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Romanzen Aus Magelone: Characteristics of Style

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5

ROMANZEN AUS MAGELONE:
CHARACTERISTICS OF STYLE

A Covering Paper
Presented to
the Graduate Faculty
Central Washington State College

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Benjamin Fredrick Hammack
August 1972

An integral part of this covering paper is a tape recording of a graduate recital performed on July 27, 1969, as part of the requirements for the completion of the thesis.

APPROVED FOR THE GRADUATE FACULTY

Joseph S. Haruda, COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

Wayne S. Hertz

John DeMerchant

Note: A Copy of the recital program follows on next page.

CENTRAL WASHINGTON STATE COLLEGE
DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

presents in

Graduate Recital

FRED HAMMACK, Tenor

*VIVIENNE W. ROWLEY, Pianist

Assisted by *HERBERT A. BIRD, Violist

PROGRAM

I
Danza, danza, fanciula gentile..... Francesco Durante
Mattinata Ruggiero Leoncavallo
Nebbie Ottorino Respighi
Celeste Aida Giuseppi Verdi
 from "Aida"

II
Die Mainacht Johannes Brahms
Keinen hat es noch gereut Johannes Brahms
Treue Liebe dauert lange Johannes Brahms
Morgenlich leuchten in rosigen Schein Richard Wagner
 from "Die Meistersinger von Nurnberg"

INTERMISSION

III
Si mes vers avaient des ailes Reynaldo Hahn
Extase Henri Duparc
Beau Soir Claude Debussy
La fleur que tu m'avais Jetee Georges Bizet
 from "Carmen"

IV
Four Hymns Ralph Vaughan Williams
 I. Lord! Come Away!
 II. Who Is This Fair One?
 III. Come Love, Come Lord
 IV. Evening Hymn

Herbert A. Bird, Viola

Outside This House Samuel Barber
 from "Vanessa"

HERTZ RECITAL HALL

July 27, 1969

3:00 P.M.

**Faculty Member*

*In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts Degree in Music
Reception following in Room 123*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
1. INTRODUCTION	1
PURPOSE OF THE STUDY.	1
LIMITATION OF THE STUDY	1
DEFINITION OF TERMS	1
Chromaticism	1
Diatonic	2
Free sectional	2
<u>Lied</u>	2
Parlato.	2
Strophic	2
2. THE POEMS.	3
THE TEXT.	3
3. CHARACTERISTICS OF STYLE	6
MELODY.	6
RHYTHM AND METER.	7
HARMONY	8
FORM.	9
TEXTURE	9
PIANO ACCOMPANIMENT	10
4. SUMMARY.	12
BIBLIOGRAPHY.	14

ROMANZEN AUS MAGELONE:
CHARACTERISTICS OF STYLE
by
Benjamin Fredrick Hammack

Brahms' Romanzen aus Magelone serves as an excellent model for the German lied. Although other musical elements are important, Brahms never sacrifices his melodic lines, which progress diatonically in a wide range. Complex rhythms, with such devices as hemiola and holding over the measure line, are frequent. Although some songs are ternary or strophic, a free-sectional form is generally employed. The textures vary; one song may be both homophonic and polyphonic. A complex piano accompaniment always enhances the text and requires an accomplished pianist.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Romanzen aus Magelone, Opus 33, for high voice and piano accompaniment, Brahms' setting of fifteen poems by Ludwig Tieck, constitutes a very important contribution to the repertory of the German lied. It is unusual that this cycle is little known to many, including some in the field of music.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

In view of the fact that many singers have a somewhat limited knowledge of the Magelone cycle, a study of these songs is of value. The author found that such an investigation was helpful in understanding and in performing this cycle.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Although the writer performed only two songs (the first and last) from the cycle on his Masters' Recital, the investigation includes all fifteen songs, with comments on various musical characteristics of style.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Chromaticism. The use of tones not naturally appearing

in the diatonic scale.

Diatonic. Denotes the natural scale of five whole steps and two half steps.

Free sectional. Refers to a form that is sectional in nature but conforms to no standard form.

Lied. A song in the German vernacular.

Parlato. A style of singing with syllables of the text occurring on every note.

Strophic. A form in which all verses in a song are sung to the same music.

Chapter 2

THE POEMS

Luwig Tieck's poems, Liebesgeschickte der Schönen Magelone und Grafen Peter von Provence were set to music by Brahms between 1861 and 1868. The first section (six songs) was published in 1865; the second section (nine songs) appeared in 1868. Sources have noted that Brahms was inspired to set the poems because of a childhood sweetheart. After meeting her again in 1861, and learning of her marriage, he was prompted to write the cycle. Inasmuch as the poems comprise a group of composite narratives, a brief synopsis is provided.

THE TEXT

Young Count Peter of Provence desires to leave his parents home and travel the world. His desires to travel are strengthened when he meets a noble, wandering minstrel from a foreign land who sings song No. 1, Keinen hat es noch gereut (None has ever mourn'd in sooth). Peter follows the counsel of the minstrel and one morning leaves his parents and riding off, he sings song No. 2, Traun! Bogen und Pfeil sind gut für den Feind (Ho! Broadsword and spear are meet for the foe). Upon arriving in Naples where King Magelon

lives with his daughter Magelone, Peter seeing her, falls in love. Shortly thereafter Magelone notices Peter, who, completely enraptured, sings song No. 3, Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden (Are they sorrow, are they pleasure).

Magelone, similarly infatuated, requests her nurse to find out Peter's name and rank. After answering the nurses' questions Peter inserts a message in a ring he wishes Magelone to have. She is greatly impressed with the message which is song No. 4, Liebe kam aus fernen Landen (Love came forth from far off places). She puts the ring on a string of pearls around her neck. Song No. 5, So willst du des Armen (Wilt deign to be near me), is the second message given to Magelone in a ring. After the third meeting with the nurse, a meeting of Peter and Magelone is arranged in her chambers. Peter is ecstatic and sings song No. 6, Wie soll ich die Freude, die Wonne denn tragen? (O joy out of measure, the hour of our greeting). At the meeting Peter vows his love, gives her a third ring and, after leaving, sings song No. 7, War es dir, dem diese Lippen bebten ('Twas for thee, for thee my lips were burning). After agreeing to break her previous engagement and flee with Peter, he sings, to his lute, song No. 8, Wir müssen uns trennen (The hour of our parting).

During the flight, Magelone, resting, listens to Peter sing a lullaby, song No. 9, Ruhe, Süßliebchen (Rest thee, my lady). As Magelone sleeps, Peter removes the necklace with the rings and places it on the ground beside him.

Destiny then appears in the form of a raven who snatches up the rings and, after being chased by Peter, drops the necklace into the sea. Peter, panic stricken, finds a boat and rows to the spot where the rings fell into the water. A storm breaks and drives Peter out to sea where in despair he sings song No. 10, So tönet denn, schäumende Wellen (The seawaters roar and surround me). Magelone, awakening, searches for Peter, finds his horse, and as she follows it, loses her way in the forest. She finally discovers the house of an old shepherd and his wife. She sings of her desolation in song No. 11, Wie schnell verschwindet so Licht als Glanz (As fame and power fast fade away). Meanwhile, Peter, lost at sea, is rescued and taken to a Sultan's castle where he thinks about Magelone in song No. 12, Muss es eine Trennung geben (Must we then once more be parted). The Sultan's daughter, Sulima, infatuated with Peter, waits for him in the garden and sings song No. 13, Geliebter, wo zaudert (Sweet love, what can hinder). However, Peter escapes and, drifting on the sea, merrily sings song No. 14, Wie froh und frisch (How free and fresh). Peter is rescued eventually by fishermen who direct him to shepherds; the same ones who are protecting Magelone. Peter and Magelone are joyfully reunited and married. To celebrate their reunion they plant a tree and return each year to that place, consecrating it with song No. 15, Treue liebe dauert lange (Love long tried hath long endured) (8:361).

Chapter 3

CHARACTERISTICS OF STYLE

Romanzen aus Magelone, published when Brahms was thirty years old, established his career as a lied composer. In these songs many musical characteristics of Brahms are evident.

MELODY

As in all of Brahms' lied, the melody is the creative force in the Magelone cycle. Although other musical elements are generally apparent, Brahms never subordinates his vocal line to them. In setting the text, and thus enhancing its meaning musically, his melodic line frequently assumes dramatic proportions. This is evident in many songs, particularly song No. 1, Keinen hat es noch gereut, where even the range becomes extreme, extending over an octave and a fifth.

The wide range of these songs is quite different from the majority of German lied, which has a somewhat limited range. The opening phrase of song No. 10, illustrates a wide vocal range. (Example 1.)

The melodies of the cycle generally move in a diatonic manner, although some chromaticism is employed. Many times the chromaticism occurs with a change of mood and modulation

of key. (Example 2.)

Example 1. So tonet denn, schäumende Wellen, meas. 4-6

So tö - - - net denn, schäu - - - men - de
The sea - - - wa - ters roar - - - and sur

Example 2. Wie froh und frisch, meas. 56-61

Sie mit sanf - - - tem Au - - - ge
kind, - - - est eyes, me seems, - - - are
nie - - - der. Eb - ne dich, du
gaz - - - ing. Waft the bur - - - den,

Even in the most dramatic sections, executed in a parlato styl, Brahms still has a cantabile melody.

Example 3. Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden, meas. 48-51

dul - - den? Wie ist's, daß mir im Traum al - le Ge - dan - ken auf und
an - - guish? A - round, like to a dream, fan - cies are play - ing charmed

RHYTHM AND METER

Many rhythmic devices are employed in the cycle, most of them in the accompaniment. One rhythmic device that Brahms uses quite often is a type of hemiola, i.e., a time value relationship of 3:2 (1:329). (Example 4.) Many times the rhythm of the vocal line and that of the accompaniment seemingly are unrelated. However, its employment is

clarified when the text is understood.

Example 4. Wie soll ich die Freude, die Wonne denn tragen?
meas. 2-3

Allegro.

The songs are generally metrical, although at times Brahms obscures the meter by tying over the bar line.

HARMONY

As with most music of the Romantic period, conventional triadic harmony is employed. Other features such as chromaticism and polyphonic devices are all based on a strong tonal center.

Example 5. Wie froh und frisch, meas. 40-42

längst er-sehn ten Hei-mat
long de-sir'd, that long lost

Although there are frequent temporary modulations which appear somewhat complex, the tonal feeling is never really lost.

FORM

In general, Brahms employs a free-sectional form in most of the songs, however a few are in ternary and strophic form. The free-sectional form allows Brahms freedom of melodic repetition without conforming to a standard sectional form. Occasionally the freedom of the form is influenced by other elements such as textual considerations.

TEXTURE

Both homophonic and polyphonic textures are evident in this cycle and frequently in the same song. For example song No. 4, Liebe kam aus fernen Landen employs a homophonic texture in the first section.

Example 6. Liebe kam aus fernen Landen, meas. 1-2

Andante.

Lie - be kam aus fer - nen Lan - den
Love came forth from far off pla - ces,

However, the next section is polyphonic in texture. (Example 7.)

Example 7. Liebe kam aus fernen Landen, meas. 38-40

Poco vivace e sempre animato.

Al - - le mei-ne Wünsche flo - gen in der Lüf-te blau-en
Wings are all my wishes tak - ing, through the blue they float and

cresc. ed animato

PIANO ACCOMPANIMENT

The accompaniment of the Magelone cycle is an extremely important part of each song. All songs demand an accomplished pianist, as most are quite difficult. The complexity of the piano part, however, varies according to the demands of the text. At times the accompaniment should be quite subordinate and understated. At other times the piano part is extremely important in enhancing the text. For example song No. 1, Keinen hat es noch gereut depicts the galloping of a horse. The piano part very expertly portrays this galloping.

Example 8. Keinen hat es noch gereut, meas. 15-20

Other descriptive effects employed in the accompaniment are found in song No. 10, So tönet denn, schäumende Wellen where the piano depicts the rushing of the seawaters. A gentle rocking motion in the accompaniment describes the lullaby in song No. 9, Ruhe, Süssliebchen.

Occasionally, when the vocal line is repeated, the accompaniment is varied to provide further musical effects. In some songs, the accompaniment serves as a unifying force. For example in song No. 6, Wie soll ich die Freude, die Wonne denn tragen? while the vocal part changes in various ways, the accompaniment, at the end, repeats the opening. Although the melodic lines in this cycle are always evident, the accompaniment is never completely a subordinate part.

Chapter 4

SUMMARY

Brahms' Romanzen aus Magelone serves as an excellent model for the German lied. Although other musical elements are important, Brahms never sacrifices his melodic lines, which progress diatonically in a wide range. Complex rhythms, with such devices as hemiola and holding over the measure line, are frequent. Although some songs are ternary or strophic, a free-sectional form is generally employed. The textures vary; one song may be both homophonic and polyphonic. A complex piano accompaniment always enhances the text and requires an accomplished pianist.

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