. Byron alludes to Tasso in the fourth canto of his *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*: "In Venice Tasso's echoes are no more,/ And silent rows the songless gondolier."⁵⁰ For Liszt, however, the Venetian gondolier is not songless—like the "spirit of the hero," the song haunts the waters and reflects Tasso's suffering to those who listen.

This passage is a curiosity, and closer scrutiny suggests an alternative interpretation of the chronological events that Liszt mentions, and their possible meanings. Initially, he presents a narrative more closely associated with Tasso's lived experience, and the events that are important to those specific places. Ferrara, Rome, and Venice represent suffering, triumph, and legacy respectively. As Liszt continues, he rearranges the order to Venice—Ferrara—Rome. The implication of this change conveys a narrative chronology more complex than lament→triumph→legacy. In Liszt's (re-)interpretation, Tasso reaches his legacy as heroic genius *through* lament (legacy→~~lament~~→triumph). Tasso's legacy is tinged with suffering. This suggests to me that his stature as creative genius (in the mind of Liszt and the Romantics) necessitated his suffering. I read a tension in Liszt's formulation—Tasso is both a man of heroic legacy, worthy of emulation, and a man whose recognition is achieved largely through his suffering. This tension is evident in Liszt's preface and in the way Liszt employs the musical apparatus in *Tasso*.

⁴⁹ It was brought to my attention in an earlier draft of this chapter that Liszt's inclusion of Rome, laurels, and triumph is also likely due to his commitment to the Roman Catholic Church. Liszt did take minor orders and was referred to as Abbé Liszt following his ordination. He also spent a great deal of his later life in Rome. Neither Goethe nor Byron exhibited such loyalty to the Catholic church.

⁵⁰ Byron, "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage: Canto IV," ed. Susan J. Wolfson and Peter J. Manning, 2nd ed. (London: Penguin Group, 2005), 512.

Liszt's unique narrative procedure also articulates "different moments in time" that establish a tension, or "*contrast* between reality and ideality."⁵¹ Venice depicts Liszt's present where the gondoliers can still be heard singing a tune—a quasi-folksong in nineteenth-century terms—with text from Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata*. Liszt devotes a great deal of space in the preface describing the importance of the Venetian/Gondolier melody.⁵² This focus translates into the musical material, where the main section (and later apotheosis) is built upon this tune. Liszt treats the Gondolier's song as a type of ideal sacred relic of veneration, proof of Tasso's triumph, monumental legacy, and masculine heroic genius. The preface then returns to the past to explore the reality of Tasso's suffering in Ferrara. The music that represents Ferrara is a stylized minuet, a dance form meant to evoke some distant past. The evocation of minuet style in *Tasso* creates a scene, the specificity of which is integral to the overall form of the symphonic poem and its larger contextual meaning. The narrative then moves forward to Tasso's final years in Rome. Musically, Liszt portrays Rome through the apotheosis of the main theme, a transformation of the "found" Venetian/Gondolier melody. This compositional strategy is meant to portray "the ideality of Tasso's posthumous reputation."⁵³ Kregor amplifies this idea of recognition after death when he writes:

Liszt does not identify any events in Tasso's life that are to be depicted, but instead creates a spiritual pilgrimage of sorts, in which the ubiquitous melange of striving, misunderstanding, and suffering that artists endure in life leads to their immortality after death.⁵⁴

The order of Liszt's chronology creates a strong link with the idea of the beneficent *spirit* of Tasso. In gleaning ideas of Tasso's reality and ideality, along with suffering for immortality, I argue that the

⁵¹ Cormac, *The Symphonic Poems of Franz Liszt*, 122. Italics mine.

⁵² This is not the first instance Liszt incorporated a version of the Tasso/Gondolier melody in one of his compositions. The melody initially appeared in his collection of piano pieces *Venezia e Napoli*. For a discussion on the evolution of Liszt's *Tasso*, including the source material for the Tasso/Gondolier theme, see Cormac, *The Symphonic Poems of Franz Liszt*, 69-131.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Kregor, *Program Music*, 120.

sequence of events evokes the spirit of the heroic genius who first suffered, and later gave that suffering meaning. Liszt's Tasso is a spirit, an entity that gives a new meaning to place, and the inner emotions of heroic suffering, triumph, and legacy a new meaning. This appears musically in the way Liszt treats form, thematic material, and harmony. All emphasis points to Rome and the Gondolier song that venerates Tasso's life, legend, heroic masculinity, and genius.

3.4 Place, Spirit, and Tension—Toward a Reading of the Music

The first half of the preface introduces ideas of monumentality, characterizes Tasso's heroic genius, and explicates the significance of place to themes of lament, triumph, and legacy. These ideas reveal the tension of Tasso's life and legend: he is both/and "proud-sad;" "martyr-poet;" active-passive; suffering-triumphant. This tension not only offers a nuanced depiction of Tasso's character, but it also drives Liszt's compositional strategies. Liszt outlines the narrative structure of *Tasso* as a way to evoke the "great contrasts in the destiny of poets." ["les deux grandes oppositions de la destinée des poètes, don't il a été justement dit, que si on fait peser parfois la malédiction sur leur vie, la bénédiction ne manqué jamais à leur tombe"].⁵⁵ He portrays movements through time and explores Tasso's experiences and emotions within specific places. Liszt recreates tension through form, musical motives, musical topoi, and harmony, all of which go through a series of shifts and transformations before they reach apotheosis.

3.4 (a): Form

Tasso appears almost formless, as if it consists of a string of motives with little connection to other musical material. However, because Liszt evokes specific places and events in Tasso's life, the gestures and themes portray larger narrative associations. I hear four main "sections" in *Tasso*, each

⁵⁵ Liszt, Preface to *Tasso*, 1.

differentiated by the transformation of thematic motives, themes (amplified by key area), and recurring musical topoi. This creates a tension between the evocation of continuity and the suggestion of a fluid musical form. The first section is a lengthy introduction (mm. 1-61) that sets the scene of Tasso's transformation. The introduction contains two shorter, contrasting subsections—a slow *Lento* and an agitated *Allegro strepitoso*. The remaining three sections are associated with the places Liszt linked to Tasso's lament-triumph: Venice (mm. 62-144); Ferrara (mm. 165-270); and Rome (mm. 533ff). The transitional material between each musical representation of place reintroduces the motives of the *Lento* and *strepitoso*. This evokes the *sound* of Tasso's lament as doubleness: the legacy of Tasso's heroic genius (in Venice) is saturated with suffering.

The overall motivic material portrays Tasso's experiences as a narrative of (legacy-) triumph through lament. The final statement of the Tasso-Gondolier theme invokes Tasso's triumphant redemption. Liszt conveys Tasso's doubleness musically by drawing upon a narrative that amplifies tension through memory associated with place. Liszt writes:

Lamento e Trionfo: these are the *two great contrasts* in the destiny of poets, of whom it has been truly said that if fate *curse*s them during life, *blessing* never fails them after death. In order to give this idea not only the authority but the splendor of reality, I have endeavoured to borrow even its form from fact.

[Lamento e Trionfo: tells sont les deux grandes oppositions de la destinée des poètes, dont il a été justement dit, que si on ait peser parfois la malédiction sur leur vie, la benediction ne manqué jamais à leur tombe. Afin de donner à cette idée non seulement l'autorité mais l'éclat due Fait, nous avons voulu emprunter au fait sa forme même, et pour cela nous avons pris comme thème de notre poème musical...].⁵⁶

The tension between lament and triumph evokes splendor despite Tasso's ultimate failure to succeed *in life*. The ideality of Tasso's spirit haunting places both past and present—the memory of spirit—raises the possibility of an equally free treatment of form. Remembrance is not necessarily precise;

⁵⁶ Liszt, Preface to *Tasso*, 1. Emphasis mine.

and it is often shaped by an emotional recollection of a specific time or event. The Venetian-Gondolier tune carries a cultural legacy of memory, and Tasso's genius is embodied within it. Liszt's *Tasso* is structured to evoke the ethereal, hovering quality of Tasso's spirit. While it is possible to hear *Tasso* as a free treatment of sonata form,⁵⁷ I suggest that Liszt's emphasis on the transcendental does not make sonata form particularly conducive to interpreting the expressive and programmatic meaning of the symphonic poem. Sonata form is built upon the concept of tension and resolution (and metaphors of masculinity and femininity) and therefore does not readily hold space for the unresolved doubleness of Tasso's subjective experiences.⁵⁸

To articulate how I hear the form, I have adapted a diagram based on Eero Tarasti's formal analysis of *Tasso* (see figure 6 below).⁵⁹ The four major sections, linked to time and place, are distinguished by the transformation of a simple motivic gesture—a triplet. Changes to the motive are signaled by expressive markings, rhythm, tempi, musical topoi, and harmony. Furthermore, each section depicts a mood, character, and associative place, all of which reflect the tension of Tasso's heroic masculinity and creative genius. The four non-sequential sections are:

- (1) Lamento;
- (2) Strepitoso;
- (3) Tasso-Gondolier; and
- (4) Minuet.

Tasso's lament (the combination of *Lento* and *strepitoso*) forms the introductory material and features the triplet motive; the Tasso-Gondolier theme represents both our hero and Venice, the place of Tasso's legacy and where his spirit is most palpable; the minuet portrays the court at Ferrara; and finally, the transformation of the Tasso-Gondolier theme in its apotheosized state represents Rome.

⁵⁷ See Kaplan, "Sonata Form in the Orchestral Works of Liszt," 142–152.

⁵⁸ For a detailed explanation of masculine and feminine coding in sonata-form structure, see Susan McClary, *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991). See especially pages 112–131.

⁵⁹ Eero Tarasti, *Myth and Music: A Semiotic Approach to the Aesthetics of Myth in Music, Especially That of Wagner, Sibelius and Stravinsky* (The Hague: Mouton Publishers, 1979), 142. I am indebted to Tarasti for my understanding of the form of *Tasso*. Figure 6 derives from Tarasti's formal scheme.

The connection between the *lamento* and Tasso-Gondolier theme is particularly significant. The *lamento* is the pervasive emotion that defines the other musical material while the Tasso-Gondolier theme is a characterization of the hero. By connecting emotion and character via the triplet gesture, Liszt reveals that suffering (lament) is always an aspect of Tasso's character that is never resolved.

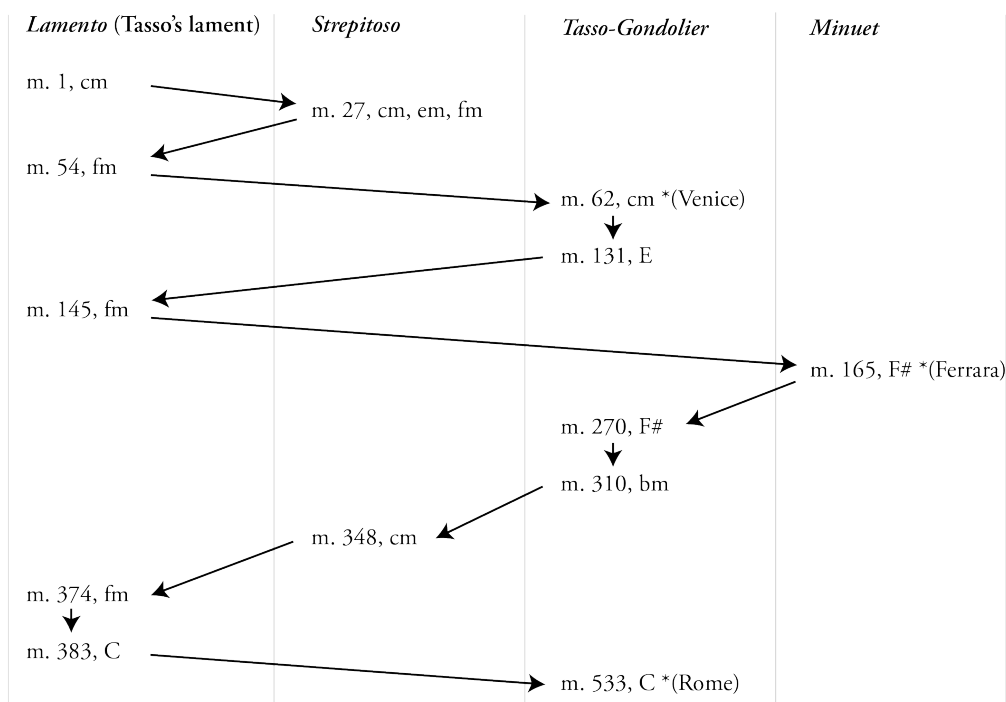


FIGURE 6 FORM OF *TASSO*

This formal diagram can be read vertically and horizontally. The vertical plane shows how the occurrences and variants of the motivic (and thematic) material evolves over time.⁶⁰ The *lamento* appears five times, the *Strepitoso* three, and the Tasso-Gondolier theme five. The minuet is a stand-alone section as is the *Strepitoso*. The vertical plane also conveys how each motive's harmonic trajectory transforms. Taking the *lamento*, the harmony shifts from C minor in the opening, to F minor, and finally to the tonic C major (a tonic-subdominant relationship). The *Strepitoso* almost exclusively emphasizes C minor. The minuet is heard once as a single entity, but later incorporates a

⁶⁰ Ibid., 141.

statement of the Tasso-Gondolier theme. Harmonically, the minuet is the furthest from the tonic (C minor/major), in the foreign F# major. The minuet's foreignness is further amplified because it is approached by a statement of the *Lento* in F minor. The key areas of the Tasso-Gondolier theme portray the journey of Liszt's hero, from C minor in its first statement, E major (the raised mediant to the minor tonic), F# sharp major (an augmented fourth and the furthest point harmonically), B minor (the leading tone of C minor), finally to C major, the key of Tasso's triumph.⁶¹

Reading the shift in each gestural/motivic "section" along a vertical plane clearly outlines their frequency and key area. But the form may also be read horizontally and doing so shows the way Liszt transforms motives and gestures throughout *Tasso*. The implications of horizontal form (e.g., sonata form) suggest a definitive teleology: there is a beginning and movement toward an end. Yet, the musical narrative Liszt emphasizes in *Tasso* does not solely express a teleological form. Motives sound, slide backwards, and shift to evoke place and its associated extra-musical expression, all designated by changes in tempi, thematic character, and harmony.⁶² The formal process in *Tasso* evokes how Tasso's masculine-heroic transformation comes to pass through the tension of creative labour. The fullness of its meaning becomes clear when I consider how the motives and themes aid in Liszt's reinterpretation of Tasso's legend. The complexity of the formal structure—read both vertically and horizontally—turns away from a strictly teleological form that favours resolution. Rather, Tasso's genius and the *memory* of his suffering is *always* coloured by lament, even in his triumph.

⁶¹ Tarasti explicitly connects the movement from C minor (struggle) to C major (triumph) in Liszt's *Tasso* to Beethoven's Symphony no. 5. See *Myth and Music*, 92.

⁶² Music is particularly challenging when trying to describe its movement over time. Yet, music is inherently teleological. It has a beginning and an end. It cannot express the same aspects of narrative that stories and other written texts can. Nevertheless, program music, with its reliance on the extra-musical, can *suggest* disruptions in time; tension and doubleness abound. Liszt's reference to Beethoven's teleological narrative from struggle to triumph calls attention to the innovation of Liszt's non-teleological narrative of triumph through suffering in *Tasso*.

3.4 (b): Musical Motives, Gestures, Topoi, and Themes

Tasso's unique structure suggests that Liszt was more concerned with evoking extra-musical content than adhering to traditional formal processes. The form itself is dictated by the transformation of musical motives, gestures, and themes via harmonic shifts. All of them contribute to extra-musical associations—and their wider meanings—that Liszt highlights in his (re-)interpretation of Tasso's legend. The interplay between formal procedure and motivic/thematic transformation highlights Tasso's expression of heroic masculinity: it reflects his social experiences and innermost emotions. The central gesture in *Tasso* is a pervasive, descending triplet figure. I associate this gesture with the idea of Tasso's ever-present suffering. Associating the triplets with lament subsequently effects how I interpret the meaning of their transformation. Example 1 shows some key moments where Liszt incorporates and transforms the triplet motive.



Tasso triplet motive, *Lento*, mm. 1-2



Allegro strepitoso, mm. 27-28



Tasso-Gondolier theme + triplet motive, mm. 62-66



Minuet, mm. 271-279ff



Tasso theme as Apotheosis, mm. 533-536

EXAMPLE 1 *TASSO*, TRANSFORMATION OF THE TRIPLET MOTIVE

The triplet gesture first appears in the introduction (*Lento*, m. 1) and is characterized by minor-mode tonality and slow descending sequence. The shift to an unstable *Allegro strepitoso* (m. 27) transforms the triplets in a way to evoke frenetic energy: staccato sixteenth-notes; accents on each beat; chromaticism; and repeated notes on the first beat that contrast with the descending triplets of the third and fourth beats. The agitation of this passage is amplified by the quick succession through C minor, E minor, and F minor before returning to the *Lento* (m. 54). In measure 62, the triplets reappear in C minor along with a musical phrase that eventually transforms into the Tasso-Gondolier theme. Its full statement emerges in measure 131 in E major. After a brief return to the *Lento* (m. 145), Liszt incorporates the triplets into a stylized minuet in $\frac{3}{4}$ time. This lengthy passage treats the triplets like an ornamentation, as if Tasso's lament is merely a decoration in the Ferrarese court. Finally, in measure 533, the triplets accompany the Tasso-Gondolier theme into the triumphant apotheosis.

The triplet motive acts as a type of *Leitmotiv* that permeates the symphonic poem. Similar to how Wagner uses them in his music dramas, the pervasiveness of their presence in *Tasso* represents not only the hero's masculine character, but also his "historical manifestations,"⁶³ emotions, and subjective experiences. The triplet evokes suffering, it permeates the spirit-memory-legacy of Tasso, it conflicts with the courtly atmosphere at Ferrara, and it represents triumph. The triplet motive constantly refracts and mutates, which is a fitting metaphor for a heroic protagonist who haunts both place and the laborious act of creative innovation. One gesture has many meanings, a testament to the complexity of program music and Liszt's sensitivity to his subject.

Identifying how the triplet figure transforms in *Tasso* is only one, albeit important, aspect of my interpretation of the possible meanings associated with that motive. But the triplets also appear alongside additional musical topoi that contribute to Liszt's evocation of Tasso-as-hero. In the

⁶³ Keith Johns, *The Symphonic Poems of Franz Liszt*, 17.

opening measures (example 2),⁶⁴ Liszt creates a particular setting, or *atmosphere* of lament, primarily through motivic gestures and unstable harmony. This *Lento* section features descending triplets that alternate between the strings and the woodwinds. The sequential treatment of the chromatically descending triplets gives the illusion of movement, but ultimately the overall effect conveys a static, almost hovering quality. The idea of an atmosphere of lament is further amplified by the low instrumental register, sparse texture, and minor-mode tonality. The first phrase (mm. 1-7) concludes with Liszt amplifying the motivic and harmonic tension. A diminuendo and the fermatas slow the tempo, which in turn amplifies the diminished-seventh harmonizations. The phrase ends with no suggestion of resolution. Rather, it gives the impression that “one is dragged downward.”⁶⁵

The image shows a musical score for 'Tasso's Lament' by Franz Liszt, arranged by Theophil Forchhammer. The score is for piano and is marked 'Lento' and 'ff'. It consists of two systems of music. The first system shows the beginning of the piece with descending triplets in the strings and woodwinds. The second system shows the end of the piece with a diminuendo and fermatas leading to a final diminished-seventh chord. The score is in 3/4 time and features a minor mode tonality.

EXAMPLE 2 TASSO, TASSO'S LAMENT, MM. 1-11

The *Lento* gives way to the frenetic *Allegro strepitoso* (example 3), but the two-measure approach (mm. 25-26) fails to prepare the listener for the forte downbeat.⁶⁶ It is abrupt and jarring. The triplets become sixteenth-note utterances: fragmented and punctuated by staccatos and accents. The whole of the *strepitoso* is tonally unstable, moving sequentially through a series of diminished-seventh passages that touch on C minor, E minor, and F minor. In contrast to the *Lento*, the musical texture incorporates the entire symphonic retinue, with an emphasis on the brass. These sixteenth-note

⁶⁴ Franz Liszt, *Tasso: Lamento e Trionfo*, arr. Theophil Forchhammer (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1885).

⁶⁵ Fallon-Ludwig, “Narrative Inspiration in Liszt’s Symphonic Poems,” 375.

⁶⁶ Liszt, *Tasso: Lamento e Trionfo*, arr. Theophil Forchhammer..

triplets give way to the angular phrase of the *marcato agitato* over a G pedal (m. 33). As the expressive marking indicates, this phrase evokes a palpable anxiety. Liszt evokes this anxiety with a sequentially ascending chromatic line, suspensions, and accents on the off-beat. The introduction concludes with a brief return to the motivic gestures and musical topoi of the opening *Lento*. This time the key area shifts from C minor to F minor. The return of the *Lento* is brief, but it is effective as a contrast to the *strepitoso*. The final phrase of the introduction dissipates into nothing.

Allegro strepitoso.

Str. a. Bl.

marcato agitato

V. Br.

EXAMPLE 3 TASSO, ALLEGRO STREPITOSO, MM. 27-37

The introduction (mm. 1-53) extends beyond musical topoi (gestures that carry meaning in themselves through extensive use) to the extra-musical content Liszt highlights in the preface.⁶⁷

⁶⁷ The theory of musical topoi was initiated by Leonard Ratner. His *Classical Music: Expression, Form, and Style* (New York: Schirmer, 1980) served as the model for this ground-breaking analytical approach. Ratner's students Wye Allanbrook and V. Kofi Agawu considerably developed his methods. See Allanbrook, *Rhythmic Gesture in Mozart: Le nozze di Figaro and Don Giovanni* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1983) and Agawu, *Playing with Signs: A Semiotic Interpretation of Classical Music* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991). These works are a small representation of the earliest work in musical topic theory.

Vande Moortele asserts that the “program remains silent about [this]...portion of the piece.”⁶⁸ I argue to the contrary and suggest the structure and motivic material depicts the lament of Tasso’s heroic genius—a man “ill-treated during life.” [“...du genie mal traité durant sa vie...”].⁶⁹ While the introduction does not explicitly correspond to Venice, Ferrara, or Rome, its evocation of lament shapes Tasso’s experience with those places. Indeed, the whole of the preface is an articulation of lament and suffering. Shulstad suggests the tripartite structure (*Lento-Strepitoso-Lento*) represents Tasso’s “physical and mental state” and Liszt’s compositional strategy “makes the listener hear the actual sounds, so that the audience can share Tasso’s experience.”⁷⁰ Liszt’s preface supports this interpretation when he describes how Byron makes his audience “feel and hear the groans of Tasso.” [“Toutefois, Byron, en nous transmettant en quelque sorte les gémissements du Tasse dans sa prison...”].⁷¹ Shulstad is sensitive to Liszt’s preface, but her analysis appears to be more in line with musical mimesis. Liszt depicts the *idea* of groaning, along with the experience that initially caused such heroic strife. Tasso’s lament encapsulates more than his experience in prison: he is always striving for recognition and always suffering because he comes up short. While striving suggests continual motion (and the tension between the *Lento* and *Strepitoso* evokes this) the full meaning is not yet revealed. Similarly, Tasso’s heroic masculinity, though determined by his suffering, is not yet asserted. Tasso is only memorialized through the transformation of this lament across time and place. But the introduction does evoke a doubleness: lament is both paralyzing and intense; passive and agitated. This music reflects Tasso’s legendary status as genius.

The introduction leads to quasi-monothematic material that represents Tasso’s spirit in Venice. Liszt introduces the main theme, the Tasso-Gondolier theme, as a derivation of a popular Venetian

⁶⁸ Steven Vande Moortele, “Beyond Sonata Deformation,” 46.

⁶⁹ Liszt, Preface to *Tasso*. Liszt felt this deeply—the constant struggle to be recognized as an outstanding artist.

⁷⁰ Shulstad, *The Symbol of Genius*, 50.

⁷¹ Liszt, Preface to *Tasso*.

gondolier song, a found melody (example 4). In his preface, Liszt writes that Tasso's "glory still lives on in the popular songs of Venice." ["...sagloire est encore vivantedans les chants populaires de Venice"].⁷² which points to Tasso's posthumous reputation. Given Tasso's cultural significance, Liszt's extrapolation of a tune with a text from *Gerusalemme liberata* is unsurprising:

““Canto l’armi pietose e’l Capitano,/Che’l gran Sepolcro liberò Cristo!””

["I sing of holy war and the captain/who freed the Sepulchre of Christ!"].⁷³

EXAMPLE 4 TASSO, TASSO-GONDOLIER THEME, OPENING, MM. 62-66

Liszt describes the Tasso-Gondolier theme as “plaintive, slow, and mournfully monotonous,” but the gondoliers give it a

special character by dragging certain notes and holding out their voices, which, heard from a distance, produce an effect similar to that of rays of light reflected from the ripple of the waves...the Venetian melody breathes so gnawing a melancholy, so irremediable a sadness, that a mere reproduction of it seems sufficient to *reveal the secret of Tasso's sad emotions*. As the imagination of the poet lends itself to depict the brilliant illusions of the world, so this melody seems to express the deceptive and fallacious coquetries of those smiles, whose perfidious poison brought about the horrible catastrophe which could never find compensation in this world, but was, nevertheless, covered at the Capitol with a mantle far exceeding in splendor the purple of Alphonso.

[Afin de donner à cette idée non seulement l'autorité mais l'éclat du Fait, nous avons voulu emprunter au fait sa forme même, et pour cela nous avons pris comme theme de notre poème musical, le motif sur lequel nous avons entendu les gondoliers de Venise chanter sur les lagunes les strophes du Tasse, et redire encoure trois siècles après lui: 'Canto l'armi pietose e'l Capitano, Che'l gran Sepolcro liberò di Christo!' Ce motif est en lui-même plaintif, d'une gémissante lenteur, d'un deuil monotone; mais les gondoliers lui prêtent un miroitement tout particulier en traînant certaines notes par la retenue des voix, qui à distance planent et brillent

⁷² Liszt, Preface to *Tasso*.

⁷³ Ibid.

comme des tratnées de gloire et de lumière...Le motif vénitien respire une mélancolie si navrée, une tristesse si irremediable, qu'il suffit de le poser pour révéler le secret des douloureuses émotions du Tasse. Il s'est prêté ensuite, tout comme l'imagination du poète, à la peinture des brillantes illusions du monde, des décevantes et fallacieuses coquetteries de ces sourires don't le perfide poison amena l'horrible catastrophe qui semblait ne pouvoir trouver de compensation en ce monde, et qui, néanmoins, fut revêtue au Capitole d'une pourpre plus pure que celle du manteaux d'Alphonse!].⁷⁴

The Tasso-Gondolier theme amplifies the atmosphere of lament while also encapsulating the hero's essential characteristics, revealing *Tasso's* thematic focus as historical figure, folk hero, and creative genius.⁷⁵ This theme not only implies lament, but also portrays the associations of suffering as integral to Tasso's genius. By building his introduction from fragments of this "found" theme, Liszt suggests that suffering and agitation achieve comprehensible meaning only retrospectively.

Liszt structures the Tasso-Gondolier theme in two sections. The first is an *Adagio mesto* (m. 62, see example 4) in C minor—the first instance in *Tasso* that a key is firmly established.⁷⁶ The theme's first statement is in the bass clarinet and is accompanied by the triplet motive (in the horns) and the arpeggios in the harp. The theme is stark and brooding, a reflection (on those Venetian waves) of Tasso's lament first characterized in the opening. In measure 90, the theme shifts in character, which is initially signaled by the *espressivo molto* expressive marking. The harmony shifts to A-flat major and the instrumentation changes to cellos, horns, and bassoons (example 5).⁷⁷ The triplet gesture shifts to be part of the internal texture, but it is nevertheless present, always suggesting that lament is not far away.

⁷⁴ Ibid. Emphasis in the English text is mine.

⁷⁵ Jonathan Kregor, *Program Music*, 121.

⁷⁶ Liszt, *Tasso: Lamento e Trionfo*, arr. Theophil Forchhammer.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

EXAMPLE 5 TASSO, TASSO-GONDOLIER THEME, *ESPRESSIVO MOLTO*, MM. 91-97

Finally, in measure 131, Liszt transforms the Tasso-Gondolier theme into a more stable statement. He modulates to a bright E major and augments the theme as a foreshadowing of Tasso's apotheosis.

In the context of Liszt's preface, the Tasso-Gondolier theme reflects the atmosphere of lament through its "plaintive, slow, and mournfully monotonous gnawing melancholy." ["Ce motif est en lui-même plaintif, d'une gémiscante lenteur, d'un deuil monotone..."].⁷⁸ Liszt capitalizes on this characterization by amplifying Tasso's spirit-legacy and emotional experiences—represented by the main theme—with the lament-laden triplet motive. Liszt adds a further dimension when he associates the Tasso-Gondolier theme with Venice, the place that captures Tasso's legacy through memory and song. This legacy anticipates Tasso's future triumph as an expression of posthumous genius, but one that is hard-won by suffering. In retaining the atmosphere of lament, Tasso *becomes* heroic through the tension of his suffering and triumph. But the Tasso-Gondolier theme never reaches its full (triumphant) potential because the hero, as Kregor writes, "never takes control of himself or his fate: his motive habitually forms a portion—but never the principal material."⁷⁹ Spirit indeed, and like an apparition Tasso glints upon the Venetian waves. His purpose is not to control or

⁷⁸ Liszt, Preface to *Tasso*, 1.

⁷⁹ Kregor, *Program Music*, 120-121.

resolve the tension between suffering and triumph, but to retain that tension as an integral aspect of his heroic legacy. Tasso never materializes, but his presence as spirit and memory suggests that he exists in fluid suspension, both present and absent. He appears when another creative genius calls upon his heroic spirit, as Liszt does in his preface.

The presence of the triplet figure, along with the melancholy character of the half-formed theme, suggests that lament and not Tasso is the central subject. Privileging an emotional expression or state of being over a representation of character has certain gendered implications. Kregor's assertion that Tasso "never takes control of himself" suggests that the hero is a victim, unable to break free from the constraints that serve as his source of lament. Victimization can imply a failed masculinity if the standard of manliness is the normative social construct. Perpetual suffering, or constraints, suggest an inability to overcome. However, considering Tasso's legend, and the wider socio-cultural associations of heroic masculinity and creative genius, those constraints—that victimization—are precisely what make him heroic. Tasso's suffering masculinity is an aspect of his lived experience. His victimization ennobles him to reach the greatness of the sublime—the epitome of heroic masculinity. Furthermore, embedded within the theme itself is a sense of monumentality; and it was found and repurposed to fit the narrative of Tasso's legacy through lament and triumph. Tasso's heroic masculinity (re-)imagined by Liszt is both passive and transcendental, imbued with suffering and yet monumentalized. The lament associated with the Tasso-Gondolier theme is necessary for a full, albeit unresolved transformation of our masculine hero.

The introduction of Tasso as spirit and memory is followed by a brief but jarring return of the *Lento* in F minor (m. 145). The function of this return serves a dual purpose: it reflects how suffering is both integral to Tasso's legacy and points to the suffering imposed on Tasso during his courtly sojourn in Ferrara. To evoke Ferrara, Liszt transforms the triplet motive into a new musical topic that represents the idea of courtly life (m. 165). The minuet is characterized by its $\frac{3}{4}$ time, largely

diatonic harmony, modulation to F# major, balanced phrase structure, and change in instrumentation to feature woodwinds and strings. The music is light, even frivolous, and evokes a pastoral idyll.⁸⁰ For a moment, Liszt appears to shift significantly from the melancholy Tasso-Gondolier theme and the lament of the introduction. However, the musical gestures of the minuet combine the triplet descent of the lament motive and the Tasso-Gondolier theme. Here, the triplets transform into rhythmic alterations punctuated by grace notes (example 6).⁸¹

Allegretto mosso con grazia. (quasi Menuetto.)

The image shows a musical score for a piano piece. It consists of four systems of music. The first system has a tempo marking 'Allegretto mosso con grazia. (quasi Menuetto.)'. The score is in F# major and 3/4 time. The right hand features a triplet of eighth notes, and the left hand has a bass line. There are dynamic markings like 'mf espressivo' and 'espressivo'. There are also performance instructions like 'wt.' and 'cl.'.

EXAMPLE 6 TASSO, MINUET SECTION, MM. 167-200

The minuet is a façade and its idealism derives from illusions. Tasso never felt accepted among the courtiers, and Ferrara contributed *the most* to his personal and creative suffering. Yet the court also shaped Tasso’s experience. Liszt invokes this tension between Tasso and the court by presenting the

⁸⁰ Interestingly, Tasso’s pastoral, *Aminta*, was a favourite for madrigalists to evoke the idealization of nature. The pastoral has its own rich history in drama, literature, music, and art. Its evocation in music from the eighteenth to the nineteenth centuries is best reflected by composers like Handel, Rousseau, Rameau, Beethoven, Wagner, and Debussy. The large corpus of pastoral scholarship—and pastoral theory—reflects both the changing meanings of the term and its use in describing art and literature. Raymond Williams poignantly states that the foundation of the pastoral is a “myth functioning as a memory” (43). The result is that society looks back at representations of pastoral life and determines their own present is in decline. See Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973).

⁸¹ Liszt, *Tasso: Lamento e Trionfo*, arr. Theophil Forchhammer.

Tasso-Gondolier theme both within and in contrast to the minuet topic, amplified by the lament-laden triplet figure:

[a]s the imagination of the poet lends itself to depict the brilliant illusions of the world, so this melody [the Tasso-Gondolier melody] seems to express the deceptive and fallacious coqueries of those smiles, whose perfidious poison brought about the horrible catastrophe which could never find compensation in this world...

[Il s'est prêté ensuite, tout comme l'imagination du poète, à la peinture des brillantes illusions du monde, des décevantes et falacieuses coquetteries de ces sourires don't le perfide poison amena l'horrible catastrophe qui semblait ne pouvoir trouver de compensation en ce monde...].⁸²

Liszt's preface here itself suggests that the "fallacious coqueries" of the court lead "to both historical ephemerality and artistic sterility."⁸³ Tasso's imagination allows him to creatively depict life in the Ferrarese court, but identifying its superficiality leads to his suffering. Given this socio-cultural context, along with the musical topic of the minuet, Liszt conveys the doubleness in Tasso's experience. Court life was incongruent with Tasso's nature, and he could not adhere to its strict social norms. Rather than be a part of the superficial court, Tasso chooses self-exile.

The shift to F# major contributes to this narrative of alienation. In the context of the key relationships, F# major is a tritone from the tonic, and the furthest point in Tasso's harmonic journey. Yet Liszt reveals a tension between the key area of F# major and the musical character of the theme. The minuet offers a sense of reprieve from the lamentation of the opening and the deep melancholy of the Venetian Tasso-Gondolier theme. The minuet's major mode points forward to the triumph Tasso will experience in the C major apotheosis. But in terms of Tasso's experience in Ferrara, F# major represents suffering just as C minor and F minor had previously. The inclusion of the triplet figure amplifies this tension despite the transformation of the minuet topic to include a

⁸² Liszt, Preface to *Tasso*, 1.

⁸³ Kregor, *Program Music*, 122.

statement of the Tasso-Gondolier theme in F# major (m. 270). Yet given the symbolism associated with the court, the inclusion of both represents a contrast rather than a resolution. Liszt includes in the score a hint to Tasso's relationship within the court:

“Hier nimmt der Vortrag des Orchesters einen doppelten Charakter an: _ die Bläser leicht und flatterhaft; die singenden Streich-Instrumente sentimental und graziös.”

[“Here the orchestra assumes a *dual character*: the wind-instruments lightly and in a fluttering manner; the cantabile stringed instruments sentimentally and gracefully”].⁸⁴

Liszt's coupling of the Tasso-Gondolier theme with the affect (and F# major key) of the minuet suggests that Tasso does not integrate into the fold of the court. The dual character reflects Tasso's experience of true alienation. This links back to Kregor's idea that Tasso is a victim, a qualifier that only exists because Tasso defies social structures. That said, the musical signifiers corresponding to Tasso's alienation both *within* and in contrast to the court do not articulate the same expression of lament as the introduction and the Venice sections. But rather than view this musical moment as proof that Tasso attempts to align his sensibilities with Ferrarese court life, Liszt reveals that alienation is welcome. This is a true hallmark of masculine heroic genius, and one aligned with Byron's self-assertive hero. Tension in Tasso's character shows that he can stand in contrast with the (creatively, heterosocially normative) oppressive court and still retain his suffering heroic masculinity.

As the minuet continues, the diatonic theme becomes increasingly more chromatic, suggesting a further breakdown of Tasso's strained relationship with the court. But as it is for so many Romantic-era heroic geniuses, his breakdown is necessary for a full expression of where genius can take an artist. Creative labour requires individual, solitary suffering. While Tasso's life at court was anything but solitary, it nevertheless represents a prison for his imagination. Tasso begins to break

⁸⁴ Franz Liszt, *Tasso: Lamento e Trionfo*, ed. Franz Liszt-Stiftung, Franz Liszt: Musikalische Werke, Serie I, Band 1 (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1907), 207.

free from the confines of court life when a second statement of the minuet and Tasso-Gondolier theme strongly pivots from F# major as the dominant of B minor (m. 310). This statement is brief and is interrupted by the second statement of the furious and agitated *Allegro strepitoso* (m. 348) in C minor followed by a brief statement of the *Lento* in F minor (m. 375). This sequence (Tasso-Gondolier/minuet → *Strepitoso* → *Lento*) creates a sense of (false) harmonic, major-mode stability that leads to the dual expression of lament. Although the Tasso-Gondolier theme and the minuet topics are built on the same lamenting triplet motive, the overall *character* of *Lento* and *Strepitoso* convey Tasso's lamentation in its purest form, unaltered in its expression. The atmosphere of lament returns.

Hints of Tasso's triumph begin in measure 383 with the final statement of the *Lento* motive in the tonic C major. Liszt approaches this "triumphant" key through the pivot from its leading tone of B minor, to C minor, and to F minor. C major, therefore, appears through dominant shifts, never quite resolving. The moment of posthumous triumph, however, appears in measure 533 (example 7) with the transformation of the Tasso-Gondolier theme in the tonic.⁸⁵ Tasso is apotheosized, with all the familiar gestures Liszt employs in symphonic poems—fanfare, brass, augmented rhythms, and reiteration of the main thematic material. In contrast to its initial statement, this transformation is characterized as *pomposo*, with a

a fuller texture, scoring in the upper registers, steady tempo and major mode. The theme is also rhythmically augmented throughout and presented at a slower tempo than the previous transformation, which contributes to its grandiose character.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ Liszt, *Tasso: Lamento e Trionfo*, arr. Theophil Forchhammer.

⁸⁶ Fallon-Ludwig, "Narrative Inspiration in Liszt's Symphonic Poems: The Case of Hunnenschlacht and Tasso: Lamento e Trionfo," 376.

Moderato pomposo. (die Viertel wie früher die Halben.)

The musical score consists of three systems of piano reduction. The first system begins with a treble clef and a bass clef. The tempo and mood are 'Moderato pomposo. (die Viertel wie früher die Halben.)' and the dynamics are 'sempre fff'. The score is filled with dense chordal textures, including many triplets and staccato quarter notes. There are several 'p.w.' markings and asterisks throughout the piece.

EXAMPLE 7 TASSO, APOTHEOSIS, MM. 533-544

This is the moment Tasso receives his laurels and is “glorified...as a martyr and poet.”⁸⁷ In terms of the program, this final, rather short section represents Rome, the place associated with Tasso’s glory as a creative genius. Yet, while Tasso’s triumph is “complete,” his glory remains (thematically) a part of the heroic lament a few bars earlier—the apotheosis is approached through yet another transformation of the triplet motive, though treated with the same pomp as the Tasso-Gondolier theme (example 8).⁸⁸ The entire passage from measures 500-532 (piano reduction) is included to show the augmentation of the triplet figure that exemplifies the bombastic quality associated with the apotheosis. In measure 517, the triplets begin to dissipate, leaving staccato quarter notes to build the tension before the ultimate release of the apotheosis in measure 533.

⁸⁷ “...glorifia en lui le martyr et le poète.” Liszt, Preface to *Tasso*.

⁸⁸ Liszt, *Tasso: Lamento e Trionfo*, arr. Theophil Forchhammer.

Quasi Presto.
Hr. Str.

Hr. Tr.

p. and p. w.

Ossia

EXAMPLE 8 *TASSO*, APPROACH TO APOTHEOSIS, MM. 500-532

This moment appears positive and triumphant, and it reflects the larger theme that presents Tasso in the depths of lament, only to be glorified as the poet, the MAN, he always *should have been*. Yet, the tension in this moment reflects on the significance of meaning in the previous musical material. The doubleness of suffering and apotheosis, as Dana Gooley writes, “not only shapes [the] first section of *Tasso*, but is worked into the large-scale plan.”⁸⁹ If suffering and apotheosis shape the structure of *Tasso*, the implication is that triumph fulfils Tasso’s masculine destiny. Yet Tasso’s apotheosis is coloured by lament and while this does not change his masculine destiny, it does suggest that the legacy of his heroic masculinity contains both suffering and triumph.

⁸⁹ Dana Gooley, “Gender Representation in Liszt’s Orchestral Works,” in *Gender Studies & Musik: Geschlechterrollen Und Ihre Bedeutung Für Die Musikwissenschaft*, Forum Musik-Wissenschaft (Regensburg: ConBrio, 1996), 145.

The structure of the thematic material portrays the tension between *lamento* and *trionfo* and is fortified by the shift from C minor to C major. Tarasti indicates that only when this harmonic movement is expressed “can the definitive triumph and resolution...or passage from action to its achievement be accomplished.”⁹⁰ The opening lament (*Lento*) motive—and the idea of suffering—is the catalyst for Tasso’s action. Although the characteristics of the *Lento* convey a sense of passivity, the tonal ambiguity, pervasive chromaticism, and sequential treatment of the motives spark movement of a kind. But whereas Tarasti suggests that Tasso’s musical structure “looks similar to that of some old tale about a hero,”⁹¹ I argue Tasso’s heroic journey is more akin to the Romantic hero’s mental striving, for action is not always physical. The mental being, that turn inward, can lead to a heroic journey where the catalyst for action is suffering due to the pressures of creative genius.

Liszt exemplifies suffering through the triplet-lament motive of the *Lento*. This gesture follows Tasso’s movements, from place to place and across time. Each time the motive attempts to break free, it is halted, first by the violent *Strepitoso*, an “active” transformation of the triplet motive. The second frustration appears after the transformation of the Tasso theme in E major (m. 131), where Liszt hints at Tasso’s triumph. Rather than move toward *trionfo*, Liszt shifts to F minor and slips back to lament. The third attempt appears in Ferrara where the Tasso theme shifts from F# major to B minor (m. 270), to a second iteration of the *Strepitoso* in C minor (m. 348). The hero’s wandering leads back to two statements of the initial lament motive (m. 374) in F minor and C major. The modulation is significant, however, because it points to Tasso’s hard-won triumph, musically articulated in the final transformation of the Tasso-Gondolier theme in C major.

The lament motive is the driving force of *Tasso*. It not only provides the atmosphere of lament, but it also represents Tasso’s suffering and serves as the foundation for every other theme. Liszt’s

⁹⁰ Tarasti, *Myth and Music*, 143.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 144.

attention to its meaning is similar to Wagner's concept of "foreshadowing." While the first statement of a motive is not necessarily its definitive context, it can (and often does) hint at an event/moment/emotion that is to come in its fullest form.⁹² In *Tasso*, the final statement of the lament motive appears alongside the apotheosized Tasso-Gondolier theme, thereby completing its purpose to evoke Tasso's legacy as triumph through lament.

Tasso's lament is not resolved, but rather combines with the main theme to evoke the doubleness of the hero's triumph. And there is no question that Tasso achieves his hard-won glory. His apotheosis is unmistakable. Historically, Tasso's genius was rewarded posthumously, and the biographies from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries show how his popularity (as man and poet) amplified his genius. Even Byron's poem suggests a posthumous triumph of a kind:

No—it shall be immortal!—and I make
A future temple of my present cell.
Which nations yet shall visit for my sake.⁹³

Yet Tasso's legend shows that triumph is not achieved through overcoming, but by suffering. This is the nature of the Romantic-era heroic genius, and this is how Liszt conveys his Tasso musically.

Kregor offers a brilliant interpretation of the meaning of Liszt's apotheosis, indicating that

an irony of Liszt's tendency to musically apotheosize his characters is their loss of individuality, their sublimation into the social fold of the orchestra...by the end of the orchestral work, the poet has won, but only by using prosaic voice marked by rhythmic homogeneity, metrical lethargy, and diatonicism.⁹⁴

This moment of *Tasso* is meant to show triumph—triumph over detractors, triumph over social standing, and triumph over anxieties around creativity. Liszt, too, suggests a sense of Tasso's

⁹² For a more in-depth discussion of Wagner's use of *Leitmotiv* in his music dramas, see Richard Wagner, *Opera and Drama*, trans. William Ashton Ellis (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, [1893] 1995).

⁹³ Lord George Gordon Byron, "The Lament of Tasso," in *The Complete Poetical Works of Lord Byron*, ed. Paul Elmer More, The Cambridge Poets (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1905), 439.

⁹⁴ Kregor, *Program Music*, 123.

triumph: “the horrible catastrophe which could never find compensation in this world...nevertheless covered the Capitol with a mantle far exceeding in splendor the purple of Alphonso.” [“...l’horrible catastrophe qui semblait ne pouvoir trouver de compensation en ce monde, et qui, néanmoins, fut revêtue au Capitole d’une pourpre plus pure que celle du manteur d’Alphonse!"].⁹⁵ But notice the tension: Tasso receives laurels, but his suffering is not rewarded “in this world.” Does Liszt therefore suggest his spirit of Tasso, called up from the waters of Venice, is an evocation of triumph? Tasso is both/and—his triumph is written into his suffering, and his suffering is an expression of triumph. Liszt’s musical depiction of Tasso’s triumph—though bombastic like many Lisztian conclusions—is an underhanded one. Fast tempo, full orchestration, diatonicism, and major-mode harmony, all the compositional aspects Kregor alludes to as an act of folding Tasso into the orchestra, strips the hero of the tension that made him a creative genius. This act makes the initial celebration of Tasso’s lament, codified through the triplet motive of the introduction and the Tasso-Gondolier theme, all the more important. Tasso is *meant* to suffer because in doing so, he is heroic.

Tasso’s innermost emotions extend to larger socio-cultural associations of heroic masculinity and creative genius. Tasso’s heroic masculinity is expressed through tension. Liszt’s preface notes that lament and triumph are the two “great *contrasts* in the destiny of poets.” The idea of lament has implications of passivity and weakness, which Liszt emphasizes when he describes Tasso’s sufferings as a common aspect in the “destiny of the most unfortunate of poets.” [“Les malheurs de la destinée du plus infortuné des poètes...”].⁹⁶ Triumph, on the other hand, conveys heroic strength to withstand, or perhaps even avoid suffering. Liszt’s Tasso clearly suffers, as all great poets (including the symphonic poets) do. Kregor offers an insightful interpretation of Tasso’s character, stating that “Liszt treats Tasso as object, not subject, allowing Tasso’s environment and emotional condition to

⁹⁵ Liszt, Preface to *Tasso*, 1.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.* Emphasis mine.

determine the scope of his musical involvement.⁹⁷ If Tasso is a mere object within the scope of the symphonic poem, what does that mean in terms of Tasso's heroic masculinity? Tasso is a victim, unable to break free from the struggles of his situation. He is weak and his emotional state is determined by his environment. His musical involvement throughout the piece is determined by how well he copes. Kregor's tone is less than forgiving, but his interpretation does not account for heroic weakness. In other words, Tasso is a heroic character precisely because he is victimized. Tasso, throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was regarded as a masculine heroic genius, a man whose imagination, writing, *and* suffering made him a great man of legend. Suffering is a mark of genius and a mark of masculinity, and Liszt's treatment of Tasso reveals that he is on par with the cultural trends associated with Tasso. His groans, his disgust with the Ferrarese court, and his posthumous triumph in Rome come together in the Venetian gondolier song that sings his praise.

3.5 Concluding Remarks

Liszt's *Tasso: Lamento e Trionfo* exhibits complex ideas that require equally complex analyses. The purpose was to show just how complex the legend of Tasso had become in the early nineteenth century, and how Tasso's legend became a theme so closely associated with creative genius. For Liszt, in particular, the preface attached to the symphonic poem implies that program music is not merely the result of a musical representation of a text's meanings or narrative, but that it *also* maps the composer's subjective experience of the text—and its associative meanings—onto his creative works. Thus program music may be enriched by personal associations and/or cultural interests. I want to return to the questions at the opening of chapter two: who is Tasso? and how (or perhaps *why*) should we reconcile his poetic genius with his weakness as a man? The first question is straightforward: Tasso is a sufferer, perpetually engaged in various states of tension. He is a social

⁹⁷ Kregor, *Program Music*, 120-21.

outcast, but he is also deeply individual. He is an emblem of creativity and as a genius negotiates the laborious struggle that accompanies that creativity. These qualities are why it is counterproductive to reconcile Tasso's expression of (masculine) poetic genius with masculine "weakness." In the nineteenth century, and particularly in Byron's reimagining, Tasso's compelling character derives precisely because he possesses masculine heroic genius through hard-won creative labour. These aspects of the legendary Tasso are what made him so attractive to creative artists in general. Thus, Liszt's program is not simply a vague narrative tool, but rather reveals the complexity of the subject. In understanding the nuances attributed to Tasso's life and legend, the interpreter can garner a deeper understanding and appreciation of Liszt's symphonic poem.

Chapter Four: Mazeppa's Wild Ride and the Bonds of Freedom

“Away, away, my steed and I,
Upon the pinions of the wind.”
— Lord Byron, *Mazeppa*

4.1 Preamble. Doubleness of Pinion(s)[-ed]

Mazeppa's legendary ride across the steppes of the Ukraine is almost certainly a fabrication. Yet despite its questionable origins, the evocative image of horse and rider bound together against their will captured the imagination of Romantic-era creative artists. Among the earliest and most influential of these was Lord Byron, whose portrayal of Mazeppa's punishment was so poignant that it effectively propelled the ride narrative to legendary status. A generation of creative artists drew inspiration from Byron's *Mazeppa*, detailing the hero's suffering as a symbolic representation of their own creative anxieties. The Mazeppa myth is symbolically potent and multivalent: it shows how larger cultural themes can become inscribed with social meanings that “shift according to audience circumstances.”¹ For some, Mazeppa was a traitor and the legend of his ride has acted as a metaphor for his defeat and exile later in life. Yet in western European culture, Mazeppa was also perceived as a symbol of genius whose suffering became a necessary component of his legendary heroic masculinity.² His stature as a great man, hero, and genius derives from his attempt to survive long

¹ Patricia Mainardi, “Mazeppa,” *Word & Image* 14, no. 4 (December 2000): 347.

² I should mention that my examination of the significance of Mazeppa is from a western European perspective. There are two reasons for this. First, I do not read Ukrainian or Russian, so I am limited in the historical work I can engage with. Furthermore, Mazeppa does not exhibit the same legendary status in eastern Europe. Mazeppa's legendary status is primarily a western European construct. The transmission of Mazeppa's legendary suffering derived from Voltaire, who was writing in French for a French-speaking audience. Byron, of course, was familiar with Voltaire's historical work and

enough to transcend that suffering. This is the Mazeppa at the core of Romantic-era depictions, including Liszt's symphonic poem.

The Mazeppa of western European legend is a figure of contrasting masculine-heroic characteristics. The epigraph from Byron's poem at the head of this chapter encapsulates this doubleness of Mazeppa's lived experience: "Away, away my steed and I,/Upon the pinions of the wind." These lines suggest an archetypal image of a triumphant hero on the back of his noble horse. The command "Away, away" evokes heroic dynamism, while reference to the *pinions* of a bird's wing conveys the unfettered liberty and transcendence of flight. The wind *upon* which the hero and horse ride acts as an ethereal agent that transports both to a sublime, supernatural realm where both are free from earthly concerns. Thus, these lines from Byron's poem portray a symbiotic companionship between hero and horse where the action and freedom of flight are defining aspects of Mazeppa's unfettered masculine heroic genius.

However, those familiar with Byron's ballad, particularly the section about Mazeppa's wild ride, know that neither hero nor horse are truly free. As the legend goes, Mazeppa is punished for a crime by being bound naked to the back of an unbroken horse for a tortuous three-day ride. "Away, away" is the spur that sets the ride in motion, but it is not the hero's agency. In Byron's poem, the symbolism of horse and rider transforms into a specifically Romantic image of heroic masculinity—he exists in tension as both passive and active; vulnerable and strong; suffering and triumphant. Byron portrays this doubleness of Mazeppa's character through the word "pinions." As a noun, *pinions* evoke the symbolic freedom of a bird's wing (flight). But reconceived as the verb *pinioned* suggests the violent *physical* bonds that pin Mazeppa to the back of the horse. I suggest Byron subverts the traditional active, even militaristic metaphor of the horse and rider into a complex and

he based his *Mazeppa* on a short passage in Voltaire's *Histoire de Charles XII*. The popularity of Byron's suffering hero then became an inspiration for predominantly French creative artists. The fame of Mazeppa as legendary hero was disseminated largely by Romantic French artists.

contradictory image where Mazeppa and the steed are both *actively* bound together (against their will) and passively subjected to the pain of each other's punishment. The heroism implied in the line "Away, away" is not lost, nor is the doubleness of *pinion(s)[-ed]* resolved.³ The symbolic union evokes the moment Mazeppa "becomes heroic."⁴ The act of *becoming* infers that although Mazeppa is pinioned to the horse, he also flies upon the pinions that enable heroic freedom.

Mazeppa's legendary stature derives from the doubleness of his pinions. The contrasting and contradictory ideas of freedom and binding are central to Mazeppa's heroic character, masculine expression, and elevation to the realm of creative genius. Two components are central to my reading of the myth: the symbolic relationship between (1) horse and rider and (2) the physical and emotional experience of Mazeppa's suffering, in other words, heroic masculinity. Mazeppa's heroism is expressed in the tension between his body and mind. As Mazeppa is passively pinned, naked and vulnerable, onto the erratic horse, his body suffers while his mind both endures physical pain and actively transcends it. The sheer force of his active will ensures survival. When these two elements converge there is a manifestation of the sublime. The interior workings of the heroic mind reflect the inexplicable outward view. Only men of particular genius are able to take such intense suffering and turn it into something profoundly heroic.

"Away, away" was something of a motto for Liszt, particularly during his years as a touring virtuoso. He often expressed a desire to withdraw from the concert stage, but numerous events "kept him bound to his piano 'like Mazeppa bound to his horse.'"⁵ Liszt saw Mazeppa's suffering as a reflection of his own creative struggles. The pinions he wished to break not only symbolized his success as a virtuoso, but also served as the impetus for his depiction of Mazeppa's heroic

³ My formulation of *pinion(s)[-ed]* is meant to reflect the tension of that word as both a noun and a verb. The implication in Byron's text, and elsewhere, is that Mazeppa is simultaneously *both* bound *and* free. In other words, freedom is not contingent on previously being bound.

⁴ Kenneth Clark, *Civilisation* (London: B.B.C., 1974).

⁵ Alan Walker, *Franz Liszt, Volume 1: The Virtuoso Years: 1811-1847* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1983), 427. Walker indicates that Liszt, due to his celebrity, was consistently booked for concerts.

masculinity and creative genius in his symphonic poem.⁶ Liszt's preface to the score of his symphonic poem, which includes Victor Hugo's poem "Mazeppa" in its entirety, amplifies this identification and articulates the hero's ride as a symbol of the struggles associated with creative labour. But on a broader level, I argue Liszt's incorporation of Hugo's poem shows his awareness of the Mazeppa myth as an "imaginative catalyst" and important cultural artefact.⁷ Liszt contributed to the myth-making that aligns with earlier depictions of Mazeppa, his horse, and the symbolic expression of heroic masculinity and creative genius.

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first traces Mazeppa's transition from a real Ukrainian military hero to a culturally significant and legendary figure. I begin with an outline of how Mazeppa's fight against the Russian Empire propelled him to folk hero status after his death. Mazeppa's presence in Ukrainian military history and culturally inscribed artefacts (art, for instance) reflects a version of heroic masculinity that favours political power and valour. Voltaire's brief description of Mazeppa in *Histoire du Charles XII* (1731) presents both historical fact and legendary fabrication. Significantly, he amplified the story of Mazeppa's ride, a story that proved influential for Byron. With the publication of Byron's *Mazeppa*, the transition from history to legend within western European culture was nearly complete. The second section of this chapter explores the symbolism of Mazeppa's ride. Drawing on Byron's account and the visual representation of it by Théodore Géricault, I examine how Mazeppa's symbolic pinions, his relationship to the horse, his naked body and posture, and his physical and mental strife all invoke the doubleness of being both bound and free. At the heart of Mazeppa's legend is the tension between suffering masculinity and heroic genius. I reserve consideration of two crucially important sources, Hugo's poem "Mazeppa" and

⁶ Liszt's symphonic poem, *Mazeppa*, derives from his previously composed *Transcendental Étude* of the same name. The theme of Mazeppa was already on Liszt's mind not only while he was touring as a concert pianist, but also after his retirement from public performance.

⁷ Hubert F. Babinski, *The Mazeppa Legend in European Romanticism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974), 1.

Gustave Boulanger's painting *Le Supplice de Mazeppa*, for the following chapter, since they are more directly and intimately tied to Liszt's *Mazeppa*.

4.2 Mazeppa in History and the Making of a Legend

To fully understand the significance of the Mazeppa legend—in its content, themes, and wider socio-cultural meanings—it is necessary to discuss the sources from which the myth originally derives. Mazeppa's legend in European art and culture reached its zenith in the mid-nineteenth century. The valourization of his legendary ride is traced to western European perspectives that favoured suffering masculine heroism over a Ukrainian national champion. The sensational story of Mazeppa's ride inspired poetry, paintings, dramas, musical compositions, and even popular equestrian shows.⁸ From a twenty-first century perspective, the historical and creative objects (literary, musical, etc.) that depict the ride portray Mazeppa as pure legend whose symbolic suffering is often compared to Prometheus chained to the rock. But Ivan Stepanovych Mazeppa was a real person, though his official biography reflects little of the legendary status he assumed 150 years after his death.⁹ He was born in Polish-Ukrainian territory (1632 or 1644) and died after he and Swedish king Charles XII (1682-1718) were defeated in the Battle of Poltava.¹⁰ Socially, Mazeppa was from

⁸ See Tony Voss, "Mazeppa-Maseppa: The Migration of a Romantic Motif," *Tydskrif Vir Letterkunde* 49, no. 2 (2012): 110–135 for a sampling of the various works based on the Mazeppa legend. Voss's section on the migration of the Mazeppa legend to the realm of bourgeois "escapism" is particularly illuminating (115-119).

⁹ It is perhaps important to note the variation in spelling Mazeppa's/Mazeppa's name. Generally speaking, Mazeppa with one "p" refers to the real person whereas Mazeppa with two "ps" refers to the artistic, aesthetic, and Western cultural manifestation of the legendary hero. For the sake of consistency, I will make use of the latter spelling.

¹⁰ Charles XII reigned from 1697-1718 and Peter the Great reigned from 1689-1725. The famous Battle of Poltava was in 1709. The biographical details of Mazeppa's life are polarized and biases occur depending on the allegiances of the historian. The scholarship that does exist either favours pro-Ukrainian, and therefore a pro-Mazeppa, stances, or a pro-Russian/anti-Mazeppa account. For scholars who are pro-Mazeppa, see Clarence A. Manning, *Hetman of the Ukraine Ivan Mazeppa* (New York: Bookman, 1957). For pro-Russian accounts, see Evgenii Anisimov, *The Reforms of Peter the Great: Progress Through Coercion in Russia*, translated by John T. Alexander (Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1993), 111-117. More recently, Thomas M. Prymak's article "The Cossack Hetman: Ivan Mazeppa in History and Legend from Peter to Pushkin" offers a concise chronology of Mazeppa's biography—including military details—along with the way Mazeppa appeared to subsequent generations of historians, novelists, authors, poets, painters, and musicians. See *The Historian* 76, no. 2 (Summer 2014): 237–277.

the Ukrainian gentry. Politically, he was a favourite of Polish King Jan Kazimierz, and spent his youth as a page in Kazimierz's court. Mazeppa returned to the Ukraine under mysterious circumstances, though some historians believe he had an illicit affair with a Polish nobleman's young wife (and so the legends begin).¹¹ A decade later, Mazeppa appeared as a soldier in the Cossack army. Over time, he worked his way up the ranks to become Hetman—the highest military officer—of the Ukrainian Cossack army.¹²

The Mazeppa of history dominated the Ukrainian political and cultural landscape, and his military campaigns are examples of his leadership capabilities. He became a loyal vassal and confidant to Peter the Great. However, for reasons uncertain to historians Mazeppa later conspired against the Tsar and entered into secret negotiations with Charles XII.¹³ Perhaps feeling a sense of confidence, Mazeppa and Charles XII invaded Russian territories during the Great Northern War (1700-1721). The culminating event of Mazeppa's alliance with the Swedish king was the Battle of Poltava, which ended in defeat. Nevertheless, Poltava is important because *in* defeat, Mazeppa was solidified as a symbol of heroic valour for Ukrainian nationalism.¹⁴ Mazeppa's life, and more specifically his military leadership, inspired an array of Ukrainian folk literature: monuments to a great man in history.

¹¹ See Babinski, *The Mazeppa Legend in European Romanticism*, 2.

¹² Ibid. To be more specific, the autonomous Cossack state which Mazeppa ruled is in the eastern part of the Ukraine. Historian Thomas M. Prymak indicates that state is called traditionally called "the Hetmanate," which until the end of Mazeppa's rule "exercised an important influence upon the more sovereign polities that surrounded it: the rapidly growing Tsardom of Muscovy, the still vast Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and the numerous vassal Ottoman Turkish territories to the south, especially Moldavia and the Crimean Khanate" (238). See Prymak, "The Cossack Hetman: Ivan Mazepa in History and Legend from Peter to Pushkin," 238.

¹³ Following his change in allegiance, Mazeppa and Charles XII defeated the Polish king Augustus the Strong (r. 1697-1718).

¹⁴ Mazeppa's military alliances are what ultimately make him such a divided figure. Among historians, as Prymak so aptly describes, the Russians label Mazeppa as a traitor, while the Ukrainians consider Mazeppa a defender of freedom (238-239). The debate over Mazeppa and his alliances continues today.



FIGURE 7 “HETMAN MAZEPPA WITH MACE,” CA. 1703, PORTRAIT BY UNKNOWN ARTIST, 18TH CENTURY MUSEUM OF THE HISTORY OF ZAPOROZHYE (MUSEUM OF THE HISTORY OF WEAPONS), ZAPORIZHIA, UKRAINE

Mazeppa’s rise from page to Hetman, along with the events of his military career, are undisputed facts. Enough biographical information is known to invite creative/artistic treatment, particularly as ideologies of nationalism swept across Europe in the nineteenth century. The portrait of Mazeppa shown in figure 7 portrays the Hetman’s *real* military exploits through posture, dress, and props. Mazeppa evokes strength, both in his armour—symbols of militarism and warfare—and in the position of his arm sweeping across his body. Power is conveyed through regality. Mazeppa’s red cloak and scepter, traditional symbols of royalty, authority, and sovereignty, suggest strength *in* leadership. The events of Mazeppa’s (military) life were the subject of artistic treatment beginning in the eighteenth century. These depictions of Mazeppa and his military exploits are valuable historical, cultural, and artistic artefacts. However, my interest in Mazeppa centres on neither the specifics of biographical detail nor his military excellence.¹⁵ My approach aligns with that of Patricia Mainardi,

¹⁵ For an excellent discussion on the ways Mazeppa’s life and legend have been treated throughout history, see Prymak’s “The Cossack Hetman” and Babinski’s *The Mazeppa Legend in European Romanticism*. Prymak introduces various works that deal with Mazeppa from the early eighteenth century to the twentieth century. Babinski examines the Mazeppa legend in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but his main focus is on the Romantic period, with a discussions on Byron and the French Romantics, Eastern European sources of the Mazeppa legend, and the works of Ryleev and Pushkin. Babinski concludes by analyzing Juliusz Słowacki’s treatment of Mazeppa.

who explores “the multivalence of the Mazeppa theme” and its “semiology into the ‘artist-genius.’”¹⁶ Mazeppa’s torture via wild horse, though a fabrication, is more culturally significant (in western Europe) than his military successes and failures.

Mazeppa lived and perished in eastern Europe (Ukraine; Poland), but his legend extends beyond its borders. His name reached an international audience after the publication of Voltaire’s quasi-historical narrative *Histoire de Charles XII* in 1731.¹⁷ The primary subject for his study is the reign, rise, and fall of Charles XII, but a brief passage that recounts Mazeppa’s “treachery” and punishment served as one source for Romantic-era treatments of Mazeppa’s legend. In his account, Voltaire writes that

on the discovery of an intrigue with the wife of a Polish nobleman, the latter had him tied, stark naked, to a wild horse, and set him free in that state. The horse, which had been brought from Ukrainia, returned to his own country, carrying Mazeppa with him half dead from hunger and fatigue.¹⁸

It is unclear where Voltaire found this information about Mazeppa’s wild ride, though historians suggest that the content derives from the memoirs of Jan Pasek (1677-1766), a member of the Polish gentry and Mazeppa’s rival at court. Pasek recorded various types of courtly events—some fact, some fiction. His account of Mazeppa’s ride falls into the latter category and is dubious at best.¹⁹

¹⁶ Patricia Mainardi, “Mazeppa” in *Word & Image* 16 (No. 4, October-December 2000), 335.

¹⁷ See Daniel Defoe’s *A True Authentick and Impartial History of the Life and Glorious Actions of the Czar of Muscovy: From his Birth and his Death*, London: A. Bettesworth et al., 1725. Other historical accounts before Lord Byron’s poem include J.A. Nordberg’s *Histoire de Charles XII, roi de Suède*, 4 vols., La Haye: J-M Husson, 1742-48. Nordberg was King Charles XII’s former chaplain. According to Prymak, Nordberg took offense over Voltaire’s account of the Swedish king. Thus, he penned a four-volume biography to correct Voltaire’s mistakes. That said, Prymak indicates that Voltaire’s account of Mazeppa is accurate: “Nordberg never criticizes Voltaire’s portrait of Mazepa...Nordberg only added a few new details to Voltaire’s account [of Mazeppa]. These were, however, quite important. They included that fact that, after Poltava, Mazepa had led Charles to safety in Moldavia and died there shortly afterwards from exhaustion” (245).

¹⁸ François-Marie Arouet Voltaire, *The History of Charles XII, King of Sweden*, trans. Winifred Todhunter (London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd, [1908] 1912), 157. The source material on which Voltaire based his narrative of the wild ride is dubious. Voltaire received his information from Count Stanisław Poniatowski, who served under the Swedish king from 1702 to 1719. Poniatowski, in turn, received his information from the memoirs of Jan Chryzostom Pasek, one of Mazeppa’s contemporaries. Voltaire’s account of Mazeppa’s ride therefore is based on second or third hand tales. See Ksenya Kiebuszinski, “The (Re)Fashioning of an Archetype of Genius: Ivan Mazepa in Nineteenth-Century French Art and Literature,” *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 31, no. 1/4 (2010 2009): 633–653.

¹⁹ Babinski, *The Mazeppa Legend in European Romanticism*, 7-8.

Thomas Prymak suggests malicious intent, intimating that Pasek fabricated the details of the ride in order to humiliate Mazeppa for an unknown insult or offence.²⁰ Within Pasek's memoirs, harm befalls the emerging hero through the power of words rather than actions.

Pasek's and Voltaire's accounts of the circumstances leading to the wild ride show a shift in the symbolic meanings associated with Mazeppa. Their histories do not concern a military leader, but a suffering hero who ends up straddling the line between biography and legend. Central to this divide is an emphasis on age. Documents, stories, and narratives that examine Mazeppa's later military career are far less sensational than accounts of Mazeppa's youth:

Mazeppa as the elderly and experienced champion of Ukrainian liberty was not the only image that Voltaire gave the European public. He also laid a firm foundation for a second image, one which may, however, have had much less basis in fact: that of the youthful Mazeppa as a romantic and tragic hero.²¹

Whether or not Mazeppa was actually stripped naked, pinioned to the back of a horse, and sent off across the steppes to suffer, the ride makes for a good story. I suggest Voltaire makes this apparent with the inclusion of the "Mazeppa myth" in his *Histoire*. The portion that pertains to Mazeppa's ride is brief, and not overly pertinent to his military relationship with Charles XII. Rather than focus on a self-sacrificing national hero, Voltaire depicts Mazeppa's capture, punishment, and humiliation.

Byron was the most important author and creative artist to explore the Mazeppa of history and, more significantly, of legend. Byron derives his historical content from Voltaire and, for the most part, he remains loyal to the narrative of the *Histoire*. The Advertisement that precedes the poem cites Voltaire (in French) at length (figure 8), but Byron neither provides additional information on why he chose these passages nor does he include an interpretation of their meanings. Byron's *Mazeppa* touches on the same historical narrative: he traces Mazeppa's arch of suffering from

²⁰ Prymak, "The Cossack Hetman," 245.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 244.

his torturous ride to his final defeat at Poltava. Within Mazeppa's story, Byron explores themes of leadership, love, suffering, freedom, defeat, and death. The central symbol of the narrative, as the Advertisement makes clear, is the symbiotic relationship of horse and rider, whether that is of companionship or mutual suffering.

CELUI qui remplissait alors cette place, était un gentilhomme Polonais, nommé Mazeppa, né dans le palatinat de Padolie; il avait été élevé page de Jean Casimir, et avait pris à sa cour quelque teinture des belles-lettres. Une intrigue qu'il eut dans sa jeunesse avec la femme d'un gentilhomme Polonais, ayant été découverte, le mari le fie lier tout nu sur un cheval farouche, et le laissa aller en cet état. Le cheval, qui était du pays de l'Ukraine, y retourna, et y porta Mazeppa, demi-mort de fatigue et de faim. Quelque paysans le secoururent: il resta long-tems parmi eux, et se signala dans plusieurs courses contre les Tartares. La supériorité de ses lumières lui donna une grande consideration parmi les Cosaques: sa réputation s'augmentant de jour en jour, obligea le Czar à le faire Prince de l'Ukraine.—Voltaire, *Histoire de Charles XII*, p. 196.

[The one who then filled up that place was a Polish gentleman, name Mazeppa, born in the Palatinate of Padolie; he had been brought up as a page of John Cazimir, and had acquired, at his court, some interest in the *belles-lettres*. A youthful intrigue with the wife of a Polish gentleman having been discovered, the husband caused him to be bound stark naked on the back of a wild horse, and sent him forth in that condition. The horse, which was from the Ukraine, went back there, carrying Mazeppa, half-dead with exhaustion and hunger. Some peasants saved him; he remained a long time in their midst, and distinguished himself in several actions against the Tartars. His evident superiority gained him great respect among the Cossacks; his reputation, daily increasing, obliged the Tzar to make him Prince of the Ukraine.—Voltaire, *Histoire de Charles XII*, p. 196].²²

Le roi [Charles XII] fuyant et poursuivi eut son cheval tué sous lui; le Colonel Gieta, blessé, et perdant tout sa sang, lui donnns le sien. Ainsi on remit deux fois à cheval, dans le suite, ce conquérant qu n'avait puy monter pendant la bataille.—Voltaire, *Histoire de Charles XII*, p. 216.

[The king, fleeing from pursuit, had his horse killed under him; Colonel Gieta, wounded and losing blood, gave him his. Thus this conqueror, who had not been able to mount during the battle, was twice placed on a horse in its aftermath.—Voltaire, *Histoire de Charles XII*, p. 216].²³

²² Lord Byron, "Mazeppa" in *Lord Byron: Selected Poems*, Edited by Susan J. Wolfson and Peter J. Manning (London: Penguin Books, 1996), 602. French translation by Peter Cochran, "Lord Byron: *Mazeppa*," PDF, Peter Cochran's Website-Film Reviews, Poems, Byron..., March 26, 2009, <https://petercochran.files.wordpress.com/2009/03/mazeppa.pdf>.

²³ Ibid.

Le roi alla par un autre chemin avec quelques cavaliers. Le carrosse, où il était, rompit la marche; on le remit à cheval. Pour comble de disgrâce, il s'égara pendant la nuit dans un bois; là, son courage ne pouvant plus suppléer à ses forces épuisées, les douleurs de sa blessure devenues plus insupportables par la fatigue, son cheval étant tombé de lassitude, il se coucha quelques heures au pied d'un arbre, en danger d'être surpris à tout moment par les vainqueurs qui le cherchaient de tout côtés.—Voltaire, *Histoire de Charles XII*, p. 218.

[The king, with some horsemen, took another route. The coach in which he was placed slowed progress; he was placed on a horse. To crown his humiliation, he got lost in a wood during the night; there, his courage no longer being able to compensate for his loss of strength, the pain of his injury made more insupportable by tiredness, his horse having fallen down from exhaustion, he rested for a few hours at the foot of a tree, in constant danger of being surprised by the victors, who were everywhere looking for him.—Voltaire, *Histoire de Charles XII*, p. 218].²⁴

FIGURE 8 ADVERTISEMENT TO BYRON'S *MAZEPPA*

Byron's *Mazeppa* is structured as a frame narrative. In the opening of the poem, the narrator sets up the main narrative by describing the situation Charles XII and his allies face amidst their defeat at Poltava. While hiding in exile, Charles asks Mazeppa to entertain him with a story. The poetic voice transfers to the aging Hetman, who recounts his wild ride—"[t]he school wherein [he] learn'd to ride."²⁵ The legend is already familiar: Mazeppa recalls his youthful love affair that resulted in punishment. Mazeppa is sent off ("away, away!") on a tortuous journey. On the third day, the Tatar steed dies but Mazeppa miraculously survives, enabling him to one day rise to Hetman. The narrator-voice returns in the final lines of the poem to relay how Mazeppa's story put the Swedish king to sleep. This suggests that the dramatic events of the wild ride, along with Mazeppa's suffering, are merely entertainment, rather than a way to elicit sympathy or even awe. But against all odds, Mazeppa survives!

²⁴ Ibid. The three large paragraphs appear exactly as they do in the Advertisement, save for the English translations (in square brackets), which are provided by Peter Cochran. The first paragraph describes Mazeppa's capture and punishment for his illicit affair, along with his future role as Hetman. The second and third paragraphs outline Mazeppa's and Charles XII's defeat.

²⁵ Lord George Gordon Byron, "Mazeppa," in *Lord Byron: Selected Poems*, ed. Susan J. Wolfson and Peter J. Manning (London: Penguin Books, 1996), 605.

The narrative of Byron's poem is connected to Mazeppa's life and tortuous experiences. The frame structure, however, sets up tensions between history and legend; present and past; leadership and defeat. The opening and the closing of the poem are set in the (historical) present, which "acts as a gateway to a central subject, theme, or character" that "complement[s] the main subject."²⁶ The ride, on the other hand, portrays Mazeppa's most formative and mythological past experience. The tension within Byron's frame is further amplified when considering the meanings inscribed in Mazeppa's two contrasting characters. While Mazeppa miraculously survives the ride of his youth, he is defeated in his golden years following decades of military accomplishments. This defeat provides symmetry to Mazeppa's leadership capabilities, suggesting that Mazeppa's heroism is characterized by both his military qualities *and* his exile/death. Defeat is an inevitable aspect of Mazeppa's historical and legendary narrative, but in Byron's poem—and in the Romantic consciousness—Mazeppa asserts his heroic masculinity through profound suffering and triumphant survival.

4.3 A Horse, a Man, and a Wild Ride: Mazeppa's Expression of Heroic Masculinity

Byron's *Mazeppa* centers predominantly on the hero's legendary wild ride and "death-in-life" experience.²⁷ The ride is the catalyst for Mazeppa's heroic masculinity, and the themes Byron details are significant in determining the cultural meanings associated with *making* his hero. Babinski argues that Mazeppa is compelling because he functions "within the bounds of human potential, almost forced to the heroic by the circumstances of his life, but not somehow by nature destined to be a hero."²⁸ Mazeppa's humanity—his sins and subsequent punishment—make him believable, perhaps even relatable. Yet, Mazeppa's miraculous survival of his three-day gallop extends beyond the realm

²⁶ Babinski, *The Mazeppa Legend in European Romanticism*, 32.

²⁷ Tony Voss, "Wild and Free: Byron's Mazeppa," *The Byron Journal* 25 (1997): 73.

²⁸ Babinski, *The Mazeppa Legend in European Romanticism*, 33.

of human potential. But Mazeppa's unyielding will to endure unmitigated suffering is linked to his heroic identity. The symbols that reflect Mazeppa's suffering are linked to the doubleness of the pinions: the symbiotic relationship between horse and rider, nakedness, and posture. Mazeppa is captured, stripped naked, and bound backwards to an unbroken horse. He is punished, loses control, and is vulnerable. Yet his mental fortitude ensures his survival. The tension of Mazeppa's symbolic stature as both bound and free solidifies his place as a potent expression of Romantic-era heroic masculinity and creative genius.

Byron alludes to the important relationship between horse and rider, and the pinions that represent simultaneous suffering and freedom in the Advertisement that precedes the poem. He indicates that Mazeppa's overall experiences with horses reflect defeat, whether due to being captured (the ride) or in death (exile). This sets the overall tone of the poem. Mazeppa's suffering, survival, exile, death, and heroic legend are contingent on his relationship with horses. Beyond the wild horse that carries Mazeppa across the steppes, Byron describes the elder Hetman's care of his horse companion, the one he rode into the Battle of Poltava.

The Cossack prince rubb'd down his horse
 And made for him a leafy bed
 ...
 And joy'd to see how well he fed;
 For until now he had the dread
 His wearied courser might refuse
 To browse beneath the midnight dews:
 But he was hardy as his lord,
 ...
 But spirited and docile too;
 Whate'er was to be done, would do.
 Shaggy and swift, and strong of limb,
 All Tartar-like he carried him.²⁹

²⁹ Byron, "Mazeppa," 604.

This attention to the horse in the opening lines of *Mazeppa* both anticipates and contrasts with the poignant relationship with the wild horse of the ride, the one who both carried out Mazeppa's punishment and saved him from death. Ultimately, Mazeppa's interest in and respect for horses was the result of that life-altering and heroic experience.

Byron gives nearly as much attention to the horse as he does to his hero. To reflect the chaotic ride across the Ukrainian landscape, Byron emphasizes speed: "We sped like meteor through the sky;" "fast we fled, away, away—;" "At times I almost thought, indeed,/He must have slacken'd in his speed."³⁰ This relationship to speed strengthens the bonds that create the symbiosis between horse and rider by articulating the tension between the *action* (speed) of the horse and the *passivity* (immobility) of Mazeppa:

...my bound and slender frame
 Was nothing to his angry might,
 And merely like a spur became.
 Each motion which I made to free
 My swoln limbs from their agony
 Increased his fury and afright:
 I tried my voice, — 't was faint and low,
 But yet he swerved as from a blow;
 And, starting to each accent, sprang
 As from a sudden trumpet's clang.³¹

The imagery of Mazeppa, a man of "slender frame," chained to the horse of unbridled power suggests heroic passivity. Mazeppa's physical strength is no match to that of the horse (or of his captors), and the power of his words prove useless against the will of the horse: "Mazeppa's attempts to free himself only bind him more tightly: and his voice only alienates the horse more."³² Mazeppa's heroic masculinity is determined by his *inability* to control the situation, which results in unmitigated

³⁰ Ibid., 614-615.

³¹ Ibid., 615.

³² Voss, "Wild and Free: Byron's Mazeppa," 73

suffering. The tension, therefore, resides in the speed of action, “away, away,” and the pinions that bind ever tighter with Mazeppa’s necessary passivity. Silence and inaction actually lead to freedom.

The powerful image of Mazeppa bound to an erratic, wild horse becomes clearer if contrasted with familiar military images of horse and rider. The military hero mounted upon his steed is a long-standing cultural trope with roots in the classical period.³³ Jacques-Louis David’s iconic painting, *Napoleon Crossing the Saint Bernhard Pass* (1801), illustrates this classical archetype (figure 9). The portrait depicts Napoleon as a charismatic conqueror. His image, punctuated by his flowing crimson cloak, dominates the frame. As he sits astride his rearing horse, Napoleon points toward an unseen summit as his troops haul cannon up the rocky terrain. His upward gesture conveys both his authority and his heroic capability to conquer the unknown. The names Hannibal, Charlemagne, and Bonaparte etched into the rocks put him in direct lineage of extraordinary military heroes who succeeded in conquering the formidable Alps. Napoleon embodies power and he asserts his dominance over his troops, animal, nature, history, and even the viewer.



FIGURE 9 JACQUES-LOUIS DAVID, *NAPOLEON CROSSING THE SAINT BERNHARD PASS* (1801-02), OIL ON CANVAS, CHÂTEAU DE VERSAILLES

³³ In his *Phaedrus*, Plato presents the allegory of horses and chariots to explain the nature of the human soul. The chariot is pulled by two winged horses, one black (mortal) and one white (immortal). The charioteer is in charge of controlling both horses, to guide them in order to propel the vehicle forward. While the purpose of the allegory is to evoke the nature of the soul as containing both rational and spiritual parts, the popular image is nevertheless significant in terms of the greater symbolism of the horse and rider in history.

David's portrait evokes a sense of mutual respect between rider and horse. They appear in communion and their postures are complementary. The rearing motion and upward mobility of the horse mirrors Napoleon's hand gesture. The two appear to work toward a mutual goal. Yet while Napoleon and his steed work in tandem, the rider is nevertheless in control, though he does not exactly dominate. Mainardi argues that the symbolism of this image "represent[s] such composite images of rational behaviour, with the 'lower' bodily instincts of the horse held in check by the 'higher' intellect and rationality of the rider."³⁴ This relationship of body and intellect is hierarchical and implies a shared purpose—to conquer and command. Thus, David's portrait of Napoleon articulates the traditional meanings associated with the imagery of horse and rider. Art historian Stefan Germer identifies these traditional meanings as a type of interplay, where "horse was man's representative and enlargement of his self," whose symbolic value is a part of "systems of established meaning."³⁵ This meaning takes the unity of man and animal as a product of masculine imagination where the horse represents an extension of the rider's will, dominated by the masculine power of rider.

David's painting portrays the relationship between the horse and Napoleon as a symbol of rational control and authority. Byron, on the other hand, depicts the horse as turbulent and chaotic. This reversal of power is central to the Mazeppa legend. The erratic, passion-driven movement of the horse replaces the agency of the rider, who is passively taken along for the ride. Mainardi describes the Romantic horse as "overcome by passions" and "uncontrolled by the rider-intellect."³⁶ Mazeppa does not ride into battle as a conquering man of action but is captured and unwillingly bound to the back of a wild horse: "he was a noble steed,/A Tartar of the Ukrainian breed...wild

³⁴ Mainardi, "Mazeppa," 338.

³⁵ Stefan Germer, "Pleasurable Fear: Géricault and Uncanny Trends at the Opening of the Nineteenth Century," *Art History* 22, no. 2 (June 1999): 167.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

[and] untaught.”³⁷ Byron emphasizes the untamed, wild nature of the horse, while simultaneously expressing its nobility. These equestrian characteristics contrast with Mazeppa’s description of his loyal horse of the opening—

The Cossack prince rubb’d down his horse,
And made for him a leafy bed,
And smooth’d his fetlocks and his mane,
And slack’d his girth, and stripp’d his rein,
And joy’d to see how well he fed.³⁸

The care and compassion Mazeppa directs toward his horse is one of love and respect. This steed accompanied Mazeppa to battle, fought alongside him, and was exiled to a foreign nation along with his master. The wild horse, on the other hand, mirrors Mazeppa himself—trapped, bound, and without agency: “[t]hey [Mazeppa’s captors] bound me on, that menial throng,/Upon his back with many a thong.”³⁹ In this moment, neither hero nor horse are free: both are trapped, pinioned to one another. Their fates not only reflect each other, but are necessary: “each lives out his destiny—the horse to die and Mazeppa to be saved.”⁴⁰ With a cry (“away, away”) the wild horse is *set free* and his impulse is to gallop head-long to his Ukrainian home. Mazeppa, while not free, is also sent on a journey home, one that ultimately leads to a new life as Cossack Hetman. The freedom of the horse’s flight leads to its death, whereas Mazeppa’s capture and suffering ultimately leads to his triumph. This death-in-life motive, the doubleness that links freedom and death, suffering and triumph, is something that Liszt capitalized on. The flight of the horse is ubiquitous throughout Liszt’s composition, as is the hero’s suffering. But when the two entities are pinioned, there is a tension between freedom (pinions) and suffering (pinioned).

³⁷ Byron, “Mazeppa,” 612.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 604.

³⁹ Byron, “Mazeppa,” 613.

⁴⁰ Babinski, *The Mazeppa Legend in European Romanticism*, 34.

The imagery of Mazeppa and the horse was a favourite of Romantic-era painters, particularly in France. The examination of the Mazeppa legend in nineteenth-century aesthetic culture would be incomplete without acknowledging how visual art aided in the dissemination of the myth. The pathos of Byron's suffering hero, along with the bodily torture of both Mazeppa and the horse, proved to be fertile ground for further exploration. In the generation after Byron, Mazeppa's wild ride became an "instance of purgation through suffering,"⁴¹ a potent metaphor for the labour of creative activity. This labour became a goal for both the act of creation and the desired recognition for creating works of genius. By the 1820s and 1830s, Mazeppa symbolized the Romantic hero-artist "exiled and reviled (for passion and commitment) in one dispensation, only to survive into the praise and recognition of another."⁴² Voss's statement refers to Mazeppa's punishment at the hands of the Polish nobleman in his youth and his leadership among his later subjects. The Mazeppa myth, therefore, combines heroic activity and passivity as two simultaneous, contrasting, and unresolved states within the hero's masculine expression. The legend of Mazeppa's wild ride, and the doubleness that derives from the pinion(s)/[-ed] creates the in-betweenness of the hero's exile and recognition—a culturally-and-aesthetically-coded space that centers on suffering and survival.

The visual cues in Géricault's *Mazeppa* (1820 [figure 10]) cogently portray the hero's suffering. His depiction of Mazeppa—the relationship to the horse, bodily posture, mental torment, and heroic masculinity—is in stark contrast to David's portrait of Napoleon. Géricault's image depicts the pinioned, suffering hero and his symbiotic relationship with the horse. Mazeppa's naked body is stretched across the horse's back. His head is tilted over the horse's withers, obscuring the hero's face. While the viewer does not see anguish on Mazeppa's face, the overwhelming darkness (evoked by the extensive use of blues and blacks) creates an atmosphere that reflects the sublimity of

⁴¹ Voss, "Mazeppa-Maseppa: Migration of a Romantic Motif," 111.

⁴² *Ibid.*

Mazeppa's agony. He embodies the terror associated with the bleak setting while the landscape reflects back onto his deep, even overwhelming emotion. The landscape, despite its starkness, mirrors Mazeppa's emotions—a pathetic fallacy of stormy proportions. The foreground and the background merge into one focal plane in order to clarify the subjects, though only the highlights on Mazeppa's leg and chest and the horse's mane and tail are in view. The ambiguity Géricault depicts through highlights and shadows leads to “unifying atmospheric lighting [that] binds the limbs to one another and isolates them against their dark, almost black surroundings.”⁴³ This unification is a visual portrayal of the pinions that bind Mazeppa to the horse through contrasts in colour and light. Their bodies are connected, yet, the horse clearly has a consciousness of its own. It struggles, moves, flies (“away, away”) in a way that eludes (Mazeppa's) control.



FIGURE 10 GÉRICAULT, *MAZEPPA*, EARLY 1820S, OIL ON PAPER APPLIED TO CANVAS, PRIVATE COLLECTION

While the use of dark colours, highlights, and shadows create an atmosphere of suffering, the contrast in “movement” between the two subjects portrays its own symbiotic struggle. The horse

⁴³ Germer, “Pleasurable Fear: Géricault and Uncanny Trends at the Opening of the Nineteenth Century,” 166.

labours as he attempts to lift himself and his (heroic) burden from the water. The horse's posture evokes "a moment of uncertainty, expending tremendous energy."⁴⁴ Yet while the horse struggles, it nevertheless dominates the energy in the painting. The horse strains to lift himself over the bank of the river while Mazeppa lies helpless. In another circumstance, the rider would dismount to ease the burden on the horse while passing such difficult terrain (unless that rider is Napoleon). Mazeppa, however, is only capable of passively *experiencing* himself as a burden. He has neither the power nor the strength to change position, nor to break the pinions that bind him to the horse.⁴⁵ Yet despite the horse's movement (and Mazeppa's passive stance) both appear to be near their breaking point, and based on the legend, the horse will die. Mazeppa, on the other hand, outlives his charger only *after* being rescued. Thus, the passivity of the hero does not lead to failure, but to survival.

Mazeppa neither conquers and commands nor dominates and controls the horse. Rather, he unites himself with the horse's energy; and their subjective experiences depend upon each other. The horse's energy generates suffering, and in his struggle to break the pinions that bind him to the horse, Mazeppa "only increases the uncontrolled fury of the animal as well as his own agony."⁴⁶ However, upon closer scrutiny, Géricault's Mazeppa and David's Napoleon feature similarities. In both paintings, the horse is stepping up an incline, as if to suggest forward momentum—a striving toward a goal that is not within the visual frame. Napoleon's goal is to conquer the Alps, which symbolically suggest the lands that lay on the other side of the mountain range. Similarly, Géricault's Mazeppa is *meant* to conquer the "formidable" (imaginative) Ukrainian landscape, but his body pinioned to the wild horse (in this visual moment) suggests an expression of masculine-heroic passivity. Those privy to Mazeppa's future triumph are aware of the outcome, but in this moment,

⁴⁴ Babinski, *The Mazeppa Legend in European Romanticism*, 55.

⁴⁵ Despite Mazeppa's desire to unhinge himself from the horse, being pinioned is also a necessary aspect of his heroic stature: his attachment to the agent of his suffering is akin to being bound to genius.

⁴⁶ Jerome McGann, *Fiery Dust: Byron's Poetic Development* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), 180.

the viewer only experiences the hero's suffering. Furthermore, in both paintings, hero and horse complement each other's physicality. While Napoleon appears more assertive, Mazeppa "has the power of a crucifixion or a *pieta* [sic],"⁴⁷ a posture that connotes Christ-like physical and mental will despite being bound in a tortuous position (the cross), or dead, cradled by the Virgin Mary. If one considers the religious canonical works that represent both Christ's crucifixion and the *pietà*, along with the cultural significance of those images, it is reasonable to suggest that Géricault visually alludes to the future of Mazeppa's triumph. Christ was bound to the cross, he died, but he *also* transcended death.

Géricault's painting is a private, interior image that depicts Mazeppa in not only in a state of isolation, but also one of Christ-like (near) defeat. The lack of definitive setting communicates a mood or emotional state more so than action: Mazeppa "does not hold the reins but is carried along helplessly by his horse."⁴⁸ Géricault reflects one of the more poignant moments of Byron's narrative, when Mazeppa, already half-dead from physical pain, begins to suffer psychologically:

My undulating life was as
 The fancied lights that flitting pass
 Our shut eyes in deep midnight, when
 Fever begins upon the brain (lines 557-560)
 ...
 There was a gleam too of the sky,
 Studded with stars; - it is no dream;
 The wild horse swims the wilder stream!
 The bright broad river's gushing tide
 Sweeps, winding onward, far and wide...⁴⁹

Craig Franson goes into detail describing the specific ramifications associated with Mazeppa's physical pain and psychological struggle, both of which contribute to Mazeppa's heroic expression.

⁴⁷ Voss, "Mazeppa-Maseppa," 111. A *pietà*, "pitty," is a subject in Christian art that typically depicts a dead Christ cradled by the Virgin Mary.

⁴⁸ Mainardi, "Mazeppa," 340.

⁴⁹ Byron, "Mazeppa," 618.

He writes that for Mazeppa, the physical pain of his body “incorporates rather than opposes the contents of consciousness.”⁵⁰ Mazeppa’s body and the suffering of his mind are inextricably linked, and both connote doubleness of activity and passivity. While Mazeppa is bound to the horse, seemingly without agency/power, he is actually active in his heroism:

the contortions of Mazeppa’s body are not in themselves pain; they are behaviors that typify pain and characterize potential responses to it. ‘Writhing’ and ‘howling,’ in other words, however embodied and however associated with painful sensations, are instead actions.⁵¹

The simultaneous activity and passivity in Mazeppa’s pinions find their symbolic relevance in Géricault’s painting. Mazeppa survives a hard, three-day ride backwards, exposed to the elements all while mentally processing the pain his body endures.

The imagery of Mazeppa on the back of the horse also conveys a metaphor for mind and body parallel to “the backwards rider, a version of ‘world upside down’ imagery which operates through an inversion of visual norms.”⁵² But, ironically, Mazeppa’s torturous ride, passively pinned to the back of this horse, grants him his freedom and victory, whereas other heroes actively ride their steeds to victory. This ironic union emphasizes Mazeppa as a hero of suffering masculinity, in which he passively relies on the wild and persistent whims of the horse.⁵³ The gendered imagery of Mazeppa’s ride is also reflected in his posture. He is naked and strapped facing outward, a position of vulnerability. Mazeppa’s nakedness offers no form of protection against the elements. The mere possibility of bodily harm, while being unable to defend against it, may be interpreted as a form of failed masculinity. Vincenzo Patanè amplifies this with an evocative, homoerotic description of Mazeppa’s posture on the horse. Drawing from the wider tradition of Mazeppa imagery, he writes

⁵⁰ Craig Franson, “‘Those Suspended Pangs:’ Romantic Reviewers and the Agony of Byron’s *Mazeppa*” in *European Romantic Review* 23, no. 6 (December 2012): 729.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 736.

⁵² Mainardi, “Mazeppa,” 338.

⁵³ Susan Chaplin, “Gender,” ed. John Murray, *Encyclopedia of the Romantic Era, 1760-1850* (London: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2004), 406.

[t]here is...a strong, even sadomasochistic, eroticism in this incredible ‘beast with two backs’...The naked body of the young man is presented in a sexual position, legs akimbo and open to any intrusion, after being entirely at the mercy of his torturers who brutally handled his thighs in order to lash him to the horse as tightly as possible...it is the animal riding the man, doing whatever it wants with him and forcing him into helpless passivity...⁵⁴

This interpretation of Mazeppa’s heroic masculinity is intriguing, especially since most visual representations of Mazeppa’s posture place him in a spread-eagle position, with his genitalia exposed. While Mazeppa is physically vulnerable, Géricault symbolically asserts his hero’s masculine virility by sharing the horse’s body. Furthermore, this fusion of bodies—horse and rider—“conceived of as indissolubly bound muscles swelling in tension,” were hallmarks of “fantasies of bodily totality and impregnability.”⁵⁵ Thus, Mazeppa symbolically becomes one body with his frantic charger, bending to the horse’s will. Nevertheless, Mazeppa’s vulnerability suggests that the act of *being vulnerable* means to experience all manner of sensations, which in turn shape nature and character. Mazeppa’s heroic masculinity is contingent on his experiences. These experiences include vulnerability, pain, and suffering—the hallmarks of his particular brand of masculine heroism—but also his future assertion of virility and triumph. Likewise, his genius coincides with the relationship to the horse, the active agent that metaphorically represents the painful spur of creativity.

4.4 Concluding Remarks

Struggle, vulnerability, and suffering masculinity lie at the heart of the image of Mazeppa on the horse. Throughout the ride, Mazeppa by necessity remains passive, projecting his “suffering on the whole world of his vision.”⁵⁶ Yet the symbolic implication of Mazeppa’s ride does not *truly* result in success (despite the fact that he survives the ordeal), but rather epitomizes the “bound but

⁵⁴ Vincenzo Patanè, “Lord Byron’s Sour Fruit,” *The Keats-Shelley Review* 30, no. 1 (2016): 53-54.

⁵⁵ Germer, “Pleasurable Fear: Géricault and Uncanny Trends at the Opening of the Nineteenth Century,” 165.

⁵⁶ Lawrence Kramer, “The Devoted Ear,” in *Musical Meaning and Human Values*, ed. Keith Chapin and Lawrence Kramer (New York: Fordham University Press, 2009), 60.

unbeaten Mazepa, ever struggling for but never quite attaining his personal freedom.”⁵⁷ Thus, Mazeppa’s legendary ride is symbolic of the struggle all artists face in the wake of their own social, cultural, political, and aesthetic ideologies.⁵⁸ The symbolism of Mazeppa’s body and mind as contributing factors to his expression of heroic masculinity, plays an integral role in his legend and his representation in creative works. Mazeppa exists in the realm of doubleness: both his body and his mind suffer, but he also survives. His mental fortitude makes him capable of transcending the suffering of his body. But Mazeppa is no less of a masculine hero for his suffering because, as George L. Mosse explains, “heroism, death, and sacrifice became associated with manliness” at the turn of the nineteenth century.⁵⁹ Images of Mazeppa, the hero bound and “ever struggling for but never quite attaining his personal freedom”⁶⁰ were also potent symbols for the suffering, misunderstood artist-genius.

⁵⁷ Prymak, “The Cossack Hetman,” 257.

⁵⁸ Babinski, *The Mazeppa Legend*, 21.

⁵⁹ George L. Mosse, *The Image of Man: The Creation of Modern Masculinity* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 50.

⁶⁰ Prymak, “The Cossack Hetman,” 257.

Chapter Five: Always, Away: Liszt's *Mazeppa* and the Fire of Inspiration

5.1 Preamble: Mazeppa's Symbolic Genius

The sublime terror of Mazeppa's legendary ride was a potent image of heroic suffering, survival, and eventual triumph. Romantic-era artists like Byron and Géricault capitalized on the tension of Mazeppa's masculine-heroic experience: his passive, naked body pinioned to the agent of his freedom. Liszt's *Mazeppa* (1854) portrays these same attributes, but with a greater emphasis on the suffering artist-genius:

Mazeppa, tied naked to a horse, became a symbol and an interpretation of the sufferings of the artist—of the man of genius who endures so much for the sake of his art.¹

As he had with the figure of Tasso, Liszt found in Mazeppa something that spoke to his sensibilities. In the previous chapter, I mentioned that he frequently referred to the image of Mazeppa bound to the horse as a metaphor for his performance career. By the time Liszt composed his symphonic poem, Mazeppa represented something more enduring. The sublime power of creative genius is a hard-won prize. To achieve its sublime reward, the artist must exist passively and painfully pinioned to an unyielding force. There is no stopping that ride once it begins.

The Mazeppa legend, and its implied expressions of masculine heroic genius, was deeply entrenched in the larger cultural and aesthetic atmosphere of the late 1820s.² Victor Hugo was the

¹ Jurgen Schutze, *Art of Nineteenth-Century Europe*, translated by Barbara Forryan (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1979), 52.

² By the time Liszt composed *Mazeppa*, the hero and his ride had a wide-spread cultural legacy. Byron's poem inspired a generation of creative artists. Géricault's tortured hero inspired Eugene Delacroix's "Mazeppa on the Dying Horse" (1824) that focused on the suffering and isolation of the hero. Horace Vernet's "younger, more sympathetic, and more innocent" Mazeppa subject depicts the hero as soft and delicate. See Thomas M. Prymak, "The Cossack Hetman: Ivan

most prominent creative artist of French Romanticism to explicitly connect Mazeppa to the concept of genius. Liszt's symphonic poem was undoubtedly inspired by Hugo's reinterpretation of the Mazeppa myth. He included Hugo's poem "Mazeppa" in its entirety as the preface to the published score. The plight of the creative genius is a common theme in Hugo's works. His short poem "Le Génie," for instance, describes how possessing genius (despite its divine spark) means to perpetually suffer. Hugo makes this point more poignant by drawing from Promethean imagery to portray the genius in a continual cycle of suffering:

Malheur à lui! l'impure Envie
 S'achare sur sa noble vie,
 Semblable au Vautour éternel;
 Et, de son triomphe irritée,
 Punit ce nouveau Prométhée
 D'avoir ravi le feu du ciel!

[Woe unto him! for Envy's pangs impure,
 Like the undying vultures', will be driven
 Into his noble heart, that must endure
 Pangs for each triumph; and, still unforgiven,
 Suffer Prometheus' doom...]³

Mazeppa in History and Legend from Peter to Pushkin," *The Historian* 76, no. 2 (Summer 2014): 258. The symbolic significance of Mazeppa's body contributes to the socio-cultural legacy associated with the ride, but reinterpreted in ways that speak to the creative artist. The Mazeppa myth reached its apex in the theatrical and popular entertainments. Equestrian shows include Léopold Chandezon and Jean-Guillaume-Antoine Cuvelier, *Mazeppa Ou Le Cheval Tartare, Mimodrame En Trois Actes, Tiré de Lord Byron* (Paris, 1825), staged by popular equestrian Antonio Franconi and his *Cirque Olympique*. Tony Voss notes that Chandezon's and Cuvelier's play preceded Hugo's poem "Mazeppa," an important aspect to note in terms of the "adaptation of the hero to popular cultural forms" (Voss, "Mazeppa-Maseppa: The Migration of a Romantic Motif," *Tydskrif Bir Letterkunde* 49, no. 2 (2012): 115). British playwright Henry M. Milner produced his hippodrama *Mazeppa; or, The wild horse of Tartary*. Its popularity was unparalleled and it was adapted into genres such as burlesque and melodrama, including the American equestrian show *Mazeppa*. This melodrama featured American actress Adah Isaacs Menken. Her portrayal of Mazeppa was a sensation because she appeared on a live horse (impressive) in a nude body stocking (very impressive!). Equestrian shows continued into the twentieth century.

³ Victor Hugo, "Le Génie," in *Odes et Ballades: Par Victor Hugo*, 4th ed., vol. 2 (Paris: Charles Gosselin, libraire, 1829), 49, <https://link-gale-com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/apps/doc/TQIOWD573298137/NCCO?u=edmo69826&sid=NCCO&xid=0e112b42>. Emphasis mine. It is useful to note that for Romantic-era artists, Prometheus, too, was also a symbol of creative genius. Eighteenth-and-nineteenth-century depictions of Prometheus emphasize his heroic stature as a creator, rebel, and saviour, offering the life-spark of fire from which the crafts of creativity allow humankind to be self-reliant. He suffers eternally due to his generous act of self-sacrifice to aid in the civilization of society. Goethe's "Prometheus" (1774) contains the *Sturm und Drang* qualities that idealize Prometheus as a defiant transgressor. Johann Gottfried Herder's *Der entfesselte Prometheus (Prometheus Unbound)* offers a (re-)interpretation of the myth that emphasizes his doctrine of *Humanität*. Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus* (1818) tells the story of a scientist who defies the laws of nature and creates a monster. Lord Byron describes Prometheus as "a symbol and a sign/To Mortals of their fate and force." See

Genius chooses the body and mind it desires—it is an entity outside its possessor’s soul. The noble artist who embodies genius is a victim to its whims (“Puis il accourt, et meurt victime”).⁴ His fortune of birth requires him to endure suffering—a destiny of “grief and injustice.” [“Pourtant, fallût-il être en proie/A l’injustice, à la douleur,/Qui n’accepterait avec joie/Le génie au prix du malheur?”].⁵

Contrasts and tensions are imbued in the experiences of the artist, and the concept of doubleness offers a critical lens to explicate the meaning(s) of these experiences. If chosen by genius, profound pain exists in both striving *and* triumph. Yet Hugo also describes genius as a treasure of inestimable value. The glory of surviving such an enduring, painful flame is eternal presence: “La Gloire, fantôme céleste,/Apparaît de loin à ses yeux;/Il subit le pouvoir funeste/De son sourire impérieux!” [“[t]hat clear celestial flame, so pure and high,/O’er which nor time nor death can have control”].⁶

Genius lies in a realm beyond common human experience and it is characterized by its doubleness of both pain and pleasure. It is inexplicable: spirit, inspiration, essence. Genius is fiery, hot, tempestuous. It is tranquil, sublime, and eternal. Genius belongs to Romantic-era heroic men with the capability to withstand being pinioned to such a force and the fortitude to fly upon its pinions of freedom—always, away!

In this chapter, I examine Liszt’s *Mazeppa* as an articulation of the doubleness in Romantic-era conceptions of creative genius. Mazeppa’s experience pinioned to the unyielding horse symbolizes the suffering masculine artist-hero who embodies genius—the inexplicable force that valorizes both suffering and (triumphant) survival. The chapter is in three sections. The first outlines existing

Lord George Gordon Byron, “Prometheus,” in *Lord Byron: Selected Poems*, ed. Susan J. Wolfson and Peter J. Manning (London: Penguin Books, 1996), 395. American painter Thomas Cole situates Prometheus within the imposing Caucasus mountain range to emphasize Prometheus’s suffering and isolation. These representative examples are just a few works based on the Prometheus myth that show how the themes of suffering and defiance appeared cross-historically and cross-culturally, from literature to landscape painting. Liszt’s reinterpretation of the Prometheus myth makes universalism, historical struggle, and creative perseverance (genius) explicit. The driving narrative focused on the unresolved tension between the hero’s misfortune (“malheur”) and glory (“gloire”).

⁴ Hugo, “Le Génie,” 50.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 51.

⁶ *Ibid.*

musicological scholarship about Liszt's *Mazeppa*. Most music historians either focus on musical apparatus (topic theory, narrative, and form) or the content of the program within a larger survey of Liszt's symphonic poems. Contemporary musicologists generally regard *Mazeppa* as a composition of mere effect without substantial content. Yet nineteenth-century reviews by Saint-Saëns and Debussy praise Liszt's imaginative ability to musically portray Mazeppa's painful experience. The second section introduces Liszt's extra-musical inspirations and the sources of his programmatic content. While Liszt's (re-)interpretation derives predominantly from Hugo's "Mazeppa," the multivalence of the myth necessitates an examination of Liszt's wider inspiration: the Byronic epigraph "away, away" and Louis Boulanger's painting *Le Supplice de Mazeppa*. My interpretation of Liszt's *Mazeppa* takes into account this intertextuality to evaluate expressions of masculine heroic genius. The bulk of the second section examines Hugo's text to decipher how heroic masculinity and creative genius are captured in the metaphors of speed and movement. The final section consists of my analysis of Liszt's *Mazeppa*, which hinges on a close reading the programmatic text. I focus predominantly on the way Liszt utilizes motivic gestures and thematic materials. The main "Mazeppa" theme, along with gestures that amplify his suffering, create a cyclical musical form in order to evoke the leitmotif of Mazeppa's pinions.

5.2 Liszt's *Mazeppa* in Musicological Scholarship

Is *Mazeppa* a good or bad composition? This question is central to twentieth-and twenty-first-century value judgements of Liszt's sixth symphonic poem. For instance, Humphrey Searle describes *Mazeppa* as "unfortunately *not* one of Liszt's finest creations."⁷ Michael Saffle offers a similar assessment, indicating that while Liszt was a "marvelous creator of effects...his best works—and this

⁷ Humphrey Searle, *The Music of Liszt*, Second Revised Edition (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1954), 73. Emphasis mine.

symphonic poem *is not* one of them—consist of *more* than effects.”⁸ Some nineteenth-century reviews of *Mazeppa* are generally more positive. Late nineteenth-century French composers Camille Saint-Saëns and Claude Debussy praise Liszt for his ability to capture key aspects of the ride narrative. Saint-Saëns writes that Liszt brilliantly portrays the expansiveness of the landscape—a reflection of Mazeppa’s internal struggle—through the innovative use of orchestration.⁹ Interestingly, Debussy contrasts *Mazeppa* with Beethoven’s Symphony No. 6 (*Pastoral*), indicating that the *Pastoral* is more imitative in its depiction of babbling brooks and chirping birds. *Mazeppa*, on the other hand, evokes “the stormy passion that rages throughout.”¹⁰ For Debussy, the emotional gestures of storminess, passion, and rage contribute to the successful portrayal of Mazeppa’s experience pinioned to the horse. *Mazeppa*’s long performance history, the inclusion of Hugo’s “Mazeppa” as an integral component of the composition, and the symbolic associations within the Mazeppa legend suggest that Saint-Saëns and Debussy are correct: *Mazeppa* conveys something beyond mere effects.

Scholarship that addresses *Mazeppa* is generally part of larger discussions of Liszt’s symphonic poems. Reeves Shulstad’s chapter in *The Cambridge Companion to Liszt* is a survey of Liszt’s Weimar-era orchestral works. She devotes a single paragraph to *Mazeppa*, focusing on poetic inspirations, key narrative points, and some particulars of the main theme. In *Program Music*, Kregor clusters *Mazeppa* with Liszt’s other character studies, which include *Tasso*, *Orpheus*, and *Prometheus*. He takes the

⁸ Michael Saffle, “Orchestral Works,” in *The Liszt Companion*, ed. Ben Arnold (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2002), 252. Emphasis mine. In this latter category, Rey M. Longyear lists three symphonic poems as “philosophical:” *Les Préludes* (1845-54), *Ce qu’on entend sur la montagne* (1845-54), and *Die Ideale* (1857-58). Longyear’s designation of philosophical is a categorization of abstract music (e.g., philosophical) and concrete subject matter. Furthermore, for Longyear, the idea of the abstract, philosophical music is closely linked to the authorship of the programmatic source material. While *Les Préludes* does not serve as one of the central works in his discussion, it nevertheless derives from Lamartine’s *Méditation* (1823). The other two symphonic poems are based on works by two writers at the center of cultural movements: French Romanticism (Hugo) and Weimar classicism (Schiller). See Rey M. Longyear, “Liszt’s Philosophical Symphonic Poems: Their Intellectual History,” in *Journal of the American Liszt Society* 32 (1992), 42-51.

⁹ Quoted in Lynne Johnson, “Franz Liszt and Camille Saint-Saëns: Friendship, Mutual Support, and Influence” (PhD diss, University of Hawaii, 2009), 206. The original review was published in *La Renaissance littéraire et artistique* 1, 36 (28 December 1872): 285-286.

¹⁰ Quoted in Jonathan Kregor, *Program Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 277. I will also note that Liszt would have appreciated this assessment of *any* of his works.

historical-turned-legendary-hero narrative into the realm of musical composition. But rather than focus explicitly on *Mazeppa*, he provides an account of the chronology that led to the symphonic poem.¹¹ Albert Brussee delves into the compositional chronology of *Mazeppa* in greater depth. Most of his article examines the *Mazeppa* sketch in Liszt's Sketchbook N6. Brussee suggests that Liszt's engagement with *Mazeppa*'s legend began circa 1832, roughly at the same time as Liszt met Hugo and Boulanger.¹² This research reveals the continuing relevance of the *Mazeppa* myth in social, cultural, and aesthetic circles. The works of Shulstad, Kregor, and Brussee aid in understanding the compositional history of *Mazeppa*. While my engagement with *Mazeppa* does not emphasize the transformation of Liszt's *Mazeppa* works, I offer an in-depth examination of the socio-cultural meanings that contextualize *Mazeppa*'s symbolic genius within nineteenth-century discourses of heroic masculinity.

Jeanne Fauré-Cousin and France Clidat's *Aux sources littéraires de Franz Liszt* examines some of the literary works that inspired Liszt's programmatic orchestral work, including his *Dante* and *Faust* symphonies, "Scenes" from Lenau's *Faust*, *Mazeppa*, and the "Petrarch Sonnets."¹³ For *Mazeppa*, Fauré-Cousin and Clidat include a brief account of *Mazeppa*'s role as a legendary hero and offer Hugo's poem "Mazeppa" and a prose translation of Byron's *Mazeppa*. Similarly, Michael Stegemann's "Programme, pamphlet ou poésie?" examines Liszt's prefaces within the context of program music and the extra-musical. He offers an historical account of musical eras and works that depended on the idea of the extra-musical, citing compositions from French and Italian madrigals to Berlioz's

¹¹ These include the fourth étude in D minor (1827), the fourth *Grandes études* (1839), a stand-alone piano work entitled *Mazeppa* (1847), and revised versions of the 1839 *Grandes études* and the 1847 *Mazeppa*, published as one of the twelve *Études d'exécution transcendante*. The first iteration of the symphonic poem appeared in 1856, which included Hugo's poem as the preface. In 1857, a two-piano arrangement of the symphonic poem was published. Finally, a four-hand piano arrangement of the symphonic poem was published in 1875. See Table 4.3 in Kregor's *Program Music*, 117.

¹² Kregor's compositional chronology places the earliest musical motives in the symphonic poem as early as 1827. Liszt apparently visited the home of Hugo in the summer of 1832, where he also met Boulanger. See Brussee, "Franz Liszt's *Mazeppa* Sketch in His Sketchbook N6," 36-37.

¹³ Jeanne Fauré-Cousin and France Clidat, *Aux Sources Littéraires de Franz Liszt: Byron, Pétrarque, Dante, Hugo, Sainte-Beuve, Senancour, Lamartine, Gœthe, Lenau, Huland, Freiligrath, Les "Fioretti"* (Paris: "La Revue musicale," 1973).

Symphonie Fantastique as examples. The bulk of Stegemann's chapter, however, describes the sources of inspiration—and the meaning(s)—of the prefaces for Liszt's *Ce qu'on entend sur la montagne*, *Mazeppa*, *Héroïde funèbre*, and *Les Préludes*. His discussion of *Mazeppa* features a brief account of its compositional history and Liszt's sources of inspiration. Like the scholars above, Stegemann's assessment of *Mazeppa* implies an ease of interpretation:

Et même si Liszt était “parti à vide,” *Mazeppa* demeure...celui de ses Poèmes Symphoniques dont *l'écoute linéaire* est la plus facile, garantissant la compréhension presque sans le programme.

[And even if Liszt were “left empty,” *Mazeppa* remains... that of his Symphonic Poems whose *linear hearing* is the easiest, guaranteeing understanding almost without the program].¹⁴

“Linear hearing” is valuable as an extension of effect. But given the complexity of the myth as it extended across centuries of literary, artistic, and musical creation, I contend that if *Mazeppa* is easily understood without the aid of the program, the symbolic value associated with the *Mazeppa* legend is resolved. My critical examination of *Mazeppa* subverts the idea of linear hearing because Liszt's engagement with *Mazeppa*'s symbolic power, and its inherent tension, is more complex than a linear account of the ride narrative might imply.

Carl Dahlhaus's brief discussion of *Mazeppa* in *Analysis and Value Judgement* centers on Liszt's compositional strategy. While his book attempts to reconcile objective/formalist analysis and subjective aesthetic judgment—a stance diametrically opposed to my interpretation of program music—his analysis of the main “ride” section of *Mazeppa* is insightful. Dahlhaus argues that Liszt incorporates “latent structures,” or evolving content (such as narrative) that “admits...several formal interpretations.”¹⁵ The plurality in Dahlhaus's discussion of form is useful because it suggests the doubleness in Liszt's depiction of *Mazeppa*. However, while acknowledging that extra-musical

¹⁴ Michael Stegemann, “Programme, pamphlet ou poésie? Les Préfaces de Franz Liszt pour ses Poèmes Symphoniques,” in *Franz Liszt: Lectures et Écritures*, ed. Florence Fix, Laurence Le Diagon-Jacquin, and Georges Zaragoza (Paris: Hermann, 2012), 111. Emphasis Mine.

¹⁵ Carl Dahlhaus, *Analysis and Value Judgement*, trans. Siegmund Levarie (New York: Pendragon Press, 1983), 76.

content is integral to Liszt's programmatic works, Dahlhaus does not offer a deeper explanation of how form and content may portray extra-musical meaning.

Keith Johns' analytical approach draws on topic theory to provide examples of musical archetypes that gain meaning through continued use. Topics, combined with musical form, create a way for abstract music to evoke extra-musical content. Johns argues that the main musical topics in *Mazeppa* include: funeral march, military, *Sturm und Drang*, fanfare, and folk music. These topics create the basis of Liszt's formal strategy and narrative content in *Mazeppa*. Formally, Johns hears *Mazeppa* as a three-movement symphony "based upon motivic material shared by all three movements."¹⁶ The greatest strength of Johns' analysis is the categorization of musical topics and their ascribed meanings within the context of *Mazeppa*. However, he neither provides an interpretation of the program nor examines the meaning associated with *Mazeppa*'s larger cultural status as masculine heroic genius.

The most in-depth work that examines Liszt's *Mazeppa* is John Fry's dissertation, *Liszt's Mazeppa: The History and Development of a Symphonic Poem*. Fry's discussion includes the story of *Mazeppa*, both as a historical and legendary/literary figure. He offers a detailed analysis of Hugo's "Mazeppa" that is integral to his understanding of the symphonic poem. Fry includes an analysis of *Mazeppa*, focusing on form, tone-painting, and musical expression. Tone-painting refers to "musical depictions in an instrumental work"¹⁷ and must feature distinct patterns (e.g., the horse). Musical expression is determined by recurring motives that depict the intangible: emotions, such as pain and sorrow.¹⁸ While my conclusions regarding the meaning(s) of form, thematic material, and musical

¹⁶ Keith T. Johns, *The Symphonic Poems of Franz Liszt*, ed. Michael Saffle, Franz Liszt Studies Series 3 (Stuyvesant: Pendragon Press, 1997), 68.

¹⁷ John Douglass Fry, "Liszt's *Mazeppa*: The History and Development of a Symphonic Poem" (D.M.A. diss., Ohio State University, 1988), 30.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 31.

gestures differ from Fry's, I do incorporate his ideas of tone-painting and musical expression, both of which Liszt uses throughout his symphonic poem.

I am indebted to the scholarly discourse on Liszt's *Mazeppa*. Nevertheless, most scholars either focus solely on the musical aspects (form, thematic material, musical topics) or the substance of the program. Given Mazeppa's importance as a legendary and symbolic figure, the general lack of engagement with the broader culture themes embedded within his heroic stature is surprising. Perhaps the lack of attention is the result of scholars like Searle and Saffle who suggest that *Mazeppa* only offers effects. I do not pass judgement on whether *Mazeppa* is a "good" composition. But I do find its subject, and Liszt's musical means to depict that subject, worthy of attention.

5.3 Liszt's Heroic Inspirations: Reading Boulanger, Reading Hugo, Reading Genius

Louis Boulanger (1806-1867) was the last major painter to explore the Mazeppa legend in French Romantic painting. His *Le Supplice de Mazeppa* (figure 11) belonged to his salon debut (1827-1828), where he received tremendous accolades including a second-class medal.¹⁹ Boulanger was considered an important figure in French Romanticism. Petrus Borel describes Boulanger as a poetic painter who possesses unmatched creative imagination (or, genius):

Car Louis Boulanger non-seulement est un homme de pensée, un peintre de conviction, mais il possède ce qui peut tout racheter, une prodigieuse imagination...Quelle science, quelle énergie, quell mouvement, quelle cohue, quelle terreur, quell effroi!...ses compositions sont toujours empreintes de gravité, de tristesse, de reverie, qui charment, qui séduisent; elles sont toujours expressives et largement poétiques...Dès son premier essor, dès ses tableaux de *Mazeppa*, Boulanger déclara toutes ses éminentes qualités.

[Because Louis Boulanger is not only a man of thought, a painter of conviction, he possesses what can purchase everything, a prodigious imagination...What science, what energy, what movement, what mayhem, what terror, what dread!...his compositions are always marked by gravity, sadness, reverie, which charm [and] seduce; they are always expressive and largely

¹⁹ Patricia Mainardi, "Mazeppa," *Word & Image* 14, no. 4 (December 2000): 344.

poetic...From his first flight, from his *Mazeppa* painting, Boulanger declared all of his eminent qualities].²⁰

Borel's description of Boulanger and his *Mazeppa* painting contains familiar associations with genius. Unparalleled imagination, a feature of the artistic creator, is as much a part of the discourse of Romanticism as the energy, terror, dread, sadness, reverie, and charm the Romantic hero possesses in his character. Boulanger is endowed with the same qualities as his creations, and *Mazeppa* reflects the agony and turmoil of its creator.

While Boulanger's *Supplice de Mazeppa* does not possess the same gravitas as other visual interpretations, its portrayal of the hero's capture and binding is unique. The scene is chaotic, crowded, and fragmented. The tension of the important moment is represented in "the struggle between youth and age [and] the dynamic and energetic lower group juxtaposed with the stilted and static upper group."²¹ Mainardi's observation is important: the binding of *Mazeppa* is integral to the hero's suffering. This contrasts with Géricault's representation of *Mazeppa*'s static immobility as a hero presented as *always* having suffered. In Boulanger's painting, the "static upper group" is the Polish nobility, with the Count—the victim of *Mazeppa*'s indiscretion—seated and pointing downward. All four men in the background are older, suggesting that their power is established by age and/or experience. The class dynamic is represented in the noblemen's stoicism and attire (a symbol of political power). They are quite literally above the chaos of the scene below.

²⁰ Pétrus Borel, "Des Artistes penseurs et des artistes creux," *L'Artiste* 5 (1833), 258. Translation mine. I discovered this source in Mainardi, "Mazeppa," 345.

²¹ Mainardi, "Mazeppa," 345.



FIGURE 11 LOUIS BOULANGER, *LE SUPPLICE DE MAZEPPA* (1827), OIL ON CANVAS, MUSÉE DES BEAUX-ARTES DE ROUEN

The stillness of the nobles lies in tension with the movement of the lower subjects. Boulanger shows dynamism in both Mazeppa's and the horse's struggle to free themselves from impending punishment. The captors clearly struggle to control the wild pair—it takes nine men to bind Mazeppa to the horse. While Mazeppa is naked, the half-clothed men of action convey the idea that the tension between clothed/naked equates to strong/weak. This image suggests that nakedness symbolizes passivity, vulnerability, and defeat whereas semi-nakedness portrays activity, dynamism, and physical power. Mazeppa is in a posture of suffering, yet the image evokes the potential of his legendary heroism by giving him a sculptural cast. In illustrating the origin of Mazeppa's suffering—as opposed to a moment in Mazeppa's suffering—Boulanger creates a scenario where the viewer may sympathize with the hero and despise the violent actions of his captors. Mazeppa is overtaken, but this struggle lends him his heroic status. While Mazeppa neither possesses the power of the nobility nor the muscular action of their subjects, his heroic masculinity exists in his unwilling (yet noble) suffering.

Victor Hugo contributed significantly to the Mazeppa myth in French Romanticism. The paratextual inspiration for his “Mazeppa,” first published in his collection *Les Orientales*, derives from two sources: Boulanger’s *Le Supplice de Mazeppa* (the poem is dedicated to Boulanger) and Byron’s (now familiar) line “Away!—away!—”²² The movement and inherent (Romantic) heroism—always onward, always suffering—associated with this command serves as a leitmotif for the wild ride:

“Away!—away!—and on we dash!”
 ““Away!—away!—My breath was gone—”
 “And on he foam’d—away!—away!—”
 ““Away, away, my steed and I...”
 “But fast we fled, away, away—”²³

Liszt capitalized on this speed and movement. “Away, away,” an ever-present rhythmic and motivic entity in the symphonic poem, has a double purpose: it represents both the horse’s headlong gallop (an instance of tone-painting) and symbolizes the pinions that bind Mazeppa to the inspirational demands of genius.

Section	Stanzas	Subsection Theme	First Line
I	1-2	Capture/Binding	Ainsi, quand Mazeppa, qui rugit et qui pleure...
	3-5	They Go!	Un cri part, et soudain voilà que dans la plaine...
	6-9	Suffering	Et si l’infortuné, don’t la tête se brise...
	10-13	Survival	Le cheval, qui ne sent ni le mors ni la selle...
	14-17	Prophesy of Triumph	Enfin, après trois jours d’une course insensée...
II	18-23	The Ride of Ideality	Ainsi, lorsqu’un mortel, sur qu son dieu s’étale...

TABLE 1 STRUCTURE OF VICTOR HUGO’S “MAZEPPA”

Hugo’s “Mazeppa” is divided into two non-sequential sections separated by Roman numerals (table 1). The first section may be divided into smaller subsections that focus on the progression of Mazeppa’s capture/binding, movement (they go!), suffering, survival, and eventual triumph. I have

²² In the preface to the first edition, Hugo indicates that his meaning of “oriental” does not apply to the Far East, but rather any culture outside of Western European traditions. The legend of Mazeppa, therefore, had a sense of the exotic, at least in terms of nineteenth-century usage. However, Hugo’s “Mazeppa,” and the poems of the collection as a whole, are primarily concerned with color and legend rather than the political associations of exoticism and colonialism.

²³ George Gordon Lord Byron, “Mazeppa,” in *Lord Byron: Selected Poems*, ed. Susan J. Wolfson and Peter J. Manning (London: Penguin Books, 1996), 602–626.

included the poem as it appears in Liszt's published score. It includes the original French, a German translation by Peter Cornelius, and an English translation by F. Corder (figure 12).²⁴ Stanzas one and two describe Mazeppa's capture and the anticipation of the painful ride across the "boundless horizon."²⁵

Ainsi, quand Mazeppa, qui rugit et qui pleure,
A vu ses bras, ses pieds, ses flancs qu'un sabre effleure,
Tous ses membres liés
Sur un fongeux cheval, nourri d'herbes marines
Qui fume, et rait jaillir le feu de ses narines
Et le feu de ses pieds;

[Behold this Mazeppa, o'erpowered by minions,
Writhe vainly beneath the implacable pinions
His limbs that surround.
To a fiery steed from the Asian mosses
That, chafing and fuming, its mane wildly tosses
The victim is bound.]²⁶

These opening lines give the impression of the "restraint of a great deal of energy...[where] pain, tension, and fury are controlled."²⁷ Babinski's assertion that this scene represents restriction and tension suggests certain masculine implications. The idea of control, including *lack* of control, is a metaphor for Mazeppa's heroic masculinity. He is "o'erpowered" by the Count's subjects, unable to defend himself, and is a victim to tormentors who take pleasure in his despair. Mazeppa is a man

²⁴ The English translation by F. Corder takes certain poetic liberties and it often misses the nuances of Hugo's text. While this translation is not without its issues, I have chosen to include some excerpts within the prose of this chapter. That said, where the translation warrants it, I include my own interpretation of Hugo's poem.

²⁵ "Dans l'horizon sans fin." Victor Hugo, "Mazeppa," in *Les Orientales: Par Victor Hugo* (Paris: Charles Gosselin, libraire, 1829), 329, <https://link-gale-com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/apps/doc/IPTZUD389089456/NCCO?u=edmo69826&sid=NCCO&xid=6b78b6ca>.

²⁶ Ibid., 327-328. See also Victor Hugo, "Mazeppa," in *Symphonische Dichtungen Für Großes Orchester*, trans. F. Corder (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, n.d.), 1.

²⁷ Hubert F. Babinski, *The Mazeppa Legend in European Romanticism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974), 67.

built for suffering, and his bonds keep him tethered to the horse like Prometheus to the rock.²⁸

While the spirited horse mirrors Mazeppa's struggle by being "bound" against his will, there is tension between Mazeppa's passivity and despair and the horse's fiery fury. Thus, Mazeppa's heroic stature "functions [as] the appropriation of the female role as victim, the effeminization of Mazeppa signifying his surrogate female status."²⁹ This is violence, which suggests that the inspiration of genius is also violent.

MAZEPPA.
SYMPHONISCHE DICHTUNG No. 6 VON F. LISZT.
Away! away!
Byron, Mazeppa.

I.

Wie sie Mazeppa trotz Knirschen und Toben,
Gebunden an allen Gliedern, gehoben
Auf das schnaubende Ross,
Dem glühend die weiten Nüstern dampften,
Dess Hufen den bebenden Boden stampften,
Dass er Funken ergoss;

Wie schlangengleich er in Banden gerungen,
Dass rings Gelschter schallend erklungen
Seiner Henker im Chor,
Bis widerstandlos ihn die Fessel zwinget,
Und Schaum vom Munde, Blut ihm dringet
Aus den Augen hervor:

Da gellt ein Schrei, und schneller als Pfeile
Fliegt mit dem Mann in rasender Eile
In die Weite das Ross:
Staubwirbel hüllet die Atemlosen,
Der Wolke gleich, darin Donner tosen
Und der Blitze Geschoss.

Sie flieh'n; sie fliegen durch Talesengen
Wie Stürme, die zwischen Bergen sich drängen,
Wie der fallende Stern;
Nun sind sie ein schwärzlicher Punkt noch zu
sehen,
Bis sie wie Schaum auf der Welle zergehen
An dem Horizont fern.

Sie flieh'n; in die unermesslichen, wilden
Oeden, wo endlos sich Kreise bilden
Immer neu, immer mehr;
Ihr Ritt ist ein Flug, und die Türm' und Städte
Und Bäume und riesiger Berge Kette
Tanzen wild um sie her.

Und wenn der Gebund'ne im Krampf sich rühret,
Dann sprengt das Ross wie vom Sturm entführet,
Immer jäher erschreckt,
In die Wildniss, die kahlen, unwohnlichen Steppen,
Wo das Land mit faltigen Sandeschleppen
Wie ein Mantel sich streckt.

MAZEPPA.
POÈME SYMPHONIQUE No. 6 DE F. LISZT.
Away! — Away! —
Byron, Mazeppa.
En avant! En avant!

I.

Ainsi, quand Mazeppa, qui rugit et qui pleure,
A vu ses bras, ses pieds, ses flancs qu'un sabre
effleure,
Tous ses membres liés
Sur un fougueux cheval, nourri d'herbes marines
Qui fume, et fait jaillir le feu de ses narines
Et le feu de ses pieds;

Quand il s'est dans ses nœuds roulé comme un
reptile,
Qu'il a bien réjoui de sa rage inutile
Ses bourreaux tout joyeux,
Et qu'il retombe enfin sur la croupe farouche,
La sueur sur le front, l'écume dans la bouche,
Et du sang dans les yeux:

Un cri part, et soudain voilà que dans la plaine
Et l'homme et le cheval, emportés, hors d'haleine,
Sur les sables mouvants,
Seuls, emplissant de bruit un tourbillon de poudre
Pareil au noir nuage où serpente la foudre,
Volant avec les vents!

Ils vont. Dans les vallons comme un orage ils
passent,
Comme ces ouragans qui dans les mouts s'en-
tassent,
Comme un globe de feu;
Puis déjà ne sont plus qu'un point noir dans
la brume.
Puis s'effacent dans l'air comme un flocon d'écume
Au vaste océan bleu.

Ils vont. L'espace est grand. Dans le désert
immense,
Dans l'horizon sans fin qui toujours recommence.
Ils se plongent tous deux.
Leur course comme un vol les emporte, et
grands chênes,
Villes et tours, monts noirs liés en longues chaînes,
Tout chancelle autour d'eux.

Et si l'infortuné, dont la tête se brise,
Se débat, le cheval, qui devance la brise,
D'un bond plus effrayé
S'enfonce au désert vaste, aride, infranchissable,
Qui devant eux s'étend, avec ses plis de sable
Comme un manteau rayé.

MAZEPPA.
SYMPHONIC POEM No. 6 BY F. LISZT.
Away! — Away! —
Byron, Mazeppa.

I.

Behold this Mazeppa, o'empowered by minions,
Writhe vainly beneath the implacable pinions
His limbs that surround.
To a fiery steed from the Asian mosses
That, chafing and fuming, its mane wildly tosses,
The victim is bound.

He turns in the toils like a serpent in madness,
And when his tormentors have feasted in gladness
Upon his despair,
When bound to his sinister saddle, poor creature,
With brow dropping sweat and with foam on
each feature
His eyes redly glare:

A shout — and the unwilling centaur is hieing,
The flight of the steeds of Apollo outvicing,
O'er mountain and plain;
The sand cloud behind him e'er deep'ning and
height'ning,
The track of a storm pierced by flashes of lightning;
A mad hurricane.

They fly. Helter-skelter they rush through the
valley,
Like tempests that out of rock fastnesses sally,
Or levin's dread flash;
Then faded in mist to a speck without motion,
Then melted away like the froth of the ocean
That wild breakers dash.

They fly. Empty space is behind and before them;
The boundless horizon, the sky arching o'er them,
They plunge ever through:
Their feet are like wings. See the forest, the
fountain,
The village, the castle, the long chain of
mountain
All reel on the view!

And if the poor wretch in unconscious convulsion
But struggle, the horse with a fiercer impulsion
Outstripping the blast,
Dashes into a desert vast, trackless, and arid,
Extending before them, a sand plain unvaried,
Earth's mantle so vast.

²⁸ Hugo's poem "Genius" uses strong Promethean imagery: "Pangs for each triumph; and, still unforgiven,/Suffer Prometheus' doom, who ravished fire from Heaven./Still though his destiny on earth may be/Grief and injustice; who would not endure/With joyful calm, each proffered agony;/Could he the prize of Genius thus ensure?" (lines 8-14).

²⁹ Mainardi, "Mazeppa," 345.

Rings Alles in düstren Farben brennet,
Es rennt der Wald, die Wolke rennet
Ihm vorbei, und der Turm
Und der Berg in röthliches Licht sich tauchend,
Und hinter ihm Rosse, die schnaubend und rauchend
Galoppieren im Sturm.

Und hoch der abendlich strahlende Bogen,
Der Ozean, der aus den Wolkenwogen
Neue Wolken entrollt!
Die Sonne, eh' ihm die Sinne vergehen,
Sieht er, ein marmornes Rad, sich drehen,
Mit Geädel von Gold.

Dann dunkelt sein Blick, sein Haupthaar hängt
Hernieder straff, sein Blut besprenget
Das Gestrüpp und den Sand,
Ihm schwillt der Leib im umwindenden Strange,
Der ihn, wie gierig ihr Opfer die Schlange
Immer enger umwand.

Und rasender immer tobt und schiesset
Das Ross dahin, dem Blut entfließet
Aus zerrissenem Fleisch;
Und weh! schon mengt in der Rosse Trablen,
Das dampf dahinbraust, ein Zug von Raben
Sein unheimlich Gekreisch'.

Es kommen die Raben, und hoch in Lüften
Der Aar, verscheuchet von Modergrüften,
Es vermehren den Schwarm
Die Eulen, der Geier, der mästend auf Leichen
Taucht mit dem Hals in modernde Weichen
Wie mit nackendem Arm.

Ihr Nest verlassend im nächt'gen Fluge
Gesellen sie sich dem Leichenzuge,
Der die Lüfte durchschnellt;
Mazeppa, sinnlos, hört nicht ihr Toben,
Er starrt nach dem riesigen Fächer nur oben,
Wessen Hand ihn wohl hält?

Sternlos die Nacht! die geflügelte Meute
Folgt gierig, rastlos, der sicheren Beute,
Bis sie fiel und erlag;
Er sieht nur ein wirbelndes, düstres Gewirre,
Und hört wie im Traum nur im dumpfen Ge-
schwirre
Ihrer Fittiche Schlag.

Und nach dem rasenden Ritt dreier Tage,
Der sie durch Wüsten, Steppen und Hage
Ueber Eisbrücken trug,
Hinstürzt das Ross bei der Vögel Rufe,
Es löschen die Blitze, die mit dem Hufe
Aus den Steinen es schlug.

Tout vacille et se peint de couleurs inconnues,
Il voit courir les bois, courir les larges nues,
Le vieux donjon détruit,
Les monts dont un rayon baigne les intervalles;
Il voit; et des troupeaux de fumantes cavales
Le suivent à grand bruit!

Et le ciel, où déjà les pas du soir s'allongent,
Avec ses océans de nuages où plongent
Des nuages encor,
Et son soleil qui fend leurs vagues de sa proue,
Sur son front ébloui tourne comme une roue
De marbre aux veines d'or!

Son œil s'égaré et luit, sa chevelure traîne,
Sa tête pend; son sang rougit la jaune arène,
Les buissons épineux:
Sur ses membres gonflés la corde se replie,
Et comme un long serpent resserre et multiplie
Sa morsure et ses nœuds.

Le cheval, qui ne sent ni le mors ni la selle,
Toujours fuit, et toujours son sang coule et
raisselle,
Sa chair tombe en lambeaux;
Hélas! voici déjà qu'aux cavales ardentes
Qui le suivaient, dressant leurs crinières pendantes
Succèdent les corbeaux!

Les corbeaux, le grand-duc à l'œil rond qui
s'effraie,
L'aigle effaré des champs de bataille, et l'orfraie
Monstre au jour inconnu,
Les obliques hiboux, et le grand vautour fauve
Qui fouille au flanc des morts où son col rouge
et chauve
Plonge comme un bras nu!

Tous viennent élargir la funèbre volée!
Tous quittent pour le suivre et l'yeuse isolée,
Et les nids du manoir.
Lui, sanglant, éperdu, sourd à leurs cris de joie,
Demande en les voyant qui donc là-haut déploie
Ce grand éventail noir.

La nuit descend lugubre, et sans robe étoilée.
L'essaim s'acharne, et suit, tel qu'une meute ailée,
Le voyageur fumant.
Entre le ciel et lui, comme un tourbillon sombre,
Il les voit, puis les perd, et les entend dans l'ombre
Voler confusément.

Enfin, après trois jours d'une course insensée,
Après avoir franchi fleuves à l'eau glacée,
Steppes, forêts, déserts,
Le cheval tombe aux cris de mille oiseaux de
proie,
Et son ongle de fer sur la pierre qu'il broie
Eteint ses quatre éclairs.

Strange colours the wavering landscape is wearing;
The forest, the cloud-castles, madly go tearing,
And whirl on their base.

The peaks where the sunbeam a passage just forces
He sees; the next moment a herd of wild horses
Gives noisily chase.

O the sky, where night's footsteps already are
nearing!

Its oceans of cloud with yet more clouds appearing
To melt in their hold;

The sun with its sharp prow dividing those billows
Which turn at its glorious touch into pillows
Of satin and gold.

His eye gleams and flickers, his matted locks wander,
His head sinks: what splashes of blood are
those yonder

On bramble and stone?
The cords on his swollen limbs biting yet deeper,
And like a lithe serpent or venomous creeper
Contracting their zone.

The horse, neither bridle nor bit on him feeling,
Flies ever; red drops o'er the victim are stealing;
His whole body bleeds.

Alas! to the wild horses foaming and champing,
That followed with manes erect, neighing and
stamping,

A crow-flight succeeds.
The raven, the horn'd owl with eyes round and
hollow,

The osprey and eagle from battle-field follow,
Though daylight alarm.

The carrion crow and the vulture so bloody,
Which plunges 'mid corpses its neck bare and
ruddy,
Just like a bare arm.

All hasten to swell the procession so dreary,
And many a league from the holm or the eyrie
They follow this man.

Mazeppa, scarce hearing what sound the air sunders,
Looks up; who can that be unfolding, he wonders,
A mighty black fan?

The gloomy night falls with no stars penetrating;
More keen is the chase in impatience awaiting
Until his breath quit;

As a strange and mysterious whirlwind he fears
them,
They flash and are gone, then in darkness he
hears them

Confusedly flit.

Then after three days of this course wild and
frantic,

Through rivers of ice, plains and forests gigantic,
The horse sinks and dies;

His limbs quiver faintly, his struggles are over,
And once more the birds of prey circle and hover
Where low the prince lies.

Da liegt er niedergeschmettert und glühet
Vom Blute röter, als Ahorn blühet
Wenn der Lenz ihn belaubt;
Der Vögel Wolke kreiset, die graue,
Begierig harret manch' scharfe Klaue
Zu zerfleischen sein Haupt.

Und doch! der sich windet im Staub und ächzet,
Der lebende Leichnam von Raben umkrächzet,
Wird ein Herrscher, ein Held!
Als Herr der Ukraine einst wird er streiten,
Und reichliche Mahlzeit den Geiern bereiten
Auf dem blutigen Feld.

Ihm blühet Grösse aus Qual und Leiden,
Der Mantel der Hetmans wird ihn umkleiden,
Dass ihm Alles sich neigt;
Der Zelte Volk wird sich huldigend scharen
Um seinen Thron, ihn begrüßen Fanfaren,
Wenn er herrlich sich zeigt.

II.

So, wenn ein Sterblicher, den Gott empfunden
Tief in der Brust, und fühlet sich gebunden
An den Geist, der ihn trägt.
O Genius, feurig Ross! umsonst sein Ringen,
Des Lebens Schranken wirst du überspringen,
Die dein Huftritt zerschlägt.

Du führst durch Wüsten ihn, auf eis'ge Gipfel,
Durch Meeresflut und über moos'ge Wipfel
Zu den Wolken empor,
Und Nachtgestalten, die du aufgescheuchet,
Umdrängen ihn, es krächzt um ihn und keuchet,
Der gespenstische Chor.

Du lässtest ihn auf deinen Feuerschwingen
Die Körperwelt, die Geisterwelt durchdringen,
An dem ewigen Strom
Tränkest du ihn, und wo Kometen streifen,
Lässt du sein Haupthaar unter Sternen schweifen
Hoch am himmlischen Dom.

Die Monde Herschels und mit seinen Ringen
Saturn, den Pol, um dessen Stirn sich schlingen
Diademe von Licht,
Er sieht sie all', auf schrankenlosem Gleise
Erweiterst unaufhörlich du die Kreise
Seinem geistigen Gesicht.

Nur Engel und Dämonen mögen ahnen,
Welch' Leiden ihn auf nie betretenen Bahnen

Voilà l'infortuné, gisant, nu, misérable,
Tout tacheté de sang, plus rouge que l'érable
Dans la saison des fleurs.
Le nuage d'oiseaux sur lui tourne et s'arrête;
Maint bec ardent aspire à ronger dans sa tête
Ses yeux brûlés de pleurs!

Eh bien! ce condamné qui hurle et qui se traîne,
Ce cadavre vivant, les tribus de l'Ukraine
Le feront prince un jour.
Un jour, semant les champs de morts sans
séputures,
Il dédommagera par de larges pâtures
L'orfraie et le vautour.

Sa sauvage grandeur naîtra de son supplice.
Un jour, des vieux hetmans il ceindra la pelisse,
Grand à l'œil ébloui;
Et quand il passera, ces peuples de la tente,
Prosternés, enverront la fanfare éclatante
Bondir autour de lui!

II.

Ainsi, lorsqu'un mortel, sur qui son dieu s'étale,
S'est vu lié vivant sur ta croupe fatale,
Génie, ardent coursier,
En vain il lutte, hélas! tu bondis, tu l'emportes
Hors du monde réel dont tu brises les portes
Avec tes pieds d'acier!

Tu franchis avec lui déserts, cimes chenues
Des vieux monts, et les mers, et, par delà les nues,
De sombres régions;
Et mille impurs esprits que ta course réveille
Autour du voyageur, insolente merveille,
Pressent leurs légions!

Il traverse d'un vol, sur tes ailes de flamme,
Tous les champs du possible, et les mondes de
l'âme;
Boit au fleuve éternel;
Dans la nuit orangée ou la nuit étoilée,
Sa chevelure, aux cris des comètes mêlée,
Flamboie au front du ciel.

Les six lunes d'Herschel, l'anneau du vieux
Saturne,
Le pôle, arrondissant une aurore nocturne
Sur son front boréal.
Il voit tout; et pour lui ton vol, que rien ne
lasse,
De ce monde sans borne à chaque instant déplace
L'horizon idéal.

Qui peut savoir, hormis les démons et les anges,
Ce qu'il souffre, à te suivre et quels éclairs
étranges

Behold him there naked, blood-stained and
despairing,
All red, like the foliage of autumn preparing
To wither and fall.
The birds hanging o'er him now soaring like rockets,
Now dropping again to tear out of their sockets
Each tear-smarting ball.

Yet mark! That poor sufferer, gasping and
moaning,
To-morrow the Cossacks of Ukraine atoning,
Will hail as their king;
And soon in his might, o'er the battle-tide rolling,
His thousands he'll sway, and a harvest consoling
To vultures will fling.

No more in obscurity destined to languish,
The rule of a kingdom will solace his anguish
A crown on his brow:
To royal Mazeppa the hordes Asiatic
Will shout their devotion in fervour ecstatic,
And low to earth bow.

II.

So when a poor mortal whose brains the gods addle
O Pegasus! finds himself bound to thy saddle,
His fate is as meet.
Away from the world — from all real existence,
Thou bearest him upward, despite his resistance,
On metrical feet!

Thou tak'st him o'er deserts, o'er mountains in
legions,
Grey-hoary, thro' oceans and into the regions
Right up in the clouds;
A thousand base spirits his progress unshaken
Arouses, press round him and stare as they waken,
In insolent crowds.

He traverses, soaring on fiery pinions,
All fields of creation, all spirit dominions
And drains Heaven dry:
Thro' darkness and storm, or 'mid stars brightly
gleaming,
See Pegasus' tail like a comet is streaming
Across the whole sky.

The six moons of Herschel, the ringed horizon
Of Saturn, the pole whose white forehead bedizen
The weird Northern lights,
All views he: for him in this flight never ending
The infinite bounds of his vision extending,
Yield fresh Pisgah sights.

Who can know, save the angels amid whom he
dashes,
What anguish he suffers and what mystic flashes

<p>Ueberwältigen mag, Wenn Flammen er in tiefster Seele spüret, Und ach! des Nachts, wenn ihm die Stirn be- rühret Feuchter Fittiche Schlag.</p> <p>Er stöhnt entsetzt — du reissst unaufhaltsam Den Schreckensbleichen fort im Flug gewaltsam, Dass er zittert und bebt, Bei jedem Schritt scheint er dem Tod zum Raube, Bis er sich neigt und stürzt, und aus dem Staube Sich ein König erhebt.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">V. Hugo. (Übers. v. P. Cornelius.)</p>	<p>A ses yeux reluiront, Comme il sera brûlé d'ardentes étincelles, Hélas! et dans la nuit combien de froides ailes Viendront battre son front!</p> <p>Il crie épouvanté, tu poursuis implacable. Pâle, épuisé, béant, sous ton vol qui l'accable Il ploie avec effroi; Chaque pas que tu fais semble creuser sa tombe. Enfin le terme arrive . . . il court, il vole, il tombe, Et se relève roi!</p> <p style="text-align: right;">V. Hugo.</p>	<p>Illumine his sight? What fiery darts lend his spirit their fuel, And ah! what nocturnal wings icy and cruel Extinguish the light?</p> <p>He cries out with terror, in agony gasping, Yet ever the neck of his hippogrif clasping, They heavenward spring; Each leap that he takes with fresh woe is attended: He totters — falls lifeless — the struggle is ended — We hail him then king! V. Hugo. (Translated by F. Corder.)</p>
--	---	---

FIGURE 12 HUGO'S "MAZEPPA" IN ORIGINAL FRENCH WITH GERMAN AND ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

Stanzas three to five mark the beginning of the ride. Every subsequent experience Mazeppa faces is connected to chaos, fury, and movement. Suddenly there is a shout—"Un cri part"—and the horse bearing Mazeppa takes off, passing through various landscapes that amplify heroic suffering and suggest the (always) imminent threat of death. They go ("Ils vont"). Speed and movement are likened to flying: "leur course comme un vol les emporte" ["their stride like a flight takes them."] ³⁰ This is an apt metaphor for the quick succession of landscapes the hero and horse pass through—mountains, deserts, cities, etc. Yet pinions as an evocation of flight and freedom do not find their representation in this moment. This tension portrays the suffering of Mazeppa and fury of the horse. Hugo amplifies this with a succession of similes that compare the ride to sublime natural phenomena.

Ils vont. Dans les vallons comme un orage ils passent,
Comme ces ouragans qui dans les monts s'entassent,
Comme un globe de feu;
Puis déjà ne song plus qu'un point noir dans la brume,
Puis s'effacent dans l'air comme un flacon d'écume
Au vaste ocean bleu.

Ils vont. L'espace est grand. Dans le desert immense,
Dans l'horizon sans fins qui toujours recommence,
Ils se plangent tous deux.
Leur course comme un vol les emporte, et grands chênes,

³⁰ Hugo, "Mazeppa," 329. Translation mine.

Villes et tours, monts noir liés en longues chaînes,
 Tout chancelle autor d'eux.

[They fly. In the valleys like a storm they pass,
 Like these hurricanes that pile up in the mountains,
 Like a globe of fire;
 Then already think only of a black spot in the mist,
 Then fade into the air like a bottle of foam
 In the vast blue ocean.

They go. The space is large. In the immense desert,
 In the endless horizon that always starts again,
 They both complain.
 Their race like a flight takes them, and big oaks,
 Cities and towers, black mountains linked in long chains,
 Everything is wavering from them].³¹

Storms become hurricanes, hurricanes become a ball of fire. These lines suddenly shift from the “massive to the minuscule...horse and rider are only a dot in the fog.”³² Hugo continues to reinforce the wildness and vastness of nature and the smallness of the horse and rider within it. The horizon is boundless, and the horse is free to roam within it at great speed. The implication of these lines, and the speed and movement they portray, evoke the terror of the open places as a reflection of Mazeppa’s suffering *toward* triumph. He cannot become Hetman if he does not traverse the vastness of space that leads him there.

The third subsection masterfully alternates perspectives between the external world of vision and Mazeppa’s internal suffering. Mazeppa’s vision consists of blurred flashes as he (passively pinned) watches from a stationary position: “Tout vacille et se peint de couleurs inconnues.”

[Everything wavers and is painted with unknown colours].³³ As the speed and movement continue,

³¹ Ibid.

³² Babinski, *The Mazeppa Legend in European Romanticism*, 68.

³³ Hugo, “Mazeppa,” 330.

Mazeppa's visions turn inward. His "tête se brise" [head is broken].³⁴ This suggests that as Mazeppa passes through landscapes, he suffers from hallucinations and lapses in and out of consciousness. What is real? What becomes an internal vision brought on by speed, movement, pain, and terror? At the end of the subsection, the pain of the dash, already extended into the night of the first day, starts to tighten its grip: "Et comme un long serpent resserre et multiplie/Sa morsure et ses nœuds." [And like a long serpent binds and multiplies/It bites and tangles].³⁵ The implication is that inspiration becomes increasingly painful the longer it pinions the hero to its unyielding demands.

Stanzas 10-13 return more explicitly to a description of the ride, signaled by a focus on the horse. As the steed continues his furious gallop, hero and horse are accompanied by an array of wildlife. Wild horses arrive to quicken the pace. Various birds of prey, ravens, horned-owls, crows, and eagles torment the pair. Eventually vultures, as a symbol of death, appear to signal the end:

Tous viennent élargir la funèbre volée!
Tous quittent pour le suivre et l'yeuse isolée,
Et les nids du manoir.

[All come to add to this stolen funeral!
Everyone leaves to follow the isolated eye
And the nests of the manor.]³⁶

The reference to "funèbre volée" is significant. Death-in-life is a constant theme in the Mazeppa legend because the hero is perpetually on the verge of his demise. But the theme takes on new meaning with the trope of the monumental hero's funereal flight. The famous heroes of legend reached their final resting place with pomp and circumstance, surrounded by adoration. Their colossal lives are monumentalized in death by cultural traditions associated with valour and bravery. Mazeppa's funeral procession, on the other hand, is accompanied by a wild, uncontrollable horse and

³⁴ Ibid., 329.

³⁵ Ibid., 331. English translation is mine.

³⁶ Ibid., 332. English translation is mine.

carrion birds. No crowds mourn his brave soul. His monumental death is experienced alone, stolen. His heroism is nevertheless unquestionable. Mazeppa's funeral procession is a necessary component of his heroic journey to sublime transcendence. Death-in-life leads to a life beyond.

The final subsection begins with the death of the horse after three wild and frantic days. The event is violent. He crashes upon a rock, splitting it with the force of his monumental weight, while birds circle and cry above the now-dead horse and the nearly dead Mazeppa.

Enfin, après trois jours d'une course insensée,
Après avoir franchi fleuves à l'eau glacée,
Steppes, forêts, déserts,
Le cheval tombe au cris de mille oiseaux de proie...

[Finally, after three days of a mad course,
After crossing rivers with icy water,
Steppes, forests, deserts,
The horse falls at the cry of a thousand birds of prey].³⁷

As Mazeppa lies on the ground, still pinned to the dead horse, his naked and bloody body attracts more birds, waiting to tear out his eyes. The situation is dire, but not hopeless (inspiration, though painful, does evoke greatness). Suddenly, the narrator shifts from Mazeppa's current suffering to his future triumph: "Eh bien! Ce condamné qui hurle et qui se traîne,/Ce cadaver vivant, les tribus de l'Ukraine/Le feront prince un jour." [Yet! That poor sufferer, gasping and moaning,/This living corpse, the tribes of the Ukraine/will one day hail as prince].³⁸ Mazeppa's suffering, therefore, transforms into a "sauvage" triumph. While his destiny is to become Hetman, he must first pass through the painful process of *becoming* that leader. Greatness is achieved only through the cry of inspiration that leaves the hero—the "living corpse"—on the brink of death.

³⁷ Ibid., 333.

³⁸ Ibid., 334.

The first section of “Mazeppa” favours detail. If I take the narrative at face value, it consists of a series of descriptions, events, and experiences Mazeppa faces on his journey. While the first section introduces the hero and horse, the landscape, and Mazeppa’s inner turmoil, its value lies in introducing the narrative. The symbolic representation of Mazeppa and the horse appears in section II, where Hugo “explicitly makes the horse and rider symbolic by abstracting an analogue for art and the artist.”³⁹ Section II is ambiguous, a perfect metaphor for the exploration of masculine heroic suffering and creative genius—inexplicable and sublime. Hugo reformulates the ride narrative to evoke a supernatural perspective where Mazeppa “dwells upon the sense of suffering.”⁴⁰ Bound to Pegasus, the hero “traverse d’un vol, sur tes ailes de flame,/Tous les champs du possible, et les mondes de l’âme;/Boit au fleuve éternel.” [Traverses soaring on fiery pinions,/All possible fields and the worlds of the soul/Drinks from the eternal river].⁴¹ As Mazeppa flies upon the fiery pinions of freedom and flight (always, away), inspiration transforms to the (optimistic) act of creation.

The first stanza introduces the idea that genius, manifest as an ardent charger with an unwanted burden, wild and unpredictable, carries the artist beyond “common” human experiences. This makes the creative artist heroic. Yet, Hugo implies that the artist, bound to the spirit of genius, is not without its detractors:

Et mille impurs esprits que ta course réveille
Autour du voyageur, insolente merveille,
Pressent leurs légions!

[A thousand impure spirits that your race awakens
Around the traveller, insolent wonder,
Press their legions!]⁴²

³⁹ Babinski, *The Mazeppa Legend in European Romanticism*, 71.

⁴⁰ Albert Brussee, “Franz Liszt’s Mazeppa Sketch in His Sketchbook N6,” *Studia Musicologica* 55, no. 1/2 (June 2014): 30.

⁴¹ Hugo, “Mazeppa,” 336. English translation is mine.

⁴² Ibid.

The insolent spirits imply that society in general neither understands nor appreciates the creative artist. Misunderstanding is a common theme in the discourse of genius (and Liszt), but it is also a symbolic portrayal of what it means to be a genius—and heroic—in Romantic art and literature. Hugo's representation of the artist-genius continues. In a symbolic twist, the flight of genius takes the artist beyond the world capable of common experience to the boundless horizon of the ideal. This correlates to the first section that describes the passing landscape. However, in the world of the ideal, Mazeppa does not pass through plains, mountains, and forests. Rather, genius takes him to the moons of Herschel, the rings of Saturn, and past the northern lights in an infinite journey of pain and suffering. These are all images that evoke the unknown. The artist has no recourse but to follow, and in the final stanza, the purpose and result of the heroic journey is revealed:

Il crie épouvanté, tu poursuis implacable.
 Pâle, épuisé, béant, sous ton vol qui l'accable
 Il ploie avec effroi;
 Chaque pas que tu fais semble creuser sa tombe.
 Enfin le terme arrive...il court, il vole, il tombe,
 Et se relève roi!

[He cries in terror, you pursue unrelentingly.
 Pale, exhausted, yawning, under your flight which overwhelms him
 He bends in fear;
 Every step you take seems to dig his grave.
 Finally the end comes...he runs, he flies, he falls,
 And rises king!]⁴³

These final lines encapsulate the symbolic meaning of the entire poem, and it is here that the full ramifications of the Mazeppa-artist's suffering ordeal are revealed. The pattern of victory after struggle is so common that an interpreter may see in this heavenly ride the heroic mirror image of the wild, suffering ride. The cry of the opening that spurs the horse into action is mirrored in the

⁴³ Ibid., 337. English translation mine.

final lines as the cry of the genius. But Hugo stresses Mazeppa's "terror" in the closing lines and concludes with repeating the death-resurrection-coronation pattern that closed the first section. Genius brings the artist to unspeakable pain; and there is no way to stop the flow of such inspiration while in its embrace (always, away). The artist must suffer, must endure because while tortured and alienated, the Romantic artist-hero is charged with saving society. Whether society accepts the artist's purpose is another story.

Mazeppa's characterization in the second section extends the trope of the suffering Romantic hero to render the relationship between rider and horse as a symbol of the artist's struggle with inspiration and genius. Mazeppa's passivity, and the holy labour of creative genius, become an emblem of the suffering artist "bound to the saddle of genius."⁴⁴ Mazeppa not only symbolizes the doubleness of suffering and redemption; passivity and activity; vulnerability and power, but also the heroism of creative genius writ large across French Romanticism.

5.4 (Always, Away): Liszt's *Mazeppa* and Masculine Heroic Genius

One of the complaints musicologists articulate about Liszt's *Mazeppa* is that musical topics and gestures evoke mere effect. Kregor indicates that although "*Mazeppa*'s virtuosity makes for a thrilling presentation... it comes up short as a musical response to the philosophical implications of Hugo's poem."⁴⁵ One aspect that accounts for this virtuosity is the triplet that is meant to portray the constant motion of the galloping horse. I understand how this gesture might be analyzed as a shallow indication of the most obvious aspect of Mazeppa's ride. But if that is case, is it correct to describe the similar galloping motion in Schubert's *Erkönig* as mere effect? I argue to the contrary. I suggest

⁴⁴ Ksenya Kiebusinski, "The (Re)Fashioning of an Archetype of Genius: Ivan Mazepa in Nineteenth-Century French Art and Literature," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 31, no. 1/4 (2009-2010): 640.

⁴⁵ Jonathan Kregor, *Program Music*, Cambridge Introductions to Music (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 119. Kregor's analysis of *Mazeppa* is an excellent portrayal of Liszt's compositional process that takes the themes and gestures, particularly the triplet gesture, from the *Étude* to the symphonic poem.

Liszt's musical topics and archetypes, like Schubert's, mean something beyond their perceived tone-painting. The galloping horse in *Erkönig*, for instance, represents not only the horse, but also the driving, anxious energy of the father as he attempts to carry his gravely ill son to safety. The horse in *Mazeppa* also represents ideas beyond its horse effect. Pain, suffering, inspiration, genius, all find their meaning in the horse's gallop. My analysis examines the relationships between musical gestures, themes, and form as the means to evoke Mazeppa's expression of heroic masculinity within the concept of struggling over genius. Tone-painting can extend beyond effect if the interpreter considers the meanings associated with the subjects. Liszt tells more than a narrative of a wild ride.

Liszt's *Mazeppa* begins with a sudden shout ("Un cri part...")⁴⁶ on an embellished C#^{o7} chord (example 9).⁴⁷ This short *fortissimo* gesture is a catalyst for motion (away, away). However, there is no musical context to suggest the cause or purpose of this movement; therefore, the motivic gesture portrays a scene *in medias res*. The effect Liszt creates is the moment in which the wild ride is initiated. As in Hugo's poem, the auditory "cry" gesture represents the painful spur that urges creative action. The accompanying "horse" motive (example 10) is therefore a manifestation of the violence, movement, and speed of inspiration.⁴⁸ In a letter to George Sand, Liszt elaborates his view of inspiration:

[t]here he hears eternal, harmonious music whose cadence regulated the universe, and all the voices of creation are united for him in a marvelous concert. A burning fever then seizes him, his blood courses impetuously through his veins, filling his brain with a thousand compelling concepts from which there is no escape except by the *holy labour* of art.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Hugo, "Mazeppa," 328.

⁴⁷ Franz Liszt, *Mazeppa*, ed. Franz Liszt-Stiftung, Franz Liszt: Musikalische Werke, Serie I, Band 3 (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1909).

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Franz Liszt, letter to George Sand, April 30, 1837, in *An Artist's Journey: Letters d'un bachelier ès musique, 1835-1841*, ed. and trans. Charles Suttoni (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 28-29. Emphasis mine.

Painful inspiration is expressed symbolically in the erratic pace of the horse and the suffering rider being carried along. The artist's shout articulates the painful process of creation, while the horse represents the genius artists strive for. Throughout *Mazeppa*, the gesture of inspiration/genius, represented in the cry motive, is reiterated and serves as an embellishment to the main theme. This musically links the symbolism of inspiration to the suffering hero. The spirit of inspiration is ethereal, constant, and unavoidable.

Allegro agitato.

The image shows a page of a musical score for the 'Cry Motive' from Liszt's 'Mazeppa'. The tempo is marked 'Allegro agitato.' The score is for a full orchestra and includes the following parts and their first measures:

- 1 Kleine Flöte.** (Piccolo)
- 2 Grosse Flöten.** (Flutes)
- 2 Hoboen.** (Oboes)
- 1 Englisch Horn.** (English Horn)
- 1 Clarinette in D.** (Clarinets in D)
- 1 Clarinette in A.** (Clarinets in A)
- 1 Bassclarinette in C.** (Bass Clarinet in C)
- 3 Fagotte.** (Bassoons)
- 2 Hörner in F.** (Horns in F)
- 2 Hörner in F.** (Horns in F)
- 2 Trompeten in D.** (Trumpets in D)
- 1 Trompete in E.** (Trumpet in E)
- 2 Tenorposaunen.** (Tenor Trombones)
- Bassposaune u. Tuba.** (Bass Trombone and Tuba)
- Pauken in D.A.** (Drums in D and A)

The first measure of the score shows a complex rhythmic pattern with many rests, characteristic of the 'erratic pace' mentioned in the text. The dynamic marking *ff* (fortissimo) is present in several parts.

EXAMPLE 9 *MAZEPPA*, CRY MOTIVE, M. 1

The horse motive is essential to the underlying structure of the Ride. Liszt represents the horse's movement with agitated motivic and rhythmic figures. These gestures appear irregular, unpredictable, and express the erratic behavior of an unbridled horse with an unwanted burden.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Liszt represents the horse's movement with triplet figures to express the unceasing behaviour of a horse with an unwanted burden. The triplet gesture as a representation of a horse is also similar to Schubert's depiction in his lied, *Erlkönig*, albeit far more stable.

The first painful shout of inspiration (cry motive) leads to a headlong gallop. This active and external representation suggests the horse's "implacable sense of wanting to return to the land of his origin."⁵¹ Throughout the introduction of the Ride, Liszt alters the triplet figure to create rhythmic variety. There is no obvious pattern or succession. The only constant referents in the horse motive are their rhythmic persistence (triplets and sixteenth notes) and its consistent instrumentation in the strings.

Erste Violinen.

Zweite Violinen.

Bratschen.

Violoncelle.

Contrabässe.

Allegro agitato.

EXAMPLE 10 MAZEPPA "HORSE" MOTIVE, MM. 1-2

The cry, horse, and trombone motives dominate the symphonic poem. However, a third motive appears in the introduction that is no less important for creating the scene of Mazeppa's flight—an affective expression of heroic agitation. This is the "suffering" motive, and it consists of a musical line that either ascends or descends by step (diatonic or chromatic) depending on the level of internal anxiety (see example 11).⁵² This melodic line is undergirded by an unstable harmonic progression that briefly moves from the dominant (V) to the supertonic (ii) in D minor. Example 11 shows all three motives within the first five measures of the symphonic poem. The stepwise "suffering" gesture (found in the woodwinds, mm. 4-5) in this example is ascending. Later in the introduction, the line inverts and descends by chromatic step (see m. 20).

⁵¹ Babinksi, *The Mazepka Legend in European Romanticism*, 33-34.

⁵² Franz Liszt, *Mazeppa* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, n.d [1880s]).

The image displays a musical score for Liszt's *Mazepa*. It is divided into three systems. The first system is labeled 'Allegro agitato.' and 'non legato'. It features a treble and bass clef with a key signature of one flat and a time signature of 2/4. The first system includes dynamic markings such as *ff* and *p*. The second system is also labeled 'Allegro agitato.' and includes a *ff* marking. The third system shows a more complex melodic line in the treble clef with various ornaments and a *ff* marking in the bass clef.

EXAMPLE 11 *MAZEPPA*, CRY MOTIVE, HORSE MOTIVE, AND SUFFERING MOTIVE, MM. 1-5,

The rider in Liszt's *Mazepa* does not dominate his horse, but rather bends to its will. In contrast to familiar images of the horse and rider, the power associated with the image of Mazepa bound to an erratic, wild horse becomes clearer. As discussed in chapter four, the image of the military hero mounted upon his steed is a long-standing cultural trope, and Jacques-Louis David's iconic painting, *Napoleon Crossing the Saint Bernhard Pass*, illustrates this heroic archetype. Both Hugo and Liszt, however, present a hero in contrast to David's representation of Napoleon. Mazepa does not conquer, but is captured. His tormentors strip him of agency and leave him in a state of passivity. Mazepa's symbiotic relationship with the horse conveys mutual suffering generated by the horse's energy and desire to return to his home. The tension, however, is that neither horse nor rider would be free of their captors unless they leave bound to each other—always away, always pinioned. This union emphasizes Mazepa's heroic suffering masculinity, in which he passively relies on the wild and persistent whims and genius of the horse.

Liszt conveys the shared energy of the horse and rider in the first brash and defiant statement of the Mazeppa theme, heard in the low brass. Structurally, the theme contains four main components: an antecedent, continuation, cadential extension, and transition.⁵³ Taken together, they create a 36-measure musical paragraph. Over the course of the Ride, the Mazeppa theme transforms, fragments, and shifts to evoke various facets of Mazeppa’s heroic character—imperious and defiant; sorrowful and introspective—and comments on Mazeppa’s interaction with both external and internal forces. Table 2 outlines the interaction of motivic gestures, the main theme, the form, and the harmony of the Ride. Lawrence Kramer describes the musical signification of the theme as an extension beyond Mazeppa’s experience of the forces around him to his placement within his surroundings: “the motto’s combination of long notes with lurching rhythm and wide melodic leaps suggests, but never quite activates, the signification of Mazeppa’s captive body.”⁵⁴ This interaction creates a wide range of perspectives and emotions, as if the listener hears, to quote Gabriele Poole, “multiple images of the hero riding in opposite directions.”⁵⁵

	Introduction	Exposition		Quasi-Development	Quasi-Recapitulation	Coda/Transition
		<i>Primary Thematic Group</i>	<i>Secondary Thematic Group (lament)</i>	<i>[Fragmented Mazeppa theme]</i>	<i>Primary Thematic Group</i>	<i>“Death Passage”</i>
	measures 1-35 a) cry motive b) horse motive c) suffering motive	a) measures 36-68 (Mazeppa theme*) -cry motive -horse motive -anxiety motive b) measures 69-107 (transformation 1)	a) measures 122-71 (transformation 2) -sigh gesture b) measures 184-215 (transformation 3)	measures 216-231	a) measures 232-262 (transformation 4*) b) measures 263-332 (transformation 5) c) measures 333-382 (transformation 6)	measures 383-435 -suffering motive -falling gesture -fragmented Mazeppa theme -leap gesture
Key	Unstable	a) D minor b) D minor *Initial statement of the Mazeppa theme	a) B \flat minor b) B minor	Unstable	a) D minor b) D minor c) D minor *Unvaried statement of the Mazeppa theme	Unstable

TABLE 2 BREAKDOWN OF THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE MAZEPPA THEME AND THE KEY AREAS OF THE RIDE

⁵³ My interpretation of the Mazeppa theme derives from Carl Dahlhaus, *Analysis and Value Judgement*, trans. Siegmund Levarie (New York: Pendragon Press, 1983), 76.

⁵⁴ Lawrence Kramer, “The Musical Signifier,” in *The Routledge Handbook of Music Signification*, ed. Esti Sheinberg and William P. Dougherty (London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2020), 62.

⁵⁵ Gabrielle Poole, “The Language of Freedom and the Reality of Power,” in *Liberty and Poetic License: New Essays on Byron*, ed. Bernard Beatty, Tony Howe and Charles E. Robinson (Liverpool: University of Liverpool Press, 2008), 86.

The constant transformation of the theme, contrasted with its relatively static harmony, is further evidence of the tension in Mazeppa's masculine-heroic expression: an active, changing progression underpinned by being passively bound to an external (uncontrollable) agent. The lower strings, associated with the horse, double the Mazeppa theme to evoke a sense of unity, while the thirty-second notes emphasize the cry motive. The first statement of the Mazeppa theme suggests heroic defiance and draws upon the brass to evoke the heroism associated with military musical tropes. However, Mazeppa's masculinity is not conveyed by his military prowess, or at least not yet. His capture and binding invert this military imagery. Mazeppa's masculinity in this moment is expressed in his heroic suffering, amplified by the low brass and inclusion of the cry motive. But suffering is not always portrayed through tropes of lamentation. Thus, Liszt presents Mazeppa as a paradox, both heroic and not; masculine and powerless. Example 12 exemplifies tension and doubleness in the interaction of the Mazeppa theme (antecedent phrase), horse motive, and cry motive.⁵⁶

⁵⁶ Liszt, *Mazeppa* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, n.d [1880s]).

EXAMPLE 12 *MAZEPPA*, MAZEPPA THEME AND CRY MOTIVE, MM. 36-47

Liszt amplifies the fraught union between hero and horse even further with an internal descending line to amplify the tension. This gesture's consistent presence throughout the Ride, albeit transformed, is an affective expression of anxiety that symbolically binds the hero to the agent of his suffering. Liszt depicts both the horse and anxiety motives as external agents that press upon the boundaries of Mazeppa's subjectivity. With these two musical gestures, along with the Mazeppa theme, Liszt reintroduces the internal, "suffering" chromatic gesture. Rather than an ascending motion, heard in the introduction, this transformation of the suffering motive descends (example 13).⁵⁷

⁵⁷ Franz Liszt, *Mazeppa*, (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1909).

1 Kleine Flöte.
2 Grosse Flöten.
2 Hoboen.
1 Englisches Horn
1 Clarinette in D.
1 Clarinette in A.
1 Bassclarinette in C
3 Fagotte.
2 Hörner in F.
2 Hörner in F.
2 Trompeten in D.
1 Trompete in E.
2 Tenorposaunen.
 Bassposaune u. Tuba

EXAMPLE 13 *MAZEPPA*, MAZEPPA THEME AND SUFFERING MOTIVE (DESCENDING), MM. 45-50

The suffering motive is flexible and is both an affective expression of suffering and transitional material to each new statement of the heroic Mazepa theme. The tension it creates is almost palpable. Along with the chromatic descending line of the suffering motive, tension is created between the syncopated rhythms of Mazepa theme and the horse's triplet motive. These gestures and themes are then amplified by the chain of diminished seventh harmonies. Taken as a whole, the suffering motive metaphorically binds the suffering hero to the agent of his suffering and the source of his genius.

The juxtaposition of Mazepa's heroic expression—his suffering masculinity—is amplified in Liszt's treatment of the secondary thematic group. Its transitional material (m. 108) derives from the suffering motive first presented in the introduction (example 14).⁵⁸ Yet unlike the introduction, tension is created by its slow, sequential treatment in the lower strings and woodwinds over a C# pedal rather than its interaction with the cry and the horse motives. The suffering motive continues to the point of unraveling, when all that is left is a fragmented "sigh" gesture that tapers off as the

⁵⁸ Ibid.

secondary thematic material begins. This transition is the vehicle into Mazeppa's interior suffering. Paradoxically, Mazeppa's internal mental state is where his heroic action occurs. The mind is its own place and therefore capable of transcendence.

1 Kleine Flöte.
 2 Grosse Flöten.
 2 Hoboen.
 1 Englisches Horn
 1 Clarinette in D.
 1 Clarinette in A.
 1 Bassclarinette in C
 3 Fagotte.
 2 Hörner in F.
 2 Hörner in F.
 2 Trompeten in D.
 1 Trompete in E.
 2 Tenorposaunen.
 Bassposaune u. Tuba
 Pauken in D.A.
 Triangel.
 Becken.
 Grosse Trommel.
 Erste Violinen.
 Zweite Violinen.
 Bratschen.
 Violoncelle.
 Contrabässe.

Un poco più mosso, sempre agitato assai.
 Un poco più mosso, sempre agitato assai.
 Un poco più mosso, sempre agitato assai.

EXAMPLE 14 MAZEPPA, TRANSITION TO SECONDARY THEMATIC GROUP, MM. 108-121

The orchestral texture contributes to this shift in perspective. The second violins retain the horse-like triplet figure, but the sparse texture and augmentation of the preceding statement of the Mazeppa theme, suggests an illusion of time slowing down and space—internal space—opening up. The erratic pace of the horse's triplet gesture transforms to more elongated rhythms suggesting internal sorrow and despair. Archetypal heroic action is unattainable for this Romantic hero. Yet, with his propensity to turn inward, action is also undesirable. Walter Reed writes “there seems to be something in these [Romantic] heroes that is incommensurate with any pattern of action, externally perceived” and therefore any “causal pattern of action is something uncongenial to the hero's

identity.”⁵⁹ Mazeppa’s masculine-heroic qualities derive less from his actions, which amount to nothing more than bending to the will of the horse, and more from his internal struggle. The secondary thematic group illustrates an internal and tormented picture of Mazeppa’s suffering, the “unconscious convulsion” [“dont la tête se brise”] and the hidden landscape of his mind.⁶⁰

The rhythm and brash, defiant character of the theme transforms into an augmented, lyrical statement. Because Liszt presents a change in perspective, secondary motives punctuate the musical texture, including a descending chromatic “lamenting” sigh figure (example 15).⁶¹ Liszt indicates in the expressive markings that this transformation should be played *expressivo dolente*, or as expression of sorrow.

The image shows a page of a musical score for a full orchestra. The instruments listed on the left are: 1 Kleine Flöte., 2 Grosse Flöten., 2 Hoboen., 1 Englisches Horn, 1 Clarinette in D., 1 Clarinette in A., 1 Bassclarinette in C., 3 Fagotte., 2 Hörner in F., and 2 Hörner in F. The score consists of ten staves. The music is in a key with two flats and a 3/4 time signature. A specific passage is highlighted with a box, showing a descending chromatic line in the woodwinds, marked with 'pizzicato' and 'gemendo'.

EXAMPLE 15 MAZEPPA, MAZEPPA THEME AND LAMENTING “SIGH” GESTURE, MM. 135-144

This off-the-beat lament gesture amplifies the sorrowful, introspective statement of Mazeppa’s suffering. When it appears, the Mazeppa theme is relegated to the background of the orchestral texture, as if to make the expression of lament simultaneously within and apart from Mazeppa’s character.

⁵⁹ Walter L. Reed, *Meditations on the Hero* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), 17.

⁶⁰ Hugo, “Mazeppa,” 329.

⁶¹ Franz Liszt, *Mazeppa*, (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1909).

Speed and movement are no longer the central focus but rather, as Camille Saint-Saëns writes, the interior perspective is “concentrated on the man who suffers and who thinks.”⁶² In this moment, Mazeppa reaches his most vulnerable state—the nadir of his suffering heroic masculinity—that allows external forces to penetrate his internal subjectivity. As a Romantic artist-genius, Mazeppa’s passivity (though painful) is ultimately a state to strive for. In terms of artistic creativity, the concept of “labour” is an act of striving to attain the sublime, which is only attainable through the artist’s suffering. In *Mazeppa*, the association between the artist and the force of inspiration in this moment of introspection appears too strong. Liszt emphasizes the interior nature of the struggling artist in the process of creation. Labour, like that of a woman in childbirth, is the lot of the Romantic artist-hero and his creativity through torment.

Mazeppa’s interior struggle represented in the secondary thematic group (transformations two and three) closes with a transition back to the external realities of the ride (m. 232). The horse motive returns to the foreground as Liszt presents the fourth transformation of the Mazeppa theme in D minor. Liszt continues to take his hero and horse on this track for the remainder of this Ride section, as if to align with Hugo’s reestablishment of external forces amplifying Mazeppa’s suffering. Transformation five (mm. 263-332) suggests Mazeppa’s resolve—to survive despite the pain. The Mazeppa theme is restored to its initial statement in the brass, punctuated by the ever-present gallop in the strings. In the final transformation of the Ride, Liszt telescopes the Mazeppa theme and provides colourful ornamentation that suggests both the return to the Ukraine and the foreshadowing of Mazeppa’s triumph. The triplet figure in the strings, now familiar as a representation of the gallop of the horse, transform to complement the hero’s martial presence. The

⁶² Saint-Saëns, “Le cheval dévore l’espace, mais tout l’intérêt est concentré sur l’homme qui souffre et qui pense.” Phémus, “Musique,” 286. Quoted in Lynne Johnson, *Franz Liszt and Camille Saint-Saëns: Friendship, Mutual Support, and Influence*, 205.

promise of genius strengthens Mazeppa's resolve and while he remains passively pinioned to the horse, his expression of masculinity in this moment reflects heroic dynamism, control, and power.

In both Hugo's poem and Liszt's composition, the process of creation leads to a death. Liszt concludes Mazeppa's ride not with a continuation of the martial musical metaphor he established in transformation six, but with a slow, quasi-recitative "Death" passage (mm. 383-435) that mirrors the end of Section I in Hugo's poem. This short passage represents the culmination of Mazeppa's tortuous ride (example 16).⁶³ It consists of the suffering motive as a disorienting falling gesture that culminates with a leap of a minor sixth; a fragmented statement of the Mazeppa theme; and brief phrases of the triplet "horse" motive. Over the duration of the death passage, each of these motivic fragments unravel into a moment of silence. After six transformations of the Mazeppa theme (and three days!), Liszt brings horse and rider to the brink of an abyss, and for a moment it is uncertain whether horse and rider will fall, or whether either (or both) will survive.

EXAMPLE 16 MAZEPPA, DEATH PASSAGE, MM. 403-420

⁶³ Franz Liszt, *Mazeppa* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1909).

Liszt incorporates a recitative-like coda to emphasize the transformation of the suffering motive into the source of the horse's death. Hugo states

Enfin, après trois jours d'une course insensée,
Après avoir franchi fleuves à l'eau glacée,
Steppes, forêts, déserts,
Le cheval tombe aux cris de mille oiseaux de proie,
Et son ongle de fer sur la pierre qu'il broie...

[Then after three days of this course wild and frantic,
Through rivers of ice, plains and forests gigantic,
The horse sinks and dies; to the cries of multitudes of birds of prey
His limbs quiver faintly, his struggles are over...] ⁶⁴

Liszt offers the deadly blow with an F# minor⁷ pedal, punctuated with the somber sounds of the timpani. Fry describes this moment as the “diminishing energy and cessation” or the “ebbing of the life-force from the dying steed.”⁶⁵ The horse is dead, but Mazeppa's suffering continues—always, away. The andante death passage introduces two new motives. The first is a rhythmically flexible and ascending figure that rises and tapers off without a consequent statement (mm. 383-386). The second motive is an ascending and descending leap gesture (mm. 405-408). Fragmented statements of the Mazeppa theme (heard in the second flute and clarinets) punctuate these two motives as if to question whether the hero is alive or dead. The brief passage concludes with an unresolved statement of Mazeppa's status.

The larger form of Liszt's *Mazeppa* is in two sections to reflect the structure of its programmatic inspiration (table 5.3). The first section—the Ride—reflects the themes of binding (our hero is always pinioned), suffering, survival, and death. The main theme is a musical representation of the hero as he experiences the pain of his ride pinioned to the horse. The second

⁶⁴ Hugo, “Mazeppa,” 333. English translation by Corder, 3.

⁶⁵ Fry, *Liszt's Mazeppa*, 35.

section of *Mazeppa* is a march, a musical depiction of Mazeppa's future triumph. The March, like the opening of the Ride, appears out of nowhere with a trumpet fanfare in B major first heard in the distance and incrementally increasing in dynamic. This fanfare is accompanied by the cry motive of the Ride, as if to signal a restatement of the birth pangs of inspiration—death and rebirth. The March is in binary form and presents two new themes, a martial brass fanfare, the final statement of the Mazeppa theme (apotheosis), and a short coda.⁶⁶ Thematically, the March is straightforward, an aspect Searle implied with his comment that the music is “flat and shallow.”⁶⁷ Conceptually, however, the March represents more than an external articulation of triumph.

The two themes of the March are straightforward, a description that is far more forgiving than Searle's assessment that this music is “flat and shallow.”⁶⁸ The first, in D major, is outwardly regal and suggests the image of the archetypal rider on his noble steed. Like the Mazeppa theme of the Ride, this new A theme is heard in the brass and contains the same rhythmic qualities. The strings, again, evoke a horse, but the headlong gallop (of inspiration) is now controlled. There is a sense of mutual respect between horse and rider. But like David's *Napoleon*, the rider is in command. The second, B theme in D minor evokes oriental colourings through ornamentation and instrumentation, a prophecy of Mazeppa as the future leader of the Cossacks:

Eh bien! Ce condamné qui hurle et qui se traîne,
Ce cadaver vivant, les tribus de l'Ukraine
Le feront prince un jour

[Yet mark! That poor sufferer, gasping and moaning,
To-morrow the Cossacks of Ukraine atoning,
Will hail as their king.]⁶⁹

⁶⁶ Liszt indicated in the score to *Mazeppa* that the March may be performed as a stand-alone piece, without the Ride section.

⁶⁷ Humphrey Searle, *The Music of Liszt*, Second Revised Edition (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., [1954], 1966), 73.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Hugo, “Mazeppa,” 334. English translation by Corder, 3.

While I agree with Searle that the thematic material of the March is flat, or uneventful, Liszt surprises the interpreter with the reintroduction of the Mazeppa theme—and complementary motives—of the Ride. This makes the conclusion of *Mazeppa* subversive to Stegemann’s idea of linear hearing. The closing measures of the March contain the apotheosis of the Mazeppa theme in F major. This moment invokes triumph in its most monumental manifestation.⁷⁰ Liszt transforms Mazeppa as suffering hero into a monumental figure of admiration and glorification. This is analogous to the idea that “the race of the first Mazeppa is only the visible and earthly shadow of the ideal Mazeppa.”⁷¹

<i>Ride</i> (mm. 1-382)	<i>Death Passage</i> (mm. 403-435)	<i>March</i> (mm. 436-577)	<i>Apotheosis</i> (mm. 578-592)	<i>Coda</i> (mm. 593-610)
Introduction (Unstable)	Fragments (Unstable)	Introduction (Fanfare) (B major)	Mazeppa Theme (F major) transformation 6	(D major—implied by Dominant pedal)
Primary Theme Group (D minor) Mazeppa theme; transformation 1		Theme A (“Regal”) (D major)		B ♭ “frame” (mm. 606-607)
Secondary Theme Group (B ♭ minor/ B minor) transformation 2; transformation 3		Theme B (D minor)		
Recapitulation (D minor) transformation 4; transformation 5; transformation 6				

TABLE 3 LARGE-SCALE FORMAL STRUCTURE OF LISZT’S *MAZEPPA*

However, like Hugo’s celestial Mazeppa crying in terror, Liszt’s refiguring of Mazeppa bears the mark of suffering. An augmented statement of the suffering motive precedes the final Mazeppa theme, which is the only instance in the March where this motive occurs. The texture of the accompaniment reintroduces the arpeggiated triplet motive associated with the erratic horse. These motivic gestures suggest that Mazeppa still suffers—always, away, bound to the back of inspiration. Following the statement of the Mazeppa theme, the leap gesture from the death passage reoccurs.

⁷⁰ See Alexander Rehding’s book *Music and Monumentality: Commemoration and Wonderment in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009) for an excellent discussion of the concept of “musical monumentality.” Rehding notes that the apotheosis of Liszt’s symphonic poems represents the “gigantic, larger-than-life—in short: superhuman—object of admiration and glorification” (49).

⁷¹ Unsigned review (by Augustin Jal?) of *Les Orientales, Le Mercure de France au dix-neuvième siècle* 24 (1829): 199. Quoted in Kiebuszinski, “The (Re)fashioning of an Archetype of Genius,” 640.

Liszt incorporates a surprising B \flat “framing” chord in the final measures. Within the context of the March, B \flat is a major VI in D minor (parallel of the tonic, D major) and therefore exists within the soundscape of triumph. Yet, the presence of B \flat also signals back transformation two of the Ride, which emphasizes B \flat minor as a reflection of Mazeppa’s internal torture while bound to the horse (example 17).⁷²

EXAMPLE 17 *MAZEPPA*, B \flat “FRAME” AND CRY MOTIVE, MM. 598-610

Liszt’s insistence on returning to these moments suggests that the memory of Mazeppa’s suffering persists in triumph. In terms of motivic gesture and harmonic frame, *Mazeppa* ends where it begins.

The apotheosis and coda of the March make it possible to hear in Liszt’s *Mazeppa* a cycle in its construction. That cycle relates to Hugo’s idea in “Le Génie” that the pain of inspiration and genius

⁷² Franz Liszt, *Mazeppa*, (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1909).

attends the suffering hero the same way the eagle tears out Prometheus' liver daily. In "Mazeppa," Hugo plays with the idea of time, indicating at the end of Section I that Mazeppa will one day be triumphant. This notion of past and future configuration suggests that the artist's struggle to unfetter his pinions will continue indefinitely.

The symbolic significance of the doubleness of horse/rider, inspiration/genius may be understood best by reading into Hugo's Mazeppa myth a messianic-like structure. If Mazeppa and the horse share similarities to Christ and the cross, it is possible to see the March as a recognition of the power of suffering *in* triumph. Christ's suffering is entwined with the idea that the cross symbolizes both his suffering and triumph in an effort to save humanity. From this perspective, Mazeppa's suffering on the horse is an act of triumph in itself and is not contingent on his rescue. The restatement of the Mazeppa theme, along with a transformed utterance of the suffering motive and death motive, suggests that Mazeppa has only reached his triumphant end through suffering. Without suffering, the heroic artist-genius is incapable of triumph. Like Christ, Mazeppa could not reach transcendence without being bound to his version of the cross.

In the equation of hero and genius, Mazeppa (the artist) is metaphorically bound to the back of genius. As he tries to escape, his bonds become tighter. Yet, this is the price of artistic creation: "when a mortal, in whom a god seems manifest, sees that he is tied alive to the back of Genius, an ardent charger, he fights in vain."⁷³ The symbolism of Mazeppa's torturous wild ride can be understood as a manifestation of death-in-life where the artist surrenders the self to the powers of genius.⁷⁴ Brussee describes the moment the horse succumbs as the "apotheosis of a true artist who during his life is ignored and despised, only to be recognized as a genius when he is almost dying."⁷⁵ Hugo's process of recognizing Mazeppa as an artist is present in Boulanger's painting, where the

⁷³ Babinski, *The Mazeppa Legend in European Romanticism*, 71.

⁷⁴ Tony Voss, "Wild and Free': Byron's Mazeppa" *The Byron Journal* 25 (1997): 73.

⁷⁵ Brussee, "Franz Liszt's Mazeppa Sketch in His Sketchbook N6," 30-31.

“image of the artist suffering in the face of his hostile audience”⁷⁶ is read into the dynamic between Mazeppa and the others in the image.

Heroic suffering and passivity allow external forces to penetrate internal subjectivity. For the Romantic artist-genius, this passivity—though painful—is a state to strive for. Christine Battersby articulates that the nineteenth-century artistic genius symbolized the creator’s passivity along with the labour required to create such works of genius. Creation “involved suffering, pain and tears.”⁷⁷ As great men struggled to create, they likened their experience to the process of becoming pregnant and giving birth. Metaphors of masculine motherhood were common: “the artist conceived, was pregnant, labored (in sweat and pain), was delivered, and (in an uncontrolled ecstasy of agonized-male-control) brought forth.”⁷⁸ The qualities associated with genius considered “feminine” in the eighteenth century—intuition, emotion, sensitivity, imagination—became an integral component of masculine heroic creativity in the nineteenth century. The concept of “labour” is an act of striving to attain the sublime, attainable only through suffering. Babinski describes the artist’s commitment to pursue this vision no matter the cost:

the tireless flight of Genius takes the artist out of the banal world to the horizon of the ideal...[t]he artist suffers, strange lights shine in his eyes, he is burned by sparks of passion, and cold wings batter his face at night; only the artist riding Genius knows these things.⁷⁹

The doubleness of genius is apparent: it is the cause of the Mazeppa’s suffering; it carries Mazeppa to the Ukraine; and genius triumphantly raises the hero to Hetman.

⁷⁶ Mainardi, “Mazeppa,” 345.

⁷⁷ Christine Battersby, *Gender and Genius: Towards a Feminist Aesthetics* (London: The Woman’s Press, 1989), 73.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Babinski, *The Mazeppa Legend in European Romanticism*, 71.

5.5 Concluding Remarks

Like *Tasso*, *Mazeppa* derives musical meaning from the trope of suffering heroic masculinity. Individualism and alienation draw Mazeppa from society to a realm beyond common experience. His keen imagination and constant striving—a particular manifestation of suffering—is a key component of his subjectivity. Mazeppa as a representation of creative genius is free to express (and wallow in) the emotions of his soul precisely because he is an isolated, suffering, and heroic soul. The doubleness implied in Byron’s line “away, away” found relevance in subsequent Romantic-era creative works. While Mazeppa is pinioned to the ardent charger of inspiration, he flies upon the fiery pinions of freedom. To possess genius means to experience the liberty of artistic freedom, even if at the expense of isolation, alienation, and misunderstanding. Liszt draws from expressions of character and symbolism to guide the listener to connect the “image and emotion” of Mazeppa’s struggle to the musical devices that “convey both these elements at once.”⁸⁰ These internal and external forces lie in tension to render the artist-hero’s struggle in the same scale as the most monumental of cosmic struggle, even if it takes place in the hidden mind of the artist where he is bound to the flames of inspiration.

⁸⁰ Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, trans. J. Bradford Robinson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 150.

Summary and Conclusion

One of the guiding tenets in Liszt's conception of program music is the intimate connection between musical form and extra-musical content. Liszt describes his particular compositional aesthetic in the essay loosely about Berlioz, though his attempt to account for the merits of his own works is not difficult to discern. The conception of program music is only one aspect Liszt covers in his Berlioz essay. He devotes a large section to the guideline he deems important for the interpretation of programmatic works: a sensitivity to the complex nature of deciphering musical meaning. For Liszt, program music is not merely the result of a musical representation of a given text's meaning, but also an expression of the composer's subjective experience that results from the intersection of music and text. The sheer quantity of possible interpretations, combinations, and diminutions is boundless. Nevertheless, Liszt's hopes is to present a coherent composition that aligns with the ideas encapsulated in the poetic meaning of his chosen program.

My engagement with *Tasso: Lamento e Trionfo* and *Mazeppa* began with an interest in the poetic meanings Liszt emphasized in their accompanying prefaces. The themes of suffering and triumph, already culturally familiar heroic tropes, are emphasized in the heroic narratives of Tasso and Mazeppa. The former suffered in life, but triumphed via his posthumous reputation and legacy. The latter endured a tortuous ride, and his survival to become Hetman signaled triumph. Musically, Liszt portrays the same larger bipartite structure: the transformation of the primary theme reaches its heroic (triumphant) apotheosis, but only after the composer examines what it means to suffer. It would be possible to leave the poetic engagement of each preface, along with its musical representation, at that—a heroic journey deeply engrained in Western culture. However, such a simple formulation does a disservice to Liszt's aesthetic intentions. Taking the time to think through

the deeper meanings of suffering and triumph, as they relate specifically to Tasso's and Mazeppa's legendary re-imagining, leads to possible alternative modes of interpretation.

If program music seeks to connect the soul of the composer—made manifest in the musical work—to the soul of the interpreter, it is necessary to engage in the intersection of poetic meaning and musical structure. My analysis of Liszt's *Tasso* and *Mazeppa* derives from an interest in Romantic-era expressions of heroic masculinity and creative genius. In this dissertation, I have engaged with Lydia Goehr's concept of doubleness to examine the complex relationship between musical aesthetics and the socio-culturally mediated components linked to musical creation (monumentality, politics, gender), engagement (analysis, interpretation), and enjoyment (is the work effective?). I argued that this critical approach offers more interpretive possibilities by allowing the tensions associated with Tasso's and Mazeppa's heroic character to remain unresolved. Both are great men who suffered from external forces pressing upon their subjectivity, both are symbolic of the sublime pain associated with creation, and while both succeeded in their triumphant legacy, it was only achieved through suffering.

In this dissertation, I have argued that Liszt's *Tasso* and *Mazeppa* incorporate nineteenth-century cultural values and ideologies that ascribe meaning to their (legendary) identities. Tasso and Mazeppa are real men from history whose works and deeds are historically important. Yet the reinterpretation of their lives by Romantic authors and artists reveal that Tasso's and Mazeppa's cultural (and later aesthetic) significance derives from their legendary status as great men whose suffering is equally great. Liszt engaged with literary and visual representations of this expression of Romantic heroism by incorporating the archetypes of pain, suffering, legacy, and triumph into these symphonic poems. The net effect was a continuation of the larger mythology surrounding Tasso and Mazeppa that emphasizes suffering heroic masculinity—the hero-as-victim—as a necessary component of *becoming* a (symbol of) genius. By delving into the Romantic-era cultural significance of

suffering and triumph, along with their gendered implications, I have suggested that Tasso and Mazeppa symbolized the creative artist who navigates the unresolved tensions between suffering, triumphant, and the recognition of their labour to create (literally or figuratively) great works.

The legend of Tasso's masculine-heroic character initially derived from sensationalized biographical details that appeared shortly after his death. The genre of biography shaped the way Tasso's life was viewed. In the nineteenth century, the tension in Tasso's masculine heroic expression was particularly emphasized. John Black and Richard Wilde portrayed Tasso as a great man destined to live an unhappy life: he experienced both pleasure in his poetic/creative glory and pain in his unresolved aspirations and insatiable passions. Yet this tension between aspiration and agitation, striving and suffering, ignited not only Tasso's creative spark, but also the creativity within the artists who aspired to Tasso's recognized, albeit posthumous, achievements. Liszt's reimagining of the Tasso legend incorporates the narrative of tension through representations of triumph and heroic legacy inscribed by lament. In his preface to *Tasso*, he writes

I have wished to indicate this contrast even in the title of my work, and have hoped to succeed in portraying this grand antithesis of genius ill-treated during life, and shining after death.¹

In this short passage, Liszt reveals the complexity of Tasso's heroic expression. Tasso is a victim, "ill-treated during life," yet he is ennobled by his heroic suffering. Tasso's genius, while unrecognized during his lifetime, shines all the brighter in the minds of the artists who look to his struggle as a source of inspiration. As Tasso's spirit shifts across time and place, his memory whispers to those whose creative sensibilities align with the suffering associated with the creative act.

Taking this larger poetic meaning from Liszt's preface, I have argued that Tasso's masculine-heroic character—symbolic of genius—is musically portrayed through the interplay of form, musical

¹ Franz Liszt, *Tasso: Lamento e Trionfo*, ed. Franz Liszt-Stiftung, Franz Liszt: Musikalische Werke, Serie I, Band 1 (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1907).

gestures, theme, and harmony. When these aspects work in tandem, their meanings become more explicit. I suggested that through form, Liszt creates a narrative of Tasso's fame, travelling from heroic legacy, through suffering, to triumph. Yet, taking the main theme and musical gestures, Liszt reveals that aspects of Tasso's suffering exist in both his triumph and his poetic legacy. There is no escaping the forces that create genius and heroic monumentality. In other words, Tasso's heroic masculinity is characterized by his suffering. His role as a symbol of Romantic-era creative genius is established through the inherent tension of his character. His status as an emblem of heroic masculinity solidifies the notion that suffering is the beacon for the genius's creative spark.

My interpretation of the tension at play in Mazeppa's masculine-heroic character is underpinned by the double meaning or doubleness of Byron's pinion(s)/[-ed]. In my discussion of Mazeppa, I argued how Byron fixates on the tension between the action/speed of the horse and the inaction/passivity of the hero. Mazeppa, bound, suffering, naked, and vulnerable, was a potent symbol of the victimized hero. While he suffers, passively bound to the back of the wild horse, Mazeppa actively defies his captors, the horse, and even his own passive body. This articulates associations with the sublime, where the transcendental flight (upon the pinions) of genius represents the act of overcoming while simultaneously being bound to the agent of suffering. Through the symbolic union between Mazeppa and the horse, the (passive) act of being pinioned directly translates to the act of *becoming* a manifestation of masculine heroic genius.

Liszt capitalized on the terror of Mazeppa's legendary ride as an evocation of heroic suffering and survival. Drawing from the works of Hugo, Boulanger, and Byron, among others, Liszt evokes Mazeppa's masculine-heroic experience as a representation of the artist suffering due to the whims of creative inspiration—musically represented by the consistent evocation of the horse in motion. As he tries to escape, his bonds become tighter, resulting in a continuation of suffering. Mazeppa has no option but to ride, and Liszt conveys this through the transformation of the Mazeppa theme over

time and through place/space. This passivity reflects a type of heroic masculinity that celebrates suffering. Yet, this suffering of the creative genius reaches sublime heroic heights through the freedom and transcendence of flight. The contrasting, tension-laden meanings of pinion(s)/[-ed] find their relevance in Mazeppa's heroic expression: always away, both bound and free.

Goehr's concept of doubleness, and the power of letting tension exist unresolved, is a useful analytical framework not only for my particular interpretation of Liszt's *Tasso* and *Mazeppa*, but also for the musico-cultural climate of mid-nineteenth-century Austria and Germany. This period, at times described as the "War of the Romantics," conveyed a collective anxiety over the direction symphonic music would take after Beethoven's death. In the 1830s and 1840s, a number of composers contributed to the symphonic genre. But none could rightfully lay claim to the Beethoven inheritance. Composers of the Romantic generation were innovative and each approached their works in uniquely personal ways. There is a sense of subjective experience writ large within the corpus of the period's leading compositional voices: Robert Schumann, Felix Mendelssohn, Carl Maria von Weber, and Hector Berlioz. Yet despite the advances of these composers (and more), debates over the merits of descriptive symphonic music raged, reaching their apex in the 1850s. Although Liszt came relatively late to symphonic composition, he was nevertheless among the composers of the New German School who perceived their works as an encapsulation of the same spirit of ingenuity as Beethoven's works from nearly half a century earlier. Initially the conflict was presented in the press with Wagner, not Liszt, as the primary spokesperson for the musical progressives. His three main works, *Art and Revolution* (1849), *The Artwork of the Future* (1849), and *Opera and Drama* (1851) were particularly important for introducing the ideas entrenched in his music dramas.² Nevertheless, both Wagner and Liszt subscribed to the same aesthetic ideals: music is

² Jonathan Kregor provides a condensed list of the primary points of Wagner's aesthetic concerns. The three main points he identifies involve the concept of "Total Work of Art;" drawing from mythological subjects to emphasize "the folk;"

capable of expressing *something* beyond its “tonally moving forms.”³ For Liszt, the intermingling of formalist musical processes with impressions and sensations of an extra-musical text cultivated a new art that captured a unique subjective experience.

As I outlined in the introduction, Hanslick represented the primary opposing voice to the progressive New German School. His attacks on Wagner, Liszt, and the other musical progressives are well documented. Hanslick denied the power of expression—if music transcends its formalist limits, it ceases to be musical. His most famous attack on Liszt, and one that distilled the essence of the conflict between the musical conservatives and progressives, appeared in the preface of the 1858 edition of his *Vom Musikalisch-Schönen*:

[d]uring the preparation of this second edition, Liszt’s program symphonies have since appeared as complements to Wagner’s writings. So far, these have only succeeded in antagonizing the *self-sufficient meaning of music* by presenting the listener with little more than formally inchoate fluff. I am sure that no one will rebuke me for not shortening or diluting the polemical aspects of my position in light of these developments. If anything, I would think it even more important to demonstrate the *singular and eternal in musical art* as it pertains to beauty, as practiced by our masters Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and Mendelssohn, and as it should be fostered in the future by *true* musical innovators.⁴

Hanslick’s dismissal of Liszt’s symphonic poems served as an aesthetic banner for the musical conservatives. For critics like Hanslick, Liszt’s music appeared inauthentic and lacked substance. His symphonic poems did not—*could not*—present the same ground-breaking feats as the works of past (German) masters. Musical conservatives believed instrumental music *should* exist as an entity in itself, free from external influences. Music *should* be abstract and “ontologically ambivalent.”⁵ The focus of music *should* be structures and forms, tones and harmonies. To partake in a musical genre

and fulfilling the German/Beethovenian symphonic tradition. See Kregor, *Program Music*, Cambridge Introductions to Music (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 137.

³ Edward Hanslick, *On the Musically Beautiful: A Contribution Towards the Revision of the Aesthetics of Music*, trans. Geoffrey Payzant (Indianapolis, Ind.: Hackett Pub. Co., 1986), 29.

⁴ Eduard Hanslick, *Vom Musikalisch-Schönen*, 2nd ed. (Leipzig, Rudolph Weigel, 1858), ix. Quoted in Kregor, *Program Music*, 138. Emphasis mine.

⁵ Kregor, *Program Music*, 138.

that points to an explicit extra-musical source takes away from the beauty of music as an abstract, ethereal art.

The mid nineteenth-century debates over the lineage of instrumental music, its value, and its possible meaning serve as the broader context of this dissertation. I have suggested that in order to fully understand and appreciate Liszt's programmatic compositions requires an engagement with the then-current musical and cultural milieu. Yet in many ways, the crisis over program music extends beyond the long nineteenth century. More recent scholarship on Liszt amplifies the supposed pitfalls of his programmatic works. The majority of musicologists focus on Liszt's treatment of form, thematic material, and harmony. While there are gestures toward Liszt's programmatic narratives, few amplify their extra-musical meaning(s) in conjunction with the formalist properties of the symphonic poems. By undervaluing or even disregarding the content of the programs, musicologists extend the debates, effectively wedging Liszt within a formalist category. But Liszt was not opposed to developing formal processes in music. Musical structures were integral to conveying the intended extra-musical meaning of his symphonic poems. The function of the program, as Liszt writes, "is merely to indicate in a preparatory way the states of mind that impelled the composer to create his work, the thoughts he tried to embody in it."⁶ The "thoughts" the composer tries to "embody" within the composition is expressed through musical structures. By evoking the (poetical) extra-musical text, Liszt expresses something meaningful about characters, concepts, and/or narratives.

My interpretation of Liszt's programs as culturally relevant artefacts aids my analysis and understanding of the formal aspects of *Tasso* and *Mazepa*. This engagement with both the extra-musical and structural aspects of these two programmatic works results in an approach that amplifies the inherent tensions I see at the core of nineteenth-century art and culture. In other words, Liszt's

⁶ Franz Liszt and Carolyne Sayn-Wittgenstein, "Berlioz and His 'Harold' Symphony," in *Music in the Western World: A History in Documents*, ed. Piero Weiss and Richard Taruskin (New York: Schirmer Books, 1984), 382.

compositional practices, aesthetic ideology, and choice of extra-musical subjects reflect larger socio-cultural trends of his day. Ultimately, my interest in Tasso and Mazeppa stems from the way both figures represented the tensions I see in Romantic-era expressions of heroic masculinity and creative genius. I chose Liszt's *Tasso* and *Mazeppa* as subjects for analysis because of their progression from real men of history to heroic men of legendary genius.

Concluding Remarks

When I look back upon your activity in these last years, you appear superhuman to me; there is something very strange about this. However, it is very natural that creating is our only joy, and alone makes life bearable to us. We are what we are only while we create; all the other functions of life have no meaning for us, and are at the bottom concessions to the vulgarity of ordinary human existence, which can give no satisfaction.⁷

I may be bold to finish a dissertation on Liszt's *Tasso* and *Mazeppa* with a quote from Wagner. My apprehension derives from my fear of Wagner's indomitable influence. Better leave him be. Yet I cannot imagine a more appropriate conclusion. Wagner's praise for Liszt's ability to produce works under the duress of his duties as *Kapellmeister* projects an image of the archetypal masculine heroic genius, made through unresolved tension. Liszt appears *superhuman*, which is somehow strange. The act of creation is a *joy* that makes life worth living. Success, virility, and the move toward enduring monumentality exist *only while* [Liszt] *creates*. An ordinary existence is nothing short of *vulgarity*. In this short passage, Wagner places the creative genius apart from the ordinary man. Liszt, and no doubt Wagner himself, can find no meaning in life except in the painful struggle to create. This is the language used to describe the Romantic hero, and indeed Liszt *was perceived* as a Romantic hero. But

⁷ Richard Wagner, "Wagner to Liszt, London, 7 June 1855," in *Correspondence of Wagner and Liszt*, ed. W. Ashton Ellis (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986), 91–92.

this is also the language of a type of suffering masculinity that encapsulates the struggle to create and the satisfaction that comes from suffering endured.

Bibliography

- Abbate, Carolyn. *Unsung Voices: Opera and Musical Narrative in the Nineteenth Century*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991.
- Abrams, Meyer Howard. *The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1953.
- Agawu, V. Kofi. *Playing with Signs: A Semiotic Interpretation of Classical Music*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991.
- Allanbrook, Wye. *Rhythmic Gesture in Mozart: Le Nozze Di Figaro and Don Giovanni*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1983.
- Altenberg, Detlef. "Franz Liszt and the Legacy of the Classical Era." *19th-Century Music* 18, no. 1 (Summer 1994): 49–63.
- Anisimov, Evgenii. *The Reforms of Peter the Great: Progress Through Coercion in Russia*. Translated by John T. Alexander. Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1993.
- Aquilecchia, Giovanni. "Ludovico Ariosto." In *Encyclopædia Britannica*, September 4, 2020. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Ludovico-Ariosto>.
- Aristotle. *Poetics*. The Complete Works of Aristotle. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991.
- Arnold, John H., and Sean Brady, eds. *What Is Masculinity? Historical Dynamics from Antiquity to the Contemporary World*. Genders and Sexualities in History. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.
- Ayed, Nahlah. "Beethoven's Scowl." *Ideas*, September 21, 2020. <https://www.cbc.ca/radio/ideas/beethoven-s-iconic-scowl-influences-how-we-hear-his-work-musicologist-1.5732631>.
- Babinski, Hubert F. *The Mazeppa Legend in European Romanticism*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1974.
- Bahr, Ehrhard. "The Silver Age of Weimar. Franz Liszt as Goethe's Successor: A Study in Cultural Archaeology." *Goethe Yearbook* 10 (2001): 191–202.
- Battersby, Christine. *Gender and Genius: Towards a Feminist Aesthetics*. London: The Woman's Press Ltd., 1989.
- Biddle, Ian, and Kirsten Gibson, eds. *Masculinity and Western Musical Practice*. Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2009.

- Bishop, Lloyd. *The Romantic Hero and His Heirs in French Literature*. Vol. 10. Romance Languages and Literature, II. New York: Peter Lang, 1984.
- Black, John. *Life of Torquato Tasso*. Edinburgh: J. Murray, 1810.
- Borel, Pétrus. “Des Artistes penseurs et des artistes creux.” *L’Artiste* 5 (1833): 253–259.
- Boulanger, Louis. *Le Supplice de Mazeppa*. 1827. Oil on canvas, 525 x 392 cm. Musée des Beaux-Arts de Rouen.
- Brand, Charles Peter. *Torquato Tasso: A Study of the Poet and of His Contribution to English Literature*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965.
- Brett, Philip, Elizabeth Wood, and Gary C. Thomas, eds. *Queering the Pitch: The New Gay and Lesbian Musicology*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2006.
- Bruno, Paul W. *Kant’s Concept of Genius: Its Origin and Function in the Third Critique*. London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2010.
- Brussee, Albert. “Franz Liszt’s Mazeppa Sketch in His Sketchbook N6.” *Studia Musicologica* 55, no. 1/2 (June 2014): 27–42.
- Burnham, Scott. *Beethoven Hero*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995.
- . “Novel Symphonies and Dramatic Overtures.” In *The Cambridge Companion to Schumann*, edited by Beate Perrey, 148–172. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- Byron, Lord George Gordon. “Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage: Canto IV.” edited by Susan J. Wolfson and Peter J. Manning, 2nd ed., 508–569. London: Penguin Group, 2005.
- . “Mazeppa.” In *Lord Byron: Selected Poems*, edited by Susan J. Wolfson and Peter J. Manning, 602–626. London: Penguin Books, 1996.
- . “Prometheus.” In *Lord Byron: Selected Poems*, edited by Susan J. Wolfson and Peter J. Manning, 394–396. London: Penguin Books, 1996.
- . “The Lament of Tasso.” In *The Complete Poetical Works of Lord Byron*, edited by Paul Elmer More, 436–440. The Cambridge Poets. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1905.
- Campbell, Joseph. *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. 3rd ed. Bollingen Series, XVII. Novato: New World Library, 2008.
- Carlyle, Thomas. *On Heroes, Hero Worship, and the Heroic in History*. London: London: Chapman and Hall, LD., 1895.
- Chandezon, Léopold, and Jean-Guillaume-Antoine Cuvelier. *Mazeppa Ou Le Cheval Tartare, Mimodrame En Trois Actes, Tiré de Lord Byron*. Paris, 1825.

- Chaplin, Susan. "Gender." In *Encyclopedia of the Romantic Era, 1760-1850*, edited by Christopher John Murray. Vol. 1. New York: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2004.
- Clark, Kenneth. *Civilisation*. London: B.B.C., 1974.
- Cochran, Peter. "Lord Byron: Mazeppa." PDF. Peter Cochran's Website-Film Reviews, Poems, Byron..., March 26, 2009. <https://petercochran.files.wordpress.com/2009/03/mazeppa.pdf>.
- Cohen, Michèle. "Manliness, Effeminacy and the French: Gender and the Construction of National Character in Eighteenth-Century England." In *English Masculinities 1660-1800*, 44–61. Women and Men in History. London: Longman, 1999.
- Cole, Thomas. *Prometheus Bound*. 1847. Oil on canvas, 162.6 x 243.8 cm. Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco.
- Connell, R.W., and James W. Messerschmidt. "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept." *Gender and Society* 19, no. 6 (December 2005): 829–859.
- Cormac, Joanne. *Liszt and the Symphonic Poem*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017.
- Dahlhaus, Carl. *Analysis and Value Judgement*. Translated by Siegmund Levarie. New York: Pendragon Press, 1983.
- . *Nineteenth-Century Music*. Translated by J. Bradford Robinson. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989.
- David, Jacques-Louis. *Napoleon Crossing the Saint Bernhard Pass*. 1801-1802. Oil on canvas, 246 x 321 cm. Inv. 2342. Château de Versailles.
- Deaville, James. "Defending Liszt: Felix Draeske on the Symphonic Poems," translated by Susan Hohl. In *Franz Liszt and His World*, edited by Christopher Howard Gibbs and Dana Gooley, 485–514. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006.
- . "Liszt in the German-Language Press." In *The Liszt Companion*, edited by Ben Arnold, 41–54. London: Greenwood Press, 2002.
- . "Liszt's Virtuosity and His Audience: Gender, Class and Power in the Concert Hall of the Early 19th Century." In *Das Andere: eine Spurensuche in der Musikgeschichte des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts*, edited by Annette Kreuziger-Herr, 281–300. Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1998.
- . "The Making of a Myth: Liszt, the Press, and Virtuosity." In *New Light on Liszt and His Music*, 181–195. *Analecta Lisztiana*, II. New York: Pendragon Press, 1997.
- Defoe, Daniel. *A True Authentick and Impartial History of the Life and Glorious Actions of the Czar of Muscovy: From His Birth and His Death*. London: A. Bettesworth et al., 1725.
- Delacroix, Eugène. *Tasso à l'hôpital de St. Anne Ferrara*. 1839. Oil on canvas, 60 x 50 cm. Private Collection.

- DeNora, Tia. *Beethoven and the Construction of Genius: Musical Politics in Vienna, 1792-1803*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997.
- Elfenbein, Andrew. *Byron and the Victorians*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995.
- . “Mary Wollstonecraft and the Sexuality of Genius.” In *The Cambridge Companion to Mary Wollstonecraft*, edited by Claudia L. Johnson, 228–245. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- . *Romantic Genius: The Prehistory of a Homosexual Role*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999.
- Fallon-Ludwig, Sandra. “Narrative Inspiration in Liszt’s Symphonic Poems: The Case of Hunnenschlacht and Tasso: Lamento e Trionfo.” *Studia Musicologica* 54, no. 4 (December 2013): 367–378.
- Fauré-Cousin, Jeanne, and France Clidat. *Aux Sources Littéraires de Franz Liszt: Byron, Pétrarque, Dante, Hugo, Sainte-Beuve, Senancour, Lamartine, Gœthe, Lenau, Huland, Freiligrath, Les “Fioretti.”* Paris: La Revue musicale, 1973.
- Franson, Craig. “‘Those Suspended Pangs;’ Romantic Reviewers and the Agony of Byron’s Mazeppa.” *European Romantic Review* 23, no. 6 (December 2012): 727–743.
- French, Henry, and Mark Rothery. *Man’s Estate: Landed Gentry Masculinities, 1660-1900*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Fry, John Douglass. “Liszt’s Mazeppa: The History and Development of a Symphonic Poem.” D.M.A diss, Ohio State University, 1988.
- Furst, Lilian R. “The Romantic Hero, or Is He an Anti-Hero?” *Studies in the Literary Imagination* 9, no. 1 (Spring 1976): 53–67.
- Garber, Fredrick. “Self, Society, Value, and the Romantic Hero.” *Comparative Literature* 19, no. 4 (Autumn 1967): 321–333.
- Géricault, Théodore. *Mazeppa*. Early 1820s. Oil on paper applied to canvas, 285 x 215 mm. Private Collection.
- Germer, Stefan. “Pleasurable Fear: Géricault and Uncanny Trends at the Opening of the Nineteenth Century.” *Art History* 22, no. 2 (June 1999): 159–183.
- Gibbs, Christopher Howard. “‘Just Two Words. Enormous Success:’ Liszt’s 1838 Vienna Concerts.” In *Franz Liszt and His World*, edited by Christopher Howard Gibbs and Dana Gooley, 167–230. Bard Music Festival Series. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006.
- Goehr, Lydia. *The Quest for Voice: Music, Politics, and the Limits of Philosophy*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von. *Torquato Tasso*. Edited by Thomas Calvin. Heath's German Series. Boston: D.C. Heath & co., 1888.
- Gooley, Dana. "Gender Representation in Liszt's Orchestral Works." In *Gender Studies & Musik: Geschlechterrollen Und Ihre Bedeutung Für Die Musikwissenschaft*, 139-150. Forum Musik-Wissenschaft. Regensburg: ConBrio, 1996.
- . "Warhorses: Liszt, Weber's Konzertstück, and the Cult of Napoléon." *19th-Century Music* 24, no. 1 (Summer 2000): 62–88.
- Grabócz, Marta. "Common Narrative Structures in Music and Literature: A Semiostylistic Investigation into the Arts of the 19th Century (Liszt and Goethe)." In *Selected Proceedings of the 10th International Conference of 19th Century Music*, edited by Jim Samson and Bennett Zon, 155–168. London: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2002.
- Hadlock, Heather. "Different Masculinities: Androgyny, Effeminacy, and Sentiment in Rossini's *La Donna Del Lago*." In *Rethinking Difference in Music Scholarship*, edited by Olivia Bloechl, Melanie Lowe, and Jeffrey Kallberg, 170–213. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015.
- Hanslick, Edward. *On the Musically Beautiful: A Contribution Towards the Revision of the Aesthetics of Music*. Translated by Geoffrey Payzant. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1986.
- . *Vom Musikalisch-Schönen*. 2nd ed. Leipzig: Rudolph Weigel, 1858.
- Harvey, Karen. "The History of Masculinity, circa 1650-1800." *Journal of British Studies* 44 (April 2005): 296–311.
- Head, Matthew. "Beethoven Heroine: A Female Allegory of Music and Authorship in *Egmont*." *19th-Century Music* 30, no. 2 (2006): 97–132.
- Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich. *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*. Translated by T.M. Knox. Vol. II. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975.
- Hepokoski, James. "Fiery-Pulsed Libertine or Domestic Hero? Strauss's *Don Juan* Reinvestigated." In *Richard Strauss: New Perspectives on the Composer and His Work*, edited by Bryan Gilliam, 135–176. Durham: Duke University Press, 1992.
- . "Program Music." In *Aesthetics of Music: Musicological Perspectives*, edited by Stephen Downes, 62–83. New York: Routledge, 2014.
- Hetman Mazepa with Mase* [painting]. ca 1703. 18th Century Museum of the History of Zaporozhye.
- Hewitt, Regina. "Torquato Tasso--A Byronic Hero?" *Neophilologus*, no. 71 (1987): 431–446.
- Horova, Mirka. "Byron's *The Lament of Tasso* and the Mannerism of Madness." In *37th Annual International Byron Society Conference*. University of Valladolid, Spain, 2011.
- Houle, John. "The Life of Tasso." In *Jerusalem Delivered*. London, 1763.

- Hugo, Victor. "Le Génie." In *Odes et Ballades: Par Victor Hugo*, 4th ed., 2:49–56. Paris: Charles Gosselin, libraire, 1829.
- . "Mazeppa." In *Les Orientales: Par Victor Hugo*, 327–37. Paris: Charles Gosselin, libraire, 1829.
- . "Mazeppa." In *Symphonische Dichtungen Für Großes Orchester*, translated by F. Corder, 1–4. Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1885.
- Jal, Augustin ? "Les Orientales, Le Mercure de France Au Dix-Neuvième Siècle" 24 (1829).
- Johns, Keith T. *The Symphonic Poems of Franz Liszt*. Edited by Michael Saffle. Franz Liszt Studies Series 3. Stuyvesant: Pendragon Press, 1997.
- . *The Symphonic Poems of Franz Liszt*. Edited by Michael Saffle. Stuyvesant: Pendragon Press, 1997.
- Johnson, Lee. *The Paintings of Eugène Delacroix: A Critical Catalogue 1816-1831*. Vol. 1. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1981.
- Johnson, Lynne. "Franz Liszt and Camille Saint-Saëns: Friendship, Mutual Support, and Influence." PhD diss, University of Hawaii, 2009.
- Johnson-Hill, Erin. "Romanticism, the Classical Muse, and the Beethovenian Gaze: A Changing Iconography of Musical Inspiration." *Music in Art* 33, no. 1/2 (Spring-Fall 2008): 247–267.
- Kallberg, Jeffrey. "The Harmony of the Tea Table: Gender and Ideology in the Piano Nocturne." *Representations* 39 (Summer 1992): 102–133.
- Kaplan, Richard. "Sonata Form in the Orchestral Works of Liszt: The Revolutionary Reconsidered." *19th-Century Music* 8, no. 2 (Autumn 1984): 142–152.
- Kates, Judith A. "The Revaluation of the Classical Heroic in Tasso and Milton." *Comparative Literature* 26, no. 4 (Autumn 1974): 299–317.
- Kiebuszinski, Ksenya. "The (Re)Fashioning of an Archetype of Genius: Ivan Mazepa in Nineteenth-Century French Art and Literature." *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 31, no. 1/4 (2010 2009): 633–653.
- Kimmel, Michael, and Amy Aronson, eds. *Men and Masculinities: A Social, Cultural, and Historical Encyclopedia*. Oxford: ABCilio, 2004.
- Kramer, Lawrence. "The Devoted Ear." In *Musical Meaning and Human Values*, edited by Keith Chapin and Lawrence Kramer, 59–78. New York: Fordham University Press, 2009.
- . "The Musical Signifier." In *The Routledge Handbook of Music Signification*, edited by Esti Sheinberg and William P. Dougherty, 57-66. London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2020.

- Kregor, Jonathan. *Program Music*. Cambridge Introductions to Music. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015.
- Laudon, Robert Tallant. *The Dramatic Symphony: Issues and Explorations from Berlioz to Liszt*. Hillsdale: Pendragon Press, 2012.
- Lawrence, Jason. “‘When Despotism Kept Genius in Chains’: Imagining Tasso’s Madness and Imprisonment, 1748-1849.” *Studies in Romanticism* 50, no. 3 (Fall 2011): 475–503.
- Liszt, Franz. *Franz Liszts Musikalische Werke*. Edited by José Vianna da Motta. Vol. IV. II. Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1916.
- . “Letter to George Sand, April 30, 1837.” In *An Artist’s Journey: Lettres d’un Bachelier Ès Musique, 1835-1841*, edited and translated by Charles Suttoni, 28–29. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1989.
- . “Liszt on the Artist in Society.” In *Liszt and His World*, edited by Christopher Howard Gibbs and Dana Gooley, translated by Ralph P. Locke, 291–302. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006.
- . *Mazeppa*. Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, n.d (1880s).
- . *Mazeppa*. Edited by Franz Liszt-Stiftung. Franz Liszt: Musikalische Werke, Serie I, Band 3. Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1909.
- . *Mazeppa: Symphonische Dichtung No. 6, S. 100*. Corrected Edition. London: Ernst Eulenburg & Co., 1976.
- . “Preface to Prometheus.” translated by Humphrey Searle, v–ix. London: Ernst Eulenburg & Co., 1975.
- . “Preface to Tasso: Lamento e Trionfo.” In *Tasso: Lamento e Trionfo*, translated by Humphrey Searle, n.d.
- . *Prometheus*. London: Ernst Eulenburg & Co., 1975.
- . *Tasso: Lamento e Trionfo*. Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1885.
- . *Tasso: Lamento e Trionfo*. Edited by Franz Liszt-Stiftung. Franz Liszt: Musikalische Werke, Serie I, Band 1. Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1907.
- . *Tasso: Lamento e Trionfo*. Translated by Humphrey Searle. London: Eulenburg, 1976.
- Liszt, Franz, and Carolyne Sayn-Wittgenstein. “Berlioz and His ‘Harold’ Symphony.” In *Music in the Western World: A History in Documents*, edited by Piero Weiss and Richard Taruskin, 381–383. New York: Schirmer Books, 1984.

- . “Berlioz and His ‘Harold’ Symphony.” In *Strunk’s Source Readings in Music History*, edited by Leo Treitler, Second Revised., 1158–1174. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1998.
- Liu, Yen-Ling (Annie). “Text, Topics, and Formal Language: Musical Narrativity in Franz Liszt’s Prometheus and Tasso.” *Language and Semiotic Studies* 1, no. 3 (Autumn 2015): 139–160.
- Lokke, Kari. “Weimar Classicism and Romantic Madness: Tasso in Goethe, Byron, and Shelley.” *European Romantic Review* 2, no. 2 (2008): 195–214.
- Longyear, Rey M. “Liszt’s Philosophical Symphonic Poems: Their Intellectual History.” *Journal of the American Liszt Society* 32 (1992): 42–51.
- Low, Jennifer A. *Manhood and the Duel: Masculinity in Early Modern Drama and Culture*. New York and Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.
- Mainardi, Patricia. “Mazeppa.” *Word & Image* 14, no. 4 (December 2000): 335–351.
- Manning, Clarence A. *Hetman of the Ukraine Ivan Mazeppa*. New York: Bookman, 1957.
- Manso di Villa, Giovanni Battista. *La Vita Di Torquato Tasso*. Euangelista Deuchino, 1621.
- McClary, Susan. “Constructions of Subjectivity in Franz Schubert’s Music.” In *Queering the Pitch: The New Gay and Lesbian Musicology*, edited by Philip Brett, Elizabeth Wood, and Thomas Gary, 2nd ed., 205–234. London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2006.
- . *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991.
- McGann, Jerome. *Byron and Romanticism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- . *Fiery Dust: Byron’s Poetic Development*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968.
- Milman, Robert. *The Life of Torquato Tasso*. London: H. Colburn, 1850.
- Mosse, George L. *The Image of Man: The Creation of Modern Masculinity*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.
- Mueller, Rena Charin. “Liszt’s ‘Tasso’ Sketchbook: Studies in Sources and Revisions.” PhD diss, New York University, 1986.
- Murray, Penelope, ed. *Genius: The History of an Idea*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd, 1989.
- Nattiez, Jean-Jacques. “Can One Speak of Narrativity in Music?” Translated by Katharine Ellis. *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 115 (1990): 240–257.
- Newcomb, Anthony. “Schumann and Late Eighteenth-Century Narrative Strategies.” *19th-Century Music* 11, no. 2 (Autumn 1987): 164–174.

- Nordberg, J.A. *Histoire de Charles XII, Roi de Suède*. 4 vols. La Haye: J-M Husson, 1742.
- Patanè, Vincenzo. "Lord Byron's Sour Fruit." *The Keats-Shelley Review* 30, no. 1 (2016): 48–56.
- Pauly, Rebecca M. "Baudelaire and Delacroix on Tasso in Prison: Romantic Reflections on a Renaissance Martyr." *College Literature* 30, no. 2 (Spring 2003): 120–136.
- Pederson, Sanna. "Beethoven and Masculinity." In *Beethoven and His World*, edited by Scott Burnham and Michael P Steinberg, 313–331. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000.
- Plato. *Symposium*. Translated by Robin Waterfield. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Poussin, Nicolas. *Rinaldo and Armida*. ca 1630. Oil on canvas, 82.2 x 109.2 cm. Dulwich Picture Gallery.
- Pryer, Anthony. "Hanslick, Legal Processes, and Scientific Methodologies: How Not to Construct an Ontology of Music." In *Rethinking Hanslick: Music, Formalism, and Expression*, edited by Nicole Grimes, Siobhán Donovan, and Wolfgang Marx, 52–69. Rochester: Rochester Press, 2013.
- Prymak, Thomas M. "The Cossack Hetman: Ivan Mazepa in History and Legend from Peter to Pushkin." *The Historian* 76, no. 2 (Summer 2014): 237–277.
- Purvis, June, and Amanda Weatherill. "Playing the Gender History Game: A Reply to Penelope J. Corfield." *Rethinking History* 3, no. 3 (1999): 333–338.
- Purvis, Philip, ed. *Masculinity in Opera: Gender, History, and New Musicology*. New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2013.
- Ratner, Leonard. *Classical Music: Expression, Form, and Style*. New York: Schirmer, 1980.
- Reed, Walter L. *Meditations on the Hero: A Study of the Romantic Hero in Nineteenth-Century Fiction*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974.
- Rehding, Alexander. *Music and Monumentality: Commemoration and Wonderment in Nineteenth-Century Germany*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Ridge, George Ross. *The Hero in French Romantic Literature*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1959.
- Rushton, Julian. "Music and the Poetic." In *Cambridge History of Nineteenth-Century Music*, edited by Jim Samson, 151–177. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- Saffle, Michael. *Liszt in Germany 1840-1845: A Study in Sources, Documents, and the History of Reception*. Franz Liszt Studies Series 2. Stuyvesant: Pendragon Press, 1994.
- . "Orchestral Works." In *The Liszt Companion*, edited by Ben Arnold, 235–279. Westport: Greenwood Press, 2002.

- Schoenberg, Arnold. *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*. Edited by Gerald Strang and Leonard Stein. London: Faber and Faber, 1967.
- Schopenhauer, Arthur. *Parerga and Paralipomena: Short Philosophical Essays*. Translated by E.F.J. Payne. Vol. 2. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974.
- . *The World as Will and Representation*. Translated by E.F.J. Payne. Vol. 2. New York: Dover, 1969.
- Schutze, Jurgen. *Art of Nineteenth-Century Europe*. Translated by Barbara Forryan. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1979.
- Scott, Joan Wallach. *Gender and the Politics of History*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1988.
- Scruton, Roger. "Programme Music." In *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Accessed February 28, 2017.
- Searle, Humphrey. *The Music of Liszt*. Second Revised Edition. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1954.
- Serassi, Pierantonio. *La Vita Di Torquato Tasso*. Rome: Stamparia Pagliarini, 1775.
- Shulstad, Reeves. "The Symbol of Genius: Franz Liszt's Symphonic Poems and Symphonies." PhD diss, The Florida State University, 2001.
- Solie, Ruth A., ed. *Musicology and Difference: Gender and Sexuality in Music Scholarship*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993.
- Spenser, Edmund. *The Works of Edmund Spenser, With a Selection of Notes from Various Commentators; and a Glossarial Index: To Which Is Prefixed, Some Account of the Life of Spenser*. Edited by Henry John Todd. London: George Routledge and Sons, 1872.
- Stegemann, Michael. "Programme, pamphlet ou poésie? Les Préfaces de Franz Liszt pour ses Poèmes Symphoniques." In *Franz Liszt: Lectures et Écritures*, edited by Florence Fix, Laurence Le Diagon-Jacquin, and Georges Zaragoza, 103–117. Paris: Hermann, 2012.
- Stravinsky, Igor. *Chronicles of My Life*. Translated by Anon. London: Victor Gollancz, 1936.
- Tarasti, Eero. *A Theory of Musical Semiotics*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994.
- . *Myth and Music: A Semiotic Approach to the Aesthetics of Myth in Music, Especially That of Wagner, Sibelius and Stravinsky*. The Hague: Mouton Publishers, 1979.
- Thorslev, Peter L. *The Byronic Hero: Types and Prototypes*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1962.
- Tofanelli, Stefano, and Raffello Morghen. *Torquato Tasso*. ca 1826. Engraving on paper, 6 1/4 x 8 1/2 inches. From the Collection of Mary Crane Hone. <https://mchistorical.tripod.com/id9.html>.

- Torkewitz, Dieter. "Liszts Tasso." In *Torquato Tasso in Deutschland: Seine Wirkung in Literature, Kunst Und Musik Seit Der Mitte Des 18 Jahrhunderts*, edited by Achim Aurnhammer. Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1995.
- Tosh, John. *Manliness and Masculinities in Nineteenth-Century Britain: Essays on Gender, Family and Empire*. London: Pearson Longman, 2005.
- . "The History of Masculinity: An Outdated Concept?" In *What Is Masculinity? Historical Dynamics from Antiquity to the Contemporary World*, edited by John H. Arnold and Sean Brady, 17–34. *Genders and Sexualities in History*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.
- Vande Moortele, Steven. "Beyond Sonata Deformation: Liszt's Symphonic Poem Tasso and the Concept of Two-Dimensional Sonata Form." *Current Musicology*, no. 86 (Fall 2008): 41–62.
- . *Two-Dimensional Sonata Form: Form and Cycle in Single-Movement Instrumental Works by Liszt, Strauss, Schoenberg, and Zemlinsky*. Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2009.
- Voltaire, François-Marie Arouet. *The History of Charles XII, King of Sweden*. Translated by Winifred Todhunter. London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd, 1908.
- Voss, Tony. "Mazeppa-Maseppa: The Migration of a Romantic Motif." *Tydskrif Bir Letterkunde* 49, no. 2 (2012): 110–135.
- . "Wild and Free?: Byron's Mazeppa." *The Byron Journal* 25 (1997): 71–82.
- Wagner, Richard. *Opera and Drama*. Translated by Willian Ashton Ellis. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1893.
- . "Wagner to Liszt, London, 7 June 1855." In *Correspondence of Wagner and Liszt*, edited by W. Ashton Ellis, 91–92. New York: Greenwood Press, 1986.
- Walker, Alan. *Franz Liszt: The Weimar Years, 1848-1861*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1988.
- . *Franz Liszt, Volume 1: The Virtuoso Years: 1811-1847*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1983.
- Wilde, Richard Henry. *Conjectures and Researches Concerning the Love, Madness, and Imprisonment of Torquato Tasso*. Vol. 1. New York: Alexander V. Blake, 1842.
- Williams, Raymond. *The Country and the City*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973.
- Wilson, James D. *The Romantic Heroic Ideal*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982.
- Wood, Gillen D'Arcy. *Romanticism and Music Culture in Britain, 1770-1840: Virtue and Virtuosity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.