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I, **Bo Ra Kim**, hereby submit this original work as part of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts in Piano.

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A New Perspective on the Interpretation and Performance of Franz Liszt's Piano Cycle, Harmonies poétiques et religieuses, S.173

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**A New Perspective on the Interpretation and Performance of
Franz Liszt's Piano Cycle, *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*, S.173**

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Abstract

This document focuses on Franz Liszt's piano cycle, the *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*, one of the most challenging and obscure sets among the composer's oeuvre. Until recently, the *Harmonies* has remained largely neglected compared to Liszt's other major piano cycles. Yet, it is a momentous work that embodies Liszt's lifelong passion for literature and reflects his deep-seated religious belief. In addition, the set was produced at a critical moment in his life, when he retired from the concert platform to become a serious composer and developed a relationship with Princess Carolyne zu Sayn-Wittgenstein.

This study first places the *Harmonies* in historical and literary contexts, which is imperative to understanding its diverse themes, poetic models, and religious orientation. Detailed discussion of its musical aspects follows, in order to illustrate how Liszt fashioned the work as a means of unifying literature and religion within his compositional aesthetics and pianistic style. The closing chapter focuses on performance practice, seeking to make the set more accessible to pianists and audiences by suggesting an approach that emphasizes the composer's spiritual quest. The ultimate goal of this study is to serve as a performer's guide toward a thoughtful interpretation of this extraordinary cycle.

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Table of Contents

Abstract.....	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
Copyright Permissions.....	vi
List of Musical Examples.....	vii
List of Tables.....	ix
Chapter	
1. Introduction to the <i>Harmonies poétiques et religieuses</i>	1
A. Liszt and Religion.....	1
B. Liszt and Piano Cycle.....	5
2. The <i>Harmonies poétiques et religieuses</i> : Historical Perspectives.....	10
3. The <i>Harmonies poétiques et religieuses</i> : Modes of Analysis.....	18
A. Lamartine’s Poetic Style in the <i>Harmonies poétiques et religieuses</i> ..	18
B. Genesis of Liszt’s <i>Harmonies poétiques et religieuses</i>	21
C. Analysis of the <i>Harmonies poétiques et religieuses</i> (1853).....	31
4. Programmatic Elements in the <i>Harmonies poétiques et religieuses</i>	54
A. Literary Association and Narrative Line.....	54
B. Tonality.....	59
C. Harmonic Language.....	62
D. Motivic Relationship.....	67
5. Performing the <i>Harmonies poétiques et religieuses</i>	72
A. Liszt Performance Aesthetics.....	72
B. Performance Difficulties of the <i>Harmonies poétiques et religieuses</i> ..	75
C. New Approach to the <i>Harmonies poétiques et religieuses</i>	77
D. Closing Remarks.....	83
Bibliography.....	86
Appendix.....	91

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Frédéric Chopin, *Polonaisen*, copyright © 1990 by G. Henle Verlag München. Used by permission.

List of Musical Examples

		Page
Example 1.1.	Franz Liszt, <i>Invocation</i> , mm. 5-7.....	32
Example 1.2.	Franz Liszt, <i>Invocation</i> , mm. 56-59.....	33
Example 1.3.	Franz Liszt, <i>Bénédiction de Dieu dans la solitude</i> , mm. 1-4.....	33
Example 2.1.	Franz Liszt, <i>Ave Maria</i> , mm. 1-6.....	34
Example 2.2.	Franz Liszt, <i>Ave Maria</i> , mm. 33-38.....	35
Example 2.3.	Franz Liszt, <i>Ave Maria</i> , mm. 134-137.....	36
Example 3.1.	Franz Liszt, <i>Ave Maria</i> , mm. 138-141.....	37
Example 3.2.	Franz Liszt, <i>Bénédiction de Dieu dans la solitude</i> , mm. 1-2.....	37
Example 4.1.	Franz Liszt, <i>Harmonies poétiques et religieuses</i> , S. 154, mm. 1-2.....	39
Example 4.2.	Franz Liszt, <i>Pensée des morts</i> , mm. 1-3.....	39
Example 4.3.	Franz Liszt, <i>Pensée des morts</i> , mm. 58-59.....	40
Example 4.4.	Franz Liszt, <i>Pensée des morts</i> , m. 65.....	40
Example 5.1.	Franz Liszt, <i>Pensée des morts</i> , mm. 77-80.....	43
Example 5.2.	Franz Liszt, <i>Pater noster</i> , mm. 1-4.....	43
Example 5.3.	Franz Liszt, <i>Hymne de l'enfant à son réveil</i> , mm. 1-3.....	43
Example 6.1.	Franz Liszt, <i>Funérailles</i> , mm. 1-3.....	44
Example 6.2.	Franz Liszt, <i>Funérailles</i> , mm. 24-27.....	45
Example 6.3.	Frédéric Chopin, <i>Piano Sonata No. 2</i> , Op. 35, 3 rd mov, mm. 31-32.....	46
Example 6.4.	Franz Liszt, <i>Funérailles</i> , mm. 56-57.....	46
Example 6.5.	Frédéric Chopin, <i>Polonaise in A-flat major</i> , Op. 53, mm. 84-89...	47

Example 6.6.	Franz Liszt, <i>Funérailles</i> , mm. 134-136.....	47
Example 6.7.	Franz Liszt, <i>Funérailles</i> , mm. 189-192.....	48
Example 7.1.	Franz Liszt, <i>Miserere d'après Palestrina</i> , mm. 13-14.....	49
Example 7.2.	Franz Liszt, <i>Miserere d'après Palestrina</i> , m. 26.....	50
Example 8.1.	Franz Liszt, <i>Andante lagrimoso</i> , mm. 1-4.....	51
Example 8.2.	Franz Liszt, <i>Andante lagrimoso</i> , mm. 95-99.....	52
Example 9.1.	Franz Liszt, <i>Cantique d'amour</i> , mm. 1-2.....	52
Example 9.2.	Franz Liszt, <i>Cantique d'amour</i> , mm. 106-107.....	53
Example 9.3.	Franz Liszt, <i>Cantique d'amour</i> , mm. 134-140.....	53
Example 10.	Franz Liszt, <i>Bénédiction de Dieu dans la solitude</i> , mm. 255-258.	58
Example 11.	Franz Liszt, <i>Invocation</i> , mm. 198-203.....	63
Example 12.1.	Franz Liszt, <i>Pensée des morts</i> , m. 49.....	64
Example 12.2.	Franz Liszt, <i>Funérailles</i> , mm. 16-17.....	65
Example 12.3.	Franz Liszt, <i>Funérailles</i> , mm. 143-145.....	65
Example 12.4.	Franz Liszt, <i>Pensée des morts</i> , mm. 57-59.....	67
Example 13.1.	Franz Liszt, <i>Invocation</i> , mm. 99-108.....	68
Example 13.2.	Franz Liszt, <i>Pensée des morts</i> , mm. 1-3.....	68
Example 13.3.	Franz Liszt, <i>Andante lagrimoso</i> , mm. 1-4.....	69
Example 14.	Franz Liszt, <i>Bénédiction de Dieu dans la solitude</i> , mm. 310-311.	79

List of Tables

	Page
Table 1. The Inventory on p.22 and the Corresponding Works in N5.....	25
Table 2.1. The <i>Harmonies</i> in the First Period (1834-1846) by Albert Brussee...	28
Table 2.2. The <i>Harmonies</i> in the Middle Period (1847/1848) by Albert Brussee	29
Table 3.1. The List of Compositions for the Six-movement Cycle.....	30
Table 3.2. The <i>Harmonies poétiques et religieuses</i> , the Final 1853 Version.....	31
Table 4. Key Scheme of Each Movement and Corresponding Character.....	60

Chapter 1

Introduction to the *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*

Liszt and Religion

In 1853, Franz Liszt saw a long-awaited plan finally come to fruition: The *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*, which embodies Liszt's artistic aspiration and religious conviction, was published as a set of ten pieces by Kistner in Leipzig after almost twenty years of preparation. Liszt's stay in Weimar, from 1848 to 1861, constituted the most prolific period of his major large-scale compositions, such as Symphonic Poems and the Piano Sonata in B Minor, and he diligently revised his previous works as well, including the *Harmonies*. Though the *Harmonies* was not his first published multi-movement work, it was certainly his first effort to create a religious music drama by synthesizing disparate spheres, namely religion and literature, for solo piano.

As the *Harmonies* bears a long compositional history, it gives us a useful scope to observe Liszt's continual progress of compositional experiments from his youthful years to maturity. Albert Brussee explains that Liszt usually worked in two phases: the first stage only provides a foundation with moments of fleeting inspiration, while the second stage gives a complete form with corrections and details.¹ The *Harmonies* also went through the two-step process, and left many traces to witness Liszt's artistic development. Liszt had proved his ability to depict the vivid color palette of virtuosity through his earlier keyboard compositions like piano paraphrases and transcriptions, and he further

¹Franz Liszt, introduction to the *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses* (1847 version), ed. Albert Brussee (Huizen, Holland: B.V. Muziekuitgeverij XYZ, 1997), xv.

attempted to create a more mature and innovative pianism in the *Harmonies*. Therefore, this magnificent work signifies a transition of the composer's path, departing from glittering virtuosity to profound pianism through the exploration of diverse compositional experiments and sonority of the instrument.

Why did Liszt, who enjoyed a glamorous life with tremendous fame as a fashionable virtuoso, intend to express his religious faith through the piano cycle at the height of his career? Liszt's commitment to religion traces back to his childhood. Liszt's father, Adam Liszt, was a deeply religious person, who was once a Franciscan novice. His religious view influenced the young Liszt in nurturing a strong Catholic faith. Alan Walker describes the adolescent Liszt as a solitary boy who consoled himself with reading, especially Christian literature.² As Liszt inherited a strong religious belief from his father, he became familiar with the Catholic rituals, and regularly attended Mass at the church nearby his apartment in Paris. Abbé Félicité-Robert de Lammenais's liberalism and Catholicism carried young Liszt away, and the inspiring agenda of the Saint-Simonians prompted him to contemplate the artist's status in religion and society. Their idealistic views, such as Christian brotherhood, left a strong stamp on Liszt's artistic perspective and his productions. Young Liszt presented a series of bold manifestos in his remarkable essay, "On the Position of Artists and Their Condition in Society," suggesting specific ideas to improve the current musical culture of Europe, including a new direction for religious music.³ He was particularly impressed by the Saint-Simonians's concept of brotherly love and an artist-priest role for a divine

² Alan Walker, *Franz Liszt: The Virtuoso Years, 1811-1847* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1983), 116-117.

³ Ralph P. Locke, "Liszt on the Artist in Society," in *Franz Liszt and His World*, ed. Christopher H. Gibbs and Dana Gooley (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 291-296.

community.⁴ Under the influence of the Saint-Simonians, Liszt idealized the artist as a priest who brought divinity to society through music, and saw art as a channel of communion between man and God. As Liszt embraced these ideas, he tried to fulfill them through a humanitarian effort, such as his support for the erection of a Beethoven monument in Bonn. He saw the artist's role as indispensable to achieving social ideal and reform, and he elevated the artist's status to that of high nobility, considering art as a sublime and exalted realm.⁵ Though Liszt lived a life of stunning success, he never lost his belief in God.

Liszt wrote numerous religious works throughout his career, but the majority of his religious compositions surfaced after he moved to Rome in 1861. During his Rome years, sacred vocal music occupied the center of the composer's mind; therefore, a remarkable output of vocal music appeared in great numbers, such as *Christus, Die Legende von der heiligen Elisabeth*, and the *Gran Mass*. While Liszt mainly contributed religious choral works at this time, he also composed several religious-related piano works, such as the *Deux Legends*, S. 175: *St. François d'Assise: la prédication aux oiseaux* and *St. François de Paule: marchant sur les flots* and several transcriptions from his own religious works, including *Via Crucis*. The *Harmonies* is a particularly exceptional piece among his religious piano works, which grew over a twenty-year period, encompassing his passion toward diverse subjects—religion, literature, and music.

⁴ Ralph P. Locke, *Music, Musicians, and the Saint-Simonians* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 101-106.

⁵ Leon Botstein, "A Mirror to the Nineteenth century: Reflections on Franz Liszt," in *Franz Liszt and His World*, ed. Christopher H. Gibbs and Dana Gooley (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 535-537.

Despite Liszt's sincere dedication to religion, his virtuosic works took most of the spotlight, and the public had neglected, or underestimated, his religious corpus until recently. As Michael Saffle states, while many of Liszt's more well-known piano works and symphonic poems contain a certain degree of transcendence and faith, relatively few of his religious compositions are performed with frequency.⁶ For example, the first two volumes of the *Années de pèlerinage* have firmly established themselves as favored repertoires, but the third book of the *Années de pèlerinage* and the *Harmonies*, known as religious sets, have received much less attention. The *Harmonies*, in particular, has been rarely performed because of its extraordinary length, ninety-minutes long. Only a few movements have found their ways to the concert stage, and the rest of the pieces have been left to oblivion. Publishers have also showed indifference to the *Harmonies*; for example, the Peters edition by Emil von Sauer, a distinguished pupil of Liszt, presented only three movements out of ten.

Although Liszt had been committed to the Catholic faith throughout his life, his image as a Don Juan and Mephistophelean artist was overwhelming. Liszt lived a life of extremes, enjoying, for instance, public accolade as a demonic pianist; but he also took minor orders, acquiring a title of Abbé in the mid-1860s. His radical transformation by turning to the Church brought a sarcastic reaction from his contemporaries, and it distorted Liszt's aspirations and accomplishments. Howard Hugo points out that "Of the many histrionic acts performed by the great showman, none received more sarcastic comment by his contemporaries than did his assumption of clerical vows—and much was made of the fact that the fifth vow, that of chastity, was not taken by the middle-aged

⁶ Michael Saffle, "Sacred Choral Works," in *The Liszt Companion*, ed. Ben Arnold (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002), 335.

Don Juan.”⁷ As the archetypal images of Liszt had become permanent, most of the public’s attention was weighted toward his virtuosic pieces, which were representative of his glorious days as an unparalleled virtuoso. However, Liszt did not settle for public approval, especially once he moved to Rome, as he constantly tried to broaden his musical dimensions.

According to Charles Rosen, Liszt needed reevaluation, though he never went out of the public’s favor.⁸ The *Harmonies* is, in a way, an excellent example that shows the different personalities of Liszt, and it particularly carries the wide spectrum of Liszt’s artistry, revealing his insights into literature and religion. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to discover characteristics of Liszt’s music other than his brilliant virtuosity. In addition, this study delivers a new interpretation of the *Harmonies* as a place for the artist’s (and even the audience’s) religious transformation. Three distinctive characteristics—a Prayer, Church, and God—drive the musical drama, presenting various levels of emotional interaction.

Liszt and the Piano Cycle

Among Liszt’s extensive compositions, the piano cycle holds a special place in his oeuvre. A piano cycle, a collection of short pieces, is interrelated through the diverse relationships of musical elements like motives, themes, and keys, which ultimately build musical unity; meanwhile, individual movements maintain their own distinct characteristics. Combination of varied forms in cyclic works shows diverse ways to

⁷ Howard E. Hugo, trans. and ed., *The Letters of Franz Liszt to Marie zu Sayn-Wittgenstein* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1971), 17.

⁸ Charles Rosen, *The Romantic Generation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995), 472-474.

create musical coherence. Due to sheer variety of his cyclic experiments, it is difficult to identify the absolute formulation that explains how to acquire such musical integration within various musical frames.

The coexistence of variety and unity particularly attracted many romantic composers, and the genre flourished in the nineteenth century. Robert Schumann was a leading composer who used this genre as an efficient vehicle to promote his vast musical imagination, using a recurring theme on a surface level and subtly intertwining formation on a deeper level such as referential chords, harmonic progressions, and repetition of motives throughout movements. Schumann's *Carnaval* is a prime example, consisting largely of short masterful dances, which are carefully interrelated by formal organization through recurrence of thematic materials, key relationships, and imaginary figures. Schumann successfully set diverse cyclic elements to knit a narrative through individual pieces in his *Carnaval*.

Franz Schubert also employed cyclic elements to express complex emotional states, and his famous song cycles and piano pieces became significant models for early Romantic musicians. The *Wanderer Fantasy* shows exuberant virtuosity alongside beautiful lyricism without any pause between movements, and Schubert used cyclic elements to create musical coherence throughout four movements, portraying the restless mind of a wanderer. Liszt also produced a number of cyclic works that fulfill his musical aesthetics through thematic transformation across several sections or movements.

Liszt contributed to the genre by composing several piano cycles, particularly three volumes of *Années de pèlerinage* and the *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*. The first two sets of *Années de pèlerinage* relate personal impressions of various subjects

such as nature, literature, and art during Liszt's retreat with Countess Marie d'Agoult. The third volume, published in 1883, is a peculiar set among the series. According to Dolores Pesce, the third set of *Années de pèlerinage* is a particularly exceptional one, as it evokes a Hungarian atmosphere, while his previous books are related to Switzerland and Italy respectively.⁹ It also has been interpreted as religious, in that it reflects Liszt's later life of religious devotion. Liszt's Piano Sonata in B minor is also an important cyclic work in his keyboard repertoire, which shows his technique of thematic transformation in various levels to achieve musical unity; as regards its religiosity, Paul Merrick suggests that the B minor Sonata also relates to Catholicism by the cross motif.¹⁰

Among Liszt's cyclic works for keyboard, the *Harmonies* explicitly shows his innermost conviction and sincere spirituality as inspired by religious poems. This set draws out lesser-known aspects of Liszt's personality, his deep-rooted religious faith, and enthusiasm for literary works. Liszt tried to create musical drama, synthesizing religion and literature, thus the *Harmonies* bears the most challenging and complex quality of his piano cycles as he intended to bind three different worlds into one frame.

Defining the term "cycle" remains controversial among scholars, since each cyclic work creates musical cohesion in a different way. The general perception of a given genre is that "More generally the term 'cyclic' describes those works where thematic links bind more than one movement; it is not properly applied to mere thematic

⁹ Dolores Pesce, "Liszt's 'Années de Pèlerinage,' Book 3: A 'Hungarian' Cycle?" *19th-Century Music*, Vol. 13, No. 3 (Spring, 1990), 208.

¹⁰ Paul Merrick, *Revolution and Religion in the Music of Liszt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 283-295.

resemblances.”¹¹ As the conventional approach has faced its limitation when applied to individual cycles, scholars have suggested more developed methods from the traditional approach to establish general criteria. Peter Kaminsky, developing work by Arthur Komar, divides cyclic practices into three categories: the close similarity of material throughout movements, the ordering of movements by tonal and motivic relationship, and the coherent sequence of keys.¹² Kaminsky’s study also introduces several other studies briefly—for instance, David Neumeyer’s dramatic principles and Patrick McCreless’s cross-reference—and he integrates and expands these methods into his own. According to Kaminsky, cyclic works can attain integrity through what McCreless has dubbed “cross-reference,” in which repetition of motives or harmonic progressions ultimately stitch movements into a large-scale tapestry. David Ferris provides a fresh scope to understand cyclic works by explaining fragmentary and open-ended form as features that imply musical coherence. Furthermore, Ferris claims that these elements eventually stimulate the listener’s imagination to perceive musical flow.¹³

Though no absolute definition of cyclicism exists, for this study, the ideas from these prominent scholars will be applied to my consideration of Liszt’s *Harmonies*. In chapter 3, the *Harmonies* will be analyzed in greater detail with the goal of understanding how Liszt pursued musical unity through relationships of key, thematic material, and harmonic progression. It will ultimately provide various possibilities to interpret this extraordinary work.

¹¹Hugh Macdonald, "Cyclic form," *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root <<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>> (accessed 24 April 2015).

¹² Peter Kaminsky, "Principles of formal Structure in Schumann’s Early Piano Cycles," *Music Theory Spectrum*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (Autumn, 1989): 207.

¹³ David Ferris, *Schumann’s Eichendorff Liederkreis and the Genre of the Romantic Cycle* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 122.

Liszt's *Harmonies* exists as three separate but related works: a single-movement piece (1835), a handful of compositions intended to be parts of a six-movement setting of the *Harmonies* until 1847 and a version of twelve movements (1847) that Albert Brussee has recently reconstructed, and a final published version of ten movements (1853). As the whole process spanned almost twenty years, each phase contains invaluable sources to follow Liszt's compositional transformation. Therefore, tracing its complex genesis is imperative to understand how Liszt developed his compositional technique and changed his musical aesthetics. Though this research will comprise all the versions to observe the composer's musical development, it will mainly focus on the latest version of 1853.

Chapter 2

The *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*: Historical Perspectives

In 1830, Alphonse de Lamartine published a collection of poems, the *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*, which articulates Lamartine's poetic spirituality. Liszt had admired Lamartine's works, and the *Harmonies* particularly captivated the young composer by its appealing presentations of poetic insight into religious faith. Under the influence of Lamartine's philosophical and religious approach, Liszt first published a single-movement piece in 1835, entitled the *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*, in honor of Lamartine. Soon after the first *Harmonies* was published, Liszt planned to expand it into a collection of several pieces. According to his correspondence with Countess Marie d'Agoult on August 25, 1834, Liszt revealed his ambition to turn the *Harmonies* into a large-scale work. Liszt wrote that "Our harmony will be dedicated to Lamartine; I shall first publish it alone, and later I shall write half a dozen."¹⁴ It is evident that Liszt had a specific plan for a series; however, his concert career, changing aesthetics of musico-poetics, and self-doubt meant that the work took nearly two decades to complete. In 1853, Liszt finally published the *Harmonies* as a cycle of ten pieces: *Invocation, Ave Maria, Bénédiction de Dieu dans la solitude, Pensée des morts, Pater noster, Hymne de l'enfant à son réveil, Funérailles, Miserere d'après Palestrina, Andante lagrimoso*, and *Cantique d'amour*.

The ultimate design of Liszt's ten-movement *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses* owes itself to several critical events: Liszt's early retirement from the concert platform in

¹⁴ Serge Gut and Jacqueline Bellas, ed., *Correspondence: Franz Liszt, Marie d'Agoult* (Paris: Fayard, 2001), 79.

1847, which ended his so-called *Glanzzeit*; the initiation of a lifelong relationship with Princess Carolyne zu Sayn-Wittgenstein; his enthusiasm of Alphonse de Lamartine's literary works; and the death of his friends resulting from the Hungarian uprising in 1848. These circumstances deeply impacted Liszt's life and music in various ways, and also prompted him to complete the *Harmonies*, which he had contemplated doing since the second half of the 1830s.

Liszt had a strenuous concert schedule between 1838 and 1848; his extensive journeys took him as far afield as Constantinople, Scotland, St. Petersburg, and the Iberian Peninsula. While his contemporaries, such as Schumann and Chopin, mainly stayed in their nests, Leipzig and Paris, respectively, Liszt incessantly traveled around the world with his voluminous repertoire. His last concert tour resumed in 1846 in Vienna, the city where Liszt's career started. He also performed in his native country, and finally reached Kiev in 1847. Liszt's visit to Constantinople is particularly noteworthy, since the city was considered *terra incognita* for most Europeans at that time.

Liszt's generosity and humanitarian gestures generated constant demands for unexpected concerts.¹⁵ During this time, Liszt appeared in public more than a thousand times, and he performed a wide range of repertoire from Bach to Chopin. Liszt introduced piano recitals in the modern sense, and Walker describes Liszt's achievement as something that "Few pianists today could match."¹⁶ As his legendary fame swept all over Europe, Heinrich Heine coined the term "Lisztomania" to describe the public's hysterical reactions to the pianist. Though Liszt built unparalleled triumphs, his accomplishment was severely criticized and was sometimes satirized by his

¹⁵ Dana Gooley, *The Virtuoso Liszt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 254.

¹⁶ Alan Walker, *Franz Liszt: The Virtuoso Years*, 286.

contemporaries due to his enormous success. Liszt was often portrayed as a pianist who pursued fame but lacked real musicality. Though Liszt highly appreciated Clara Schumann's talent and even dedicated his *Grandes études de Paganini* to her, she was particularly hostile toward Liszt's music. When Liszt dedicated his sonata in B minor to Robert Schumann, Clara denigrated the piece, describing it as a blind noise.¹⁷

Liszt's successful career brought constant stresses of concerts and travels, and it caused him considerable physical fatigue. Considering the poor condition of travels and the arduous schedule of concerts, it was only a matter of time before success completely exhausted Liszt. He eventually considered early retirement with a sincere commitment to composition instead. It was a wise decision to save his artistic energy at the height of his career.¹⁸ He was only thirty-five years old when he officially gave up his legendary career to compose serious music. After his last concert in Elisabethgrad, Russia (today: Kirovohrad, Lithuania) in 1847, he enjoyed his sojourn at the chateau in Woronince, one of Princess Wittgenstein's estates, where he could catch his breath before taking a huge step. With unconditional support from Princess Wittgenstein, he began to concentrate on composition at Woronince, resulting in the completion of individual pieces of the *Harmonies*.

As much as Liszt was a versatile artist whose interests ranged over various subjects, Princess Wittgenstein was also an exceptional intellect, a brilliant conversationalist, a strong businesswoman, and a sincere Roman Catholic. She spent much of her childhood in her father's library, and her extensive reading enabled her to

¹⁷ Nancy B. Reich, *Clara Schumann: The Artist and the Woman*, rev. ed. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001), 201.

¹⁸ Walker, *Franz Liszt: The Virtuoso Years*, 442.

have an eclectic taste. Her unfortunate marriage with Prince Nicholas von Sayn-Wittgenstein soon brought their permanent separation; she subsequently isolated herself socially, indulging in reading instead. Yet she was strong and independent enough to manage her vast estates and serfs with absolute control.

Liszt met the Princess during his concert tour in Kiev in 1847, where she had business meetings at that time. After attending Liszt's recital, she wanted to make an anonymous donation as a gesture of admiration, but Liszt insisted on seeing her to express his gratitude for her generosity. They were instantly attracted to each other and soon started a relationship that lasted until his death in 1886. After concerts in Kiev, the Princess invited Liszt to stay at her chateau at Woronince for ten days. It is known that Woronince is where Liszt finally decided on his retirement and planned to pursue his compositional career, and the Princess was the one who encouraged Liszt to change his career path completely, which ultimately led him to the golden age of his composition. After Liszt's last public recital in Elizabethgrad in September 1847, he returned to Woronince, planning his new future. Liszt was finally able to concentrate on composition, and he decided to resume his overdue *Harmonies*. At Woronince, Liszt completed the *Invocation*, the *Bénédiction de Dieu dans la solitude*, and the *Cantique d'amour*. As Liszt gained confidence about his new direction, he decided to move to Weimar, the city of Goethe and Schiller, as Kapellmeister to the court of Grand Duke Carl Alexander of Sachsen-Weimar, thus accepting a long-standing invitation from Grand Duchess Maria Pavlovna of Russia. Liszt first left, and then Princess Wittgenstein followed him with her only daughter, Marie, to Weimar, sacrificing her fortune and social status for Liszt.

Princess Wittgenstein genuinely appreciated Liszt's works and urged him to pursue his career as a composer. She not only encouraged him to pursue this new direction, but also brought him back to the Catholic faith, which became an inseparable link between them.¹⁹ Though she may have lived an unorthodox existence, she devoted herself to Catholicism throughout her lifetime. She later left extensive essays on church issues during her stay in Rome, and she even privately published a massive, multi-volume critique, *Des causes intérieures de la faiblesse extérieure de l'Église*, which was banned by the Vatican. Her intelligence and genuine belief in Liszt's capability for composition convinced Liszt to open a new chapter in his life and music, and their communion with religion made a strong tie for this union. In 1853, Liszt dedicated his final version of the *Harmonies* to the Princess.

Another influential figure that made an important contribution to the *Harmonies* is Alphonse de Lamartine, a leading French writer and a prominent politician during the first half of the nineteenth century. Lamartine secured his reputation during the disorderly political circumstances in France, and his contemporaries severely condemned him for his moderation, depicting him as an opportunist. Lamartine was tied to Catholicism throughout his life, and his religious poems brought him an immediate success. Though he had a successful career as a prominent statesman-poet at that time, most of his celebrated works completely fell into oblivion after his death, and only a few poems outlived him. Though his religious beliefs are difficult to define, as Andrew Haringer points out, Lamartine was inclined to stress a universal view of God similar to Liszt's.²⁰

¹⁹ Sacheverell Sitwell, *Liszt* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1967), 144.

²⁰ Haringer, "Liszt as Prophet: Religion, Politics, and Artists in 1830s Paris" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 2012), 118.

Haringer brings another intriguing parallel between Liszt and Lamartine in terms of the complex nature of their legacy, since both of them received ambivalent opinions from their contemporaries and remain controversial to this day.²¹ Lamartine's poetic sense of spirituality appealed to individuals, which brought him great fame, and Liszt highly praised Lamartine's approach and applied the same character to his music.

In 1830, Lamartine published the *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*, which had been written for four years in various places in France and Italy. His preoccupation with God is evident in the *Harmonies*, and Lamartine considered the title of the work to be "Modern Psalms" or "Sacred Harmonies."²² He articulates his religious preoccupation by unveiling the divine presence in all forms of creation, which truly inspired the young Liszt.

Liszt, who was introspective and religious during adolescence, indulged himself in diverse literature, and the religious poetry of Lamartine was one of his favorites. Liszt's personal acquaintance with Lamartine was observed in his correspondence with Marie d'Agoult,²³ and Liszt revealed his admiration for the poet's ability to create spontaneity in a religious mode. Liszt particularly chose Lamartine's *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses* as inspiration for his first serious composition to present his musical originality and creativity. Lamartine's approach to combining art and religion attracted the young Liszt, as he searched for a way to realize his strong desire to integrate music with literature and religion.²⁴ In particular, Liszt greatly valued the poet's ability to

²¹ Haringer, 110-112.

²² Ibid., 135.

²³ Marion Bauer, "The Literary Liszt," *The Musical Quarterly* Vol. 22, No. 3 (July 1936): 300.

²⁴ Haringer, 136.

create meditative lyricism. Though Liszt clearly had sincere affection toward Lamartine, Liszt also saw Lamartine's moderation as a serious shortcoming of his poetic works. This is probably the reason why Liszt gradually limited Lamartine's influence, and infused more of his own artistic touches to later versions of the *Harmonies* piano cycle.

In 1848, Europe was overcome with growing apprehension by a series of revolutionary events, which were first triggered in France and then shifted to Vienna, and it finally inspired Hungary's yearning for independence. However, Hungary's attempt to gain independence from the Austro-Hungarian Empire was brutally crushed. Many of Hungary's leading intellectuals and political figures with whom Liszt was closely acquainted died or were forced into exile. Though Liszt was not directly involved in the revolution, he had sincere concerns about the political issues in his mother country. In 1838, Liszt first revealed his patriotism by giving many charity concerts and a huge donation for the Hungarian victims of the Danube floods. Hungarians praised his humanitarian gesture, considering him as a Magyar hero, and Liszt's return to his native land in the following year generated tremendous enthusiasm. The culmination of this visit was the bestowing of the "Sword of Honour," where Liszt was treated as a national hero who engendered the national spirit, and Liszt made a moving speech, supporting freedom for Hungary. During Liszt's tour of Hungary in 1847, prominent political figures accompanied Liszt, such as Count László Teleki, who was a deputy of the Diet during Hungarian revolution. Though Liszt had supported the idea of revolutionary actions to further human rights, he did not agree that these actions should include violence. Rather Liszt defended a peaceful way to regain political power from the Habsburgs, as Lajos Beththyány, the prime minister of Hungary, pursued. He did not address his opinion in

public; therefore, he was later accused of apathy in regard to the Hungarian uprising. However, Hungary's loss devastated Liszt, and he paid tribute to his fallen friends and kinsfolk with an elegy of mournful magnificence—the *Funérailles: October 1849*, the seventh movement in his *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses* (1853). As Merrick states, Liszt did not deliver a fervent hymn to liberty, but a monument to the Hungarian nationalists who died in the failed uprising.²⁵

²⁵ Merrick, *Revolution and Religion in the Music of Liszt*, 32.

Chapter 3

The *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*: Modes of Analysis

Lamartine's Poetic style in the *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*

Lamartine inherited his religious faith from his mother, a devout Catholic, and religion was inseparable from his works. He attended a school at Belley, which was operated by Jesuits, and this was where he nurtured his intellectual and literary capacity alongside a Catholic faith. Though he kept his religious roots during his lifetime, he gradually deviated from the traditional Catholicism with growing skepticism, rather leaning toward a more universal view of God and religion.²⁶ The religious atmosphere prevails throughout his works, and his reflective tone brings in various emotional states to contemplate the divine, ultimately realizing the transcendence of God. His meditative tone is particularly appealing, inspiring individuals to have their own divine moment. It also blends with Romanticism, carrying a passionate spirit and an ambiguous poetic imagery. Lamartine's most celebrated work, the *Méditations poétiques*, published in 1820, instantly brought him enormous success, and delivers religious sentiments with great sensibilities in the tradition of French Classicism.

Ten years later, his relationship to God was expressed more clearly through a new collection of religious poems, the *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*. The *Harmonies* consists of four books, each of which includes eleven and thirteen poems alternatively. The title of the collection was first intended to be "Modern Psalms" or "Sacred Harmonies," and Lamartine carefully set individual titles of the cycle to reveal poetic musicality alongside the religious theme. The word "hymn" appears frequently in the

²⁶ Haringer, 118.

Harmonies, as he claimed in his preface to the 1849 edition: “Life is a hymn in which every soul is a voice.”²⁷ This statement indicates that the poet emphasized the musical aspect of life; indeed, musicality is an intrinsic quality of his work. Lamartine’s *Harmonies* delineates diversity in the unity of nature and the life of the human spirit, which essentially connects to God. Lamartine’s verses are also exceptionally musical, for example, the first poem, “Invocation,” carries full musicality and vitality in words:

But above all it is your name, O King of nature,
Which causes this divine instrument to vibrate in me;
When I invoke this name, my heart filled with murmuring resounds
Like a temple where people sing endlessly.²⁸

The dramatic intensity of the *Harmonies* reaches its culmination at the end of the third book. According to Haringer, the cycle builds up the poetic musicality as it progresses, and the “Cantate pour les enfants d’une maison de charité,” the poem from the third book, is an example that shows how Lamartine shaped it as a short musical drama with recitative, soloists, and chorus.²⁹ As Lamartine plots the poems with increased musicality, the nature of the narrative gets stronger and more persuasive, which enables Liszt to construct a musical drama through them. Liszt incorporated several quotations from Lamartine’s *Harmonies* into his *Harmonies* in order to deliver his intention effectively. The musical nature of Lamartine’s *Harmonies* was idiosyncratic, which captured Liszt’s attention along with the poet’s philosophical and religious approaches.

²⁷ Haringer, 135.

²⁸ Charles M. Lombard, *Lamartine* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1973), 34.

²⁹ Haringer, 136.

As Lamartine's musical poetry strongly attracted the young Liszt, Liszt also had an affinity with Lamartine as they shared similar perspectives on religion, art, and politics. Lamartine believed in the value of religious belief to humanity, and this affirmation was what he tried to voice through his works.³⁰ Likewise, Liszt believed art to be a reflection of humanity, and he fulfilled his belief by giving numerous benefit concerts and producing many religious-related works throughout his life.

Since the romanticized form of religious faith in poetry was popular in the nineteenth century, Lamartine synthesized art forms and religion in his *Harmonies*, and Liszt highly appreciated Lamartine's literary method and works.³¹ The structure of Lamartine's poetry followed the tradition of French classicism, but he applied more flexibility to the traditional frame, amplifying the delicate spirit of Romanticism. Robert Denommé appreciates Lamartine's balance of tradition and innovation, considering his tone equally as an advocate of change and a defender of traditionalism.³² Liszt held Lamartine's ability to accommodate accessibility with originality in high regard, while others criticized Lamartine's moderation, condemning a lack of poetic depth in Lamartine's works. In the *Lettres d'un bachelier ès musique*, Liszt assessed Lamartine's approach, describing, "Lamartine had the gift of seizing the exact point of permissible innovation."³³ Lamartine's formal freedom in his poetry equates to Liszt's facility for improvisation; therefore, it is not unusual that Liszt particularly selected Lamartine's work to demonstrate his artistic conception.

³⁰ Haringer, 121

³¹ *Ibid.*, 136.

³² Robert Denommé, *Nineteenth-Century French Romantic Poets* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1969), 42.

³³ Bauer, 301.

Genesis of Liszt's *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*

The *Harmonies* has an exceptionally complex history of compositional evolution. Scholars have researched existing sketches mainly from the N5 and N9 sketchbooks in the Weimar Archive to trace Liszt's compositional progress, and their scholarly effort provides a valuable insight into Liszt's craftsmanship as a composer. However, Liszt's *modus operandi* raises a problem. It is extremely difficult to arrange all of his sketches precisely in chronological order, as the composer often left pieces either incomplete or with no indication about the dates. Moreover, Liszt worked on several pieces simultaneously, and he also frequently revisited his old works, incorporating old materials with new ideas or completely discarding them. Finally, the twenty-year gestation period of the *Harmonies* magnifies these problems considerably.

Albert Brussee's publication of earlier versions of the *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses* and Rena Charnin Mueller's dissertation, "Liszt's 'Tasso' Sketchbook," trace a thread of the cycle's complex genesis and its evolution.³⁴ Brussee scrutinizes the earlier versions of the *Harmonies*, and proposes the reconstruction version, a set of twelve movements as a second phase between a single-movement work and a final version of ten movements. Liszt's sketches show that the *Harmonies* underwent significant revision as his approach changed, and his final production is considerably different from the preceding works. Mueller investigates Liszt's sketchbook, and analyzes how the *Harmonies* evolves as a reflection of Liszt's musical intentions. More recently, the excellent preface by Adrienne Kaczmarczyk to the New Liszt Edition of the *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses* not only sums up the current state of scholarship on the

³⁴ Rena Charnin Mueller, "Liszt 'Tasso' Sketchbook: Studies in Sources and Revisions" (Ph.D. Diss., New York University, 1986), 251-277.

Harmonies, but also provides useful information about the work's genesis, with particular emphasis on Liszt's numerous attempts during the 1840s and early 1850s to fashion the work into a cohesive cycle. Tish Anne Kilgore's recent study on the *Bénédiction de Dieu dans la solitude* summarizes the previous studies of the set's compositional evolution, introducing Leslie Howard's and Michael Short's approach along with Brussee's reconstruction, to reorganize the complex history of the cycle. Though Mueller and Brussee both agree that the *Harmonies* has three different phases, they show slightly different ways of periodization: Mueller categorizes three periods as 1834-1835, 1840-1848, and 1848-1853, whereas Brussee divides them into 1834-1846, 1847/1848, and 1852/1853. We shall concur with the three-phase development of the *Harmonies*, based on the current studies, but the middle period will be separated into two subdivisions: the initial period (1833-1835), the middle period (1840-1846 and 1847-1848), and the final period (1849-1853).

The Initial Period: *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*, a single piece

Liszt published his first *Harmonies* in 1835, which is a remarkable single-movement with no stable tonality or meter. This quasi-atonal work prognosticates Liszt's late compositional style, which is full of musical experiments. However, the piece was deemed too ahead of its time, as the public found the work bizarre and disturbing. The first draft of the *Harmonies*, probably begun in May 1833, has lines from Schiller, which expresses disillusionment and an exhaustion of feelings, which Liszt replaced with another quotation from François-René de Chateaubriand: "avec un profond sentiment

d'ennui" (with a profound feeling of boredom).³⁵ Liszt frequently read Chateaubriand's *Génie du christianisme*, sharing the common opinion about the current situation of religious apathy and disrespect for universal values. Therefore, the quotation from Chateaubriand concisely delivers Liszt's aim to portray his emotional weariness. As Liszt developed his relationship with the Countess Marie d'Agoult at this time, his personal suffering, such as a strong yearning and deep frustration with unfulfilled love, shaped the piece as well. Two contrasting characters of the religious state and emotional exhaustion dominate the first *Harmonies*. While the absence of tonality and meter delineates the disillusionment to which Chateaubriand referred, the serenity of the middle section, *Andante religioso*, is faithful to its title from Lamartine's. This daring piece was later reincarnated as the fourth movement, the *Pensée des morts*, of the final version in a more conventional form with a more stable poetic model ("De profundis").

The Middle Period: *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*, the first cycle

Before the first *Harmonies* was issued, Liszt already revealed his intention to expand the *Harmonies* into a work of about a half-dozen movements. He indeed began to work on the cycle, jotting down several ideas, which were later transformed to the *Hymne du matin*, the *Ave Maria*, and the *Hymne de la nuit*. He stated his plan to publish the cycle once more in a letter to Pierre Wolff dated December 2, 1840.³⁶ However, the plan soon came to a halt, while he was mostly occupied with his concert schedule, and he also felt in need of stylistic change.

³⁵ Adrienne Kaczmarczyk, preface to the New Liszt Edition of the *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses: Earlier versions (suppl. 6)*, trans. Lorna Dunbar (Budapest: Editio Musica, 2009), xxviii.

³⁶ Kaczmarczyk, preface to the New Liszt Edition of the *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*, xxxi.

Accurate dates for the second period are not firmly established. Even though Liszt stuck to his plan, publication did not take place as he had hoped. Liszt set the inventory of movements for a cycle, although the composer constantly revised it. It seems that Liszt made slow progress during the middle period, but copious sketches prove that Liszt had numerous ideas for the cycle. Therefore, the long middle period can be divided into two subdivisions as 1840-1846 and 1847-1848.

Liszt's early attempts can be found in several different sources from the Goethe und Schiller-Archiv, yet most of early pieces were not incorporated into the final version or were simply left unfinished. Only two pieces became an integral part of the final cycle after a drastic revision: the *Prière d'un enfant à son réveil*, written in 1840 in Fontainebleau, and the *Prélude*, composed in 1845. The N8 sketchbook, so-called the Lichnowsky sketchbook, contains several valuable materials of the *Harmonies*, including the sketches that later became the *Hymne de matin* and the *Litanies de Marie*. It also shows that Liszt compiled six pieces for the inventory of the *Harmonies*. Kaczmarczyk speculates that the missing first piece might be the *Prélude*, which was the successor to the first *Harmonies*, and she further suggests that these pieces are the compilation of “roughly half a dozen” that Liszt mentioned before.³⁷

Another important source for the *Harmonies* is the N5 sketchbook, known as the Tasso sketchbook that Liszt used between 1845 and 1848. This document provides the inventory of eleven movements associated with the *Harmonies*. They correspond as follows:

³⁷ Kaczmarczyk, preface to the New Liszt Edition of the *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*, xxxii.

Table 1. The Inventory on p.22 and the Corresponding Works in N5.³⁸

1. – (missing)	1. <i>Prélude (~Harmonies, piano piece)</i>
2. <i>Mi b</i>	2. <i>Prélude</i>
3. <i>ut mi [neur]</i>	3. <i>C minor piano piece</i>
4. <i>Elegie Pr: de Prusse</i>	4. <i>Élégie sur des motifs du Prince Louis Ferdinand</i>
5. <i>Marche de P.</i>	5. <i>C# minor march ded. to Prozinsky</i>
6. <i>M. K.</i>	6. <i>Piece for Marie Kalergis</i>
7. <i>Chopin</i>	7. unidentified work
8. <i>re b</i>	8. <i>Denière illusion</i>
9. <i>Prière d'un enfant</i>	9. <i>Prière d'un enfant à son réveil</i>
10. – <i>sol b</i>	10. <i>G flat major piano piece</i>
11. <i>(2de Sonn. fa#)''</i>	11. <i>Petrarch sonnet No.47 (Benedetto)</i>

Each item from the inventory corresponds with pieces in the N5 sketchbook, except the missing first piece. As seen in the Lichnowsky sketchbook, the beginning piece may be the same *Prélude*, the successor of the first *Harmonies*, as Kaczmarczyk suggests, while another *Prélude* in the following movement could be an early sketch of the *Bénédiction*. After two *Préludes*, Liszt put three literary quotations from the works that probably nurtured Liszt's imagination at that time: *Le Livre du peuple* and *Une voix de prison* by Lamennais, and *Leier und Schwert* by Theodor Körner. It is thought that a quotation from Körner's poem *Bei der Musik des Prinzen Louis Ferdinand* on p.4 in the N5 sketchbook is a source of inspiration for the C minor piano piece, and Liszt produced this dramatic work, which demonstrates an intense final moment of the Prince's heroic death. The next piece is also connected to Louis Ferdinand, which shows another side of the Prince, a gifted musician and composer. When Liszt received the published compositions by Prince Ferdinand after his performance of the *Quatuor*, another of Ferdinand's works, Liszt composed the *Élégie* in return, using the opening theme of the

³⁸ Kaczmarczyk, preface to the New Liszt Edition of the *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*, xxxiii.

Quatuor. The *Marche de P* relates to the untitled draft of a march in C-sharp with the name of Colonel Prozinsky, and the *M.K.* is likely the initials of Chopin's pupil, Marie Moukhanoff. Though it is impossible to know what Liszt meant to do with the *Chopin*, the conjecture for the initials can be drawn by the proximity of the entries in the inventory.³⁹ For the *G-flat major piano piece*, there is a difference of opinion between the New Liszt edition and the Brussee edition, because Liszt inserted it in the middle section of the *Dernière illusion*. While Kaczmarczyk identifies it as an independent number as stated in the inventory, Brussee considers it as a part of the *Dernière illusion*. The last piece in F-sharp from the inventory was not included in the *Harmonies*, but it was later developed into the *Petrarch sonnet No. 47*. Mueller suggests that Liszt may have thought of another version of the Petrarch sonnet that had no place among three sonnets.⁴⁰

By the summer of 1846, Liszt was no longer interested in his setting of the *Harmonies*, and he decided to create a new version for the cycle instead. Liszt finally resumed composing a large number of pieces when he stayed in Woronince with Princess Wittgenstein between October 1847 and January 1848. Kaczmarczyk notes that this version of the *Harmonies* is more closely tied to Lamartine's poem, and individual movements carry the verses from the *Harmonies* or prayers in Latin, which well correspond to the title of the cycle.⁴¹ Liszt could speed up the progress because of the Princess's unconditional support; moreover, her literary interest and religious belief influenced the characteristic change to the *Harmonies*. After Liszt cut out significant

³⁹ Mueller, Tasso, 263.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 260.

⁴¹ Kaczmarczyk, preface to the New Liszt Edition of the *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*, xxxviii.

amounts of his *Harmonies poétiques* sketchbook (N9), only eleven pieces survived without any designation of ordering: the *Invocation*, the *Hymne de la nuit*, the *Hymne du matin*, the *Litanies de Marie*, the *Miserere von Palästrina*, the *Pater noster d'après la psalmodie de l'Église*, the *Hymne de l'enfant à son réveil*, the fragmentary and untitled piece that inspired the cycle, the *La Lampe du temple ou L'Âme présente à Dieu*, the *E-flat major piano piece*, and another *E-flat major piano piece*.

The first entry, the *Invocation*, is a newly composed work with a quotation from Lamartine's *Harmonies*, and the following pieces, the *Hymne de la nuit* and the *Hymne du matin*, stem from the earlier sources dating from 1832-1833. The *Litanies de Marie* is related to two previous pieces, one composed in 1844 and the other that only has a theme in the N8 sketchbook. The *Litanies de Marie* is a particularly notable piece, which shows Liszt's early use of the crux motif that became a major component in several of Liszt's later pieces. Though it is a large-scale work, Liszt would exclude it from the final version. It is possible to presume that the similarity between the opening theme of the *Invocation* and the main theme of the *Litanies de Marie* would be the cause of removal.⁴² The *Miserere von Palästrina* is an arrangement of a four-part setting of Psalm 50(51) that Liszt copied into his Tasso sketchbook. Another liturgical arrangement is the *Pater noster*, which was written on the back of the *Miserere* draft; it is a transcription of a version for male choir and organ, published in 1846.⁴³ The *Hymne de l'enfant à son réveil* appears in all versions, coming from the *Prière d'un enfant à son réveil*, and it is now combined with new materials, remaining almost identical with the final version.

⁴² Brussee, introduction to the *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses* (1847 version), xiv.

⁴³ Kaczmarczyk, preface to the New Liszt Edition of the *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*, xxxiv.

While the tenth movement in E-flat major was left incomplete and fragmentary, another E-flat major piano piece can be linked to the *Prélude* from the Tasso sketchbook and the *Bénédiction* from the final cycle. At the end of the E-flat major piano piece, there is *Laus Deo* (Praise to God), which suggests that the former prelude may have served as a postlude for this version. Liszt intended to publish a cycle of twelve movements, however, there is no information left as to the exact order of compositions for this cycle. Kaczmarczyk proposes that the *Ave Maria*, a transcription of mixed choir with *ad libitum* organ accompaniment, along with another transcription *La Charité* from Gioachino Rossini's choral work can fulfill the twelve-movement cycle alongside ten movements from the N9 sketchbook, excluding the unfinished E-flat major piano piece.⁴⁴

Brussee argues for an initial period that ran from 1834 to 1846, proposing that Liszt completed nine pieces by then, as mentioned in the correspondence with the Countess Marie.⁴⁵ The initial period, in which the work did not cohere formally, appears to be the longest in Brussee's edition:

Table 2.1. The *Harmonies* in the First Period (1834-1846) by Brussee.

1. *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses* (1834)
2. *Hymne de l'enfant à son réveil* (first version)
3. *Prélude*
4. *Langueur*
5. *Bei der Musik des Prinzen L. F.*
6. *Dernière Illusion*
7. *Attente*
8. *M. K.*
9. *Litanies de Marie*

⁴⁴ Kaczmarczyk, preface to the New Liszt Edition of the *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*, xxxxi.

⁴⁵ Brussee, introduction to the *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses* (1834-1846), ed. Albert Brussee (Huizen, Holland: B.V. Muziekuitgeverij XYZ, 2001), x.

Brussee set nine compositions mainly from the N5 sketchbook, which draws several intriguing differences from the New Liszt Edition. The fourth piece, the *Langueur*, is the third piece from the list in the N5 sketchbook, which is described as the *C minor piano piece* in the New Liszt Edition. The titles differ, because it is enclosed in brackets with a question mark, which Kaczmarczyk considers that the title is illegible. The next movement, *Bei der Musik des Prinzen L. F.*, comes from a draft of the *E major piano piece* in the N5 sketchbook, which is not included in the inventory on p. 22 of the N5. While the *Dernière illusion* had been revised constantly, Liszt put the *G-flat major piano piece* between the middle sections of it. Brussee sees the *G-flat major piano piece* as a continuation of the unfinished work and thus merges it into the *Dernière illusion*, while Kaczmarczyk interprets them as separate pieces. The *Attente* and the *M. K.* appear in the inventory of the N5, but they were left unfinished. Brussee makes an effort to round out those pieces by introducing his own completions.

Brussee's middle period comprises twelve movements from the N9 sketchbook, that is, between late 1847 and early 1848 during Liszt's sojourn at Woronince.

Table 2.2. The *Harmonies* in the Middle Period (1847/1848) by Brussee.

1. *[Invocation]*
2. *Hymne de la nuit*
3. *Hymne du matin*
4. *Litanies de Marie*
5. *[Miserere d'après Palestrina]*
6. *Pater noster, d'après la Psalmodie de l'Église*
7. *Hymne de l'enfant à son réveil*
8. *[Pensée des morts]*
9. *La Lampe du Temple*
10. *[Encore un hymne]*
11. *Bénédiction de Dieu dans la solitude*
12. *[Postlude]*

He suggests that Liszt intended a twelve-piece series of poetic-religious character, and he reconstructs them as Liszt's first cycle, which shares a common motif.⁴⁶ He claims that this motif is derived from the first *Harmonies*, and it bounds pieces into the entity through the recurrence of three descending notes and their inversion. The *Prélude* from the first phase is now transformed to the Postlude for the 1847/1848 cycle, and the *Bénédiction* appears in the cycle as well.

The Final Period: *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*, the final version

Liszt changed his concept again from the twelve-movement into a six-movement cycle by the end of 1850, when he notified Joachim Raff that he was preparing to publish a new version of the *Harmonies*.⁴⁷ Mueller notes that the inventory for the set is found on the piano paper used by Liszt and his copyists during the Weimar years.⁴⁸

Table 3.1. The List of Compositions for the Six-movement Cycle.

1. *Élevez-vous de mon âme*
2. *Ave Maria*
3. *Bénédiction de Dieu dans la solitude*
4. *Les morts*
5. *Pater noster*
6. *Prière de l'enfant à son réveil*

In 1851, Liszt composed another two movements, the *Miserere* and the *Andante lagrimoso*, and he also finished the *Funérailles* and the *Cantique d'amour*. The latter two pieces changed the nature of the cycle. The *Funérailles*, which was specifically

⁴⁶ Brussee, introduction to the *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses* (1847 version), vii-x.

⁴⁷ Kaczmarczyk, preface to the New Liszt Edition of the *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*, xxxxi.

⁴⁸ Mueller, *Tasso*, 271.

influenced by the Hungarian uprising in 1849, and the *Cantique d'amour*, written for the Princess, infuses the cycle with autobiographical elements.⁴⁹ This material contributes to a new interpretation of the *Harmonies* as a music drama. Liszt began the *Harmonies* in the context of a heated relationship with Marie in the 1830s, and he completed it with the full support of Princess Wittgenstein. The *Harmonies* were thus bookended by two remarkable women who shared Liszt's literary interest and religious belief. The final version of the *Harmonies*, a ten-movement cycle, was published in 1853 by Kistner in Leipzig, and it was dedicated to Princess Wittgenstein.

Table 3.2. The *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*, the Final 1853 Version.

1. *Invocation*
2. *Ave Maria*
3. *Bénédiction de Dieu dans la solitude*
4. *Pensée des morts*
5. *Pater noster*
6. *Hymne de l'enfant à son réveil*
7. *Funérailles*
8. *Miserere d'après Palestrina*
9. *Andante lagrimoso*
10. *Cantique d'amour*

Analysis of the *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses* (1853)

The final version of the *Harmonies* (1853) comprises ten movements. Given its protracted compositional history, the *Harmonies* exhibits a range of styles, stimuli, and techniques. Thus, this section considers the work's programmatic features, harmonic language, and motivic relationships. These features help explain how Liszt created a music drama that binds the *Harmonies* as a whole.

⁴⁹ Kaczmarczyk, preface to the New Liszt Edition of the *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*, xxxxi.

1. Invocation

The *Invocation* in E major opens the cycle, and its fervent tone from the beginning creates immediately an intense call for God. Liszt put two stanzas from Lamartine's poem of the same title, which describes the elevation of the soul to reach the place where God is revealed. In particular, the opening word, *Élevez-vous* (Rise), serves as a motto with ascending three notes, not only for this movement but also for the entire cycle.

Example 1.1. Liszt, *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*, S. 173, *Invocation*, mm. 5-7.

The image shows a musical score for the beginning of the *Invocation* by Liszt, measures 5-7. The score is in E major (three sharps) and 4/4 time. It features a piano accompaniment with a treble and bass clef. The treble clef part starts with a melodic line: C#4, E4, F#4, with accents and a fermata over the E4. The bass clef part has a complex accompaniment with chords and a bass line. The lyrics 'scen - do' are written under the first measure. There are various musical markings such as accents, slurs, and a fermata. A small asterisk is at the end of the score.

This three-note motive, C#-E-F#, is similar to the crux motif, which consists of two intervals, a major second and a minor third. The crux motif is considered to be Liszt's trademark,⁵⁰ and it also appears in the *Harmonies* as varied forms through thematic transformation. Besides the opening theme, other thematic materials are also related to the crux motif in some way, such as the second theme at mm. 22-27 and the third theme at mm. 52-55.

Several thematic materials of the *Invocation* point to later pieces of the cycle. The descending motive (C-Bb-A) from the second theme can be considered as an implication of the *Pensée des morts*, which contains the same descending motive throughout the

⁵⁰ Kaczmarczyk, preface to the New Liszt Edition of the *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*, xxxviii.

piece. Kilgore further claims that the opening theme and the third theme of the *Invocation* show a similarity with the *Bénédiction* theme.⁵¹

Example 1.2. Liszt, *Invocation*, mm. 56-59.



Example 1.3. Liszt, *Bénédiction*, mm. 1-4.



The *Invocation* instantly grabs attention, creating overwhelming intensity by repeated chords, consecutive octaves, and dynamic contrast. This severity is interrupted by a sudden serenity in B major at m. 68, and Liszt gradually builds up tension out of this short-lived tranquility, putting the tritone F and B in the bass. The augmented fourth, so-called “diabolus in musica,”⁵² had been once considered as an unpleasant interval for church music, but Liszt used it as an expressive means to depict a desperate prayer to God. They remain for twenty long measures until they reach F-sharp major at m.113. The chromatic moves depict restlessness that escalate the dramatic tension: for example, the

⁵¹ Kilgore, 33.

⁵² Arnold Whittall, “Tritone,” *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root <<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>> (Accessed 25 April 2015).

cadenza starting at m. 155 takes up with chromatic steps with *molto crescendo*, making a grand return of the third theme with *ff* at m. 164. Once more, F and B appear on the downbeat of each measure, and they create the most dramatic moment of the piece as they are combined chromatically. The expansive register also contributes to the movement's overall dramatic effect. Kilgore interestingly remarks that the final cadence at mm. 200-203 reveals the keys for last three pieces of the cycle, E-g#-E.⁵³

2. *Ave Maria*

The second movement is a transcription of Liszt's own work for chorus and organ, and it creates a tranquil and elevated mood that is completely different from the previous piece. *Ave Maria* has three sections, and it comes with the three-part prayer in Latin text, which can be seen as an allusion of the Holy Trinity. This piece particularly evokes a mystical atmosphere with chant-like melodies in a simple texture. The rhythm of the opening motive imitates the verbal rhythm of the text, "Ave Maria" with a half note, two crochets, and two half notes. This also evokes the sound of church bells or antiphonal delivery of a chorale piece.

Example 2.1. Liszt, *Ave Maria*, mm. 1-6.

The musical score for Liszt's *Ave Maria*, measures 1-6, is presented in a grand staff. The tempo is marked *Moderato*. The music is in C major and 3/4 time. The dynamic is *pp* (pianissimo). The instruction *una corda* is written below the bass staff. The score shows a series of chords in the right hand and a simple accompaniment in the left hand. A fermata is placed over the final chord in measure 6.

⁵³ Kilgore, 34.

The tonality is uncertain during the 16-measure introduction, and it finally settles in B-flat major tonic chord at m. 18. The Latin text comes in with the bass line at m. 33, which contrasts texturally with the following chordal passages at m. 36, as soloist and choir.

Example 2.2. Liszt, *Ave Maria*, mm. 33-38.

The piece modulates from B-flat to several key areas, such as G major, C major, and A-flat major, before settling in D major at m. 54 with the text “Jesus.” Liszt put IV-V, an archaic cadence that seems to be his adaptation of the classic Phrygian cadence, when “Jesus” and “Dei (God)” are referenced in the text at m. 56 and m. 73. The opening motive comes back at m. 62, and shifts to B minor at m. 65. B minor is the semitone from the main key, B-flat major, and this relationship is also found at mm. 120-125 with the harmonic progression of the Bm-VI/Bm-vi/Bb-IV-I. The *Ave Maria* motive repeats at m. 82, moving to E-flat minor, and Liszt paints the Latin text “peccatoribus (sinners)” with chromatic descending lines at mm. 87-92 before going back to B-flat major at m. 103. There is a prime example of the mediant relationship at the final cadence, I-vi-I-iii-I.

Example 2.3. Liszt, *Ave Maria*, mm. 134-137.



The last four notes of the piece are particularly noteworthy, since they are identical with the opening notes of the next movement.

3. *Bénédiction de Dieu dans la solitude*

The *Bénédiction* is the longest and the most acclaimed piece of the cycle, arguably Liszt's *magnum opus*. As Lamartine's verse addresses the overwhelming joy that comes from renewed faith and peace, Liszt creates great tranquility and approaches the sublime. Lamartine's poetic expression of the overflowing joy is represented by the water-like flowing accompaniment, which is widespread in the *Bénédiction*, alongside long-phrased melodies. There are several works in which Liszt employed this accompaniment to create water imagery, such as *Les jeux d'eau à la Villa d'Este* from the *Années de pèlerinage*, and Liszt extensively used the accompaniment in the *Bénédiction* to express the ecstatic moment.

Musical continuity is attained directly through the common melodic and rhythmic material between the end of the *Ave Maria* and the opening of the *Bénédiction*.

Example 3.1. Liszt, *Ave Maria*, mm. 138-141.

Example 3.2. Liszt, *Bénédiction*, mm. 1-2.

The piece begins in F-sharp major, and the following sections appear in D major and B-flat major, respectively. Although often described as ABA form, there has been a longstanding controversy over the details of its structure. It is a seemingly rondo form, as the opening part comes back twice throughout the piece; however, it is difficult to define clear-cut divisions. The first section in F-sharp major covers a large proportion, taking 178 measures till the next section comes in D major, a feature which compels Ben Arnold to suggest breaking the first section into the three sections by setting m.43 as section B and m.86 as A'. He explains that the formal structure of the *Harmonies* can be seen as a rondo or sonata-rondo with coda (ABA'CDA" coda), if we consider the middle parts C and D as development sections.⁵⁴

Kilgore's analysis of the *Bénédiction* proposes a three-part structure with coda, but she provides a different viewpoint on its large-scale form. She divides the piece into

⁵⁴ Ben Arnold, "Piano Music: 1835-1861," in *The Liszt Companion*, ed. Ben Arnold (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002), 91-92.

six subdivisions (AABCAACB) by key area, and claims that there is a tonal symmetry from the section B to coda that shows the keys in reverse order.⁵⁵ For another structural symmetry, she explains that the *Harmonies* consists of three parts: an introduction up to m. 85, the middle with two episodes, and a final coda, starting at m. 330.⁵⁶ The introductory section recurs twice at mm. 86-178 and mm. 253-329, termed two episodes, and two other sections in D major and B-flat major at mm. 179-252 are designated as “the Middle.” According to Kilgore’s partition, this movement represents God, emphasized by symbolically alluding to the Holy Trinity.

4. *Pensée des morts*

The fourth piece has the same title as Lamartine’s poem, and it is the reworked piece of the first *Harmonies* and the *De profundis, Psaume instrumentale* (1834), which was inspired by Felicité de Lamennais’s prose poem from his own periodical in 1831. Lamennais set the opening lines of Psalm 129(130) in his poem, describing the path to redemption, and Liszt applied this idea of redemption for his thematic transformation technique.⁵⁷ Liszt took the materials from the original *Harmonies*, the opening up to m. 39 and the *Andante religioso* mm. 63-119, and incorporated them into the *Pensée des morts* as an intense opening and the tranquil *Adagio* section. The *De profundis* chant appears in full chords with the Latin text at mm. 58-61 as the culminating moment, which expresses an eager voice of supplication. Liszt preserved these original materials to achieve such intensity.

⁵⁵ Kilgore, 68.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 136.

⁵⁷ Paul Merrick, *Revolution and Religion in the Music of Liszt*, 21.

Despite maintaining significant earlier material, however, *Pensée des morts* is considerably different from the initial work. Unlike the first *Harmonies*, it provides more metric and tonal stability: Liszt put meter signs (5/4, 7/4, and 4/4) where he left no meter for the first *Harmonies*, and he also provided a sense of tonality with a cycle of thirds around G as a center with D major, B-flat major/B major, and E-flat major in the *De profundis* chant.⁵⁸

Example 4.1. Liszt, *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*, S. 154 mm. 1-2.

Example 4.2. Liszt, *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*, S. 173, *Pensée des morts*, mm. 1-3.

Liszt trimmed the bass counterpoint from the original *Harmonies*, and he simplified the texture at the beginning of the *Pensée des morts*, emphasizing the descending three-note motif. Though it seems to be less striking than its predecessor, the piece still maintains charisma, as Liszt gradually builds up the climax, adding more layers, dynamics, repetitions, and chromaticism. It successfully creates the emotional swirl of the tremendous sufferings, and it finally reaches climax when the full chords of the *De profundis* chant come.

⁵⁸ Kilgore, 40.

Example 4.3. Liszt, *Pensée des morts*, mm. 58-59.

De pro-fun-dis clama-vi ad te, Do-mi-ne: Do-mi-ne, ex-au-di vo-cem me-am.

This chordal presentation is one of resolve, and the subsequent return of the opening theme makes a transition into the peaceful state of the following *Adagio* section. Between the chordal section and the return of the opening theme, there is a transitional passage, which shows Liszt’s creative use of the whole-tone scale. At m. 65, Liszt placed the whole-tone scale from F to D# in the soprano, while the inner voices present repeated patterns of suspension and resolution, shifting from B-flat major, E major, D major, G major to F-sharp major and finally reaching the B major chord. The *Adagio* section in G major at m. 77 presents the harp-like accompaniment, which conveys serenity.

Example 4.4. Liszt, *Pensée des morts*, m. 65.

cre - - - - - scen - - - - - do

Most scholars agree that the first *Harmonies* has a more effective conclusion with the return of the chant and unaccompanied recitative at the bass than the placid ending of the *Pensée des morts*.⁵⁹ The difference between the two pieces shows the change in Liszt’s approach. The earliest *Harmonies* is a self-contained piece, focusing on the dismalness and massiveness of death. The *Pensée des morts*, however, is emotionally

⁵⁹ Arnold, “Piano Music: 1835-1861,” 94.

open-ended, beginning with despair, moving through hope, and concluding with the emptiness of death. The descending three-note motive is prevalent up until the Adagio section through the thematic transformation. Then, the *Adagio* section begins with the pendulum motif, a symmetrical form that is derived from the first *Harmonies*, placing B-A-G-A-B at the soprano. This motif links to the following pieces, the *Pater noster* and the *Hymne de l'enfant à son réveil*.

5. *Pater noster*

The *Pater noster* is a four-part setting with text from a prayer for forgiveness; like the *Ave Maria*, it is another transcription of Liszt's own choral work for choir and organ. It is a short piece with fifty-three measures in C major, and it consists of three sections. The pendulum motif reappears at the opening of the *Pater noster* in order to link adjacent movements.

The first section shifts from C major/A minor to G major through progressions of B-flat major, A-flat major, and A major. The following section is a variation of the previous section with similar presentation of keys, but it concludes with D major at m. 38. The closing section appears unaccompanied in F-sharp minor at m. 39, highlighting the text "Et ne nos inducas intantationem" (lead us not into temptation), and the repetition of the phrase without text follows like an echo. The piece ends with a long plagal cadence, shifting from G minor at mm. 49-50 to C major (V7-IV-I) at mm. 51-53. As seen above, there is a mediant relationship of keys, as the cycle of thirds, D-F#-Bb and D, appears at the closing section. Kilgore gives an intriguing insight: her bass reduction shows two

augmented chords (C-Ab-E) from the first two sections, and she suggests that this augmented chord is identical to that of the *Funérailles*.⁶⁰

6. *Hymne de l'enfant à son réveil*

The *Hymne de l'enfant à son réveil* is one of the pieces that underwent significant transformation in the evolution of the *Harmonies*. It is derived from the *Prière d'un enfant à son réveil* of 1840; Liszt later changed it into the current title, expanding the length yet reducing the density of texture for a better fit with the cycle. This movement is peaceful and harmonious, portraying purity and innocence of children as described in Lamartine's poem. The thematic structure is binary, and two sections are repeated alternately with some variations.⁶¹

The opening section starts with A-flat major, moving to F minor, and it journeys through D-flat major, A-flat minor, and E-flat major. The next section begins with E major at m. 95, which is a semitone higher, and ends with V of F major at m. 110. The subsequent variations of the previous sections have almost the same key scheme. The newly added *Andantino* section starts with the theme of dotted chords in F major, and concludes with a plagal cadence in A major. Other semitone relationships can be detected: at mm. 129-136, when A-flat major shifts to A major, and V/F-sharp major moves a semitone lower into IV6-V/ F minor at mm. 140-144, which is a Phrygian cadence.

Another important element to mention is the pendulum motif. The opening theme contains the pendulum motif, and it recurs throughout the piece. It comes from previous

⁶⁰ Kilgore, 43.

⁶¹ Ibid., 44.

pieces, namely the *Pensée des morts* and the *Pater noster*, and this motivic recurrence gives musical unity.

Example 5.1. Liszt, *Pensée des morts*, mm. 77-80.

Example 5.2. Liszt, *Pater noster*, mm. 1-4.

Example 5.3. Liszt, *Hymne de l'enfant à son réveil*, mm. 1-3.

7. *Funérailles*

This is the most intense and dramatic piece of the cycle, and it is also considered to be one of Liszt's finest works. The *Funérailles* seems to be an inconsistent component in the cycle, because it is neither associated with Lamartine's poem nor does it have a religious background. As the title indicates, it is clearly inspired by the execution of his

chromatic moves sap the intensity and wrap up the introduction with a grand pause. The semitone motive, Db-C, recurs throughout the piece.

After the stormy introduction, the funeral procession in F minor follows. While the descending bass theme accompanied by dotted chords with fortitude creates great solemnity, the augmented triads deliver a tragic tone, which expresses suppressed grief.

Example 6.2. Liszt, *Funérailles*, mm. 24-27.

The musical score for measures 24-27 of Liszt's *Funérailles* is presented in two staves. The right-hand staff (treble clef) contains a series of dotted chords, some with a fermata, and some augmented triads. The left-hand staff (bass clef) contains a descending eighth-note melody with a triplet of eighth notes in the first measure. The tempo/mood is marked 'solto voce' and 'pesante'.

The sixteen-measure phrase is repeated with added octaves and chords from m. 40, and it shifts into F-sharp minor at m. 48, ending with a half cadence in G-sharp minor at m. 55.

The next section in *lagrimoso* is in A-flat major, and the exquisite melody, accompanied by broken chords, is a poignant lament on the death of Liszt's friends. The half step down from F to Fb at m. 56 is reminiscent of the opening motive in the right hand (F-E) from the introduction. According to Kilgore, this section recalls Chopin's *Marche funèbre*, since the contour of melodies and texture are strikingly similar.⁶³

⁶³ Kilgore, 48.

Example 6.3. Chopin, *Piano Sonata No. 2*, Op. 35, 3rd mov., mm. 31-32.

31

pp

3 15 2 * 3 13 *

Example 6.4. Liszt, *Funérailles*, mm. 56-57.

lgrimoso

dolce pp

una corda

1 2 3 1 2 3 2

The theme is repeated in B major at m. 72, appearing in the middle voice, and moves through A major and F major. The dominant pedal of A-flat major prepares a grand return of the theme in A-flat major at m. 89. The third repetition ends with the dominant of C-sharp minor, and the next section takes over G# to Ab, moving enharmonically into D-flat major.

The ostinato bass with repeating triplets opens up the new section in D-flat major, and the cascades of repeating bass with majestic chords portray a heroic march to the battlefield. The key area shifts by descending thirds to A major at m. 122, F major at m. 133, and D major at m. 143. The change of bass figuration at m. 143 stirs up a riot of emotion, and the ascending octaves in both hands at m. 151 build up intensity. After the ascending octave finally arrives at Db, a dramatic pause silences the din. The return of Db is a reminiscence of the persistent bells of Db from the introduction. This section also

hearkens back to Chopin's *Polonaise in A-flat major*, Op. 53, due to their similar left hands.

Example 6.5. Chopin, *Polonaise in A-flat major*, Op. 53, mm. 84-89.

The image shows a musical score for Chopin's *Polonaise in A-flat major*, Op. 53, measures 84-89. The score is written for piano and consists of two systems. The first system starts at measure 84 and ends at measure 86. The second system starts at measure 87 and ends at measure 89. The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and the time signature is 3/4. The right hand (treble clef) features a melodic line with a *sotto voce* marking above it. The left hand (bass clef) has a rhythmic accompaniment with a *stacc.* marking below it. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

Example 6.6. Liszt, *Funérailles*, mm. 134-136.

The image shows a musical score for Liszt's *Funérailles*, measures 134-136. The score is written for piano and consists of two systems. The first system starts at measure 134 and ends at measure 135. The second system starts at measure 136 and ends at measure 136. The key signature is one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 3/4. The right hand (treble clef) features a melodic line with a *rit.* marking above it. The left hand (bass clef) has a rhythmic accompaniment with a *rit.* marking below it. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

The grand return of the funeral-march theme, inaugurating the coda, breaks silence at m. 156, and this is the moment of the ultimate climax. The coda successively revisits all the previous themes, the funeral theme in F minor, the *lagrimoso* theme in E major, and the heroic march theme in F minor, respectively. The melodic line of the *lagrimoso* theme shows the step down from C# to C, which recalls the opening bass of Db and C from the introduction. The heroic march finally comes in *sotto voce* at m. 185, but the muffled march gradually speaks up, reaching a Db augmented chord at the final climax of m. 190. Db resolves to C, which recalls the opening drone. A sudden dynamic

change from *ff* to *pp* at the end does not give a strong closure, but leaves great anticipation of another completion, which creates musical flow.

Example 6.7. Liszt, *Funérailles*, mm. 189-192.

8. *Miserere d'après Palestrina*

The *Miserere* first appeared as an untitled piece in the *Harmonies* sketchbook, which was the arrangement of Psalm 50 (51), based on the psalm harmonization that was issued in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* under the title of “Miserere von Palästrina.”⁶⁴ Liszt expanded this untitled work in 1851, entitling the expanded version the *Miserere d'après Palestrina* in the 1853 *Harmonies*. There is no connection between Liszt’s *Miserere d'après Palestrina* and works by Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, because the psalm harmonization does not come from Palestrina’s work. The title rather symbolizes Liszt’s strong interest in the traditional performing style of the Sistine Chapel where the *Miserere Psalm* was performed during the Holy week, and his sincere respect to the greatest composer of Renaissance Church music. The German music periodical made an error in the soprano part of the psalm setting, which was D-C#-G instead of D-C#-D; therefore, the D-C#-A-G from the intersection of soprano and alto can be

⁶⁴ Kaczmarczyk, preface to the New Liszt Edition of the *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*, xxxix.

fortuitously interpreted as the mirror inversion and retrograde of the crux motif, which can be connected to the religious character of the *Harmonies*.⁶⁵

The piece has three sections and a coda. After the first statement up to m. 12, the following two sections are variations of the first section, which begin at m. 13 and m. 25 respectively, and the coda comes at m. 37. The first section opens up in E major with the key signature of G major/E minor, presenting the text of the prayer asking for mercy on the Day of Judgment. Each line of the prayer starts with a broken chord, which is fully expanded in the following sections. Liszt changed the register and the accompaniment for the following sections to create dramatic contrast. In the first variation, both parts are played in treble clef, placing the theme in the bass with tremolo-like accompaniment.

Example 7.1. Liszt, *Miserere d'après Palestrina*, mm. 13-14.

The musical score for Example 7.1 shows two staves. The top staff is in treble clef and contains a rapid, tremolo-like accompaniment of broken chords. The bottom staff is also in treble clef and contains a simple bass line. The tempo is marked 'poco più mosso' and the dynamic is 'pp'. The score includes fingerings (8, 5, 2) and a repeat sign with a first ending bracket.

The second variation quickly changes the register to bass clef, and the theme has fuller texture with octaves and chords surrounded by rapid arpeggios, creating a harp-like sound.

⁶⁵ Kaczmarczyk, preface to the New Liszt Edition of the *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*, xxxix.

Example 7.2. Liszt, *Miserere d'après Palestrina*, m. 26.



Two sections show radical change of register, texture, and dynamic, creating the dramatic contrast of sound from the mystical to the grandioso. Moreover, two distinctive accompaniments create mysterious otherworldliness. The flowing accompaniment with the opening *Miserere* motif is extended to the coda, which starts at m. 37, wandering around B-flat major and D-flat major before E major arrives to end the work.

9. *Andante lagrimoso*

The ninth movement of the cycle does not bear any title, but has a designation at the beginning, *Andante lagrimoso*. Liszt put two stanzas from Lamartine's poem, "Une larme ou consolation" ("A tear or consolation"), which describes silent tears falling on a land without mercy. The *Andante lagrimoso* stems from the piece in the 1847/1848 *Harmonies*, the *La lampe du temple*, and Liszt significantly revised it to draw a more lamenting character.

The piece is in G-sharp minor, divided into three sections with a coda. Like previous pieces, it consists of the thematic statement and subsequent variations. The beginning of the piece creates a somber atmosphere with the statically moving bass line and the sigh motif in the soprano.

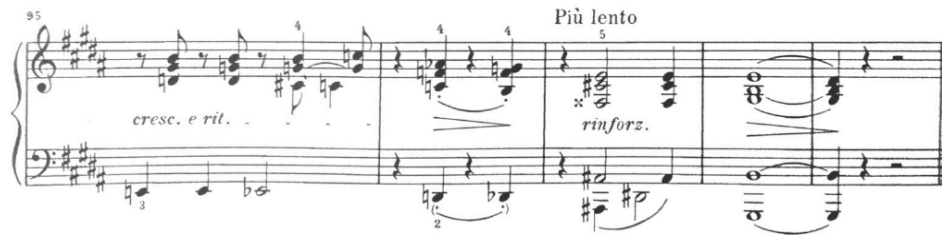
Example 8.1. Liszt, *Andante lagrimoso*, mm. 1-4.



G-sharp minor moves to B minor at m. 19, where the first variation starts, and it soon shifts to D major at m. 23. The section ends in C major, and a short cadenza-like figure leads to the next section, which starts at m. 42 in the same key. Both hands play in treble clef (as in the *Miserere d'après Palestrina*), and the theme appears in the middle voice surrounded by the arpeggiated accompaniment. This middle section explores several key areas such as D-flat major, D-sharp minor, and G minor. A half cadence in A-flat major continues for five measures, before the last section launches at m. 66. Liszt smoothly bridges sections with improvisational figurations at m. 41 and m. 61. The next section in A-flat major modulates through F minor, B major, and A major, which Kilgore compares to the coda of the *Bénédiction* on the basis of shared characterization.⁶⁶ The piece finally comes back to G-sharp minor at the coda with the opening theme, and the final cadence has the sigh motif, suspending E through the harmonic progressions of vii^o-V9-VI, which moves down to D#. Though the piece concludes with the tonic of G-sharp minor, it lacks a strong sense of finish, which creates the expectation of another closure.

⁶⁶ Kilgore, 59.

Example 8.2. Liszt, *Andante lagrimoso*, mm. 95-99.



10. *Cantique d'amour*

The closing movement finally returns to E major, the key that began the cycle. This piece is not related to any of Lamartine's poem or the Catholic prayer, but as the title implies, it is associated with Princess Wittgenstein to whom Liszt dedicated the work.

A six-measure introduction opens the piece. The last G-sharp minor chord from the *Andante lagrimoso* reappears at the beginning of the *Cantique d'amour*, and then it shifts to the dominant chord of E major. The opening motif at mm. 1-2 is reminiscent of the sigh motif from the *Andante lagrimoso*, which serves as a smooth transition between the two movements.

Example 9.1. Liszt, *Cantique d'amour*, mm. 1-2.



After the introduction, the theme comes in E major and again at m. 22 surrounded by the harp-like accompaniment (*quasi arpa*). The middle section starts with B-flat major at m. 46, and it moves to the subdominant of E-flat major at m. 60. Chromatic shifts dominate the section: for example, the upper voices at mm. 46-47 and the bass line at mm.

46-53 show chromatically descending steps. The opening theme returns at m. 79 in E major, and Liszt adds more virtuosity for each repetition with chords and octaves. Octave passages at m. 107 create a short cadenza, whose improvisational character seizes a dramatic moment of the section, preparing the following coda.

Example 9.2. Liszt, *Cantique d'amour*, mm. 106-107.

The coda strengthens E major with cascades of ascending arpeggios from m. 108, and the key shifts through C-sharp major and A-sharp minor. Chromatic chords interrupt the ascending arpeggios at m. 124, by which time the piece has moved through F-sharp minor and A minor. E major finally arrives at m. 128, emphasized by an E pedal-tone in the bass and tonic chords in the soprano, with repeated tonic chords jumping around the whole gamut of the keyboard to bring the cycle to a grand, magnificent conclusion.

Example 9.3. Liszt, *Cantique d'amour*, mm. 134-140.

Chapter 4

Programmatic Elements in the *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*

Literary Association and Narrative Line

The *Harmonies* is not merely a collection of religious-related pieces, but a spiritual music drama woven by various kinds of programmatic elements. These programmatic features create dramatic tension and release throughout the cycle, and they are also essential components to achieve musical coherence. The following discussion will focus on the programmatic nature of the *Harmonies* in order to understand how Liszt built an effective narrative for the cycle, and attained musical unity through key schemes, harmonic and motivic relationships, and Lamartine's poetic program. It will be closely linked to the discussion of performance interpretation of the *Harmonies* in chapter 5, since it helps establish the narrative of the cycle, providing useful guidance for the performance.

Liszt embarked on the *Harmonies* with the specific intention of incorporating religion and literature into music. As mentioned earlier, Liszt originally used a quotation by Schiller when he began the first draft of the *Harmonies*, but he later replaced it with another quotation by Chateaubriand in the 1835 *Harmonies*. At this time, Liszt put more weight on emotional exhaustion and disillusionment through both quotations. He particularly identified himself with Chateaubriand's religious values, and aligned himself with Chateaubriand's statements about the issues of the current time, such as disillusionment and indifference toward religion.

While previous quotations from Schiller and Chateaubriand were used for denoting Liszt's social and religious awareness, Liszt included Lamartine's foreword as preface to his own *Harmonies*:

There are meditative souls raised invincibly by solitude and contemplation towards infinite ideas, that is, towards religion; all their thoughts are expressed in enthusiasm and prayer, their entire existence is a silent hymn to the Divinity and to hope.⁶⁷

This quotation draws listeners to the work's source of inspiration for the work, setting a specific atmosphere before exploring the religious music drama. In that way, listeners can enter into the religious mode to experience different levels of emotional states, ultimately reaching the point of religious transformation. Lamartine's preface carries Liszt's vision for the *Harmonies*, which addresses universal values and expresses profound beauty in coexistence of diversity and unity. For the 1853 *Harmonies*, Liszt retained Lamartine's lines, cutting the first line only. Liszt's empathy with disillusion was the first inspiration for the *Harmonies*, and Liszt's longing for an answer to overcome his sufferings led him to produce the subsequent *Harmonies*.

The *Harmonies* casts three very different characters to create a religious program: Prayer, who is in deep agony; Church, who mediates communion with God; and God, who gives consolation that elevates the prayer to religious ecstasy. These three characters appear in sequence from the beginning, and Prayer finally closes the set with the transcendent state of mind in the last piece, the *Cantique d'amour*. To follow the outline of this music drama, we will look for the literary association in the *Harmonies*, Lamartine's poems, and Catholic prayers.

⁶⁷ Haringer, 140. Original in Alphonse de Lamartine, preface to *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses* (Paris: Hachette, 1920).

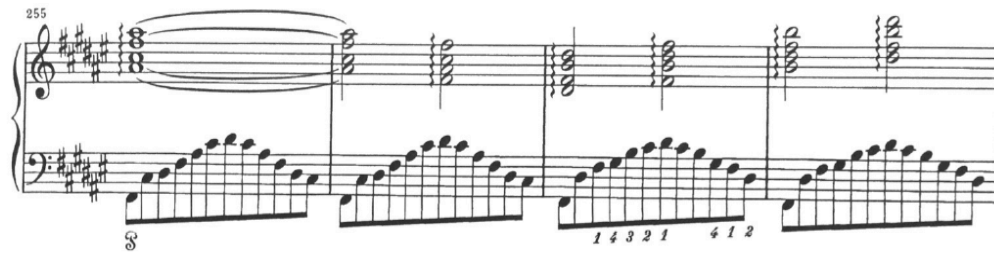
Liszt alternated the Prayer, Church, and God to delineate interaction among three characters, and it is their interaction that eventually makes religious transformation possible. Liszt applied Lamartine's poems to characterize Prayer and God, and the liturgical text appears as Church mediates Prayer and God. Though Lamartine's poems mainly shape the two characters, Prayer and God, these quotations are stated from the Prayer's point of view. Interestingly, the *Pensée des morts* has both sides, the liturgical text and Lamartine's poetic influence. Likewise, the piece contains the darkest meditation on death, while the liturgical text relieves dramatic tension by asking for God's forgiveness.

Liszt placed selected verses from Lamartine's *Harmonies* as preface to selected movements, and there are pieces that are certainly influenced by Lamartine's *Harmonies*, bearing the same titles. Liszt also put liturgical text in several pieces, mostly for the transcriptions of his own sacred choral works. These verses and the liturgical text not only serve as a direct source of narrative, but also tightly connect to motivic figures and harmonic progressions. The selected movements have a direct connection to Lamartine's work by Liszt's reference, which are the *Invocation*, the *Bénédiction*, and the *Andante lagrimoso*. Other pieces such as the *Pensée des morts*, and the *Hymne de l'enfant à son réveil* also correspond to Lamartine's poems with the same titles. Liturgical texts were written out for the following movements: the *Ave Maria*, the *Pensée des morts*, the *Pater noster*, and the *Miserere d'après Palestrina*. Even though the 1853 version is perceived to be under less influence of Lamartine and more in Liszt's own style, Lamartine's poetic influence on the *Harmonies* remains strong.

The poetic narrative line by Lamartine can be divided into three levels: a desire to renew faith in God, deriving contemplation on life and death, and a request for God's mercy to heal profound grief from death. Lamartine's poems provide a guide to Prayer's intense feelings of outcry, agony, and grief, and God's greatness and consolation corresponding to Prayer. Lamartine's verses in the *Invocation* immediately grab the attention with a fervent tone of the prayer, and the word "Élevez-vous" is used repeatedly to arouse an inner voice of aspiration toward God. The *Bénédiction* expresses overflowing joy and peace from the renewed faith in God. In the *Pensée des morts*, Prayer reveals the darkest side of his mind, as the piece dwells on the dreariness of death. The word "enfant" appears at the end of Lamartine's poem, which implies Prayer's hope for redemption, and it naturally connects to another poem of the *Harmonies*, the *Hymne de l'enfant à son réveil*. The *Hymne de l'enfant à son réveil* describes God as a creator who gives innocent souls to children, while Lamartine's "Une larme ou consolation," in the *Andante lagrimoso*, seeks healing through God's mercy. These poems contemplate the eternal question of life and death; Liszt selectively put them in the cycle to guide the audience through his narrative.

Lamartine's poetic expression is reincarnated as particular musical gestures. Liszt placed the ascending motives in the *Invocation* to express the sentiment "Élevez-vous" from Lamartine's verses, and the constant use of the rising motives portrays an ardent desire to reach God. Various arpeggiated accompaniments in the *Bénédiction* evoke water imagery, which are associated with the words of Lamartine's poem such as "inondé" (flooded), "surabondé" (abundant), "flots" (waves), "orages" (storms), and "glissé" (slippery).

Example 10. Liszt, *Bénédiction*, mm. 255-258.



Liszt set the Latin text for the pieces of Church, which evokes a sacred atmosphere, as Church is an intermediary between Prayer and God. The *Ave Maria*, the *Pater noster*, and the *Miserere d'après Palestrina* worship the almightiness of God, asking for his blessing and mercy. As mentioned above, the *Pensée des morts* is not a part of Church as a character, but it has the liturgical text as well, the *De Profundis*. This prayer of supplication is set in the middle of the *Pensée des morts*, reinforcing a sincere calling for God at the height of Prayer's sufferings. To carry out the meaning of these liturgical texts, Liszt set the music with a compressed texture, which creates dramatic contrast.

While Lamartine's poems carve the cycle's dramatic outline, illustrating emotional states varying from acute anguish to heavenly bliss, the setting of liturgical texts represents stillness and reverence for religion during the emotional whirlwind. Liszt interlaced two contrasting sources to narrate a story of religious transformation by three characters. During the poetic and religious program, two movements out of ten—the *Funérailles* and the *Cantique d'amour*—have no literary association. At first glance, the *Funérailles* does not fit into the narrative of the cycle, thus disrupting cyclic and stylistic unity; however, the piece sounds even more compelling with the composer's personal experience of his friends' death, heightening Prayer's agony at the culmination of the cycle. The *Cantique d'amour* has a more secular nature, as it was intended for Princess

Wittgenstein, but the piece serves as a successful epilogue for this sacred work, delivering the final reconciliation through love. In doing so, the *Harmonies* maintains its programmatic nature throughout, conveying solid narrative stream.

Tonality

Merrick states that for Liszt, unity can be not only musical, but also psychological.⁶⁸ Therefore, adopting a programmatic approach to Liszt's music is essential for understanding how Liszt achieved dramaturgy and musical unity in his large-scale works. The key scheme is an important factor to understand the programmatic nature of Liszt music, as individual tonality stands for particular characters. Kilgore introduces recent studies of symbolism in Liszt's music by several scholars, and in summarizing Merrick's approach to Liszt's tonality she particularly observes how keys project extra-musical association.⁶⁹ Merrick argues for Liszt's programmatic use of key, and he suggests that Liszt chose particular tonality for programmatic reasons. He observes that themes of love and religion have frequently appeared in Liszt's music, and keys associated with these themes show the consistent use of certain tonality.⁷⁰ For Liszt, love and religion are affinitive, as he saw love as the divine power that leads us to redemption through religious transformation. According to Merrick, E major is a religious key, and A-flat major represents love. B major is described as a heaven where ultimate happiness exists, and C major expresses a place of purity, such as a church.

⁶⁸ Paul Merrick, *Revolution and Religion in the Music of Liszt*, 296.

⁶⁹ Kilgore, 95.

⁷⁰ Paul Merrick, "The Role of Tonality in the Swiss Book of *Années de pèlerinage*," *Studia Musicologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, vol. 39, no. 2/4 (1998): 367.

Merrick’s approach to tonality and symbolism can be applied to interpret the dramaturgy of the *Harmonies*. The keys for movements of the *Harmonies* are as follows:

Table 4. Key Scheme of Each Movement and Corresponding Character.

Movement	Key	Protagonist
1. <i>Invocation</i>	E major	Prayer
2. <i>Ave Maria</i>	B-flat major	Church
3. <i>Bénédiction de Dieu dans la solitude</i>	F-sharp major	God
4. <i>Pensée des morts</i>	G/E-flat major	Prayer
5. <i>Pater noster</i>	C major	Church
6. <i>Hymne de l’enfant à son réveil</i>	A-flat/G-sharp major	God
7. <i>Funérailles</i>	F minor/ A-flat major	Prayer
8. <i>Miserere d’après Palestrina</i>	E major in the key signature of G	Church
9. <i>Andante lagrimoso</i>	G-sharp minor	God
10. <i>Cantique d’amour</i>	E major	Epilogue by Prayer

Opening and closing the *Harmonies* in E major strongly emphasizes the cycle’s sacred nature. The drama really takes up from Prayer’s movements, while Church and God respond unworldly to Prayer’s suffering. Prayer’s movements, the *Pensée des morts* and the *Funérailles*, contemplate death, and F minor is often associated with death in the Romantic works. The key of *Pensée des morts*, G major/minor, is curious. Why did Liszt not set the *Pensée des morts* in F minor, which obviously show the idea of death in the title? Kilgore explains Liszt’s key arrangement in the *Ave Maria*, with that the words

“peccatoribus (sinners)” in E-flat minor and “nunc et in hora mortis nostrae (now and in the hour of our death)” in G minor, foreshadow the *Pensée des morts*.⁷¹ The *Funérailles* not only delineates torment after death, but also seeks reconciliation. The main keys of the *Funérailles* are F minor, A-flat major, D-flat major, and F major. It is A-flat major, the key of loves that extricates Prayer from the suffering, and this appearance at the climactic moment of the cycle provides a way toward peaceful closure. The heroic march starts in D-flat major at m. 109, the key known for consolation; in turn, this majestic atmosphere amplifies the heroism in F major at m. 133.

God responds to the suffering Prayer by giving consolation and by awakening religious values such as blessings, purity, and mercy. The *Bénédiction* is in F-sharp major, which is considered a divine and mystical key, and the *Hymne de l'enfant à son réveil* employs A-flat major, the key of love, to bring Prayer back to the state of innocence and purity. Kilgore explains the idea of the crucifixion for the *Andante lagrimoso*, employing Merrick's suggestion of Trinity for G#/Ab/G# and her idea of the cross motif.⁷² It is noteworthy that A-flat major appears in the process of reconciliation, from the *Hymne de l'enfant à son réveil* to the *Andante lagrimoso*, which suggests love is the key to achieve redemption in this drama.

The pieces for Church appear in B-flat major for the *Ave Maria*, C major for the *Pater noster*, and E major for the *Miserere d'après Palestrina*. As mentioned above, Kilgore claims that the key scheme of the *Ave Maria* foreshadows the following movements, as the *Bénédiction* shares the common key areas, B-flat major, D major, and F-sharp major, and the *Pensée des morts* is in G major/minor, the remaining key area of

⁷¹ Kilgore, 103.

⁷² Ibid., 111.

the *Ave Maria*.⁷³ According to Merrick's research on the first volume of the *Années de pèlerinage*, Liszt set C major for the first piece of the cycle, the *Chapelle de Guillaume Tell*, to symbolize the beginning, representing Church.⁷⁴ Considering the idea of the beginning, the key of the *Pater noster*, C major, is well combined with the theme of its subsequent movement, the *Hymne de l'enfant à son réveil*, which expresses purity and innocence. Tonality, once more, gives a consistent and compelling flow for the drama. The *Miserere d'après Palestrina* shows a simple tonality, as it stays in E major all along, holding the pure state of mind, seeking mercy, forgiveness, and redemption. Church pieces provide a consistent dramatic flow, as their tonalities smoothly connect to the succeeding pieces. In that way, they successfully bridge between Prayer and God.

Liszt's key arrangement for the *Harmonies* well corresponds to the narrative outline discussed above, and the tonality is the foundational element to understand the dramaturgy of the *Harmonies*.

Harmonic Language

Liszt's harmonic language is crucial to understanding the composer's experimental style, and the *Harmonies* shows his ability to enrich the drama through various harmonic treatments. The *Harmonies* features mediant relations, flexibility within enharmonic relationships, expressive chromaticism, and frequent appearances of augmented triads and diminished seventh chords. Liszt used these harmonic devices to carry symbolic meanings or to deliver a strong dramatic force, providing diverse sonority

⁷³ Kilgore, 102.

⁷⁴ Merrick, "The Role of Tonality in the *Années de pèlerinage*," 377.

throughout the cycle, and these harmonic means create ambiguity in tonality—all features that distinguish the *Harmonies*.

Mediant relations, one of Liszt's hallmarks, are everywhere in the *Harmonies*. They serve a central role musically and philosophically for the cycle, as they broaden the possibility of harmonic exploration. The number three is symbolically rich in Catholicism. The symbolic importance of Trinity is achieved by the third relationships throughout the cycle, and it is also combined with three-part form frequently.

The *Invocation* shows a series of thirds from F-sharp major to A major and C major at mm. 113- 125, and the last six measures are another prime example of the mediant relationship, which presents the harmonic progressions of E-G#-E.

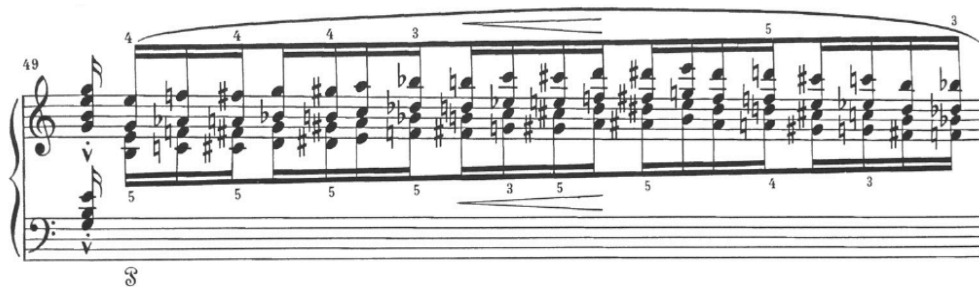
Example 11. Liszt, *Invocation*, mm. 198-203.

The *Ave Maria* displays an explicit example of third relations at the end, I-vi-I-iii, and it concludes with the opening motif of the next movement. Another third relationship in the *Ave Maria* is shown when B-flat major and D major appear to demonstrate Mary and Jesus, respectively. The *Bénédiction* reveals the mediant relationship clearly through its tonal scheme by stacking up three major thirds: F-sharp major-D major-B-flat major. The *Andante lagrimoso* also shows the constant appearance of the mediant relationships. For instance, the G-sharp minor opening modulates to B minor at m. 19 and E major shifts into C major at m. 42.

Liszt often applied enharmonic relationship in the *Harmonies*, freely roaming the territory of tonality. For example, D-sharp major chord smoothly turns into E-flat major at m. 74 in the *Invocation*, which changes the mood to prepare the climax. In the *Hymne de l'enfant à son réveil*, an enharmonic relationship serves as bridge for the return to the home key, A-flat major. The dominant F-sharp minor (C#-E#-G#) at m. 140 changes to a Db chord (Db-F-Ab), which converts to a IV6 of F minor.

Chromaticism is an exquisite device to express the meaning of a text and to intensify its dramatic effect. The simple texture and moderate moves of melodic lines create a gracious atmosphere in the *Ave Maria*. However, chromatic descending steps interfere with the mood when the text “peccatoribus” appears. The middle section of the *Cantique d’amour* shows chromatic moves in both voices, bass and soprano, and reveals an astonishing return to E-flat major. Chromatic moves start in B-flat major at m. 46, shifting to E major, and it moves down by semitone with the opening theme at m. 60. As the *Pensée des morts* carries the subject of death, both chromaticism and tonal ambiguity are effectively combined to describe the emotional chaos that comes from inner struggle and fear. The improvisational passages at mm. 49-57 show a tumult of vehement feeling, created by chromaticism.

Example 12.1. Liszt, *Pensée des morts*, m. 49.



In the *Funérailles*, Liszt combines chromaticism with a dotted rhythm to maximize death's tragic effect, and he places chromatic octave passages at mm. 143-149 to depict magnificence. The *Pensée des morts* and the *Funérailles* employ chromaticism at the most depressing—and critical—moments of the cycle.

Example 12.2. Liszt, *Funérailles*, mm. 16-17.

Example 12.3. Liszt, *Funérailles*, mm. 143-145.

As the striking contrast between extreme simplicity and complexity brings the cycle an appealing narrative, the augmented triad and the diminished seventh chord take an active role in shaping the drama of the *Harmonies*. Larry Todd addresses the significant role of the augmented triad in Liszt's music, and he analyzes the *Funérailles* as an example of Liszt's systematic treatment of the augmented triad. He points out that the *Funérailles* shows Liszt's advanced and extensive use of the augmented triad as a structurally unifying element that it is also associated with death and mourning.⁷⁵ The *Funérailles*, indeed, marks the culminating point of the cycle by these powerful harmonic

⁷⁵ Larry Todd, "The 'Unwelcome Guest' Regaled: Franz Liszt and the Augmented Triad," *19th-Century Music* XII/2 (Fall 1988): 101.

devices, and the augmented triads and diminished-seventh chords constantly appear through the piece, in the melodic line or as chords, as expressions of relentlessness. From the very beginning, the bass and the soprano create the augmented chord, C-E-Ab; likewise, Liszt stacked the augmented triads with *molto crescendo* and *ff* at the last culmination, at mm. 188-190, creating a triumphant moment of the piece and the cycle.

While the *Funérailles* builds up dramatic effect by using the augmented triad and the diminished-seventh chord, the *Ave Maria* uses these sonorities more sparingly. The augmented triad delivers oxymoronic qualities, as seen in Liszt's *Petrarch Sonnets*, and Liszt applied it to the word "venturis tui" (your womb) in the *Ave Maria*. The word comes with the augmented triad, Bb-D-F#, to describe the paradoxical situation of a virgin with child. While the augmented triad creates a mystic quality, the diminished seventh chords do the text painting. At mm. 89-92 in the *Ave Maria*, the diminished-seventh chords upon the descending chromatic bass express a grim picture of the Latin text "peccatoribus."

The *Pensée des morts* presents a series of augmented triads at m. 57 where the short cadenza expresses severe pain from agony. Prayer cries out in pain with augmented triads and the whole-tone scale, and the harmonic progression finally reaches E-flat major with a call for God's mercy. In this way, the piece achieves a powerful culmination through the change of harmonic presentation from a series of augmented triads to the unison of E-flat major chords.

Example 12.4. Liszt, *Pensée des morts*, mm. 57-59.

Overall, Liszt strategically used the augmented triad and the diminished seventh chord to create subtle colors of sound and a strong dramatic force in the *Harmonies*.

Motivic Relationships

The *Harmonies* is a musical tapestry, woven together by different threads of various literary sources, harmonic devices, and motives. Though Brussee claims that the earlier versions of the *Harmonies* carry more pronounced motivic relationship,⁷⁶ the final cycle also shows significant motivic relationship for musical unity.

The three-note motif has been prevalent from the earliest *Harmonies*, and it remains the main thematic idea in the evolution of the cycle. It is also noteworthy that Liszt used the three-note unit extensively in the *Harmonies* to pronounce Trinity once more. From the beginning of the cycle, the three-note unit is pervasive, and this motivic pattern takes shape into various motivic figurations, such as the cross motif, the

⁷⁶ Albert Brussee, “The *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses* in its First Version (1847),” *Journal of the American Liszt Society* Vol. 44 (Fall 1998): 6.

pendulum motif, and sigh motif. All of the motivic configurations are formed out of the basic three-note pattern.

Once the three-note motif opens up the first piece, the *Invocation*, it acts like a driving force for the entire cycle. The middle section of the *Invocation* is constantly promoting the pattern, where it builds to a powerful climax.

Example 13.1. Liszt, *Invocation*, mm. 99-108.

The musical score for Example 13.1 shows Liszt's *Invocation*, measures 99-108. It is written in 5/4 time and features a complex texture with multiple layers of chords and melodic lines. The right hand plays a series of chords, while the left hand plays a more active line. The tempo is marked "espress." and "poco a poco stringendo". The key signature has one sharp (F#). The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

It emerges as a descending motif at the beginning of the *Pensée des morts* and the opening bass line of the *Andante lagrimoso*.

Example 13.2. Liszt, *Pensée des morts*, mm. 1-3.

The musical score for Example 13.2 shows Liszt's *Pensée des morts*, measures 1-3. It is written in 5/4 time and features a slow, heavy texture. The tempo is marked "Lento assai" and "pesante". The key signature has one sharp (F#). The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

Example 13.3. Liszt, *Andante lagrimoso*, mm. 1-4.



While these motives are the same three-note motif, each introduces a completely different atmosphere. The descending motif in *Pensée des morts* creates tension, placed on the off-beat with the marking *pesante*, while the ascending motif in the *Andante lagrimoso* evokes more a delicate and reflective tone, settling on the downbeat with *sotto voce*.

Even though Liszt named the cross motif in 1857, deriving its origin from a Gregorian chant, it had been used as early as in 1843. The cross motif has a significant meaning for Liszt, encompassing his attitude about love, revolution, and religion.⁷⁷ In the *Harmonies*, the cross motif does not appear as an original contour. However, similar motivic figures circulate throughout the cycle. Even though these motivic variations are not the exact form of the cross motif, they can be considered like the cross motif due to their characterization in the cycle. The opening rising motif in the *Invocation* consists of a minor third and a major second, instead of the original intervals of a major second and a major third. The *Bénédiction* and the *Pater noster* also offer similar figurations, and all these rising motives are associated with the implication of God. According to Kaczmarczyk, Liszt placed it to accentuate spirituality; For example, the *Pater noster*

⁷⁷ Merrick, *Revolution and Religion*, 300.

carries the cross motif at m. 39 when the four-part texture suddenly changes into the single melodic lines and octave unison, which is the only repetition in the piece.⁷⁸

The pendulum motif, which is derived from the earliest version of the *Harmonies*, appears altered in various pieces of the 1853 *Harmonies*. The *Andante religioso* section of the first *Harmonies* begins with the pendulum motif (B-A-G-A-B), which is the first appearance of the motif. Liszt used this motivic material again in the *Prière d'un enfant à son réveil*, which is the preceding work of the *Hymne de l'enfant à son réveil*, and it remains as the integral element for unity in the later *Harmonies*. The pendulum motif appears successively from the *Pensée des morts* to the *Hymne de l'enfant à son réveil*. In the *Pensée des morts*, the middle voice at mm. 1-3 introduces the pendulum motif, and it expands texturally, appearing in the soprano and the bass as well. The *Adagio* section at mm. 77-79 also carries this similar pattern, and it recurs in the bass near the end at mm. 166-167, albeit not as a complete form. The following movements, the *Pater noster* and the *Hymne de l'enfant à son réveil*, also introduce the pendulum motif at the beginning. The recitative in the *Ave Maria* at mm. 33-35 is also reminiscent of the pendulum motif.

The sigh motif is prevalent in the *Andante lagrimoso*, and more elaborated forms of the sigh motif appear in other pieces of the *Harmonies* as well. The *Andante lagrimoso* expresses God's sympathy and consolation for the frustrated mind that experiences the loss of his beloved. The recurrence of the sigh motif creates a depressing atmosphere, as it illustrates the one who hides deep sadness. It is the sigh motif that opens up the last piece of the cycle, the *Cantique d'amour*, as if the chaotic mind full of frustration finally embraces the message of God, opening up to the abiding virtue that is love. The sigh motif obtains a more lyrical character when fitted with a dotted rhythm. The opening

⁷⁸ Kaczmarczyk, "The Genesis of the *Funérailles*," 383.

theme of the *Bénédiction* has the descending notes with a dotted rhythm at mm. 1-2 and mm. 9-12, and they bring more flexibility to the melodic lines that mostly consist of half and quarter notes. This pattern appears constantly throughout the piece, and successfully enriches its serene character with water-like accompaniment. The similar figuration with a dotted rhythm is observed in the soprano at the *lagrimoso* section of the *Funérailles* at mm. 56-57, which is imbued with deep anguish after the tragic mood of the funeral march.

Motivic linkage among movements imbues the *Harmonies* with great unity. The descending three-note motif connects the *Ave Maria* and the *Bénédiction*, and both the *Andante lagrimoso* and the *Cantique d'amour* share the sigh motif. More fundamentally, this direct connection through motivic kinship fashions a powerful spiritual journey for both performer and audience.

Chapter 5

Performing the *Harmonies poetiques et religieuses*

Liszt's Performance Aesthetics

Liszt piano playing has been often described as a mix of dazzling pianism, flashy technique, and tremendous charisma. His splendid and daring style was reflected in his early compositions, and his remarkable technique and improvisational skill sealed his reputation as arguably the greatest of all pianists. However, Liszt's virtuosity was not the only component of his artistry, but rather a component of an ambition that sought to merge various subjects, such as literature and religion, into music. Liszt's aesthetic view on the artist's role also seemed to run counter to his practice, since he secured his fame upon support from aristocratic and bourgeois societies. As Erika Quinn notes, Liszt's romantic sensibility and spirituality were in direct conflict with his shining career,⁷⁹ and this contradictory aspect remained the essential character of Liszt music. Liszt's pupils and contemporaries documented his spontaneous and improvisational playing, while Liszt's correspondence also revealed the master's agony stemming from his triumphant success and sincere musicianship. These various records provide a useful insight into understanding Liszt's stylistic and aesthetic views on pianism.

As Liszt's splashy presence on the stage created enormous enthusiasm, his pianistic skills also led him to a controversial tendency of taking great liberties over the works he performed. Kenneth Hamilton notes that Liszt's performing style in his early years shows a large degree of freedom of interpretation, even for the Beethoven Piano

⁷⁹ Erika Quinn, *Franz Liszt: A Story of Central European Subjectivity* (Boston: Brill, 2015), 51.

Sonatas.⁸⁰ Hamilton also points out that this tendency created even more problems with Liszt's own compositions.⁸¹ In August G \ddot{o} llerich's notes of Liszt's master classes, Liszt clearly showed a permissive attitude by suggesting that his pupil play a short prelude to his *Liebestraum* No. 3 or insert an additional chord at the end of *Valse oubliée* No. 2.⁸² This liberal understanding of textual fidelity derived from his constant search for improvement and his embracement of diversity. Liszt incessantly revised his works, which resulted in multiple versions of the same composition, and he also allowed his talented pupils to make modifications for his works, which added even more variants for the same work. In short, Liszt brought enormous flexibility to the interpretation of his music.

Though his attitude later changed into more sincere commitment to music as written, especially for Beethoven and Chopin, he considered a performer's individuality as important as the performer's fidelity to the score. Liszt highly respected a performer's role for the realization of written music, and he emphasized what music expresses rather than its technical effect. As Leon Botstein notes, the nature of improvisation took a substantial part of Liszt's musical experiment, and this performative experience became a strong tie to his compositions.⁸³ Liszt's performing career also shaped his compositional career: keyboard works are apparent examples that illustrate the composer's integrated

⁸⁰ Kenneth Hamilton, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Liszt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 172-174.

⁸¹ Kenneth Hamilton, *After the Golden Age: Romantic Pianism and Modern Performance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 229-236.

⁸² August G \ddot{o} llerich, *The Piano Master Classes of Franz Liszt 1884-1886: Diary Notes of August G \ddot{o} llerich*, ed. Wilhelm Jerger, trans. Richard Louis Zimdars (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 87.

⁸³ Botstein, 545.

style of composition. Liszt did not aim for precision, but embraced flexibility. His famous master classes during 1884-1886, compiled by his pupil August Göllerich, provide invaluable insight into the master's pianism. He suggested his talented pupils make their own alterations to his works for better realization,⁸⁴ which shows his respect for others' musical personalities. While Liszt's way of recreation is uncommon in modern performance practice, his openness fostered more possibilities for his music to be explored.

Considering Liszt's attitude for taking liberty, a performer's interpretation contributes meaningfully to Liszt's music. Though Liszt stressed the performer's fidelity in his later life, he always left room for performers to highlight their own personalities to audiences more than any other composer. The nature of Liszt's music is not a molded frame. Liszt's approach to keyboard music is distinctive, since he adapted his own pianistic skills to his works. He knew very well how to create drama in his piano music, but he also left numerous interpretative decisions to the performers.

Liszt's musical charisma also came from his powerful sound projection on the stage, encompassing tenderness to grandeur. Liszt's contemporaries, such as François-Joseph Fétis and Ignaz Moscheles, compared Liszt's performance with orchestral playing,⁸⁵ which suggests that Liszt's keyboard music, particularly large-scale works, enlarged the expressive capability of the piano. Different levels of dynamics and textual contrast create compelling dramatic force in Liszt's works, which evoke the orchestral effect on his audience.

⁸⁴ Hamilton, *After the Golden Age: Romantic Pianism and Modern Performance*, 174.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 227.

The performative nature and orchestral character can be applied to the *Harmonies*, considering that the *Harmonies* is a cycle of ten pieces lasting ninety minutes long. A work of grand music drama and transcendence, the *Harmonies* encapsulate Liszt's moral idealism and stylistic elements of his pianism. Just like his multifaceted personality, Liszt's pianism and aesthetics reveal his multi-layered artistry, which ultimately appear as dramatic clashes in his music.

Performance Difficulties of the *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*

Though the cycle certainly possesses marked characteristics and significant value, most of movements are not usually encountered in concerts. Indeed, owing to their intense virtuosity and exquisite lyricism, only the *Bénédiction* and the *Funérailles* have remained staples of the piano recital. Why has the *Harmonies* as a whole not received the same recognition as, say, the *Années de pèlerinage*?

The biggest difficulty is its length, approximately ninety minutes as a whole, which is unconventionally long for a typical concert or recital. Nowadays, concert programs in general offer a variety of pieces from different eras, so the performance of a single work of such length is a daring and daunting task for pianists. Such a performance—which can last anywhere from seventy-five to ninety minutes—also demands an intense focus on the part of the audience. Yet, this religious drama exposes constant inner conflicts and redemption, subjects that Liszt himself dealt with, so the *Harmonies* offers the performer/audience a window into the composer's state of mind, as it held a special personal significance for Liszt.

Another concern is the lack of musical consistency and excitement, compared to his other piano cycles. Liszt was often criticized for his uninteresting and repetitious large-scale works,⁸⁶ and the *Harmonies* have shared the same criticism. As mentioned above, only a few pieces survived on the stage, and scholars often criticize its inconsistent quality. Humphrey Searle condemns the *Harmonies* as extremely uneven, and he further argues that arrangements of liturgical music had no importance, describing that the *Invocation* is overdone and the *Pensée des morts* is weaker than its original version.⁸⁷ While the *Bénédiction* and the *Funérailles* are praised as Liszt's masterpieces, the remaining pieces are often severely criticized for their overly simple setting and lack of musical drive.

However, considering the amount of time that Liszt dedicated to the composition of the *Harmonies* and the ways in which the cycle reflects his own artistic and personal goals, the *Harmonies* demand an interpretive approach that is distinct from his other cycles. The *Harmonies* also demands a total commitment to explore various levels of emotional states, and this experience will appeal to each listener in a different way. Individual movements convey a distinctive ambience, presenting various levels of emotion from spiritual serenity and confidence to dreary intensity and utter despair. Though a piece on its own might be considered weak and uneven, when combined these pieces create a highly contrasting, fulfilling drama.

As the *Harmonies*—both Lamartine's original and Liszt's piano cycle—seeks communion with God, three different characters, which were introduced in chapter 4,

⁸⁶ Rosen, 472.

⁸⁷ Humphrey Searle, *The Music of Liszt* (London: Williams & Norgate Limited, 1954), 55.

deliver the religious music drama: Prayer, Church, and God. In other words, the performer must inhabit three very different roles on stage.

New Approach to the *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*

A lengthy work is a double-edged sword; it can contain a composer's various musical ideas and its variations, but it can easily overwhelm the audience, as it requires high concentration for a considerable time. As discussed above, the *Harmonies* has been obscure for a long time due to its inapproachable length. However, this extensive work can be interpreted as an extraordinary work of religious music drama for solo piano, which condenses a life-long religious journey. In that way, the *Harmonies* should be reconstructed with a specific dramatic scheme to show what Liszt tried to pursue in his longest piano cycle. The new approach to the *Harmonies* will also shed new light on the maligned pieces of the work, such as the *Ave Maria* and the *Andante lagrimoso*, to rediscover their dramatic functions in the cycle.

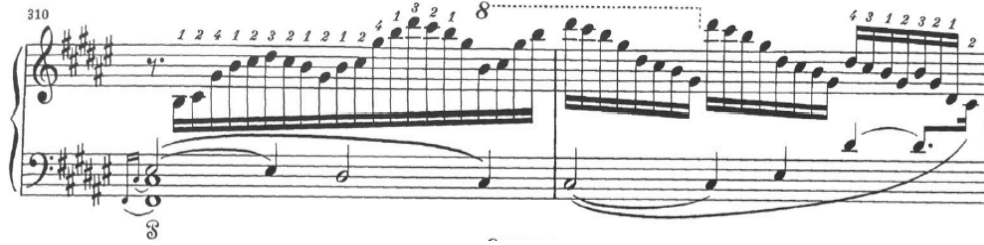
To obtain musical integrity with dramatic flow, the *Harmonies* needs to establish a dramatic profile. Various stylistic contrasts in the cycle portray three different characters, Prayer, Church, and God, and these characters appear successively, creating a plot for the cycle. Each character conveys its own personality: Prayer's inner conflict creates dramatic tension, which constructs the main stream of narrative for the work. While Prayer acts like the leading character, God makes a balance of the drama, providing the opposite atmosphere. Church is the pivot of the dynamics among the characters, as it is a medium of communion between Prayer and God. The voice of God consoles Prayer, guiding him to redemption, and this serene, yet resolute, voice

effectively builds dramatic contrast against Prayer. Therefore, the roles of Church and God are significant in the *Harmonies* as the dramatic forces alongside Prayer's extreme range of emotions.

Though Prayer unfolds intense inner distress through a wide range of emotions, Liszt set a relatively slow tempo for pieces in which Prayer appears. The tempo indications of these pieces, *Andante con moto*, *Lento assai*, and *Adagio*, do not seem pertinent with the expression of earnest pleading. It is musical gestures that create the passionate atmosphere for Prayer's pieces, which are the *Invocation*, the *Pensée des morts*, and the *Funérailles*, describing the chaotic mind of a struggling human being. Despite choosing *Andante con moto* for the *Invocation*, Liszt himself advised his students to play it rather fast and fiery so as to be faithful to musical context.⁸⁸ Considering Liszt's successful production of the dramatic effect in the *Harmonies* with moderate tempo, his choice of tempo reveals that he did not adhere to excessive virtuosic style, but focused instead on expressing profound musicality. However, it does not mean that Liszt neglected his renowned technique. These tempo indications practically provide Liszt with room to present various virtuosic techniques in a more sophisticated way. For example, the *lgrimoso* from the *Funérailles* at m. 56 seems rather simple, but the left hand spans almost two octaves with rolling chords in *pianissimo*. While the left hand is busy stretching, the right hand should play a single *legato* melodic line. The *Bénédiction* has a similar presentation, with constantly moving accompanimental figures and long phrases of *cantabile* melody. The example below shows a singing melody in the bass and a florid accompaniment that should sound effortless.

⁸⁸ Hamilton, *After the Golden Age: Romantic Pianism and Modern Performance*, 241.

Example 14. Liszt, *Bénédiction*, mm. 310-311.



There are more direct presentations of virtuosity as well; the cascading octave passages in the *Funérailles* at mm. 133-155 reminds us of Liszt's mastery of the keyboard. It is worth emphasizing, however, that Liszt employed his virtuosic technique only to heighten the dramatic and musical elements of the *Harmonies*. Liszt's restrained use of virtuosic presentation is effective in terms of the dynamics of drama in this lengthy work.

Each movement conveys a different approach to express its musical intensity, as it portrays different subjects of suffering. The *Invocation* begs for an answer from God, and its abrupt opening and repetition of rising and falling octaves create an alarmed and urgent mood, which describes Prayer's anxiety and impetus. The *Pensée des morts* is the most striking and compelling piece in the *Harmonies*, portraying the darkest side of one's mind. The opening does not give a definite feeling of tonality, and the melodic line does not settle with a cadence, which sounds like endless self-doubt. It starts with a single melodic line and octaves, and it develops into a denser texture with repetitive and fluctuating chords. As one doubt creates a train of anguish, Liszt put diminished and augmented chords in vague tonality constantly to maximize its dramatic effect, which comes from "a thought of the dead." The following chordal section at m. 58 is the strong moment of emotional explosion. With its simple chordal setting, Prayer's crying for mercy is so powerful that all the dizzying technical presentation stops here, succumbing

to an irresistible force toward God. The next *Adagio* part from m. 77 is particularly astonishing in terms of its opposite simplicity. This section requires much less difficult technique, and it has a plainer setting with repetitive accompaniment and rolling chords. Liszt suggests a delicate performance in this *Adagio* section, putting *dolcissimo*, *cantabile assai*, and *sempre sotto voce e legato* at the beginning. This can be odd after all the emotional swirls with technical demands; however, the sluggish mood in the *Adagio* depicts a sense of emptiness after death. G major may suggest gentleness, but it does not demonstrate sweetness after the resolution. The flowing accompaniment from m. 85 might also indicate redemption after renouncing worldly desires. The previous section ends at m. 75 in a single melodic line like the introduction, indicating that Prayer's doubt still remains. Therefore, the subsequent section delivers the completely drained emotion of one who ceases to exist.

The emotional exhaustion that inspired Liszt to compose the earliest *Harmonies* was no longer viable to Liszt in 1853; instead, the idea of reconciliation shaped the profile of the final version of the *Harmonies*. The *Funérailles* also depicts darkness and the fierceness of death, but Liszt sublimates it to heroism. Liszt intensified the unsettling atmosphere with clashing diminished chords from the beginning, and the augmented triads add bitterness. While the *Pensée des morts* hardly has a dotted rhythm, the *Funérailles* shows its extensive use. Even the melodic line of the *lagrimoso* at m. 56 carries the dotted rhythm to heighten the expression of deep sorrow. The *Funérailles* releases an explosive energy from its virtuosic technique, which guides Prayer to reach the most fanatical moment. However, the piece concludes with an F minor chord and

octave in *pianissimo* after the fierce drama, and this mysterious ending leaves the audience expecting another closure.

The pieces for Church, the *Ave Maria*, the *Pater noster*, and the *Miserere d'après Palestrina*, have been blamed for creating the uneven quality of the *Harmonies*. However, they significantly develop the drama. The simple setting of those movements seems dull on the surface, compared to other pieces, but it is an immediate and efficient way to divert the extreme emotions from Prayer's pieces. After the ecstasy of the *Bénédiction* and the trauma of the *Pensée des morts*, the *Pater noster* cleanses the agonized soul with holy water. This startling contrast instantly changes the mood, evoking a mystic atmosphere to make the audience want to enter a spiritual place. While Prayer and God deliver a lyrical or intense tone, simplicity in the pieces of Church gives a reserved tone. Church stands impartial in the drama, so that the interaction between Prayer and God characterizes the drama's main confrontations. In this way, the uneven quality can be understood as a dramatic flow, in fact, as a composer's specific intention. The structure is transparent, and there is no need to elaborate the given melodies to create intensity. If this simplicity were absent in the cycle, the interaction between Prayer and God would not be appealing as a transcendental experience, but heard as a simple repetition of intensity and lyricism without a convincing narrative. Church pieces give a moment to breathe for both of the performer and the audience, making them reflect on the current state of mind and elevate themselves into spiritual awareness.

Though all three movements for Church show monotonous settings, each of them has a different texture, which evokes various sets of instrumentation. The *Ave Maria* is the most melodious and chromatic of the three. The beginning of the piece imitates the

sound of a bell, and the melodic flow and the chordal parts overall evoke various instruments of chamber orchestra, creating the inviting mood. The *Pater noster* has the simplest texture in the *Harmonies*, mostly chordal. This piece can be associated with a small group of instruments like a woodwind quartet, and intimacy from the simple setting guides listeners into their internalization. The *Miserere d'après Palestrina* shows vibrato-like figures and lots of arpeggios, and they resemble the technique of string instruments, especially a harp. The varied texture from each piece provides ideas for a tone production.

The *Bénédiction*, the *Hymne de l'enfant à son réveil*, and the *Andante lagrimoso* convey the resolute and gracious voice of God. While Liszt arranged Church movements in restrained and distant ways, he inserted a lyrical nature for the character of God. Liszt brings out various virtues through different musical portrait of each movement. The *Bénédiction* is a prime example that shows Liszt's exceptional lyricism, which expresses the sublime, a divine value. According to Kilgore, the florid accompaniment of the *Bénédiction* is associated with the expression of divine water, and it evokes an impressionistic atmosphere, using four notes of the pentatonic scale.⁸⁹ Liszt himself described water as a source of eternal life,⁹⁰ and he extensively used this accompaniment in his water-associated pieces like the *Jeux d'eaux à la Villa d'Este*. As the accompaniment creates serenity over the slow melodic line, the recitative-like melody delivers solitude. Hamilton suggests that Liszt's music should move in large phrases, and the tone production and a singing melody are the most important qualities to bring out in

⁸⁹ Kilgore, 139.

⁹⁰ Kilgore, 140.

the *Bénédiction*.⁹¹ Simplicity in the *Hymne de l'enfant à son réveil* depicts absolute purity and innocence, and it is particularly compelling in the context of death from the *Pensée des morts*. As mentioned above, the closing section of the *Pensée des morts* illustrates complete emptiness after death, and the pureness in the *Hymne de l'enfant à son réveil* emerges out of the nothingness of death. In the *Andante lagrimoso*, God demonstrates his empathy for Prayer's sorrow from the loss of his beloved, and God's compassion shows despair, expressed by the opening sigh motif, and comfort from the flowing C major section at m. 42.

The last piece, the *Cantique d'amour*, is an epilogue by Prayer that shows reconciliation. After restless suffering, Prayer finally finds an answer that can heal inner wounds and agony: love. The introduction of the piece starts with the sigh motif in G-sharp minor, and it quickly shifts to dominant of E major, as if the longtime frustration finally finds a hope for resolution. The piece carries a large phrase of melody, surrounded by broken chords and arpeggios, and the performer should focus on the singing tone of the main melodic line, producing the restful mood through accompaniment. A short cadenza at m. 107 and the following coda describe the sheer joy of the final reconciliation. The recurring ascending arpeggios describe the elevation of the soul, and *poco accelerando* from m. 124 magnifies the ecstatic moment into a grandioso ending.

Closing Remarks

A reevaluation and the new approach to the *Harmonies* have great significance, in terms of reviving this obscure work and, more generally, rediscovering Liszt's artistic path. Considering the *Harmonies* as one of Liszt's early efforts during the transition of

⁹¹ Hamilton, *After the Golden Age: Romantic Pianism and Modern Performance*, 242.

his career path, this magnificent cycle is a milestone in Liszt's compositional career, which preserves various musical experiments to realize his idealism on religion and music. Liszt agonized over the social role of artists in his time, and he firmly believed in beneficial influence of religion through art. This sincere attitude was reflected on the *Harmonies*, as Liszt tried to deliver religious transformation through the cycle. In a way, The *Harmonies* is where Liszt's musical creativity meets his philosophical interest. As Quinn claims, Liszt was indeed much more than a piano virtuoso.⁹²

Through the characterization of each piece from the *Harmonies*, the work can find a new way of interpretation as a religious music drama on a large scale. The inconsistent quality and the unusual length of the *Harmonies*, major causes of existing criticism, can be perceived as a compelling narrative, created by three distinctive characters. The *Harmonies* deals with self-doubt and a feeling of uncertainty about life and death, which any man can experience, and Liszt suggested universal values as a key to reconciliation. Liszt's personal and expressive Catholicism in the *Harmonies* aims to appeal to the individual. The detailed narrative with three characters well serves the composer's approach to this religious music drama, and helps the audience assimilate the story as a prayer. Liszt invites the listeners to journey through his musical confession, and makes them experience spiritual exaltation by his renewed faith in God.

A performer's mission seems daunting. First and foremost, the performer should embrace a genuine Lisztian identity, a struggling man/artist, which is far different from his public persona, to understand the value of the *Harmonies*. Liszt employs related motives, harmonic progressions, and forms to emphasize the symbolic meaning of the Trinity throughout the *Harmonies*. These elements not only bring musical unity to the

⁹² Quinn, 62.

cycle, but also Liszt's religious conviction, namely, that exists in the every form of nature. Various sides of Liszt's pianism should be explored, and the performer should also reveal Liszt's ability to create the dramatic force out of striking simplicity. As the *Harmonies* let the audience experience religious transformation, the new interpretation of the *Harmonies* will transform our perspectives on Liszt's musical and philosophical view, and it will help understand Liszt's personal and artistic integrity.

In short, the *Harmonies* is a sublime music drama, one which demands a substantially different approach from Liszt's other, more popular, piano cycles. The interpretation offered here seeks to clarify Liszt's intentions, to give the audience greater accessibility, and to enable them to better experience—and participate in—Liszt's spiritual journey.

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Appendix

A. Selected Poems from Lamartine's *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*, referenced

in Liszt's *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*. Translations by Bo Ra Kim.

Invocation

Élevez-vous, voix de mon âme,
Avec l'aurore, avec la nuit!
Élancez-vous comme la flamme,
Répandez-vous comme le bruit!
Flottez sur l'aile des nuages,
Mêlez-vous aux vents, aux orages,
Au tonnerre, au fracas des flots;

Élevez-vous dans le silence
A l'heure où dans l'ombre du soir
La lampe des nuits se balance,
Quand le prêtre éteint l'encensoir;
Élevez-vous au bord des ondes
Dans ces solitudes profondes
Où Dieu se révèle à la foi!

Invocation

Rise, voice of my soul,
With the dawn, with the night!
Run like a flame,
Spread like a noise!
Float on the wing of clouds,
Mingle with the winds, the storms,
Thunder, the roar of waves;

Rise, in silence
Now or in the shades of evening
The lamp of nights in balance,
When the priest turns off the incense
Rise on the edge of waves
In this profound solitude
Where God is revealed in faith!

Bénédition de Dieu dans la solitude

D'où me vient, ô mon Dieu! cette paix qui m'inonde?
D'où me vient cette foi dont mon coeur surabonde?
A moi, qui tout à l'heure incertain, agité,
Et sur les flots du doute à tout vent ballotté,
Cherchais le bien, le vrai, dans les rêves des sages,
Et la paix dans des coeurs retentissants d'orages.
À peine sur mon front quelques jours ont glissé,
Il me semble qu'un siècle et qu'un monde ont passé;
Et que, séparé d'eux par un abîme immense,
Un nouvel homme en moi renaît et recommence.

Blessings of God in solitude

Whence comes, O my God, this peace which overwhelms me?
Whence comes this faith with which my heart overflows?
To me who, always uncertain, agitated
And on the waves of doubt at any wind sways
Search for good, the truth, in the dreams of the wise,
And the peace in the resounding hearts of storms.
Scarcely on my brow some days have passed,
It seems to me that a century and a world have passed;
And that, they are separated by an immense abyss,
A new man in me is reborn and begins again.

Pensée des morts

Voilà les feuilles sans sève
Qui tombent sur le gazon;
Voilà le vent qui s'élève
Et gémit dans le vallon;
Voilà l'errante hirondelle
Qui rase du bout de l'aile
L'eau dormante des marais;
Voilà l'enfant des chaumières
Qui glane sur les bruyères
Le bois tombé des forêts.

Thought of the dead

There are the leaves without sap
Which fall on the grass;
There is the wind that rises
And moans in the valley;

There is the wandering swallow
Who grazes the tips of wing
The still water of the marshes
There is the child of thatched cottages
Who gleans on the moor
The fallen wood of the forest.

Hymne de l'enfant à son réveil

Ô Père qu'adore mon père,
Toi qu'on ne nomme qu'à genoux!
Toi dont le nom terrible et doux
Fait courber le front de ma mère!

On dit que ce brillant soleil
N'est qu'un jouet de ta puissance;
Que sous tes pieds il se balance
Comme une lampe de vermeil.

On dit que c'est toi qui fais naître
Les petits oiseaux dans les champs,
Et qui donne aux petits enfants
Une âme aussi pour te connaître!

On dit que c'est toi qui produis
Les fleurs dont le jardin se pare,
Et que, sans toi, toujours avare,
Le verger n'aurait point de fruits.

Aux dons que ta bonté mesure
Tout l'univers est convié;
Nul insecte n'est oublié
À ce festin de la nature.

Hymn of the child at this awakening

O Father who adores my father,
The one whom we only name when on our knees!
You whose name is terrible and sweet
bent my mother's face!

It is said that the brilliant sun
Is a toy of your power;
That under your feet he balances himself as in equilibrium
As a golden-red lamp.

It is said that from you the little birds are born
The little birds in the fields
And it is you who gives the little children
A soul through which to know you!

It is said that you produce
The flowers which adorn the garden,
And that without you, always sparing,
The orchard would have no fruits.

The gifts of your goodness measure
The entire universe is invited;
No insect is forgotten
At this feast of nature.

Une Larme, ou consolation

Tombez, larmes silencieuses,
Sur une terre sans pitié;
Non plus entre des main pieuses,
Ni sur le sein de l'amitié!

Tombez comme une aride pluie
Qui rejaillit sur le rocher,
Que nul rayon du ciel n'essuie,
Que nul souffle ne vient sécher.

A tear or consolation

Fall, silent tears,
On a land without pity;
Neither between pious hands,
Nor on the breast of friendship!

Fall as an arid rain
That reflects on the rock
Let no ray of heaven wipe
Let no breath come to dry.

B. Latin Prayers, referenced in Liszt's *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*

Ave Maria

Ave Maria, gratia plena,
Dominus tecum,
Benedicta tu in mulieribus,
et benedictus fructus ventris tui, Jesus.
Sancta Maria, Mater Dei,
ora pro nobis peccatoribus,
nunc et in hora mortis nostrae

Hail Mary, full of grace,
our Lord's with thee,
Blessed art thou among women,
and Blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, mother of God,
pray for us sinners, now,
and in the hour of our death

De Profundis

De profundis clamavi ad te, Domine;
Domine, exaudi vocem meam.
Fiant aures tuæ intendentes in vocem deprecationis meæ.
Si iniquitates observaveris, Domine,
Domine, quis sustinebit?
Quia apud te propitiatio est;
et propter legem tuam sustinui te, Domine.
Sustinuit anima mea in verbo ejus:
speravit anima mea in Domino.
A custodia matutina usque ad noctem,
Speret Israël in Domino.
Quia apud Dominum misericordia,
et copiosa apud eum redemptio.
Et ipse redimet Israël ex omnibus iniquitatibus ejus.

From the depths, I have cried to thee, O Lord;
Lord, hear my voice.
Let thy ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.
If thou, O Lord, wilt mark iniquities:
Lord, who shall stand it?
For with thee there is merciful forgiveness:
and by reason of thy law, I stood by thee, O Lord.

My soul hath relied on your word:
My soul hath hoped in the Lord.
From the morning watch even until night,
Let Israel hope in the Lord.
Because with the Lord there is mercy:
and with him plentiful redemption.
And he will redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

Miserere

Miserere mei Deus,
secundum magnam misericordiam tuam.
Et secundum miserationem tuam,
dele iniquitatem meam.

Have mercy on me, O God,
after thy great goodness.
And according to the multitude of thy tender mercies
blot out my iniquity.

Pater noster

Pater noster qui es in caelis
sanctificetur nomen tuum.
Adveniat regnum tuum.
fiat voluntas tua,
sicut in caelo et in terra.
Panem nostrum quotidianum da nobis hodie.
Et dimitte nobis debita nostra,
sicut et nos dimittimus debitoribus nostris.
Et ne nos inducas in tentationem:
sed libera nos a malo.
Amen.

Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed by thy name,
Thy kingdom come,
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
and lead us not to into temptation:
but deliver us from evil.

Amen.