

## Academic Forum 36 (2018–19)

Given the preceding overview of two instances of divergence in hocket scholarship, certain conclusions can be drawn. Based upon the contemporaneous writings of John of Salisbury, Prosdocimus de Beldemandis, and Franco of Cologne, Dalglish's careful consideration of a potential improvisatory origin of hocket technique is convincing and, to me, offers a much more satisfactory answer than does Sanders' compositional origin of the practice as an outgrowth of the Notre-Dame school. Furthermore, I find Zayaruznaya's criticisms of Schmidt-Beste to be well-researched and supported. Schmidt-Beste, however, convincingly argues that mid-syllable hocketing is far more dramatic than post- or non-syllabic hocketing. Therefore, I argue that standard, contemporary hocket practice was post- or non-syllabic hocket distribution with mid-syllabic hocketing reserved for dramatic effect in pertinent passages.

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## Liszt's *Funerailles*: A Picture of Loss

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### Abstract:

In the world of music, many pieces bear titles that aid the listener in understanding the musical intent. Some might assume the same to be the case with Franz Liszt's piano piece, *Funerailles* (Lit: Funerals). Indeed, Liszt includes an additional indicator of his intent by writing "October 1849" at the top of the manuscript as well. The fateful month indicated saw the death of Liszt's famous contemporary and fellow composer Frederic Chopin as well as the historically significant execution of the Thirteen Martyrs of Arad in Liszt's native Hungary. With such imbuelement of meaning, it stands to reason that the piece contains material that can be interpreted to be musical expressions of loss. In this paper, I argue that *Funerailles* is a musical depiction of the concept of loss and its many manifestations. After supporting this claim, a short narrative is included which guides the listener through Liszt's evocative piece.

Essay:

Though many of Franz Liszt's pieces contain titles which aid their interpretation (*La Campanella*, *Mephisto Waltz*, *Mazzeppa*, etc.), it is significantly less common for him to give a descriptive title and suggestive subtitle. In the case of *Funerailles* (Lit. Funerals), not only does Liszt place this piece within his evocative set "Poetic and Religious Harmonies," but he also includes the subtitle *October 1849*.<sup>29</sup> With such indications of meaning and signification, Liszt must have included within the piece certain icons or musical topics that aid in interpreting the meaning and narrative of the piece as a whole. Because of this, looking within the work for interpretive clues and teasing out hermeneutic windows gives both performer and listener an opportunity to achieve a deeper understanding and appreciation for the piece as a whole. Overall, I argue that with Liszt's distinct interpretive cues and dialogue with Chopin through intertext, *Funerailles* can be understood as a musical iteration of loss. This loss is not simply the pain of death, but rather the entire series of events that takes place with loss – pain, anger, nostalgia, frustration, loss of purpose, and eventually, overcoming loss. While conveying this sense of loss, Liszt includes small vignettes of the loss he himself is experiencing in the deaths of Chopin and the 13 Martyrs of Arad during October 1849.



Figure 1: *Funerailles*, mm. 1-4

Within the piece, a holistic sense of loss is indicated through the use of several unique musical features of the work. First, the entire work is framed with figures that evoke a sense of darkness, pain, and doom. The opening contains distant bells – dis-sonorous, hollow, and ominous (see Figure

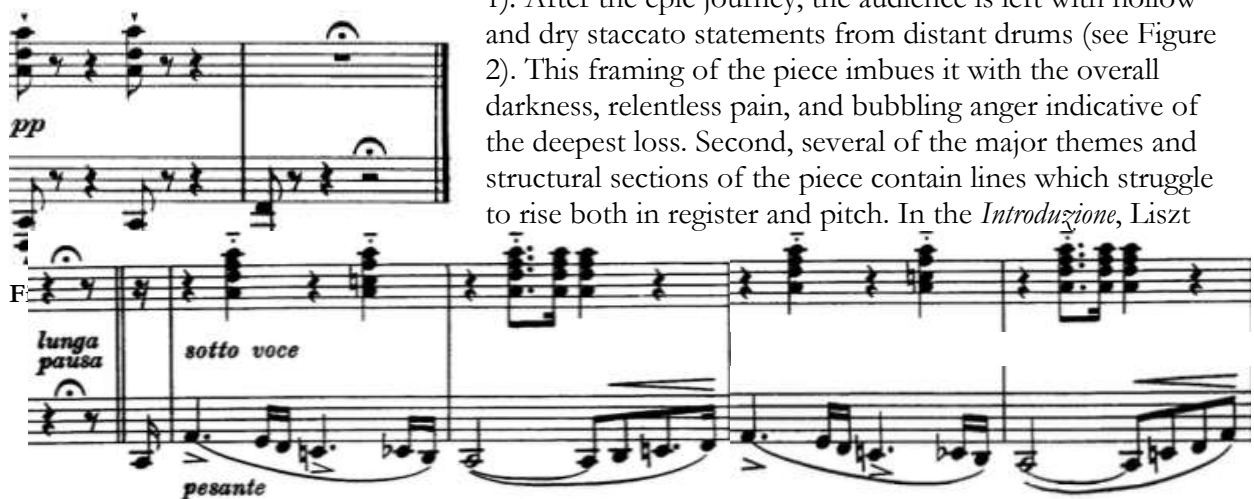


Figure 3: *Funerailles*, mm. 25-28

<sup>29</sup> Franz Liszt, *Harmonies poetiques et religieuses* (Munich: G. Henle Verlag, 1999).

## Academic Forum 36 (2018–19)

features a chromatic line beginning with a sighing gesture on F before attempting to rise. This rise moves a minor third higher to Ab before receding back to F (see Figure 1). In the next section of the piece, a Funeral March, the theme begins with a leap from C to Ab before gradually falling again to C through several flattened scale degrees (see Figure 3).

The *Lagrimoso* theme beginning in m. 56 centers around C and, though the tonal area is now major, the theme itself still struggles to escape from the C. Just as with the theme from the March, the *Lagrimoso* starts with a leap before a conspicuous fall to Fb returns the theme to the C (see Figure 4). Even upon its restatement and expansion in mm. 60-64, the theme is sequenced downward before

Figure 4: Funerailles, mm. 56-64

eventually returning to the same C as before (see Figure 4).

In addition to the ominous frame Liszt writes and the oppressed themes contained within, the *Lagrimoso* section itself is full of compositional devices that aid in communicating the overwhelming sense of loss permeating the piece. This section is the first extended instance of major tonality in the piece and yet bears the stylistic indication *lagrimoso*. This instruction is enhanced aurally by the prominence of the Fb in the melodic line, where an Eb would have been more tonally appropriate (see Figure 4). This Fb is truly tragic and robs the listener of the peace and contentedness that the major key ought to bring. This false happiness is supported by an equally tragic arpeggiated accompaniment alternating between Ab and Ab°.

Figure 5: Funerailles, mm. 109-116

Though the *Lagrimoso* is the first time a major tonality is encountered, it is not the only such instance. Once the *Lagrimoso* has been worked through several keys, voicings, and registers, a new theme appears. This theme is best described as a militaristic march and fanfare (see Figure 5). Unlike the major *Lagrimoso*, the unbridled excitement and purity of the major tonality are not obscured in this section. Featuring an ornamented ostinato alternating between tonic and dominant within F Major, Liszt utilizes a steadily rising figure of highly rhythmic chord inversions to drive this portion of the piece. The Militaristic theme moves through several key areas – always rising. Because of this gradual ascent, the busy buzzing of the ostinato, and the regal rigidity of the march rhythms, this section communicates a sense of exuberance, excitement, and celebration seemingly out of place among the dark and heavy preceding sections. There is no loss communicated within this section. Upon examining this theme’s return, however, it is seen that Liszt makes slight compositional changes that cast the theme in an entirely new light. No longer is the ostinato within a major key but rather, oscillates between the tonic and dominant of F Minor while the chords alternate between F Major and  $\text{Db}^+$  (see Figure 5).<sup>30</sup> With this transformation, the once proud and exuberant Militaristic theme is now full of despair and rage. Though the first instance of this theme seems to negate the narrative of loss posited above, Liszt’s manipulation of the excitement and joy from the theme’s first iteration enhances the pain and tragedy of its return.

Overall, by framing the piece with dark, foreboding icons of doom and oppression while utilizing melodic lines which constantly struggle to rise above their limiting boundary intervals, Liszt creates a soundscape of oppression, darkness, and struggle that enhance his communication of a sense of loss. This soundscape is then decorated with a false, tragic happiness of the first major tonality

<sup>30</sup> An argument could be made that this  $\text{Db}^+$  is an enharmonic respelling of an  $\text{F}^+$ . This could then be explained to be a transformation from the backward-looking alternation of the I and  $\text{I}^\circ$  of the *Lagrimoso* section to a forward-looking alternation between  $\text{i}$  and  $\text{i}^+$  in this concluding section. If analyzed with  $\text{Db}$  as the root, a strong argument can be made linking the *Introduzione* to these closing measures – enhancing the framing drums and bells. Furthermore, arguing that the concluding section is forward looking minimizes the sense of loss experienced in the transformation between the Militaristic theme and its first iteration earlier in the piece – harming the overall musical continuity of the sense of loss permeating the piece.

experienced and the tragic return of a once-proud, once-optimistic militaristic theme. By utilizing universal icons and clear topical references to loss and pain, Liszt communicates the notion of loss common to the human experience.

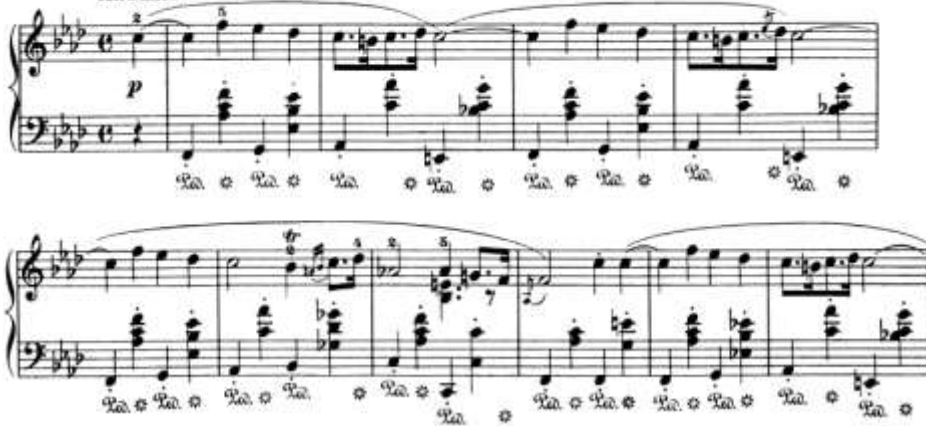


Figure 6: Nocturne in F Minor, mm.1-10

in F Minor, Op. 55. Not only is the Nocturne in the same key as *Funerailles*, but its themes also struggle to rise above certain tones. Most conspicuously is a comparison between the main theme of the Nocturne and the funeral march of *Funerailles*. In the Nocturne, the melody centers around C and heavily features descending lines (see Figure 6). Upon comparing these devices next to the funeral march of *Funerailles*, the C-centeredness and descending figures appear striking (see Figure 7). Though Liszt's use of the figures is much more chromatic, the harmonic framework and aesthetic outline of the melodies are highly similar.

Before utilizing the analysis of compositional devices above and generating a narrative or creating an interpretation from them, it is important to highlight key instances of intertext present in *Funerailles*. Throughout the piece, parallels can be drawn to three works of Chopin all composed before *Funerailles* and, seemingly, heavily influential in its genesis. The first of these is the Nocturne



Figure 7: Funerailles, mm. 25-28

Secondly, several similarities are encountered between Chopin's Nocturne in Ab Major, Op. 32 No. 2 and *Funerailles*. Not only is this Nocturne also in the closely related key of Ab (the key of the *Lagrimoso*), but the *Lagrimoso* seems to draw influence from both the melody and accompaniment patterns of the Nocturne. In the Chopin, the left-hand accompaniment uses an Ab pedal tone in an atypical arpeggiation figure going from pedal tone to harmonic interval to a second pedal tone (see Figure 8). This exact arpeggiation figure – complete with the Ab pedal tone – is present in the *Lagrimoso* of *Funerailles* (see Figure 9).

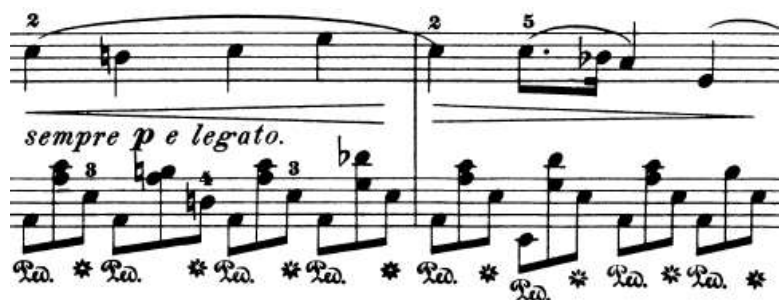


Figure 8: Nocturne in Ab, mm. 3-4

Just as Liszt’s melody in the *Lagrimoso* centers around C, Chopin’s treatment of the melody in the Nocturne centers around the same C. Especially of note, however, is the ornamentation Chopin writes in m. 5 and the written-out ornamentation in the Liszt m. 66 (see Figure 10). Not only is the accompaniment highly similar and the centric pitch identical, the ornament is exactly parallel between the Nocturne and *Funerailles*.



Figure 9: Funerailles, mm. 56-59

Finally, and most *prima facie*, the left-hand figuration of the Militaristic theme of *Funerailles* bears striking resemblance to the accompaniment figures of Chopin’s Polonaise “Heroic” Op. 53. While Liszt uses triplets with a small turn to ornament the oscillation between tonic and dominant, Chopin simply writes descending 16<sup>th</sup> notes between tonic and dominant in his ostinato (see Figures 11 and 12). Chopin also begins with octaves as the ostinato while Liszt chooses to delay the double voicing

until twenty-five measures after the ostinato begins. Both begin with the ostinato as a solo for two measures before a highly rhythmic march-like melody enters. Also of note is that both begin in the same key relationship to their respective original keys.<sup>31</sup>



Nocturne, m. 5



Funerailles, m. 66

Figure 10: Comparison Between Ornaments



Figure 11: Polonaise, mm. 83-85

<sup>31</sup> The Polonaise begins in A $\flat$  Major with this theme appearing in E Major while *Funerailles* is in F Minor with this theme in D $\flat$  Major.

With an understanding of these relevant intertexts now addressed, it is prudent to take the compositional analysis from above, combine it with the intertextual references and put together a narrative and interpretation helpful to the performer, analyst, and listener.

As briefly mentioned above, *Funerailles* contains narrative and interpretive implications at the universal level (the human experience of loss), the musical level (the death of Chopin), and at the national level (the failed Hungarian Revolution of 1848 and the 13 Martyrs of Arad). Though the tropes pertinent to the human experience of loss are described above, further evidence is needed to argue for the other two levels of interpretation. Though Liszt may have never been close to Chopin (the two having a strictly professional relationship, and even that, limited), Chopin's contributions to music, pedagogy, and pianism were known throughout Europe. On October 17<sup>th</sup> of 1849, the influential and respected Chopin passed away. Liszt, in *Funerailles*, includes intertextual references to his contemporary's works to connect the loss of the music community to the experience of loss in general. Finally, though Liszt was never vocal in praise (or disregard) of his native Hungary or its revolt against Austria in 1848, he did express deep sadness at the brutal bloodshed of the revolution.<sup>32</sup> When this revolution ultimately failed, the Hungarians were once again placed under the Austrian Empire. The emboldened Austrian government, in order to root out any sentiment that might give cause for another revolution, murdered the thirteen leading Hungarian generals and key public officials on October 6, 1849 – the victims became known as the 13 Martyrs of Arad.<sup>33</sup> Liszt considered several of these victims friends and was deeply saddened at their seemingly senseless death.<sup>34</sup> The Militaristic theme and the overall martial quality of the piece seem to accent this particular element of Liszt's experience with loss.



Figure 12: *Funerailles*, mm. 109-112

Liszt's *Funerailles* seeks to provide a musical snapshot of the human experience of loss. His compositional choices, references to contemporary events laden with deeply-felt

sadness, and weaving of the multiplicity of textures together into one, epic journey, create a soundscape which embodies all that is felt, all that is thought, and all that is remembered in a time of deeply felt loss.

## Appendix I: Narrative

I offer the following as a narrative of Liszt's *Funerailles*:

We begin by hearing the distant bells – signaling doom (m. 1). These are broken and seemingly inescapable. The ascending line struggles to rise above the doom, the pain, and the inevitability of death (mm. 2-9). This represents hope – the hope of the mourning, the hope of a people, the hope of an idea.

<sup>32</sup> Alan Walker, *Franz Liszt: The Weimar Years* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), 70-71.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 71-72.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 70-72.

## Academic Forum 36 (2018–19)

This hope eventually gives way to the deepest agony over loss (mm. 10-17). Even through this, the hope attempts to push through until finally, the trumpet announces its fate – everything is pushed back down, squashed back under the strong grip of doom and oppression (mm. 18-20). Even still, hope glimmers (m. 21).

Then the funeral march begins as the dead from the struggle (be they ideas, people, or something else entirely) process to their final resting places (mm. 25-31). It is a somber melody – full of regret and of pain. Even through this, something continues to struggle to rise (mm. 31-36). But just as before, this semblance of hope is eventually lost and transformed to rage (m. 50). Even this rage, however, is eventually robbed of us (m. 54). We realize that the rage is misplaced – it's simply pain and loss.

The fallen finally arrive at their resting place as a nostalgic reminiscence of their life, their pride, their joy, and the peace they now have is now presented (mm.56-84). All this, however, is shrouded in the pain of loss. Eventually, however, this pain gives way to a general acceptance of the loss as seen through the celebration of their life, energy, and vitality – it's as if they're still with us (mm.86-108). Now we turn to remember with fervor their ideals, their cause, their pride (mm. 109-142). We remember the gusto with which the fallen lived. The fanfares and marches that sent them out the gates and the exuberance and youthful vigor in their faces. There is no regret here – no pain – nothing except pure pride, confidence, and the excitement of life. As this grows from the nostalgic flat keys to the more intense sharp keys, so does the feeling grow from remembering the past to finding the motivation to continue. We feel the need to take up the mantle for their cause – to pick up where they left off. But this thought reminds us that they are gone. This thought causes the pain of loss to rise yet again (mm. 143-150). No longer do we focus on the peace that the fallen now have or the inspiration we feel to carry on. Now the sheer rage comes to the forefront as these funerals change everything (156-169). The senselessness of the death, the despair over the inevitability of death, and anger at those who caused it: it's all too much. Once we reach the point of grieving that we were robbed of before, however, the rage subsides (mm. 170-176). We can accept it – all of it. We again remember the peace they now have and, in a way, experience the transcendence ourselves (mm. 177-184). This resolution brings back our fervor – lights within us that same youthful exuberance they had. Though instead of being purely pride and excitement, now there is anger and rage hidden within the passion (mm. 185-190). It closes as the bells in the distance gradually disappear.

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### Biographical Sketch

Jared Rixstine graduated from Millikin University in 2016 with a B.M. in Piano Performance and a B.A. in Political Science. He then earned the Master of Music in Piano Performance and Pedagogy from the University of Oklahoma where he was awarded the Provost's Certificate for Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistants. A Nationally Certified Teacher of Music, he was appointed as Lecturer of Music at Henderson State University in 2018. He is a member of the College Music Society, Music Teacher's National Association, and the National Posture Institute. A dedicated pedagogue, his research focuses on learning theory, cognition, and andragogy.