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The influences of German/Viennese singspiel and French opera comique Rescue Opera on Beethoven's Fidelio

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**The Influences of German/Viennese Singspiel and French
Opéra Comique *Rescue Opera* on Beethoven's *Fidelio***

By

Kelly Evelyn Evans

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MASTER'S THESIS

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Kelly Evelyn Evans
May 9, 2011

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The Influences of German/Viennese Singspiel and French
Opéra Comique *Rescue Opera* on Beethoven's *Fidelio*

A Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of
Western Washington University

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Music

By
Kelly Evelyn Evans
May 2011

Abstract

The problematic, compositional development of Beethoven's only rescue opera, *Fidelio*, which was written from 1804 to 1814, was inspired by a variety of late-eighteenth century operatic forms, including Viennese and German *Singspiel*, French *opéra comique* rescue opera and Italian opera seria. The composer explored the technical aspects of these operatic forms in several compositions, in particular those written by Karl Ditters von Dittersdorf (*Der Doktor und Apotheker*, Vienna, 1786); Paul Wranitzky (*Oberon*, Vienna, 1789); Luigi Cherubini (*Les deux journées*, Paris, 1800); and André-Ernest-Modeste Grétry (*Richard Coeur-de-Lion*, Paris, 1784). Focusing specifically on the compositional influence of Cherubini's *Les deux journées* on Beethoven's *Fidelio*, this Thesis will question Beethoven's juxtaposition of *Singspiel* melody with the somber texture of the *opéra comique* aria in both acts of his rescue opera. Furthermore, the melodic form of Cherubini's *Les deux journées*, strongly influenced by Grétry's pre-Revolutionary *opéra comique Richard Coeur-de-Lion*, was an operatic composition which indirectly affected Beethoven's *Fidelio*. Overall, this Thesis establishes that Beethoven created in *Fidelio* an unfocused composition of previously-established operatic genres of the Classical period, rather than sending forth a personal statement of late-Classical, early-Romantic operatic form.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my thesis advisor, Dr. Bertil H. van Boer, for his expert advice regarding the genesis of my thesis topic. Through extensive research and score study I have had the opportunity to comprehend the significant influence of Cherubini's early-nineteenth century rescue opera, *Les deux journées,* upon Beethoven's only rescue opera, *Fidelio*. I owe an equal debt of gratitude to Robert L. Bussard for his support regarding the translation of Stephanie's text to Dittersdorf's Viennese *Singspiel*, *Doktor und Apotheker*. And last, I would also like to thank my mother, Barbara G. Evans, for her endless patience concerning my amalgamation of scholarly material for this Thesis, and for her assistance in proofreading the text.

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Introduction: Ludwig van Beethoven's limited contribution to Viennese theatrical production, leading to the amalgamation of *opéra comique* and *Singspiel* forms in the genesis of his unique *rescue opera,* Fidelio

Throughout his career as a symphonic composer, Ludwig van Beethoven felt it necessary to avoid the dramatic medium of operatic composition. Lacking the experience of his colleagues, veterans of the Viennese *Singspiel* and French *opéra comique* forms, Beethoven found it frustrating to adapt to the foreign, theatrical genre. The composer's experience of setting his only rescue opera, *Fidelio* from 1804 to 1814, with the assistance of his three librettists, Sonnleithner, Breuning and Treitschke[1], proved to be a treacherous undertaking. Yet, after the failure of *Leonore*, its first translation in Vienna in 1806, Beethoven was not discouraged from pursuing further operatic projects. In a petition of 1807 to the Directors of the Vienna Opera, the composer made an offer to compose an opera annually for a fixed salary of 2,400 florins, in addition to the receipts of the third performance of each theatrical work. Still, the directors (including Princes Lobkowitz and Esterházy) chose not to answer Beethoven's petition for an annual commission, probably sensing that the composer would not fulfill his contract.[2] Beethoven, undeterred from his goal, attempted numerous settings during the years 1807-1826 of a wide range of libretti by a variety of late-eighteenth century German poets: Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall, Karl Theodor Körner, Karoline Pichler, Eduard von Bauernfeld, Johann Baptist Rupprecht, Franz Grillparzer, Marianna Neumann, Johann Sporschil, Johann Christoph Friedrich von Schiller, Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel, Heinrich von Collin, August Friedrich Ferdinand von Kotzebue, Johann Carl Friedrich Rellstab and Johann Wolgang von Goethe.[3] Unfortunately, Beethoven's initial enthusiasm for a variety of projects was quickly extinguished due

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[1] Michael C. Tusa, "Beethoven's essay in opera: historical, text-critical, and interpretive issues in *Fidelio*," In *The Cambridge Companion to Beethoven*, edited by Glenn Stanley, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 200-201.

[2] Dyneley Hussey, "Beethoven as a Composer of Opera," *Music and Letters* 8 (1927): 243-244.

[3] Winton Dean, "Beethoven and Opera." In *The Beethoven Reader*, edited by Denis Arnold and Nigel Fortune, (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1971), 381-382.

to his own censure of a poet's libretto or a sudden change of heart, turning to the next available text possessing to him a more pleasing character.[4]

The musical influences upon Beethoven's only operatic production, *Fidelio*, illustrate the composer's lack of comprehension regarding the medium of nineteenth-century Viennese opera. Beethoven attempted to create a rescue opera containing an unusual amalgam of late-eighteenth century musical styles, Viennese *Singspiel* and French *opéra comique*, emphasizing the principles of heroism and fidelity espoused during the French Revolution. Due to the rich musical history of the eighteenth century Viennese *Singspiel*, typified by several pieces in the genre written by Paul Wranitzky and Karl Ditters von Dittersdorf,[5] this operatic form strongly influenced the first act of Beethoven's opera, as it focused on strophic melodies for the secondary bourgeois characterization of the plot. In the musical form utilized for the apex of the drama leading up to the rescue scene in *Fidelio's* Act Two, Beethoven incorporated strophic melodies identical to those found within the typical *opéra comique*, stemming from Cherubini's post-Revolutionary opera *Les deux journées*. Cherubini's creation of *Les deux journées* was situated within the period of his late-eighteenth century rescue opera repertory, found alongside the works of André Grétry, Nicolas Isouard, Nicolas-Marie Dalayrac, Etienne-Nicolas Méhul and Jean-François Le Sueur.[6] In fact, Grétry's *opéra comique*, *Richard Coeur-de-Lion*, a successful, pre-Revolutionary rescue opera, displayed the Classical melodic structure Cherubini inserted in *Les deux journées*. Furthermore, the modal strophic melody in Grétry's opera, "Ô Richard, Ô mon roi!," foreshadowed the extensive amount of *mélodie* Cherubini used in his *Les deux journées*.[7] Therefore, Beethoven's compositional process was highly indebted to

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[4] Dyneley Hussey, "Beethoven as a Composer of Opera," 243.
[5] This is in reference to Paul Wranitsky's *Oberon* and Carl von Dittersdorf's *Doktor und Apotheker*, two works which influence the melody of Viennese Singspiel inserted into Beethoven's *Fidelio*.
[6] R. Morgan Longyear, "Notes on the Rescue Opera," *The Musical Quarterly* 45 (1959): 50-51.
[7] H.G. Sear, "Background for Cherubini," *Music and Letters* 24 (1943): 15-16.

these two composers of *opéra comique*, as well as the aforementioned composers of Viennese *Singspiel*, as the composer attempted to produce a hybrid melodic structure, borrowing from different operatic traditions. Struggling with the transition from symphonic composition to an unfamiliar vocal medium, Beethoven wrote his overture to *Fidelio* four times, attempting to emulate the Classical structure of Cherubini's overture in *Les deux journées*. This act strongly reflects the degree to which Beethoven relied on Cherubini's style of orchestration in his final *Fidelio* overture, not being sure of the correct format. Cherubini's opera thus directly influenced Beethoven's utilization of Classical melody and form, depicting the heroic activity of the main characters in Act Two (Leonore, Florestan, Rocco and Pizarro) leading up to the rescue scene.[8] Consequently, Cherubini's use of melody in *Les deux journées* must be closely analyzed to comprehend the musical language of Beethoven's opera. This Thesis analyzes several relevant, operatic works by Cherubini, Grétry, Dittersdorf and Wranitzky, revealing Beethoven's utilization of melody and orchestration in his *Fidelio* as a direct influence of the operatic genres of Viennese *Singspiel* and *opéra comique* in the late-eighteenth century.

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[8] Michael C. Tusa, "Beethoven's essay in opera," 200-207.

Chapter 1: The Combined Influences of Luigi Cherubini's *opéra comique* rescue opera, *Les deux journées*, and André Grétry's *opéra comique* rescue opera*, Richard Coeur-de-Lion*, incorporated into Ludwig van Beethoven's rescue opera, *Fidelio*

Currently, *Fidelio* is a remnant of eighteenth century *rescue opera* left within our contemporary, operatic repertoire.[9] Rescue opera is the sub-genre of French *opéra comique* composed from about 1760 through the first decade of the nineteenth century[10], thus enhancing the patriotic fervor of the French Revolution, from 1789 to 1795[11]. The musical style in Cherubini's first *opéra comique*, *Lodoïska*, performed in 1791 at the Théâtre Feydeau in Paris and later, in his *Les deux journées*, performed at the same theater in 1800, originated in André Grétry's *Richard Coeur de Lion*, the first rescue opera written before the Revolution performed in 1784.[12] In the years leading up to the Revolution, one of the airs from Grétry's opera, "O Richard, O mon roi!"*,* became exceedingly popular within the new Republic to the point of obsession.[13]   Accordingly, it is not hard to understand Cherubini's focus on strophic melodies in *Les deux journées*, which in turn directly affected Beethoven's application of dramatic melodies in Act 2 of his *Fidelio*. Additionally, as Beethoven incorporated the musical character of French rescue opera and Viennese *Singspiel* into his only opera, the composer formed a unique, amalgamation of operatic styles written by a musician known mainly for his symphonic composition. After the production of *Fidelio*, the composer, uninterested in a variety of texts, rejected every other libretto from a number of nineteenth century poets: Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall, Karl Theodor Körner, Karoline Pichler, Eduard von Bauernfeld, Johann Baptist Rupprecht, Franz Grillparzer, Marianna Neumann, Johann Sporschil, Johann Christoph

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[9] William Kindermann, *Beethoven*, (Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1995), 102.
[10] R. Morgan Longyear, "Notes on the Rescue Opera," *The Musical Quarterly* 45 (1959): 49-52.
[11] Elizabeth Rechniewski, "France," *Nations and Nationalism: A Global Historical Overview*, Vol. 1: 1770-1880, edited by Guntrum H. Herb and David H. Kaplan, (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, Inc., 2008), 169.
[12] Winton Dean, "Opera under the French Revolution," *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association,* 94 (1967-68): 81-82.
[13] H.G. Sear, "Background for Cherubini," *Music and Letters* 24 (1943): 15-16.

Friedrich von Schiller, Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel, Heinrich von Collin, Johann Carl Friedrich

Rellstab and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe.[14] Beethoven appeared to lack the motivation to undergo

a second operatic production, making it difficult for one to comprehend why the composer, so at

odds with the required details of the compositional process, would attempt to transcend the

medium of a completely foreign genre.

Due to Napoleon's unexpected occupation and invasion of Vienna during the premiere of

Fidelio in 1805, Beethoven sought the assistance of three librettists, Joseph Ferdinand von

Sonnleithner, Stephan von Breuning and Georg Friedrich Treitschke, all of whom were involved in a

complex process of revision from 1805 to 1814.[15] The libretto originally written by Jean-Nicholas

Bouilly in 1798, *Leonore, ou l'amour conjugale,*[16] was adapted by Sonnleithner in 1805. From that

date until 1814, the three librettists, collaborating with the composer, gradually refined the

complexities of *bourgeois* and aristocratic characterization present in Bouilly's rescue plot to match

the musical texture of Beethoven's score.[17] It is important to note the aristocratic characterization

present in the rescue scene of the Act Two finale in Beethoven's opera. The conclusive events of the

main aristocratic characters in the heroic plot are carried to the height of drama, resulting in a

Viennese *Singspiel* choral texture similar to the rescue scene in Wranitzky's Romantic, fairytale

Singspiel, *Oberon*. Consequently, the climactic rescue scenes in Beethoven's *Fidelio* and Cherubini's

Les deux journées stem from the eighteenth century operatic forms of Viennese *Singspiel* and French

opéra comique.

Beethoven, equally influenced by the genres of *opéra comique* of Grétry and Cherubini and

the Viennese *Singspiel* of Wranitsky and Dittersdorf, developed *Fidelio* into a compositional hybrid of

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[14] Winton Dean, "Beethoven and Opera," 381-383.
[15] Michael C. Tusa, "Beethoven's essay in opera," 200-201.
[16] Winton Dean, "Beethoven and Opera," 340-341.
[17] Michael C, Tusa, "Beethoven's essay in opera," 200-201.

operatic styles deeply rooted within the sub-genre of rescue opera. The composer's interest in the

Singspiel and *opéra comique* genres can be connected to his experience as a violist in Emperor

Maximillian Franz's opera company in Bonn from 1788 until the composer's departure for Vienna in

1792. The composer had ample opportunity to play the varied repertory of *opéra comique*

composers, André Grétry, Pierre-Alexandre Monsigny, Nicolas Dezède, and Nicolas-Marie Dalayrac,

and South German *Singspiel* composers, Karl Ditters von Dittersdorf, Georg Anton Benda, Joseph

Schuster, Johann Lukas Schubaur, and Ignaz Umlauf, grounding him in the orchestration of these

operatic forms.[18] Additionally, during Beethoven's first ten years in Vienna two, successful, German

theaters, Karl von Marinelli's *Leopoldstadt* and Emmanuel Schikaneder's *Theater auf der Wieden*[19],

produced Viennese *Singspiel* focusing on farces and Oriental fairy stories written by Aegidius

Christoph Müller, Joseph Weigl, Franz Xaver Süssmayr, Franz Anton Hoffmeister, Johann Baptist

Schenk and Ferdinand Kauer.[20] Each composer placed strophic melodies into a comical plot of

spectacle, creating light entertainment for Viennese audiences.   The genre of *opéra comique*

originated as a parody of grand opera, and before the outset of the French Revolution in 1789, this

operatic form became a diversionary entertainment created for social amusement, not political

agitation. Each opera contained an assortment of strophic melodies with simple rhythms and the

drama itself focused on the rescue of the aristocrat or *bourgeois* character from a vile imprisonment,

hence the term "rescue opera".[21] These works, popular before and after the Revolution, kept the

populace entertained. As rescue operas written after the Revolution, Beethoven's *Fidelio* and

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[18] Winton Dean, "Beethoven and Opera," 332. Dean does not mention Paul Wranitzky as a South German *Singpspiel* composer. This is strange considering the similarity of musical textures in the rescue scenes of Beethoven's *Fidelio* and Wranitzky's fairytale *Singspiel*, *Oberon*.
[19] Schikaneder's *Theater auf der Wieden* opened in 1789 but due to the cost of his extravagant productions, Schikaneder's landlord, Prince Stahremberg cancelled his lease; Schikaneder had another theater built on the *Wien* in 1800, the *Theater an der Wien*, housing his opera troupe from the previous *Theater auf der Wieden*.
[20] Winton Dean, "Beethoven and Opera," 333.
[21] Winton Dean, "Opera under the French Revolution," 81.

Cherubini's *Les deux journées* supported the ideals of the new French Republic, reinforcing the political ideology of the third estate, 81% of society: freedom and equality for all mankind. This sentiment was formally expressed by this body of French citizens, titled the "National Assembly", in the declaration for the rights of man and citizen passed in Paris August 26, 1789: fraternité, equalité, egalité.[22]

Indeed, this sub-genre of *opéra comique* present in Paris after the Revolution spread quickly to the Viennese theaters. When Schikaneder opened Vienna's *Theater an der Wien* in 1800 and successfully produced Cherubini's *Lodoïska* in 1802[23], Cherubini was commissioned by the director of the *Theater an der Wien* to write a series of *opéra comique* productions, the end result being greater popularity for the composer in Vienna than in Paris. Cherubini's melodic works were quickly followed by the varied *opéra comique* repertory of an assortment of composers currently working in Vienna: Etienne-Nicolas Méhul, Pierre Gaveaux, Adrien Boieldieu, Nicolas Isouard and Henri-Montan Berton.[24] Consequently, Beethoven was certainly familiar with the composers contributing a profuse amount of operatic material to the Viennese *Singspiel* and *opéra comique* genres.

Another factor contributing to the development of the rescue scene at the end of Beethoven's heroic plot in *Fidelio* may be found in the emerging political philosophy present in Bonn of the German Enlightenment during the 1780s, in the writings of Immanuel Kant.[25] Regarding the composer's philosophical ideology, Soloman concurs in his statement that Beethoven's political beliefs were influenced in the 1780's by the "enlightened absolutism" of Elector Maximilian Franz during the composer's years in Bonn. This political philosophy may have led Beethoven to believe in

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[22] Elizabeth Rechniewski, "France," 173.
[23] Winton Dean, "Beethoven and Opera," 333.
[24] Winton Dean, "Beethoven and Opera," 334.
[25] Lewis Lockwood, *Beethoven: The Music and the Life*, (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2003), 35-38.

the idea of the enlightened ruler leading his subjects towards "freedom, brotherhood and peace".[26]

This is precisely the ideology espoused in the end of Bouilly's text for *Fidelio* as the enlightened Don

Fernando, the King's minister, promotes the equality of brotherhood for all mankind. Yet, regarding

the ideology of liberation present in Bouilly's text for Cherubini's *Les deux journées*, one should note

the writings of Jean Jacques Rousseau. Rousseau believed the only way to maintain liberty in a

society was for people of all classes to yield to a self-governing community and if anyone should

resist this societal reorganization, he had sacrificed his concept of freedom and must be '*forced* to be

free' by the collective.[27] Furthermore, the following specified virtues of Rousseau's philosophical

ideology for mankind epitomize Mikeli's moralistic declaration in the rescue scene of Cherubini's *Les*

deux journées: "virtue, friendship, paternal and filial love, fraternity, renunciation, honor and

charity".[28] Consequently, the philosophical ideologies present in French and German societies

towards the end of the eighteenth century may directly correlate to the subjective ideology of

brotherhood present in the rescue scene of the two rescue operas by Beethoven and Cherubini.

Cherubini's musical training and Italian background gives one the appropriate perspective

from which to study Cherubini's contribution to eighteenth century rescue opera. Maria Luigi Carlo

Zenobi Salvatore Cherubini[29], later known as Luigi Cherubini (1760-1842) was born in Florence, and

at the age of six Cherubini received harpsichord and violin instruction from his father, the

accompanist at the Pergola Theater. After Cherubini received further instruction from Bartolomeo

and Alessandro Felici, as well as Pietro Bizarri, a vocal teacher, and Giuseppe Castrucci, an organist,

the young student wrote a number of compositions. In 1773, Cherubini wrote a *cantata*, *La Pubblica*

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[26] Paul Robinson, "*Fidelio* and the French Revolution," *Cambridge Opera Handbooks: Ludwig van Beethoven, Fidelio*, edited by Paul Robinson, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 73.

[27] H.G. Sear, "Background for Cherubini," 20-21.

[28] H.G. Sear, "Background for Cherubini, 21.

[29] Frederick Crowest, *Cherubini*, 1-18. This is the full name listed in the register of baptisms at St. John the Baptist Basilica, but although his father called him Carlo, as a boy, he was known as Luigi Cherubini during his adult life.

Felicità, which premiered at the celebration honoring the Grand Duke of Tuscany, Peter Leopold. The

third son of Emperor Francis and Maria Theresa, Leopold ruled as the Archduke of Austria and the

Grand-duke of Tuscany from the death of his father in 1765 until 1790. At this latter date Leopold

ascended to the throne as Leopold II, Holy Roman Emperor of Austria and King of Hungary, Croatia

and Bohemia, a title he held until 1792.[30] Evidently impressed (with the scholarship of Cherubini's

composition), Leopold II sent Cherubini to Bologna in 1778 to study with Giuseppe Sarti, composer of

eighteenth century Italian opera, both comic and serious.[31] From 1778 to 1782, Sarti trained

Cherubini to copy the sacred scores of Palestrina, the Renaissance master of counterpoint, instead of

those of Leo and Durante, eighteenth century Italian church composers.[32] This study encouraged the

young composer to develop a structured, Classical form in the orchestration of his operatic

composition, resulting in a structural form utilized by German composers of the nineteenth century,

specifically Beethoven and Wagner. When asked, Beethoven considered Cherubini the greatest

living composer other than himself and Wagner duly classified Beethoven and Cherubini as the two

greatest composers of the Classical age. [33] The profundity of such approbation could be due to

Cherubini's study of eighteenth century Classical form in the instrumental compositions of Gluck,

Mozart and Haydn when the composer moved to Paris in 1788.[34] Therefore, as one starts to

conceptualize Cherubini's art as cosmopolitan, it is important to take note of his "Germanic"

orchestration, heralding German instrumental composition of the 19th century. It has been said of

Cherubini's musical form, "his art is sincere . . . and founded on the twin canons of eternal truth and

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[30] Robert J. Kerner, *Bohemia in the Eighteenth Century: A Study in Political, Economic, and Social History With Special Reference to the Reign of Leopold II, 1790-1792*, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1932), 55.
[31] Frederick Crowest, *Cherubini*, 3.
[32] Frederick Crowest, *Cherubini*, 4.
[33] Maximilian Albrecht, "Cherubini: The Cosmopolitan," *Bulletin of the American Musicological Society* 4 (1940): 4.
[34] Maximilian Albrecht, "Cherubini: The Cosmopolitan," 4.

beauty from one who was an Italian by birth, French by adoption, German by inclination, and who contrived to please three very different audiences—in Turin, in Paris and in Vienna".[35]

Due to Sarti's influence during the early years of Cherubini's inchoate development as an operatic composer, the latter premiered his first operatic commission, *Il Quinto Fabio*, in 1780 at a fair held in Allesandria, located in Piedmont, Italy. Yet, it was not a success, due to Cherubini's adherence to the Italian opera seria in the late-eighteenth century, as expressed in the symmetrical Classical form of recitative, arioso, aria, and enhanced instrumentation.[36] The succession of Cherubini's Italian opera seria compositions following *Il Quinto Fabio* from 1782 to 1784 did not fare with any greater success: *Armida abbandonata*, premiered at Carnival in Florence, 1782; *Adriano in Siria*, premiered in Livorno[37], 1782; *Il Messenzio*, premiered at Pergola Theater in Florence, 1782; *Lo Sposo di tre Femine e Marito di Nessuna*, premiered at Teatro San Samuele in Venice, 1783; *L'Idalide*, premiered at Pergola Theater, 1784; and *L'Alessandro nell'Indie*, premiered in Mantua, 1784.[38] Due to three excerpts from manuscripts of Cherubini's opera seria composition of this period found by Richard Heinrich Hohenemser and Giulio Confalonieri, it seems that Cherubini incorporated unusual, orchestral color into his score: flute, oboe, French horn and trumpet.[39] Unfortunately, the Italian audiences of the composer's opera seria productions wanted light entertainment, not heavy orchestration.

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[35] Edward Bellasis, *Cherubini: Mermorials Illustrative of His Life and Work*, new ed., (Birmingham: Cornish Brothers, 1912), i-x preface.

[36] S.C. Willis, "Cherubini: From Opera Seria to Opéra Comique," *Studies in Music* 7 (1982): 158. Willis states that the Italian opera seria reform of the late-eighteenth century, adopted in Cherubini's operas, was led by a few progressive composers: Jommelli, Traetta, Sacchini and Sarti, Cherubini's teacher in Bologna. Willis states that the revised Classical reform of Cherubini's opera seria works was duly applied to his later French *opéra comique* compositions.

[37] Frederick Crowest, *Cherubini*, 5. Crowest states that *Adriano in Siria* received its first performance in Leghorn, the traditional name for Livorno, a port city on the Ligurian Sea at the Western edge of Tuscany.

[38] Frederick Crowest, *Cherubini,* 5.

[39] S.C. Willis, "Cherubini: From Opera Seria to Opéra Comique," 162.

After composing about a dozen serious and comic operas in the Neapolitan style[40], Cherubini

moved to Paris in 1788 to align himself with the following French composers of *opéra comique:*[41]

Nicholas-Marie Dalayrac, Nicolas Isouard, Andre Grétry, Jean-François Lesueur, Etienne-Nicolas

Méhul and François-Adrien Boieldieu.[42] Cherubini fulfilled his first commission for the Paris Opéra on

December 5, 1788 with *Démophon*, a *tragédie lyrique* consisting of an overture and three acts in the

symmetrical Classical structure of opera seria. The composer utilized a libretto by Jean-François

Marmontel, a French librettist and leader of this period of reform, to mold the Italian aria of opera

seria to the dramatic plot of the French text.[43] Although this work was not favored in Paris due to the

composer's compact orchestration, Cherubini successfully established in *Démophon* the

transformation of his operatic style, using the French *opéra comique* texture of his next opera,

Lodoïska.[44]   Once the composer settled in Paris, he was immediately taken into Marie Antoinette's

musical salon. In 1789, Cherubini was made director of the *Théâtre de Monsieur*, the King's new

theater in Paris housing a variety of Italian-based works at the French court.[45] By 1792, King Louis

XVI renamed it the *Théatre Feydeau* in an attempt to erase any affiliation with the monarchy during

the Revolutionary unrest of the ruling of the new French Republic.

As the operatic repertory performed at the *Théâtre Feydeau* altered to accommodate the

Revolutionary fervor of the new Republic, favoring French *opéra comique* rescue opera over the

elitist, Italian opera buffa, the director of the theater contributed a number of his successful works:

Lodoïska (1791); *Eliza* (1794); *Médée* (1797); and *Les deux journées* (1800).[46] And although the

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[40] Winton Dean, "Opera under the French Revolution," *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association*, 80.
[41] Frederick J. Crowest, *Cherubini*, 70.
[42] R. Morgan Longyear, "Notes on the Rescue Opera," *The Musical Quarterly* 45 (1959): 50-52.
[43] S.C. Willis, "From Opera Seria to Opéra Comique," 166. Willis states that Marmontel's libretto for Cherubini's *Démophon* was based on Metastasio's *Demofoonte*, originally set by Antonio Caldara in 1733. Marmontel found the aria to be the most important element of opera seria reform.
[44] Frederick Crowest, *Cherubini,* 8-9.
[45] Frederick Crowest, *Cherubini,* 7.
[46] David Charlton, "The French Theatrical Origins of *Fidelio*," 62.

French court originally built the *Théâtre de Monsieur* to import the late-eighteenth century, popular,

Italian opera buffa to Paris, prior to 1789 the production of Italian operas at the theater was carefully

restricted. Yet, as the pressures of the Revolutionary Republic grew, the *Théâtre de Monsieur*

continued to produce a wave of lively Italian operatic productions until August of 1792, when the

singers left France.[47] This action was due to the violence of the Republic led by the members of the

third estate of French society, who had formed the National Assembly and the declaration of the new

Republic on September 21, 1792.[48]

The premiere of Cherubini's first successful *opéra comique* at the *Feydeau* in 1791, *Lodoïska*,

heralded the political sentiment of the revolutionary Republic, epitomizing in its characterization the

heroism of rescue opera. The details of *Lodoïska's* plot focus on the rescue of the heroine *Lodoïska*

from Baron Dourlinski's remote castle in Poland by her lover Floreski. Poland, recently divided by

three partitions to Prussia, Russia and Austria in 1773, 1793 and 1795, served as an excellent setting

for a heroic rescue.[49] Therefore, when Cherubini premiered *Lodoïska*, an *opéra* comique seen by

Parisian audiences 200 times in a single year, the cosmopolitan musician launched his career as a

successful composer of French rescue opera; Cherubini was thus forevermore known for his

contribution of operatic repertory to the French genre of *opéra comique*.[50]   At the height of

Revolutionary "Terror" under the new French Republic, all theatrical representation, including

Cherubini's *Lodoïska*, made an artistic commentary on the current state of affairs.[51] The impact of

the composer's *opéra comique* upon French audiences of the new Republic can be seen in Crowest's

cogent analysis of its effects upon French theater: "The new work breathed the spirit of stormy

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[47] David Charlton, "The French Theatrical Origins of *Fidelio*," 62.
[48] Elizabeth Rechniewski, "France," 169, 173.
[49] Winton Dean, "Opera under the French Revolution," 82-83
[50] Frederick J. Crowest, *Cherubini*, 9.
[51] H.G. Sear, "Background for Cherubini," 20.

times, and evidenced clearly enough that a new era was dawning upon musical Europe, one to be not less marked in its effects than the changes which were overtaking all phases of social life."[52]

Cherubini infused the heroic characterization of the typified, Revolutionary rescue plot into *Lodoïska* and continued to develop this vein of heroism in *Les deux journées*. This work involved the rescue of a parliamentary aristocrat and his wife by a working-class water-carrier and his family.[53] Before examining the music of Cherubini's *Les deux journées*, it is necessary to reveal the historical background of Bouilly's text. Jean-Nicolas Bouilly based his libretto for *Les deux journées* on the story that happened during the time of Cardinal Jules Mazarin, First Minister of France during the years 1642-1661. The latter's tyrannical despotism culminated in the two day rebellion known as the *fronde*, a revolutionary *assemblage* against the French state comprised of members of the *Parlement* and the disgruntled French citizenry held from August 26 to August 28, 1648.   Due to the imposed threat on the lives of the royal family, Queen Anne and Cardinal Mazarin decided to permit the release of the three incarcerated *parlementaires*, and the people of France supported the decision of the French court.[54]

Yet, the historical significance of Cardinal Mazarin's and Queen Anne's rule inserted into Bouilly's text was not the only piece of history to influence Cherubini's rescue opera. Cherubini's plot was duly affected by the genre of rescue opera popular during the French Revolution rule. The Republic supported works by Grétry, Dalayrac, Berton, Méhul and Cherubini as a means of entertainment for the masses and patriotic stimulus for the new regime.[55] Thus, the events leading up to the French Revolution necessitated this sub-genre of *opéra comique* and need to be addressed

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[52] Frederick J. Crowest, *Cherubini*, 9-10.
[53] Cherubini, Luigi, Arthur Baildon and Jean-Nicolas Bouilly. *The Water Carrier, Les Deux Journées : Lyric Drama in Three Acts*, translated by Arthur Baildon, (London" Boosey and Co., 1876), 8.
[54] Ruth Kleinman, *Anne of Austria: Queen of France*, (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1985), 208-209.
[55] Winton Dean, "Opera under the French Revolution," 79.

for one to understand the Revolutionary character of heroism present in Cherubini's *Les deux journées*.

The *ancien régime* of Louis XVI during the 1770s gave the monarchy absolute control over the French state, administration and the law.[56] The division of the *bourgeoisie* and the aristocratic nobility fell into three distinct estates, comprised of clergymen, land-owning nobility, middle-class merchants and the working-class.[57] The first estate comprised the clergy, who represented the principles of French society and supported the dogma of the divine right of the monarchy. The second estate included the land-owning nobility, who until the seventeenth century were more important than the monarchy with respect to land and power. However, it was the third estate, made up of about 81% of the total population,[58] an economically diverse membership of the peasant class, who continually defined the emerging identity of the French citizen. Rechniewski states that the third estate included men of disparate means: parish priests and influential churchmen; rich and poor nobles who had lost their land; members of the indigent working-class, and successful merchants benefitting from middle-class mercantilism. It was the third estate who was heavily taxed by the crown regardless of societal position, and they felt disenfranchised by the autocratic tactics of the monarchy. By 1770, France's economic crisis resulted in the starvation of the third estate, which led to a deficit of 50 million livres,[59] leaving the king with no alternative but to raise the level of taxation among this diverse membership in French society.

In order to fully comprehend the economic crisis of the French state, it is especially beneficial to note the rising middle class in France during the eighteenth century, as well as France's lack of credit during this new period of industry, leading to the economic decline precipitating the French

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[56] Elizabeth Rechniewski, "France," 169.
[57] Elizabeth Rechniewski, "France," 169-171.
[58] Elizabeth Rechniewski, "France," 169.
[59] Elizabeth Rechniewski, "France," 172.

Revolution. When Louis XVI inherited the crown in 1771, the king also inherited a failed economy

and a massive amount of debt. Due to middle-class mercantilism during the expanded economy of

the eighteenth century and the reign of Louis XV, the economic state of France was excellent.[60] A

great deal of industry had developed, due to the availability of traded goods (cotton, silk, porcelain,

glass, and sugar) received through maritime trade in the port cities of Nantes, Bordeaux and

Marseilles. However, the antediluvian bureaucracy of the monarchy's *ancien régime* did not

anticipate the changing, economic status of the middle class, and when the French state ran out of

money, they had no line of credit from which to borrow. France had no state bank, due to the

middle-class businessmen placing their investments in gold.[61] By 1785, France had drained the

reserves of gold throughout the world but had no way to pay for it, and as a result, the great

economy lost its gold standard.[62] Coupled with this economic crisis was an agricultural crisis of failed

grain harvests in 1777, 1785 and 1786,[63] thus raising the price of bread for the townspeople and

leading to massive starvation within the third estate.[64]

All of these factors led the people of this estate to revolt against the French monarchy and

form a new French Republic in 1789. The battle of the people versus the French monarchy began in

May of 1789 when the Estates General, a body of representatives of all three estates, met with Louis

XVI at the Versailles Palace to discuss economic reform. By June 17, 1789, the delegates of the third

estate had declared themselves the National Assembly, and on August 26 this Assembly passed the

Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, signed by Louis XVI. In 1792, the new Republic

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[60] Charles Morazé, *The Triumph of the Middle Classes: A Political and Social History of Europe in the Nineteenth Century*, Anchor Books Ed., (Garden City: Anchor Books, World Publishing Company, 1968), 153.

[61] Charles Morazé, *The Triumph of the Middle Classes*, 154. Morazé makes an interesting point that France did not trust any currency but the gold standard, resulting in her action of taking gold from the rest of the world to avoid the use of paper currency.

[62] Charles Morazé, *The Triumph of the Middle Classes,* 154-55.

[63] Charles Morazé, *The Triumph of the Middle Classes*, 152.

[64] Elizabeth Rechniewski, "France," 172.

was put in place by the Convention, and at that point the most brutal killings of the radical Republic, known today as the "Terror", took place. Maximilien Robespierre (1758-1794) was an influential leader of the "Terror" within the French Republic from 1792 to 1794 because he made use of the guillotine, an effective means of death for unruly factions existing within the new French Republic.[65] The statistics reveal the horrific bloodshed of the "Terror" resulting in 2,639 people beheaded in the Revolution between March, 1793 and August, 1794 alone.[66]

Observing these statistics, the excessive bloodshed of the radical French Republic directly affected the heroic characterization of Cherubini's *Les deux journées*. The plot of the composer's *rescue opera* reflects this feeling of horror during the French Revolution felt by various members of nobility wrongfully imprisoned by the French state. In this particular opera, the antagonist, Cardinal Mazarin, has his troops searching every home and place of business for the fugitive, Count Armand, the President of the *Parlement,* and his wife, Lady Constance. Throughout the story, the French audience witnesses the fear of these two nobles, for they do not know if they will ever see each other again or even live beyond the tyrannical leadership of Mazarin. The protagonist, the noble Antonio Michéli, a water-carrier, risks his and his families' lives to save the two members of nobility, with no payment except the knowledge that he has helped his fellow man. This enlightened view of humanity, which also appears throughout Beethoven's *Fidelio*, is brought directly to the audience in Act Three with Mikéli's closing statement of the chorus finale: "Le premier charme de la vie, c'est de server l'humanité."[67]

The premiere of Cherubini's *Les deux journées* occurred at the *Théâtre Feydeau* on January 16, 1800 and was immediately declared a success by Parisian audiences. Crowest classified this work

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[65] Mona Ozouf, "War and Terror in French Revolutionary Discourse, 1792-1794," *The Rise of Fall of the French Revolution*, edited by T.C.W. Blanning, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 269-270.
[66] William Doyle, *The Oxford History of the French Revolution*, (Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1989), 275.
[67] Luigi Cherubini, Arthur Baildon and Jean-Nicolas Bouilly, *The Water Carrier, Les Deux Journées*, 30. "The first beauty of life is to serve mankind."

as a "masterpiece of lyric drama,"[68] and like *Lodoïska*, *Les deux journées* was also given 200

performances. As a consequence, its fame spread throughout Europe.[69] This led to its quick success

in Germany, where it was known by German audiences as *Der Wasserträger*. Cherubini thus created

a work which audiences of post-Revolutionary France found fascinating, due to its resemblance of

real life, portrayed in a realistic manner.[70]

The libretto of *Les deux journées* was a superb text, and Cherubini's setting was equally

apropos.[71] In Bouilly's memoir, *Mes Récapitulations*, the librettist details his first meeting with

Cherubini at the home of Joséphine Beauharnais, who later became the wife of Napoleon Bonaparte

in 1796.[72] Cherubini needed an excellent librettist who could create a rescue plot filled with a variety

of dramatic situations. Bouilly stated that he had based a libretto on a personal experience during

the reign of the "Terror", when he had actually witnessed the rescue of his good friend, a magistrate,

by a water-carrier, thereby promoting the beneficence of all mankind as an overarching theme.[73]

Not only did Bouilly's libretto immediately impress the composer, it also referenced a specific

trade within the French *bourgeoisie*: the water-carrier. According to the story revealed in *Mes*

Récapitulations[74], twelve water carriers appeared at Bouilly's front door with a fresh bouquet of

flowers one fine morning during the run of his magnificent opera. When Bouilly asked what he could

do for the gentlemen, they responded: "In the name of all water-carriers, for the honor you have

done us by this masterpiece on the stage, where—blood and thunder!—you have drawn us in such a

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[68] Frederick J. Crowest, *Cherubini,* 19.

[69] Frederick J. Crowest, *Cherubini*, 19-20.

[70] Frederick Crowest, *Cherubini,* 73.

[71] Frederick J. Crowest, *Cherubini*, 20.

[72] Luigi Cherubini and Joseph Bennett, "The Great Composers, No. XIII. Cherubini (Continued)," *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular* 486 (1883): 434. Bennett and Cherubini state that Bouilly met with Cherubini at the home of Joséphine Beauharnais around 1796, and it was probably around this time that the librettist composed his libretto for Cherubini's *Les deux journées*.

[73] Luigi Cherubini and Joseph Bennett, "The Great Composers," 434.

[74] Luigi Cherubini and Joseph Bennett, "The Great Composers," 435.

way that it made us cry, neither more nor less than if we had been a lot of little children."[75]

Apparently the water-carriers were so moved by Bouilly's heroic text that they expressed their desire

to supply the librettist with free bottled water for a year, an offer of which Bouilly declined. Instead,

he shared a bottle of his finest wine with them and gave the flowers to his wife and daughter.

As one begins to examine the essence of Cherubini's rescue opera and its realistic plot, it is

imperative to acknowledge several factors found within the dramaturgical format of rescue opera:

the rescue of the principal character from a vile existence by the other main characters in the plot;

the removal of most comic elements from the libretto; passages of text in the libretto indicating the

political ideology of French society felt during the social unrest of the Revolution; and the

implementation of realist characterization in the rescue plot. [76] With these structural components

defining the generic rescue opera of the late-eighteenth century, it becomes possible to

conceptualize the course of action needed in the Revolutionary plot for real life characters to carry

out the rescue of the imprisoned protagonist.

In a rescue opera, the principal character is usually saved from an awful imprisonment or

death, by other heroic characters in the drama.[77] In the plot of *Les deux journées* for example, Count

Armand, the president of the French *Parlement* and his wife, the Lady Constance, a "guardian angel

of the poor"[78], are pursued by Cardinal Mazarin, the First Minister to Queen Anne of Austria who has

placed a price of 6,000 ducats on Armand's life.[79] The main protagonist is Antonio Mikéli, a Savoyard

water-carrier, who, witnessing the distress of Armand and Constance who are surrounded by

Mazarin's battalion of guards at the gates of Paris, offers his own humble abode as shelter from the

storm, which Armand and Constance gladly accept.

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[75] Luigi Cherubini and Joseph Bennett, "The Great Composers," 435.
[76] R. Morgan Longyear, "Notes on the Rescue Opera," 50-54.
[77] R. Morgan Longyear, "Notes on the Rescue Opera," 50.
[78] Luigi Cherubini, Arthur Baildon and Jean-Nicolas Bouilly, *The Water Carrier, Les Deux Journées*, 5.
[79] Luigi Cherubini, Arthur Baildon and Jean-Nicolas Bouilly, *The Water Carrier, Les Deux Journées*, 5-8.

The second characteristic of rescue opera is the removal of most of the comic elements from

the text. This is easily noticeable in the opening melody of *Les deux journées* (Example 1).[80] Bouilly's

text in this example reveals the character of Cherubini's opera: "Un pauvre petit Savoyard mourait de

froid et de souffrance. Un Français passe par hazard; L'entend gémir; vers lui s'avance. L'pauvret à la

vie est rendu, par ses secours, son assistance".[81] This text tells the story of a Frenchman passing by

chance as he heard the Savoyard groaning, and in pity, he offered his assistance. The poor fellow is

brought back to life by the Frenchman's comfort and aid. In Act One, Mikéli's children, Antonio and

Marceline, as well as Mikéli's invalid father, Daniel, are all awaiting Mikéli's return from his work at

the end of the day. They talk of the singing and dancing that will take place the next day at Antonio's

wedding to Angélina, the daughter of Sémos, a rich farmer in the nearby village of Gonesse outside

of Paris. Antonio is asked to rehearse the song he is going to sing at his own wedding, celebrating

the heroic tale of how he was saved by a French foreigner.[82] Clearly, the solemnity of Antonio's

character is revealed in this strophic G minor *chanson* as he professes his gratitude towards this

foreigner. Cherubini's utilization of grace notes in the melody, in mm. 17 and 20, reveals an

ascending interval from *g'* to *d''* with the text, "petit", in m. 17, and an appoggiatura highlighting the

fifth of an F♯-diminished triad quickly descending to the tonic with the text, "souffrance". The modal

timbre of Antonio's melody is emphasized by the descending motif of a diminished seventh, *e♭''* to

f♯', present in mm. 21-22 with the text, "par hazard". Furthermore, in m. 21, Cherubini adds

chromatic color to Antonio's melody by preceding the diminished harmony with an ascending motif

of a *c'* extended to *e♭'*, eventually dropping down to *f♯'* in m. 22. Consequently, the composer's

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[80] Luigi Cherubini. *Les Deux Journées,* (Bologna : Bibliotheca Musica Bononiensis, Universita degli Studi di Bologna, Italy, 1982), 1-308.

[81] Luigi Cherubini, Arthur Baildon and Jean-Nicolas Bouilly, *The Water Carrier, Les Deux Journées*, 4. Baildon's translation: Once a poor little Savoyard, with cold and want was nearly dying; When his infant prayer was heard, by a kind stranger his state spying. Life came back to the child again, through the kind timely aid then given.

[82] Luigi Cherbuini, Arthur Baildon and Jean-Nicolas Bouilly, *The Water Carrier, Les Deux Journées*, 3-4.

Example 1, Cherubini, *Les deux journées*, Couplet No. 1, Antonio: *Un pauvre petit Savoyard*, mm. 9-62

theme emphasizes the sorrowful expression in the character's text, demonstrating Antonio's complete veneration for the stranger rescuing him from near death. After Antonio sings the text in the first couplet in mm. 39 to 43, "Bon Français, Dieu te recompense! Un bienfait n'est jamais perdu,"[83] he is joined, in a metaphorical sense, by his fellow French citizens, Marceline and Daniel. The G minor melody of this vocal ensemble then emerges out of Antonio's somber melody, accentuating the reverent mood of the text through a series of descending scalar patterns put with the text, "un bienfait jamais perdu". Specifically, this opening, homophonic ensemble of Cherubini's

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[83] Luigi Cherubini, Arthur Baildon and Jean-Nicolas Bouilly, *The Water Carrier, Les deux journées*, 4. Baildon's translation: Blest be that stranger now by Heaven, a good deed is ne'er done in vain.

rescue opera establishes precisely the moralistic sentiment of Bouilly's text pervading the entire

drama, proclaiming that the greatest joy in life is to help one's fellow man.[84]

The remainder of Act One includes the following events: After Mikéli returns home for his

day's work, Marceline and Daniel go to get Marceline's passport for the journey to Gonesse, a small

village outside of Paris, the following day. After Armand and Constance arrive, Cardinal Mazarin's

soldiers appear to look for the two fugitives, and Mikéli courageously hides them in his bedroom.

The soldiers do not find them, and, as they leave, Antonio arrives and almost gives their identity

away with his surprised facial expression. The soldiers leave peaceably, and then Antonio recognizes

Armand as the foreigner who once saved his life. Mikéli concocts a plan to smuggle Armand in his

water cart across the border of Paris and to give Constance Marceline's new passport to pass her off

as Antonio's sister, as Constance and Antonio would normally go together through the border the

next day. Marceline will not be able to pass through the border without her passport and is very

upset at the thought of missing her brother's wedding. Mikéli and Antonio tell Marceline that she

will be returning the love shown by the French foreigner to her brother and that she will be helping

an innocent man escape the tyranny of Cardinal Mazarin and the French state. Submissively, she

consents, and Act One ends.

In Act Two, Cardinal Mazarin's guards are positioned at the gates of Paris and have been

instructed that whoever finds the Count will receive 6000 ducats. A soldier's chorus demands no pity

and no clemency for the fugitive of the French state. Antonio and Constance arrive at the gate to

pass through customs, and although Constance is disguised in humble attire, her hair and eyes do not

match Marceline's photo on the passport, so the guards will not let her pass. Antonio tries to protect

Constance, but the head guard orders the two of them torn apart. Mikéli then arrives with Armand,

concealed in his water cart and speaks to the Commandant, persuading him that Constance's identity

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[84] Luigi Cherubini, Arthur Baildon and Jean-Nicolas Bouilly, *The Water Carrier, Les Deux Journées*, 31.

does indeed match the picture on Marceline's passport. Antonio and Constance are allowed to pass

through the gate, but now Mikéli is stopped because he is transporting a vehicle without special

permission. The guards then offer Mikéli 1000 ducats if he can tell them of Armand's location.

Mikéli gives them false directions down a deserted alley and then releases Armand through the gate

when the guards are distracted.

Act Three takes place in the village of Gonesse. Antonio and Constance are late in arriving,

due to a treacherous journey through the woods. Antonio leaves Constance by a tree and goes to

find Armand, who is not far behind them. Antonio has Armand climb a tree and hide in its foliage to

conceal his identity from Mazarin's troops, and Constance hides in the hollow of the tree until

Armand is free, whereupon she will give a signal of three claps for his appearance. Angelina and

Sémos greet Antonio, and a chorus of maidens and shepherdesses sing of the happy occasion of

Angelina and Antonio's wedding. Mazarin's soldiers then appear in search of Armand. The soldiers

require Sémos to provide their evening's lodging, to which he obliges, and then two of the soldiers,

drinking wine, discover Constance hiding in the tree. The soldiers find Constance to be attractive and

attempt to accost her, when Armand jumps out of the tree and separates Constance from the

soldiers. Armand is then surrounded by Mazarin's troops, who wish to know his identity. After he

proudly reveals this, the Commandant is about to arrest him when Mikéli appears with a notice of

amnesty for Count Armand, signed by Queen Anne of Austria and Cardinal Mazarin. Act Three ends

with Mikéli's declaration in song that it is the first joy of life to serve humanity.[85]

The variety of strophic melodies and ensembles, found throughout *Les deux journées*, reflect

the Classical form of Cherubini's *opéra comique*. Thanks to the composer's application of melody

and expanded orchestration in his rescue operas, the composition of his *opéra comique* form was

often criticized by the French critics for its unpleasing aural combination of angular vocal harmony

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[85] Luigi Cherubini, Arthur Baildon and Jean Nicolas Bouilly, *The Water-Carrier, Les Deux Journées*, 31.

paired with an overpowering instrumentation.[86] However, not all of the French critics were

displeased with Cherubini's employment of additional brass and percussion in his orchestration.

Fétis stated his approval of the composer's melodies in his *Les deux journées*, in accordance with the

late-eighteenth century form of French *opéra comique*, but he also pointed out that the composer's

increased employment of orchestral timbres in his layered instrumentation rendered the work as

displeasing to other French critics of the period.[87] An excellent representation of Cherubini's use of

melody is presented below in the introduction to the first vocal ensemble of Act One (Example 2), the

trio, "Ô mon libérateur". This example illustrates the Classical form of Cherubini's opera through his

incorporation of an ascending, staccato motif in C major, sequenced in the orchestral introduction.

In a lively rhythm of eighth and sixteenth notes outlining the diatonic triad in mm. 1-4, Cherubini

establishes the rhythmic melody of this ensemble, performed by Mikéli, Constance and Armand. At

this point in the text, Count Armand and Lady Constance praise Mikéli, their eternal liberator, and

the latter expresses his extreme pleasure in helping his fellow man.[88] Starting in m. 9, the composer

initiates this dramatic action through a staccato melody performed by the ensemble in canon, each

member stating the ascending motif one measure apart. When Armand enters with his text, "Ô mon

libérateur", in m. 9 on *c'*, ascends to *g'* which is then followed by three beats of rest, Constance

simultaneously enters with her text, "O mon Dieu tutélaire", in m. 10 on *g'* and ascends to the higher

register on *c''*.

       After several measures of sequential repetition of the aforementioned motif, Cherubini

expertly inserts a secondary motif into Armand's vocal line with his text, "jusqu'à mon heure

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[86] S. C. Willis, "Cherubini: From Opera Seria to Opéra Comique," *Studies in Music* 7 (1982): 169. Willis states an example of the composer's expanded orchestration in *Démophon*, where Cherubini adds a complement of piccolos, clarinets, trombones and kettle drums to the generic instrumentation of flutes, oboes, horns, trumpets, bassoons and strings.
[87] Frederick J. Crowest, *Cherubini*, 21.
[88] Luigi Cherubini, Arthur Baildon and Jean-Nicolas Bouilly, *The Water Carrier, Les Deux Journées*, 7.

Example 2, Cherubini, *Les deux journées*, **Trio No. 3, Armand, Constance, Mikéli:** *Ô mon libérateur!,* **mm. 1-30**

Constance.
Ô mon dieu tuté...lai...re, ô mon dieu tuté...lai...re, oui jusqu'à

...teur ô mon li.be.ra...teur oui jusqu'à mon heu...re der...

v.lli

mon heu...re der......nière, je te por.te.rai dans mon

...nière je te por.te.rai dans mon cœur,
Mikéli.
v.lli Jai fait ce que je devais faire, ma

...cœur, oui jusqu'à mon heure der.nie....re, jusqu'à mon heure der...

oui jusqu'à mon heure der.nie....re, jusqu'à mon heure der...

ré...compense est d'mon cœur. col C.B

cresc.

cresc.

...nie.re, je te por.te.rai d'mon cœur, oui dans mon cœur, oui dans mon cœur.

...nie.re, je te por.te.rai d'mon cœur, oui dans mon cœur, oui dans mon cœur.

dernière", in mm. 13-15. A descending, diatonic motif of stepwise motion from *g'* down the octave

to *g*, the composer maintains rhythmic energy. Cherubini draws Mikéli into the polyphony in mm.

15-16 with a variant accompanimental motif derived from the introductory orchestration. After

Mikéli outlines a C major triad with his text, "Je fais ce que je devais faire", the composer returns to

Armand's new motif from mm. 13-15, repeating it sequentially in his melody in mm. 17-18 and in

Constance's melody a measure later. This time, however, the composer changes the descending

motif, confining the stepwise harmony from *f'* to *b* instead of down to *g*. It seems that Cherubini

changed the sequence of Classical harmony to allow the vocal polyphony of the ensemble to reach its

climax in the third, sequential motif of mm. 21-29. This last section begins with a texture of

descending dotted rhythms in mm. 21-24, performed in thirds by Constance and Armand, in their

text, "Oui, jusqu'à mon heure dernière", extending upward from *c'* and *e''* to *a* and *a''* an octave

apart. Finally, Constance and Armand's melody ends in mm. 25-29 with the text, "Je te porterai dans

mon coeur", in a descending, dotted rhythm from *f'* and *f''* to a unison *b'*. Thus, Cherubini restates

his previous harmony and the melody ends in the dominant, G major.

Overall, the repetitive sequencing of Cherubini's melody in *Les deux journées* seems to be

directly related to the vocal lines of *opéra comique*. The melodies of this genre originated in André

Grétry's *Richard Coeur-de-Lion*, an opera in three acts with a libretto by Michel-Jean Sedaine which

premiered at the *Théâtre Italien* in Paris on October 21, 1784 and was presented before Louis XVI at

Fontainebleau on October 25, 1785. [89] The earliest example of a rescue opera, Grétry's *opéra*

comique was extremely popular, having a run of ninety performances in less than twenty-five years.[90]

In Act One, Blondel de Nesle, the faithful valet of Richard I of England (known as Richard the

Lionheart), disguised as an elderly, bearded minstrel, arrives in Linz to search for his master and king,

who has been incarcerated in a fortress during his return from the Third Crusade (1189-1192).

Blondel then meets Laurette Williams, daughter of Williams, an exiled Welsh knight who does not

wish his daughter to marry Florestan, governor of the fortress at Linz. The elderly minstrel conspires

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[89] Linda Mae Stones, "Musical characterization in eighteenth-century opéra-comique: *Tom Jones, Le déserteur,* and *Richard Coeur-de-Lion*" (Ph.D. thesis, University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign, 1985), 102.

[90] Georges Heyelli, "Notice sur Sedaine," ed. *Théâtre de Sedaine*, (Paris: Librarie générale, 1877). *See also* Linda Mae Stones, "Musical characterization in eighteenth-century opéra-comique: *Tom Jones, Le déserteur,* and *Richard Coeur-de-Lion*", 102.

with Laurette against her father, and when Marguerite, a guest of Williams, arrives at the manor,

Blondel attains entrance by singing Richard's air, originally composed for Marguerite.

In Act Two, Blondel determines his king is confined in Williams's fortress and sings Richard's

"troubadour" song to him on the terrace where the king stands, whereupon Richard answers with

the second couplet and the two conclude in duet. Next, Blondel is taken into the fortress by

Williams's guards and upon meeting with Governor Florestan, the valet brings news of Laurette's

love.

Finally, the *opéra comique* concludes with Act III as Blondel informs Marguerite of Richard's

presence. After the valet removes his minstrel's disguise, he and Marguerite make plans to rescue

Richard from the fortress upon Governor Florestan's arrival the next day to meet Laurette at the ball.

The following day, Blondel and Marguerite rescue Richard from the fortress, and then Richard and

Marguerite return to England. A chorus of peasants offers their blessings for Florestan and

Laurette's marriage, and the *opéra comique* concludes with general rejoicing.[91]

Throughout the opera the composer employed a variety of instrumental timbres to reflect

the identities and social rank of each character in Sedaine's rescue plot: flutes, oboes, bassoons,

horns, trumpets, kettledrums and strings.[92] It is possible that the expansion of timbres in the

composer's instrumentation appealed to Cherubini as the latter attempted to orchestrate his own

opéra comique melodies of *Les deux journées*. Analyzing the characterization of *Richard Coeur-de-*

Lion, Grétry felt it was necessary to set the music of Sedaine's nobler subjects (Richard, Marguerite,

Blondel) in a modern, tonal language, reinforcing the presence of nobility. At the same time, the

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[91] Linda Mae Stones, "Musical characterization in eighteenth-century opéra-comique," 108-109.
[92] Linda Mae Stones, "Musical characterization in eighteenth-century opéra-comique," 111.

composer worked to communicate the modal, Renaissance forms of the twelfth century, as displayed

in the "troubadour" duet, therefore suggesting the Palestinian character of Richard's Third Crusade.[93]

Musically, two vocal pieces in Grétry's *Richard Coeur-de-Lion* seem to have inspired the

melodic context of Cherubini's *Les deux journées*: Blondel's air in Act One, "Ô Richard! Ô mon roi!";

and the "troubadour"[94] duet performed by Blondel and Richard at the beginning of Act Two, "Une

fièvre brûlante". Blondel's air, written in duple meter in C major, contains several themes portraying

Richard's noble character in the opera. Grétry introduces the first theme (Example 3a)[95] after the

initial ritornello in mm. 22-24 with the text, "Ô Richard! Ô mon roi!", and the second theme

(Example 3b) in mm. 24-26 with the text, "L'univers t'abandonne". The first theme contains a

masculine motif for Richard on the downbeat, a dotted figure in C major triadic harmony

representing the king's royalty and noble rank in society, while the second theme encompasses a

feminine, descending scalar motif with suspensions, portraying Richard's abandonment and

emasculated status.[96] In Grétry's air, written in a rondo form, the composer also creates a series of

brief episodes in G major (Example 4) characterizing the twisted chain of iron shackles upon Richard's

body. The first episode is inserted in the air after the first A section of the rondo form, at mm. 30-34,

with the text, "Moi seul dans l'univers, Voudrais brisesr tes fers, et tout le reste t'abandonne!"[97] The

rhythmic vocal pattern of eighth notes, containing the F# leading tone accentuating a G major

tonality, adds an extemporaneous spontaneity to the otherwise structured Classical rhythms of

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[93] Linda Mae Stones, "Musical characterization in eighteenth-century opera-comique," 111-112.
[94] Linda Mae Stones refers to the duet performed by Blondel and Richard, *Une fièvre brûlante*, as a "troubadour"
duet due to its form as a medieval *Romance*, using the trochaic and iambic rhythmic modes I and II.
[95] André-Ernest-Modeste Grétry, *Richard Coeur de Lion: opéra-comique en trois actes en prose et en vers par
Michel J. Sedaine*, (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1910), 14-18; 48-50.
[96] Linda Mae Stones, "Musical characterization in eighteenth-century opéra-comique," 114-115.
[97] Linda Mae Stones, "Musical characterization in eighteenth-century opera-comique," 115. "Myself alone in
the universe, would break your chains, and all the rest deserted you."

Grétry's air. Overall, the diatonic melody of Blondel's air in Grétry's *opéra comique* influenced the use of melodic vocal lines in Cherubini's *Les deux journées*.

Example 3a, Grétry, *Richard Coeur-de-Lion*, Air, Blondel: *Ô Richard! Ô mon roi!*, mm. 22-24
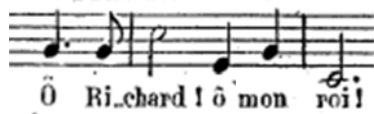
Example 3b, Grétry, *Richard Coeur-de-Lion*, Air, Blondel: *Ô Richard! Ô mon roi !*, mm. 24-26

Example 4, Grétry, *Richard Coeur-de-Lion*, Air, Blondel: *Ô Richard! Ô mon roi!*, mm. 30-34

Compared to Blondel's air, the narrow contour of the vocal line spanning an octave in Grétry's romance, "Une fièvre brûlante", contains a modal melody set to the trochaic and iambic

rhythmic modes of the fourteenth century Ars Nova.[98] A repetitive, C major melody in triple meter,

Daniel Heartz has suggested the *branle de Poitou* dance pattern as a source for these rhythmic

modes.[99] The first couplet (Example 5) is performed by Blondel set to the trochaic rhythmic Mode I

of long-short and the iambic rhythmic Mode II of short-long. Furthermore, this melody serves as the

refrain of the romance, given intermittently to both Blondel and Richard, who finally end the duet in

tertial harmony (Example 6). With the opening text of the first couplet in m. 11, "Une fièvre

brûlante", Grétry implements the trochaic rhythm of a half note, followed by a quarter note, as the

vocal line moves from *e''* to *c''*. Then, after this rhythm is continued for several measures, the

composer ends the first couplet in m. 16 with the reverse rhythm of the iambic mode, a quarter note

followed by a half note. Furthermore, at the text "terrassait", the melody transitions from an *f''* to

d'', ending in the dominant G major. Grétry expertly sets the melody of the duet in diatonic thirds,

with Richard a major third above the original melody of Blondel's first couplet. Consequently, the

composer's consonant harmony of the duet achieves the same melodic texture as Blondel's

aforementioned air, thus creating a lyrical vocal line. Overall, the modal melody of the refrain in

Grétry's romance, "Une fièvre brûlante"*,* encompasses a diatonic vocal texture similar to the contour

of melody found in Cherubini's chanson, "Un pauvre petit Savoyard!", (Example 1). Furthermore,

both of the strophic melodies are set in various forms of triple meter, Grétry's romance in 3/4 and

Cherubini's chanson in 6/8. A unique, structural parallel of antique vocal forms, this similarity reveals

Grétry's compositional influence upon Cherubini's *Les deux journées*.

    The use of the concerted vocal ensemble in Cherubini's *opéra comique* reflects the pathos of

the French citizenry during the post-Revolutionary years, 1799-1804, when Napoleon led the French

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[98] Linda Mae Stones, "Musical Characterization in eighteenth-century opéra-comique," 121.
[99] Daniel Heartz, "The Beginnings of the Operatic Romance: Rousseau, Sedaine, and Monsigny," *Eighteenth Century Studies* 15 (1981-1982): 155. *See also* Linda Mae Stones, "Musical Characterization in eighteenth-century opéra-comique: *Tom Jones*, *Le Déserteur,* and *Richard Coeur-de-Lion*," 121.

Republic as the First Consul of the Directorate.[100] As this Classical form utilized in Cherubini's *Les*

deux journées represented a united expression of the French people during the years of the "Terror",

Winton Dean states that the Jacobin terrorists of the French state supported this musical form in the

composer's rescue opera as "a vehicle for popular entertainment and patriotic stimulus."[101]

Consequently, Cherubini developed it in his *opéra comique* to reflect the many concerted expressions

of mankind: from the joyous, vocal ensembles of two to five voices in Act One to the grandiloquent

soldiers' chorus in Act Two, and the exuberant, rescue chorus of Act Three.   Specifically, the

concerted pieces and choruses define the character of the French people in *Les deux journées*. All

reflect the character of the common man even after the French Revolution, as the music is conceived

Example 5, Grétry, *Richard Coeur-de-Lion*, Duet, Blondel: *Une fièvre brûlante*, mm. 10-17

Example 6, Grétry, *Richard Coeur-de-Lion*, Duet, Richard, Blondel: *Une fièvre brûlante*, mm. 77-85

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[100] Elizabeth Rechniewski, "France," 169.
[101] Winton Dean, "Opera under the French Revolution," 79.

in Classical, diatonic harmony and with powerful orchestration.[102] In addition to the sequential

repetition in the aforementioned orchestral introduction in Example 2, the subsequent, concerted,

vocal melody reflects a texture of simple, diatonic harmony. Thus, in all of the concerted ensembles

in *Les deux journées*, Cherubini's melody symbolizes the unity of mankind developed in the new

French Republic.

The texture of Cherubini's melody is rooted in two vocal forms used in *Les deux journées*, the

mélodie and the aria, which seem to be taken from the operatic traditions of both *opéra comique*

and opera seria.[103] These two forms pertain to the dual-class, social status within French society:

aristocratic class and the *bourgeoisie*. It is imperative to comprehend the division of social class,

within two separate plots: the dramatic rescue plot, culminating in the rescue scene at the end of

the opera and the sub-plot, which contains a series of commonplace events, leading up to the

rescue.[104] Within Act One, a number of events pertaining to the working-class characters in this

opera, which include Mikéli and his family, require the use of *mélodie* as the primary musical form:

Antonio's *mélodie* praising Armand, the French foreigner, and how he saved Antonio's life; Mikéli's

mélodie, asking for God's guidance, as he attempts to rescue Armand and Constance from Cardinal

Mazarin; and the energetic, melodic line given to all the characters in the ensemble finale, led by

Antonio, as they sing of their indescribable joy in helping the stranger who once saved Antonio's

life.[105]

A comparison of Antonio's melody in Example 1, "Un pauvre petit Savoyard", with the later

melody of Example 2, "Ô mon libérateur", actually betrays a more fluid style of the aristocratic aria in

the latter ensemble. Although it maintains its classical structure in a diatonic sequence of repetitive

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[102] Frederick J. Crowest, *Cherubini*, 21-22.
[103] Frederick J. Crowest, *Cherubini,* 73.
[104] Michael C. Tusa, "Beethoven's essay in opera," 204.
[105] Luigi Cherubini, Arthur Baildon and Jean-Nicolas Bouilly, *The Water Carrier, Les Deux Journées*, 4-7; 14-15.

motifs, the dual-class character of *Les deux journées* is seen through the different vocal lines of the

three characters. In Example 2, it is clear that Armand and Constance share an intimate *opéra*

comique duet written in the typified structure of Classical melody, and Mikéli enters only briefly as a

character of secondary importance to reflect on his participation in the plot. Mikéli's character is

highlighted in a later section of "Ô mon libérateur" (Example 7), where the comical side of his

character is revealed through a simple tune. Mikéli joyfully recounts the tale of how, with the help

of his disguise for Armand, Cardinal Mazarin's dutiful guards mistook Armand for Mikéli, the water-

carrier, and let the former pass through the gates of Paris. The scalar sequence of eighth notes, used

with the laugh, "Ah, ah, ah, ah, ah," refers to the clever joke Mikéli had pulled on the French state.

Therefore, it is a motif in Cherubini's *opéra comique* texture quite different from the somber

character of Antonio's opening tune, "Un pauvre petit Savoyard". Furthermore, this melody reveals

an assortment of *opéra comique* motifs utilized throughout Cherubini's rescue opera.

Example 7, Cherubini, *Les deux journées*, Trio No. 3, Mikéli: *Ô mon libérateur*, mm. 75-84

A full development of the melodic form of *opéra comique*, the French air, is found in the duet of Constance and Armand in Act One, "Me séparer de mon époux!" (Example 8). This intense piece of music embraces the lyrical, vocal line of the nineteenth century operatic aria, complete with declamatory recitative and dramatic orchestration. A parallel has even been drawn between the dramatic orchestration of *Les deux journées* and Wagner's orchestral scores, as there is no solo aria for any one singer, and nothing in the music interrupts the course of the drama.[106] Cherubini seems to have created his operatic composition instrumentally by achieving a complete synthesis of drama and musical form as he incorporated the voice into his instrumentation. In the opening section of quasi-recitative (Example 8), Cherubini uses the quick declamation of eighth and sixteenth notes embedded within a C minor, chromatic vocal line to paint the intensity of emotion as Constance fears being separated from Armand forever. Cherubini's orchestration changes from earlier in Act One to enhance an overall feeling of Angst in Constance's vocal line. The strings play a four beat motive, moving within a minor third to a major third in C minor, a motive heard seven times. Cherubini then transitions from C minor to D major, culminating in a fermata on the V/V with the additional orchestration of the woodwinds.

In the first section there are brief, dramatic sections of text in recitative, used in conjunction with the string of eighth and sixteenth notes, expressed by Constance and Armand with the words, "Me séparer de mon époux!; Songe aux maux qui nous environment. Ils sont affreux; Je les braverai tous"; and "D'un ennemi puissant redoute le courroux. Quels moyens aurais-tu pour éviter ses coups? Ceux que l'hymen et l'amour donnent. "[107] At this point, Constance states that she does not want to be separated from Armand, but he reminds her that their lives are in great peril. The vocal line is

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[106] Frederick J. Crowest, *Cherubini*, 76.

[107] Luigi Cherubini, Arthur Baildon and Jean-Nicolas Bouilly, *The Water-Carrier, Les Deux Journées*, 9. "What, part with my husband? Think of the evils that surround us. They are dreadful. I shall brave them all. Fear the

Example 8, Cherubini, *Les deux journées*, Duo No. 4, Constance: *Me séparer de mon époux!,* mm. 1-23

somewhat contorted and angular, as Cherubini increases the dramatic intensity in Armand's text, "N'expose pas tes jours conserve-les pour moi", leading up to Constance's climactic fermata in her vocal line as it spans an interval of a minor sixth, as it quickly stretches from a *f♯'* to *d''*. This unbalanced vocal line becomes more expansive in the subsequent air, "Non, dût-il m'en coûter la vie", (Example 9). With the downbeat on *d''*, the composer has created a return to the tonic in D major. The melody's chromatic harmony in mm. 19-20, from *g♯'* on the text "vie" to *g'♮* on the text "non", indicates a harmonic shift to the dominant from D major to an A major seventh chord. Furthermore, this harmony is supported by an accompanimental rhythmic pattern of two notes in m. 20, *c♯''* and *a'*, providing the root and the third of this dominant texture. Then, the previous melody in. m. 20, initiated by the aforementioned *g'♮*, simultaneously highlights the seventh, third and fifth of the A major seventh; *g', c''* and *e''*. Cherubini creates great intensity of emotion in Constance's vocal line as she climbs vocally from *g'* to *g''* in m. 21 on the word "couter", only to drop down a major seventh to *a'* on the downbeat of m. 22, and a major third to *f'* in the next measure. Continuing with the text "je ne t'abandonnerai", the vocal line forms an angular contour as the descending section of the melodic motif in m. 24 suggests the plagal of D major, only to jump up to *g''*, touch it again in the next measure, and finally descend over the next two measures to *d'*. This lyrical aria creates a pensive, emotional state, and the surrounding orchestration enhances this dramatic setting.   Following Constance's vocal line (Example 9), the bassoons execute a scalar passage in D major in mm. 27-28, emphasizing the chromatic melody of the previous vocal statement. This visceral orchestration is then subsequently followed by another, descending scalar passage in mm. 31-32, played by the first violins, extending from *f♯''* down to *b* and ending on *f♯'*.

It is pertinent to perceive Cherubini's orchestral concept of rich harmony within his overture to *Les deux journées*. Beethoven was greatly affected by Cherubini's orchestration, as is clearly

Example 9, Cherubini, *Les deux journées*, Air, Constance, *Non, dût-il m'en coûter la vie*, mm. 16-34

evident in a comparison between the overtures to *Fidelio* and *Les deux journées*.[108] Beethoven once

stated in a letter to Cherubini dated March 15, 1823: "I value your dramatic works more highly than

those of any other. Every time I hear a new work of yours I am enchanted, and I take greater interest

in them than in my own".[109] Although Beethoven and Cherubini shared a similar orchestral vision of

operatic composition, Cherubini's overture is singular in its ability to paint the dramatic rescue scene

through the composer's creation of a Romantic orchestration within a Classical setting.

　　　　An accurate impression of the serene introduction in E major to Cherubini's overture has

been described by John Ella, who praises the composer's overture for its sequence of short, melodic

phrases in the orchestration accurately depicting the imagery of tragic incidents in Cherubini's rescue

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[108] Frederick J. Crowest, *Cherubini*, 76.
[109] Maximilian Albrecht, "Cherubini-The Cosmopolitan," *Bulletin of the American Musicological Society,* 4, (1940): 5.

opera.[110] The opening string motif of Cherubini's overture reflects the strict nature of Cherubini's

orchestral, compositional style (Example 10). The alteration between *forte* and *piano* dynamics

ensures a controlled execution of this orchestral motive. Consequently, Cherubini succeeds in

restricting any dramatic representation of musical form until the *Allegro*. There are also four

characteristics in the introduction to Cherubini's overture which contain the essence of the

Example 10, Cherubini, *Les deux journées*, *Overture*, mm. 1-8

composer's style: contrabass unison motif; melodic phrases; violin tremolo; and the subsequent

response of the bass.[111]   Following the initial string melody ending on the dominant of E major, the

composer includes a descending motif for the bass and cello in unison, extending the orchestral

range of sound to *D*. The beauty of this motif is heightened by the *piano* dynamic after the register

change from *B* to *b*. Next, the second characteristic reflects certain melodic phrases played by horns

in E major (Example 11), serving to enhance the tonic and create a harmony of an augmented fifth.

This is played by the first horn part and reinforced by the C♮, played by the cellos and basses.

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[110] Frederick J. Crowest, *Cherubini*, 22. *See also* J. Ella, *Musical Sketches Abroad and at Home*, 3d Ed., 20. Ella
also gave a lecture on *Les deux journées* at the London Institution in the nineteenth century.
[111] Frederick J. Crowest, *Cherubini*, 25.

The third characteristic is represented by the violin tremolo (Example 12). Cherubini extends the previous melodic phrase (Example 11) played by the horns into a longer melody for the woodwinds, as he shifts the tonal harmony from E major to C major. Beneath the woodwind motif, Cherubini inserts a *piano* tremolo for the violins. At this point, Cherubini builds the orchestral tension, leading up to the rhythmically-driven *Allegro*, as the basses now respond with a descending motif of four sixteenth notes and a quarter note. It is apparent that the composer understood with great acuity how to use his instrumental forces to create intense musical drama, preparing his listeners for the emotional fervor in his opera.

A series of orchestral motifs that inherently connected to the drama of Bouilly's text also serve to accentuate the excitement of the later rescue scene. These are present in the *Allegro* section of Cherubini's Overture (Example 13). Here, it is crucial to take note of the driving energy in Cherubini's orchestration, as observed in the fast-paced dominant chromatic melody in mm. 41-43 and the forte succession of sixteenth notes in mm. 43-48. Specifically, the composer successfully creates an immediate acceleration of tempo, as a quickly rising chromatic line played by the first violins and a forte succession of sixteenth notes played by the second violins vigorously proclaim the dominant B major returning to E major. It is the moment of triumph that foreshadows the rescue scene. The previous orchestration is then followed by a diatonic sequence of two motives in mm. 44-54. The first motive in mm. 43-48 is a dotted *forte* melody, which then transitions into a repetitive motif highlighting the tonic E major, an F♯ minor seventh and the seventh, a D♯ diminished triad, pushing towards the tonic. However, the second motive in mm. 49-54 states a variation of this diatonic harmony in diminution. Overall, through the utilization of a fast-paced succession of sixteenth notes highlighting the tonic and the chromatic seventh, Cherubini successfully maintains the rhythmic energy of the *Allegro* in his overture harmony in diminution.

Example 11, Cherubini, *Les deux journées*, Overture, mm. 9-12

Example 12, Cherubini, *Les deux journées*, Overture, mm. 27-34

Example 13, Cherubini, *Les deux journées*, Allegro, *Overture*, mm. 40-62

Finally, to attain complete understanding of Cherubini's romantic orchestration it is crucial to examine the composer's utilization of vocal polyphony in his Act One finale, "Ô ciel! En croirai-je mes yeux!", (Example 14). Sung by Antonio, Marceline, Constance, Armand, Mikéli, and Daniel, and accompanied by a full orchestral ensemble, it represents Antonio's initial excitement of recognizing Armand as the French foreigner who saved his life. Cherubini pairs the six voices into three duos, creating in some places three different melodic lines at the same time. The intensity of the entire ensemble is felt in the text, "Ô celeste providence que je bés tes bienfaits", which expresses the thanks of the ensemble for God's great blessings.[112]

Constance's lyrical, vocal line with the text, "non je n'éprouvai jamais" (Example 15), is an illustration of Cherubini's insertion of an opera seria style, reserved at first for a character of the aristocratic class due to the combined nature of aria and melody in Cherubini's concerted ensembles. Before long, however, the entire ensemble is given similar, lyrical, vocal lines proclaiming their love for mankind. The intensity of the ensemble builds as the characters are paired together in imitative polyphony at the text, "non". Then the composer continues this polyphonic melody with the text, "je n'éprouverai jamais", in an ascending arpeggiated vocal line as the four characters proclaim their gratitude for Divine Providence. Cherubini accentuates the vocal qualities of the aria towards the end of the Act One Finale, as Constance's E♭ major arpeggiated line displays operatic coloratura

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[112] Luigi Cherubini, Arthur Baildon and Jean-Nicolas Bouilly, *The Water-Carrier, Les Deux Journées*, 14-15.

(Example 16). The rising, diatonic melody, set to the text, "que je bénis tes bienfaits", reaches its

climax in m. 350 in the dominant *b♭''*. Finally, this harmony is subsequently followed by a

descending, chromatic line from *a''* to *g''* and an ascending, arpeggiated sequence in m. 353. Overall,

Cherubini creates this brief section of operatic figuration to incorporate the florid vocalization of the

operatic aria into his rescue opera.

Cherubini also implements the *opéra comique* style into his Act One finale, "Ô ciel! En

croirai-je mes yeux!", as he depicts the depth of sadness in Marceline's character when she learns

she cannot accompany her brother Antonio to his own wedding in order to save the lives of

Constance and Armand. Cherubini gives a poignant melody to the clarinet (Example 17), which

reflects his musical characterization of Bouilly's working-class characters. This melody conveys a

return to the modal contour of Antonio's opening chanson, "Un pauvre petit Savoyard". After the

chromatic melody is heard from the clarinet in mm. 232-234, Antonio enters with his original melody

in G minor at m. 238 to calm Marceline and convince her to help the remarkable man who saved his

life. By m. 246, Cherubini shifts the harmony from G minor to the relative major and Marceline

subsequently responds with the text, "ma secourir ton bienfaiteur", in the tonic Bb ending at m. 256

in the dominant, A diminished seventh on *e♭''*. A loving sister, Marceline concedes to the wishes of

Antonio, and after Mikéli repeats Antonio's aforementioned melody in his vocal line in mm. 261-274,

the finale ends with eternal praise of Divine Providence bestowed upon Armand, Constance and the

entire ensemble.[113]

Cherubini created a remarkable masterpiece of Classical form and Romantic orchestration in

his rescue opera, *Les deux journées*. The composer effectively increased his utilization of brass and

percussive instrumentation, paired with a sequence of Classical diatonic melodies and arias from the

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[113] Luigi Cherubini, Arthur Baildon and Jean Nicolas Bouilly, *The Water-Carrier*, *Les Deux Journées*, 15.

Example 14, Cherubini, *Les deux journées*, Act One Finale, Armand, Constance, Marceline, Daniel, Antonio, Mikéli: *Ô ciel! En croirai-je mes yeux!,* mm. 80-100

Example 15, Cherubini, *Les deux journées*, Act One Finale, Armand, Constance, Marceline, Daniel, Antonio, Mikéli: *Ô ciel! En croirai-je mes yeux!*, mm. 324-330

Example 16, Cherubini, *Les deux journées*, Act One Finale, Constance: *Ô ciel! En croirai-je mes yeux!*, mm. 347-355

Example 17, Cherubini, *Les deux journées*, Act 1 Finale, Antonio, Marceline, Mikéli: *En croirai-je mes yeux!*, mm. 230-274

. . heur   le vrai bonheur.

genres of *opéra comique* and opera seria, to create a more individualistic genre which, by the middle

of the nineteenth century, could foreshadow Wagnerian ''music drama''.[114] And yet, this

cosmopolitan composer found a home for his *opéra comique* rescue operas not in Bologna or London,

but in Paris during the years of the radical French Revolution and the French Republic. But even with

this city's acceptance of Cherubini's Italian melodic form during the years of the Revolution,

Cherubini's enhanced orchestration actually presaged the expanded form of Wagnerian German

Romantic opera and French grand opera of the mid-nineteenth century.[115] Furthermore, it was the

German composers of this period, even more than the French, who hailed Cherubini's *Lodoïska* and

Les deux journées as masterpieces of the Classical age.[116]

      Another statement of German admiration for Cherubini's music can be found in the typical

reaction to the overture of *Les deux journées* at the turn of the century. This was a piece of music

greatly admired by the leading composers of the Romantic German school of the early-nineteenth

century due to its robust rhythms and colorful orchestration. Additionally, Mendelssohn once

offered a truly remarkable commendation for Cherubini's opera, stating that he found "the overture

to *Les deux journées* to merit greater respect than all of the 1834 Berlin repertory".[117]

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[114] S.C. Willis, "Cherubini: From Opera Seria to Opéra Comique," 168.
[115] S.C. Willis, "Cherubini: From Opera Seria to Opéra Comique," 172.
[116] Frederick J. Crowest, *Cherubini*, 74-75.
[117] Edward Bellasis, *Cherubini: Memorials*, 82-85.

Overall, Cherubini was considered a leader in the reform of Italian opera seria during the late-eighteenth century[118], owing to his strict adherence to Classical form and incorporation of the aria in his early opera seria compositions[119] performed in Bologna and Turin, as well as his later series of *opéra comique* compositions, performed in Paris. The composer was adept at creating a perfect blend of music and drama within an expanded orchestral timbre. He raised the music above the text, keeping the purity of the melody first and foremost in his mind.[120] Cherubini achieved this synthesis of form in *Les deux journées* by combining the rustic melodies of *opéra comique* with the elegant arias of opera seria, thus creating a seamless texture of Classical melody.[121] A unique representation of rescue opera, Cherubini's *Les deux journées* lives on in the current repertory, for Cherubini's style of German, Romantic orchestration greatly influenced Beethoven's *Fidelio*, the sole survivor of current rescue opera repertory within the twenty-first century.[122]

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[118] Margery Juliet Stomne Selden, "The French Operas of Luigi Cherubini," (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1951), 10. *See Also* S.C. Willis, "Cherubini: From Opera Seria to Opéra Comique," Studies in Music 7 (1982): 158.

[119] S.C. Willis, "Cherubini: From Opera Seria to Opéra Comique," 159.

[120] Edward Bellasis, *Cherubini*, 40-41. Bellasis quotes *The Musical World*, taken from J. V. Bridgeman's *Niederrheinische Musik-Zeitung (N.M.Z.)*, citing A. von Ulibicheff, *Nouvelle Biographie de Mozart*.

[121] Frederick J. Crowest, *Cherubini*, 73.

[122] William Kindermann, *Beethoven*, 102.

Chapter 2: Beethoven's *Fidelio*: A collaborative amalgamation of Viennese *Singspiel* and French *opéra comique*, melodrama and the dramaturgical rescue scene

       Beethoven's only successful foray into the world of opera was *Fidelio*, written and

subsequently revised from 1805 to 1814.[123] Due to Beethoven's inadequate understanding of

German opera and lack of theatrical experience,[124] he had to rely on the successful genre of German

and Viennese *Singspiel* established by both north and south German composers in the late-

eighteenth century. Beethoven's experience performing the repertory of certain French *opéra*

comique composers such as André-Ernest-Modeste Grétry, Pierre-Alexandre Monsigny, Nicolas

Dezède, Nicolas-Marie Dalayrac, and Viennese *Singspiel* composers like Karl Ditters von Dittersdorf,

Georg Anton Benda, Joseph Schuster, Johann Lukas Schubaur and Ignaz Umlauf as a member of the

court orchestra in Bonn until 1792 undoubtedly established his understanding of operatic forms.[125]

Beethoven did not therefore create a novel operatic structure in his *Fidelio*, but rather incorporated

several German vocal styles of operatic composition into his opera: Viennese *Singspiel* for the

bourgeois, strophic melodies of Acts One and Two and French *opéra comique* for the dramatic arias

in both acts for the four main characters involved in plotting Florestan's demise.[126] More specifically,

two forms of *Singspiel* had a direct influence on Beethoven's *Fidelio*: the Viennese *Singspiel*, such as

that found in Karl Ditters von Dittersdorf's *Der Doktor und Apotheker* and Paul Wranitzky's fairytale

opera *Oberon*; and the parallel tradition of the German *Singspiel*, as found in Johann Friedrich

Reichardt's *Elwin und Elmire*, for example. Both these forms directly influenced the folk melodies of

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[123] Michael C. Tusa, "Beethoven's essay in opera: historical, text-critical, and interpretive issues in *Fidelio*," In *The Cambridge Companion to Beethoven*, ed. Glenn Stanley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 200-01.

[124] Michael C. Tusa, "Music as drama: structure, style, and process in *Fidelio*," In *Cambridge Opera Handbooks: Ludwig Van Beethoven: Fidelio* (New York: Cambridge Opera Handbooks, 1996), 101.

[125] Winton Dean, "Beethoven and Opera," In *The Beethoven Reader*, edited by Denis Arnold and Nigel Fortune, (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1971). 332.

[126] Lewis Lockwood, *Beethoven: The Music and the Life* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2003), 259.

Beethoven's *Fidelio*.[127] Coincidentally, the inspiration for Beethoven's dramatic rescue scene in Act

Two of *Fidelio*, a point of interest in this chapter, can be linked to the ending finale of Wranitzky's

Oberon. However, the style of *opéra comique* found in Cherubini's *Les deux journées*, as presented in

Chapter One, equally contributes to the extensive orchestration and chromatic vocal harmony

utilized in Act Two of Beethoven's *Fidelio*. Therefore, Beethoven clearly synthesized in *Fidelio* a

pasticcio of operatic styles previously cultivated by a number of late-eighteenth century composers.

Dittersdorf's *Doktor und Apotheker* is an excellent example of the Viennese *Singspiel,* similar to the

Italian opera buffa in the late-eighteenth century.[128] His opera provides diatonic, folk melodies for all

of the characters, who belong to the *bourgeoisie* or middle class. In the same operatic vein,

Wranitzky's *Oberon* provides another example of bourgeois folk melodies written to a fairytale text,

likewise set in the form of Viennese *Singspiel*. The influences of these operas on Beethoven's *Fidelio*

will reveal the unique amalgamation of vocal and orchestral textures within the composer's only

work in this genre.

A comparative analysis can be made between a variety of strophic, folk melodies found in

both *Doktor und Apotheker* and *Oberon* and the *Singspiel* melodies present in Act One of

Beethoven's *Fidelio*; the use of melodrama leading into Rocco and Leonore's grave-digging duet in

Act Two of *Fidelio*, and Cherubini's use of *melodrama* in Act Two of his *Les deux journées*; as well as

the contrasting, musical forms found in the energy-driven rescue scene, including the

implementation of the robust final choruses written in the style of Wranitzky and Grétry in the

finales of Beethoven's and Cherubini's respective operas.

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[127] Thomas Bauman, *North German Opera in the Age of Goethe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 9.
[128] Paul Joseph Horsley, "Dittersdorf and the finale in late-eighteenth century German comic opera," (diss., Cornell University, 1988)," 72.

Before one can comprehend the unique division of *Singspiel* and *opéra comique* between

Acts One and Two of Beethoven's *Fidelio*, it is imperative that one study the conception of this rescue

opera plot, originally conceived by the librettist Jean-Nicolas Bouilly. Coincidentally, Bouilly wrote

both of the libretti for Beethoven's *Fidelio* and Cherubini's *Les deux journées* in 1800.[129] The

intended title of Beethoven's opera was actually *Léonore*, the heroine of Bouilly's heroic text.

Furthermore, the French title of Bouilly's original libretto was *Léonore, ou L'amour conjugal,* written

in 1798 and first set by Pierre Gaveaux, a French singer, composer and actor[130]. The libretto was

later set by Ferdinand Päer in Dresden in 1804 with the title of *Leonora, ossia l'amore conjugale*

(Leonora, that conjugal love)[131], and it was this version that inspired Beethoven to set the same text.

One evening, after a successful performance of Päer's opera, Beethoven spoke frankly with that

composer: "I like your play. I have a good mind to set it to music."[132] And thus the seed for

Beethoven's *Léonore* was born. Although Beethoven wanted his opera to be entitled *Léonore*,

reflecting the central character of heroic self- sacrifice in his opera, fate decided otherwise. Due to

Päer's version of Bouilly's text with the same title performed thirteen months earlier[133] and the

composer's close connection to the Kärntnertor Theater in Vienna, the Viennese censor of the

theater felt that the same title would be associated with Päers' work and therefore the name of

Beethoven's only opera was permanently changed in 1805 with Joseph Ferdinand von Sonnleithner's

adaptation to Bouilly's libretto, thus creating the first version of the *rescue opera*, *Fidelio oder die*

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[129] Winton Dean, "Opera under the French Revolution," *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association*, 94 (1967-68): 85.

[130] Hector Berlioz, *Beethoven by Berlioz: a critical appreciation of Beethoven's nine symphonies and his only opera-Fidelio-with its four overtures,* compiled and translated by Ralph de Sola, (Boston: Crescendo Publishing Company, 1975), 49. Pierre Gaveaux and Madame Scio played the roles of Florestan and Fidelio/Leonore in 1798.

[131] Alexander Thayer, *Life of Beethoven*, I, revised and edited by Elliott Forbes, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), 346.

[132] Hector Berlioz, *Beethoven by Berlioz*, 49.

[133] Lewis Lockwood, *Beethoven,* 255.

eheliche Liebe (Fidelio, or the triumph of married love).[134] Beethoven even wrote the second version

of the overture to his opera for the 1806 production and titled it *Leonore No. 3* in the hopes that his

opera could retain its original title.[135] But alas, Beethoven's rescue opera retained the title *Fidelio* in

1806 in all three of its performances between 1805 to 1814.

Although Bouilly was the creator of this text, in 1804 Beethoven actually chose Joseph

Ferdinand von Sonnleithner, a Viennese librettist, to adapt Bouilly's text into German for the first

production of his opera in 1805, and Sonnleithner held to the original libretto with very few

changes.[136] Not a coincidence, J. N. Bouilly's libretti for both *Fidelio* and *Les deux journées* were

taken from his own personal experiences when he was the governor of an official state department

in Tours during the Terror of the new French Republic.[137] According to rescue opera musicologist

Paul Robinson, regarding the plot for *Fidelio*, the poet witnessed the humanitarian act of an

aristocrat, incarcerated in Touraine, being liberated by his wife.[138] This being the case, Bouilly

himself would have been the king's minister who freed the prisoner, thus making Bouilly's libretto

not only a commemorative statement of heroism but also an act of his benevolence towards the

aristocracy during the worst days of the Terror.[139] However, Beethoven knew nothing of Bouilly's

experiences during the Terror, as the personal account was only published in 1836 in Bouilly's

memoirs long after Beethoven's composition of *Fidelio*.[140]

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[134] Winton Dean, "Beethoven and Opera," 338.

[135] Edmund Morris, *The Universal Composer: Beethoven*, Eminent Lives Series, (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2005), 119. Despite Beethoven's desire to highlight Leonore's virtuous character in the title of his *rescue* opera, the title designated by the Viennese censor for Beethoven's rescue opera, *Fidelio*, continues to this day to highlight the heroine's male disguise.

[136] Michael C. Tusa, "Beethoven's essay in opera," 200.

[137] Dyneley Hussey, "Beethoven as a Composer of Opera," *Music and Letters*, 8 (1927): 245.

[138] Paul Robinson, "*Fidelio* and the French Revolution," *Cambridge Opera Handbooks: Ludwig van Beethoven: Fidelio*, compiled and edited by Paul Robinson, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 74.

[139] Lewis Lockwood, *Beethoven*, 255.

[140] Paul Robinson, "*Fidelio* and the French Revolution," 74.

Before examining the details of Bouilly's plot, it first seems prudent to present one with a few of the unusual circumstances of the genesis of Beethoven's *Fidelio*. Around 1802 to 1803, when Beethoven began his venture into the world of operatic composition his hearing loss made it difficult for him to deal with the various components necessary for the operatic stage: singers, impresarios, stage directors, theater audiences and the theater censor.[141] In short, the composer was unprepared for the theatrical demands of stage production, which, at times, lacked the organized performances of his symphonic compositions. Beethoven became influenced by the advent of French rescue opera in 1802 when Emanuel Schikaneder, the impresario of the Theater an der Wien, presented Cherubini's *Lodoïska*. The plot of this rescue opera, set in Poland, reverses the heroism of *Fidelio* as the imprisoned heroine, Lodoïska, is rescued by her lover, Floreski, from a castle besieged by Tatars.[142] It has been stated by Lockwood that later, in 1802, two more rescue operas by Cherubini, *Faniska* and *Les deux journées*, were also performed at the Theater an der Wien. Consequently, these *rescue operas* by the aforementioned composer influenced Beethoven's compositional process regarding his implementation of specified rescue opera characterization within *Fidelio*.

However, the popularity of the rescue opera originated prior to the French Revolution in 1784 with Grétry's successful work, *Richard Coeur de Lion*.[143] Furthermore, it had been developed through the end of the eighteenth century with the works of the new French school of *opéra comique* composers: Jean-François Le Sueur, Nicolas-Marie Dalayrac, André-Ernest-Modeste Grétry, Nicolas Isouard, François-Joseph Gossec, Etienne-Nicolas Méhul and Luigi Cherubini.[144] The adventurous plots found in the rescue opera, very often alluding to the guillotine and the

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[141] Lewis Lockwood, *Beethoven*, 252.
[142] Lewis Lockwood, *Beethoven*, 253-254.
[143] H. G. Sear, "Background for Cherubini," *Music and Letters*, 24 (1943): 15.
[144] Winton Dean, "Opera under the French Revolution," 81.

Revolutionary prison, gave Beethoven the dramatic venue for the creation of his heroic opera.[145]

Beethoven was truly inspired by Cherubini's operatic works and at this point in his career, he

remarked to his friend Ignaz Seyfried that he considered Cherubini "of all living opera composers the

one most worth attending to".[146] Thoroughly inspired by Cherubini's dramatic orchestration and use

of melody particularly in his French rescue operas, Beethoven decided that he could write in a similar

vein.

One of the problems with Beethoven's only opera was the libretto itself. Beethoven was

rather strict in his determination of an acceptable libretto, probably stemming from a philosophical

mindset adapted from the German literary movement of the mid-eighteenth century known as *Sturm*

und Drang.[147] While he found Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* to contain the best text espousing the

esoteric views of Freemasonry and the Enlightenment, Beethoven found the immorality within

Mozart's *Don Giovanni* and *Le Nozze di Figaro* to be "unworthy of a great composer".[148] It was

therefore most likely the serious, moralistic focus of Cherubini's *Les deux journées* that Beethoven

found so appealing. However, Bouilly's text for *Fidelio* did not provide a steady, continuous thread

of moralistic drama from beginning to end. Maynard Soloman notes in his analysis of Bouilly's non-

theatrical plot with his bold-faced statement that Bouilly's libretto contains an "artless text, stagnant

action and cumbersome development".[149]

Actually, even before considering Bouilly's text, Beethoven attempted to set an archaic

libretto by Emanuel Schikaneder called *Vestas Feuer* in the fall of 1803. Schikaneder procured free

lodging for Beethoven at the Theater an der Wien in order to persuade the composer to set this

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[145] Lewis Lockwood, *Beethoven*, 254.
[146] Lewis Lockwood, *Beethoven,* 253.
[147] Dyneley Hussey, "Beethoven as a Composer of Opera," 246.
[148] Dyneley Hussey, "Beethoven as a Composer of Opera," 246.
[149] Maynard Soloman, *Beethoven*, 2nd edition, (New York: Schirmer Trade Books, 2001), 256.

text.[150] Beethoven worked diligently with it for a few months but soon found it to be "too ungrateful".[151] It was a tale of heroism set in Ancient Rome but the monotonous detail weighed down Beethoven's creative mind, and he told Georg August Griesinger in November of 1803 that he was looking for a more reasonable text.[152]   All that remains of *Vestas Feuer* is eighty-one pages of manuscript for the first scene containing a love duet and a trio for soprano, tenor and baritone, which Beethoven later used as the melody for the reconciliation duet of Leonore and Florestan during the rescue scene of *Fidelio's* Act Two, "O namenlose Freude".[153]   By January of 1804, Beethoven had started his work on *Fidelio*, and it was scheduled for performance on October 15, 1805. However, on September 30 the Viennese court censor placed a ban on Beethoven's work due to its revolutionary implications during a time of political instability in Vienna. The ban was eventually lifted on October 5, and finally, after several weeks of copying the music and scheduling adequate rehearsal time, *Fidelio* was performed on November 20, 1805.[154] However, due to Napoleon's occupation of Vienna several days before the premiere of *Fidelio*, Beethoven's opera did not fare well in Vienna, being removed from the theater after several performances.[155] The failure of the 1805 performance may be attributed primarily to the fact that many of Beethoven's patrons, and a large portion of the theaters' aristocratic audience, fled Vienna weeks before the city's occupation. This left the theater half empty, with the audience consisting mostly of French officers, who certainly would not have appreciated the flavor of Viennese *Singspiel* in the first act.[156]

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[150] Lewis Lockwood, *Beethoven*, 254.
[151] Alexander Thayer*, Life of Beethoven*, 344.
[152] Winton Dean, "Beethoven and Opera," 336.
[153] Winton Dean, "Beethoven and Opera," 336-337.
[154] Alexander Thayer, *Life of Beethoven*, 385-386.
[155] Michael C. Tusa, "Beethoven's essay in opera," 200.
[156] Lewis Lockwood, *Beethoven*, 256-257.

Beethoven significantly revised his *Fidelio* two more times, in 1806 and later in 1814, with

the assistance of two more librettists, Stephan von Breuning and Georg Friedrich Treitschke.[157] In

1805, Joseph Sonnleithner had left Bouilly's text in its original form of three acts. Unfortunately, this

made the text too lengthy, and Beethoven was forced to create an excess of *Singspiel* pieces for the

bourgeois characterization of Rocco, Marzelline, Jaquino, and Fidelio. Beethoven then enlisted the

help of Breuning in the winter of 1805-1806 to improve the dramatic impetus of Bouilly's drama,

reducing it from three acts to two. *Fidelio* premiered again at the *Theater an der Wien* on March 29,

1806, but after two performances it was again withdrawn.[158] The subsequent failure this time was

due to a financial circumstance. Although Breuning and Beethoven had improved the unity of

dramatic text and musical form, *Fidelio* still did not produce enough revenue for the director of the

theater, Baron Peter von Braun, to be able to remunerate Beethoven to the composer's satisfaction.

The composer was deeply wounded by the failure of his opera, an argument ensued, and in a rage,

Beethoven demanded possession of his score.[159] Finally, *Fidelio* saw its first successful premiere in

1814, when Vienna needed a new work for a benefit concert that would incur no additional expense

to the court budget. Three appointed governors of the Vienna opera decided to approach Beethoven

regarding the revival of his *Fidelio*, and the composer was delighted to have another chance to

present his opera.[160] Beethoven procured Treitschke to revise the text, and after the composer

made additional revisions to his score, it was performed at the Congress of Vienna in 1814 to the

critical acclaim of Viennese audiences celebrating the defeat of Napoleon.[161]

Throughout Beethoven's compositional process another point of consideration was the

development of his operatic overture. Beethoven wrote four versions, not quite understanding how

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[157] Michael C. Tusa, "Beethoven's essay in opera," 200-201.
[158] Michael C. Tusa, "Beethoven's essay in opera," 201.
[159] Alexander Thayer, *Life of Beethoven*, 397-398.
[160] Edgar Istel and Theodore Baker, "*Leonore* and *Fidelio*," *The Musical Quarterly*, 7 (1921): 237.
[161] Paul Robinson, "*Fidelio* and the French Revolution," 74.

to build the orchestral drama without giving away the apex of emotional intensity, the rescue scene, prior to the commencement of Act One. As previously stated, Beethoven was impressed with Cherubini's orchestration and attempted to duplicate the colorful, E major instrumentation in all of his overtures for *Fidelio*, written in the following order: *Leonore No. 2*, written in C major in 1805; *Leonore No. 3*, written in C major in 1806 (and similar in construction to *Leonore No. 2); Leonore No. 1*, written in CM in 1808[162]; and the *Fidelio* Overture*,* written in EM in 1814.[163] Beethoven wrote the first three overtures to introduce Florestan's aria which opens Act Two. The aria's main theme in A♭ major dominates the opening slow section of the first two overtures, followed by an energetic *Allegro* in the strings. The *Allegro* modulates to E major with a repeated statement of Florestan's aria and finally comes to a halt with the the two trumpet calls heralding the arrival of the king's minister and the inauguration of the dramatic rescue scene. The exuberant overture then ends with the final chorus honoring Leonore, followed by a deliberate coda. A cogent statement was once given by Wagner regarding the essence of Beethoven's *Leonore No. 3*, "it is not the overture to the drama; it is the drama itself".[164] According to Lewis Lockwood, Beethoven finally rectified the compositional errors of his overture in 1814 by placing the entire composition in E major, drawing an emotional connection between the orchestral harmony of the *Allegro* in the *Fidelio* overture and Leonore's aria of hope for her husband Florestan in the first act, "Komm, Hoffnung".

Next, an analysis of the bipartite characterization of the rescue plot, found in the individual acts of *Fidelio*, is needed to comprehend the inherent themes of heroism, virtue and conjugal love

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[162] Alexander Thayer, *Life of Beethoven*, 398. After the performance of *Fidelio* in 1806, Prince Lobkowitz requested a performance at his house in Prague resulting in Beethoven's request to borrow certain woodwind and brass parts from Baron Braun at the Theater an der Wien. It was not recorded whether a performance occurred in Prague. Simultaneously, Beethoven's friend and patron, Prince Lichnowsky, sent the score of Beethoven's opera to the Queen of Prussia for an intended performance in Berlin but it also did not occur at this time.
[163] Lewis Lockwood, *Beethoven*, 261.
[164] Lewis Lockwood, *Beethoven*, 261.

presented in Bouilly's text. According to Paul Robinson, Leonore disguises herself in Act One as

Fidelio, a young man, in order to rescue her aristocratic husband, Florestan, who has been unjustly

imprisoned for two years by the governor of the prison, Don Pizarro. Leonore seeks employment

with the jailor, Rocco, as his turnkey in order to gain access to her husband, who has been

incarcerated in the dungeon two stories below the entrance to the jail. A secondary plot also occurs

within Act One whereupon Fidelio's arrival at the jail, Rocco's daughter, Marzelline, falls out of love

with her intended, Jaquino, the prison gatekeeper, and decides instead that her heart belongs to the

new turnkey and wishes them to be married. Jaquino is frustrated with Marzelline's transfer of her

affection and professes that he does not understand her heart. Although Leonore is unhappy with

this deception, she feels her disguise is necessary to rescue Florestan. Rocco, fond of Fidelio, favors

the marriage and asks Pizarro's permission for them to be married. He also asks the governor's

permission for Fidelio to accompany Rocco to the prisoners' cells below the surface, including

Florestan's cell in the dungeon, where, over the last two years, this state prisoner's sustenance has

been greatly reduced, resulting in starvation.[165]

All of these mundane activities, concerning the working class characters, Rocco, Fidelio,

Marzelline and Jaquino in Act One, develop into the first high point of the drama when Pizarro

receives a note that the king's minister, Don Fernando, is coming to visit the prison due to its

harboring several victims for unjust causes. Pizarro becomes worried that the minister will place him

in jail if Florestan lives to tell Don Fernando of Pizarro's crimes against Florestan. As Rocco obeys

Pizarro's every command relating to the maintainence of the jail and its prisoners, Pizarro concocts a

plan in which he will force Rocco to assist him in killing Florestan before the minister's arrival. Rocco

reluctantly agrees that he and Fidelio will dig Florestan's grave but insists that Pizarro must kill him

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[165] Paul Robinson, "*Fidelio* and the French Revolution," 68.

himself. This action is followed by Leonore stepping out of the shadows in shock at Pizarro's plan.

She then unequivocally states her desire to rescue her husband from his dire fate. Finally, Act One

ends with the prisoners' chorus when Leonore as "Fidelio" convinces Rocco to let the prisoners walk

among the grounds in the sunshine in an attempt to find Florestan. Florestan, unfortunately,

remains in the dungeon.[166]

In Act One Beethoven chooses the style of Viennese *Singspiel* to capture the trivial actions of

the secondary working-class characters. This is a typical plot of eighteenth-century domestic comedy,

which focuses on conventional relationships and the banal activities of the bourgeoisie. However, in

Act Two, all of this becomes secondary in the light of the intense drama involving the primary

characters: Pizarro, Florestan, Leonore and Rocco. Accordingly, it appears that Rocco maintains a

dual-status, as he is a member of both the working class and the aristocratic class; his complex

character is continually developed musically and dramatically throughout the entire opera. In

contrast to the light *Singspiel* melodies found in the first half of Act One, by the second half

Beethoven implements a different musical language that is fully developed throughout the rest of

the opera and ends in the rescue scene's triumphant chorus at the end of Act Two.[167] Here,

Beethoven's intense orchestration written in the style of Cherubini communicates the gravity of

Pizarro's crime against Florestan and the impending doom he places on Florestan's life. The

collective ideology of rescuing one's fellow man from despair becomes the focal point of Beethoven's

Fidelio in Act Two, as the composer endorses a set of values established within the eighteenth-

century Enlightenment promoting freedom for all mankind.[168]   Beethoven borrows the chromatic

texture of his melodies at the beginning of Act Two from the somber, vocal language of Cherubini's

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[166] Paul Robinson, "*Fidelio* and the French Revolution," 68.
[167] Paul Robinson, "*Fidelio* and the French Revolution," 84.
[168] Michael C. Tusa, "Music as drama," 117-118.

Les deux journées.[169] However, the *opéra comique* texture is unequivocally stated in Act One as well,

as Pizarro, Rocco and Leonore are all given dramatic arias enabling them to express their Angst. Thus,

Beethoven synthesizes the texture in his *Fidelio*, conveying not only the spirit of humanity during the

French Revolution, but also shifting the focus in the plot to extoll specific virtues of mankind:

Pizarro's treachery to Florestan; Rocco's compliance with Pizzaro's designs for deception and power;

and Leonore's yearning desire to rescue Florestan at the cost of her life.[170]

The second act depicts Florestan's bleak existence in his dark prison cell in the dungeon.

Rocco and Leonore descend to the dungeon to dig Florestan's grave, and it is then that Leonore sees

his condition and realizes that he is indeed her husband. While Rocco and Leonore are digging

Florestan's grave, Pizarro appears in the dungeon to kill Florestan, but Leonore surprises Pizarro

pointing a gun at him and declaring that he will have to kill her first. At this point the trumpet sounds

twice, heralding the arrival of the king's minister, Don Fernando, and the rescue scene instantly

begins: Florestan is rescued from Pizarro's evil machinations; Leonore and Florestan share a blissful

reunion; and Pizarro must now answer to the king's minister for his crimes. Finally, a rescue chorus

espousing the freedom of mankind is led by the minister, and the entire joyous ensemble praises

Leonore's extraordinary virtue of conjugal fidelity.[171]

If one considers how the bourgeois plot of Act One is transformed into the heroic tale of self-

sacrifice, revealed through the aristocratic characterization of Act Two, it almost makes Beethoven's

opera easier to analyze as two separate works.[172] With two unique musical styles in each act,

Singspiel and *opéra comique*, contributing to two different classes of characters, Beethoven draws a

parallel to Cherubini's dual-characterization in *Les deux journées*: the bourgeois member of society

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[169] Michael C. Tusa, "Music as drama," 102-104.
[170] Michael C. Tusa, "Beethoven's essay in opera," 203.
[171] Paul Robinison, "*Fidelio* and the French Revolution," 68.
[172] William Kinderman, *Beethoven*, (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995), 102.

and the aristocrat. However, with respect to the variety of influences on Beethoven's *Fidelio*, it will

become evident that the composer had trouble communicating the drama of Act One by his use of

Viennese *Singspiel* melody. Indeed, several excellent examples of this operatic form can be found in

the *Singspiel* of Karl Ditters von Dittersdorf and Paul Wranitzky, *Der Doktor und Apotheker* and

Oberon, and these works will shed light on the operatic genres which influenced Beethoven's

composite style of composition.

Karl Ditters von Dittersdorf, (1739-1799) wrote a successful work for Joseph II's nationalized

Burgtheater entitled *Der Doktor und Apotheker*, which premiered on July 11, 1786. A comic Viennese

Singspiel in two acts, Dittersdorf set his score to a libretto written by Gottlieb Stephanie Jr. (1740-

1800), a successful Viennese actor, playwright and librettist.[173] Example 1, shown below, exemplifies

the *Singspiel* character of one of the prominent arias in Act One of *Fidelio*, "Komm Hoffnung, lass den

letzten Stern". The *Singspiel* character of Leonore's aria in *Fidelio* can be found in a similar aria from

Act One of Dittersdorf's *Doktor und Apotheker*, "Wie kann wohl Freude noch in meinem Herzen

wohnen", likewise sung by a character named Leonore. This protagonist in *Docktor und Apotheker* is

in love with Gotthold, a surgeon and the son of her father's sworn enemy, Doctor Krautmann.

Leonore's father is Stössel, the apothecary, and he and his wife, Claudia, wish Leonore to marry the

rambunctious seafaring captain, Sturmwald. At the same time, Sichel, Gotthold's friend and surgeon,

wishes to marry Rosalie, Leonore's cousin. The two pairs of lovers successfully devise a series of

comic schemes, outwitting the unsuspecting parents, and the comical plot ends celebrating the

virtues of victorious love.

This last aria conveys a similar, non-thematic character in its melody also found in Leonore's

important aria in Act One in *Fidelio*, shown below in Example 1a-c. Comparing the two melodies in

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[173] Paul Joseph Horsely, "Dittersdorf and the finale," 66-70.

Example 1a and 1b: *Doktor und Apotheker*, Act 1, Arie No. 2, Leonore: "Wie kann wohl Freude noch in meinem Herzen", mm. 1-15*; 1b, mm. 37-46:* Scalar Coloratura; **Example 1c:** *Fidelio,* Act 1, Arie No. 9, Leonore: "Komm, Hoffnung, lass den letzten Stern", mm. 33-55.

a)

b)

c)

Dittersdorf and Beethoven, it becomes clear that the contour of the melody is placed within an

Adagio tempo, the E major aria of *Fidelio* in 2/4 and the E♭ major aria of *Doktor und Apotheker* in 4/4.

The melodies communicate a lyrical vocal line, creating a feeling of longing and love, reflecting the

prospective texts. Both Leonores profess their profound love for their intended lover or husband

within the confines of the *Singspiel* vocal form: repetitive text, sequential development of short

vocal and orchestral motives, and scalar coloratura.[174] In the aria from *Doktor und Apotheker* one

can observe the use of coloratura within Leonore's melisma in this *Singspiel* structure. Dittersdorf

incorporates the motivic nature of *Singspiel* into this section in the third measure of the fourth

system. This three-note vocal motive, situated between *e''* and *g''*, is stated four times and then

finally descends in C minor arpeggiation ending on the dominant, *b♭'*. However, the coloratura

depicted in Beethoven's aria reflects a chromatic, ascending, scalar melisma on the text, "sie wird's

erreichen," in the third system revealing Leonore's hope to rescue Florestan from his imprisonment.

This embellishment of the vocal line or scalar coloratura can also be found in an aria from

Dittersdorf's *Doktor und Apotheker* sung by Rosalie, "Verliebte brauchen keine Zeugen", shown

below in Example 2. There is a motivic repetition within Rosalie's melisma on the word "Ja,"

beginning in the first system. This scalar motive spans an octave from *e'* to *e''*, and after an eighth

rest, a repetition of the motive occurs on the third of the E major chord, *g♯''*. Subsequently, the third

repetition occurs at the fifth of the chord on *b'*, ascends to *b''* and finally descends through chromatic

figuration to the tonic *e'*. At this point, a new motive is developed sequentially at the fourth measure

of the second system as Rosalie's elaborate melisma stretches from *c''* to *a''* in mm. 70-83, finally

descending to e' through chromatic harmonization. After studying this pattern of vocal melody, it

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[174] The element of coloratura in an aria is seen solely in *Fidelio's* "Komm, Hoffnung", except for a few of the scalar passages in "Jetzt Schätzchen", another *Singspiel* melody in the first act of *Fidelio*. This occurrence is probably due to the choppy rhythms and motivic structure found throughout the other *Singspiel* melodies in *Fidelio*.

becomes easy to comprehend Dittersdorf's Viennese *Singspiel* as a direct influence on Beethoven's

Fidelio. Both composers wrote ascending scalar passages in these arias for Lenore ("Komm Hoffnung,

lass den letzen Stern", *Fidelio*) and Rosalie ("Verliebte brauchen keine Zeugen", *Doktor und*

Apotheker), therefore creating the inherent vocal melody of the *Singspiel* tradition.

Example 2: Dittersdorf, *Doktor und Apotheker*, Act 1, Arie No. 10, Rosalie: *Verliebte brauchen keine Zeugen*, mm. 61-83

It also seems important to examine the opening measures of Rosalie's aria (Example 2). In Example 3 the opening measures of "Verliebte brauchen keine Zeugen" display the same ragged motivic structure as the opening duet to Beethoven's *Fidelio*, "Jetzt Schätzchen, jetzt sind wir allein". Both pieces are written in an *Allegro* tempo in 2/4 meter. The use of rests within the individual motives of the vocal line creates a disjunct, dancelike character in Rosalie's aria. Although "Jetzt Schätzchen", (Example 4), uses a higher percentage of sixteenth notes within the vocal line compared to the eighth- note-rest-eighth-note formula of "Verliebte brauchen", both arias maintain a lively, energetic rhythm. The staccato articulation in Dittersdorf's orchestration contributes to the sprightly *Singspiel* character of this aria, and it seems to have served as an excellent model for Beethoven's aria. Several salient characteristics of "Jetzt Schätzchen" may also shed some light on Beethoven's implementation of *Singspiel* in his *Fidelio*. In his opening duet in Act One, the composer creates a shifting meter in Marzelline's vocal line as she sings a string of eighth and sixteenth notes in 2/4 and then drifts into a series of triplets. This, of course, produces a lilting hemiola as the vocal line is less metrically structured within the triplet. This use of shifting meter is quite common within *Singspiel* and communicates the text very effectively. With reference to the plot, this opening duet of *Fidelio* captures the scene of frustration between Marzelline and Jaquino within the foyer on the ground floor of the dreary prison. As Marzelline is ironing, she staunchly refuses to accept Jaquino's hand in marriage, and Jaquino, increasingly vexed at her attitude, has his temper exacerbated by the knocking at the prison gate, forcing him to return to his occupation as gatekeeper.[175] This leads to another musical point of consideration. Beethoven conceived a "knocking" motive in an attempt to unify the melody with the incipient drama of Bouilly's text, as shown in Example 5. Executed by the core of first and second violins and violas at a *forte* dynamic, the imagery of knocking at the prison gate is achieved, exemplifying the *Singspiel* character of the duet, as such an abrupt rhythmic change

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[175] Paul Robinson, "*Fidelio* and the French Revolution," 68.

Example 3: Dittersdorf, *Doktor und Apotheker*, Act 1, Arie No. 10, Rosalie: *Verliebte brauchen keine Zeugen*, mm. 17-28

Example 4: Beethoven, *Fidelio*, Act 1, Duet No. 1, Marzelline, Jaquino: *Jetzt, Schätzchen, jetzt sind wir allein*, mm. 1-17

Example 5: Beethoven, *Fidelio*, Act 1, Duet No. 1, Marzelline, Jaquino: *Jetzt, Schätzchen, jetzt sind wir allein*, mm. 64-70

in the orchestration contributes to the non-thematic structure common in Viennese comic opera.

Also, as all melodies therin are usually strophic, this programmatic motif creates a momentary climax

in the drama before returning to the original tune.

In order to fully comprehend the essence of the genre in Beethoven's *Fidelio*, however, it

seems logical to examine one of the finest examples of Viennese *Singspiel* in Beethoven's *Fidelio*,

"Hat man nicht auch Gold beineben", sung by Rocco in Act One (Example 6). All of the arias, duets

and concerted pieces written in *Fidelio* contain the strophic form of a Viennese *Singspiel*, e.g., several

verses of text to the same melody. However, in this aria, each strophe is musically divided into an

ABA' form resulting in three sections: an *Allegro moderato* in 2/4; an *Allegro* in 6/8; and a return to

Allegro moderato in 2/4.   Several components of this form should be noted. First, Beethoven's

opening section establishes a lively character in the music displayed by a series of thirty-second

notes and an ascending dotted motif in the strings extending from *d''* to *d'''*. In the following *Allegro*

section in 6/8 (Example 7), Beethoven enhances the orchestration by adding florid, scalar motives in

the violins, thus accompanying Rocco's repetitive, non-thematic melody. In the aria, Rocco proclaims

Example 6: Beethoven, *Fidelio*, Act 1, Arie No. 4, Rocco: *Hat man nicht auch Gold beineben*, mm. 1-13

Example 7: Beethoven, *Fidelio*, Act 1, Arie No. 4, *Allegro*, Rocco: *Hat man nicht auch Gold beineben*, mm. 63-67

to Fidelio and Marzelline the necessity of money to produce a successful marriage. Such a lighthearted text certainly fits within the character of most *Singspiel* texts.

Several other pieces from Dittersdorf's *Doktor und Apotheker* closely resemble the *Singspiel* character in Rocco's "Hat man nicht auch Gold beineben". Sichel's aria in Act One of *Doktor und Apotheker*, "Wenn man will zu Mädchen gehen" (Example 8), conveys the same, rhythmically buoyant expression of Rocco's aria, as it is written in *Vivace con garbo* in cut time with staccato articulation in the orchestra. Sichel's enthusiastic text describes the energetic character of the two main love interests of the young men, Leonore and Rosalie, and the repetitive rhythms present in the orchestral introduction only serve to contribute to the definitive message of the text. Dittersdorf's use of the melodic motif in the third bar, consisting of an eighth-note followed by an eighth-rest followed by another eighth-note, can also be found in Rocco's aria, as well as several other pieces of *Fidelio* in Act One: Marzelline's "O wär' ich schön mit dir vereint"; Marzelline and Jaquino's duet "Jetzt, Schätzchen, jetzt sind wir allein "; and the trio performed by Rocco, Marzelline and Fidelio, "Gut, Söhnchen, gut".

Example 8: Dittersdorf, *Doktor und Apotheker*, Act 1, Arie No. 5, Sichel: *Wenn man will zu Mädchen gehen*, mm. 1-14

The other piece from *Doktor und Apotheker* which may have inspired Beethoven's creation

of Rocco's aria is that of Sturmwald from Act One, "Der Wein ist ein Specificum" (Example 9). The

non-thematic character of *Singspiel* melody found in the last aria, the eighth rest in between each

eighth note, can be seen in Sturmwald's aria with even greater precision: in m. 15, a string of eighth

notes performed as *parlando*, developed over two measures, concludes in a ragged texture of eighth

notes separated by rests. Furthermore, the component of chromatic, scalar figuration in the

orchestral accompaniment creates a similar counterpoint to the infrequent motivic development

heard above with the text, "was Schadt's" in Sturmwald's vocal line. Dittersdorf wrote the scalar

passages in sequential form as a chromatic run, first extended from *g'* to *d''* in the key of G, dropped

Example 9: Dittersdorf, *Doktor und Apotheker*, Act 1, Arie No. 8, Sturmwald: *Der Wein ist ein Specificum*, mm. 13-22

down to *c♯″* and subsequently ascended again to *d‴*.   This entire section does not contain a lyrical

texture in the vocal line or orchestral accompaniment and therefore, it provides an excellent source

of inspiration for the implementation of Viennese *Singspiel* in Beethoven's opera.

The final piece in *Doktor und Apotheker* which might have influenced the melody of

Beethoven's *Fidelio* is the trio in Act One sung by Claudia, Stössel and Sturmwald, "Fürs Erste ist zu

wissen" (Example 10). This ensemble bears a striking resemblance to the trio of Act One in *Fidelio*,

"Gut, Söhnchen, Gut, hab' immer Muth", performed by Rocco, Marzelline and Fidelio, (Example 11).

In both trios, three independent vocal lines merge to create a layered texture of diatonic harmony.

The same motivic, non-thematic structure exists within each vocal line, as the text conveys a variety

of simultaneous action. At this point in the opera, Claudia is anxious to provide the newlyweds

Leonore and Sturmwald with brand new furniture and decorations for their new home, and

meanwhile Sturmwald and Stössel are helping her with the preparations. Musically, Dittersdorf

implements sequential motives lasting two to three measures in order to incorporate the action of

the libretto into his text. The composer's utilization of three separate lines of melody creates the

typical counterpoint found in comic *Singspiel* of the late-eighteenth century. However, after the

action of the comical scene has been described, the polyphonic texture of the ensemble changes to

homophonic declamation (Example 10). As the three characters in the trio are in agreement to

Claudia's plan for the young lovers, the contrary motion in the homophonic texture of each vocal line

concurs with the resolved action in the libretto.

Beethoven appears to have been influenced by this treatment of the ensemble in

Dittersdorf's comical *Singspiel*, because he duplicated this pattern in his Act One trio of *Fidelio*, "Gut,

Söhnchen, Gut". In Beethoven's adaptation of the Viennese ensemble in his opera, he created a

Example 10: Dittersdorf, *Doktor und Apotheker*, Act 1, Trio No. 3, Claudia, Sturmwald, Stössel: *Fürs Erste ist zu wissen*, mm. 24-30

Example 11: Beethoven, *Fidelio*, Act 1, Trio No. 5, Rocco, Fidelio, Marzelline: *Gut, Söhnchen, Gut, hab' immer Muth*, mm. 42-60

melodic motive for the lowest voice part and then repeated it in sequence for the upper parts. Thus, it would seem the voices were sequentially developed without the polyphonic texture found in Dittersdorf's ensemble. Each voice communicates a different line of text independent of the sequential motives found in the other vocal parts. This can be seen especially in Marzelline's vocal line starting at the end of the first system of Example 11 with the text, "Du darfst mir auch in's Auge schatten der Liebe Macht ist auch nicht klein." Marzelline describes her love for Fidelio and how, after he returns from the dungeon with Rocco, the two of them will be happily married. Naturally, Beethoven accorded her a lengthy motif to proclaim the happiness of her text. However, afterwards Rocco, Marzelline, and Fidelio are all given sequential motifs, each one declaring a different text. This is exactly the polyphonic texture Dittersdorf adopted in his trio, and it effectively expresses the variety of feelings felt by all three characters simultaneously. Furthermore, this then merges into a congruent homophonic texture at the word, "Ja," declaimed with a half note. A decided pause in the action, the three vocal lines seem to be in agreement that as the text states, "Ja, ja, wir warden glücklich sein;" i.e. everyone will be happy. Clearly, in all of these examples from Dittersdorf's *Doktor und Apotheker*, Beethoven felt that the strophic nature of Viennese *Singspiel* was the ideal setting for the bourgeois characterization of *Fidelio*. It is evident that the non-thematic vocal texture in the strophic *Singspiel* moments of Beethoven's *Fidelio* address the commonplace issues of his working class characters as opposed to the heroic ideals espoused by the aristocratic characters, Leonore and Florestan.[176] This shift in characterization will be further analyzed in future discussion of the rescue scene at the end of this chapter.

There exists another eighteenth-century Viennese *Singspiel* depicting the same sort of strophic melodies in Beethoven's *Fidelio*: Paul Wranitzky's *Oberon*. Wranitzky (1756-1808) was a

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[176] Paul Robinson, *"Fidelio* and the French Revolution," 68.

Bohemian composer, violinist and conductor who worked in Vienna and wrote about 23 stage works, making his operatic debut in Vienna at Schikaneder's *Theater auf der Wieden* in 1789 with *Oberon, König der Elfen*, a *Romantic Singspiel* in three acts.[177] Due to the opera's popularity in German-speaking lands, *Oberon* was subsequently given during the coronation ceremony for Leopold II at Frankfurt am Main at the Mainz National Theater on October 15, 1790. Thomas Bauman states that this work was the first of many successful performances at the Mainz National Theater, and new music was composed for this gala performance by Carl David Stegmann and Ignaz Walter, two German composers of the late-eighteenth century. Wranitzky's librettist was Karl Ludwig Giesecke, who was inspired by the epic tale, *Oberon* written by Christoph Martin Wieland, an eighteenth century German poet and writer. However, Giesecke also mined a work of Friederike Sophie Seyler, a well-recognized poet of the German stage; her libretto set to music by Karl Hanke in 1789 at the Schleswig court entitled *Hüon und Amande*. Giesecke effectively transformed this five act play with songs into a three act *Singspiel* and fused a literary masterpiece within the texture of Viennese comic opera, thus creating an exotic rescue opera.[178]

Wieland's epic tale, as adapted by Wiesecke, takes place in France, Beirut, Baghdad and Tunis during the reign of Charlemagne.[179] The plot highlights the mythological king of the fairies, *Oberon*, and the aid he gives the German knight, Hüon, who endeavors to succeed in a quest given to him by Charlemagne.

At the beginning of this story, during an initial journey to meet with the emperor Hüon is attacked in battle by the emperor's second son, Charlot, and as a consequence, the knight

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[177] Thomas Bauman, "Music Reviews: Paul Wranitzky, *Oberon*: *Konig der Elfen*, Singspiel in drei Akten," *Notes* 52 (1995): 629.
[178] Thomas Bauman, "Music Reviews: Paul Wranitzky, *Oberon*," *Notes* 52 (1995): 630.
[179] Nasser Al-Taee, "Fidelity, Violence, and Fanaticism: Orientalism in Wranitzky's *Oberon, König der Elfen*," *The Opera Quarterly* 17 (2001): 47.

accidentally kills Charlot. As punishment for Hüon's actions, Charlemagne sends the knight on a

dangerous journey requiring several deeds in order for the knight to obtain Charlemagne's

forgiveness and acceptance back into the Frankish ruler's kingdom: travel to Baghdad and kill the

Caliph's second in command, Prince Babekan; rescue the daughter and heiress of the Sultan Harun al

Rashid, Amande, from the Sultan's royal castle in Baghdad; claim Amande as his wife; and remove

four teeth and a handful of hair from the Sultan's body as a peace offering to Charlemagne, who

wished to convert the Sultan to Christianity.[180] Scherasmin, the former squire of Duke Siegewin,

once the father of Hüon, decides to accompany him in his travels to Baghdad. Oberon, the king of

the fairies, endeavors to help the two men on their journey through his magical powers. After

Hüon's rescue of Amande from the Sultan's royal palace in Baghdad, however, the fairy king informs

the two lovers that they must remain chaste until they can be married in the Catholic faith and

receive the Pope's blessing. During the long journey on a ship provided by Oberon across

treacherous waters, the fairy king becomes angry at the immorality of women in marriage and makes

a vow to never again be joined in love with Titania, his wife and queen of the fairies, until he can find

a pair of constant lovers. As a result, he decides to test the fidelity of Hüon and Amande and their

ability to remain pure by putting them through a series of tests. After the first test, a shipwreck on a

deserted island, Hüon and Amande are captured as slaves to the Pasha of Tunis, Almansor, and his

wife, Almansaris. After Almansor and Almansaris both try to seduce each lover into becoming the

other's prospective mate and compromising the fidelity of the two lovers, Hüon and Amande are

almost burned at the stake when Oberon's faith in conjugal love is restored and he decides to save

them. The fairy king transports Hüon and Amande in his ship back to Charlemagne's French kingdom,

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[180]Nasser-Al Taee, "Fidelity, Violence, and Fanaticism," *The Opera Quarterly* 17 (2001): 44.

where the lovers are married. In the end, honor is restored between the King of the Franks and the

German knight and everyone lives in happiness.[181]

The text of Wranitzky's *Oberon* can be placed within the genre of eighteenth-century Turkish

opera due to Giesecke's implementation of magic and magical devices, as well as the opera's exotic

setting in the Ottoman Empire.[182] Indeed, this opera contains a rescue within a rescue. Hüon sets off

on a treacherous journey to rescue Amande from an unhappy union with Prince Babekan and from

the prospect of living within her father's court as a Muslim. Yet, due to the magical powers of

Oberon and Titania, the fairy king has to ultimately rescue the lovers from death in order for Hüon to

be successful in his quest. A romantic piece of literature, Wranitzky's setting of Wieland's text is

another primary example of the standard rescue plot incorporated into the Viennese *Singspiel* text.

Accordingly, the composer's implementation of melody within this fairytale *Singspiel* also

influenced the *Singspiel* melody found in Beethoven's *Fidelio*. Example 12, shown below, displays the

Singspiel vocal texture in a cavatina, an Italianate aria form, written for Amande, "Dem ich Hohn

gesprochen Habe". Several characteristics of *Singspiel* immediately become apparent through closer

analysis of Wranitzky's melody; the ascending melodic motif of the first violin in the orchestral

introduction; the motivic development of the vocal line interspersed with eighth and quarter rests;

and the *staccato,* sixteenth-note, rhythmic ostinato in the second violin, providing an orchestral

foundation for the repetitive development of Amande's vocal line. This cavatina, set in *Andante*

grazioso, actually conveys the same, sequential motifs of melody found in Leonore's Act One aria in

Fidelio, "Komm, Hoffnung" (Example 13). In Leonore's aria, the sequences are composed of

arpeggios, whereas in Amande's aria the corresponding sequences maintain ascending and

descending stepwise motion. Nevertheless, the motivic structure of Wranitzky's *Singspiel* vocal line

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[181] Werner Beyer, *The Enchanted Land* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1963), 6-26.
[182] Nasser-Al Taee, "Fidelity, Violence, and Fanaticism," *The Opera Quarterly* 17 (2001): 45.

remains the same and displays perfectly the beauty of the strophic melody found within Viennese comic opera of the eighteenth century.

Another point worth consideration is the tempo of Amande's cavatina. The *Andante* tempo helps to convey the meaning of Amande's text. At this point in the plot, Oberon has given Amande a dream of seeing Hüon, the knight with whom she believes to be in love. Therefore, Wranitzky chooses a slower tempo to convey the love in Amande's heart. This sentiment is quite similar to the love portrayed in Leonore's heart in "Komm, Hoffnung", as she fervently clings on to her last hope that she can rescue her beloved Florestan. However, at the same time it is crucial that one takes note of the non-thematic, sequential development of the vocal line. At the end of the second system in Example 12, Amande begins her aria on the text, "Dem ich Hohn gesprochen habe," with a descending phrase from *e''* to *a'*, followed by an eighth-rest and an *a'* eighth-note on the third beat. This irregular declamation then cascades down an octave to *e'* returning to the third of the tonic C major.

An additional, influential melody upon Beethoven's *Fidelio* from Wranitzky's *Oberon* can be found in Fatime's aria, "Ein Mann im Traum, glaubt sicherlich" (Example 14). This is a similar melody, revealing the same, rhythmic sequences of Beethoven's "Jetzt, Schätzchen, jetzt sind wir allein", a duet found in *Fidelio*, (Example 14). There exists an exuberant rhythm within each of these *Singspiel* melodies. Although Wranitzky placed Fatime's aria in a 3/8 *Scherzando* and Beethoven chose the duple meter of a 2/4 *Allegro*, both pieces result in a non-thematic, dancelike articulation. The rhythmic unit of a quarter note followed by an eighth note, found in the second system of Fatime's aria, with her text, "glaubt sicherlich," creates the dancelike character of the playful sequence. At this point in the text, Fatime, Amande's confidante, has had a dream of a handsome man and Amande in an embrace, whereupon the man flees without explanation. Therefore, Fatime believes

Example 12: Wranitzky, *Oberon*, Act 1, Cavatina No. 12, Amande: *Dem ich Hohn gesprochen Habe*, mm. 1-14

Example 13: *Fidelio*, Act I, Arie No. 9, Leonore: *Komm, Hoffnung, lass den letzten Stern*, mm. 72-80

Example 14: Wranitzky, *Oberon*, Act II, Aria No. 13, Fatime: *Ein Mann im Traum, glaubt sicher lich*, mm. 9-24

Example 15: Beethoven, *Fidelio*, Act I, Duet No. 1, Marzelline, Jaquino: *Jetzt, Schätzchen, jetzt sind wir allein*, mm. 18-31

the man is not available for either Amande or herself. It becomes clear through this deeper

understanding of Wieland's text why Wranitzky chose the fast meter for Fatime's aria: to create an

element of uncertainty and excitement in the musical texture. By the same token, the pattern of an

eighth note followed by two sixteenth notes in Beethoven's duet reveals an equally playful rhythm in

duple instead of triple. Overall, the rhythmic *Singspiel* construct of Fatime's aria in Wranitzky's

Oberon may possibly have induced Beethoven to open *Fidelio* with a jovial, lighthearted duet imbued

with motivic, dancelike rhythms. Afterall, it is this opening duet in *Fidelio* which establishes the

Singspiel structure of the entire first act in Beethoven's opera.

A final influence of *Singspiel* melody may be found in Wranitzky's duet of love for Hüon and

Amande in Act Two, "Amande, ach, so bist du mein", (Example 16). First, the motivic structure of

Wranitzky's duet is unique in its division of text. In Hüon's line of text, "Amande mein, so war's kein

Traum," Wranitzky creates a descending motive from *a'* to *f'*. Even though the composer implements

an octave leap from *f'* to *f''*, the line descends again to *c''* in the key of F. After this descending motif

is heard in the duet, Amande responds to Hüon's joyful exclamation of love with an ascending motive.

This musical texture indeed serves as an excellent example of text painting; an ardent display of

fidelity between the lovers in a lively 3/8 *Allegretto*. Amande's motif extends from *c''* to *f''*, yet the

pull towards the tonic is felt as she sits between *e''* to *f''* for two measures before cadencing on the

diminished seventh of F major. The classically-balanced phrases of Wranitzky's motivic texture

succeed in illustrating the repetitive, melodic structure of Viennese *Singspiel*.

Example 16: Wranitzky, *Oberon*, Act 2, Duet No. 17: Hüon, Amande: *Amande, ach so bist du mein*, mm. 11-26

There is, however, another aspect of Wranitzky's duet. This provides an excellent illustration of the tertial harmony displayed in the vocal texture of Beethoven's duet "O namenlose Freude", written for the reconciliation of Leonore and Florestan towards the end of Act Two in *Fidelio*. Shown below in Examples 17a –b, the tertial harmony of the lovers in each duet is readily apparent. Although Wranitzky's duet is in 3/8 and Beethoven's duet in in 2/4, both pieces project the same unification of harmony placed within a rhythmic setting. As Wranitzky's duet reveals a rising motif for the two lovers starting on *f'* and *a'* in mm. 27-33, Beethoven's duet embodies a parallel tertial harmony in mm. 17-21, as Leonore and Florestan ascend from an *a'* and *c'* to a *e''* and *g''*. It is quite possible that Beethoven found Wranitzky's tertial structure useful in capturing the essence of ecstasy in the text of his duet. After all, this duet, placed within the rescue scene of *Fidelio*, follows a quartet written within a chromatic, *Sturm und Drang*, rescue opera texture of pathos and suffering. Consequently, it seems appropriate that the subsequent reconciliation of Leonore and Florestan be declared through a motivic texture of tertial harmony.

Throughout the analysis of Viennese *Singspiel* presented in this chapter, one should comprehend the influence of Wranitzky and Dittersdorf's operas on the organic, compositional

Example 17a: Wranitzky, *Oberon*, Act 2, Duet No. 17: Hüon, Amande: *Amande, ach so bist du mein*, mm. 27-41

Example 17b: Beethoven, *Fidelio*, Act 2, Duet No. 15, Leonore, Florestan: *O namenlose Freude*, mm. 14-29

development of Beethoven's Fidelio. Use of *melodrama*, however, in Beethoven's *Fidelio* illustrates

Cherubini's use of this texture, pertaining to *opéra comique* in his *Les deux journées*, and this may

have influenced Beethoven's opera. In *Fidelio*, the only section of the opera to incorporate

melodrama is the grave-digger's duet in Act Two, when Leonore and Rocco descend into the

dungeon where Florestan's cell is located to dig the latter's grave. The *melodrama* precedes the

melody of the duet and it starts with a series of orchestral motifs, followed by textual interjections

made by Leonore and Rocco. The initial orchestral motive and Leonore's corresponding text, "Wie

kalt in diesem unterirdischen Gewölbe!" (Example 18a), establishes the dramatic nature of Bouilly's

text leading up to the rescue scene. The sequence of brief chromatic motives found within the entire

orchestration of Beethoven's *melodrama*, however, provides the key to understanding the

composer's adaptation of this dramatic form. Example 18 offers the first five chromatic motives of

Beethoven's *melodrama*. It is crucial to note the programmatic nature of each motive, as it describes

Leonore's and Rocco's movements in the dungeon.   In the first motive, the descending, syncopated

Example 18a and 18b: Beethoven, *Fidelio*, Act 2, Melodrama, Rocco and Leonore: *Wie kalt in diesem unterirdischen Gewölbe!* mm. 1-8; mm. 6-11

a)

b)

motion in the bass line from f to c♯ indicates the action of walking down the stairs to the dungeon.

Specifically, the rhythmic declamation of the first four motives is rather repetitive, either due to a

series of sixteenth-note rests, as is in the first two motives, or a staccato articulation, seen in the

third *Allegro* motive. However, in the fifth motive and also the corresponding section (Example 18b),

the orchestral tempo changes from *Allegro* to *Adagio* and Beethoven writes an arpeggiated motif in

the key of F to adequately convey the feeling of serenity on Florestan's face as he sleeps peacefully in

his cell. However, the motivic character of the orchestration in Beethoven's *melodrama* is precisely

why it fails to propel the dramatic action forward to the grave-digger's duet. In addition to

Beethoven's development of the non-thematic, ragged motif in his orchestration, the composer's

division of the text into short segments in between each musical segment causes the intensity of the

drama to wane. And, although Cherubini's use of *melodrama* in *Les deux journées* is conceived

motivically, the composer of French *opéra comique* devotes less sections of text within his use of

melodrama in Acts Two and Three, therefore requiring fewer orchestral motifs.

In *Les deux journées*, Cherubini uses the musical texture of *melodrama* to convey the essence

of fear felt by Constance, Antonio and Armand as Mikéli's detailed plan for the two-day rescue of the

aristocratic president of the French parliament, Count Armand, and his lovely wife, Constance, goes

awry. Example 19 provides the first instance of *melodrama* in Act Two, "Regarde-moi!", leading into

a piece written for trio and soldiers' chorus. At this point in Act Two, Constance, disguised as

Marcelline, Antonio's sister, arrives with Antonio at the Paris border with Marcelline's passport in

hand enabling them to leave Paris. However, the second commandant at the border realizes that

Constance's description in her passport does not match her identity and threatens to turn Constance

over to the captain. Of course, Antonio tries to fight the officer holding Constance at the border,

resulting in a retinue of soldiers wishing to arrest Constance.[183]

The rhythm of this first section of *melodrama* immediately sets it apart from the example in

Beethoven's *Fidelio*. Whereas Beethoven's *melodrama* is written in *Poco sostenuto* and gradually

moves to *Allegro*, Cherubini's *melodrama* captures the flavor of rescue from the first notes in an

Allegro tempo. Consequently, it is not very long after this section that Constance initiates the trio

with her plaintive text to Antonio, "Ô mon frère! Je t'en supplie! Antonio, ne m'abandonne pas.''

Further analysis of this section of *melodrama* reveals that each motive in the first system consists of

five to seven notes and the sections of text contain individual phrases instead of entire sentences. It

is also important to note the *tremolo* in the string orchestration of the second system. Starting with

the text, "Tes yeux ne peuvent s'arrêter sur les miens," Cherubini builds an underlying energy in the

musical texture through his use of a sustained *tremolo*. Overall, one can observe the sense of

urgency and fervor in the orchestration and vocal texture of Cherubini's *melodrama* that simply does

not exist in the *melodrama* of Beethoven's opera.

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[183] Luigi Cherubini, Arthur Baildon and Jean-Nicolas Bouilly, *The Water Carrier, Les Deux Journées*, 17-18.

Example 19: Cherubini, *Les deux journées*, Act 2, No. 7 Mélodrame, Constance, 2ⁿᵈ Commandant, trio et choeur: *Regarde-moi !* mm. 1-8

In comprehending Cherubini's compositional intent of his *melodrama,* the primary example may presently be found in Act Three, with the following action: Armand hides in the hollow of the tree outside Semos's house on the day of Antonio's wedding. Constance, introduced to everyone as Marcelline, is concerned for the safety of Armand in his hiding place with so many French soldiers surrounding the area. Constance emerges from the house to the tree where Armand is hiding and is accosted by two French soldiers. At this point, Armand emerges from the tree and holds the soldiers at gunpoint, ordering Constance's immediate release. Within this sequence of events, Cherubini builds the dramatic texture. Example 20 illustrates this particular section of *melodrama* in which Constance walks over to the tree and snaps her fingers three times. Originally, this was the signal that he and Armand planned so that he and Constance could be reunited once they were secured

Example 20: Cherubini, *Les deux journées*, Act 3, Mélodrame, quatuor et chœur, Constance, Armand, Soldats, Le Village de Gonesse: *Prenons bien garde, à n'être vue de personne*, mm. 1-22

outside of the Paris border, in the village of Gonesse at Semos's house. Armand does not respond

and at this point, the soldiers attack Constance, and Armand rushes to his wife's defense.

Cherubini creates a smooth transition from the brief section of *melodrama* to Constance's

subsequent *recitative*, leading into the trio and chorus. Initially, a sequence of text is spoken by

Constance, and in the second measure, the only accompaniment heard is in the first violin and viola

on *f'*. After this pattern is repeated, there is a pause in the *melodrama* while Constance gives the

signal to Armand to come out of his hiding place. When Armand does not appear, the string motive

on *f'* sounds again concluding Cherubini's brief section of *melodrama*. This dramatic texture is

quickly followed in the second system by Constance's somber *recitative* beginning with her text,

"Que ce silence est effrayant!" It is at this point that Cherubini builds his layers of orchestration

through the section of *recitative* to the beginning of the *Allegro* trio. First, at the end of the second

system, Cherubini adds the second violin which serves to intensify the static contour of Constance's

vocal line, slowly descending from *a'* to *d'* in the key of F major. Consequently, the string

accompaniment in the next section in the third system is enhanced by the additional motives in the

cello and contrabass. Cherubini creates a cello motive, composed of a string of thirty-second notes

and a few rests, thereby enhancing the excitement of Constance's text. Starting at the end of the

third system with the text, "Approchons-nous bien doucement," the orchestral texture is expanded

to include a variety of woodwinds, flute, oboe and bassoon, in addition to the robust core of strings.

Finally, the fifth system contains a powerful transition to the trio through an increase in tempo and

rhythmic ostinato of the strings. Cherubini's *melodrama* (and successive pieces) from *Les deux

journées*, weds the drama of Bouilly's text to a string of orchestral motives. In comparison,

Beethoven was unfortunately not able to duplicate this, due to the motivic, non-thematic

orchestration of *melodrama* in his *Fidelio*.

In addition to the implementation of *melodrama* in Beethoven's and Cherubini's respective rescue operas, melodramatic characterization reaches its zenith in the dramaturgical rescue scene. The rescue scene in *Fidelio* centers around a theatrical *opéra comique* quartet, "Er Sterbe!", performed by the four main characters of Act Two: Leonore, Rocco, Florestan and Pizarro. Although Rocco's character belongs to the bourgeois characterization of Act One, Beethoven effectively places Rocco within the dramatic *opéra comique* texture of this quartet in Act Two. The action preceding the quartet begins with the grave-diggers' scene, encompassing the *melodrama* and duet in which Rocco and Leonore proceed to dig Florestan's grave, followed by Leonore recognizing the prisoner as her husband Florestan. At this point, Pizarro descends the staircase to Florestan's cell, and upon the prisoner's recognition of Pizarro as an unsavory character, the quartet commences. The apex of drama in the quartet is felt by all of the characters when Leonore defends Florestan by holding Pizzaro at gunpoint, finally disclosing her identity as Florestan's loyal wife, Leonore. This shocking, expressive section of the quartet is immediately followed by a trumpet call, which sounds twice, heralding Don Fernando's arrival. Within a single action, all of the Angst of the previous spectacle is immediately dissolved. The final scene concludes with the minister's message of hope to the freed prisoners, reflecting Beethoven's endorsement of Enlightenment ideology, and a celebratory chorus honoring Leonore as the beacon of conjugal devotion. Thus, Florestan is rescued by his virtuous Leonore from the treacherous deeds of Pizarro, who is then sent to Florestan's former cell in the dungeon.[184] Clearly, Beethoven's intention was to build his musical texture and Bouilly's text into an emotional climax, exploding into a triumphant finale chorus, celebrating the virtues of mankind.

Specifically, there are two important points of action in the quartet leading up to the minister's arrival by way of the trumpet call. The first active section, shown below in Example 21,

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[184] Paul Robinson, "*Fidelio* and the French Revolution," 68.

displays the chromatic texture in the key of D encompassing Pizarro's vocal line, a vitriolic diatribe

directed at Florestan, as Pizarro vows to kill his nemesis. Beethoven projects a complex

chromaticism in his orchestral texture. It is important to take note that the *pianissimo* dynamic at

the beginning of Pizarro's vocal tirade beginning with the text, "Doch er soll erst wissen," quickly

transcends into a static line of *forte* chromatic harmony by the second system of Pizarro's vocal line.

Example 21: Beethoven, *Fidelio*, Act 2, Quartet No. 14, Pizarro, Fidelio, Rocco, Leonore: *Er Sterbe!* mm. 7-43

Starting at *d♯* in m. 15 with the text "Der Rache Dunkel sei zerrissen," his vocal line ascends a half-step to *e* which is then repeated five times before arriving at *f♮*. With each sequential, successive motive, the melody rises to new chromatic heights. At the text "Sieh' hier!," the melody enters with a string of *a's*, eventually rising to a bellicose, *forte e'*. An angular and discordant tonality, it is worthwhile to observe the corresponding orchestration: starting at *g* in the third system, the tonal texture of D major is bombarded by a string of unrelated, arpeggiated chords played by the contrabass, including G♯ major, D♯ diminished and E♭ major. Furthermore, the full string orchestration intensifies as the tonality transitions into F♯ diminished and then F♯ minor, finally returning to the key of D major, highlighted by a string of *d's* in the vocal line. Color is added through the continuous *tremolo* in the strings and the trumpet *sforzandi*, thus contributing to the intensified Angst of Pizarro's vocal line.

Beethoven utilizes his chromatic harmony again when Leonore reveals her identity to Rocco,

Pizarro and Florestan, a crucial point in Beethoven's rescue scene. The composer conveys the apex

of chromatic orchestration in Example 22 with Leonore's text, "Tödt' erst sein Weib!" as the heroine

dares Pizarro to kill her. This is a core section within this D major quartet, as Beethoven's chaotic,

chromatic polyphony of the four protagonists momentarily ceases. Each of the male characters

expresses his shock at Fidelio's true identity imitatively and in order to convey this texture vocally,

Beethoven invents a brief, motivic sequence in the non-related tonality of E♭ major with the text,

"Sein Weib?" showcasing this abrupt change in Pizarro's dastardly plan, followed by Leonore's

Example 22: Beethoven, *Fidelio*, Act 2, Quartet No. 14, Pizarro, Florestan, Rocco, Leonore: *Er Sterbe!* mm. 76-87

restatement of her identity. Starting with Leonore's initial motive in the key of E♭, Beethoven

invents a two note, *forte* motive of an eighth note followed by a half note to convey the overall shock

of her existence. Additionally, the composer further strengthens the intensity of this section through

his addition of a harmonic ostinato in the bassoons and oboes, alternating between *forte* and *piano*,

as Leonore restates her identity in the text "Ja, sieh' hier Leonore!" This section is then followed by

Leonore's explanation of her existence in the jail to the Rocco, Florestan and Pizarro, eliciting a

repetition of the same two-note motive in their text, "Sein Weib?" (Example 23). The dramaturgical

Angst of this text can be witnessed through the vocal intensity of Leonore's melody as she ascends to

the high *b♭''*, finally plummeting back to *d''*. Beethoven's strident display of Leonore's heroism,

placed in the supertonic tonality of E♭ major, creates the perfect summit to this melodramatic

quartet.

Example 23: Beethoven, *Fidelio*, Act 2, Quartet No. 14, Pizarro, Florestan, Rocco, Leonore: *Er Sterbe!*, mm. 88-94.

Leonore confronts Pizarro with a pistol and announces she will kill him if he moves any closer,

shown in her text, "Noch einen Laut und du bist tot!" (Example 24). Immediately following, the

abrupt arrival of the trumpet call is heard by the four characters and all action ceases. Beethoven

infused a diatonic motif of simple harmony in C major, set apart from the complex chromaticism of

the quartet. After the first statement of the trumpet call (Example 24), the string orchestration re-

enters at a *pianissimo* dynamic in D major (Example 25) and the four vocalists react to the trumpet

call proclaiming Florestan's rescue in a homophonic, chorale-like setting. Although the vocal

harmony is still chromatic, the tonality transcends through F major-minor 7, B♭ major, E♭ major and

finally ends again in B♭ major with the combined texts "Höll' und Tod! der Minister!" and "grosser

Gott" as all four characters are in shock at the turn of events. The vocal harmony ends in B♭ major

with a fermata, and the trumpet call is sounded again in C major, sealing Pizarro's fate and

announcing Florestan's freedom.

Example 24: Beethoven, *Fidelio*, Act 2, Quartet No. 14, Initiation of Rescue Scene, Trumpet Call, mm. 125-132

Example 25: *Fidelio*, Act 2, Quartet No. 14, Pizarro, Florestan, Rocco, Leonore: *Er Sterbe!* mm. 133-146

Compared to the complex orchestral texture of the quartet leading into the rescue scene in *Fidelio*, Cherubini handles the orchestration of his rescue scene in *Les deux journées* in a completely different fashion. In Act Three of *Les deux journées*, the rescue scene is initiated when Armand is discovered at Semos's house by the French soldiers, who accost Constance as she comes out of the house looking for Armand. The struggle between Constance and the soldiers draws the attention of the other soldiers and the inhabitants of Gonesse, resulting in Armand disclosing his true identity to the French soldiers, who are then excited that they have finally captured their fugitive Armand, the president of the French Parliament. At the same time everyone is responding to this strange turn of events, Mikéli, the watercarrier, arrives and announces that all members of the legislature have been pardoned by the government due to fear of revolution. Mikéli, in essence, serves as the *deus ex machina*. Finally, Cherubini's rescue scene is commemorated in the finale ensemble led by Mikéli, "Livrons-nous tous à la gaieté!", as he proclaims in a simple, strophic melody that the greatest joy of life is to serve humanity.[185] However, instead of a trumpet call proclaiming Armand's freedom, Cherubini has Mikéli suddenly appear, make his pronouncement of Armand's freedom, and the finale simply occurs without any musical transition.

First, the motivic texture of the chorus leading up to the beginning of Cherubini's rescue scene highlights the non-thematic, repetitive texture of *opéra comique* found in *Les deux journées*. It is possible that Cherubini created this homophonic, motivic texture to contrast the Angst of Armand's discovery and imminent arrest with the joyous rescue of the victim and his lovely wife proclaimed in strophic melody. It seems that the repetitive motives used in the choral sequence preceding the rescue scene of *Les Deux Journées* might have influenced the *opéra comique* orchestration of the quartet preceding the ensemble finale in Beethoven's *Fidelio*. Example 26,

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[185] Luigi Cherubini, Arthur Baildon and Jean-Nicolas Bouilly. *The Water Carrier, Les Deux Journées*, 31.

shown below, depicts the repetitive, F major, choral homophony Cherubini paired with the soldiers'

text, "Enfin, nous tenons cet Armand! Ah quell hereux évènement!" stating their victorious capture

of Armand.   Simultaneously, the villagers of Gonesse proclaim their surprise at Armand's identity in a

similar declamation, "Quoi, c'est là le célèbre Armand? Quel singulier évènement!" as Cherubini

repeats these texts many times within a repetitive, motivic texture, proclaiming the height of

emotion within this homophonic chorus.

However, Cherubini's finale chorus following this homophonic declamation takes on a much

simpler, strophic character. Mikéli leads the entire ensemble in a diatonic, G major melody, "Livrons-

nous tous à la gaieté!, proclaiming the happiness of serving mankind (Example 27). Cherubini's *opéra*

Example 26: Cherubini, *Les deux journées*, Act 3, Mélodrame, quatuor et chœur, Constance, Armand, Soldats, Le Village de Gonesse: *Prenons bien garde, à n'être vue de personne*, mm. 110-114


comique texture, betraying the strophic character of Grétry's *Richard Coeur de Lion*, lends an air of

simplicity to the finale rescue chorus. In contrast to the bombastic rhetoric of Beethoven's finale

chorus paying tribute to Leonore's virtuous character, Cherubini's rescue scene appears classically

elegant and refined and perfectly suited to the genre of revolutionary rescue opera. Compared to

Cherubini's ensemble finale, Beethoven's rescue chorus in Act Two of *Fidelio*, "Heil sei dem Tag!",

sounds quite revolutionary and heroic. Texturally, Beethoven develops a repetitive, motivic structure

in his orchestration. The moment of triumph is at hand, as Leonore has finally succeeded in rescuing

her virtuous Florestan. At last, it is time for exuberant celebration of Leonore's virtuous character

and the exultation of mankind. However, Beethoven did not inherit this dynamic chorus from

Cherubini's *Les deux journées*, but instead he drew a model from Wranitzky's finale chorus in *Oberon*,

"Hymen fügt euch nun zusammen". Examples 28a-b exemplify the motivic orchestration of both

finales, which in turn are completely different in structure from Cherubini's opera.

Example 27a and 27b: *Les Deux Journées*, Act 3, Rescue Chorus Ensemble Finale, Mikéli: *Livrons-nous tous à la gaieté!* , a-mm. 21-26 ; b-mm. 34-52

a)
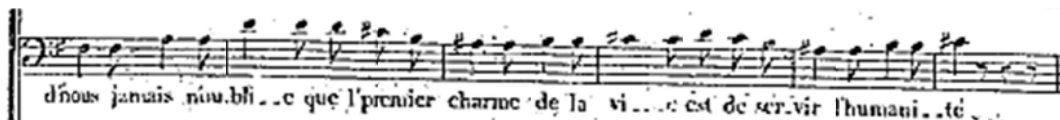
b)

The motivic structure within Beethoven's orchestration is written in the same vein as Wranitzky's Viennese *Singspiel*. Both orchestrations include a rhythmic, diatonic melody, proclaiming joy for everyone. Dynamic contrasts between repetitions of the motivic melody can be seen in measure three of Beethoven's finale chorus, which adds to the militaristic nature of his orchestration. Briefly, the text of Wranitzky's ensemble finale in *Oberon* concerns the festive union of Hüon and Amande in marriage and thanksgiving paid to Hymen, the Greek god of marriage,

Example 28a: Wranitzky, *Oberon*, Act III, Finale Chorus: *Hymen fügt euch nun zusammen*, mm. 1-5

Example 28b: Beethoven, *Fidelio*, Act II, Finale Chorus: *Heil sei dem Tag!* mm. 1-5

led by Oberon, Titania, Scherasmin and Fatime.[186] Examples 29a-c, shown below, display the

comparative choral texture in Wranitzky and Beethoven's finales. Completely diatonic and

homophonic, the texture contains a series of motives and a great deal of repetition. Although

Wranitzky's homophonic, choral texture is not as non-thematic as Beethovens', both finales share a

forte dynamic. It is evident that the *fortissimo* accents are more pronounced in "Heil sei dem Tag",

as every other measure in the first system has a *piano* dynamic; whereas in Wranitzky's finale, the

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[186] Nasser Al-Taee, "Fidelity, Violence, and Fanaticism," *The Opera Quarterly* 17 (2001): 44.

Example 29a: Wranitzky, *Oberon*, **Act III, No. 29 Finale Chorus, Oberon, Titania, Fatime, Scherasmin:** *Hymen fügt euch nun zusammen*, **mm. 12-20**

a)

Example 29b-c: Beethoven, *Fidelio*, Act II, No. 16, Finale Chorus, Chor des Volkes, Chor der Gefangenen: *Heil sei dem Tag!*, b-mm. 33-43; c-mm. 64-69

b)

c)

composer utilizes a strictly homophonic, *forte* setting with very little alteration. The emotional

impact of Beethoven's finale is high, and consequently, the *fortissimo* repetition of his text reflects

the heroic sentiment of the Enlightenment, promoting the virtuous character of mankind. Overall,

both finales are taken from the *Singspiel* tradition and project a motivic texture of choral homophony

not found in the orchestral texture of Cherubini's *opéra comique*.

Conclusion: Beethoven's unique contribution to Viennese *Singspiel* and French *opéra comique* forms of the early-nineteenth century

The origin of Beethoven's *Fidelio* is rooted in the melodic *Singspiel* of Dittersdorf and

Wranitzky, as well as the Classical *opéra comique* of Cherubini and Grétry. In the initial, diatonic

structure of strophic solo arias, duets, and trios present in Act One of *Fidelio*, the composer

introduces the *bourgeois* characterization of his rescue opera. Through the utilization of this musical

structure, it becomes clear that the Classical strophic melodies of Dittersdorf's *Der Doktor und*

Apotheker and Wranitzky's *Oberon* successfully establish the melodic framework for this

"background of domestic realism tinged with comedy"[187] present in the characterization. The

implementation of the *opéra comique* aria and the sequential repetition of the homophonic

ensembles inserted into Act Two and leading up to the triumphant rescue scene, however, reveal

that Cherubini's *Les deux journées* and Grétry's *Richard Coeur-de-Lion* clearly exerted an equal

influence over the compositional development of *Fidelio*.

Even though the melodic form of *Les deux journées* shaped the work's musical configuration,

the composer looked correspondingly to the villain, Dourlinski, found in Cherubini's *Lodoïska*, as

inspiration for the characterization of the villain in *Fidelio*, the unscrupulous Pizarro.[188] Thus,

Cherubini's dramatic model created a vehicle for several arias infused with Romantic orchestration,

conveying the intensity of feeling displayed in the aristocratic characterizations of *Fidelio*, Leonore,

Florestan, Pizarro and Rocco. Indeed, many structural aspects of *Fidelio* are solely indebted to

Cherubini's *opéra comique* compositions: the Romantic, programmatic *Fidelio Overture*; the use of

melodrama and spoken dialogue; Classically strophic airs, duets, trios and quartets; the dramatic

conception of the Prisoner's Chorus; and the homophonic melody of the ensemble finale, proclaimed

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[187] Winton Dean, "Beethoven and Opera," In *The Beethoven Reader*, 373.
[188] Winton Dean, "Beethoven and Opera," In *The Beethoven Reader*, 374.

at the end of the rescue scene in Act Two. Undoubtedly, the gestation of the overture for *Fidelio* is a reflection of Beethoven's lack of experience as an operatic composer, and yet, there is a thematic energy present in the inclusion of *Singspiel* and *opéra comique* in Beethoven's opera. Certainly, this reflects the solidified musical form of Beethoven's *Fidelio*, finally achieved through its last revision. Nevertheless, it still remains problematic that Beethoven chose to conceive the two acts of his rescue opera according to two, completely separate forms of Viennese *Singspiel* and French *opéra comique*. Although Beethoven juxtaposes these operatic forms of melody throughout the movement of Bouilly's rescue plot with the mundane, perfunctory activities of the secondary, *bourgeois* characterization, both forms seem to function on an equal footing in *Fidelio*.

An analysis noticeably illustrates Beethoven's anticipation of the late-nineteenth century Romantic orchestration within his rescue opera. In the dramatic arias performed by the aristocratic characters in *Fidelio*, the composer added a complement of brass and percussive, chromatic instrumentation to the core of strings and woodwinds of the typical Classical operatic orchestration. Thus, by 1805 Beethoven successfully produced an original Romantic form of Germanic (perhaps even Wagnerian) orchestration through his modification of Cherubini's *opéra comique* style and instrumentation.

After the first, successful performance of *Fidelio* at the Congress of Vienna in 1814, Beethoven was reluctant to set any of an assortment of libretti presented to him from 1807 to 1826 written by a number of nineteenth century poets: Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall, Karl Theodor Körner, Karoline Pichler, Eduard von Bauernfeld, Johann Baptist Rupprecht, Franz Grillparzer, Marianna Neumann, Johann Sporschil, Johann Christoph Friedrich von Schiller, Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel, Heinrich von Collin, Johann Carl Friedrich Rellstab and Johann Wolgang von Goethe.[189]

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[189] Winton Dean, "Beethoven and Opera," 381-83.

After the strenuous revisions Beethoven applied to his first operatic work, the composer seemed

unwilling to tackle a second operatic project, providing as a pretense his lack of interest in the

suggested libretti. It is indeed unfortunate that Beethoven did not choose to pursue another rescue

opera in his previously-established vein (which succinctly established the musical character of the

dramatic rescue plot in *Fidelio*). In so doing, it is possible that the composer could have hastened the

development of early-nineteenth century, German Romantic Opera, as a nationalist genre.

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