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Stanislaw Moniuszko (1819-1872) is considered the father of Polish opera, yet he is completely unknown outside of his native country. His contributions to Polish culture were enormous, including works like twelve volumes of Śpiewniki Domowe (Domestic Songbooks), the operas Halka and Straszny Dwor (The Haunted Manor), the operettas Loteria (The Lottery), Nowy Dziedzic (The New Landlord), the cantatas including Sonety Krymskie (Crimean Sonnets), Pani Twardowska, and orchestral overtures Bajka (Fairytale) and Kain.

Stanislaw Moniuszko was a great patriot with a profound sense of duty that his art must promote Polish music, language, and culture, which is very significant considering he lived in a time of Polish history when the country was taken off the map. Moniuszko composed twelve volumes of *Śpiewniki Domowe* to the poetry of Polish poets of his time, including Adam Mickiewicz (1798-1855), Józef Ignacy Kraszewski (1812-1887), and Jan Czeczot (1796-1846). His purpose was to educate Polish people about their music and poetry and persuade amateur musicians to invest their time making music together.

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A POLISH OPERA BECOMES VIOLIN FANTASY

by

Elzbieta Tokarska

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Approved by

Prof. Marjorie Bagley Committee Chair © 2022 Elzbieta Tokarska

DEDICATION

In memory of my father Henryk Tokarski.

APPROVAL PAGE

This dissertation written by Elzbieta Tokarska has been approved by the following committee of the Faculty of The Graduate School at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Stanislaw Moniuszko (1819-1872) is considered the father of Polish opera, yet he is completely unknown outside of his native country. His contributions to Polish culture were enormous, including works like twelve volumes of Śpiewniki Domowe (Domestic Songbooks), the operas Halka and Straszny Dwor (The Haunted Manor), the operettas Loteria (The Lottery), Nowy Dziedzic (The New Landlord), the cantatas including Sonety Krymskie (Crimean Sonnets), Pani Twardowska, and orchestral overtures Bajka (Fairytale) and Kain.

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The opera *Halka* depicts the socioeconomic conflicts of that time in Poland using the tragic love story of a common highlander girl, Halka, and a nobleman, Janusz. Moniuszko had to wait many years to see his work staged due to censorship, finances, and the political situation. The composer included many elements of characteristic Polish music, including national dances like mazurka and polonaise, and mountain peasant's dance - *tance goralskie*. Moniuszko also included folk tunes in his memorable arias like *Gdybym rannym słonkiem* and *Szumia jodly*.

Inspired by Moniuszko's patriotic duty to his country, I decided to write *Halka Fantasy* - a piece for violin and piano in the spirit of his national opera *Halka*. My goal with this work was to continue Moniuszko's mission to educate people about Polish heritage, culture, and music and

pay tribute to his life's work. It was really important to me to portray the character and the spirit of Polish music, as Moniuszko intended in his opera; however, *Halka Fantasy* is not a direct transcription of his work rather a piece inspired by the opera. I hope that the composition can stand on its own as a prominent work for violin and piano and provoke conversations outside opera houses about one of the greatest Polish composers from the Romantic era.

CHAPTER II: STANISLAW MONIUSZKO

Stanislaw Moniuszko was born on May 5, 1819, in Ubiel near Mińsk, which was part of Poland in the fifteenth century, later belonged to the Grand Duchy of Warsaw under the rule of Tsar Alexander I, and is currently part of Belarus. The Moniuszko family can be traced back five generations to the beginning of the fifteenth century. The composer's grandfather, also named Stanislaw, was one of the richest landowners near Vilnius. At fifty, he married Ewa Woyniłowiczówna at fifty, which was rather late in life, but they managed to have ten children—four daughters and six sons.

The least academic of his sons, the only one who did not graduate from Wilno University, a "black sheep" in a very intellectual family, was, paradoxically, Czesław Moniuszko, the composer's father. He loved poetry and left twelve volumes of memoirs written in verse! His artistic talents were not of the highest order but thanks to his pencil or charcoal drawings, we know a lot more about the composer's environment at Ubiel. These sketches always contain a chessboard, books, pianos (square, upright, and grand) and ... dogs! He was not an idle fellow, but lacked business acumen and, together with his five illustrious brothers, squandered slowly, or virtually gave away, all the vast fortune left by the composer's grandfather.²

On July 20, 1818, Czeslaw Moniuszko married Elżbieta Madżarska, the daughter of a wealthy textile manufacturer. They had their only child - Stanislaw, or Stasio, as his family called him a year later. From a very early age, the child showed a big interest in the piano, and consequently, at the age of four, his mother became his first piano teacher.³ Stasio grew up listening to his mother Elżbieta Moniuszko play and sing patriotic and folk songs. He was able to sing all of them alongside her by the age of five. Those early childhood experiences shaped the sensitivity and imagination of the young composer's mind⁴ and had a tremendous impact on his future

¹ B. M. Maciejewski, *Moniuszko: Father of Polish Opera* (London: Allegro Press, 1979), 11.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., 12.

⁴ Jan Prosnak, Stanisław Moniuszko (Kraków: Polskie Wydawnictwo Muzyczne, 1968), 24.

passion and devotion to Polish music, which became an integral part of his interests and compositions. Two years later, Piotr Karafa-Korbut took over duties as tutor to young Stasio. He was a locally famous musician, Elżbieta's own childhood music teacher, and was known to play multiple instruments and compose dance music, including polonaises. He taught Stasio piano, violin, and banjo. He was on a very friendly basis with the family and enjoyed playing chess with Czeslaw Moniuszko.

Stasio was born during the worst moment in Poland's history. The three Partitions of Poland (1772, 1793, 1795) resulted in the complete disappearance of Poland from the map for over a hundred years, and the constant unsuccessful fights for Polish sovereignty and independence morally crushed the Polish nation, hoping to restore their country and identity. Ironically this horrific time in history contributed to the development of the arts, which were heavily influenced by Polish national character.⁷

During Stasio's formative years, most schools in the country mandated that children study in the Russian language while completely forbidding the use of their native tongue. It was no different in Minsk—this convinced Czeslaw to move with the family to Warsaw, as it was one of few places that still allowed children - in private schools - to speak Polish. The family arrived in the Polish capital on August 18, 1827, and stayed for three years. Warsaw was a cultural center at the time and provided many opportunities for aspiring artists. The capitol had private schools and even a Music Conservatoire, established in Warsaw in 1821 (where Fryderyk Chopin studied between 1826 and 1829). As they settled in, Czeslaw Moniuszko bought his son

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⁵ Prosnak, 24.

⁶ Maciejewski, 12.

⁷ Marlena Niewczas, "The Voice of Nationalism in Moniuszko's Operas" (master's thesis, Florida Atlantic University, 2010), 6.

⁸ Maciejewski, 13.

a grand piano made by the local manufacturer Wilhelm Troszel and approached August Freyer (1803-1883), an organ virtuoso and pianist, to ask for lessons for his eight-year-old son. Freyer was a colleague of Chopin as they both studied with Jozef Elsner. According to Igor Belza, the eminent Chopinologist, "Chopin while in Vienna, on several occasions met his countrymen: Tomasz Nidecki and August Freyer, future teacher of Moniuszko."

August Freyer was a renowned musician and held the post of resident organist at the Holy Trinity Evangelical Parish Church, the biggest Protestant church in Poland, situated right in the center of Warsaw. His organ recitals were a main cultural event, and often gathered the best Polish organists who wanted to hear him play.

He also composed, but mainly religious music: sacred songs with organ accompaniment composed especially for the Lutheran Church, *Salve Regina* for men's chorus, *Veni Creator* for male-voice quartet and several organ pieces such as *Preludes, Fugues, Fantasy in* F minor and *Variations*. He also wrote a *School for Organ* (1861) and *Treatise on Harmony* (1858).⁹

In 1860, Freyer was appointed professor of harmony and counterpoint at the newly established Musical Institute in Warsaw. Later Moniuszko joined the faculty of composition, so the master and student became colleagues. From the beginning of their work together in 1827, August Freyer sensed in his young pupil a great talent and asked Mr. Czeslaw Moniuszko to take his son to as many concerts as possible and expose the youngster to many cultural events to shape his artistic education outside of the practice room. Because of that effort, Stasio attended one of Chopin's concerts and was overwhelmed by his virtuosity. Freyer arranged to introduce Stasio to his idol, and Moniuszko was grateful for this all his life.¹⁰

While in Warsaw, Stasio had five other private tutors besides his music teacher, who were hired to prepare him for a very difficult examination to *Szkola Pijarow*, the best private school at

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⁹ Maciejewski, 14.

¹⁰ Ibid., 15.

the time. It all seemed like the best decision Czeslaw Moniuszko could have made for his family and for his son, to move across the country in pursuit of culture and education for Stasio, as he wrote in his unpublished *Memoirs*:

I could not find a better place to live with my young offspring than the house where the Society for the Promotion of Sciences and Arts has its headquarters. This was a comparatively warm apartment in the severe winters of Warsaw but, unfortunately, a large library on the first floor was too cold to study in. However, the children insisted on reading there and got bad colds. The hope that the Copernicus monument is soon to be erected outside our window is our great consolation and helps us to forget all our discomforts.11

In July 1830, Stasio passed all his entrance examinations to Szkola Pijarow and was supposed to start his education that year; however, the political situation changed the plans for young Moniuszko. The outbreak of the French Revolution in 1830 and the revolt in Belgium accelerated the Polish November Uprising in 1830, which forced the Moniuszkos to return to their family estate in Ubiel. It is worth noting that in 1830, the two greatest Polish composers of the Romantic period, Chopin and Moniuszko, went their separate ways. Chopin was never to return to his native country, and eleven-year-old Moniuszko did not return to Warsaw for many years after that.¹²

From 1830 to 1834, Stasio attended a grammar school in Minsk and returned to piano lessons with his new teacher Dominik Stefanowicz. Later in life, Moniuszko wrote about the influence the mentor had on his development:

It was Stefanowicz, who, through his great love for music, inspired me to take music as my future profession. He understood best my enthusiasm for all the arts, music especially, and knew best how to direct it.¹³

¹¹ Maciejewski, 15.

¹² Ibid., 16

¹³ Maciejewski, 17.

Thanks to Stefanowicz, who was also a conductor for the local orchestra and theater, Moniuszko attended many theatrical plays and operettas and sat through orchestral rehearsals. This opportunity of observing rehearsals at such a young age influenced Moniuszko's future interest in larger musical forms and understanding the discipline of musical directors.

In 1836, Stasio's parents encouraged their son to travel to Vilnius with his uncle Aleksander Moniuszko. Aleksander was very fond of Stasio, especially since he had no children of his own. They stayed at Muller's Guest House on Niemiecka Street. It happened to have a grand piano in one of the dining halls, of which young Stasio took advantage. ¹⁴ His playing attracted the owner's young daughter Aleksandra Muller, who, in time, became very fond of Stasio. The two of them fell in love, and soon it was decided that they would get married. His love letters from that time were greatly inspired by the greatest Polish poet of the Romantic era, Adam Mickiewicz (1798-1855). ¹⁵

Czeslaw Moniuszko was very reluctant about his son's future as a musician. He imagined that Stasio should take over family estates, but Stasio was very determined to follow his musical path. With Stasio's strong will and his wife's persuasion, Czeslaw eventually gave up on his vision for his son's future and accepted Stasio's wishes. But, he never stopped worrying because the arts were heavily censored and even suppressed by the occupying administration. The family began considering further musical studies for Stasio, which was not an easy decision. After the Uprising of 1830-1831, it was becoming impossible to obtain visas for Polish students since most of their home country's elite left Poland and settled in Paris. Warsaw was also out of the

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid., 18.

question because of the political situation, and after much debate, the Moniuszkos settled on Berlin ¹⁶

In 1837 Moniuszko attended the Singakademie in Berlin under tutelage of Carl Friedrich Rungenhagen. On 18 June 1839, Rungenhagen wrote the following testimonial for Moniuszko:

Mr. Stanislaw Moniuszko, since October 1837, received under my guidance higher musical education, with special reference to composition. I must state that during that time he made good progress which gave him the foundation to master his craft in any further study.

Most probably, Moniuszko asked himself for this testimonial for travel purposes since it was becoming very problematic to travel back and forth from Russian-occupied Poland.¹⁷

Rungenhagen won the post of director over Mendelssohn in 1833. Some historians wonder what would have happened to Moniuszko's composition education had Mendelssohn mentored him. Although the young Polish composer studied with Rungenhagen, he met Mendelssohn "after the performance of the Oratorio *St. Paul* in Berlin. Moniuszko himself acted as an accompanist and répétiteur of the Singakademie during the years 1837-40, and prepared many singers of his academy for Mendelssohn's performance, which took place on January 18, 1838." ¹⁸

During the Berlin period, Moniuszko composed several songs, two quartets, piano miniatures, and a *Mass* for soloists, choir, and organ. This composition was performed with the help of amateur musicians during Moniuszko's vacation in Vilnius in 1839. Also, during that stay, Stasio finally got engaged to his beloved Aleksandra Müller. After his return to Berlin, Moniuszko published three songs set to the texts of Adam Mickiewicz, which gave the first

¹⁶ Maciejewski, 20.

¹⁷ Ibid., 28.

¹⁸ Ibid., 27.

glimpse of Moniuszko's love for Polish music and literature and showed his ability to write music in Polish national style.

On publication of these songs at least two music critics noticed for the first time the emergence of a new young Polish composer. G. W. Fink (1783-1846) in the Leipzig's *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* wrote: "Moniuszko's Polish songs, published in German translation, are charming love songs which breathe the national spirit in words and music. Several modulations display restlessness but show a steady pen and directness of ideas..." In the word restlessness Fink, most probably, made some allusion to the Polish armed insurrections against its oppressors.¹⁹

On September 25, 1840, Moniuszko married Aleksandra and accepted the post of organist at the Roman Catholic Church of St. John, which was attached to Vilnius University before its closure by the Russians. The young couple settled in a small apartment at Muller's Hotel on Niemiecka Street, where they first met, which was to be their home for the next eighteen years. It was a good place for the Moniuszkos to start their life journey as a married couple. Maciejewski (1979) describes the town as follows:

Wilno (Vilnius) is a beautiful town, full of churches and handsome buildings. The dainty and petite Church of St. Anne, with its intricate Gothic façade, so impressed Napoleon on his way to Moscow in 1812 that he wished he could take it with him to Paris! Wilno bears marks of many cultures and a great freedom of expression of religious beliefs: there were 28 Roman Catholic churches, 7 Orthodox, and 2 Protestant, a Muslim mosque, a synagogue and several chapels. Ostra Brama (The Pointed Gate) with its venerated XVI century Madonna, by an unknown artist, is all that remains of the ancient city walls built in 1522 by Zygmunt Jagiełło (Sigmunt I), king of Poland. The old Wilno University in its imposing Neoclassical buildings was originally founded as a Jesuit academy by the Polish King Stefan Batory (Stephen Bathory) in 1578. It was transformed into a university in 1802, only to be closed by Tsarist Russia thirty years later. The university became a cradle of several Polish patriotic organizations and was disbanded by the Russians on political grounds.²⁰

Besides being an organist at the Roman Catholic Church of St. John, Moniuszko started to teach piano and organ and became a traveling music teacher. The Vilnius years were very fertile in at

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¹⁹ Maciejewski, 31.

²⁰ Ibid., 34.

least two aspects: Moniuszko created many new compositions and became a father of ten children.²¹

Stanisław could no longer count on support from his family. His in-laws were able to assist him with publishing his first Vilnius compositions. But, despite the initial financial struggle, Moniuszko managed to raise his status through compositions that he sold, especially the collection of two hundred songs. 22 Moniuszko focused on earning more money through publications and private lessons. One of his many piano students showed true talent and later became a music critic and an acknowledged composer (one of the Mighty Five); César Cui and both artists became long-term friends. Moniuszko's love for Polish music was also seen in the influence on young Cui, whose first composition was a Mazurka, and one of his last pieces, *Four Sonnets op. 48*, was inspired by the Polish poet Adam Mickiewicz. 23 To help promote his publications, Moniuszko undertook three business trips to St. Petersburg. During the first journey, in 1842, he obtained the official document that allowed publication of his songs, which was impossible back home due to the censoring of his works for being Polish and patriotic. In the local Polish paper, *Tygodnik Petersburski*, he was finally able to advertise a public subscription of the upcoming first book of songs, *Śpiewnik Domowy* (published in 1843, Vilnius). 24

Unfortunately, during that time, the political situation in the country was growing in tension, and in 1846 the peasant uprising known as Galician Slaughter broke out in the Austrian partition zone. The peasants, the largest social group in occupied Poland, lived in extreme poverty and were exploited for centuries by the gentry. Finally, the unlivable conditions and the unstable situation caused them to take action in their own hands and fight for their emancipation.

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²¹ Maciejewski, 34.

²² Ibid., 35.

²³ Ibid., 38.

²⁴ Niewczas, 64.

As a result, they murdered around a thousand noblemen in Galicia and burned their manors, but the uprising ultimately failed due to a lack of organized forces, weapons, and people.

This affair highlighted a number of difficult realities for the romantic nationalists: firstly, peasant serfdom was abolished as a result of the failure – rather than hoped for success – of their grand nationalist project; and secondly, it highlighted the precarious position of the nationalists as the new intellectual class vis-à-vis the interdependence of the ancient classes. Deep division ensued amongst Polish intellectuals over the peasant question. While conservatives wanted stringent measures to contain the peasants, the revolutionary romantics sought full emancipation.²⁵

Moniuszko, among many others, saw the Galician Slaughter as a cry for help by the peasants, and he understood that the only way to unite the nation was to educate the people about peasants' suffering. Moniuszko knew that he could accomplish it through music by writing an opera; for him, it was the best form to speak to people's consciousness.²⁶

In 1846 Moniuszkos traveled to Warsaw for the premiere of the operetta *Loteria* (The Lottery). The performance took place on September 12, 1846, and was a great success, which gave the composer instant notoriety. After that, Moniuszko started getting invited to a *Soiree musicale* at the literary salons of the Luszczewski family, where he met Wlodzimierz Wolski (1824-1882). Wolski was a member of the *cyganeria warszawska* (Warsaw bohemians), a group of revolutionaries and poets inspired by the writings of Edward Dembowski, a Polish philosopher, literary critic, and journalist who wrote and published the weekly *Przeglad Naukowy* (*Scientific Review*). This journal was dedicated to 'literature, knowledge, and art' for the young, independent-minded intelligentsia and was heavily influenced by Dembowski's philosophical views on Hegelianism. Writers advocated a national philosophy of Poland's history in which the peasantry was recognized as the foundation of the nation. Dembowski

²⁵ Harry White and Michael Murphy, *Musical Constructions of Nationalism: Essays on the History and ideology of European Musical Culture 1800-1945* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2001), 170.

²⁶ Nadzieja Drucka, *Stanisław Moniuszko: zycie i tworczosc* (Instytut Wydawniczy "Nasza Ksiegarnia" – Warsaw: 1966), 97–98.

considered Wolski a progressive writer and published his poetic drama *Ojciec Hilary* (Father Hilary) in *Przegląd Naukowy* in 1843. However, due to the arrest of many writers and contributors, the journal went into decline in 1845-1846, and another of Wolski's poems, *Halszka*, on the peasant question was censored by the Russian Warsaw office. Fortunately, *Halszka* persisted in circulation in the literary salons, where Moniuszko first contacted its author.

After the initial meeting at the *soiree musicale* in the literary salon of the Luszczewski family, Wolski and Moniuszko immediately started transforming the poem into an opera. Moniuszko initially scored *Halka* in two acts; it was ready to be performed by the following year. However, such were conditions of the time that during the disturbances precipitating the 'Spring of the Peoples,' there was little chance of having it performed in Warsaw. Instead, Moniuszko directed the first performance in the hall of his in-laws' hotel in Vilnius on January 1, 1848. It was not until ten years later, on January 1, 1858, that it finally received a performance in Warsaw. The decision by the board of directors of the Grand Theatre in Warsaw to revive *Halka* came in the period after the death of Nicholas I when a more liberal administration emerged with Aleksander II. Moniuszko and Wolski started working on expanding the whole opera for the upcoming performance.²⁷ After the successful stage performance in Warsaw, Moniuszko received an invitation to take a post as Artistic Director of that venue. That same year, the composer and his family moved to Warsaw.²⁸

On January 22, 1863, another uprising broke out in Warsaw. During such horrific times in history, the works of Polish artists like Mickiewicz and Moniuszko brought real solace to harassed Polish minds. Mickiewicz's poetic epic, *Pan Tadeusz* (1834), which glorified Poland's past, inspired Moniuszko to compose his second most important opera after *Halka*, *Straszny*

²⁷ White and Murphy, 167–168.

²⁸ Niewczas, 67.

Dwór (The Haunted Manor) in four acts (1861-1864). The opera enjoyed three successful performances before the Russian censors banned it.²⁹

In 1864, Moniuszko began to teach at the Institute of Music in Warsaw, where he was directing the choir and lectured on contrapuntal harmony and composition. It was a financially stable position in which he remained for the rest of his life.

On February 12, 1859, Tsar Alexander II signed a charter authorizing the establishment of a Music Institute in Warsaw. Since the inauguration of the Institute was conditional upon the payment of over forty three thousand rubles to the government, Apolinary Kątski, the principal founder and later director of that academy, appealed to the public for donations. Some contributed musical instruments, music, textbooks on music and singing, etc. In many parts of the country concerts, balls and lotteries were organized to raise funds for the Warsaw Institute of Music. It was inaugurated on January 26, 1861.³⁰

Moniuszko's last works of 1871-1872 were weaker compositions and did not receive good reviews. In fact, his last operetta, Beata, was a complete failure. Tormented by his recent letdowns and poor health, Moniuszko developed a heart condition that worsened daily. He was aware of his condition, and a day before his death, Stanisław decided that starting in July of that year, he would quit his position at the Institute of Music and lighten his workload. He was a very religious man who started with an early mass at the local church every day. On June 4, 1872, Stanisław Moniuszko left early for church and took care of his errands afterward. When he returned home, he suffered from pain in his chest which, later that day, at six o'clock, developed into a heart attack that ended his life. Sixty-nine musicians performed his *Requiem* at the Grand Theater, and the funeral mass took place on June 7 at the St. Cross Church, presided over by Bishop Baranowski. The composer was buried in Powązki Cemetery in Warsaw, and thousands of people attended his funeral. Sixty-nine musicians performed his funeral.

²⁹ Maciejewski, 86.

³⁰ Prosnak, 169.

³¹ Niewczas, 68.

³² Prosnak, 174.

CHAPTER III: OPERA HALKA

Halka represents a transition from the traditional opera to the reformed musical drama introduced by Wagner. It follows the form of the earlier type of opera by having independent solos, duets, and ensemble numbers, but it also suggests the future reforms in musical dramas, which consisted of a repetition of prominent phrases at appropriate moments and an organic harmonization of scenes. Moniuszko managed to draw the expression and dramatism of the score through his own lens despite its musical material and language being so agreeable with his contemporaries.

The songs of this opera are very melodious, characteristic and dramatic. There are, however, also other remarkable factors which raise it to the rank of a masterpiece. No Polish dramatic composer had previously expressed by dance scene the Polish national temperament so perfectly as Moniuszko has done. *Halka* contains in the first act a Polonaise, whose grave, courteous and noble manner makes it rank second only to the masterpieces of Chopin, though without the tragic triumphant character characterizing the latter. This act of *Halka* culminates in a dance-scene, a "mazur", which is one of the most brilliant products of Moniuszko's musical temperament.³³

Moniuszko was twenty-eight when he was composing his masterpiece, even younger than Weber when he wrote his famous *Der Freischutz. Halka* has the same significance to Polish music as *Der Freischutz* does to German music, and it has not lost its magic charm to this day.³⁴ The national spirit is expressed distinctly in the Polish dances, which celebrate specific regions and the various traditions of Polish history. The polonaise represents the noble tradition, while the mazur and highland dances celebrate the spirit of folk traditions, much like Mickiewicz's *Pan Tadeusz*. These dances were one of the major attractions of the opera.³⁵

³³ Maciejewski, 65-66.

³⁴ Ibid., 65.

³⁵ White and Murphy, 169.

Before the performance in Warsaw, *Halka* was still a two-act opera. Moniuszko and Wolski decided to expand their work to its current version in four acts in preparation for the Warsaw premiere. On June 4, 1857, Moniuszko wrote to Quattrini:

Having looked through the opera, I feel the need to total recasting though without changing the original ideas. This (1) the role of Jontek, really one of the chief characters, must be not a baritone as now but a tenor; (2) a duet for Jontek and Janusz must be added to the finale of Act I; (3) transposition of the introduction, terzet, and Jontek's aria in Act I; (4) the polonaise of the opera must of course be danced, as is customary at a ball; (5) after the first number of the second act there will have to be a mountaineers' dance which I will see to.³⁶

The part of Jontek had originally been written for a baritone, Moniuszko's friend Jozef Bonoldi, singing teacher at Nobles' Institute at Vilnius, where he had sung it in 1848. But this meant that among the male soloists there was a preponderance of baritones or basses and Jontek was probably sung by a tenor even in 1845. Now, for Warsaw, the changes in the part went far beyond transposition; instead of secondary character he became principal. Another major change was the insertion of a long scene after Halka's exit in Act I, leading to the ballet: a new chorus, a polonaise aria for Zofia's father, and then a mazurka. Act I was now so long that it had to be bisected, and the second half, with a change of scene to the garden at night, now became Act II. This is opened by Halka with a fine new recitative Italianate aria written to appease the elegant soprano Pauline Rivoli who had not been too happy at taking the part of a peasant girl. The original second Act was also bisected, the first scene – now Act III – being set in a mountain village with the mountaineers' dance' mentioned in Moniuszko's letter to Quattrini. The remainder became Act IV, opening with a scene for Jontek with a bagpiper, and including another fine addition to the score: a *dumka* for Jontek. Even the names of some of the characters were changed: for instance Zofia's father, originally Czesnik became Stolnik. Wolski, the librettist, cheerfully provided the additional text needed. (He collaborated with Moniuszko again soon afterwards in another, much less successful, three-act opera Hrabina (The Countess). Composer and librettist toyed with other ideas. At one point they considered the possibility of ending the opera with a peasant uprising but realized that this would never be tolerated by the censorship. And apparently the first Vilnius version had ended not with Halka's suicide but with her rescue by her faithless lover, a denouement approved by such an authority as Henryk Opienski and which Moniuszko's publisher Gebethner and Wolff preserved in a libretto of 1860. But the suicide has remained the accepted version. *Halka* had now become a full-length opera, slightly Italianized-perhaps in awareness of the Italian prima donna, for whom the composer sent an Italian translation of part of Act II for better understanding'-but thoroughly Polish in its employment of mazurka and polonaise rhythms and in Jontek's dumka in Act IV. Another authentic touch: Moniuszko begged the *regisseur* that in the mazurka which ends Act I there should be, after the introduction, two bars of rhythmic stamping. 'It seems to me that this bound to have a pretty good effect when the brilliant orchestra then begins

³⁶ Gerald Abraham, Essays on Russian and European Music (Clarendon Press: Oxford 1985), 158–159.

the dance proper'. But he came nearest to genuine folk elements in the bagpiper's Jontek's *dumka* and in the mountaineers dance in Act III.³⁷

The new four-act version of *Halka* was a great success, with the roles and synopsis as follows:

SCENE: Podhale, a mountain region in the southern part of Poland;

TIME End of XVIII century.

CHARACTERS

HALKA, a peasant girl (Soprano)

JONTEK, a peasant boy (Tenor)

STOLNIK, landowner (Bass) and his daughter

ZOFIA (mezzo),

JANUSZ, a young nobleman (Baritone),

DZIEMBA, Stolnik's administrator (Bass),

BAGPIPER, a local highlander (Bass),

GORAL, highlander (Tenor),

TWO GUESTS (Tenor and Baritone),

NOBLEMEN AND HIGHLANDERS.

ACT I

SCENE I – A lavish engagement party is taking place in the Polish manor house of the country squire, Stolnik. Zofia, his young and beautiful daughter, has become engaged to Janusz, a nobleman. The spacious rooms and grounds of the manor are filled with guests of high rank and standing who dance to the music of majestic polonaise. Once the dance is over Dziemba, Stolnik's closest friend, sings an aria in praise of the engaged couple, wishing them perpetual love and unity. All the guests join him in spontaneously wishing good luck and long life to the happy pair and they address their congratulations to the families of each. Another splendid polonaise brings the scene to a conclusion. SCENE II – Slowly all guests start leaving the party and Stolnik, together with Zofia and Janusz, remains. The young couple asks Stolnik for his blessing on the engagement and he, with great pleasure, fulfills their wish. This moving ceremony however is interrupted by the sad distant aria of the young peasant girl, Halka, who is madly in love with Janusz whose child she carries. Zofia asks Janusz whose voice it is they hear but Janusz pretends he knows nothing, saying it is merely a peasant girl outside the house. Stolnik and Zofia are unaware of the true identity of the young Halka and interpret her song as being in praise of small kindness from Janusz; a noble gesture towards a simple peasant girl in distress.

SCENE III – Janusz, in a *recitativo* aria, sings out his heart which is torn between the love of a peasant girl and that of Zofia. He knows how Halka left her peasant boyfriend, Jontek, for him and he remembers now, in a remote part of the grounds belonging to his fiancée's father, he told the poor girl of his love to her. He had asked her to wait for him at a place on the outskirts of the town close to the River Vistula where two holy statues and a crucifix dominate the scene. But he was untrue to his word. Halka, in a mad frenzy, returns to the grounds of the manor where she lingers in the hope of catching a glimpse of

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³⁷ Abraham, Essays on Russian and European Music, 159–160.

her beloved as he passes by the windows. Half in a trance she sings out her love for Janusz.

ACT II

SCENE I – The scene opens with Halka singing a beautiful aria "Gdybym rannym slonkiem..." (If I could only fly at dawn like a nothingale) She lingers, half hidden, amongst the trees in the grounds of the manor, being drawn, like a magnet, into close proximity to Janusz.

SCENE II – Jontek, madly in love with Halka, has left his mountain village in search of her. On finding her he tries his utmost to convince her that Janusz has no interest in her presence but Halka refuses to believe him and insists on going to the manor to talk to Janusz. Jontek follows her in despair.

SCENE III – Dziemba answers the door and refuses to admit Halka and Jontek or even to announce to Janusz their presence. He requests their immediate departure.

SCENE IV – Janusz appears and throws Dziemba away from the door in fear of Stolnik's and Zofia's hearing uproar. He asks Halka and Jontek to leave at once. Jontek summons enough courage to voice his disgust at the way in which Halka is being treated, especially in view of the fact that she is an orphan.

SCENE V- Stolnik and Zofia are informed by Dziemba about the young peasant girl, whereupon both Kalka and Jontek are thrown out in a brutal manner.

ACT III

SCENE I – This takes place several weeks after the engagement party in the mountain village which has been owned for more than a century by Janusz's family. It is Sunday and the peasants (Gorale) are going to church to pray. After the mass all the women from the village talk about the forthcoming wedding and warn the young virgins to beware the advances of the young squire. While the elder folk gossip, the young girls start dancing. SCENE II – Halka and Jontek return to their village and tell their friends of the harsh treatment which they received outside of the squire's manor. At that moment a black raven is seen flying over the mountains pastures and the peasants interpret this as a bad omen. At the end of this scene the wedding procession of Janusz and Zofia is about to commence.

ACT IV

SCENE I – Jontek descends a mountain path and stops next to the entrance of the village cemetery. He sings an aria pitying Halka and her misfortunes. In the distance he hears the sound of a village bagpiper playing a lament which seems to forebode some impending disaster. Jontek sings "Szumia jodly na gor szczycie…" (Fir trees shimmering on top of the mountains).

SCENE II – the wedding procession approaches the village church. Halka looks at her happy rival with a grief stricken heart. She is in great despair.

SCENE III – In a duettino between Halka and Jontek, Halka pours out her tormented heart. Jontek cannot give any consolation; in his peasant simplicity he takes Halka to see the newly-weds at the church altar in the hope that, in the face of reality, she will come to her senses. This vision, however, has completely opposite results: Halka, half insane, wants to set the church alight and take her own life.

SCENE IV – The hushed sound of the church organ together with the gentle response of the peasants singing is heard against Halka's dramatic recitativo where she declares her weakness and that her little child, which is also that of Janusz, is dying of hunger and neglect.

SCENE V – Halka decides to leave the church unharmed and to spare her beloved one but takes her own life. She makes her way to a mountain precipice and throws herself from it into the river below.

SCENE VI – Jontek and his friends witness this tragic scene. They run after Halka to the precipice but it is too late. Dziemba leaves the church just after the tragedy and, completely unaware of what has happened, asks the peasants to sing joyful wedding songs to show their respect and constant loyalty to the newly-wed squire.³⁸

The first important review of *Halka*, which had the biggest impact, was written by Hans von Bulow in a long article in the *Neue Zeitschrift fur Musik*. The majority of his essay discusses musical details, comparisons with other operas, and even offers advice to the composer. When commenting on the nationalistic aspects of the opera, Hans von Bulow placed the greatest emphasis on cultural nationalism and acknowledged the work's political motivation. He began his review:

It is always a welcome occurrence when nations generally regarded as living in a state of oppression and therefore suffering in a kind of peculiar existence of their own find a satisfying outlet for their deep-seated and legitimate national aspirations by abandoning the futile and inflammable game of playing politics in favor of aesthetic activity. For it is only the realm of the spirit that impassioned dreams can be converted into noble reality, a reality that becomes the more undeniable the more ideal are the forms through which the national spirit seeks expression.³⁹

In his review, Bulow noticed the recent awakening of the 'national spirit' in Poland, which was clearly expressed by the composer "in its most spiritual and therefore its richest form of expression, that of poetry and music." He also noted that the Polish aristocracy was united in their patriotic ideals and their consciousness of the nation, which he demonstrated by quoting a "cultured Polish lady," who characterized Moniuszko and his opera thus:

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³⁸ Maciejewski, 106-109.

³⁹ White and Murphy, 172-173.

He is a Slavic poet; portrays with true and profound feeling the melancholy, the exaltation, the wild passion, the pious resignation of the Lithuanian race. His opera, Halka, embodies wonderful beauties.

Bulow acknowledged that *Halka* represents the oppressed peasantry but did not consider the entire political context of the opera. In fact, Moniuszko and Wolski had contemplated including a peasant uprising in the opera but decided against it. The most significant political aspect of the opera was in the original poem *Halszka* by Wolski, which idealized the peasants in the aftermath of the Galician slaughter.⁴⁰

Halka was more than a representation of the 'oppressed peasantry' or an expression of the 'national spirit': her 'elevated style' was the very essence of Dembowski's national philosophy, and her redemptive self-sacrifice resonated with Messianism.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Ibid., 173.

⁴¹ Ibid.

CHAPTER IV: PROCESS OF WRITING HALKA FANTASY—ORCHESTRAL SCORE COMPARISON

My piece titled *Halka Fantasy* for violin and piano is inspired by Moniuszko's opera *Halka* in terms of harmonic and melodic material. I have chosen the following sections of the opera *Halka* as an inspiration for my composition:

-Overture

- -Halka's aria Jako od wichru krzew polamany (as a bush torn by winds) Act I, Scene IV,
- -Halka's aria Gdyby rannym słonkiem (If with morning sun) from Act II, Scene I,
- -Mazur Act I, Scene VI.

Figure 1. Halka Fantasy and Opera Halka Score Side-by-Side Measure Comparison

Halka Fantasy Measure numbers	Opera <i>Halka</i> score
1-4	Opera Halka, Overture mm. 2-6
5-12	Self-composed, based on motives from Halka Overture, mm. 2-6
13-16	Halka Overture, mm. 26-30
17-23	Halka's aria <i>Jako od wichru krzew polamany</i> (as a bush torn by winds) from Act I, Scene IV mm. 1-7
24-31	Halka's aria Jako od wichru krzew polamany, mm. 8-15
32-38	Self-composed, based on motives from the aria <i>Jako od wichru krzew polamany</i> , mm. 12-15
39-43	Halka's aria Jako od wichru krzew polamany, mm. 16-23
44-47	Self-composed, based on motives from the aria <i>Jako od wichru krzew polamany</i> , mm. 23-26
48-63	Halka's aria Jako od wichru krzew polamany, mm. 26-41
64-67	Self-composed
68-82	Halka's aria, <i>Gdyby rannym slonkiem</i> (If with morning sun) from Act II, Scene I, mm. 17-31

Halka Fantasy Measure numbers	Opera Halka score
83-87	Self-composed, based on harmonic progression of the Halka's aria, <i>Gdyby rannym slonkiem</i> , mm. 32-36
88-102	Halka's aria, Gdyby rannym slonkiem, mm. 37-51
103-104	Self-composed
105-122	Mazur from the I Act Scene IV, mm. 1-38
123-142	<i>Mazur</i> mm. 39-58
143-159	<i>Mazur</i> mm. 59-79
160-176	Mazur mm. 80-94
177-204	Mazur mm. 95-122
205-230	Mazur mm.123-149
231-234	Self-composed, based on Mazur mm. 150-153
235-246	Mazur mm. 154-165
247-250	Self-composed, based on Mazur mm. 154-165
251-270	Mazur mm. 166-184
271-314	Mazur mm. 185-229
314-319	Self-composed, based on Mazur mm. 230-238

When composing *Halka Fantasy*, it was very important for me to demonstrate the Polish national character and it is most clearly indicated in the second half of my piece, which the Mazur inspired from the opera *Halka* by Moniuszko. The name Mazur comes from the region of Masovia around Warsaw, and it is one of five Polish national dances (others include Krakowiak, Polonez, Kujawiak, Oberek). Mazur is in triple meter with accents on the weak beats, mostly third beat, but sometimes also on the second beat (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Halka Fantasy mm. 119-124



Mazur's distinct character is indicated in the rhythmic structure of two eighth notes followed by two quarters alternated with three quarters. Overall, the phrase structure is built on two bar phrases (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Halka Fantasy mm. 145-146



The two bars of violin pizzicato (Figure 3) resemble the stomping of dancers before the actual Mazur begins, which was very important to Moniuszko as he wrote, "I ask for the two bars of pause after the introduction to be substituted for the rhythmical stomping. I believe that this concept is rather effective, when the great orchestra enters with the regular dance after that."⁴² I decided to keep it in my piece as a tribute to Moniuszko's wishes.

Dziewanowska described Mazur as: "it combines the fiery spirit with pride and elegance, vivacity with lyricism, dignity with joy, and boldness with gallantry."43 It is important to note that the Polish national anthem is also a Mazur known as Dabrowski's Mazurka. From the beginning of writing my piece, it was clear that I had to include Moniuszko's Mazur from Halka, as it is one of the greatest and most characteristic Polish Mazurs ever written.

⁴² Drucka, Stanislaw Moniuszko, 160.

⁴³ Ada Dziewanowska, *Polish Folk Dances and Songs: A Step-by-Step Guide* (New York, NY: Hippocrene Books, 1997), 509.

The *Halka Fantasy* for violin and piano is written in the spirit of Moniuszko's opera *Halka*. I have treated the original score as an inspiration rather than a direct transcription or an arrangement for the violin and piano. I have elaborated on Moniuszko's original musical ideas and tried to make them my own, so they can fit with the instrumentation I have chosen because I want the piece to stand on its own as a substantial work for violin and piano. Moniuszko's music can be heard and recognized throughout the *Halka Fantasy*; my goal was to represent the composer's work in a new form that would be accessible outside opera houses. I have made certain creative decisions when deciding how to represent the large orchestral instrumentation for just two instruments. One such example can be seen in Figure 4, where the violin part combines cello, second violins, bassoon, oboe, and flute solos from the Overture (Figure 5).

Figure 4. Halka Fantasy, mm. 13-16

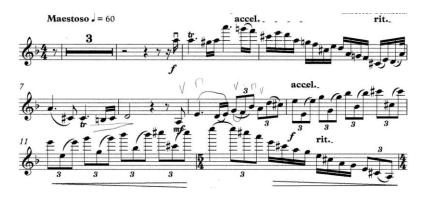


Figure 5. Opera Halka Overture, mm. 26-30



When I was writing the violin part of the piece, I had yet another Polish composer in mind—Henryk Wieniawski, which could be heard in the technical aspects of the piece. I did not have anything particular from Wieniawski's works in mind, but there was definitely an influence in how I have treated the violin part. It can be heard already at the beginning of the piece where the violin enters without any hesitation with the trill and a big leap for the high A, which then cascades down and lets the piano finish the sentence, while the second entrance of the violin is even more virtuosic with the diminished chord written as octaves reaching a fifth higher than before (Figure 6).

Figure 6. Halka Fantasy, mm. 1-12



I kept the harmonic progression when writing the piano part and took many liberties in terms of melodic and rhythmic material. An example of such treatment of the piano part is represented in Figure 7 and Figure 8 for comparison with the original score.

Figure 7. Halka Fantasy, m. 68

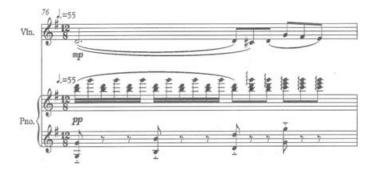
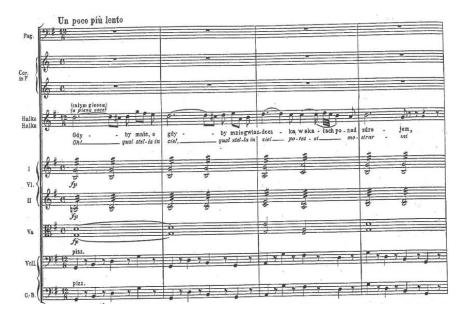


Figure 8. Halka's Aria Gdybym rannym slonkiem (if with morning sun), mm. 17-20



Many parts are only loosely based on the score or even completely composed by me with original musical material. For example, it can be seen in Figure 9, where I have used Moniuszko's music of the Halka's aria *Jako od wichru krzew polamany* in the piano part and created an elaborate accompaniment in the violin part, which again could resemble something of Wieniawski's writing.

Figure 9. Halka Fantasy, mm. 31-37



Following are examples of the original writing I created for the piece. Figure 10 is a virtuosic run connecting two phrases of the aria *Jako od wichru krzew polamany*. It is based on a simple cadence sung by *Halka*.

Figure 10. Halka Fantasy, mm. 44-47



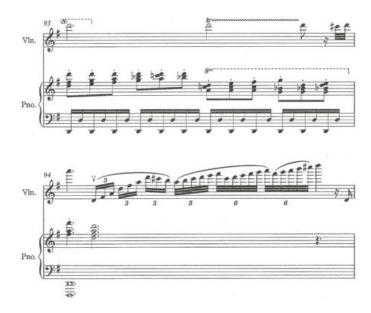
Figure 11 is a bridge connecting musical material of the aria *Jako od wichru krzew połamany* to the next aria *Gdybym rannym słonkiem*. The bridge acts as a modulation from E major to G major, changing the meter and character along with the register.

Figure 11. Halka Fantasy mm. 64-68



In Figure 12, I have kept the harmonic progression of the original score but completely recomposed the material around it in both violin and piano parts.

Figure 12. Halka Fantasy, mm. 85-86



In Figure 13, the piano's arpeggiated triplets create an agitated character and build tension as this section progresses. It does not appear in the original score.

Figure 13. Halka Fantasy, mm. 80-81



The first four bars of Figure 14 are based on the score, while the next four bars, mm. 263-264, I decided to repeat the same melodic material by a third as another transition to the repeated motive of the *Mazurka*.

Figure 14. Halka Fantasy mm. 259-268



CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION

Stanislaw Moniuszko's works, especially his operas, should not be overlooked by Western musicologists. It is important to remember that he was composing during the most horrific times in Polish history, and his compositions (including the opera *Halka*) represented the fight of all the Poles to keep their language, music, customs, identity, and autonomy. By writing his music in the spirit of Polish nationalism, he inspired faith among the Polish people that their dream to live in a sovereign country might be realized. Moniuszko understood that his talent must be used for a greater cause.

I have undertaken the task of transforming his opera *Halka* into the *Halka Fantasy* for violin and piano to share my appreciation for his music and contributions to Polish culture with audiences around the world. Moniuszko's love for his home country inspired me as a musician and Polish citizen to use my privilege and skill to present his most significant opera in a more accessible way, without the need for the full orchestra, choir, soloists, dancers, costumes, etc. This project enabled me to expand my skills beyond violin playing in a very comprehensive way to pay tribute to Moniuszko's life's work.

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APPENDIX A: RECITAL INFORMATION

- I. Solo Recital: Saturday, February 15, 2020, 7:30 p.m., Tew Recital Hall. *Violin Sonata No. 21 in E minor, KV 304* (W.A. Mozart); *Violin Sonata No. 1 in G major Op. 78* (Johannes Brahms); *Passacaglia for Solo Violin in G minor* (H.I.F Biber); *Violin Sonata No. 3 Op. 27 No. 3 in D minor, Ballade* (Eugene Ysaye).
- II. Solo Recital: Friday, April 16, 2021, 5:30 p.m., Tew Recital Hall. Violin Partita No. 3 in E major, BWV 1006 (J.S.Bach); T'filah for Solo Violin Op.33 (Lera Auerbach);
 Variations on an Original Theme Op.15 (Henryk Wieniawski); Violin Sonata No.1 in F minor Op.80, (Sergey Prokofiev).
- III. Solo Recital: Thursday, March 17, 2022, 7:30 p.m., Tew Recital Hall. Myths Op. 30
 (Karol Szymanowski); Harnasie Op.55 (Karol Szymanowski); Duets on Folk Themes
 (Grazyna Bacewicz); Suite for Two Violins (Grazyna Bacewicz); Halka Fantasy
 (Elzbieta Tokarska).

Halka Fantasy Elzbieta Tokarska Maestoso = 60Violin Maestoso = 60Piano sp accel.

