

JANKO, THE FOLK OPERA LISZT NEVER WROTE

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SUMMARY. On the basis of his extant correspondence, Liszt planned composing an opera with Hungarian scenes and titled it *Janko, der ungarische Rosshirt* (*Janko, the Hungarian horse-herder*). The libretto suggests that the opera fell into the category of the folk play, a short-lived popular performance of the time, concerning its subject, characters, structure and music. Although he had consulted with librettists, he did not write a single line of the opera. The history of the opera could end here, but one of his composer colleagues Anton G. Rubinstein (the Russian Liszt) composed music on the basis of the libretto and called it *Kinder der Heide* (*Children of the Moorland*). Are there historical or musical traces of handing over the libretto? Could references to Hungarian music be found in Rubinstein's music? And, is the 'creation' of a mixed category, the specific class of *folk opera* involved?

Keywords: opera, stage works, 19th century music, couleur locale, folk play, Franz Liszt, Anton Rubinstein.

Creating works in almost all fields of music, Liszt showed restraint only in the case of the opera, although he had very close ties with this kind of music.² In his virtuoso period, his improvisations, variations and fantasies composed on the basis of opera melodies opened a new path in the public acceptance of operas. In Weimar, as a conductor of the court, he gave outstanding performances.³ In his dramaturgical writings, he proves his skills, and in his old-age opera reminiscences he produces evidence about his clear vision of this kind of music. And, the compositions in the 1840's could qualify as sketches for an opera – while at the same time as one of

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² Adrienne Kaczmarczyk, *A parafrazistol az operaig es vissza – Liszt: Sardanapale* (*The way from the paraphrase to the opera and back – Liszt: Sardanapale*), in: *Magyar Zene* (Hungarian Music) 2001/3 August, volume 39, pp. 287-299

³ In eleven years, he conducted altogether forty-seven operas. Mentioning only the most significant ones, those of Mozart, Rossini, Meyerbeer, Wagner and Verdi.

his prestigious Hungarian researchers⁴ says – they mostly imply that Liszt was attracted by opera as a category of music. From his correspondence, the plans of several operas emerge,⁵ but as well-known, he only has one completed work from his childhood. His only opera is *Don Sanche, ou le château d'amour*⁶ written at the age of 13. Considerable skill was required to compose music for the sensationalist libretto⁷. The boy, who has learnt French for four months only at the time, speaks the language well already,⁸ and this is why he was actually requested to write the opera. And, although the libretto applies almost all possible tools of the theatre,⁹ making the composer's task difficult, the young composer clears this hurdle easily, through amply flowing melodic invention. And yet, an understandable distance from the subject is evident, because it did not inspire the young, almost toddler author¹⁰ and therefore the opera disappeared from stage after four performances.¹¹

Later on he also experimented with an opera: from the work identified by Liszt as an Italian opera and originally intended for the Kärntner Theatre in Vienna under the title *Sardanapale*¹², a draft of 111 pages is extant from 1845–51. Composing music for the *Sardanapale* libretto¹³ based on Byron's poems carries the characteristics of Italian opera adaptations from the 1840's, but with the richness of harmony, it is well ahead of its time. Other analysts think that they have discovered the

⁴ In her paper mentioned above, Kaczmarczyk discusses Liszt's relationship to the opera.

⁵ In a collection, see Kaczmarczyk: op. cit. footnote 8

⁶ *Don Sanche* or *the castle of love*, the first performance of which was on 17 October 1825, five days before Liszt's 14th birthday.

⁷ The libretto is a cavalcade written by the two contemporary authors Theaulon and De Rancé on the basis of an 18th century poet's medieval tale. The not so fortunate libretto was defended by the authors exactly by saying that it enabled the composing of multi-faceted music. See Walker, Alain, *Franz Liszt 1 The virtuoso years 1811–1847*, translated by Judit Racz Budapest, Zenemukiado (Hungarian Music Publishers), 1986, 136.

⁸ Walker: op. cit. 124. Adam Liszt's account about Liszt's language skills.

⁹ Such as a peasant dance, Cupid descending from the sky, a stormy scene, battle, funeral procession and a final ballet. See: Searle, Humphrey, Winklhofer, Sharon: *Franz Liszt*. in: *Early Romanticism: Chopin, Schumann, Liszt* (= New Grove monography), translated by Judit Racz, Budapest, Rozsavolgyi and Partner Publishers, 2010, p. 214

¹⁰ So far there has only been just one other child prodigy, Mozart, who managed to write an opera at the age of 13. Walker: op. cit. 137.

¹¹ There were mixed reviews by critics who were enthusiastic about Liszt; the magazine *Almanach des Spectacles* gives the best summary in 1826: "we have to treat this performance with understanding". Walker: op. cit. 1. 137.

¹² *Sardanapale*, opera seria en 3 actes. Scenario. The libretto is known from the draft of a French prose dated 9 December 1846. See more extensively in Kaczmarczyk: op. cit. 292.

¹³ The libretto is probably the work of the French writer Jean-Pierre Félicien Mallefille. (About the complicated history of creation: Kenneth Hamilton, *Not with a Bang but with a Whimper: the Death of Liszt's Sardanapale*. Cambridge Opera Journal 8/1, March 1996. pp. 45–58)

stylistic characteristics of Bellini, Meyerbeer, and in fact Wagner's *Rienzi*.¹⁴ Liszt gave up the plan of composing the opera in 1852, and a factor contributing to this fact could have been the difficulty of making himself independent from the closeness and greatness of the two giants of opera and musical drama, Verdi and Wagner.

In the written documents of an exhibition staged by Maria Eckhardt under the title *The Hungarian Music Theatre of Liszt and His Age*¹⁵, she mentions a "less known, but interesting and important fact", "an opera with Hungarian scenes that Liszt planned, but never wrote". Not a single line of the opera titled *Janko, der ungarische Rosshirt*, i.e. *Janko, the Hungarian horse-herder* has been found, and yet it opens the door to exciting connotations.

Like all composers, Liszt obviously also intended to write a great opera which would have laid the foundations for his appreciation as a composer and for raising him to the rank he deserved. The success of an opera largely depends on the quality and creativity of the libretto. Finally, Liszt found a libretto which could have been suitable for his identity and his totally romantic self, and which could have had a plot nicely matched to his Hungarian roots and also to the gipsies, as well as to the revolutionary ideal of musical freedom and poetry. Although we do not know much about the relationship between Beck and Liszt,¹⁶ by studying Beck's biography, we get a glimpse of Liszt's ideas about gipsies and Hungarians, and a more complete picture of his own identity.

According to his biographers¹⁷, the basic traits of the works written by Karl Isidor Beck¹⁸ are his respect for nature and his love for freedom, which are supposed to stem from his childhood years in Baja, Hungary. At that time he has wandering a lot in the town and environs, where he met frequently and had a close relationship with gipsies *representing the freedom ideal of romanticism*. This is the time when the standard image of 'trouble-free gipsies' living in the outskirts of town is imprinted on his mind. Although his family wanted him to become a physician, he devoted his Vienna studies mainly to learning literature. In Vienna he made friends with his countryman, the great contemporary poet Nikolaus Lenau and received

¹⁴ Searle –Winkhofer: op. cit. 214.

¹⁵ Maria Eckhardt, *The Hungarian Music Theatre of Liszt and His Age. Exhibition in the Franz Liszt Memorial Museum*. Muzsika (Music) magazine, December 1998, volume 41 No. 12, p. 19.

¹⁶ Raabe and Walker only mention his namesake who was the first Lohengrin of the Weimar premiere. Otherwise he worked as a confectioner, and later on became the master baker of the Vienna emperor's court again (Raabe, volume 1, 113, Walker volume 2, p. 133.)

¹⁷ Mentioning just the most important biographers: Gustav Kühne, 1879; Rudolf Gottschall, 1880; Friedricke Beck, 1904; Ludwig Fränkel 1902; Heinrich Nellen, 1908; Robert Gragger, 1909; Eduard Fechtner, 1902; Ernst Thiel, 1938; Antal Mádl, 1969; Agnes Maria Vardy, 1970; Andras Martinko, 1970; Jozsef Turoczy-Trosztler, 1961; Agnes Vardy Huszar, 1984.

¹⁸ Baja, Hungary 1 May 1817 –† Vienna, Austria 10 April 1879. A detailed biography is given below.

an invitation to Weimar from Goethe's daughter-in-law so that "he should write his poems there, in the only place worthy of his talent". After Berlin, some reading tours and many ups and downs, we find him in the spring of 1846 in Pest, where he got acquainted with Petöfi. Beck knew about Petöfi's works by then, in fact he had already translated some of his poems into German.¹⁹ The spring of 1848 found him in Berlin. In spite of being successful with his writings about Hungarian themes, he never managed to be part of the Hungarian literature and the world of Pest literature, because he wrote in German and by that time this was not really popular. The most important projection of his poetry is *Vormärz*; i.e. Beck was part of the political poetry that paved the way for the 1848 revolution. All this was supplemented by the strong sociological tone of his works: he expressed sympathy with both the poor and the prosecuted in his works. The verse novel published in 1841 and dedicated to Baron Jozsef Eotvos²⁰ under the title *Janko, a magyar csikos (Janko, the Hungarian horse-herder)*²¹ became Beck's principal work. Including Hungarian scenes, the verse novel was attractive to readers especially because of its enthusiasm about freedom. According to his analysts²², not even Lenau had broader knowledge of the Hungarian landscape and lifestyle, the life and habits of Hungarian gypsies; and all this information was used and reflected uniquely by him in this work.

For a long time, only the libretto 'continued' the 5-book *Janko* edition printed in Gothic typestyle in Leipzig (1841). A Hungarian translation of the work 'intended to be Hungarian' was not made until 1901. Beno Toth, a teacher of the German faculty at a Miskolc secondary school published an analysis²³ in the secondary school bulletin, including a translation of most of the poem.²⁴

¹⁹ Petöfi by the way did not like them and refused to approve publication. However, Beck wrote about his memories of Petöfi in Hungarian (!) in the magazine called *Koszoru (Wreath)* in 1879. See Agnes Vardy Huszar, *Karl Beck's Life and Career as a Poet*. Akademiai Kiado publishers, 1984.

²⁰ But the work had an influence on him, and certain analysts say that Viola in his work (*Falusi jegyző - The Village Notary*) is Janko's brother.

²¹ *Janko, der ungarische Rosshirt*. Leipzig, 1841. (Repeated in *Sonntagsblätter*. Vienna, 1844); 2nd revised edition. Berlin; 1853, 3rd edition – *Gedichte*. Berlin, 1846.(4th edition). Altogether there were ten editions. (Bacs-Bodrog County / edited by SamuBorovszky – Budapest: National Monographic Association, *The Counties and Towns of Hungary* [1927].)

²² Robert Gragger, *Beck Karoly es a nemzet politikai kolteszet (Karl Beck and the German Political Poetry)*, volume 138 *Budapesti Szemle (Budapest Review)*, 1909, p. 271; Bela Pukanszky, *A magyarorszagi nemzet irodalom tortenete (The History of German Literature in Hungary)*, Budapest 1926, p. 491

²³ Beno Toth, *Karl Beck's novel 'Janko, magyar csikos (Janko, the Hungarian horse-herder)'* in: *Calvinist Secondary School Bulletin (Miskolc)*, 1899/1900.

²⁴ I would like to thank the head of the Miskolc City Library Gabor Varga for making this scanned document available to me.

The story is the drama of an honest horse-herder, who is unlucky in love as a result of his good deed. Although he has been courting a faithful gipsy girl, the lovely brown-haired Juliska for a time, due to a heroic and gallant action – as a token of gratitude – he wins the hand of a German girl, Maria from her foster father. Janko then duly falls in love with Maria at first sight, but she loves the local count Waldemar. The wedding takes place, but the untied loose ends lead to adultery with an unfortunate outcome, the self-justified revenge of the horse-herder, an attempt on the life of a member of the upper class, exile, leading the life of an outlaw voluntarily, and then to death by hanging. In the meantime, the faithful, loving, but neglected gipsy girl helps him unselfishly in his hiding, and in the mitigation of his hardships, although she knows that the horse-herder cannot be hers in any case. Finally, her heart breaks because of her sorrow.

The genre is verse novel, but in its subject, clichés and formulations it perfectly advances the accessories of a folk play. So much so that it shows a very strong relationship – on the dawn of this genre – with the very first representatives of folk play. The uncrowned king of Hungarian folk play, Szigligeti wrote *Két pisztoly (Two pistols)*²⁵ in 1844, the similarly titled *Csikos (Horse-herder)*²⁶ in 1847 and *Czigany (Gipsy)*²⁷ in 1853. Szigligeti must have known Beck, because when Beck moved to Pest temporarily, he had played an important public role: between 1842 and 1848 he edited the magazine *Der Ungar (The Hungarian)*²⁸, and then in 1855 for a short period he was the editor of a yearbook for literature *Frische Quellen (Fresh Springs)*²⁹ and his diary notes were published in various German, Austrian

²⁵ The leading character is Bajkerti (a political refugee of noble origin), and only the other leading character *Sobri* (the famous outlaw) of secondary importance resembles *Janko's* character. His appearance reflects the cliché of a fair, crying and laughing, slightly self-destructive man. The music was edited by Erkel.

²⁶ This folk play is renowned as his best early work, and it speaks from the stage with the voice of the 1848 revolution. In this play, the people's truth wins, because they oppose their dishonest masters, and folk art appears in its most uniform structure. The music was edited by Beni Egressy. The play was re-discovered by Zsigmond Moricz in the 20th century.

²⁷ In the *Cigány (Gipsy)*, Szigligeti stands by an ethnic population, which played the role of musicians in the freedom fight, and he does this so obviously that the play ends with a gipsy-Hungarian marriage. This end result is only featured as a promise in *Janko*.

²⁸ *Der Ungar (The Hungarian)*. Herausgegeben vom Hermann Klein. Hauptmitarbeiter Karl Beck, I-VIII. Pest, 1842–1848. During the short existence of *Der Ungar*, it had such a unique and outstanding publication as Ferenc Erkel's *Ungarisches Nationallied*, which came out as an attachment to the 16.04.1842 copy of the magazine. (From the OSZK [National Szechenyi Library] database.)

²⁹ *Frische Quellen (Fresh Springs)*. Schönwissenschaftliche Jahrbücher, unter Mitwirkung vieler Literaturhäfte. Herausgegeben von Karl Beck. 10 Hefte. Pest, 1855. Only this volume was published in ten parts.

and Hungarian magazines³⁰. The closeness of parallels and the similar type of stories emphasise a way of thinking worth noting and reflected by the possibility of freedom and a type of resistance offered by social independence, i.e. reflected by *the fate of the gipsies, the fate of the outlaws*³¹ and the fate of the *1848 political* refugees. These plots are also decisive for Liszt, they crop up in his works,³² and in this planned opera they could have especially come to the surface.

So then, what happened?

The correspondence describing Liszt's plan and the epic poem serving as a basis of the libretto are still extant. Let us see the correspondence first. In the database of the Grove Lexicon, three letters are mentioned from 1858,³³ but many more emerged from the correspondence.

On the basis of our current knowledge, the earliest information comes from 1856, and it is in a letter written to Erkel, Liszt's Hungarian opera composer friend. In this letter Liszt explains that he is seriously toying with the idea of writing a Hungarian opera, in fact he identifies the future patron of the opera as well.³⁴

My dear honoured Friend,

Your letter was sent on to this place, where a long period of ill health kept me in bed for more than 14 days, delaying my return home.

Thank you so much for the welcome news. Next summer, I hope I

³⁰ *Nord und Süd*, 1846, 50–60; *Ország Tukre (The Mirror of the Country)*, 1862, Nos. 15 and 16 *Együttlettem unnepelt honfitársakkal (Being Together with My Celebrated Countrymen)* 1843–44, he writes about his friendly relationship with Lenau (in Hungarian); *Pester Lloyd*, 1863. Nos. 214, 226, 232, 244, 250, 256.; *Pester Lloyd*, 31 January to 5 March 1864; *Neue Freie Presse (New Free Press)*, 14 July to 7 September 1875; *Koszoru (Wreath)*, 1879 I. *Visszaemlekezések Petöfi Sandorra (Memories of Sandor Petöfi)*; *Fovárosi Lapok (Budapest Magazines)*, 1879 No. 86; *Nord und Süd*, 1879; *Wiener Zeitung*, 1879; *Zalai Kozlony (Zala Bulletin)*, 1879 volume 18 Nos. 35–38; *Pester Journal*, April 1879 Nos. 13, 15, 16, 17, 18; *Fuggetlenség (Independence)*, 1887, volume 8 Nos. 86–87.

³¹ See Karoly Eotvos, *A Bakony rossz hire (Bad Reputation of the Bakony hills)* in: *Budapesti Hírlap (Budapest Post)*, 1887, Nos. 287, 290, 291, 293, 294, 295

³² See a more extensive description in the manuscript written by Monika Iványi-Papp, *Nepszinmu reminiscencia Liszt hangszeren (Folk Play Reminiscence on Liszt's musical instrument)* to be published.

³³ "Mentioned in letters to C. Sayn-Wittgenstein, 29 March, and 19 and 27 April 1858". The database was compiled by Maria Eckhardt and Rena Charnin Mueller. *Planned compositions or transcriptions, Franz Liszt Works*, Oxford Music Online.

(Accessed 20 March 2014), <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article_works/grove/music/48265pg28#548265.29.15> Prior to submitting my paper, I received invaluable assistance from Agnes Watzatka, who made her manuscript about Lenau's influence on Liszt available to me (see footnote 150). In footnote 7 of this paper, four Mosenthal letters are already mentioned. In footnote 14 of her paper covering the Sardanapale topic, Adrienn Kaczmarczyk mentions the Erkel and Wittgenstein letters.

³⁴ Maria Eckhardt, *Franz Liszt's selected letters, Youth – virtuoso years – Weimar (1824–1861)*, Zenemukiado (Musical Publishers) Budapest, 1989, p. 129. to Ferenc Erkel 21–(24) November 1856, Zurich, (Sankt Gallen).

can make use of the occasion to get to know my godson better.³⁵ My long hair will be easily imprinted on his mind and later on when – presumably – the child will have absorbed sufficient musical substance, we shall understand each other well. For the time being, please tell Count Raday how happy I am that he substituted me (and once I give birth to my Hungarian opera, I will ask him again to be a kind of godfather) [...].³⁶

The next letter is dated one month later (26 December 1856) and comes from the excellent German writer and poet of Liszt's age, Salomon Hermann Mosenthal³⁷ who wrote the relevant opera libretto on the basis of Karl Beck's verse novel. The letter is about the initial stage, the clarification of fundamental issues.

You still owe me the instructions concerning our joint opera project. I have thought a lot about it. I have converted Beck's wonderful poem, Janko, into a very powerful musical drama by changing the end entirely. You should do three things about this. First of all, you should tell me whether you like it, then you would have to ask for Beck's approval (he plays a dominant role in this) and finally you should accept my anonymity, because I have withdrawn my 'abetment in crime' [i.e. rejected an offer] from several good composers regarding the opera.³⁸

Mosenthal urges consultation with Beck two months later.³⁹ Now let us deal with Janko. If I contact Beck, which I believe is inevitable, then I have to say good-bye to my anonymity. Therefore – if you do not want to contact Beck directly with a request to have the 'Janko' poem, saying that it is for a renowned German poet and

³⁵ "When Liszt visited Hungary in the summer of 1856, he made such good friends with his old acquaintance Ferenc Erkel (1810–1893), the chief conductor of the national orchestra which played in the mass and the symphonic concert that Erkel requested him to be the godfather of his smallest ninth son, Ferenc (1856–1863)." (Quotation: Eckhardt: op. cit. 129, footnote 1)

³⁶ "Count Gedeon Raday (1806–1873), the intendant of the National Theatre held Erkel's child over the baptismal font – in Liszt's absence." (Quotation: Eckhardt, op.cit. 129, footnote 2)

³⁷ Kassel, 14 January 1821 – † Vienna, 17 February 1877. He was renowned for his opera librettos and adaptations, and the most famous were *Saba kiralynoje (The Queen of Saba)* (Goldmark) and *A windsori vig nõk (The Marry Wives of Windsor)* (Nicolai). He wrote a libretto for Ferenc Doppler's *Judit*. He was also excellent in theatre plays other than opera librettos, in fact he had also been known as a poet. Mosenthal had written Volksstück, i.e. German folk plays since 1845, accomplishing his greatest successes in this field. The folk plays *Deborah* (1848) and *Der Sonnwendhof* (1857) were box-office hits.

³⁸ Vienna, 26 December 1856; *Franz Liszts Briefe*, Hrsg. v. La Mara, Bd. II. Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1893. Nr. 57.

³⁹ Vienna, 10 February 1857. La Mara, Bd. II. Nr. 64.

that Beck is to grant unlimited use for the purposes of an opera – then the best approach would be to ask our helpful friend Kertbeny⁴⁰ to intervene. As soon as I am informed by him or you about Beck’s approval, I will quickly start working, putting all already commenced work aside, and I will serve your Muse with all my might. I do not think it would be advisable to start earlier, because it is also possible that Beck exercises his veto. And, on the other hand, the poet’s approval does not represent an obligation for you or me.

In the same letter he provides exciting details about an idea he intends to use in the libretto for the authentic presentation of life in the ‘puszta’ (the Great Hungarian Plain). Hence, Petofi’s name crops up. He also mentions a deficiency he believes to be existing in Erkel’s operas. He talks about the future success hopefully, referring to a new and unsatisfied interest of the public.

I will soon put into our hands the scenario which draws up a draft of the story. The material must be substantially reduced for the stage; but it has wonderful moments; the life in the Hungarian ‘puszta’– which must be presented in a real folk fashion, and for which I would like to use Petofi’s poems – will contribute to strengthening your mastery skills and attract the unsatisfied interest of the public. Erkel’s operas have never gone beyond the Hungarian border [‘magyarische Grenze gegangen’], and this is a drawback of his works.⁴¹ The German factor in Janko is represented by the beautiful,

⁴⁰ Karoly Kertbeny (originally *Karl-Maria Benkert*, Vienna, 28 February 1824 – Budapest, 23 January 1882), a Hungarian translator, bibliographer and journalist of German (Bavarian) origin. He translated the works of *Petofi, Arany, Janos Garay, Vorosmarty* and *Jokai* into various European languages. During the freedom fight he is in Berlin, and because a friend of the revolution, Liszt invites him to Altenburg, he spends nine months there. In 1856, Liszt intended to ask him (!) to translate his *Ciganykonyv* (Gipsy Book) into Hungarian. (La Mara, IV, 234. 29 August). He gave up this intention, probably because Kertbeny – due to his poverty after the revolution – offered his services to the secret Austrian police. Liszt could have been informed about this by Agnes Street-Klidworth, his famous Brussels ‘double-agent’ friend. The relationship between Liszt and Kertbeny gradually deteriorates. See Lajos Gracza, *Liszt and the refugees of the 1848/49 Hungarian freedom fight*. in: Muzsika (Music) magazine October 2009. <http://epa.oszk.hu/00800/00835/00142/2976.htm>; (Accessed 3 March 2014) Mrs. Pogany Gabriella Rozsa, *Karoly Kertbeny (1842–1882) a translator and bibliographer / A Hungarian spirited intermediary of German culture in the 19th century*. in: *Konyvtari Figyelo* (Library Monitor) http://www.kjf.hu/manye/2011_szombathely/kotet/44_poganyne.pdf (Accessed 20 March 2014)

⁴¹ This remark is interesting because as well-known, Liszt consistently tried to have Erkel’s *Hunyadi* performed in Weimar (he conducted the overture of the opera in Vienna on 17 May 1846), but after his unsuccessful attempt (due to Erkel’s reluctance), he did not ever try to promote any Erkel opera or an adaptation, although he believed in Erkel’s greatness, and whenever he could, he did not miss seeing Erkel’s operas.

*but guilty German woman; I believe that we two could be successful in creating something good; I am determined. You should only acquire Beck's approval for me, because a literary man like me cannot put up with the poet's future accusations of a theft. You should therefore safeguard me against this!*⁴²

Liszt's correspondence with his long-time partner and consultant Duchess Sayn-Wittgenstein Carolyne offers many valuable pieces of information. As well-known, the late 1850's was a period of ups and downs in Liszt's life. His work in Weimar – due to the stronger intrigues and increasing difficulties – ended with resigning from the conductor's job in 1858. However, before that in April 1858 he had been able to enjoy a brief series of triumphs. He arrived in Pest with a steamboat departing on 30 March, and although it started out only as a courtesy visit, within the period he spent in Hungary, there were two successful concerts of his Esztergom Mass. It is obvious that the possibility of arriving in his homeland promoted the idea of the planned opera in his mind, and therefore before he departed he wrote the following to the duchess on 29 March 1858:

*The earlier discussions about the Hungarian opera were restarted; and therefore I have to stay here [i.e. in Vienna]⁴³ today so as to meet Karl Beck, whose poem Janos could be successfully used for an opera. I do not know what it will turn out to be, but I am relatively keen on writing this opera with Mosenthal, who has already made a kind of scenario: I will send it to you. We only need Beck's approval so as to avoid future objections and unpleasant explanations. [...]
I have just met Beck and I think Janos can be done. He was very kind and now I would only like to see how you like it. I will give you a detailed briefing as soon as I arrive.[...]
With these lines I send you lots of love in Weimar. I will set out for Pest tomorrow morning at 6 in a steamboat. Karatsony had sent me an offer to stay with him and I accepted. I am planning to be at his place for 3 or 4 days. After my return I have to stop for the same short period (here) to discuss with Beck and Mosenthal the matter of the libretto and to take delivery of the famous pulpit [sheet music holder?], which had been finished today as I was told.⁴⁴*

⁴² Vienna, 10 February 1857. La Mara Bd. II. No. 64.

⁴³ An addition by Hankiss, the publisher of the letter, see below.

⁴⁴ *Franz Liszt's Briefe. / Briefe an die Fürstin Carolyne Sayn-Wittgenstein*, Hrsg. v. La Mara Bd. IV. Nr. 311. The translation of the first part: Janos Hankiss, *Liszt Ferenc valogatott irasai (Franz Liszt's selected writings)* Budapest, Zenemukiado 1959, 441-442. The translation of the last paragraph missing from Hankiss is the work of Eszter Szabo Gilinger.

Therefore, Liszt had acquired the long awaited permission. He talked with Beck himself, without asking others to intervene, because by this time his relationship with Kertbeny mentioned in the Mosenthal letter has deteriorated, presumably because of an incident in relation to the secret police or perhaps because of his sexual identity.⁴⁵

From 29 March to 27 April 1858, until he left for Hungary, he was considerably preoccupied with this subject, because *Janko* was mentioned in more than half (!) of the eleven letters sent to the duchess at the time. On Tuesday 6 April 1858, he wrote again about a few days of consultation period with the librettists:

*Probably, I will be compelled to spend 4 or 5 days there [in Vienna] due to meetings with Mosenthal and Beck, with whom I would like to clarify the issues about Janko so that I can start working as soon as I will have finished Elisabeth. I have not forgotten that I promised you to complete Elisabeth during the year and I will seriously work on this as soon as I return from Weimar. Honestly!*⁴⁶

On Thursday 13 April he has already finished consultations about the circumstances of the premiere and he received the almost ready first act:

*This morning Mosenthal brought me the almost complete first act of Janko. I think you will like it. We have reached an agreement more or less that I would have it presented in Pest in early winter 1860 or late 1859. But first of all I must complete Elisabeth to your liking.*⁴⁷

It is probable on the basis of his letter dated Friday 16 April that they discussed the opera in details (perhaps Beck had even read the first chapter), because they all participated in an evening party, where it was discussed that in Germany or somewhere else 'such a work' may also be successful.

⁴⁵ See footnote 40 about his relationship with the secret agency. According to the most recent research, he was not only the first to contest the inhuman nature of criminal law against homosexuals, but he himself was homosexually oriented. (Judit Takacs: *The Double Life of Kertbeny*, in: G. Hekma (ed.) *Past and Present of Radical Sexual Politics*, UvA – Mosse Foundation, Amsterdam, 2004, pp. 26-40.) From his letter complaining about Liszt and written to Bettina von Armin on 28 October 1849, we can draw the conclusion that Liszt has realised his real identity earlier and was not very keen to respond. "After this I met my fellow countryman Liszt in Weimar, we understood each other and for two months we were magnetically attracted. However, philistines intervened, they took into possession Franz's soul and drove him into everyday acts in a way that he behaved coldly towards me and my real identity became embarrassing for him. We stayed together for a long while after this, but we have deceived each other with mutual courtesy. We went separate ways, and I did not take up his name on my lips either in a bad or a good sense, but he now scolds me loudly as if he wanted to deny to himself the power I exercised on him". The truth is that Liszt only expressed his 'disappointment' over him in his correspondence.

⁴⁶ 6 April 1858. La Mara, Bd. IV. No. 313

⁴⁷ 13 April 1858. Vienna. La Mara, Bd. IV. No. 316

I invited Mosenthal and Beck to the evening party. The first chapter of Janko is ready, and before my departure I will send you the preliminary libretto. Lacking a better option, this seems to be an appropriate environment to me to deal with Hungarian music. I like the idea of starting my opera career in Pest. By the way, unless I am mistaken, I believe that such an opera could be successful in Germany and in fact even perhaps elsewhere. I have to find the tone and maintain it throughout. And, you know what we believe: that our imagination will never desert us.⁴⁸

On Monday 19 April he already posts the first act so that the duchess could make her comments.

Under the same cover I am sending you the first act of Janko and the libretto. I hope it wins your appreciation. Mosenthal will soon complete the whole thing. Write your comments to me in Löwenberg, where I will arrive on Friday the latest.⁴⁹

His last reference to Janko written to the duchess on Thursday 27 April is only a kind of reminder.

In June, you would receive Rahl's portrait, which has led to this confession. Did you receive Janko? I must write from here to Augusz and Karatsony. Yesterday I replied to Nostitz in Prague and to Rosen in Rome. The day after tomorrow it will be Magnelotte's turn before I leave Löwenberg.⁵⁰

The almost casual question in a single sentence, however, does not only serve as a reminder, but it also signals to the duchess that Liszt is waiting for her approval. On 17 July 1847, when he finished the series of Hungarian Rhapsodies, he unexpectedly requests Duchess Wittgenstein (he has only got to know her recently) – as a new and nice gesture for winning her trust – to write a brief preface or postscript to the series.⁵¹ This is expanded – unluckily – into a whole volume, titled the *Ciganykonyv* (Gipsy Book) and published under Liszt's name.⁵² Roughly at this time, the

⁴⁸ 16 April 1858. La Mara, Bd. IV. No. 317

⁴⁹ 19 April 1858. La Mara, Bd. IV. No. 318

⁵⁰ 27 April 1858. 7 o'clock. La Mara, Bd. IV. No. 321

⁵¹ Klara Hamburger details the circumstances of the request. Klara Hamburger, *Liszt ciganykonyvenek magyarorszagi fogadtatasa (Reception of Liszt's Gipsy Book in Hungary) (First part 1859–1861)*, in *Muzsika* (Music) magazine, December 2000, volume 43, No. 12, p. 20.

⁵² This is published under the title *Des Bohémiens et de leur musique en Hongrie* – leading to high dissatisfaction. The manuscript was finished on 2 April 1859 and in the same year the French, and in 1861 the German (Peter Cornelius) and the Hungarian (translated by Jozsef Szekely) versions were published.

duchess completes her work, a romantic epical gipsy poem⁵³ based on many false facts. The consequences – unfortunately – make an impact on the opera as well. We have no information on the reply given by the duchess.⁵⁴ Anyway, repeated questioning by Liszt implies that she delayed her response and it is expressive that after a presumable reply – as far as we know – Liszt does not bring up his favourite subject any more to the duchess. After this, we can only trace the fate of Janko from secondary sources. A little more than two weeks later, on Saturday 15 May, Mosenthal reports with enthusiasm and pride that he has finished the whole work.

So, my dear friend, here is the finished Janko. You should be just as enthusiastic as I am. Then you will not let the book [i.e. the libretto] 'get cold' and you will grasp it with the full force of your genius, giving birth to the opera soon. I have tried: starting this work meant that it was supposed to be completed; I was unable to think of anything else until my poor horse-herder met his fate. I think Beck can rest assured: I did not do any harm to his poem.

Now I am sending you this with thousands of greetings and good wishes and I am longing to hear your kind opinion. I am requesting you to send your kind response to the address of the Ministry of Culture.

Your honoured Grand Duke invited me to a pleasant 15-minute discussion and he showed great interest in the planning of our joint work. He makes use of every occasion to talk about his Liszt with affection. Mr Von Villers – whom I have met several times recently because he presented me with the Albrecht medal on behalf of the King of Saxony – would like to read the libretto of our opera. I am wondering whether such an early disclosure is not against your wishes; after all you are now the owner of this little work. If you wish, I will send him my draft.⁵⁵

Therefore, the completed libretto was lying on Liszt's desk, waiting for the music to be composed. From this time, the ability to follow the events is more limited. Mosenthal's next and last letter was written in response to Liszt's missing letter, which terminated joint work and listed the reasons. Although the letter which would carry the broadest information for us is missing (Liszt probably destroyed it), in spite (in fact because) of the confidential nature of the response, it is more than expressive.

⁵³ According to Klara Hamburger's research and the findings of other researchers, Liszt had played a relatively small part in writing the full text.

⁵⁴ The Wittgenstein letters are unpublished up to this day, and they are kept as manuscripts in the Weimar-based Goethe-Schiller Archives. From 1858 – according to their catalogue – they do not have a letter written to Liszt.

⁵⁵ 15 May 1858. La Mara, Bd. II. No. 102

My honoured Friend, The letter I was longing to receive from you in response to my last letter indeed shattered my dreams. And yet, the composer's intention rules and no resistance is possible. I confess that I have not intended from the outset to look upon the presentation of the opera during the Palatinus festivities as the main or final aim. I had told you about my concerns at the time, and the material which was according to your special wish a kind of genre play in which the Hungarian nobleman [magyarische Edelman] does not play the main role in any respect, well, this material seemed to me from the start not to suit the palate of those who are responsible for organising the festivities. You certainly remember, my dear friend that I have told you about these worries. I focused primarily on our German audience, which looks forward with interest and curiosity to a Liszt opera, and quite recently it was Adolf Stahr⁵⁶ who expressed his enthusiasm about the prospect of enjoying a Hungarian genre painting made with voices by you. He evaluated this work as the most fortunate creation of your talent. For me it was not so important to make sure that this joint work was presented for a special occasion, and without any bitterness I would have transferred the honour to a Hungarian poet to make the special libretto for this occasion. Later on a German audience would have been certainly enthusiastic about our Janko. The work I have done exceptionally, gladly and quickly for you my dear Liszt, would always remain your property, and if you look at this calmly and clearly like me, you will certainly agree that this is undeniable. The newspapers – against my own desire and will – have already advertised the plot and the title. The suggestion to offer and submit to a different composer a libretto considered to have been rejected by you is something you will find incompatible with my name and literary reputation, especially because the reasons on the basis of which you have done so and the persons who advised you to act like this are of such a confidential nature that I cannot tell any other composer about the reason for your disappointment. I am also aware that every time I have written a libretto, I took the individuality of the composer so much into consideration and tried to put myself in his shoes so much that such a work may not be arbitrarily transferred afterwards. Well, half of my desire and objective was satisfied. I would have liked to be available to you fully and quickly – as you are a sincerely honoured and adored artist, who attracted my muse. I have fulfilled this task faithfully and perhaps not miserably. Maybe at a later time

⁵⁶ Adolf Stahr (Prenzlau, 22 October 1805– † Wiesbaden, 3 October 1876) German writer and historian. Liszt highly respected his work as a historian and writer.

*the other half of my desire will also be satisfied, when you accept
my gift and fill it with your genius.
Sincerely yours as always,*

Vienna, 27 November 1858 Mosenthal⁵⁷

Unfortunately, the word ‘Palatinusfest’ mentioned by Mosenthal has not been found in any other source so far. It was probably a celebration associated with Archduke Joseph, Palatine of Hungary (in Latin, palatinus means palatine) or another imperial and royal highness (maybe a deputy of the king, a count palatine – this version of the meaning is also known). At the name celebration of the adored and respected monarch, the Vocal-mass composed for this special occasion by Endre Bartay, a composer and theatre director (the person who invented folk play) was presented for a long time.⁵⁸ However, because Archduke Joseph died in 1847, only a commemorative ceremony could have been involved. Another reason for celebration could have been the finishing of the clay version of Archduke Joseph’s statue in August 1858,⁵⁹ but the inauguration of the statue was postponed.⁶⁰ (It is to be noted that Liszt was present at the celebration that took place 22 years later in 1869, when Archduke Joseph’s statue was unveiled.)⁶¹ The example of postponed statue inauguration indicates how sensitive the policy of the era was in association with festivities.

The emperor, or events associated with the emperor may also be tied to the word palatine. His Imperial and Royal Highness Crown Prince Rudolf was born on 21 August 1858, and on this occasion a foundation⁶² encouraging the sponsorship of charity institutions was established by Count Guido Karatsonyi, who was Liszt’s friend and sponsor. In 1858, Vasarnapi Ujsag (Sunday News) wrote about the nameday celebrations of

⁵⁷ La Mara, Bd. II. No. 115.

⁵⁸ *Ede Bartay* in: Szineszkonyvtar (Library of Actors and Actresses), www.szineszkonyvtar.hu/contents/a-e/bartavelet.htm (Accessed 20 March 2014)

⁵⁹ Directly after the Palatine’s death, the Joseph Memorial Association was founded (in which the following prestigious persons were also members: Jozsef Hild, Miklos Ybl, Ferenc Toldy and Istvan Szechenyi). The major objective of the Association was erecting the Palatine’s statue, but the 1848 events delayed the plan for a long time.

⁶⁰ Probably, the authorities believed that it was not appropriate yet to let a large number of people come together in the Hungarian capital. The complete metal statue was finished in 1860. Dr Ede Szabo, *A pest-budai palatinus – Jozsef nador (The Pest-Buda Palatine – Archduke Joseph)*. 11 March 2011 www.onkormanyzatiklub.hu/kulonlegeseletraizok/1012-a-pest-budai-palatinus-jozsef-nador (Accessed 20 March 2014)

⁶¹ Pesti Naplo (Pest Journal) 25 April 1869: “Among others, Franz Liszt accompanied by Remenyi were seen on the balcony of the Kugler house...”

⁶² The amount earmarked for sponsorship came from the interests of the 100.000 Pengo Forint foundation.

the emperor held on 4 October.⁶³ If Liszt intended to compose the opera for one of these occasions, then it is certainly understandable that the topic did not provide sufficient ‘glitter’, because the main characters are all low-born, in fact the woman in the main role is a gipsy, the leading male character becomes a social outcast, an outlaw, when the story takes a tragic turn; and the single representative of the noble class, the German count, is on the negative side from the aspect of the story. Mosenthal mentions in his own defence that he certainly mentioned earlier: the plot “does not suit the palate of those who are responsible for organising the festivities”. He further mentions, again in his own defence that it was not important for him to boast about an illustrious event, and without being offended he would have passed on to a Hungarian colleague the possibility of making a libretto for the festivities. (And hence this could have also been contested by the organisers of the celebration.) Mosenthal wrote the play for a Vienna theatre and a German audience who appreciated the exoticism and almost longed for a Hungarian topic. (It is to be noted that this objective was finally met, because Rubinstein, to whom the libretto was given, insisted on a Vienna performance.) Mosenthal was right when he concluded that technically the libretto could only be successful with a Vienna audience, because at that time many of his folk plays – most of them also based on exoticism – were performed there very successfully.

It is also obvious from Mosenthal’s reply that Liszt probably told his friend: if his libretto were offered to another composer, the excellent work would not be wasted. This is rejected quite firmly in his letter by Mosenthal, and he lists reasons like the libretto having been made especially for Liszt, and that a ‘reuse’ was impossible. As the most important cause, he mentions those confidential reasons and persons that contributed to Liszt giving up his intention to compose the music. An explanation for concealing the identity of involved persons could be that people close to Liszt ‘suggested’ the rejection of the idea. Perhaps it was Duchess Wittgenstein herself who made negative remarks, or Liszt’s good friends, Hungarian noblemen, perhaps indeed Count Gedeon Raday – who at that time (from 1854 for a period of six years) was the head of the National Theatre and who should have been the godfather – indicated his doubts? According to our current information, Liszt no longer mentions *Janko* in his correspondence, and this is a sign how sensitively he was touched by this matter. But, his legendary generosity carries him on, and if he will not

⁶³ “The nameday of His Majesty the Emperor was held by the sister city on 4 October with the appropriate decorations and solemnity. In the morning, the notabilities of the churches, civil and military authorities, major and minor officials, and a large number of worshippers were present at the religious services performed in the main churches. The theatres were illuminated at night.” Vasamapi Ujsag (Sunday News), volume 5, No. 41, 10 October 1858.

compose the music, then he lets someone else do it. He may have somehow persuaded his librettist friend to offer the libretto to Anton Grigorevich Rubinstein, a Liszt contemporary, who was called the 'Russian Liszt', and because of Liszt's incognito, this was not supposed to be embarrassing even for Mosenthal.

Next time, Mosenthal's opera libretto is mentioned in Rubinstein's letter written from Saint Petersburg almost exactly one year later on 12 November 1859.

*Shall I give you an account of all the hardships I had to go through since we have seen each other? No, I will postpone this enjoyment till the spring when I will be passing through Vienna and tell you personally. I will take to Vienna a four-act opera, the librettist is Mosenthal, and I would like to have it presented in Vienna, because I believe that the best opera in Germany is in that city in view of the opportunities.*⁶⁴

It is ironic that Rubinstein also mentions the Gipsy Book, and although he praises the work, he also mentions its deficiency:

I have read your Gipsy Book with great enjoyment, and it is extremely interesting to the artists and also to the laymen. The only thing I was sorry about was the lacking musical examples that would have illustrated their harmonies and songs, especially for the sake of those, who have never heard this music and who therefore have no idea about the wildness of this music or about that specific musical 'furia zingarese'.

He also promises in his letter to arrive in Altenburg in April. Liszt's response⁶⁵ dated 3 December 1859 is very polite, but it is objective and laconic. He keeps his involvement related to the subject in the dark, and there is no reference to the fact that he knows about the relevant libretto. He only writes objectively that he would like Rubinstein to come as he promised and to have the premiere of his opera in Vienna. The secret was presumably not betrayed, as we do not have any information on Rubinstein having been informed about the origin of the libretto.

But why Rubinstein?

Always compared to Liszt on the basis of his concert performance, the piano virtuoso's relationship with Liszt commenced in 1841.⁶⁶ The

⁶⁴ La Mara, Bd. II. No. 158

⁶⁵ La Mara, Bd. II. No. 226

⁶⁶ Indirectly, he had a relationship with Liszt already at the age of 9, because among others, he played a Liszt composition at his first public concert (11 July 1839). See Philip S. Taylor, *Anton Rubinstein, A life in music*, (= Russian Music Series) Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis, 2007.9

young pianist was deeply impressed by Liszt's piano performance he had heard in Paris, which was followed by a number of other occasions. It was a remarkable period which he spent with Liszt in Altenburg. As well known, Liszt presented in Weimar – while he was the head of the theatre – nearly fifty operas, of which eight were premieres, including Rubinstein's *Die sibirischen Jäger*⁶⁷, which was first shown on 9 November 1854.⁶⁸ His younger contemporary was sincerely appreciated by Liszt, because he had special empathy to recognise a talent, and although he sensed Rubinstein's resistance to modern music Liszt himself represented (in his opinion only the concept of the New Weimar School was lacking from his character),⁶⁹ his value judgement was unbiased. He wrote the following in his letter to Hans von Bülow⁷⁰ (7 June 1854, Weimar):

Do you know Rubinstein? He is the example of a hardworking and above average artist. In his six-year seclusion in St. Petersburg, he wrote several operas, half a dozen symphonies, the same number of piano concertos and plenty of quartets, trios, sonatas and light compositions, etc., etc.

A week ago I have put him up in Altenburg, and although he is consistently biased against the 'music of the future', I highly appreciate his talent and character. He is 25 years of age, a genuine piano talent (who has neglected this instrument in recent years) and it would be unjust to measure this man by an everyday standard.

When making a comparison of their careers, we find that after the early stage of getting acquainted – worshipping and instinctive imitation – Rubinstein deliberately⁷¹ followed Liszt's example in his attitudes towards being a performer, composer and organiser, the outstanding *parallels* of which are the setting up and management of the Russian Musical Society (1859) and the St. Petersburg Conservatory (1862), as well as the organising (1886) of the London series called 'historical solo recitals' which continued the fashion of the old music of romanticism in Liszt's style⁷².

⁶⁷ *Sibirskije ochotniki* (The Hunter of Siberia) libretto Andrei Žerebcov, Romantic opera in one act, 185, Weimar 1854

⁶⁸ Peter Raabe, *Franz Liszt. Leben und Schaffen*. Bd. 1-2. Berlin 1931, Cotta. Zeiteerg. Aufl. Tutzing 1968. 116S. This work was only performed twice, the second time on 22 November 1854.

⁶⁹ See Walker: op. cit. II. 226

⁷⁰ Eckhardt: op. cit. 160-161

⁷¹ See Taylor: op. cit. 50-51.

⁷² In 1838, Liszt presented more than 40 compositions, among others (as a premiere) Scharlatti to the illustrious audience in Vienna. Anton Rubinstein continues these efforts and raises the piano composers of the 'old music' to a pedestal. See Walker Alain *Liszt I*. 270

However, Liszt who had an irresistible influence as an artist, was unacceptable⁷³ to Rubinstein as a composer.

Already since 1856, when he completed his oratorio *Das verlorne Paradies*, he was looking for a new opera libretto, without success. At that time he stayed in Weimar. Obviously, the finding of a good libretto⁷⁴ must have been a frequently discussed subject with residents there including Liszt, and this is also confirmed by the fact that Duchess Caroline von Wittgenstein had also given the subject a thought. She recommended to Rubinstein (!) that his new opera⁷⁵ should be about the topic of the wars of religion or more specifically the Hussite uprising. Rubinstein, however, rejected this idea, because he thought Meyerbeer had covered this subject sufficiently in *Huguenots*,⁷⁶ and therefore he continued searching for 'the one'. This is a period of frequent correspondence and close friendship. Perhaps out of generosity or by letting his 'parental' or testator spirit take over, Liszt made sure that the precious libretto of *his* opera was handed over to a colleague who was so similar to him in his efforts and genius. Although it is logical that the hassle around the *Gipsy Book* and the disappointment about being neglected during the Palatinus festivities interrupted the creation process which was only about to commence, if Rubinstein did not so badly need and demand an appropriate libretto to protect his reputation as a composer, perhaps later on at a more suitable time he would have started to work on the plot which was absolutely unique for him, with such an impressive subject: the *Hungarian-gipsy* identity. At the same time, with the proper anticipation, if a 'more suitable time' never came, the precious opera could still be composed safely.

Hungary was included in Rubinstein's European tour, and this could have made the links even closer. He gave six concerts between 28

⁷³ "Liszt is a person about whom I should write a book if I wanted to analyse him. I can only tell you that this is a person who is, in all respects, such that you rarely find – and that is as an artist, as a person, and as a writer. He behaves perfectly toward me and predicts that I will have absolute success in my plans, although we completely disagree on the principal points of his views on music, which consists in the fact that he sees in Wagner the prophet of the future in opera, and in Berlioz – the prophet of the future in the domain of the symphony. I confess that I have learned a great deal from him and that many things would have passed me by quite unnoticed had I not known him and had we not exchanged views." (One part of a letter dated 15/27 July 1854.) Taylor: op. cit. 51

⁷⁴ Already earlier, for example in 1854, he discussed with Liszt which new libretto he should choose. From the themes offered, Liszt selected *Die Sibirische Jäger* for Rubinstein. His advice did not fall on deaf ears and Liszt conducted the opera at the premiere. Since then Rubinstein was hoping to get a good libretto from several librettists (Max Ring, Friedrich Hebbel), but either the libretto was not made or he was not satisfied with the result.

⁷⁵ Taylor: op. cit. 68

⁷⁶ Taylor: op. cit. 68. See below in relation to the *Huguenots* in footnote 124.

December 1857 and 27 January 1858.⁷⁷ (Rubinstein almost took turns with Liszt, who stayed in Pest in April). On this occasion, Rubinstein certainly encountered Hungarian songs composed in the style of folk songs, in fact during his Pest concerts in January 1858, he created the Hungarian phantasy *Fantasie sur des Melodies Hongroises pour le Piano*. This work comprises six Egressy songs.⁷⁸ Most certainly he came across the genre of folk play, too, because this category came into being in 1843, and reached the peak of its popularity in this period. Indeed, the Egressy songs themselves were used as the incidental music of folk plays.⁷⁹

In winter 1858 he had concerts in Vienna, whence he informed his mother that he was waiting to receive an opera libretto.⁸⁰ According to his researchers, however, it is not clear which libretto is involved.⁸¹ In spring 1859, the founding of Rubinstein's Russian Musical Society was starting to take shape, the first meeting was in autumn, and in winter the concert series started, with ten performances planned. For these concerts, they were looking for composers who would give permission to have their works played. Rubinstein, who was less understanding or tolerant⁸² towards new music, nevertheless wrote to Liszt in November. The letter cited above mentions the Mosenthal libretto and asks for help in presenting Liszt and

⁷⁷ In 1847, he gave concerts with the flutist Eduard Heidl in Sopron, Bratislava and Győr. Already since 1842, he had performances in Pest. He gave solo concerts in Pest in 1858, 1867, 1870 and 1875. (Gabor Winkler, *Barangolas az operak vilagaban. [A Journey in the World of Operas]*. Tudomány Kiadó (Science Publishing House), Budapest, 2005–2006, volume III, 2277). He was highly esteemed: the 19 January 1858 performance of Ferenc Erkel's opera *Erzsebet (Elizabeth)* was held in Rubinstein's honour in the National Theatre, not long after the premiere. See Katalin Szacsvai Kim, *Az Erkel-muhely, kozos munka Erkel Ferenc szinpadi muveiben (1840-1857) (The Erkel workshop, joint work in Ferenc Erkel's theatre plays (1840-1857))*, doctoral dissertation, 2012, 157

⁷⁸ Gyula B. Berczessi, *Tollal – lanttal – fegyverrel. Egressy Beni elete es munkassaga (By pen, lute and weapon. Beni Egressy's life and work)*. 1986. 113. He only mentions three songs: 1. This is such a big world, 2. My little flute is the branch of a weeping willow and 6. Small carriage, large carriage.

⁷⁹ See Monika Papp, *Nepszínmuvek zenei emlékei (The Music History of Folk Plays) (1843–1875)*. FLUM musicology thesis, 2000. In the FLUM music library.

⁸⁰ "That is, to see my cherished dream fulfilled, for at the present time, only with an opera can one achieve real success; we may assume that it will be successful – my passionate desire is a guarantee of this." Taylor: op. cit. 71.

⁸¹ According to Annakátrin Täuschel, the libretto of a certain Max Ring is involved, with whom he was in contact in the previous summer. According to Taylor, it is more likely that it was written by Friedrich Hebbel, but later on he found it to be useless. Taylor: op. cit. 291. Footnote 104.

⁸² According to Julia Victorovna Moskva, one of his researchers, Rubinstein's resistance against Liszt's music was due to the fact that he was young and also that he did not share the basic ideological principles of the older artist or his views about musical creativeness. Julia Victorovna Moskva, *Liszt and Anton Rubinstein*. in: *Journal of the American Liszt Society* 26, 1989. (29-32.) 30.

Wagner compositions.⁸³ Already working on the opera, Rubinstein writes the following to his friend:

*I have absolutely no luck with opera texts. I have wasted a lot of time and money and everything has been unusable. Besides, I have such a passionate desire to write an opera that I am unable with the required inclination to involve myself in any other kind of work. I am hoping that with my present attempt, I shall have more luck, and then the world will have something novel in store!*⁸⁴

A large part of the opera was written not far from the capital, in Dornbach⁸⁵, quite rapidly⁸⁶. He spent his holiday there in 1860. It is clear from his correspondence that he was in a hurry, because he wanted to finish the work before the end of the winter.⁸⁷ The libretto of *Janko, der ungarische Rosshirt* was given a new title: *Kinder der Heide*⁸⁸ and after a long period of creation, the opera was finally completed.

The premiere was on 23 February 1861 in the Kärtnerter Theatre, Vienna, as he envisaged. Not much later, in the same year, the first Vienna Spina publication came out, as a composer-authorized piano score. Around 1870, Spina republished in Vienna the piano score (on 279 pages) and then the Senff Publishing House released the orchestral score (on 451 pages) first in 1870 and then approximately in the years 1875–79. In 1880, Bartholf Senff published the score and in 1884 the piano score (on 317 pages) as a complete edition. The Russian version was first presented on 10 February 1867 in Moscow, where the Jurgenson⁸⁹ Publishing House

⁸³ "I do not know whether you are sufficiently interested in the music life of Russia and whether you are aware that we have founded a musical society, the purpose of which among others is to present the compositions of any master, any school and any period, [...]. What I have in mind are the piano concerto in E flat major, *Les Préludes*, *Orpheus*, Wagner's *Faust Overture*, *The Flying Dutchman*. [...] but I do not know how to get hold of the score – whether it exists in print, do you have it, and could you lend it to me?" La Mara, Bd. II. Nr. 158.

⁸⁴ Taylor: op. cit. 85. LN, 2: 98

⁸⁵ Dornbach is a small and quiet village, where even a postal service is unavailable and therefore it is an ideal place for a composer. Taylor: op. cit. 86.

⁸⁶ In a longer review, Eduard Hanslick discusses the premiere, to be described at length below (Niederheinische Musik-Zeitung / für Kunstfreunde und Künstler. Herausgegeben von Professor L. Bischoff. – Verlag der M. DuMont-Schauberg'schen Buchhandlung, No.10. Köln, 9. März 1861. IX. Jahrgang. S 73-76.) Among other topics, he criticises the composer for creating the opera 'in just one summer', because if he worked 'slower and more prudently' then in his opinion the composer would have written an outstanding opera.

⁸⁷ Quoted letter: Täuschel, Annakarin, *Rubinstein als Opernkomponist*. 2001, Verlag Ernst Kuhn, Berlin, in *Studia Slavica Musicologica*, Band 23. 295. (Rubinstein, Briefe, Bd. 1, 106)

⁸⁸ Hungarian title: A puszta gyermekei (*Children of the Moorland*).

⁸⁹ The Rubinstein family played a role in the founding of the publishing house: it was set up by Pyotr Ivanovich Jurgenson in 1861 acting on the advice of Anton Rubinstein's brother Nikolai (a pianist and conductor).

released in 1887 the Russian piano score version (on 307 pages).⁹⁰ The German manuscript score is in Vienna.⁹¹

Rubinstein's opera

Rubinstein's opera writing career includes fourteen operas⁹² which had carried a national character initially. He wrote his first opera in 1830 at the age of twenty, right after his Berlin study tour, under commission from the Russian Imperial Theatre. The so far continuous series of heroic national operas is interrupted by his first mature opera, the *Kinder der Heide* written at the age of thirty-two. This was his first opera written for the German stage, in which the *couleur locale*, i.e. the place where the story takes place is transferred from the territory of Hungary to the Ukraine.⁹³

The synopsis is the following.⁹⁴ In the moorland, on a cloudy evening, the gipsy girl Isbrana is longing to see her love, the horse-herder Vanya, while another gipsy Grigory repairs a pot. Two other gipsies, Pavel and Bogdan join them soon. The three gipsy lads decide to rob the inn associated with the court of Count Waldemar (Vladimir). (The inn is owned by the foreigner Conrad, who lives there with Maria, his foster-daughter of German ancestry.) The count's horse-herder Vanya, who does not feel anything towards Isbrana, arrives. His plan is to break up relationship with Isbrana, because he is being mocked about this by his non-gipsy friends. To prove her love, the gipsy girl reveals the accidentally eavesdropped plan of robbing the inn. The horse-herder is moved by the gipsy girl's benevolence and he swears again to be faithful to her forever. He prevents the robbing with the help of shepherds, and carries the fainted Maria in his arms from the house – absolutely overwhelmed by her looks. Out of gratitude, the inn-owner gives his daughter's hand to him, but Maria loves somebody else secretly, although she does not know who this man actually is.

The second act is about the wedding of Maria and Vanya. Maria confesses to her father that she is in love with a mysterious man. From her foster-father she learns that the mysterious man is no one else, but Count

⁹⁰ Information on the basis of <<http://www.ubka.uni-karlsruhe.de>>.

⁹¹ ÖNB Musiksammlung OA.243/1-3.MUS. The manuscript libretto may also be found here under the number Mus. Hs. 32027.

⁹² Various sources provide different numbers right up to 20. Currently, we have taken as a basis the data of the most up-to-date Rubinstein monography written by P. S. Taylor.

⁹³ Maybe Mosenthal is the exclusive author of the first three acts of the libretto. However, the libretto of the last act was edited by 'unsuitable people' and not the composer. Therefore, a weird idea like transferring the scene of the story to Mexico(!) was also considered initially. Finally, the location of the story was changed to south Russia, the place where – according to Hanslick – he felt most at home. See: *Niederrheinische Musik-Zeitung* 9. März 1861. IX. Jahrgang, 73.

⁹⁴ I have compiled the story according to the text of the piano score from Bartholf Senff of Leipzig (1884) and the Hanslick review.

Vladimir himself. After the performance of the girls' choir who wish the couple all the very best, Isbrana must entertain the young couple with her song. The deeply disappointed girl sings a sad song about an unfaithful lover. The couple just leave the church, when the count arrives, and he is shocked by the recognition that the woman of his dreams has just married someone else. Vanya is absorbed into the crowd to play cards and drink, and therefore the count and Maria are left on their own, quickly discovering their attraction to each other. The inn owner surprises them, and warns Maria that she must be faithful to her husband; but this is in vain, because Waldemar is determined, and Maria – being torn between her obligation and emotions, as a prediction of losing her mind later on – faints again. Vanya is already on stage, and wants to know who tortured his wife. But, the count does not pay any attention to him, and only concentrates on trying to revive Maria. In the meantime he cleverly diverts attention, proposes toasts, and then a grand wedding with gipsy dancers begins.

In the third act, Isbrana finds Vanya fast asleep after the party. She guards him, but when Vanya wakes up, she only gets angry words from him. Grigory boasts while Isbrana is around that he has a special letter, and the gipsy girl succeeds in obtaining it. While having a quarrel with Vanya, the gipsy girl avers that Maria is unfaithful to Vanya. Because the horse-herder does not believe her, she presents the obtained message to prove that the count invited Maria to a secret rendezvous. Actually, she wants Maria to see the letter as well, and while the husband wards off the bitter truth and only blames the gipsy girl, in fact he makes Isbrana to kneel down and ask Maria for forgiveness, the story takes an interesting turn: the two women sympathise with each other's passion and Maria starts to feel sorry for the gipsy girl. Only Maria remains on stage and she starts to feel that she is lost without love. Vladimir surprises her, and although she tries to head off his approach by saying that it is already too late, she finds herself in the count's arms. The horse-herder comes back, surprises Maria with Vladimir, starts a fight to regain self-esteem, wins behind the scenes and the count dies. And this is when the famous sentence is uttered during a pause of the music after a tremolo: "Ja, hört und lasst's euch sagen, ich hab' den Herrn erschlagen!"⁹⁵, which is detailed in the arioso coming right after this. The sentence made the audience's hair stand on end at the time. Vanya manages to escape with the help of Isbrana and the gipsies.

In the fourth act, the gipsy girl tries to comfort Vanya in vain at his forest hideaway after fleeing. The new reason for Vanya's bitterness is that he had to realise in the wake of a visit by Conrad and Maria that Maria lost her mind under the impact of the events. Vanya tries to make Maria

⁹⁵ "Yes, listen and hear, I have beaten the gentleman to death!" The revolutionary tone of the opera is absolutely underpinned by this sentence. After the 1848 revolution, while making preparations for the Compromise, maybe this is not the luckiest turn of the story.

responsive, and kneels in front of her penitently, but of course this makes Isbrana angry again after being almost hopeful. Because he lets the father and daughter leave freely, the gypsies are also turned against him. The soldiers are approaching, the disappointed Isbrana lets them know where the fugitive is. Scared by her own deed, Isbrana offers her love again, and begs Vanya to escape with her, but the horse-herder rejects her offer – still thinking of Maria. The gypsy girl takes action as a result of the unresolved nature of the story. When the soldiers come close to them, she pulls the dagger from the belt of the horse-herder/outlaw, stabs herself and dies.

In comparison with the original text, this is a change of the largest significance: at the end of the story, the gypsy girl commits suicide, which changes the focus of tragedy; in this case the main character is not Vanya, but the gypsy girl who is willing to follow the horse-herder to his fate.

The front page of the first printed piano score features the casting of the premiere, and this information is supplemented by the other printed scores:

Table 1

The casting of the premiere

Role	Voice type	Vienna, Kärntnertor Theatre, 23 February 1861
Count Waldemar ⁹⁶ , an officer	tenor	Herr Walter → Gustav Walter
Conrad, <i>the German owner of an inn on the count's estate</i>	baritone	Herr Hrabanek → Franz Hrabanek
Maria, <i>his daughter</i>	soprano	Frl. Krauss → Marie-Gabrielle Krauss
Wania, <i>the horse-herder</i>	tenor	Herr Ander → Aloyes Ander
Isbrana, <i>the gypsy</i>	mezzo-soprano	Frau Csillag → Mrs Csillag (Roza Csillag)
Grigori, ↴ Bogdan, <i>gypsies</i> Pawel ↵	bass baritone bass	Herr Mayerhofer ⁹⁷ → Carl Herr Lay ⁹⁸ → Theodor Herr Koch ⁹⁹ → ?

⁹⁶ I did not change the names, but used the German versions.

⁹⁷ Carl Mayerhofer, bass, Vienna, 13 March 1828 – †Vienna, 2 January 1913 (the details of opera singers come from the database of Vienna opera singers: <<http://www.operone.de/repro/repro.html>>.)

⁹⁸ Theodor Lay, baritone, Augsburg, 17 November 1825 – †?, 13 December 1893.

⁹⁹ A bassist from this period could not be found in the database under the surname Koch. However, a tenor with the same name is found in the database and it is possible that the role was played by him. The details: Caspar Koch, Cologne, 1889.– †?, 5 December 1952.

Role	Voice type	Vienna, Kärntnertor Theatre, 23 February 1861
<i>Lisa, a gipsy girl</i>	mezzo-soprano	Miss Weiß ¹⁰⁰ → Amalie Weiss
<i>An inn servant</i>	tenor	? ¹⁰¹
<i>A gipsy</i>	tenor	?
	conductor	Felix Otto Dessoff ¹⁰²
<i>People in the castle. Shepherds. Peasants. Peasant Women. Gipsies (Musicians). Gipsies (Robbers). Scene: The moorlands in the Ukraine.</i>		

By studying the list of names in the first casting, famous names are found.¹⁰³ Gustav Walter¹⁰⁴ was a tenor of Czech ancestry, who nine years later played Walter von Stolzing in the first Vienna presentation of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, and he was the top tenor on the Vienna stage on an ongoing basis for thirty years.¹⁰⁵ Although he was not at the top, Franz Hrabanek¹⁰⁶ was praised for his consistent and reliable performance by contemporary reviews.¹⁰⁷ And, Marie-Gabrielle Krauss¹⁰⁸ (who was exactly eighteen years old at the time of the premiere) was one of the most promising students of Mathilde Marchesi, the famous German mezzo-

¹⁰⁰ Amalie Weiss, mezzo-soprano, Munich, 10 February 1807 – † Vienna, 13 October 1840.

¹⁰¹ Unfortunately, it has not been possible to see the Vienna playbill yet.

¹⁰² Felix Otto Dessoff (1835–1892) was discovered by Liszt, and he became the leader of Vienna Philharmonics at the age of 25 as of 1860. He was in this post until 1875, and therefore the 1861 premiere was in the beginning of his career there. Hanslick writes enthusiastically about him: "Conductor Dessoff has special merits in the precise presentation, and he learnt this very complicated novelty with a self-sacrificing eagerness." Hanslick: op. cit. 76.

¹⁰³ The casting of 1861 are included by Spina in the printed score. (The details are first given by Taylor, op. cit. p. 90). I will identify the shortened first names and add subsequent details to the table: Weiss, and I will continue listing the activities of all singers.

¹⁰⁴ Gustav Walter, tenor, Bilin (Bílina/Böhmen), 11 February 1834 – † ? 31 January 1910.

¹⁰⁵ Gustav Walter (1834–1910) was primarily a Mozart and Goldmark singer, but he was also known as the light tenor of Wagner operas and a tenor of Verdi, Donizetti and Gounod compositions. He was also known in song literature, he sang Brahms, Dvořák (who dictated *Cigánske melodie*, the Gipsy Songs to him) compositions and he was one of the earliest singers whose voice could be enjoyed by later generations on gramophone recordings (made in 1905). (Kutsch, K. J. *A concise biographical dictionary of singers: from the beginning of recorded sound to the present*. 1969; *Gustav Walter*. Grove Music Online ed. L. Macy (Accessed January 30, 2014)

¹⁰⁶ Franz Hrabanek, ?, 1820 – † ?, 17 October 1870.

¹⁰⁷ In his review, Hanslick writes about the supporting singers as follows: "Miss Krauss, Mr Weiss, Mr Walter, Mr Mayerholer, Mr Roch, Mr Lay and Mr Hrabanek rose to the high standard of the above mentioned artists." Hanslick: op. cit. 76.

¹⁰⁸ Marie-Gabrielle Krauss, soprano, Vienna, 24 March 1842 – † Vienna, 6 January 1906.

soprano singer/teacher of bel canto at the Vienna Academy, and who later played significant roles on the Paris, Italian and Russian opera stages.¹⁰⁹ Aloys Ander¹¹⁰, a singer of Czech ancestry also had an outstanding career on the opera stage. His personality was an especially good choice for this role - a typical folk play character,¹¹¹ and in addition Ander had played very successfully the heroes of the age.¹¹² As a matter of interest, Ander had his debut in 1845 with outstanding success¹¹³ in a play which directly preceded the folk play, originally in the main role of a Paris single act vaudeville, the *Stradella* (1837) from which later on (in 1844) Flotow made a three-act opera.

A Hungarian singer was chosen to play the most interesting part in the opera, Isbrana, practically the main character. Mrs Csillag, i.e. Roza Csillag¹¹⁴ was then at the peak of her career, which she started as a

¹⁰⁹ A French singer who was born in Austria (1842–1906), an important singer of Gounod, Saint-Saëns, Boieldieu, and Meyerbeer operas. Also featured in the local presentations of Wagner and Verdi operas. (*Gabrielle Krauss*, *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, edition 5. 1954, Vol. IV, p. 838)

¹¹⁰ Originally, Aloys Anderle (Libitz a. d. Doubrava, 13 October 1821 – † Wartenberg, 11 December 1864), a German lyric tenor of Czech ancestry, with an especially strong acting character. Important roles: *The Prophet*, *The Huguenots*, *Martha*, *William Tell*. In Wagner's presence, the first presentation of *Lohengrin* in 1861 (on this basis Wagner offered the role of *Tristan* to him). Outstanding appearances: the premiere of Offenbach's great romantic opera *Die Rheinnixen*, the score of which was adjusted by the composer to Ander. His personality divided the audience: Wagner's hope that Ander would be his first *Tristan* led to the fact that Wagnerians protested against Offenbach's work. See: Constantin von Wurzbach, *Ander Aloys* in *Biographisches Lexikon des Kaiserthums Oesterreich*. Bd. 1. Wien, 1856. 32; *Alois Ander*. Grove Music Online ed. Elisabeth Fobers (Accessed: 30 February 2014)

¹¹¹ The horse-herder or a similar folk character appears in a significant majority of folk plays. Note: The most important folk play of the very first period which had been on stage for a long time with huge success and which had also been seen by Liszt later on was the similarly titled *Csikos* (*Horse-herder*) written by Ede Szigligeti in 1847. And Hanslick praises him like this: "Mr Ander encountered a very resistive problem in the character of Vanya and therefore he deserves special merit, because he performed excellently both as a singer and an actor." Hanslick: op. cit. 76.

¹¹² E.g. Wagner's *Tannhäuser*, Donizetti's *Don Sebastian*, Meyerbeer's *Johann* or *Leydene* (from the *Prophet*) and *Raoul* or *Nangisa* (from the *Huguenots*). Hilde Strell-Anderle, *Alois Ander: Aus dem Leben eines großen Tenores: das Lebensbild eines europäischen Tenors*, Wien, Eigenverlag, 1996. 53-55

¹¹³ Hilde Strell-Anderle: op. cit. 12

¹¹⁴ Originally Roza Goldstein (Irsa, Pest county, 23 October 1832 – † Vienna, 20 February 1892) a mezzo-soprano singer. First she was a member of the National Theatre and then she joined the Vienna Opera. She was very successful in Berlin in 1852 in Meyerbeer's *Prophet*, in the role of *Fides*. Between 1850 and 1861 she became the top singer of the Vienna opera. After 1861 (i.e. exactly after *Kinder der Heide*) she successfully toured Europe. Until 1873 she was a celebrated favourite with the Vienna audience, and then she became a teacher of the Vienna conservatory. In 1882, her last appearance on the Vienna stage was as the *Ortrud* of *Lohengrin*. (*Roza Goldstein*, in: *Hungarian Theatre Lexicon*. Chief Editor: Gyorgy Szekely. Budapest, Akademiai Kiado, 1994)

student of Proch, and her great success of 1858 was crowned by Ortrud (Lohengrin), her last role before retirement. This is what Hanslick wrote about her regarding her performance:

*The role of Isbrana well-matched to her artistic character was played and sung by Mrs Csillag with admirable power and persistence.*¹¹⁵

In a subsequent review about her last performance before retirement, Hanslick writes the following:¹¹⁶

A powerful and tireless voice with a broad scope, her performance is sweeping passion with a vivid and increasingly improving tone. All these factors made Mrs Csillag one of the most effective representatives of strongly pathetic characters (like Ortrud, Fides, Eglantine, Isbrana).

As if Isbrana's role were made for her. For us, her outstanding quality is based on the less sophisticated use of her voice, and on the simplicity and single sidedness of her acting. In the rest of the review, the negative traits are also mentioned.

However, the range of moods that she can really confidently express is very limited. Wherever charm, intimacy, gentleness, quiet depth or simply kindness should be expressed in voices, Mrs Csillag's song remains silent and poor. She ejected the flames and lava of passion with a volcanic force; but the gentle and warming fire of intimacy stopped burning on her lips. And we find even less things to be praised if we look at the musical side beyond the dramatic side! Mrs Csillag's singing technique has a partial shortfall (the coloratura is almost totally missing) and it is partly lacking good taste, manifest in the incomplete joining of registers, the soundless mezzo-forte and piano, and finally the terrible groaning of deep voices. Mrs Csillag's most important aim is a material impact, and unfortunately in most cases this is all she can achieve.

From the summary of musical characteristics, the ideal of a folk play singer emerges: it is not the sophistication, the lyric qualities or the technical skill which support the folk play roles of the 19th century. Quite the opposite, the main objectives are 'to be idealistic, while remaining natural

¹¹⁵ Hanslick: op. cit. 76

¹¹⁶ *Eduard Hanslick Sämtliche Schriften*. Historisch-kritische Ausgabe Bd I/5. Aufsätze und Rezensionen 1859-1861. Herausgegeben von Dietmar Strauß, Böhlau 355.

and folk-oriented', 'being simple and talking to the heart'¹¹⁷ by all means and using all available tools, actually through the application of *artistic neutrality*. These characteristics are supposed to retrieve Rousseau's slogan which became a cliché: "Back to nature!" which is characterised – although not in its 20th century sense – by a folk and folk music approach. This is how a 'purely popular, hefty and temperamental girl' became the fundamental figure of the folk play.

Mosenthal and Liszt were not mistaken: the plot brings Rubinstein the long awaited fame and reputation. The premiere became a huge success.¹¹⁸ The 9 March 1861 copy of *Niederrheinische Musik-Zeitung* gives a detailed account of the performance.¹¹⁹ The negative tone of the review seems to support my assumption that the opera was indeed a kind of folk play because the clichés, structure and topic of the libretto and the music are akin to the structure of a folk play. Let us examine these factors in details, taking only the text of the Hanslick review as a basis.

The first duet (*Dann heisst's wandern, wie die Andern – Let us wander like the others*) is found right away among the compositions identified as outstanding and worth noting by the review; Hanslick praises the melancholy of the Russian folk song. The next promising moment is when 'Isbrana is humming a tune' with the aim of diverting the gipsies' attention. Rubinstein integrated the folk song intelligently and dramatically (*Ein Rösslein, ein feuriges, fliegt durch die Nacht – A fiery horse flies in the night*). This song is the basis of the gipsies' trio, which – according to the review – shows a striking similarity with the minor part of the conspiracy scene in the *Huguenots*¹²⁰.

¹¹⁷ The reviewers of the greatest Hungarian folk play singer Lujza Blaha used these words for typesetting.

¹¹⁸ It was presented again successfully 32 years after the premiere (in 1893) in Dresden. Just like in the case of his *Feramon* opera, the public is enthusiastic about the exoticism (the gipsy scenes). See Hans John, *Anton Grigorjewitsch Rubinstein Beziehungen zu Dresden*. 118. in: *Anton Grigorjewitsch Rubinstein in der Wissenschaft*. <http://www.gku.uni-leipzig.de/fileadmin/user_upload/musikwissenschaft/pdf_allgemein/aebeitsgemeinschaft/heft4/0418-John.pdf> (Accessed on 14. 02. 2014)

¹¹⁹ The review already mentioned above: Eduard Hanslick: *Kinder der Heide*, *Niederrheinische Musik-Zeitung / für Kunstfreunde und Künstler*. Herausgegeben von Professor L. Bischoff. – Verlag der M. DuMont-Schauberg'schen Buchhandlung, No.10. Köln, 9. März 1861. IX. Jahrgang. S 73-76.

¹²⁰ It was presented under the title *Die Welfen und Ghibellinen* for the first time in 1839 in the Vienna Kärntner Theatre.

Ex. 1

Meyerbeer

Meyerbeer (transzponálva)

Rubinstein

Ein Röss-lein, ein feu-ri-ges fliegt durch die Nacht,

However, the parallel of ‘striking similarity’ only appears latently.¹²¹ It is worth noting as my own comment that Rubinstein knew the *Huguenots* well,¹²² in fact he had a special relationship with it.¹²³ The similarity underpins this relationship: the operas are tied to a common thread, the love affair between different *religions* or different *ethnic groups*. Therefore, the composer is given a chance to demonstrate through a musical code that these people are actually soul mates. In the *Huguenots*, well-justified emotions trigger a conspiracy against people of a different belief, and in this case the desire to acquire drives the conspirators, although again it is supposed to be well-justified: why not acquire from the rich... It is also a parallel that the main character overhears the conspiracy (although in the *Huguenots* the conspirators believe that Valentin is on their side, in this case they are also convinced that Isbrana did not hear their plan). Therefore it is worth noting for us that the song *Rösslein* itself unfolds from the last three notes of the *Conspiracy* song.

Returning to the review, it praises the high number of folk elements in the second act as a positive trait. Very originally, the bridesmaids introduce humorous features into their choir song by a ‘Socratic method’ (*Was wünscht zuerst eine junge Braut? – What is the first wish of a young bride?*). The next action is the impressive and wild dance song of the gypsies: the waltz type of tune winding down in the tenor is accompanied by a six-member guitar chord ensemble and a “very noisy” tambourine.

¹²¹ Discovering the parallels is difficult, because the Meyerbeer opera’s *Conspiracy* scene has a different weight (starts with an upbeat), a different rhythm (because of the triplet) and an opposite scale (minor) vis-à-vis Rubinstein’s relevant scene. It can be assumed that Hanslick knew the *Huguenots* by heart.

¹²² He has encountered the opera many times and was a good friend of Meyerbeer’s. He heard the highly successful opera already in 1844 in Berlin. And, he saw the opera in 1858 on his London tour as a predecessor of his own opera. Details: Taylor: op. cit. 17, 73

¹²³ As mentioned above, exactly when he was looking for the topic of his opera, in 1856, the subject of Hussite uprising cropped up, but Rubinstein believed that the *Huguenots* covered this topic fully, without leaving space for a continuation. See Taylor: op. cit. 68

Ex. 2

L'istesso tempo ♩

der
 Jede steht in wilder Nothung, will starr zu Boden gerichtetem Hilde stehen.

L'istesso tempo ♩

Chor der Zigeuner.
 Sopran.
 We-ri-ber stant du?

Alt.
 We-ri-ber stant du?

Tenor.
 Was blickst du so ver- lo- ren?

Bass.
 We- ri- ber stant du? sprich, sag' an, we- ri- ber?

The image shows a musical score for a gipsy choir. It consists of five vocal staves (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass, and Piano) and a piano accompaniment. The tempo is marked 'L'istesso tempo' with a quarter note equal to one beat. The lyrics are in German. The piano part features a rhythmic accompaniment with chords and moving lines in both hands.

Kinder der Heide, act II, scene 6. L'istesso tempo, The gipsy choir: "Was blicks du so verloren?"

Among the parts of the wild gipsy choir, it is a hidden 'pearl' when the contralto folk type of wedding song sung by a supporting character Lisa appears. The next song is quite different, Isbrana should sing a 'long live the young couple' song at her loved one's wedding, but this *Hochzeitslied* (wedding song) is doubtlessly neither full of joy nor idyllic. Again accompanied by guitars and a tambourine, the song is interrupted by short choir parts (*Zdenko durch die Haide strich – Zdenko walks through the moorland*) with its deep and emotional tone and genuine folk oriented¹²⁴ approach, which –

¹²⁴ Taylor mentions that the song is a real gipsy theme and according to Yury Engel's 20th century review, the unexpected musical transcription of this song is a proof of Rubinstein's brilliant talent. Taylor: op. cit. 117

according to Hanslick – turns it into the most significant musical moment of the opera.

Ex. 3

The musical score consists of two systems, each with five staves. The first system includes the vocal line for Isbrana and the piano accompaniment. The vocal line has the lyrics "Zden-ko durch die Hai - de strich,". The piano accompaniment has dynamics markings *mf* and *p*. The second system includes the vocal line for Isbrana and the piano accompaniment. The vocal line has the lyrics "brau - nes Mä - del, hü - te dich,". The piano accompaniment has dynamics markings *f* and *p*. The score is in 3/4 time and G major.

***Kinder der Heide*, act II, scene 7. Allegro non troppo, Isbrana and the gipsy choir: “Zdenko durch die Haide strich”**

Hanslick believes that Isbrana’s spontaneous cry (*Ich arme!*) after the catchwords *Tanzet, singet, trinket!* (*Dance, sing and drink!*) is an especially nice moment of the opera, which suddenly ejects ‘fire’ into the otherwise minor scale of the song. In Hanslick’s words: the roulade of *Ich*

arme! is similar to the ‘heat of passion’ which then turns into A-major after the courageous G sharp of the beginning, and this lights ‘the fire’.

Ex. 4

***Kinder der Heide, act II, scene 7. Recitativo, Isbrana:
“Wie, gefällt Euch nicht mein Lied?”***

Hanslick expressly praises the folk scenes and the intonation only, but they represent the fundamentals of a folk play. Factors other than these are the subject of criticism. He criticises the arias, duets and he hastily composed finales which are unable to display the emotional world of ‘everyday people’¹²⁵. As the initial thought of my assumption was especially inspired by these sections, let us look at the negative comments at length.

In the first duet of Vanya and the gipsy girl, ‘the warmth of the heart is missing’, which cannot be replaced ‘by some high chest-notes and fierce violin passages’ says Hanslick. Because actually a really intimate relationship never unfolds between Vanya and Isbrana, it is worth taking the musical characterisation seriously. This means that if the composer’s intention was exactly the reflection of no emotion, then the musical ‘execution’ of this was expressive. The ‘high chest-notes’ and the ‘fierce violin passages’ were the general tools of the folk (i.e. low-born, non-urban and intact) characters in folk plays. The extremist presentation of tense emotional excitement, to which both the gipsy girl and the horse-herder are amply subjected, is another important element. After such a scene in which they adore each other, the horse-herder’s emotional change without any preliminaries is more dramatic.

¹²⁵ “As soon as Rubinstein does not have to deal with Russians or gipsies, but only simply with such people who quietly guard the secret of their hearts, the last redeeming word is missing from his music.” Hanslick: op. cit. 75, i.e. it is the *couleur locale* which is basically appreciated by Hanslick.

Tempo I.
 Ach! das Herz, das Herz zer - springt vor Be - ben, ja,
 Ja, ich ge - he si - cherlich, je - doch bei Gott nicht öh - ne dich, so wahr dein Herz nur

Tempo I.

And slightly below:

stringendo
 Ich lass' dich nie, ich lass' dich nie! Mein Freund, mein Stern, mein Licht,
 sich zum Him - mel he - ben, ich lass' dich nie, ich lass' dich

stringendo
 Tempo I.
 mein Le - ben, ich lass' dich nie, nie! (sie gehen, sich um
 an-m-d, links ab.)
 nie, nein, ich lass' dich nie!

ritard.
 Tempo I.

**Kinder der Heide, act I, scene 4, Tempo I. Isbrana – Vanya duet:
 “Ach, das Herz zerspringt vor Beben”**

Although the love duets of the count and Maria ‘are weak, cold and non-intimate’, Hanslick discovers many nice details in them.¹²⁶ The musical contact points among the count, Vanya and Conrad are also ‘scarce’ with two short exceptions¹²⁷ from which he concluded that ‘gentleness was not among Rubinstein’s strengths’, consequently – one would think, says

¹²⁶ Hanslick mentions a few points where nevertheless a ‘gentleness’ can be discovered. In the song *Dachtest du meiner – Do you think of me*, the first duet of the count and Maria, and in Maria’s two ‘monodies’ which cannot be called arias in his opinion, Hanslick senses a lyrical tone.

¹²⁷ The cantilenas *Ich weiss, dein Herz ist frei von Sünd* and *Mit mir ziehst du dahin*.

Hanslick – he is more at home in the eventful scenes. But, he strongly criticises the finales and crowd scenes also. It is the final moment of the third act when the peasants and gipsies clash: the peasants intend to pay revenge for the death of their landowner, and the gipsies want to set the horse-herder free because of Isbrana. Finally they rescue Vanya, but according to Hanslick all this is a ‘haphazard mixture’.

He makes a remarkable comment about the gipsy choir. “The gipsy choirs, except for the wedding choir, are raw and wild, not in an *aesthetic*, but in a *musical* sense”. Hanslick does not like the coarse,¹²⁸ rough and almost spontaneous approach. This leads to the conclusion that maybe the composer had a *different kind of music ideal* in his mind. Perhaps a different kind of *genre* ideal?

This seems to be supported also by his opinion about the drinking song of the fourth act. A drinking song is one of the most sensitive points of an opera. The bubbles of the wine symbolise the hectic and exciting sides of life. And, in the drinking song scenes of operas, the truth is always told, even if it is bitter. The extraordinary motives of the part (criticised by Hanslick) which paves the way for the drinking song¹²⁹ are mainly based on this. Vanya is the leader of his rescuers, the gipsies, and rules with Isbrana over the ‘brown children of the moorland’, but his personality is twisted and he becomes the bogey of villagers and travellers. They lie here and there next to the fire, and drink from a pumpkin cask. But the song which is sung is not that of one person, but that of the gipsies. It may even be called a *collective* drinking song; the choir paints a dark, almost gloomy picture about their lives, and the enjoyment of wine itself does not appear in the lyrics, this only comes two songs later at the very end of the scene.

*“The gipsy’s life is miserable,
hiding in the ravine and in the depth of the forest,
we can only set out in the empty starless night,
our food is dry bread,
our pillow is a hard rock,
broken and harassed,
as if we were chased by dogs, ouch!” (one part of the song)*

¹²⁸ In his work about the *Beauty of music* written in 1854, Hanslick says that music may not play an emotional representation role, mentioning as a justification that the emotional status of the composer and that of the audience are different, and therefore he believed that descriptive music simply did not exist. From this writing it becomes obvious that music is valuable, if it can be listened to without any previous background, in other words if it is absolute music, that is a single emotion may be tied to music: the enjoyment caused by beauty.

¹²⁹ “The introduction of the fourth act with the drinking song is non-evocative and almost ugly!” Hanslick: op. cit. 76

The expression Hanslick uses ('almost ugly') emphasises naturalism (in the second bar of the couplet, a major third appears unexpectedly and roughly), which is no longer a rare occurrence in the folk plays of the 1880's.

Ex. 6

L'istesso tempo.
Grigori. COUPLET I.
Re - benblut fließ durch die A - dern, gib uns Fen - er, gib - uns Muth, sucht ihr Hü - scher,
Grigori. COUPLET II.
Gleich dem Ross' mit schwarzer - Mähne durch die wei - te Step - pe schweift, je - dem zeigt die
Grigori. COUPLET III.
Wenn man uns auch längst er - schossen, un - ser Ruf im Vol - ke klingt, und der Hirt bei

L'istesso tempo.

Kinder der Heide, act IV, scene 1, No. 14. Drinking-song

Hanslick of course is thinking along the lines of an opera ideal, but he frequently encounters a work which features the characteristics of the genre of folk play. In his opinion, Rubinstein's music loses its real effect exactly at the points where he has accumulated too many strong effects (volume, other characteristic reinforcements). He uses the definition created by Wagner (*Wirkung ohne Ursache - Effect without a cause*) and in Hanslick's opinion such parts of the *Kinder der Heide* mostly appear in the form of *vielerlei Ursache ohne Wirkung (many causes without an effect)*, i.e. the opera tries to be effective (theatrical) without any effect.¹³⁰ It is a fact that Rubinstein's well-established music clichés appear also in the staging of a contemporary Posse.

The criticism is finally directed in general against the musical form 'broken up by the frequent change of tempo' and the musical arrangement which 'lies too deep and has an excessive figuration'.¹³¹ The former mainly

¹³⁰ It is to be noted that Wagner used this definition as a compensation regarding Meyerbeer's opera, and applied it in his anti-Semitic writing of 1850 called *The Jews in Music*. (See Deathridge-Dahlhaus, in: *Wagner, His philosophical views*, 108-126.) Hanslick started his career as a Wagner-fan, but by this time he was no longer under Wagner's influence, and then from the middle of the 1850's he totally turned away from the representatives of the 'music of the future' (Wagner, Liszt). See Eduard Hanslick, ed. and int. Henry Pleasants, *Music Criticism 1846-99*, Harmondsworth 1963.; Tom Kaufman, *Wagner vs. Meyerbeer*. The Opera Quarterly, vol. 19. Number 4, Autumn 2003. pp. 644-669

¹³¹ "In addition to the fact that the concept is no good and the musical form is frequently hurried, complicated and broken up by a frequent tempo change, the unsuitable musical arrangement harms the effect of this new opera. The accompaniment of the songs is dull

characterises those points where the overflowing emotional charge also appears in the metrical fluctuations (one of the most obvious examples is the scene where Marie loses her mind or the emotional controversies between Vanya and Isbrana), and the latter is unambiguously a characteristic of the gipsy and folk theme. A folk play – as a result of its genre – has a less detailed elaboration, and therefore there is hardly any example of a frequent change of tempo, but featuring the string instruments in an outstanding figurative role is a frequent occurrence.

Ex 7.

ritard. (traurig) **Allegro moderato** = ♩ (Erhebt) **Moderato** = ♩

Ach! Was zerrt ihr mich zur Lügenfeier! Ich bin sein Weib, er sprach es ja,
er kommt zurück, die Blume ist da! Dein ist sein Herz und mein - ne See.

Kinder der Heide, act IV, scene 4, Allegro moderato. Marie:
“Ach! Was zerrt ihr mich zur Lügenfeier!”

Ex 8.

Isbrana (bei Seite) **Allegro** = ♩

Ach! Zu viel, zu viel, ich ertrag es nicht! Nur für sie hat er Erbarmen,
 (Waria sucht sich Marien verständlich zu machen, mit bittender Miene sie bei der Hand fassend. Conzsa steht mit traurig gesenktem Haupte neben ihr.)
 nur für sie ein füh-lend Herz, nichts gütlich der end-los Armen, der Betro-genen glück-lich

Kinder der Heide, act IV, scene 4, Allegro. Isbrana:
“Ach! Zu viel, ich ertrag es nicht!”

and expressionless, primarily because it relies on the low notes of string instruments and misses the fire of brass instruments; the singing voices are partly concealed by excessive and restless configurations.” Hanslick: op. cit. 76

In addition to the folk play traits of the subject and the characters, the folk song and the vaudeville type of chanson-song also occur in the opera so much so that the word *couplet* is clearly shown. Regarding such Russian songs and folk plays, this era had three dedicated Russian composers: Alyabyev,¹³² Gurilev¹³³ and Varlamov.¹³⁴ All three made an influence on Rubinstein¹³⁵ and in fact also on Liszt.¹³⁶

¹³² Alexander Alexandrovich Alyabyev (Tobolsk, 4 August 1787 - † Moscow, 22 February 1851) is the oldest of the three popular Russian composers, and one of the creators of the so-called Russian lyrical song. He grew up in a rich family in the town of Tobolsk in Siberia, and learnt music from an early childhood. He participated in the Napoleonic war, and was discharged in 1823 with many medals. As a result of the most unfortunate event of his life (after a night of gambling, he was accused of murder) he was in exile in Siberia from 1825 to 1831. In this period he wrote his most famous song *The nightingale* which is still believed to be a folk song. He composed seven operas, vaudevilles (the predecessors of folk plays), accompanying music, three string quartets and more than 200 songs. See Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, Vol. I. edition 5. 1954. p. 85.; *Alexander Alexandrovich Alyabyev*, in: Two centuries of Russian classical Romance <<http://www.classicalmusic.spb.ru/ruvoclassic/composers/alyabiev/index.htm>> (Accessed 15. 05. 2014)

¹³³ Alexandr Lvovich Gurilev Russian composer (Moscow 22 August 1803 – † Moscow, 30 August 1858) was born on Count Orlov's estate (the count is famous for initiating gipsy education) in a serf family. He learnt music first from his Sarti student father and then from the British John Field. After becoming free in 1831, he joined a small artisan company in Moscow and became a piano teacher. He became popular by means of his intimate lyric romances, which carry signs of Varlamov's influence, and the inspirations are supposed to stem from an unfulfilled love during his serf years. More than 200 very popular Gurilev songs are extant, some of them were sung across Europe. Gipsy choirs and amateurs were spreading his salon type of 'Russian songs' which were played by ear, accompanied by a guitar. His folk song arrangements also made him famous. See Dezso Legany, *Alexander Lvovich Gurilev*, in: Szabocsi-Toth musical lexicon II. (G-N) Budapest, Music Publishers, 1965. 94.; Alfred Baumgartner *Musik der Romantik*, Keisel Verlag, 1983. 234.S.; Horts Seeger, *Alexander Lvovich Gurilev*, Musiklexikon Deutscher Verlag für Musik, Leipzig, 1966. 357. S.; *Three Alexander*, in: The Voice of Russia, 2005. <http://voiceofrussia.com/radio_broadcast/2248383/2315565/> (Accessed 15. 05. 2014)

¹³⁴ Aleksandr Egorovich Varlamov (Moscow, 27 November 1801 – † Moscow, 27 October 1848) - of the three composers, he is musically the best educated Russian composer of Moldovan ancestry. As of 1811 he was a member of the St. Petersburg boys' choir, and played several instruments (violin, chello, piano and guitar), and he was a student of Dmitri Bortniansky. Between 1832 and 1844 he was the conductor of the Moscow Court Theatre. Most of his songs are sentimental folk songs, some of them folk song arrangements. Geoffrey Norris, *Aleksandr Egorovich Varlamov*, in: Oxford Music Online <http://www.oxfordmusic.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/29054?q=Alexander+Egorovich+Varlamov&search=quick&pos=1&_start=1#firstthit> (Accessed 15. 05. 2014)

¹³⁵ Not only in this opera, but also in other compositions his influence can be noted. He had a personal relationship with Varlamov and among others Rubinstein also composed a song to commemorate his death in 1849 under the title "*As a nightingale who lost her parents*" *Variations on a Varlamov theme*.

¹³⁶ Liszt adapted to the piano Alyabyev's song *The nightingale*. (*Le rossignol*, 1842 first version: S.249d; second version No.1 from *Deux melodies russes*: S.250/1, 1842-43)

*Rubinstein copied many people. Do you know who? Gurilev, Alyabyev and other gipsy composers, turning their products upside down in the centre of servile, obscene and anti-art Moscow.*¹³⁷

Let me quote two random samples from the opera. The first is a typical Vanya arioso and the second is the other gipsy girl Lisa's famous wedding romance.

Ex. 9

Moderato con moto = ♩

Wania

Sagt, ist nicht die - se Hüt - te mein, er a-ber schlich sich wie ein Wolf hin-ein,

Moderato con moto = ♩

er schlag den Zahn schon in die Brust, mein wei-sses, Lamm mir zu zer-na- gen!

For example: *Kinder der Heide*, act III, scene 6. Moderato con moto.
Vanya: Sagt, ist nicht diese Hütte mein

Ex. 10

Meno mosso

Grü - nes Blatt vom Lin - den-baum, o schick dem Pär - lein süs - sen Traum,

a tempo

duf - tig wie dein Blü - then - schnee, oh - ne Dorn und oh - ne Weh!

For example: *Kinder der Heide*, act II, scene 7. Zigeunerlied. (Lisa and the gipsy choir) Komoro, rumniori, Couplet: *Grünes Blatt von Lindenbaum*

Although such incidental music was successful during the premiere and also during the Moscow presentations in 1865¹³⁸, it was not so much appreciated by the reviews of later times.

¹³⁷ Balakirev's letter to Rimsky-Korsakov, January 1863 11/23. See Taylor: op. cit. 105

¹³⁸ Moscow, 10/22 February 1865. The opera was performed four times. Until 1903, the opera was not staged again in the territory of Russia. As far as we know, this Rubinstein opera has not been presented in Pest (up to our days). The last time Demon was sung at an opera examination in 2006 at the Academy of Music.

*It is very much old fashioned, for example the role of Wania, as if the composer wanted to comply with this view, he interprets it in the old fashioned Alyabyev-Varmamov style from a music aspect.*¹³⁹

The afterlife of the opera was also just as popular as that of folk plays. Potpourri was made from the favourite songs of the opera, Joseph Fahrbach's¹⁴⁰ *Potpourri über Motive der Oper Die Kinder der Heide von Anton Rubinstein*¹⁴¹ is published not long after the premiere in Leipzig. Fahrbach – because he was a practical and emphatic musician – knew exactly what popular meant and therefore wrote flute and guitar arrangements from Verdi operas (*Traviata*, *Aida*, *A Masked Ball*)¹⁴². Everything goes to show that the Rubinstein opera has also reached the level of popularity which encouraged adaptation. And, being played by military bands made the songs popular – just like in Hungary – i.e. music played on the stage became generally known through the performances of military and gipsy bands and gipsy musicians.

Of course, there are overlaps between the scene types of the opera and the folk play, but the inn, wedding and drinking song scenes are the indispensable and constant components of folk plays. There are no melodramatic parts in the work, but a contemporary newspaper article provides information on the use of incidental music best characterising a folk play, i.e. on possible substitutions.

¹³⁹ Yury Engel, *V opeye*, Moscow, Jurgenson Publishers, 1911. 233. Although the reviewer emphasises and praises the genuine gipsy topic in Isbrana's wedding song. See Taylor: op. cit. 117

¹⁴⁰ Joseph Fahrbach (Vienna, 25 August 1804 – † Vienna, 6 June 1883), the conductor of a military band between 1841 and 1848, a flutist and guitar virtuoso of the Vienna court orchestra and the theatre of the court between 1857 and 1867. He later on founded his own music school. He wrote several theoretic works (fagot and oboe school) and he also covered the actual issues of military music.

(Arbeiten über aktuelle Fragen des Militärmusikwesens; Organisatione della musica militare austriaca 1846.) See *Familie Fahrbach, Wiener Musiker und Komponisten: Die Brüder Joseph, Friedrich, Philipp d. A. und Anton*. in: Österreichisches Musiklexikon Online, Austrian Academy of Sciences. <www.musiklexikon.ac.at/ml?frames=yes> (Accessed 15. 03. 2014); Gretchen Rowe Clements, *Situating Schubert: Early Nineteenth-Century Flute Culture and the „Trockene Blumen” Variations, D. 802*, dissertation, State University of New York at Buffalo, 2007. pp 118-128.

¹⁴¹ Probably the details of a piano and voice score from the OCLC WorldCat database. (The nearest available place of the score is Bibliotheca civica di Ala, OCLC number: 797791849). One of the Fahrbach boys was associated with the town of Ala (all four brothers Joseph, Friedrich, Philipp, Anton were flutists). Friedrich started his career in the orchestra of the elder Johann Strauss, moved to Italy in 1855 after playing in the Vienna military band and became the music director of the Ala Philharmonics. Clements, 2007. 119

¹⁴² Data from the OCLC database.

A great success, Rubinstein's four-act musical drama, "A son of the moorlands" was presented on the 23rd of this month in a Vienna theatre. The text comes from Karl Beck's poem 'Janko, the Hungarian Horse-herder', but the librettist Mosenthal transferred the scene to the Ukraina (sic.). In the musical part, some czardas may also be heard.¹⁴³

Mentioning the czardas at the same time refers to some kind of a Hungarian relationship. The question arises whether Rubinstein has hidden other Hungarian-related motives in the opera. Several folk scales used by Liszt may be distinguished¹⁴⁴ and of these the opera features two gipsy scales.¹⁴⁵ The scale mentioned by Bardos as a *gipsy-minor* or *ungar* or *indolid* or a *major second* crops up in the opera in places where some kind of suffering¹⁴⁶ is involved in the background.

Ex. 11

**For example: *Kinder der Heide*, act II, scene 7. No. 7.
(Isbrana and the gipsy choir)**

Zdenko durch die Haide strich Gipsy-minor or Ungar: I s i f m r i d t l.

¹⁴³ Hölgyfutár (Lady Messenger), 2 March 1861, No. 27, volume 12, 215. Vienna news, A new musical drama. The opera comprises a czardas type of song in the beginning of Act IV (*Elend ist Zigeunerleben*). Therefore, from the 'some' the others could have been additional czardas songs, and hence presumably they were incidental.

¹⁴⁴ See Lajos Bardos, *Liszt Ferenc "nepi" hangsorai (Franz Liszt's 'folk' scales)* in: *Hungarian Studies of Music History / writings about Ferenc Erkel and the earlier centuries of Hungarian music*. Edited by Ferenc Bonis, Music Publishers, Budapest, 1968. 199

¹⁴⁵ This is striking in the early part of Act 3 or Act 4, but also in the whole opera in several places.

¹⁴⁶ "Suffering = Hungarian. In his international style works on the basis of Latin and other texts, when the subject is pain, destruction and suffering, Liszt's music turns into Hungarian". Quotation: Bardos: op. cit. 200

Ex. 12

The image shows a musical score for a piece titled 'N° 12, Moderato'. The score is written for piano and consists of three systems. The first system has a red box highlighting a specific passage in the right hand, which is a sequence of chords and notes. The score includes dynamic markings such as 'p' (piano) and 'cresc.' (crescendo). The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4.

For example: *Kinder der Heide*, act IV., scene 1. Moderato.
Indolid: d t l s f i m r i d. or Major second: d t l s f m r i d.

It is possible that under the impact of his Pest memories or remembering the original scene of the plot, or perhaps yielding to his rightful assumptions does Rubinstein use these scales. Of course, we should not forget that Romas living in the east and in the territory of Russia used similar scale models.¹⁴⁷ How deliberately Rubinstein used these elements, we shall perhaps never learn, but Liszt was certainly happy about the success of his opera developed by someone else. Obviously, he would have written many things differently, and yet the implemented opera must have given him a kind of satisfaction.

In 1860, already after the success of the Rubinstein opera, Liszt goes back to the gipsy topic again, but this time it is not an opera, it extends his song repertoire. He composes music for Lenau's poem "*The three gipsies*" which takes place also nostalgically on the Hungarian

¹⁴⁷ "The «gipsy scale» identified by Liszt is close to the eastern chromatic scale, and it is exactly like the bhairav scale in India (d re m fi s la t d). See Ian Hancock, *We are the Romani people*, translated by Gyorgy Novak, Budapest, Pont Publishers, 2004; In other sources, stage 4 of the bhairav scale is not raised, or in the raised version it is also called dhandiri. See also Catherine Schmidt-Jones, *Indian Classical Music: Tuning and Ragas* in: Openstax CNX, <<http://cnx.org/content/m12459/latest/>>. The 'genuine' gipsy scale in Carnatic south Indian music is the following: l t d r i m f si l. See <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simehendramadhyamam>>.

puszta¹⁴⁸ and the ‘brown children of the puszta’ play music to please themselves obviously – perhaps like Liszt.

In addition, my imagination carried me away regarding the boots¹⁴⁹ and I decided to compose Lenau’s Gipsies (Lenau: The three gipsies), finding the main lines immediately on the piano. If I were successful somehow without finding myself in the midst of bloodthirsty and wild resistance, which is the hardest test an artist can be subjected to – I would start writing.¹⁵⁰

The memories are still haunting, but this song is born¹⁵¹ and the romantic characteristics so much worshipped by Liszt, and the talented gipsy playing for himself, smoking a pipe outdoors and dreaming carelessly is shown in a miniature scene. And, this is the end of the story of Liszt’s Hungarian opera he never wrote. It had a nice plot: first it was the story of an outlaw, which became the draft of a Hungarian opera, and then it was turned into an opus taking place in the Ukraine. In the meantime, the genre itself has also expanded, and so did the number of involved composers, entailing the possibility of an exciting mixed category, the *folk opera*. All this reflected uniquely the colourful environment of Pest-Buda and Vienna in the 1850–60’s, with characteristic musical dramas, Posses and Volksstücke.

Translated by János Gerendás

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¹⁴⁸ The old Liszt adapted in 1871 (to the piano S.246) and also in 1880 (to violin and piano S.379b) a puszta subject: he adapted the work composed by one of his Polish students to the Lenau poem under the title *Puszta-Wehmut* (The bitterness of the *Puszta*).

¹⁴⁹ Lenau wrote this poem on the basis of Ferenc Pongracz’s oil painting “A gipsy with violin” on the basis of which another painting was made (Alois Schönn, 1826–1897). Liszt obtained a lithographic copy of the latter. The central figure of the painting wears boots and hussar trousers, contrary to the sleeping gipsy who is bare footed. Maybe the comment refers to this. See Ágnes Watzatka’s manuscript, *Puszta, Hussaren, und Zigeunermusik – Franz Liszt und das Heimatbild von Nikolaus Lenau*. (The manuscript is under editing in *Studia Musicology*.) The paper was read at the MTA Institute of Music Sciences International Conference *Liszt and the Arts: An Interdisciplinary Conference Budapest*, 20 November 2011

¹⁵⁰ La Mara, V. 28 May 1860, Whitsun, 8am

¹⁵¹ *The three gipsies*, 1864. S.383

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