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Acknowledgements

On behalf of the University of Ottawa's School of Music, it is my pleasure to present the second volume of *Intermezzo : The University of Ottawa School of Music's Undergraduate Journal*. This issue speaks to the inquisitive nature of the University of Ottawa student community. The panoply of topics explored in this issue range from the excavation of a virtually unknown female composer, Francesca Caccini to a reconsideration of Chopin's piano markings and their effect on the performance practice of his *Barcarolle F# Major Op.60*; a discussion of the performer's point of view in contrast to musicological discourse regarding the interpretation of Prokofiev's second violin concerto; and, a controversial yet none the less rewarding character analysis of one of operas most enigmatic characters, Katarina Lvovna from Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk,* questioning the appearance of rape and resistance within this score. These papers reflect the high academic standard at the University of Ottawa.

I would like to extend my gratitude to Dr. Lori Burns, Head of the University of Ottawa School of Music, for her support since the beginning of this

initiative to not only create the journal, but also ensure its future. Many thanks to Dr. Paul Merkley who offered his advice and guidance every step of the way: without you as a supervisor this project would not have been possible. It is also my pleasure to acknowledge the unwavering support of the Intermezzo Editorial Committee: Marie Bordeleau; Heather Buisman; Mark Constantine; Vinko Culjak; Krisandra Irvings; Patrick Juskevicius; Mary Claire Lazure; Rachel Llyod; Elsa Marshall; Susan Mielke; Adam Roy; Marc Stefan; Carolyne Sumner; and Meganne Woronchak. Finally, I would like to thank the authors for their hard work and dedication to this journal. I hope that this experience was as rewarding for you as it was for me.

Matthew Timmermans

Journal Manager

Francesca Caccini

Bianca Fortier

L'union de Marie de Médicis avec le roi de France Henri IV se fit en 1600. Elle était la troisième épouse de celui-ci, et tous les deux appréciaient la musique et les arts. Ils accueillirent plusieurs musiciens à leur cour, dont la famille Caccini. Au sein de cette famille se trouvait une musicienne particulièrement talentueuse, Francesca Caccini. Celle-ci marqua le monde de la musique, tout en suivant un parcours similaire à ses compagnes musiciennes de l'époque. Par son cheminement personnel et professionnel, il est possible de comprendre l'environnement dans lequel elle vécut. De là, en élaborant sur le contexte de son temps, ce qui la démarqua et les similitudes à son époque sont facilement identifiables.

La vie de Francesca Caccini

Francesca Caccini vit le jour le 18 septembre 1587, en Florence, Italie. Elle naquit au sein d'une famille de haut rang et de musiciens, son père était un

musicien compositeur à la cour des Médicis,[1] sa mère était une chanteuse et sa sœur et sa belle-mère étaient également des musiciennes.[2] Tout au long de sa jeunesse et sa carrière, celle-ci fut submergée par la présence de la musique et encouragée à poursuivre dans cette voie. Sa famille et son entourage se composaient de musiciens qui lui furent d'un grand soutien.[3] Ce fut d'ailleurs grâce à ceux-ci qu'elle fût initiée, dès son jeune âge, à la musique.

À cette époque, l'accès aux institutions d'enseignement musical était réservé à la gent masculine,[4] et donc, l'éducation musicale de Francesca Caccini fut prise en charge par son père, Giulio Caccini.[5] Dès son très jeune âge, celui-ci lui apprit à jouer, écrire et lire la musique. Très tôt, elle parvint à maîtriser le chant, la composition, le luth, la guitare et le clavecin.[6] Vers l'an 1600 toutefois, donc à l'âge de 11 ans, l'accès à une formation musicale pour les femmes fut davantage accessible et Francesca Caccini put bénéficier de cet enseignement. Cela lui fut possible grâce à Ferdinand de

1. Carolyn Raney, "Francesca Caccini, musician to the Medici, and her primo libro (1618)," (Thèse de doctorat, Université de New York, 1971), 2.
2. Martha Furman Schleifer et Sylvia Glickman, ed., *Women composers: music through the ages* (New York: G.K. Hall, 2006), 226.
3. Danielle Roster, *Les femmes et la création musicale : Les compositrices européennes du Moyen Age au milieu du XXe siècle* (Paris : L'Harmattan, 1998), 43.
4. Ibid, 34.
5. Raney, "Francesca Caccini," 19.
6. Diane Jezic, *Women Composers: The Lost Tradition Found* (New York: The Feminist Press, 1994), 17.

Médicis, en raison de son talent et de la présence de sa famille à la cour de celui-ci.[7] Ce fut d'ailleurs cette même année qu'elle eut l'opportunité de jouer lors du mariage de Marie de Médicis avec le roi de France, Henri IV. Giulio Caccini fit ses débuts à la cour des Médicis bien avant la naissance de sa cadette, Francesca. Elle grandit donc au sein même de la cour de Florence, joua dès son jeune âge pour les Médicis et y consacra une bonne partie de sa vie.[8]

Sa carrière en tant que musicienne de la cour prit vraiment son envol après son départ pour la France, où elle joua pour le roi, Henri IV, qui fut subjugué par son talent. Sa voix charma celui-ci qui désira la garder pour sa propre cour, trouvant qu'elle détenait la plus belle voix en France. Le grand-duc de Toscane refusa de perdre celle-ci et la Cecchina, telle qu'elle était surnommée en Toscane,[9] revint avec sa famille à Florence.[10] À son retour, en 1606, celle-ci commença à composer et elle joignit officiellement la cour de Médicis en 1607,[11] sous le Grand-duché de Toscane.[12] Ce fut cette même année qu'elle épousa son premier mari, Giovanni Battista Signorini, chanteur à la camerata.[13]

7. Roster, *Les femmes et la création musicale*, 36.
8. Mary Booker, *The work of women composers from 1150 to 1995* (Ilfracombe: Arthur H. Stockwell, 1996), 134.
9. Doris Silbert, "Francesca Caccini, Called La Cecchina." *The Musical Quartely* 32 (1946): 51.
10. Raney, "Francesca Caccini," 1.
11. Roster, *Les femmes et la création musicale*, 42.
12. Jezic, *Women Composers*, 18.
13. Raney, "Francesca Caccini," 37.

Elle fit partie de nombreuses œuvres et en composa elle-même plusieurs, dont certaines étaient en collaboration avec d'autres artistes. Elle joua à plusieurs reprises avec son père, entre autres, avant la mort de celui-ci. Elle parut également dans différents opéras, dont le *Ballo delle Zingare*. De plus, elle collabora avec Michelangelo Buonnaroti et composa sur les poèmes et écrits de celui-ci.[14] Ces compositions ont malheureusement été perdues au fil des siècles.[15] Sa première publication, *Ballo delle* Zigane, écrite en 1615, est à ce jour perdue. Sa première œuvre d'envergure, *Il Primo Libro,* fut dédiée au Cardinal Médicis en 1618, 2 ans après leur voyage à Rome. À peine quelques années plus tard, en 1625, elle publia sa deuxième œuvre d'ampleur, son opéra *La Liberazione di Ruggiero*. Celui-ci est reconnu comme étant le premier opéra composé par une femme, à être publié et présenté ailleurs qu'en Italie (présenté à Varsovie en 1682).

Sur une période de 25 ans, donc de 13 ans à 38 ans, Caccini composa nombreux opéras, dont un qui fut tout particulièrement couronné de succès à l'âge de 19 ans.[16] Ces 25 années furent l'apogée de sa carrière musicale. Malgré le temps consacré à toutes ses compositions, elle parvint également à enseigner le chant pendant 5 ans (1618-1623) et elle présenta à la cour de Florences différentes catégories d'œuvres, dont des madrigaux, des canzonettes et d'autres œuvres

14. Jezic, *Women Composers*, 19.
15. Roster, *Les femmes et la création musicale*, 45.
16. Kimberly Marshall, *Rediscovering the Muses: Women's Musical Traditions* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1993), 207.

profanes.[17] Par ses accomplissements et son talent, elle acquit rapidement une réputation de virtuose internationale, ainsi que d'enseignante et de directrice de chorale, en Italie.[18] À l'âge de 34 ans (1623), elle recevait un des salaires les plus élevés de la cour des Médicis.[19]

Sa carrière prit un tournant à la mort de son époux, Giovanni Battista Signorini en 1626, avec qui elle avait eu une fille, nommée (Margherita Singorini). Elle hérita d'une fortune considérable et quitta la cour de Florence temporairement. Elle se remaria peu de temps après à Tommaso Raffaeli, un musicien de Lucques, où ils restèrent. Elle eut un fils avec lui, avant la mort de son mari en 1630. Durant son second mariage, elle prit part à des productions à Lucques, où elle fut reconnue pour son talent. Ce n'est qu'à la mort de Tommaso Raffaeli qu'elle revint enfin à Florence, au service de la duchesse Christine de Lorraine et de Vittoria della Rovere, pour une période de 2 ans.[20]

Différentes versions quant aux derniers moments de Francesca Caccini circulent. Celle qui semble la plus fréquemment mentionnée, et qui se rapproche le plus de la réalité, serait lié à la maladie et se terminerait en 1640. Quelques années après son retour en Florences, en 1640, la Cecchina mourut d'un cancer de la bouche. Veuve de deux époux et mère de deux enfants, la réputation de

17. Jezic, *Women Composers*, 18.
18. Marshall, *Rediscovering the Muses*, 207.
19. Schleifer et Glickman, *Women composers: music through the ages*, 226.
20. Ibid., 227.

cette femme musicienne perdura bien au-delà de son dernier souffle.[21]

À l'époque de la Cecchina

Suivant une vision plutôt négative des femmes musiciennes du Moyen-Âge, la Renaissance vit plutôt un vent de renouveau pour celles-ci. Une "nouvelle image idéale de la dame vertueuse s'adonnant à la musique" s'installa.[22] Le talent pour la musique était prisé dans certains milieux, ce qui fut le cas tout particulièrement pour la Cecchina à la cour des Médicis, à Lucques et aux divers endroits qu'elle visita durant sa carrière. Malgré tout, à l'époque l'ascension et l'éducation d'une femme dans le domaine de la musique représentaient tout de même une soumission à son père, pour satisfaire les ambitions de celui-ci.[23] Sous la tutelle de celui-ci, elle fut dans divers opéras et offrit nombreux concerts à la cour.[24] De plus, il n'était pas fréquent pour les femmes d'exercer une carrière musicale, à moins qu'elles soient "born into a musical family or grown up in the presence of royalty or in a family with court or patron affiliation; and/or they had to work in an all-female environment, such as in religious convents or the all-female Venetian conservatories".[25] Francesca Caccini eut cette chance, que nombreuses autres ne purent avoir.

21. Ibid.
22. Roster, *Les femmes et la création musicale*, 33.
23. Suzanne G. Cusick, *Francesca Caccini at the Medici Court* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 8.
24. Roster, *Les femmes et la création musicale*, 45.
25. Jezic, *Women Composers*, 1.

Elle se distingua de nombreuses autres musiciennes par le déroulement de sa carrière. Tel que mentionné plus haut, les femmes ne pouvaient vraiment avoir une carrière en musique que sous certaines conditions seulement. Cela étant dit, elle eut tout de même une carrière prolifique, bien payée, qui dura nombreuses années et sa réputation traversa les siècles. Nombreuses musiciennes n'eurent pas cette opportunité. Plusieurs musiciens traversèrent les siècles et eurent des carrières remarquables, tout comme Pachelbel, Lully et Schütz, pour n'en nommer que quelques-uns. Certes il y eut nombreuses publications par des musiciennes, tout particulièrement dans la deuxième moitié du 16e siècle, avec l'augmentation des impressions de compositions, qui donna plus d'opportunités aux femmes d'être publiées.[26] Toutefois, peu d'entres-elles connurent un grand succès comme Francesca Caccini ou leurs contemporains musiciens, ou eurent la chance de voir leurs œuvres jouées. Elle fut d'ailleurs la première femme à publier un opéra, se distinguant particulièrement de ces contemporaines musiciennes sur ce point.

Alors qu'une des possibilités afin d'avoir une percée en musique pour les femmes était de composer au sein de l'Église ou pour l'Église, Francesca Caccini ne suivit pas cette avenue. Au contraire, ses compositions avaient un caractère plutôt laïque. [27] À l'époque moderne, la culture païenne faisait partie de l'univers des Européens (sans toutefois qu'il y ait questionnement sur les convictions chrétiennes) et plusieurs artistes suivirent

26. Ibid., 20.
27. Booker, *The work of women composers from 1150 to 1995***,** 134.

le courant. La première moitié du 17e siècle avait la religion au centre des préoccupations. Les tensions étaient grandes entre les catholiques et protestants, suivant un siècle de guerres et conflits religieux. Toutefois, après un siècle de tensions, le 17e siècle connut un début de tolérance entre les deux groupes, ce qui rendit possible, fort probablement, pour Francesca Caccini de composer ses œuvres avec un caractère laïque, sans vivre de représailles.[28] Toutefois, la restriction quant au milieu de publication, et de la pratique de la musique, pour les femmes rendit le cas de la Cecchina particulier. Seules les musiciennes exerçant à la cour, pour la royauté, ou dont la famille avait un lien avec une cour, publièrent des œuvres qui n'étaient pas à caractère religieux.[29]

Francesca Caccini se démarqua sans aucun doute par ses accomplissements et le déroulement de sa carrière, ainsi que par les opportunités qui se présentèrent à elle. Elle fut non seulement la première compositrice féminine d'opéra, mais elle atteint également le plus haut salaire de la cour des Médicis, parmi ceux présents à la cour avec elle. Elle perça dans le monde de la musique grâce à sa famille et à la place qu'elle occupa au sein de la cour des Médicis.

Elle joua pour celle-ci, mais également à nombreux autres endroits où elle fut invitée et voyagea. Malgré son parcours particulier et parsemé de succès, elle fit tout de même ses débuts comme ces contemporaines

28. Raney, "Francesca Caccini," 5.
29. Jezic, *Women Composers*, 1.

musiciennes. Elle étudia la musique au sein de sa famille, sous l'aile de son père musicien, et débuta sa carrière grâce à celui-ci. Des deux avenues possibles pour les musiciennes à l'époque, elle emprunta celle de la cour, ce qui lui permit davantage de liberté dans ses compositions. Donc malgré ses différences, elle restait le produit de son époque, et donc, elle était à la fois représentative et non représentative de ses contemporaines musiciennes.

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The Message of a Pianist: Chopin's Pedal Markings in *Barcarolle F# Major Op.60*

Alisha Walker

Chopin told his students and colleagues that the proper use of the pedal was "the study of a lifetime."[1] I agree with Chopin because pedaling on the piano requires musical sensitivity, technique and experience that can only be properly learned over a lifetime of study. From my experience people believe that piano is all about fingerings and agility. This comes from the idea that if a pianist wants a note all they have to do it press a key down and that note will ring out. Focusing on only fingering technique could be very harmful to a performer's musical ability. Piano pedaling plays a large part in interpreting and showcasing a piece of music. In fact, the pedal has often been referred to as "the very breath of the piano."[2] Without the proper pedal technique the "soul" of a piece of music could be lost and the audience could perceive the sound as disjointed or jarring

1. Dieter Hildebrandt, *Pianoforte: A Social History of the Piano* (New York: George Braziller, 1985), 130.
2. Roger Boardman, "A History of Teaching Piano Technic" (PhD diss., New York University, 1954.), 111.

and harmonies may also be lost. With no pedaling at all a piece would not sound soft or give off the appropriate feeling and conversely, too much pedal can be confusing to the ear and chords will be lost. Rhythm can also be affected by improper pedaling. Syncopation could be lost as well as the composer's intentions. Proper pedaling is key to a good piano performance. Many teachers vary in their method of pedal teachings and some do not instruct pedaling technique until the pianist has progressed to what the teacher sees as an appropriate level of playing. Menahem Pressler, a professor of piano at the Indiana University for over 60 years, is an accomplished pianist and a highly regarded teacher. He has been included in published pedagogy books and taught master classes around the world.[3] Contrary to Menahem Pressler's belief that all Chopin pieces should be played with the same pedaling technique (tapping the pedal on the first beat of every bar),[4] I believe the art of pedaling is contextual and will vary according to multiple factors such as: the instrument being played, and venue, limitations of notational practice, as well as structural properties within the music.[5] I will demonstrate the implementation of these factors as informing the use of pedaling by utilizing a case study of Chopin, his *Barcarolle in F# Major Op.60.*

In 1846, Frédéric Chopin wrote *Barcarolle in F# Major Op.60* on a piano that was vastly different than the piano we know today. In the mid nineteenth century, the

3. William Brown, *Menahem Pressler: Artistry in Piano Teaching* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2008), 85.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.

pianoforte was what people played. This pianoforte, over the course of its existence finally developed into the piano play today as a result of many significant changes. According to Cyril Ehrlich's research, "early pianos speak more easily and clearly, particularly in the bass, where individual notes of a chord are heard with clarity denied to the "woolly" modern instrument".[6] Although pieces originally written for the pianoforte can be played satisfactorily on a modern piano, the sound quality is different than it would have been in 1846, when *Barcarolle in F# Major Op. 60* was written. Due to structural differences, the pianos of 1846 were less resonant and the player could hold down the pedal for an entire phrase to give a "floating feeling" to the music.[7] Today, if a performer holds down the pedal for an entire phrase the music would sound like a blur and the harmonic progression could be lost. In 1844, a new pedal was unveiled at the Paris Exhibition by Xavier Boisselot. This pedal was named the "sostenuto pedal" and would allow pianists to sustain selected notes while others remained unaffected.[8] This was the beginning of a new era for pianists. The pedals today are very close to this sostenuto pedal introduced by the piano maker Boisselot. Not everyone was accepting of using pedals in piano

6. Wooly is a term that can refer to a particular texture / timbre of sound. I would describe and compare the use of wooly sound as a lack of high frequency definition and over abundance of low and mid-range notes according to Cyril Ehrlich, *The Piano: A History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 44.
7. Stuart Isacoff, *A Natural History of the Piano* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2011), 88.
8. Ibid., 25.

playing. Hummel did not favor pedals.[9] His argument against pedals was that "Mozart did not need this to help to win his fame as the most expressive player of his time."[10] Hummel did eventually decide that playing a melody in a slow tempo over a broad harmonic foundation calls for the sustaining pedal.[11] Until 1835, pianos were manufactured with four pedals or "stops" including bassoon, una corda, moderator and sustaining pedal. In 1835, the pedals were standardized to three and the bassoon pedal stopped being manufactured.[12]

Chopin was one of the first composers to consistently call for pedal in his compositions. Although only two autograph copies of Chopin's *Barcarolle in F# Major Op.60* exist, some published editions with alteration made by pupils in lesson with Chopin still exist.[13] These copies tell us that Chopin was highly aware of pedaling and of the structural changes to the piano. This also tells us that pedaling can change. There is no one set way to pedal a piece nor should generalizations be made when referring to a specific composer.[14] This constant demand for pedaling was one of the things that set Chopin apart from his contemporaries According to Ehrlich, pianos before the 1860s often had strings break during performance and the top octave sounded more like

9. Boardman, "A History of Teaching Piano Technic," 108.
10. Adolf Kullack, *The Esthetics of Pianoforte-Playing* (California: G. Schirmer, 1893), 23.
11. Boardman, "A History of Teaching Piano Technic," 100.
12. Davide Rowland, *A History of Pianoforte Pedalling* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 23.
13. Ibid., 127.
14. Dieter Hildebrandt, *Pianoforte: A Social History of the Piano* (New York: George Braziller, 1985), 70.

a "wooden knock."[15] During the late nineteenth century the thickness and tension of the strings were increased, greatly giving the piano a more brilliant and stable sound, especially in the treble.[16] Piano makers also introduced a new technique for laying the strings called 'overstringing.'[17] This meant the bass strings would cross over the treble strings allowing for better tone quality and the option of a smaller piano. This technique is found in all modern pianos but at the time of its debut all did not accept the overstringing movement. The new technique put so much stress on the frame of the piano that the frame had to be reengineered.[18] In modern pianos steel wire is used for the treble and steel overspun with copper is used for the bass. In the nineteenth century piano makers used brass, silver, platinum and gold. The pedaling would sound different depending on which material was used. While playing a piece of music the performer must keep in mind that they are only presenting an interpretation of what the composer has written.

When Chopin wrote *Barcarolle in F# Major Op 60*, the piano was in the midst of some big changes. The frame, the strings and the pedals were changing across Europe and America. There is no way to recreate the exact pedaling Chopin wanted because the instruments today are so drastically different from what Chopin was writing for. One of the reasons Chopin could have

15. Cyril Ehrlich, *The Piano: A History*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 162.
16. Ibid.
17. Ibid., 163.
18. Ibid.

composed with a lot of pedal was to ease the strain of the fingers. When a pianist does not hold down to pedal it is a much greater strain on the fingers because the fingers must lift the damper.

Until the early twentieth century most houses were equipped with less expensive square pianos.[19] These pianos were more affordable and often took longer to incorporate new developments that were seen on the grand pianos. Though Chopin's work appeared to have very precise pedal markings he often instructed his students to use the pedal sparingly.[20] This decision may have been in part because most solo recitals took place in small concert rooms and not in big halls like the ones performed in for modern recitals.[21] These smaller spaces were easier to fill with sound and therefore the performer did not have to play with much force for the whole audience to hear. Modern concert halls are spacious and resonant. Students are taught to play very loudly and play the piano with force. Pianos can often be seen moving across stage or rocking back and forth during recitals. This kind of brute strength was not used in 1845 to play *Barcarolle in F# Major op. 60,* because the performance venues for Chopin and his students were significantly smaller so the sound did not have to travel as far.

Every pianist has their own style of pedaling so it would only make sense that composers would emulate their own style in their compositions. Chopin was said to favour playing with the

19. John Last, *Interpretation in Piano Study* (London: Oxford University Press, 1960), 17.
20. Hildebrandt, *Pianoforte: A Social History of the Piano*, 70.
21. Ehrlich, *The Piano: A History*, 140.

sustain pedal to create what seemed like a "transparent vapour" of sound.[22] This could not be achieved by tapping the pedal on every beat or as Pressler asserts, on the first beat of every measure. The previous observation on Chopin's pedaling habits sounds as if Chopin is continually holding down the pedal for long periods of time to create the appropriate atmosphere. However, as previously stated, this continuous holding down of a pedal will not have the same effect as it did in 1845. The result in modern times would be very blurred together and would sound ambiguous. Modern day students are taught "even when pedal is used the legato can be more convincing if made with the fingers as well."[23] The limitations of our modern day piano have been identified and teachers are changing their technique to accommodate these limits. Another prevalent limitation actually comes from the notation of the pedaling. In 1845, there became a standard for pedal notations. A "*Ped."* Sign meant to press down the pedal and a "*" sign meant to lift the pedal.[24] This form of notation was not very accurate and there is much debate on where a player should press the pedal and lift the pedal when working with these markings. Does a performer press the pedal where the "P", "E" or "D" lies? Proper placement of the notation had not yet been discussed at the time Chopin wrote *Barcarolle in F# Major Op.* 60. On written

22. Isacoff, *A Natural History of the Piano*, 88.
23. Joseph Hofman, *Piano Playing: With Piano Questions Answered* (New York: Dover Publications, 1976), 23.
24. Joseph Banowetz, *The Pianist's Guide to Pedaling* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 79.

autographs the placement was often off to avoid note stems or dynamic markings.[25] Engravers and editors tried to be exact to the autograph but over time publishers have changed Chopin's markings to suit what they think is proper. When a pianist is sight-reading Chopin's music and tries to follow the written pedal markings confusion may ensue. Chopin's pedal indications seem unusual and in some cases daring. When a player finally finds the courage to play the markings as written it is found to be musically delightful and logical. In many instances it becomes clear that the pedaling mirrors the rhythmic movement found in the score. However, another problem lays in the uncertainty of where to lift and press the pedal. Joesph Banowetz is convinced that using musical knowledge and awareness any performer should be able to see where Chopin's phrase markings coincide with his pedal markings.[26] Although there was a standardized pedal notation when Chopin wrote *Barcarolle in F# Major Op.60,* it was not common practice to include further pedaling details such as legato pedaling or una corda pedal.[27] The Una Corda pedal is a pedal that when pressed will shift the entire keyboard over so that instead of hitting all three strings for a note the hammer will only strike two. This softens the sound and also creates a new texture. Chopin never wrote "una corda" on a single piano composition.[28] From eye witness accounts though, Chopin seemed to love combining the sustain pedal as well as una Corda pedal so to assume that the music

25. Ibid., 112.
26. Ibid., 99.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid.

never calls for una corda would not be congruent with the way in which Chopin played his own works.[29] Performers are rarely heard playing Chopin with the una corda pedal but in my opinion it is another decision that must be weighed when choosing how to pedal.

As a performer it is important to know what specific parts of a piece of music need to be brought out and what to emphasize as unique to the audience. There are numerous ways in which styles of pedaling affect performance practice of Chopin. If for example, as Pressler asserts, a performer were to tap the pedal at the beginning of every beat then musical content and meaning could be lost. Pedaling is a good way to highlight certain structural properties and bring them to the forefront of the audience's ear. For example, in measure fourteen of *Barcarolle in F# Major op.*60, there are two sixteenth note figures. These are marked staccato suggesting Chopin wanted some emphasis on these two figures. Chopin has also written a pedal marking that would appear to last the entire way through the two sixteenth note figures. There is only one way to execute this passage and it involves using the sustenuto pedal. Although Chopin does not write this in plain language we can imply it as a result of the inherent musical language. As a result the performer must use their musical intuition and training to come to an appropriate decision on how to play this figure. Two pages later there is a four measure phrase that also needs some thought and personal attention from each player.[30] Chopin has written a long legato line above these four bars yet has marked no pedal

29. Ibid.
30. Ibid., 38.

for three of the bars. The performer must decide based on the way he or she has played (and intends to play) the rest of the piece whether or not to incorporate pedal or to try to connect the notes smoothly using only legato fingerings. Both methods (pedal and no pedal with very legato fingering) are common in recordings and ultimately it is up to the performer to determine what structures will be highlighted and how to accomplish it. In measures 5-9 Chopin has written the pedal so as to be syncopated. To bring out syncopation it is common practice to pedal before the beat instead of on the beat. This is seen in *Barcarolle in F# Major Op.60* and if done with these markings in mind the pedal can really accentuate what Chopin wrote. Menahem Pressler's teaching that the pedal should be tapped on every beat would not work with syncopation. His teaching would align the pedal and rhythm in such a way that the audience would never notice a change. Syncopation, as a rhythmic device, is often used to accentuate a change or material that contrasts the norm. As a performer, I would want the audience to experience this to the fullest. As mentioned before a performer needs to determine what is important and needs to stand out from the rest of the music. Highlighting oddities such as syncopation can give the listener's ear a jolt and be enticing to the brain.

In conclusion, there is no way to determine a correct "universal" pedaling. As Chopin stated: "the pedal is the study of a lifetime."[31] There are no true expressive rules with pedaling. There are only suggestions from composers and teachers. A musician must use what they know about music to make informed

31. Hildebrandt, *Pianoforte: A Social History of the Piano*, 130.

judgments to effectively communicate the composer's intentions and phrasing. This ensures the audience hears the piece as the performer wants them to. Musical decisions must be made contextually for each individual piece as no two pieces are alike or have the same circumstances surrounding them. Unlike Liszt or Thalberg, pianists who excelled in concert halls with grand gestures, Chopin's style was better suited for an intimate environment where the listener could hear every detail.[32] The modern performer must have great attention to the instrument, the venue, how the composer notated the piece and what structural components that should be highlighted for the audience before making any attempts at playing a concert. Just remember, as Joseph Banowetz says, "pedal with purpose and you can't go wrong."[33]

32. Rowland, *A History of Pianoforte Pedalling*, 122.
33. Banowetz, *The Pianists Guide to Pedaling*, 307.

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Revue littéraire et interprétation du concerto pour violon no.2 de Prokofiev

Aurélie Thériault Brillon

Le compositeur russe Sergueï Prokofiev a écrit plusieurs concertos pour piano au cours de sa vie, mais n'a écrit que deux concertos pour violon. Ces deux œuvres pour violon sont toutes deux de magnifiques chefs-d'œuvre. Elles constituent aujourd'hui des pièces d'ampleur comportant des défis d'interprétation importants pour tous les violonistes. Le concerto pour violon no.2 en sol mineur, op.63, composé en 1935 (après le concerto no.1, qui a été composé en 1917), comporte un premier mouvement (*Allegro moderato*) particulièrement intéressant à analyser et à étudier. En effet, ce mouvement a un style unique qui se reflète à travers plusieurs éléments: les harmonies non conventionnelles, les deux thèmes contrastants et l'énergie rythmique et motrice constamment présente. C'est ce que nous tenterons de démontrer en commençant par présenter le compositeur et les caractéristiques de l'œuvre, puis en présentant une revue littéraire de quatre articles écrits par différents musicologues et enfin, en donnant ma propre interprétation du mouvement. Dans la

dernière section, je traiterai également des difficultés techniques que l'œuvre présente pour les violonistes qui interprètent le premier mouvement de ce concerto.

Caractéristiques de l'œuvre

Afin de mieux comprendre les caractéristiques de l'œuvre, il est important de saisir les éléments clefs de la vie du compositeur, Sergueï Prokofiev. Il est né en 1891 à Sontsovka, ville d'Ukraine qui faisait autrefois partie de l'URSS, et il est décédé en 1953 à Moscou, le même jour que le président et dictateur Joseph Staline.[1] Très tôt, Prokofiev a démontré des talents musicaux prometteurs: il a composé son premier opéra alors qu'il avait seulement huit ans. C'est sa mère qui lui a transmis ses premières connaissances, puis, en 1904, il est entré au Conservatoire de Saint-Pétersbourg et a étudié avec des professeurs réputés, tels que Rimski-Korsakov et Liadov.[2] En plus de s'intéresser à la composition, il était un pianiste impressionnant techniquement. En 1918, à cause de la révolution soviétique, il a quitté sa ville natale et a fait plusieurs tournées en Europe, en Asie et aux États-Unis en tant que pianiste de concert et chef d'orchestre. Au cours de ces tournées, il a rencontré plusieurs compositeurs connus tels que Poulenc, Stravinski, De Falla et Ravel.[3] C'est en 1936 que

1. Dorothea Redepenning, "Prokofiev, Sergey," *Grove Music Online*, Oxford University Press, 18 mars, 2015, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.proxy.bib.uottawa.ca/subscriber/article/grove/music/22402.
2. Laetitia Le Guay, *Serge Prokofiev* (Arles: Actes sud, 2012), 33.
3. Redepenning, "Prokofiev, Sergey."

Prokofiev a décidé de revenir dans son pays natal, plus précisément à Moscou. Ce moment constitue l'année où le gouvernement soviétique avait pris le contrôle de plusieurs domaines culturels, entre autre la musique.[4]

Contrairement à de nombreux compositeurs russes, comme Rachmaninov et Glazounov qui désiraient fuir le pays à ce moment afin d'avoir plus de liberté de composition, Prokofiev a décidé de se conformer et d'acquérir le titre de compositeur soviétique officiel. À partir de 1936, Prokofiev a donc écrit plusieurs pièces en lien avec la révolution soviétique et la guerre. Plusieurs de ses œuvres ont par contre été bannies, car elles comportaient parfois des thèmes qui n'étaient pas assez nationalistes ou qui rappelaient les caractéristiques musicales d'autres pays.[5] Enfin, on reconnaît aujourd'hui Prokofiev comme un compositeur d'avant-garde très créatif qui a composé dans une variété de genres, tels que onze concertos, sept symphonies, sept ballets, huit opéras, plusieurs sonates, et de la musique de film.[6]

Concentrons-nous maintenant sur l'étude du concerto pour violon no.2 en sol mineur, op.63. Prokofiev a composé son deuxième concerto pour violon juste avant de revenir en URSS, en 1935, la même année que son ballet *Roméo et Juliette*. Comme il voyageait encore beaucoup à travers l'Europe à cette époque, les nombreuses qu'il a visitées l'ont grandement inspiré dans

4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.

l'écriture de son œuvre: en effet, le thème du premier mouvement a été écrit à Paris et le thème du deuxième mouvement, à Voronezh, en Russie. De plus, il a complété l'orchestration à Baku, en Azerbaïdjan, et la première représentation a eu lieu à Madrid en Espagne, le 1er décembre 1935. Le soliste était alors le violoniste français Robert Soetens, pour qui le concerto avait été composé.[7] L'orchestre accompagnant Soetens était l'Orchestre Symphonique de Madrid dirigé par le chef d'orchestre Enrique Fernández Arbós.

Le premier mouvement du concerto comporte une instrumentation assez traditionnelle: le violon solo est accompagné de deux flûtes, deux hautbois, deux clarinettes, deux bassons, deux cors, deux trompettes, plusieurs percussions (castagnettes, triangle, caisse claire, cymbales, grosse caisse) et cordes (violons, altos, violoncelles, contrebasses). Contrairement au premier concerto pour violon de Prokofiev, qui a une instrumentation dense et qui comporte un grand orchestre, il est intéressant de noter que l'accompagnement du premier mouvement est plutôt léger et laisse beaucoup de place au soliste. Ceci peut être expliqué par le fait qu'au départ, Prokofiev avait songé à composer une sonate plutôt qu'un concerto. En effet, plusieurs éléments dans le premier mouvement rappellent les caractéristiques normalement présentes dans le mouvement d'une sonate, tels que la transition qui

7. Michael Steinberg, "Concerto No.2 in G minor for Violin and Orchestra, Opus 63," dans *The Concerto: A Listener's Guide* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 353.

permet d'apporter de l'énergie entre les deux thèmes principaux ou encore le fait que le deuxième thème soit dans la relative majeure (sib M) du premier thème (sol m).[8]

Le mouvement comporte deux thèmes principaux contrastants. Le premier thème est simple, mystérieux et tourne autour d'un accord de sol mineur tandis que le deuxième thème est lyrique et romantique. Le premier thème est exposé pour la première fois par le soliste seul, sans orchestre, dès la première mesure. Ce n'est qu'à la huitième mesure que l'orchestre fait son entrée. C'est la forme sonate qui définit le premier mouvement du concerto: dans l'exposition, on retrouve les deux thèmes principaux énoncés clairement, dans le développement, on entend des fragments des thèmes ainsi que des passages virtuoses et techniques au violon et finalement, dans la réexposition, les deux thèmes sont plus unis et employés de manière moins claire, plus mystérieuse. En effet, des segments de la mélodie principale des thèmes sont joués à tour de rôle par différents instruments de l'orchestre. Enfin, la coda surprend les auditeurs avec des pizzicati du soliste et termine de façon peu commune et étrange, avec un accord de sol Majeur sans tierce, ce qui donne l'impression qu'il manque un élément important pour que le mouvement soit réellement terminé.

8. Deborah Rifkin, "The quiet revolution of a B natural: Prokofiev's 'new simplicity' in the second violin concerto," *Twentieth-Century Music* 6 (2009): 189, consultée le 10 mars 2015, doi: 10.1017/S1478572210000162.

Analyse et critique des articles

Comme le premier mouvement du concerto no.2 pour violon de Prokofiev est une œuvre complexe et particulièrement intéressante à étudier, celle-ci a été l'objet de plusieurs analyses et observations de musicologues. Quatre auteurs ont particulièrement bien décortiqué cette œuvre: Michael Steinberg, Laetitia Le Guay, Simon Morrison et Deborah Rifkin.

D'abord, Michael Steinberg commence par nous expliquer brièvement le contexte de composition du concerto. Il nous apprend ensuite que Prokofiev définit le travail de composition qu'il a accompli durant sa vie selon les quatre termes de base suivants: classique, moderne, rythmique et lyrique.[9] Selon l'auteur de l'article, le deuxième concerto pour violon réunit ces quatre caractéristiques de manière convaincante. L'auteur appuie son point en donnant plusieurs exemples précis: il décrit comment Prokofiev réussit à donner l'impression que la musique est écrite en 5/4 au début du mouvement même si elle est réellement en 4/4, comment le compositeur utilise la forme sonate, et comment le deuxième thème est si lyrique qu'il nous rappelle le ballet Roméo et Juliette.[10] De plus, l'auteur explique que l'énergie harmonique est puissante tout au long du mouvement, mais particulièrement à la fin: "his harmonic energy, at its strongest here…".[11] Je suis tout à fait en

9. Steinberg, *The Concerto: A Listener's Guide*, 354.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.

accord avec ces propos, puisque Steinberg appuie ses affirmations à l'aide d'exemples concrets clairs. Il est tout à fait vrai qu'en plus de retrouver les quatre caractéristiques mentionnées précédemment sous plusieurs formes, l'énergie harmonique est très forte, puisque l'on change continuellement d'accord et qu'aucune harmonie conventionnelle n'est présente. En effet, l'auditeur se fait surprendre à plusieurs reprises pendant l'écoute de la pièce.

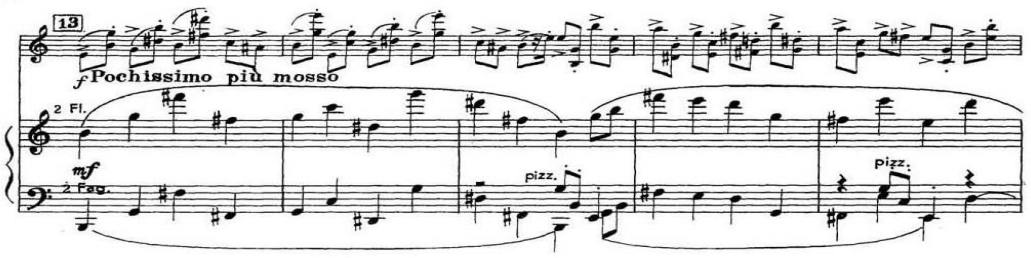
Ensuite, Laetitia Le Guay affirme qu'il y a un lyrisme rayonnant qui émane du Concerto no.2 et qui rappelle celui du Concerto no.1, « adouci, mais pas plus sentimental ».[12] Elle fait ensuite mention que les auditeurs peuvent avoir l'impression que le soliste prend une certaine liberté dans son interprétation, à cause des intervalles peu conjoints que Prokofiev utilise dans les lignes mélodiques, ce qui contribue à créer un caractère intimiste autour du mouvement et du concerto.[13] Madame LeGuay explique ainsi que « l'asymétrie, délibérée, semble le lieu de cette liberté qui, chez Prokofiev, réinvente l'héritage classique ».[14] Selon moi, l'auteure de l'article soulève un point tout à fait justifié lorsqu'elle dit que Prokofiev réinvente l'héritage classique. En effet, plusieurs compositeurs à cette époque et qui ont suivi Prokofiev n'utilisent plus vraiment les conventions de l'époque classique ou romantique, mais continuent plutôt à jouer avec la forme et avec des harmonies nouvelles dans leurs œuvres. Par exemple, beaucoup de

12. Le Guay, *Serge Prokofiev*, 151.
13. Ibid., 152.
14. Ibid.

compositeurs du XX[e] siècle, tels que Stravinsky avec le néoclassicisme ou encore Schönberg avec le dodécaphonisme ont cherché à se démarquer en créant un nouveau style de composition, avec une « réinvention » de l'héritage classique. Quant à lui, Prokofiev utilise des harmonies nouvelles dans un cadre formel classique, par exemple en utilisant la forme sonate dans le premier mouvement de son concerto no.2 pour violon.

Quant à lui, Simon Morrison fait mention de la présence de grands sauts et d'accentuations asymétriques dans le premier mouvement du concerto no.2: "The wide leaps and asymmetrical accentuations are charateristic of the Second Violin Concerto".[15] En effet, cette caractéristique que l'auteur soulève est importante puisqu'elle est très présente dans le premier mouvement. Le violon solo fait constamment des changements de cordes pour atteindre des notes très disjointes et éloignées les unes des autres, en plus d'ajouter des accents ou des *sforzando* sur plusieurs notes, mais de manière non symétrique. Ci-dessous, voici un extrait du premier mouvement (réduction pour violon et piano, mesures 113 à 117) qui illustre bien cette affirmation. On peut également remarquer qu'il y a des grands sauts mélodiques dans la partie d'accompagnement.

15. Simon Morrison, *Sergey Prokofiev and His World* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2008), 417.

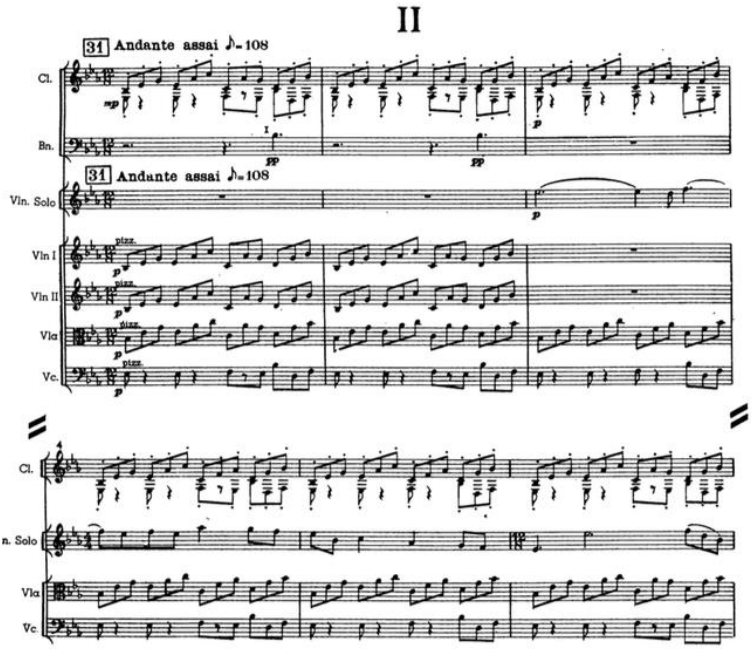


Exemple 1: Prokofiev, *Violin Concerto No.2, Op. 63*, 1er mouvement, 7.

Comme Prokofiev a composé ce concerto pendant la même année qu'il a composé son ballet *Roméo et Juliette*, l'auteur de l'article mentionne qu'il y a une relation entre les styles des deux œuvres.[16] Selon lui, le style *cantelina*, qui est définit par une balance harmonique et mélodique, est présent dans ces deux compositions.[17] En effet, selon moi, il est vrai que le style chantant et mélodique du ballet définit également le deuxième thème du premier mouvement du concerto, puisqu'il a un caractère doux, des valeurs de notes plus longues, des liaisons, et que les coups d'archet sont legato. Par contre, je dirais que ce style est surtout présent dans le deuxième mouvement, qui a un tempo plus lent et qui laisse place à davantage de lyrisme. D'ailleurs, dans ce mouvement, la mélodie du violon nous donne l'impression qu'il s'agit d'une chanson douce qui pourrait être reproduite par une soprano. Le deuxième thème du premier mouvement pourrait donc s'agir d'une introduction ou d'un avant-goût au deuxième mouvement. Dans l'exemple 2 ci-dessous (mesure 1 à 6),

16. Ibid., 416.
17. Ibid., 419.

on constate que l'accompagnement léger des cordes en *piziccati* au début du deuxième mouvement contribue à donner ce sentiment aux auditeurs.



Exemple 2: Prokofiev, *Violin Concerto No.2*, *Op. 63*, 2e mouvement, 1.

Le dernier point intéressant que l'auteur soulève est que le style *cantelina* est présent dans les compositions de Prokofiev après 1930, tandis que le style de ses compositions des années 1920 est plutôt dur et sévère. À cet égard, je considère que l'auteur ne justifie pas assez son point de vue, puisqu'il ne donne aucun

exemple ou explications quant aux compositions de Prokofiev des années 1920.

Contrairement à l'auteur précédent, Deborah Rifkin, l'auteure du dernier article, se justifie de manière convaincante lorsqu'elle affirme que Prokofiev change son style musical à partir des années 1930, lorsqu'il décide de retourner dans sa région natale en URSS.[18] Elle appelle ce nouveau style « la nouvelle simplicité », avec des mélodies simples et une forme compréhensible.[19] Ce style est reflété dans le 1er mouvement du Concerto no.2 pour violon, car le compositeur retourne vers les traditions classiques: les phrases sont structurées de la même façon qu'au 18e siècle, par exemple les buts cadentiels sont clairs et les mélodies et le lyrisme présents. Par contre, elle affirme que la tonalité n'est pas toujours parfaitement claire à cause du chromatisme et des grands sauts qui résistent à l'intégration des progressions tonales, donc qui embrouillent la tonalité.[20] Cet essai de Deborah Rifkin est très bien structuré, poussé et précis quant à l'analyse du mouvement. Après avoir mis ses lecteurs dans le contexte d'écriture du mouvement, elle analyse chacune des sections (exposition, développement, réexposition et coda) de façon brillante. La recherche complétée est impressionnante et les exemples d'extraits de la partition offerts nous aident à mieux comprendre sa thèse. Malgré tout, je ne suis pas en accord avec l'auteure lorsqu'elle

18. Rifkin, "The quiet revolution of a B natural: Prokofiev's 'new simplicity' in the second violin concerto," 183-208.
19. Ibid., 183-208.
20. Ibid., 193.

affirme que les traditions classiques sont respectées en général dans le mouvement. Plusieurs dissonances ne sont pas résolues, les grands sauts vont totalement à l'encontre des règles du contrepoint, les accentuations asymétriques sont très surprenantes et dépourvues de logique évidente. Cependant, il est vrai que la forme sonate de la tradition classique est respectée et que certaines parties des thèmes suivent la même structure. Par exemple, dans le premier thème, on entend le début d'une sentence (soit une des formes qu'un thème de la forme sonate peut prendre), avec l'idée fondamentale qui est répétée.

Dans la prochaine section, nous présenterons un résumé du style qui caractérise le mouvement ainsi que les difficultés techniques que pose le premier mouvement du concerto pour le soliste.

Mon interprétation

Après l'étude des articles de quatre musicologues et une explication du contexte de composition du mouvement, on peut affirmer que le premier mouvement de ce concerto a un style unique qui se reflète à travers plusieurs éléments: les harmonies non conventionnelles, les deux thèmes contrastants et l'énergie rythmique et motrice constamment présente. Cette thèse est particulièrement bien appuyée par l'article du premier auteur, Michael Steinberg, qui résume les quatre caractéristiques principales du mouvement: le classicisme, le modernisme ainsi que le langage rythmique et harmonique avancé employé par Prokofiev.

En tant qu'interprète du mouvement, je peux affirmer que l'œuvre présente de nombreuses difficultés techniques pour le soliste en ce qui a trait l'intonation, la mémorisation et la musicalité. D'abord, l'intonation, qui est un défi dans toutes les pièces pour violon, pose un défi encore plus grand dans cette œuvre, à cause des sauts mélodiques, des passages rapides et des harmonies non-conventionnelles. En effet, cela fait en sorte que les changements de positions sont plus difficiles ce qui a des implications sur l'intonation. Ensuite, le soliste doit mettre des efforts constants afin de mémoriser la pièce, car il y a constamment des variations subtiles dans les thèmes principaux, donc il faut savoir exactement à quels moments ont lieu ces légers changements. De plus, les passages rapides de transition sont tellement peu mélodiques qu'ils se retiennent difficilement et de façon très peu naturelle sous les doigts du soliste. Par exemple, au début du développement, entre les mesures 101 à 112, le long passage rapide en double-croches nécessite plusieurs extensions des doigts et changements de position qui sont difficiles à maîtriser. Une bonne articulation est également nécessaire afin que chaque note soit entendue clairement. Enfin, afin de rendre le concerto musical et intéressant pour les auditeurs, le soliste doit faire preuve de beaucoup d'imagination et d'implication, car il y a beaucoup de dissonances, souvent non résolues ou résolues beaucoup plus tard, dans les mélodies chantantes et lyriques. La technique qui est très présente peut aussi rendre le concerto peu agréable pour les auditeurs si le soliste ne fait pas un effort conscient pour ajouter les nuances et les directions de phrases appropriées.

Conclusion

En conclusion, le concerto no.2 est aujourd'hui une des œuvres pour violon les plus connues et les plus aimées de Prokofiev. Elle est reconnue comme étant une des œuvres majeures représentant le style de « nouvelle simplicité » que Prokofiev a adopté au début des années 1930, notamment à cause du lyrisme, des lignes mélodiques et de certaines ressemblances avec les traditions classiques.[21] Le modernisme, présent à travers les grands sauts, les accentuations asymétriques et le caractère intimiste, ainsi que l'énergie rythmique, présente à travers les passages techniques du mouvement, sont également des caractéristiques importantes à mettre en lumière.

Après avoir étudié le premier mouvement du concerto no.2 pour violon de Prokofiev, la démarche suivante serait de pousser la recherche encore plus en profondeur en comparant le style du Concerto avec celui du ballet *Roméo et Juliette*, deux œuvres composées la même année. On sait que le style *cantelina* constitue un élément de base dans les deux compositions, mais quels sont les exemples qui l'illustrent? Quelles différences pourraient être relevées compte tenu que dans un cas, Prokofiev signe un concerto alors que dans l'autre, il nous offre un ballet?

21. Ibid., 188.

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Rape and Resistance in Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk: Understanding Dmitri Shostakovich's Katarina Lvovna as a Viable and Complex Character

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Dmitri Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* is a work rife with tensions: tensions between its source text and the libretto, between moments of stunning lyricism and satiric barbarity, between the sympathy and condemnation it instills in the viewer, and most infamously, between its moral agenda and that of the social context of its setting, Stalinist Russia. At the heart of the opera and its controversy is Shostakovich's heroine, Katarina Lvovna – the unflinching murderess of Nikolai Leskov's 1865 thriller Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District, freely adapted and humanized by Shostakovich and Alexander Preis. Katarina is a bored and abused woman who embarks on a murderous path to protect her adulterous relationship with the worker and rapist Sergei, and she drowns herself and her rival, Sonyetka when Sergei sleeps with this other woman.

Katarina is an operatic heroine critics have sought to define and understand since the opera's 1934 premier.

Shostakovich was vocal about endeavouring to depict a strong woman, but many argue his musical treatment, which isolates Katarina as the only human capable of sensitivity in a world of barbarity, ultimately deprives her of personhood and gives her no identity beyond that of victim, providing an ethically dubious justification for three murders. Richard Taruskin describes Shostakovich's efforts to humanize Katrina and villainize her surroundings as "one of the most pernicious uses to which music has ever been put" and argues Shostakovich's musical justification of Katarina's deeds is morally equivalent to justifying the class-based murder or Stalin's regime.[1] He explains that the opera's "chilling treatment of the victims amounts to a justification of genocide."[2] James Morgan too exposes the "ethical queasiness" elicited from the "glorification of a murderer who claims for herself the role of victim."[3] Yet in their eagerness to problematize Shostakovich's project to musically depict Katarina as victim, these critics have failed to consider the changes Preis and Shostakovich made to the libretto, changes that can be viewed as legitimate expansions of Leskov's text. Though

1. Richard Taruskin, "The Opera and the Dictator: the peculiar Martyrdom of Dmitri Shostakovich," *The New Republic* 200 (1989): 37.
2. Ibid., 40.
3. James Morgan, "Shostakovich the Dramatist: The Nose and The Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District," in *A Shostakovich Companion*, ed. Michael Mishra (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2008): 329.

"problematic" and "heavy-handed" are certainly appropriate epithets to describe them, these changes merit more attention and certainly render the claim that the opera justifies genocide erroneous.[4] I argue that Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth* is a coherent retelling of the story that is not as distant from Leskov as these critics postulate. Some may consider the forces that motivate the changes in story and character dubious, or view the reworking clumsy at times, but the operatic story must be considered in its own right in order to understand the character of Katarina.

According to Pauline Fairclough, Vadim Shakhov argues that criticism has focused too heavily on the transformation from text to libretto, consciously or unconsciously considering Leskov's Katarina as the 'real,' psychologically valid Katarina.[5] He argues that the operatic heroine represents a new and viable psychological construct one that is, I argue, invited by the source text.[6] In the spirit of Catherine Clément, I seek to unpack Katarina as a new and viable character by examining what is said and done in the libretto. Clément explains in her spirited *Opera, or the Undoing of Women:* "Initially this is not to be about the music… I am determined to pay attention to the language, the

4. The adjectives in "" are used by Taruskin as well as Emerson and Morgan.

5. Pauline Fairclough, "Facts, Fantasies and Fictions: Recent Shostakovich Studies," *Music & Letters* 86 (2005): 458. Vadim Shakhov's work "Ledi Makbet Mtsenskogo uezda Leskova I Shostakovicha" is not available in translation as a result I was not able to incorporate the details of his argument into my work

6. Ibid., 458.

forgotten part of the opera. The part that always keeps to the shadows."[7] Like Clément, I am less interested in musical mechanisms and political subtext as in the words, actions and images of the libretto. Firstly, I will analyze the narration of Leskov's story and seek to demonstrate that its patriarchal oriented mode of narration invites a retelling of the story. Instead of viewing this retelling as politically motivated satire, I will explore the reality of Katarina's deeds and motivations and argue that her psychology is both complex and coherent, and that her final murder suicide resists the male-defined identities that have been imposed upon her throughout the opera.

Shostakovich explicitly endeavored to breathe new significance into Leskov's story. In the program notes for the 1934 Lenigrad premier, he writes: "Leskov, as a brilliant representative of the pre-revolutionary literature, could not correctly interpret the events that unfold in his story."[8] Shostakovich and Preis' narrative is the story of an "intelligent, talented and interesting" woman brought to cruel acts by her "nightmarish circumstances." Shostakovich viewed her as a "positive character" whose crimes represent a "protest against the tenor of the life she is forced to live."[9] Taruskin views this spiritual elevation of Katarina as a complete imposition upon Leskov's story. According to Taruskin, "Leskov cast Katarina as a she-devil pure and simple"

7. Catherine Clément, *Opera, or the Undoing of Women* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), 12.
8. Taruskin, "Opera and Dictator," 36.
9. Ibid.

and he does not see Leskov's Katarina as a nuanced character.[10] Leskov's Katarina is not as clear-cut as Taruskin believes, and several key aspects of the novella's narration invite the possibility of further nuance to her character. Many critics outline the detached nature of Leskov's narration which is meant to recall a procurator presenting a sketch for notes in a court case Most critics, however, align the voice of the novella with Leskov himself - Emerson is the only critic among the sources I consulted to fully acknowledge the narrator as an individual with an ethical stance and an ironic intent.[11] She asks, "How are we to understand the ethical stance of this narrator, and how might that stance affect the genre of the tale."[12] She does not dwell or provide much evidence to answer her own question and fails, in my view, to flesh out the implications of Leskov's choice of narrator. I will examine the implications of the novella narration to more fully answer Emerson's question. Chammot 1922 translation opens:

> In our part of the country you sometimes meet people of whom, even many years after you have seen them, you are unable to think without a certain inward shudder. Such a character was the merchant's wife, Katerina Lvovna Izmaylova, who played

10. Richard Taruskin, *On Russian Music* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2008), 304.
11. Caryl Emerson, "Back to the Future: Shostakovich's Revision of Leskov's 'Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk District," *Cambridge Opera Journal* 1 (1989): 61, as well as Morgan, "Shostakovich the Dramatist," 331.
12. Emerson, "Back the Future," 67.

> the chief part in a terrible tragedy some time ago, and of whom the nobles of our district, adopting the light nickname somebody had given her, never spoke otherwise than as the Lady Macbeth of the Mzinsk District.[13]

Two aspects are of note in this passage. Firstly, the narrator identifies as a resident of 19th century Mtsensk District and, if literate and if relating evidence as in a police report, is most likely male. He is thus aligned with the patriarchal forces that oppressed Katarina which, though muted in comparison to Shostakovich's, are undoubtedly present in Leskov's story.[14] Secondly, her identity as "Lady Macbeth" is imposed upon her. We are told she is never referred to otherwise, thus her identity as Katarina Lvovna is completely subsumed by and equated to that of another female murderer who is an archetype of female lust for power and serpent-like skills of coercion. Just as men take ownership of her person and body, so they take ownership of her story, denying her an individual path to tragedy and instead subsume it under patriarchal ideas of what motivates a women to murder.

Under these considerations, Leskov's narrator is unreliable and his telling of the story may not be as objective as many critics maintain. For example, Emerson states that the tale is told with minimal "authorial speculations," yet the narrative is sprinkled

13. Nikolai Leskov, "The Lady Macbeth of the Mzinsk District," in *The Sentry, and Other Stories*, trans. A. E. Chamot (Wesport: Hyperion Press, 1922), 49.
14. Morgan, "Shostakovich the Dramatist," 342.

with generalized statements concerning the nature of woman.[15] When Sergei expresses his desire to be Katarina's husband, the narrator explains that marriage is "a desire that is pleasing to every woman, no matter how intimate her relations have been with the man."[16] Fiona, a convict who sleeps with Sergei but has no representation in the opera, embodies "the simplicity of the Russian woman, who is even too lazy to say, "go away" to anybody and only knows that she is a woman."[17] These generalized interjections suggest the narrator possesses a very simplistic and sexist understanding of his female characters. The reality of the narrative is slanted to perpetuate a certain image of women. I argue Leskov's choice of narration opens the possibility that aspects of Katarina's story have gone unreported. As a member of his own patriarchal society, the narrator perhaps cannot acknowledge rape, struggle for agency and nuanced forces that could drive a woman to murder. There is space for the reader to imagine an alternate reality – a story whose events and tone would change when opened up to Katarina's perspective.

Shostakovich's rendition of Lady Macbeth is a viable alternate telling that expands upon Leskov's story and is not arbitrary in its removal and addition of certain passages. Shostakovich and Alexandre Preis chose to remove the character of Fedia (the child who is to inherit the Lvovna business and his brutal murder by Sergei and Katarina). Shostakovich explains "the murder of a child,

15. Emerson, "Back to the Future," 61.
16. Leskov, "Lady Macbeth," 78.
17. Ibid., 120-121.

however it may be explained, always makes a bad impression" and critics seize upon this statement to demonstrate the extent to which Shostakovich's Katarina is censored and problematically redeemed.[18] Shostakovich may have been right that depicting a child's murder on stage would confuse his project for the audience; however, Fedia's murder does not contradict Katarina's humanization and complexification. Morgan views this murder as the moment when the reader loses all sympathy with Katarina.[19] However, the lead up to Fedia's murder illustrates aspects of Katarina's moral isolation and provide further merit to Shostakovich's project. Sergei is the engine of greed that drives this brutal murder. In a manner reminiscent of Lady Macbeth and her desire to "pour [her] spirits in [Macbeth's] ear," Sergei carefully suggests that, when the business is given to Fedia, he and Katarina will not have the same happiness -that their affairs "will turn to ashes."[20] Katarina is slow to understand his concerns with material wealth. She asks, "How so? Why should we not have happiness?" And in response to his suggestion that they will "sink even lower than before" she responds, "What do I care, Serezha?" Sergei concludes that Fedia's death would result in their infinite happiness.[21] The image of Fedia selfishly ending her happiness festers in Katarina's mind and she is eventually driven to murder. My point is

18. Taruskin, "Opera and Dictator," 36-37.
19. Morgan, "Shostakovich the Dramatist," 330.
20. William Shakespeare, *Macbeth* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 112.
Dmitri Shostakovich and Alexander Preis, *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, trans. Edward Downes (New York: G Schirmer, 1983), 99.
21. Leskov, "Lady Macbeth," 99-100.

not that Sergei's manipulations render Katarina blameless, but that this passage illustrates the extent to which Sergei and Katarina operate on different moral planes.

Sergei values material gain and power (hence why he loses interest in Katarina when she is no longer the rich merchant's wife) - whereas Katarina is driven by a conception of love and happiness that no one understands, a conception that is mercilessly mocked by Sergei and the convicts at the end of the story. She is a woman profoundly isolated at every point in the narrative: isolated by the derision of her husband, by her conception of love and happiness not shared by her partner, by her criminal deeds and by the mockery and cruelty of her fellow convicts. Though assigning Katarina the only instances of lyricism and introspection has problematic implications (as Taruskin and Morgan argue), such separateness does have a manifestation in Leskov's tale. Even if Shostakovich desires to victimize Katarina and villanize the autocratic regime, around her feels Stalinistic, a reworking of the story is invited by incongruous elements of the narration.[22] It is not inherently problematic but indeed astute and logical to humanize and present the opera from Katarina's perspective.

In contrast to my argument, Taruskin argues that Shostakovich music imposes Katarina's moral high ground on a story that does not support such a "colossal

22. Taruskin, "Opera and Dictator," 37.

moral inversion."[23] However, Shostakovich's reimagining of Katarina is not limited to eliminating a murder and endowing her with musical lyricism. The operatic Katarina is a new and viable person: changes in the libretto not frequently elaborated upon by critics complicate Katarina's psychology. The most significant example of a libretto change is Shostakovich's rendering of Sergei's possession of Katarina an explicit rape, the implications of which are not discussed by any of the critics I encountered. Appallingly, this scene is often addressed in the scholarship as the "consummation scene" or "the seduction scene."[24] The exchange before intercourse contains protestations on Katarina's part. Whether or not Katarina is initially attracted to Sergei or whether she derived pleasure from intercourse (directorial choices productions are free to make) has no bearing on the fundamentally non-consensual nature of the sex. The experience of such a personal violation changes Katarina`s journey: her path of destruction can be viewed as a quest to reclaim a violated self. I view Katarina`s struggle to assert an active self as the thematic crux of the opera and the heart of Katarina's complexity.

The moment Sergei "seizes" Katarina, she implores him desperately to let her go with a shrieking "pusti!" (let go!).[25] In a style similar to Aksinya's frantic

23. Ibid.
24. Elizabeth Wells, "'The New Woman': Lady Macbeth and Sexual Politics in the Stalinist Era," *Cambridge Opera Journal* 13 (2001); cf. the lectures of Robert Greenberg, *Great Masters: Shostakovich – his Life and Music*, Great Courses (2002), Lecture 1: "Let the Controversy Begin," Lecture 3: "Lady Macbeth."
25. Shostakovich and Preis, *Lady Macbeth*, 13.

shrieks in the gang rape scene (Act I Scene 2), Sergei states, "I'll show you who's strongest," and Katrina's fears and protests are overwhelmed by Sergei's force and the frantic orchestral interpolation. The trombone glissando marks the end of intercourse and the exchange occurring immediately after it is highly significant. In a frail, unaccompanied line, Katarina sings, "Now go away, for God's sake: You know that I am married."[26] Sergei laughs: "Ho, ho! That's what they all say, these married women – but they still want to jump into bed with me. Ho, ho!"[27] Her pain, confusion and individual will are completely derided and undermined by Sergei's laughter. His ridicule discounts any personal trauma, as her behaviour is subsumed into his conception of female "easiness." Using Sergei's logic, conceiving intercourse as unwanted would confirm Katarina's identity as a passive woman- weak-willed and understood only by men. We know from Katarina's earlier arias that she longs for agency and an individual self. Thus her next words, "I have no husband, all I have is you," rather than illustrating the extent to which she desired intercourse, represents an attempt to *reclaim* the intercourse as a personal choice.[28] All of Katarina's subsequent actions are pushed by her desire to articulate an individual self, to protect the life and lover she has chosen for herself. It becomes psychologically imperative to accommodate all actions and events to her vision of her life as personally chosen.

26. Ibid.
27. Ibid., 14.
28. Ibid.

Her desire for agency is apparent in her opening aria, in which she defines the selves of others in terms of task. She laments "Ev'ry tiny ant has its task to do, the cows in the barn give us milk. At the mill the men fill the flour sacks. I alone here have no work to do."[29] Her unhappiness stems from a lack of direction or purpose in a world that does not demand any meaningful challenge of her. She exists only as "the merchant's wife"- her life and identity framed only in reference to Zinovy Ismailov.[30] Yet her words are not only a lament, but also an expression of restlessness. Her first words are a question: "Ah, why can't I sleep" and she tries in vain to escape into unconsciousness. Framed within Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, these are loaded words indeed, as the inability to sleep in Shakespeare's text provides an important metaphor for distressed and diseased conscience. Why, at this point, is Katarina unable to sleep? Is it simply, as she explains, because she slept all night? Or perhaps it is a sense that her pent-up desire for agency will soon burst and she will seek to break down the "firmly locked" doors that enclose her.[31] Yet her desire to assert self will find agency only in response to male aggression – rape, the most profound violation of self, ignites her hitherto dormant desire to articulate self. One of the acute tragedies of the opera is that Katarina does not succeed in emancipating or articulating herself; rather, she appropriates the rhetoric and violence of her surroundings. One of Katarina's most commanding and audacious moments is her exchange with Zinovy when he

29. Ibid., 1.
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid., 10.

returns home and proclaims that he knows "All! All! All!" about her affairs. She yells to Zinovey "I can't even call you a man, you're just a lump of wood – puny feeble, as cold as a fish."[32] Yet the seeming forcefulness of her words is undermined by the fact that she reiterates an insult given to her by Boris earlier in the opera. In Act I, scene 1 he derides Katarina for being unable to bear children and, with sexually charged malice, declares she is "as cold as a fish."[33] In confronting and insulting her husband, Katarina embodies the new woman she wishes to become with Sergei: a woman who chooses her lover, retaliates against her oppressors and realizes her own goals. Yet she is just reflecting and propagating the derisions of her abusers.

This appropriation is most apparent in Katarina's obsession with violent love-making that grows after the rape. In Act II Scene 5, she wakes up Sergei and implores "Come and kiss me! (Sergei kisses her) No, not like that: kiss me so that you make my lips burn… and the icons will fall off their ledges!"[34] After the appearance of Boris' ghost and the murder of Zinovey, as if to dispel and overpower these events, she entreats Sergei to "kiss [her] hard" and hold her with force. These violent desires are estranged from her Act I lament in which she yearns for someone to "kiss and caress [her] white breasts."[35] What has driven Katarina's desires to shift, and to measure the strength of love by its physical force? I argue

32. Ibid., 28.
33. Ibid., 2.
34. Ibid., 25.
35. Ibid., 11.

that Katarina's penchant towards violence can be traced to her rape and the coping mechanism it engenders. Because Katarina is driven to view her rape as a personal choice, rather than accepting Sergei's derogatory assertion that she is a weak-willed woman like any other, Katarina latches on to the violent sex that was forced upon her. She is empowered to make Sergei her husband, and live and love on her own terms, ("we'll live together in honour… I'll make you my husband: I'm afraid of no one."[36]) and yet her desires are dictated and shaped by male violence. Despite the agency proclaimed in her statement "I will make you my husband," Katarina's behaviour and desires are at every point in the control of men. Her deeds are reactionary. Her murders are committed in response to male violence and the desire to eliminate them spurned by rape. Morgan argues that Katarina serves only to reflect the horror of her surroundings and that this deprives her of humanity and undercuts her image as a powerful heroine:

> By constructing inhumanly oppressive surroundings for [his] heroine, [her] forces her to assert her humanity, her desire for freedom and love, by means of adultery and the murder – two crimes that in popular consciousness are inextricably linked, and that point, ultimately, to their perpetrator's loss of humanity. As a product of her environment, Katarina is ultimately deprived of her own personality, reduced to

36. Ibid., 24.

> the sum of the social pathology around her.[37]

While Morgan is right to outline an overarching passivity in Katarina's attempts to assert self, this does not necessarily indicate that she has fallen into an archetype of female behaviour or that she is ultimately deprived of personality. I have argued that Katarina's path of destruction is initiated and dictated by a rape, a specific and individual trauma. Her struggle in the first three acts can be viewed as a deluded quest for an expression and reclamation of self. In this light, her struggle becomes more personal and psychologically complex. Though Shostakovich stated that Katarina's crimes are a "protest against the tenor of the life she is forced to live, against the dark and suffocating atmosphere of the merchant class," there is room to interpret her tale as a personal tragedy. [38]

In framing her struggle in the first three acts as an individual but deluded quest to articulate self, the question of whether Katarina ever articulates a genuine self can be posed. I argue her final act of murder suicide represents a resistance to articulate either male defined categories of appropriated murderess or passive victim. Taruskin, Emerson and Morgan discuss the tensions inherent in Shostakovich's project to depict a woman who embodies both a powerful heroine and oppressed victim. They argue that, instead of constituting a feminist reworking, *Lady Macbeth* reassigns to Leskov's Katarina

37. Morgan, "Shostakovich the Dramatist," 331.
38. Taruskin, "Opera and Dictator," 37.

a martyred identity familiar to classic Russian heroines. Through her lament in Act IV, they argue, Katarina is sanctified through crime, rendering her death an "act of self-punishment [rather than] revenge against her lover and rival."[39] In assigning her these tropes familiar to female identity (slave of passion, repentant sinner, martyr), Morgan proposes that "Shostakovich is not providing a feminist revaluation of Katarina so much as he is beginning the process of reintegrating her into the traditional pantheon of Russian heroines."[40] In simultaneously pushing Sonyetka and plunging herself into the Volga river, Katarina chooses neither murder nor self-destruction, but both in equal measure. In fully embodying both tropes of female identity, Katarina asserts an act that is new and resists archetype. Choosing murder would represent a continuation on the path of destruction her male surroundings have dictated for her, confirming her identity as a crazed love-slave, a malleable pallet on which the horror of men is painted. Suicide represents a complete abandonment of the course set in motion - a renunciation of the love and pain she has experienced, and an act of self-purification that recalls her initial passivity.

These two polar stances recall the contrasting ways in which Shakespeare's Macbeth and Lady Macbeth cope with the encroaching reality of their deeds. Lady Macbeth, isolated and rendered ineffectual in her maddened guilt, jumps off a tower offstage. Whereas Macbeth, fixated on his enemies, commits to the forward

39. Emerson, "Back to the Future," 64.
40. Morgan, "Shostakovich the Dramatist," 330.

momentum of his deeds declaring in his final speech to Macduff: "I will not yield."[41] Katarina embodies the psychology of both Macbeth and Lady Macbeth, a refusal to choose either archetype by embodying the apotheosis of both. Her polar trajectories of "sinner and saint, both passive victim and political revolutionary" reach their ultimate end but collide in an act that denies either archetype resolution or confirmation.[42] Katarina frustrates her narrative arc- she has refused the world and its attempts to define her. She has created a space of ambiguity, and has made herself unreadable. The rest of her world cannot recognize it; they will call her Lady Macbeth for generations to come, but there is a certain articulation of self in her final act. It is not eloquent or musical, it may not have been intended as resistance, but it is an action that resists the project to hoist social messages on her story.

Confused as to whether Katarina is "a swine or not a swine," Rostropovich, suggests, in what would appear to be a dismissive tone, that Shostakovich has depicted a human anomaly.[43] His suggestion may in fact be correct. The question should not be whether Katarina is a swine or not a swine, victim or perpetrator – she refuses such binaries. Katarina is a woman who simultaneously embodies polarities in ways that are ambiguous and perhaps beyond understanding. The question instead lies in the consequences of human capacity for polarity, the nature of self-articulation, and

41. Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, 209.
42. Emerson, "Back to the Future," 66.
43. Ibid., 71.

how a human can articulate the extremes of abused and abuser. Although it has been argued that the incongruities of the heroine are indicative of a composer and librettist with confused and dubious goals, I prefer to expand upon Shostakovich's initial assertion that Katarina is complex, talented and interesting.

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