# A GUIDE TO FRANZ LISZT'S PIANO TRANSCRIPTIONS OF FRANZ SCHUBERT'S SONGS

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Franz Liszt (1811-1886) made fifty-six transcriptions of Schubert's songs over a period of eight years (1838-46) to introduce the name of the composer, who was little known both in and outside Vienna during his lifetime. Because Liszt intentionally preserved all the details of the original songs, these transcriptions present challenges for a pianist, such as how to produce a vocal line on the piano, as well as interpretive issues such as ornamentation, style, and conveying the meaning of the lyrics on the piano. The purpose of this study is to introduce pianists to study practices employed by singers, with the goal of interpreting the vocal aspects of Liszt's Schubert song transcriptions. The composer Robert Schumann once remarked that Liszt's transcriptions were perhaps the most difficult pieces written for the piano up to that time, and only an intelligent artist could satisfy Liszt's high level of virtuosity without destroying the identity of the original work. This could be considered a warning to pianists not to focus on the technical aspects only. The pedagogical guide presented in the study, based on singers' approaches to the actual songs, should help pianists to "see beyond the notes" and achieve a performance closer to the heart of the songs.

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

Franz Liszt (1811–1886) made fifty-six transcriptions of Schubert's songs over a period of eight years (1838–46)[1] to introduce the name of the composer, who was little known both in and outside Vienna during his own lifetime.[2] Because Liszt intentionally preserved all the details of the original songs,[3] these transcriptions present challenges for the pianist. These challenges include how to produce a vocal line on the instrument, as well as interpretive issues such as gesture, style, and conveying the meaning of the lyrics on the piano. The present guide introduces pianists to some study practices employed by singers, with the goal of interpreting the vocal aspects of Liszt's Schubert song transcriptions.

After the Danube severely flooded in Hungary in March 1838, Liszt visited Vienna and performed eight charity concerts for flood victims between April 18 and May 25. While in Vienna, he was able to introduce some of his Schubert song transcriptions to the Viennese audience. A great success, they were immediately published by Diabelli and Haslinger. When the

[1] Liszt had already begun some of his transcriptions before 1838. Liszt's first Schubert song transcription, *Die Rose* (The Rose, LW. A17, S. 556, R. 241, C. 56), was composed in 1833. During the summer of 1837, Liszt and Marie d'Agoult stayed as George Sand's guests at Nohant (France), and Liszt had already written seven transcriptions of the *Zwölfe Lieder* (Twelve Songs, LW. A42, S. 558, R. 243/1–12, and C. 144–55) when they left Nohant on July 29, 1838. In 1838–40, Liszt composed more than half of his Schubert song transcriptions: the fourteen songs of *Schwanengesang* (Swan Song, LW. A49, S. 560) in 1838–39, twelve songs from *Winterreise* (Winter's Journey, LW. A50, S. 561) in 1838–39, and *Geistlicher Lieder* (Spiritual Songs, LW. A73, S. 562) in 1840. After a break of several years, Liszt transcribed Schubert's songs again in 1846: *Sechs Melodien* (Six Melodies, LW. A109, S. 563) and *Müllerlieder* (LW. A128, S. 565), which includes six songs from *Die Schöne Müllerin*, D. 795. Liszt transcriptions were published throughout Europe, including Vienna, Paris, Milan, Hamburg, Leipzig, and London. See Solee Lee Clark, "Franz Liszt's Pianistic Approach to Franz Schubert's Songs: *Müllerlieder*, LW. A128" (DMA document, West Virginia University, 2008), 29–30, 33–34.

[2] Liszt's song transcriptions also broadened his own repertoire. Alan Walker, "Liszt and the Schubert Song Transcriptions," Introduction to *Franz Liszt: The Schubert Song Transcriptions for Solo Piano, Series III* (Mineola, NY: Dover, 1999), ix.

[3] Alan Walker, "Liszt and the Schubert Song Transcriptions," *Musical Quarterly* 75, no. 4 (winter 1991): 249–51.

publications sold quickly, Haslinger asked Liszt to compose more transcriptions.[4] During the years 1839–47, while Liszt was performing more than a thousand recitals in Germany, Italy, France, England, Spain, Turkey, and Russia,[5] one of his letters complains that Haslinger was placing too many demands on him to make more Schubert song transcriptions.[6]

Although Liszt's song transcriptions were highly popular with the general public during his lifetime, Alan Walker reports that this repertory was neglected after the composer's death for the following reason:[7] In 1936, Breitkopf & Härtel completed publishing thirty-four volumes of Liszt's music to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of his death, but the Schubert song transcriptions were excluded. It was not until the 1980s that five of these transcriptions were commercially recorded. Some of Liszt's more prominent students, such as Arthur Friedheim (1859–1932), Emil von Sauer (1862–1942), and Moriz Rosenthal (1862–1946), often played his song transcriptions. With their death, the performance tradition of these transcriptions was lost.[8] So the interpretation of the transcriptions now has to be derived from literary sources and what Liszt left in the transcriptions themselves.[9]

Liszt's Schubert song transcriptions are faithful to the vocal materials of the original songs. But the technical difficulty of these transcriptions may easily hinder an appreciation for their essential beauty. The composer Robert Schumann once remarked that Liszt's transcriptions

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[4] Walker, "Schubert Song Transcriptions," 248–50.

[5] Ibid., 259.

[6] "Haslinger overwhelms me with Schubert. I have just sent him twenty-four more new songs… and for the moment I am rather tired of this work." La Mara, *Franz Liszts Briefe*, I, 29, trans. Alan Walker, *Franz Liszt, Vol. I: The Virtuoso Years, 1811–1847* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1983), 257.

[7] Walker, "Schubert Song Transcriptions," 249.

[8] "… the last links with this repertory were broken. A new generation of pianists emerged in the 1940s and 1950s, but many of them were unaware that Liszt had transcribed Schubert at all." Walker, "Schubert Song Transcriptions," 249.

[9] "We do not possess any recordings of Liszt playing, but at least we have some specific musical access to his interpretations through his arrangements, which reveal many facets of his interpretive powers." Christopher H. Gibbs, "Beyond Song: Instrumental Transformations and Adaptations of the Lied from Schubert to Mahler," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Lied*, ed. James Parsons (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 225.

were perhaps the most difficult pieces written for the piano up to that time, and only an intelligent artist could satisfy Liszt's high level of virtuosity without destroying the identity of the original work.[10] This could be considered a warning to pianists not to focus on the technical aspects only. I trust that a pedagogical guide based on singers' approaches to the actual songs will help pianists to "see beyond the notes" and achieve a performance closer to the heart of the songs.

A note on spelling: the title of Liszt's transcription of *Der Leiermann* from the 1840 Haslinger edition is *Der Leyermann*. This author has preferred the modern spelling *Der Leiermann.*

[10] Robert Schumann, *On Music and Musicians*, ed. Konrad Wolff, trans. Paul Rosenfeld (New York: W. W. Norton, 1969), 154–55.

## CHAPTER 2

## THE BACKGROUND OF THE TRANSCRIPTIONS

Franz Schubert (1797–1828) composed over six hundred songs and elevated song to a major musical genre. Schubert's most remarkable accomplishment was the close relationship of words and music, with his piano accompaniments being notable for their sound-painting.[11] Whereas many composers immediately before him wrote easy tuneful melodies for the entertainment of amateurs, with simple harmonic piano accompaniments subordinate to the vocal parts,[12] Schubert created vocal melodies to match the poetry with the support of imaginative accompaniments on a par with the vocal parts.[13] Schubert's songs, influenced by the *ballads* of Johann Zumsteeg (1760–1802),[14] challenged the technique of both singers and pianists, so that publishers sometimes complained the accompaniments were too difficult for amateurs to play.[15]

Although Liszt and Schubert never met, Liszt fell in love with Schubert's compositions.[16] Liszt studied with Antonio Salieri (1750–1825) in Vienna in 1822–23. Salieri often told Liszt about Schubert, who had studied with him ten years earlier. In 1822, the publisher and composer Anton Diabelli (1781–1858) invited fifty composers, including Czerny, Cramer, Moscheles, Schubert, and Liszt, to compose a variation on his own waltz theme. Liszt was a mere eleven years old, the youngest composer represented in the collection, which had the fortunate byproduct of introducing Schubert's music to Liszt. The violinist and composer Chrétien Urhan (1790–1845) was an enthusiast of Schubert's music. By 1828, the year of Schubert's death, Liszt

[11] Kenneth S. Whitton, *Lieder: An Introduction to German Song* (London: Julia MacRae, 1984), 49.

[12] Lorraine Gorrell, *The Nineteenth-Century German Lied* (Portland, OR: Amadeus Press, 1993), 111.

[13] "One of the most characteristically Schubertian strategies from the earliest songs to some of the latest is the representation of an inner experience through an analogy with some outward physical motion or sound." Kristina Muxfeldt, "Schubert's Songs: the Transformation of a Genre," in *The Cambridge Companion to Schubert*¸ ed. Christopher H. Gibbs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 131.

[14] Whitton, *Lieder*, 32.

[15] Gorrell, *Nineteenth-Century German Lied*, 111.

[16] Clark, "Franz Liszt's Pianistic Approach," 28–30.

was living in Paris and had become friendly with Urhan, who had composed a string quintet based on themes by Schubert and piano etudes based on Schubert's songs. Through the influence of Urhan, Liszt came to love Schubert's music, which he recommended to his students.

Liszt's Schubert song transcriptions have a strong connection to the original works. Alan Walker maintains that Liszt preserved their originality when he transcribed Schubert's songs for the piano.[17] In contrast, Robert Schumann,[18] a Viennese critic named Carlo,[19] and Jürgen Thym[20] all consider that Liszt created his own style at the same time as preserving the spirit of the original song. Leopold Godowsky took a different approach. In the preface to the 1927 edition of his own Schubert song transcriptions, he stated that he used the theme of twelve Schubert songs as the basis for free variations, excluding the vocal materials and the original form and style, and essentially putting his own compositional stamp on the songs.[21] In contrast, Liszt maintained the literary texts as well as Schubert's original musical settings, including melody, harmonic structure, key, and accompaniment figuration, to preserve Schubert's conception, although Liszt added his own virtuosic embellishments.[22]

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[17] "… a true copy of the original." Walker, "Schubert Song Transcriptions," 257.

[18] "… an intelligent artist may do it as long as he does not destroy the identity of the original." Schumann, *On Music and Musicians*, 155.

[19] "It is a successful attempt to reproduce the melodic and harmonic beauty of the new classical song as a lyrical whole for the piano alone, and to perfect it with the power of singing and declamation without sacrifice of any of his keyboard richness." *Wiener Zeitschrift für Kunst, Literatur, Theater und Mode* (7 December 1839), cited in Otto Brusatti, *Schubert im Wiener Vormärz: Dokumente 1829–1848* (Graz, Austria: Akademische Druck und Verlagsanstalt, 1978), 107. Translated by Christopher H. Gibbs in his "Beyond Song," 225.

[20] Resulting in *Lieder ohne Wörte* of a distinctly Lisztian type. Jürgen Thym, "Cosmopolitan Infusions: Liszt and the Lied," *Journal of the American Liszt Society* 54–56 (2003–2005): 157.

[21] "My aim in transcribing these twelve songs of Schubert was not merely to transplant them from the voice to the piano; it was to create piano compositions out of vocal material, to comment upon and interpret the songs as a composer would treat a theme when writing free variations…. The songs of Schubert will not cease to be sung, notwithstanding all transcriptions." Leopold Godowsky, "Apropos Transcriptions, Arrangements and Paraphrases" (Preface to the 1927 edition)," in *The Godowsky Collection, Vol. 2: Transcriptions, Arrangements and Cadenzas* (New York: Carl Fischer, 2001), 2.

[22] Kara Lynn Van Dine, "Musical Arrangements and Questions of Genre: A Study of Liszt's Interpretive Approaches" (DMA document, University of North Texas, 2010), 77–78.

When Liszt transcribed Schubert's songs, the song text was essential to preserving the original work. Liszt composed most of his Schubert song transcriptions between 1838 and 1840, the period when he was living with Marie d'Agoult (1805–1876).[23] Although Liszt's first language was German and he spent more than ten years in Weimar, his German was not as fluent as his French,[24] so Marie d'Agoult helped Liszt to fully understand the meaning of the text by translating the German texts of Schubert's songs into French.[25] When Liszt published his song transcriptions, he showed his respect for the original works by printing the song text above the staff:

> When Diabelli brought out the first batch of twelve transcriptions, in 1838, he printed the poems separately inside the front covers. Liszt at once protested that this was useless and that the transcriptions must be printed with the words underlying the notes—exactly as Schubert himself had set them—a request that was eventually carried out.[26]

Liszt's effort to showcase the original works is also shown in the titles of his transcriptions. The title page consistently gives priority to the title of Schubert's song before mentioning the piano arrangement by Liszt. For example, the title of *Schwanengesang* and *Winterreise,* from an 1840 Haslinger edition, is *Lieder / von / Franz Schubert / für das Piano-Forte übertragen / von / F. Liszt.*[27]

As well as Liszt's literary approach, his experience with singers helped him to preserve the original works when transcribing the songs for piano. He encouraged the French operatic tenor Adolphe Nourrit (1802–1839)[28] to sing *Erlkönig* when they spent time together at the home

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[23] Clark, "Franz Liszt's Pianistic Approach," 30.
[24] Ibid., 30.
[25] Walker, *Franz Liszt,* 244.
[26] Walker, "Schubert Song Transcriptions," 252.
[27] Ernst Burger, *Franz Liszt: A Chronicle of his Life in Pictures and Documents*, trans. Stewart Spencer (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), 106.
[28] Adolphe Nourrit introduced Schubert's lieder in France in the salon of a French composer, Loïsa Puget (1810–1889) on December 21, 1834. Peter Clive, *Schubert and his World: A Biographical Dictionary* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 144.

of a Hungarian banker, M. Dessauer.[29] Liszt accompanied him singing *Erlkönig* at a concert in Lyon in August 1837, when a critic wrote about Liszt's ability to help a singer to interpret songs more effectively:

> To fully understand all that is moving, terrifying, and uncanny in *Erlkönig*, one has to hear that celebrated ballad by Goethe and Schubert performed by Liszt and Adolphe Nourrit…. But then, who but Liszt could follow the singer through all the nuances of his interpretation and instill his playing with an energy and power that doubled that terror the audience felt when hearing the cries of the doomed child?[30]

Liszt also performed Schubert several times with the tenor Benedict Randhartinger (1802–1893)[31] in Vienna during April and May 1838,[32] and he also played for the German operatic soprano Wilhelmine Schröder-Devrient (1804–1860), [33] who sang Schubert's *Ständchen*, *Ave Maria*, and *Erlkönig* for a Dresden concert in March 1840. [34] Through his experience with singers, Liszt presumably gained a knowledge of Schubert's songs that helped him to understand the composer's original conception and vocal ideas.

As a teacher, Liszt had an outstanding ability to communicate the principles of singing to his students. His teaching in his early years emphasized technique and he often played with exaggerated motions, as shown in the famous caricature of a Liszt concert in 1842. However, in Liszt's later years, his pupil Stradal recorded how Liszt emphasized a singing tone:

> Liszt … required the pupil to sing on the keys; that is, to play the piano in as song-like a manner as possible. To produce this beautiful singing tone, he demanded an artistic use of

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[29] Louis Quicherat, *Adolphe Nourrit: sa vie, son talent, son caractère, sa correspondence*, vol. 2 (Paris: L. Hachette, 1867), 30, quoted in J. G. Prod'homme and Frederick H. Martens, "Schubert's Works in France," *Musical Quarterly* 14, no. 4 (October 1928): 497.

[30] Franz Liszt, *An Artist's Journey: Lettres d'un bachelier ès musique, 1835–1841*, trans. and annotated Charles Suttoni (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 52.

[31] Randhartinger, Schubert's friend, often performed Schubert's lieder until the death of the composer. Clark, "Franz Liszt's Pianistic Approach," 32–33.

[32] Theresa Walter, *Diary*, "Liszt's Charity Concerts in Vienna, 1838–39, after the Flood in Hungary" (Budapest, May 1841), 48, cited in Alan Walker, "Schubert Song Transcriptions," 257.

[33] "…one of Liszt's favorite 1840s performance partners." Michael Saffle, *Liszt in Germany, 1840–1845: A Study in Sources, Documents, and the History of Reception* (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1994), 90.

[34] Saffle, *Liszt in Germany*, 92.

> the pedal, going into the smallest detail, and allowed the *una corda* pedal, since it "thins" and prevents a singing tone, to be employed only in exceptional cases, preferring a greater *pianissimo* to be produced without it…. [35]

Derek Watson says that Liszt always notated his compositions precisely in order to guide the performer in interpreting what the composer had in mind.[36] This accuracy was reflected as well in his teaching, which emphasized interpretation through details.[37] His discipline is shown in expression marks, dynamics, and pedaling. In Liszt's Schubert song transcriptions, he inserted many kinds of expression marks that are not in the original songs. John Reed observed that Schubert's expression marks for the songs are often detailed and idiomatic,[38] but Liszt created his own musical terms, applicable specifically to the piano, in order to render some details of Schubert's songs. For instance, in *Die Stadt*, the expression marks are: *con Pedale sotto voce* (pedal under the voice), *die Begleitung immer p und staccato* (the accompaniment always *piano* and detached), *den Takt immer sehr markieren* (the beat always very marked), *den Gesang, sempre con Ped* (the singing always with pedal), and *molto rinforzando* (very reinforced).

Altogether in his song transcriptions, Liszt used many more expression marks, including especially *il canto* (the song), *parlante* (speaking), and *voce* (voice):

> *ben pronunziato il canto* (well-pronounced singing)
> *cantando e crescendo* (singing and crescendo)
> *il canto sempre marcato ed espressivo* (always pronounced and expressive singing)
> *un poco marcato il canto* (a slightly marked singing)
> *sempre distinto il canto* (always distinct singing)
> *sempre sotto voce ma ben pronunciato la melodia* (the melody always under the voice but well pronounced)

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[35] Derek Watson, *Liszt* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1989), 173.
[36] Watson, *Liszt*, 175.
[37] "What was especially interesting in his teaching was his clarification of musical structure, his emphasis on hidden subtleties, and his explanation of the historical relation of each work to the evolution of art, for he looked at everything with the eye of a creator." Elise Braun Barnett, "An Annotated Translation of Moriz Rosenthal's *Franz Liszt, Memories and Reflections*," *Current Musicology*, no. 13 (1972): 30.
[38] John Reed, *The Schubert Song Companion* (New York: Universe Books, 1985), 508.

Such terms suggest two purposes: First, Kara Lynn Van Dine notes that Liszt successfully solved the problem of the spacing of the vocal melody and accompaniment in his transcriptions, maintaining the clarity of the melodic line to keep a direct connection with the original songs.[39] These expression marks encourage pianists to imagine songs being sung while playing the piano. Second, Liszt demanded that the song text be placed under the notes and used expression marks to suggest suitable timbres for the various styles of vocal melodies that depended on the text. [40] Consequently, Liszt's expression marks help pianists to play in a singing style closer to the meaning of the text.

[39] Van Dine, "Musical Arrangements," 80.

[40] For example, Liszt indicates *espressivo il canto* (expressive singing) for the lyrical melody in *Ständchen*, *sempre marcato la melodia* (the melody always marked) for the declamatory melody in *Die böse Farbe*, and *declamate sotto voce* (recited in a low voice) for the recitative-style vocal line in *Der Doppelgänger*.

# CHAPTER 3

# BREATHING

According to D. Ralph Appelman's definition, artful singing coordinates breathing (the physical sensations of respiration), sound (phonation), vowels (resonation), and consonants (articulation).[41] Many prominent vocal pedagogues, including Cornelius L. Reid,[42] Appelman,[43] and Richard Miller,[44] consider that control of the breath is vitally important for supported singing. Although breathing is essential for singing, it is easy for pianists to overlook the importance of breathing, because that is not a primary factor in physically producing sound on the piano. Nevertheless, it is critically important that pianists studying Liszt's Schubert song transcriptions for the first time acquire an understanding of breathing in order to interpret the vocal aspects of his transcriptions.

## 3.1. Breath-Planning

For singers, breathing is the main element[45] for sustaining tone in long phrases. Whereas ordinary breathing is accomplished through inhaling and exhaling regularly, singing breathing needs to be controlled: inhale quickly and exhale slowly to finish the phrase. Paul W. Peterson observes that "breath-planning" helps singers to prepare phrases.[46]

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[41] D. Ralph Appelman, *The Science of Vocal Pedagogy: Theory and Application* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1967), 9.

[42] Cornelius L. Reid, *The Free Voice: A Guide to Natural Singing* (New York: Joseph Patelson Music House, 1972), 160–69.

[43] Appelman, *Science of Vocal Pedagogy*, 10–11.

[44] Richard Miller, *The Structure of Singing: System and Art in Vocal Technique* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1986), 20.

[45] "In the beginning there was Breath and Singing was with Breath and Singing *was* Breath. And all Singing was made by the Breath and without Breath was not any Singing made that was made." Robert C. White, "On the Teaching of Breathing for the Singing Voice," *Journal of Voice* 2, no. 1 (March 1988): 26.

[46] Paul W. Peterson, *Natural Singing and Expressive Conducting* (Winston-Salem, NC: John F. Blair, 1955), 18–19.

### 3.1.1. Breath-Planning and Mental Concentration

Well-planned breath control is achieved by mental concentration on the desired phrasing and the expressive demands of the music.[47] Singers need to keep in mind the length of the phrase, dynamics, tempo, and tone color, and its character or mood before inhalation in order to control their breath. Therefore, the degree of inhalation depends on the nature of each phrase.[48] In the same manner, pianists should keep the qualities of the song in mind in order to play the phrases of the song, and the mental conception of breathing will help pianists to control the musical sense of a piece. This will have a direct impact on articulation, dynamics, tempo, and tone color, as well as help to produce vocal qualities on the piano.

### 3.1.2. Breath-Planning and Emotion

Breathing is significantly affected by emotion.[49] Peterson says that understanding text, moods, imagination, body expressiveness, and other elements of vocal artistry must be a part of the breathing process,[50] so breath control should be natural, based on the impulse of how it should feel.[51] Since Liszt emphasized the importance of the song text in interpreting his

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[47] Peterson, *Natural Singing and Expressive Conducting*, 67.

[48] "Lamperti said: 'A stereotyped manner of inhaling defeats the singer.'" Thomas Hemsley, *Singing and Imagination: A Human Approach to a Great Musical Tradition* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 103.

[49] Reid, *Free Voice*, 165.

[50] "It must be remembered that the text is usually written first, and the composer uses that medium of music to enhance or intensify the words. Singers should develop the habit of reading the text of a song aloud. The breath, which is supplied automatically to the singer desiring to express the words, thus becomes a natural part of the interpretation and phrasing." Peterson, *Natural Singing*, 19–20.

[51] "The Russian-born soprano and voice teacher Olga Averino writes: 'Avoid taking in air mechanically. This is essential… Since breath reflects our mental state, *take that breath to express the feeling of the musical phrase and text*. The emotional content will stimulate the impulse, and the impulse in turn will control the breath.'" Hemsley, *Singing and Imagination*, 103.

transcriptions, the pianist needs knowledge of breath control in order to deliver the meaning of the text to the audience.

According to Reid, the vocal literature of the nineteenth century emphasized intensity through emotional experiences (e.g., love, hate, anger, and intense longing). However, the singer must find a way to maintain emotional equilibrium[52] while creating a balance between breathing as a physical sensation and breathing to express the emotion of the phrase.

### 3.1.3. Breath-Planning and Physical Balance

Breathing helps singers to maintain balance between physical strength and relaxation.[53] Jeannie Ringland Smeltzer says that any nervous tension or contraction of any muscle can produce a thin tone. Through deep breathing, both mind and body gain relaxation and composure. For pianists to translate this into a physical approach to the keyboard, they need to feel the natural weight of the wrist and arm at the finger tips.[54] The balance between relaxation and contraction produces a beautiful tone on the piano.[55]

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[52] "Those who have tried to sing while emotionally overwrought will know how important it is to be in control of the emotions. This obviously poses a difficulty for the interpreter, because while he has to live the emotional experience of the drama he cannot allow himself to be overcome by it… a control which maintains an emotional equilibrium that the singer should be trying to master." Reid, *Free Voice*, 167–68.

[53] "Yoga practitioners are able to regulate their pulse rate, metabolism, and brain activity through direct mental control over their breathing… Some of the potential rewards of conscious self-regulated breathing include increased physical strength, heightened awareness, acute concentration, and total relaxation. One special benefit of the singer's practice of deep breathing is an increased output of endorphins, the same natural hormones released in aerobic exercise that produce a relaxation response." Clifton Ware, *Basics of Vocal Pedagogy: Foundations and Process of Singing* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1998), 73.

[54] Jeannie Ringland Smeltzer, *Outlines and Grades: For the Use of Piano Teachers* (Chicago: Press of Libby & Sherwood Printing Co., 1909), 117.

[55] Beryl Rubinstein, *Outline of Piano Pedagogy* (New York: Carl Fischer, 1947), 21.

## 3.2. Breathing for Phrasing

This section deals with breathing practices applied to vocal phrases in Liszt's Schubert song transcriptions.

### 3.2.1. Breathing in a Phrase

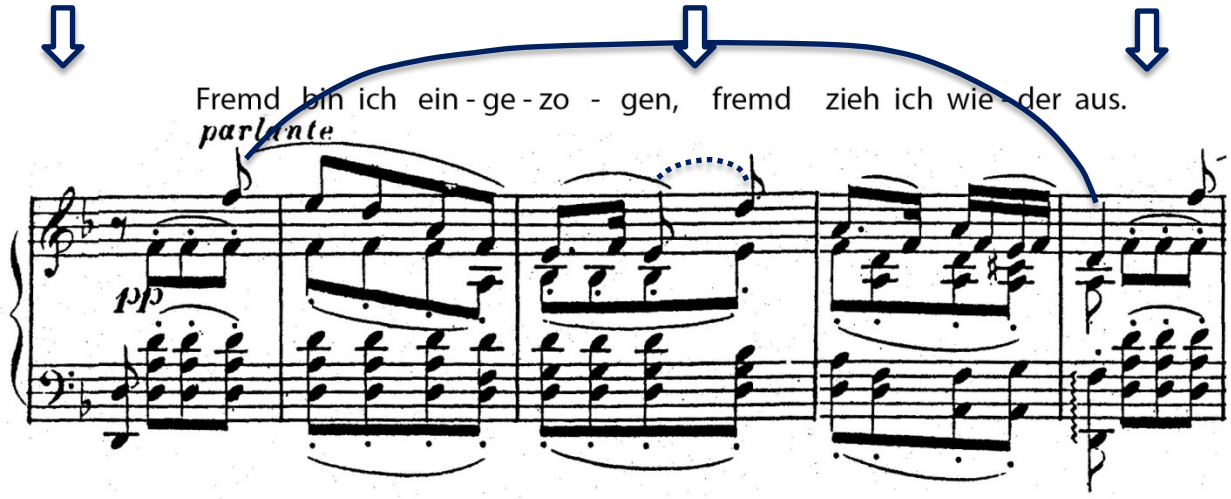
Smeltzer says that a knowledge of phrasing is crucial for intelligent expression.[56] In singing, the musical phrase is the length of a melody sung in one breath. We speak in the same way. Just as a person smoothly speaks a sentence in one breath rather than individual words, the musical phrasing in songs is divided into groups according to punctuation (e.g., a comma or period). The vocal phrase starts with inhalation and continues with exhalation until the end of the phrase. The end is then connected with another inhalation for a new phrase. The flow of the phrase should not be broken, although it is possible to take a partial breath to maintain long phrases as circumstances require. For example, in *Gute Nacht* (Example 3-1), the comma and period of the text indicate where breathing should occur:

1. Inhale before the phrase starts in m. 7.
2. Keep exhaling until the end of phrase in m. 11.
3. Another inhalation immediately after the end of phrase to start the new phrase in m. 11.

[56] Smeltzer, *Outlines and Grades*, 121.

Example 3–1: Schubert–Liszt, *Gute Nacht*, S. 561, No. 1, mm. 7–11[57]

Inhalation ------ Exhalation ---------- (Partial breath) ---------- Inhalation

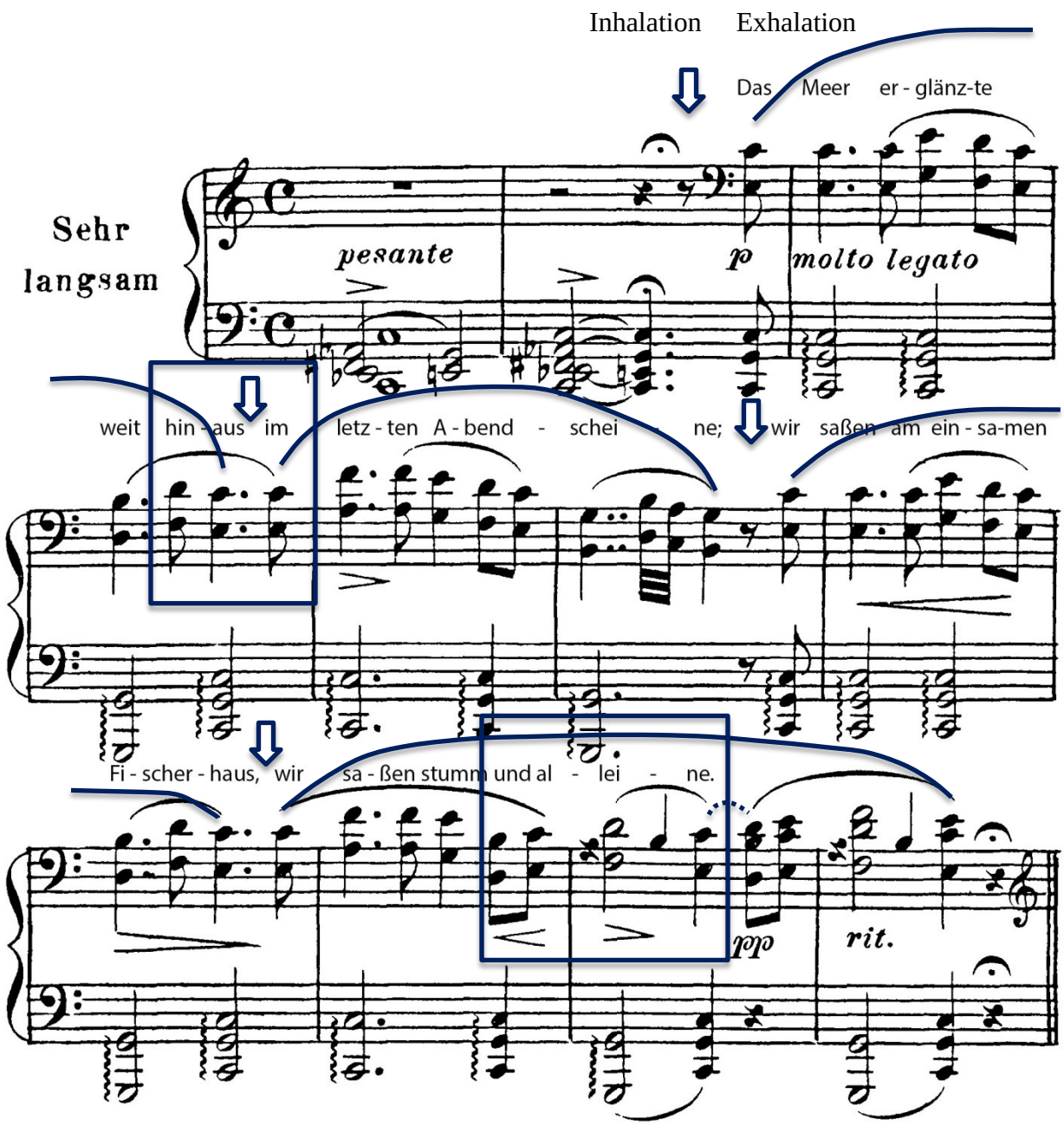



Since the phrase is short, it can be sung and played in one breath through the period in m. 11. If an extra breath is needed, it can be taken at the comma in m. 9—fast and softly so as not to disconnect the phrase. Since the pattern of the accompanying part is vertical, this passage can easily become slower and choppy. If pianists exhale gently while playing the four-measure phrase, the phrase will flow.

As well as commas and periods, prepositions are also important for deciding the length of phrases. In the beginning of *Am Meer* published by Haslinger in 1840, the phrases are too short and some phrases do not match the text. Example 3–2 shows where breaths could be taken (mm. 2, 4, 6, and 8). In m. 4, a breath can be taken before the preposition “im” (in the)

[57] Fremd bin ich eingezogen (As a stranger I entered), fremd zieh ich wieder aus (as a stranger I go out again).

Example 3–2: Schubert–Liszt, *Am Meer*, S. 560, No. 4, mm. 1–11[58]

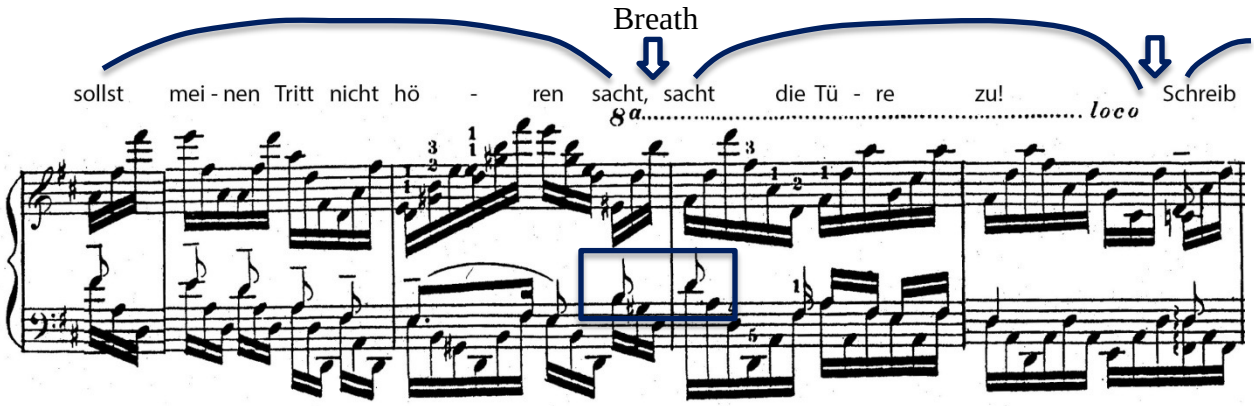



[58] Das Meer erglänzte weit hinaus (The sea shone far out into the distance), im letzten Abendscheine (in the last evening light); wir saßen am einsamen Fischerhaus (we sat at the lonely fisherman's house), wir saßen stumm und alleine (we sat silent and alone).

3.2.2. Breathing for Dramatic Expression

Hemsley observes that a breath can be taken for the purposes of dramatic expression.[59] In *Gute Nacht*, the breath in mm. 79–82 is taken in a slightly different way. In the normal pattern of the melodic line of this song, a partial breath can be optionally taken on the pickup to m. 81 (before the first "sacht"). Because of the dramatic effect of the text (sacht, sacht—softly, softly), however, the breath needs to be taken after the last beat of m. 80 (Example 3–3).

Example 3–3: Schubert–Liszt, *Gute Nacht*, S. 561, No. 1, mm. 79–82[60]



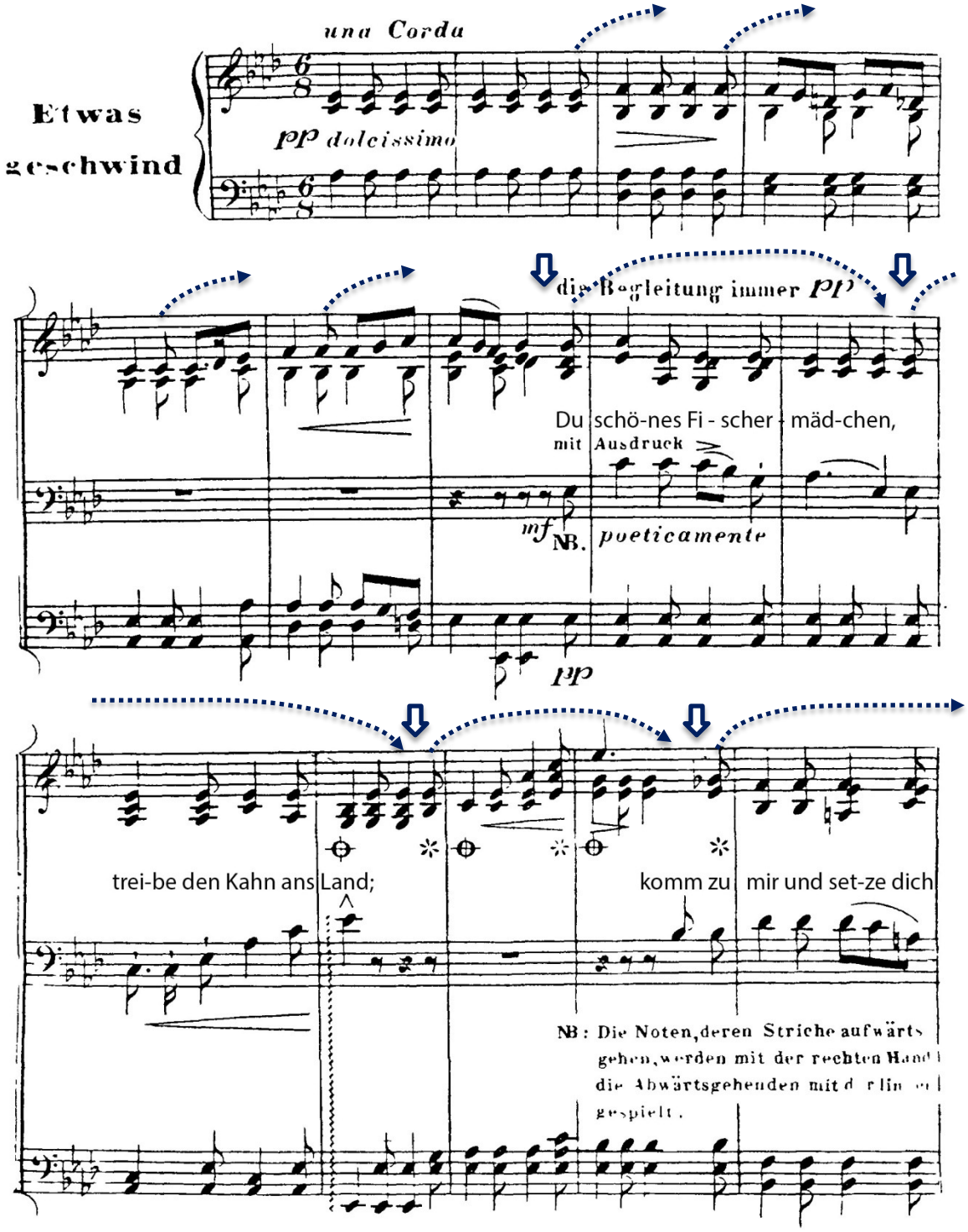

3.2.3. Breathing for the Direction of a Phrase

Breathing is also fundamental to the direction of phrase. For example, in *Das Fischermädchen* (Example 3–4), the phrases of the vocal and piano parts are different, which can result in confusion about the direction of phrase. This pattern is often found, especially in a folk-style melody with a simply structured accompaniment (e.g., *Täuschung*, S. 561, No. 9). The vocal melody informs pianists where breaths are taken (see arrow marks). When the accompaniment follows the phrase of the vocal melodies, the phrase easily flows to the end.

[59] Hemsley, *Singing and Imagination*, 105.

[60] sollst meinen Tritt nicht hören (You shall not hear my footstep) sacht, sacht die Türe zu (softly, softly, I close the door).

Example 3–4: Schubert–Liszt, *Das Fischermädchen*, S. 560, No. 2, mm. 1–14[61]

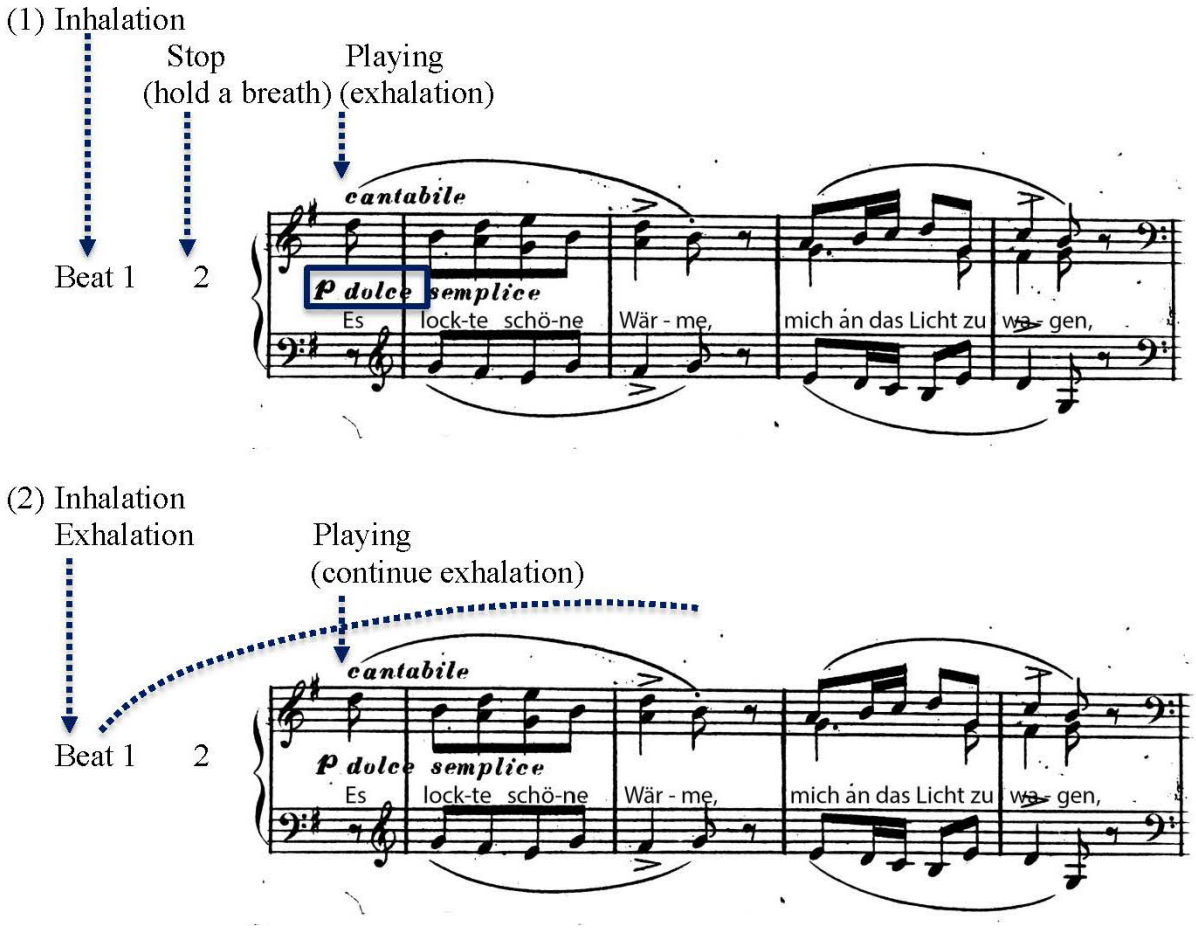



[61] Du schönes Fischermädchen (You beautiful fishermaiden), treibe den Kahn ans Land (row your boat to the land); Komm zu mir und setze dich nieder (Come to me and sit down).

3.2.4. Breath Preparation at the Beginning of a Phrase

Breath preparation at the beginning of a phrase is important in order to have a clear onset of the first note without an accent. Example 3–5 shows two possible solutions.

Example 3–5: Schubert–Liszt, *Die Rose*, S. 556, mm. 5–8[62]




Regarding the first suggestion, start the inhalation from the measure before, hold the breath on the second beat, then play while exhaling gently. While holding a breath, pianists feel resistance to exhalation, so they can start to play with steadier exhaling, rather than sharp breathing. Since the movement of the body is connected with breathing, steady exhaling helps pianists to prepare

[62] Es lockte schöne Wärme (It attracted beautiful warmth), mich an das Licht zu wagen (to dare to risk the light),

the first note without an accent. Indeed, soft singing requires singers to maintain more breath resistance and steadier control than loud singing does. As for the second suggestion, pianists can start the exhalation from the first beat of the measure before, then continue the exhalation while starting to play. By exhaling in advance, pianists can feel the flow of the phrase, thus keeping the continuity. From a purely pianistic standpoint, the opening note of each phrase should be produced with the hand close to the keyboard.

### 3.2.5. Breathing for a Long Connection

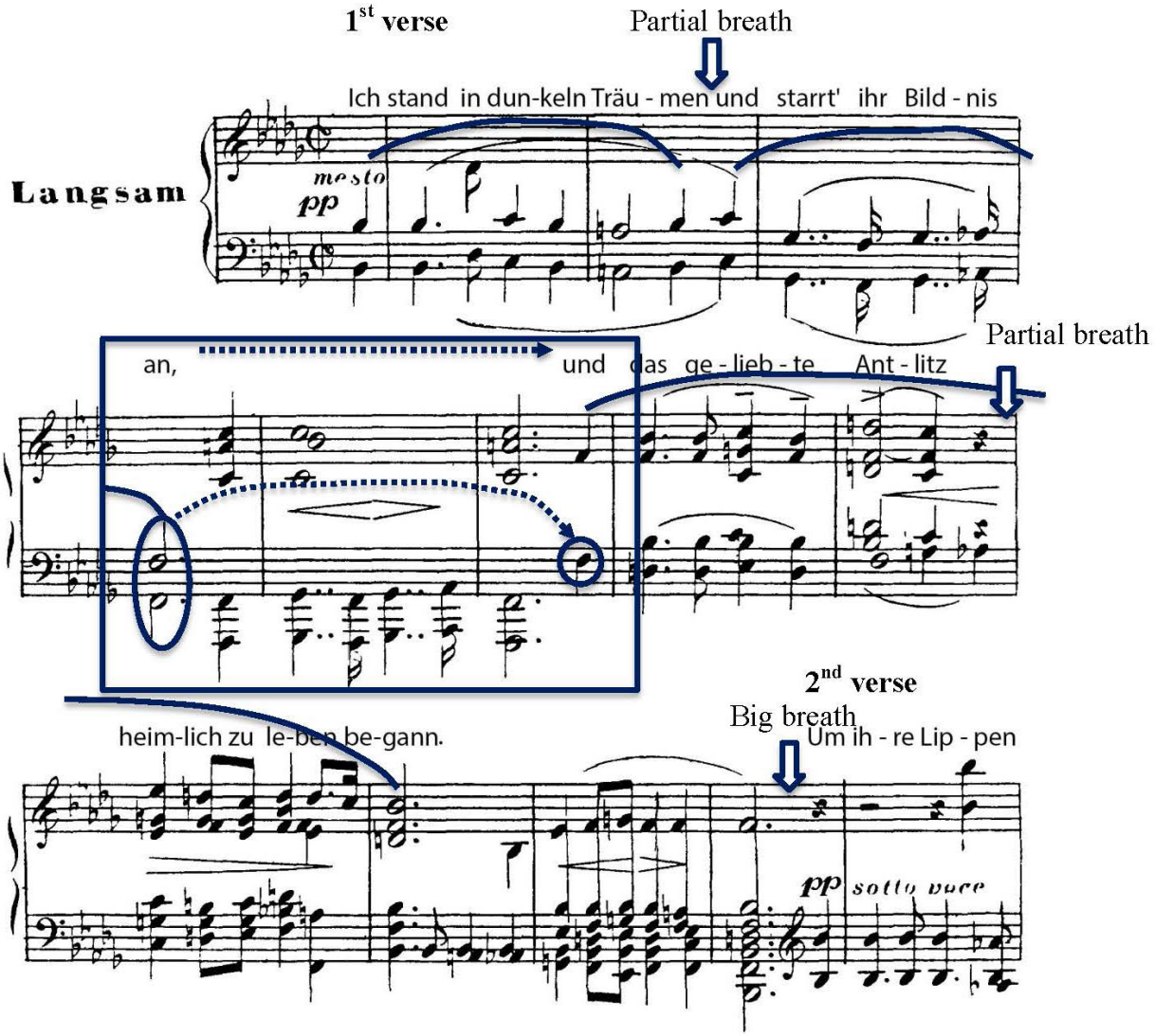
In order to create the phrase setting, some sentences of the text require a long connection. For example, the first verse of *Ihr Bild* (mm. 1–10) can be divided into three phrases but consists of only one sentence (Example 3–6).

> mm. 1–2: Ich stand in dunkeln Träumen (I stood in dark dreams)
> mm. 3–4: und starrt ihr Bildnis an (and stared at her portrait),
> mm. 7–10: und das geliebte Antlitz (and the beloved face) heimlich zu leben begann (gently began to live).

To make a long connection, it is important to maintain continuity in mm. 5–6. Martin Katz says that diminuendos and ritardandos disturb making the connection between phrases.[63] Hum F (the first beat of m. 4) or exhale gently until the next phrase starts (pick up to m. 7). Make a subtle accelerando and play the left-hand rhythmic motive slightly louder in mm. 5–6. Humming (or exhaling gently) should be steadily controlled, so that the first note of the third phrase (pick up to m. 7) keeps the same value as the last note of the second phrase (F in m. 4) and maintains the flow of the phrase at the beginning of the third phrase (m. 7).

[63] Martin Katz, *The Complete Collaborator: The Pianist as Partner* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 42.

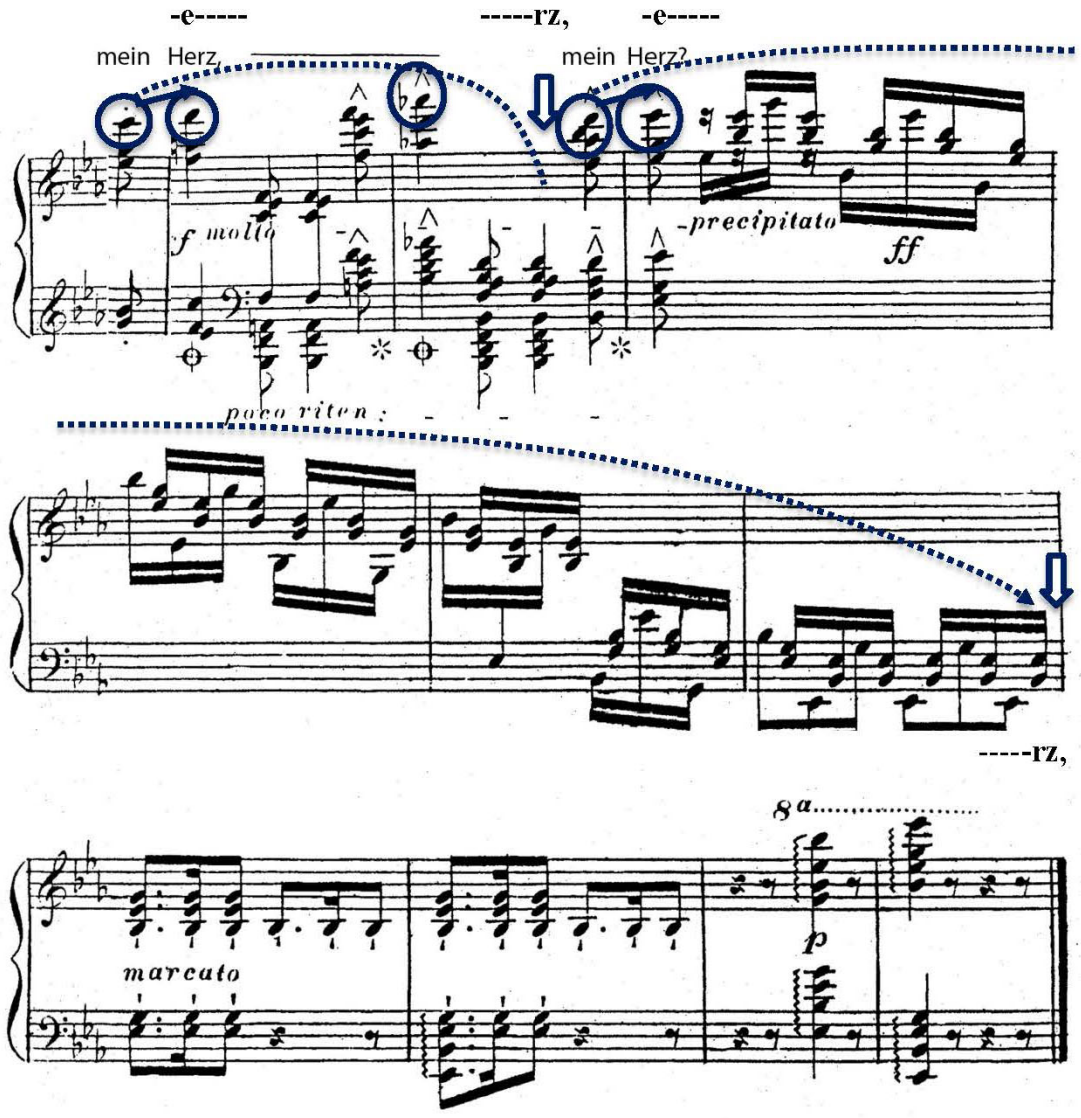
Example 3–6: Schubert–Liszt, *Ihr Bild*, S. 560, No. 8, mm. 1–13




3.2.6. Breathing for the Continuity of Momentum

Breathing is important for continuing the momentum on a leap. At the end of *Die Post* (Example 3–7), mm. 89–90 consist of a chord progression in large leaps, and this pattern tends to prompt pianists to cut the phrase short. Also, a splendid chordal run in mm. 91–94 disturbs the direction of the melody.

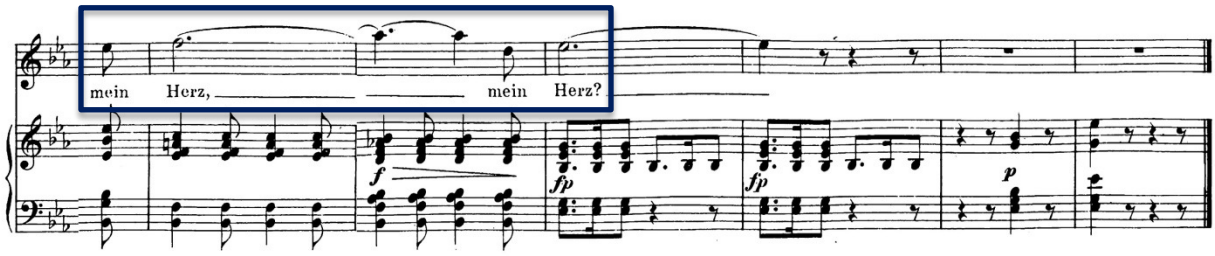
Example 3–7: Schubert–Liszt, *Die Post*, S. 561, No. 4, mm. 89–98




The text[64] indicates the melody line and the direction of phrases. In spite of all the embellishments, only five notes (Eb–F–Ab–D–Eb) are necessary to create the phrase (Example 3–8).

[64] mein Herz, mein Herz? (my heart, my heart?).

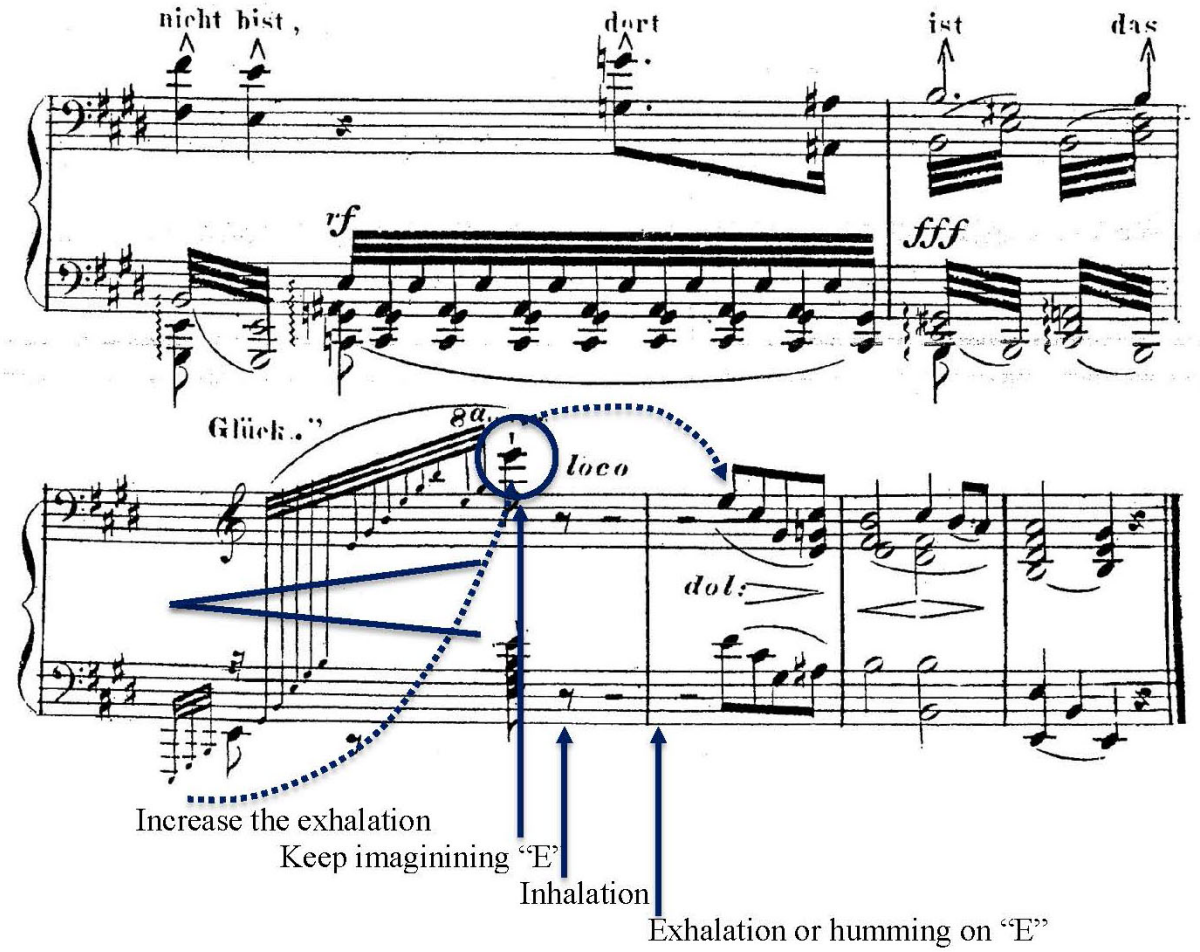
Example 3–8: Schubert, *Die Post*, D. 911, No. 13, mm. 89–94




In mm. 89–90 (Example 3–7), imagine the melody line and exhale gently while playing each phrase to maintain the continuity despite the *poco riten*. Use a softer volume when playing the accompanying chords, so that the melody line stands out. Think about how singers sustain a uniformity of tone. When singers sing " Herz," they hold the vowel "e" as long as possible with a slight crescendo and quickly pronounce "–rz" right before the next word. After the first "mein Herz," take a big breath to emphasize the second "mein Herz" and prepare the four-measurephrase (mm. 91–94). Although the big chordal run is a major virtuosic moment for the piano, it needs to be subordinated to the syllable "He" (E-flat).After the big E–flat chord on the down beat of m. 91, keep imagining "E-flat" until the chordal run ends. Start the run slowly, then gradually speed up when Liszt marks *precipitato* (precipitate).

In *Der Wanderer* (S. 558, No. 11), there is a long pause before the postlude (mm. 73–75). Since the postlude reflects the last sentence of the poem ("Dort, wo du nicht bist, dort ist das Glück—There, where you are not, there is happiness!"), pianists need to keep up the continuity during the pause. In m. 72, increase your exhalation toward the E-major chord while playing staccatissimo in order to interpret the "-k-" of "Glück." After "Glück," keep imagining "E" or humming it to make a bridge, which is invisible but helpful for continuing the momentum.

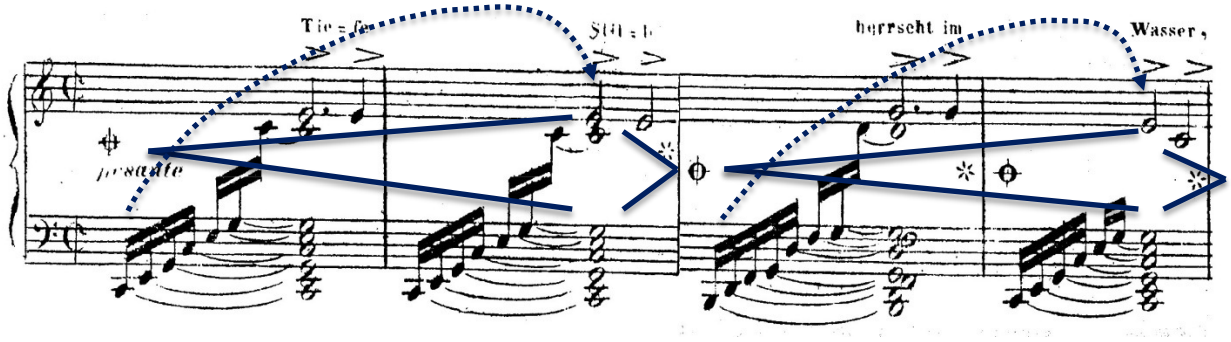
Example 3–9: Schubert–Liszt, *Der Wanderer*, S. 558, No. 11, mm. 70–75



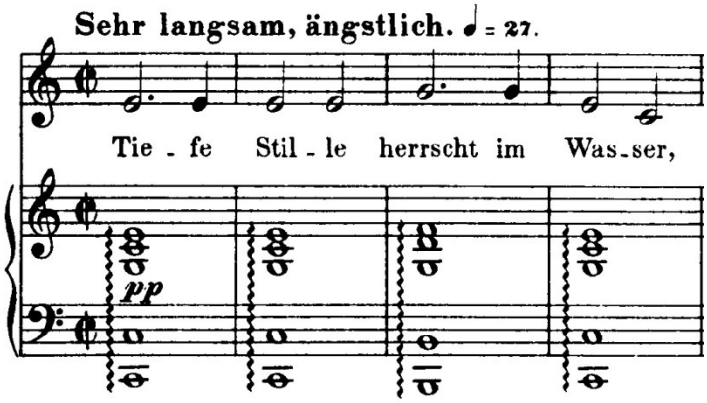

3.2.7. Breathing in a Slow Tempo

Breathing also helps pianists to continue a phrase in a slow tempo. In *Meersstille* (S. 558, No. 5), the calm melody is accompanied by arpeggio chords (Example 3–10). Although an arpeggiated chord is played simultaneously with the vocal melody in the original song (Example 3–11), in his transcription Liszt wrote the arpeggiated chord before the melody comes in, which results in the need for extra time to play the chord. In spite of this issue, the four measures should still be in one phrase (Tiefe Stille herrscht im Wasser—Deep calm prevails in the water).

Example 3–10: Schubert–Liszt, *Meeresstille*, S. 558, No. 5, mm. 1–4




Example 3–11: Schubert, *Meeresstille*, D. 216, mm. 1–4



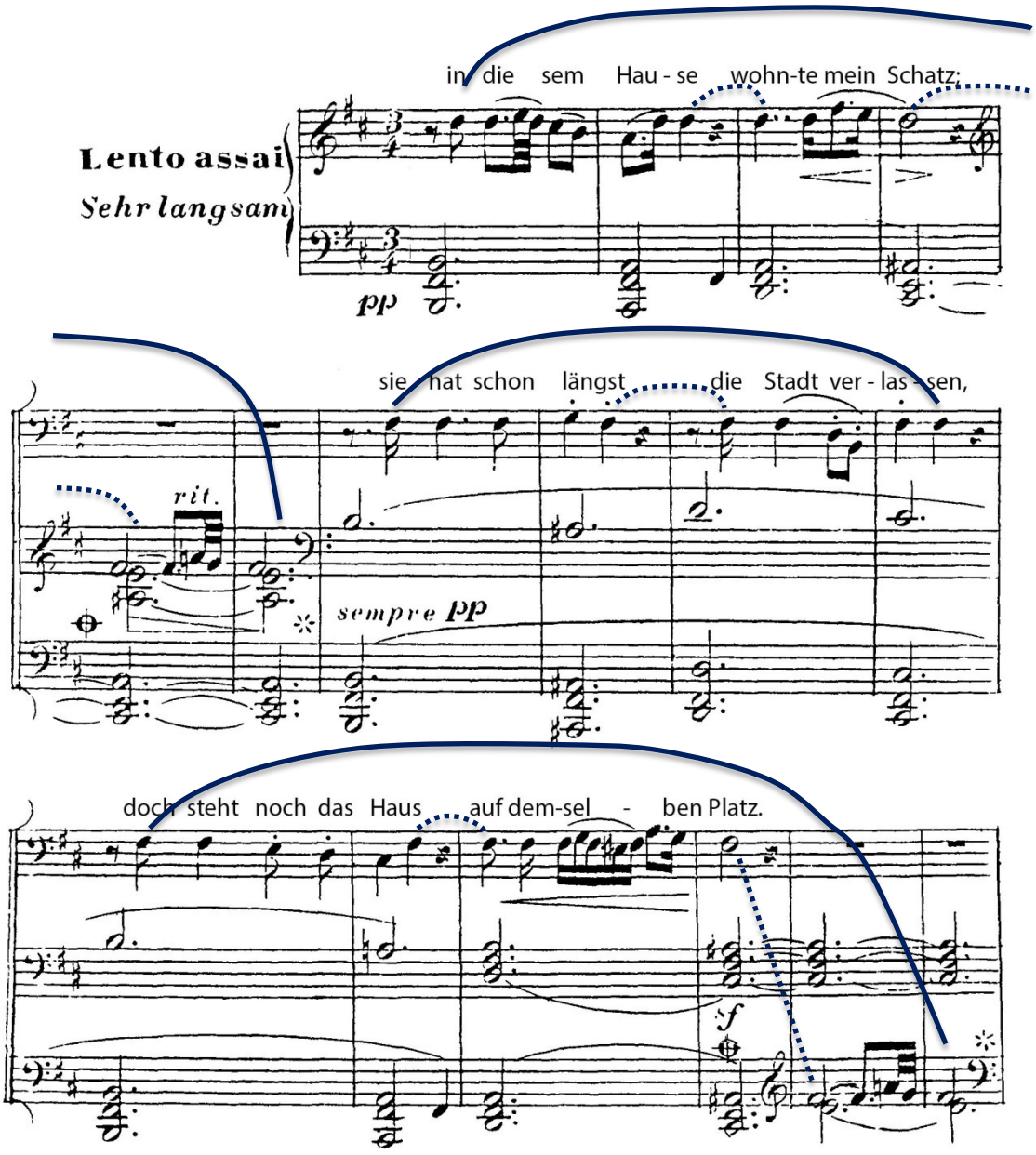

Try to play two or four measures in one breath. Exhaling gently can help the pianist to go forward so that the flow can be maintained until the ends of phrases. Liszt inserted an accent on each note of the melody in mm. 1–4 (Example 3–10). The purpose, however, is to indicate where the melody is,[65] rather than to have a real accent on each note. Even though each note has an accent, the degree of the accent should vary in order to create the shape of the phrase. Whereas the keyboard cannot sustain the sound, the voice can. Since this example is in a slow tempo, it is hard to make the gradual shape on the piano, but breathing helps pianists to feel the continuity. Singers exhale more air for crescendo and less air for decrescendo. In the same manner, start

[65] Liszt used accent marks (>, –, sf, ^, etc.) to indicate the melody. James M. George, "Franz Liszt's Transcriptions of Schubert's Songs for Solo Pianoforte: A Study of Transcribing and Keyboard Techniques" (DMA document, The University of Iowa, 1976), 62.

breathing out gently and gradually until “Stil–” in m. 2, and then exhale less. Keep the same pattern in mm. 3–4. While playing an arpeggio chord, pianists can still feel the direction from “Tiefe” to “Stille” through exhaling.

In *Der Doppelgänger*, the rests between phrases (mm. 10, 16, and 20) tend to cut the phrases short (Example 3–12). Keep each phrase within one breath. Singers would hold a breath on the rests of these measures without a partial breath, helping them to make the connection. Keep the accompaniment steady and especially avoid an accent on the third beat (F) of mm. 10 and 20.

Example 3–12: Schubert–Liszt, *Der Doppelgänger*, S. 560, No. 12, mm. 9–24[66]



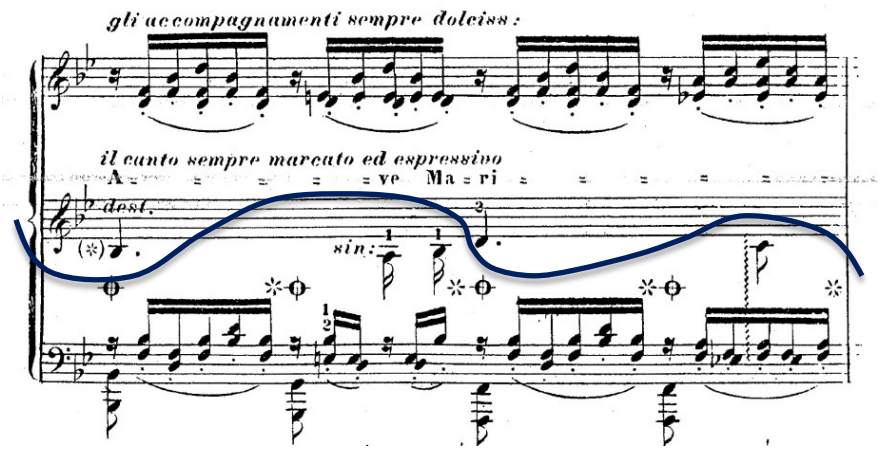

3.2.8. Humming for Legato Singing

Robert Spillman asserts that it is desirable for pianists in the German Romantic song repertoire to create a singing line through legato shadings and connections.[67] Breathing out

[66] In diesem Hause wohnte mein Schatz (In this house where my sweetheart lived); sie hat schon längst die Stadt verlassen (she left the city a long time ago), doch stecht noch das Haus auf demselben Platz (but the house still stands in the same place).

gently, accompanied by humming, helps both legato phrasing and the voicing. Although some of Schubert's melodies are literally transferred to the piano in Liszt's transcriptions (e.g., *Die Rose*, S. 556), most of them are altered in some way,[68] which can result in some confusion for the pianist. The vocal melody of *Ave Maria* is played by alternating hands in a slow tempo (Example 3–13). Although the hands share the melody line in the middle staff, they also play the accompaniment in the top and bottom staves. Pianists can use the pedal to maintain a continuous sound in the melody line; however, this does not address the issue of playing the melody legato. Humming the melody helps pianists to imagine a melodic line and to remember the tone quality of the last note. This should enable them to play the melody as it would sound if played by one hand.

Example 3–13: Schubert–Liszt, *Ave Maria*, S. 558, No. 12, m. 3




[67] Robert Spillman, "Performing Lieder: The Mysterious Mix," in *German Lieder in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Rufus Hallmark (New York: Schirmer Books, 1996), 320.

[68] For instance, because of the tessitura of the original songs, some melodies are played an octave lower by alternating hands (e.g., *Die Forelle*, S. 563, and *Ave Maria*, S. 558). In *Das Wandern*, S. 565, Liszt arranged the piano accompaniment to maintain the vocal register, although, because of the many layers in the texture, the melody is mingled with the accompaniment.

When singers want a legato, they can sing the melody with only the vowel from the text.[69] By excluding consonants, singers reduce the movement of their tongue and jaw and are able to maintain a legato without throat tension. To apply singers' practice to the piano, pianists can hum the melody with one vowel (e.g., ah, ay, ee, oh, oo) to feel the steady flow of the melody (Example 3–14), which results in legato on the piano. The following are practice suggestions (see Example 3–13):

1. Play the melody only (the middle staff) with two hands while humming it.
2. Play the accompaniment only (the top and bottom staves) while humming the melody.
3. Play all the parts while humming the melody.

Example 3–14: Schubert, *Ave Maria*, D. 839, mm. 3–4

Correct: ah - - - - -

Incorrect: ah ah ah ah ah ah ah

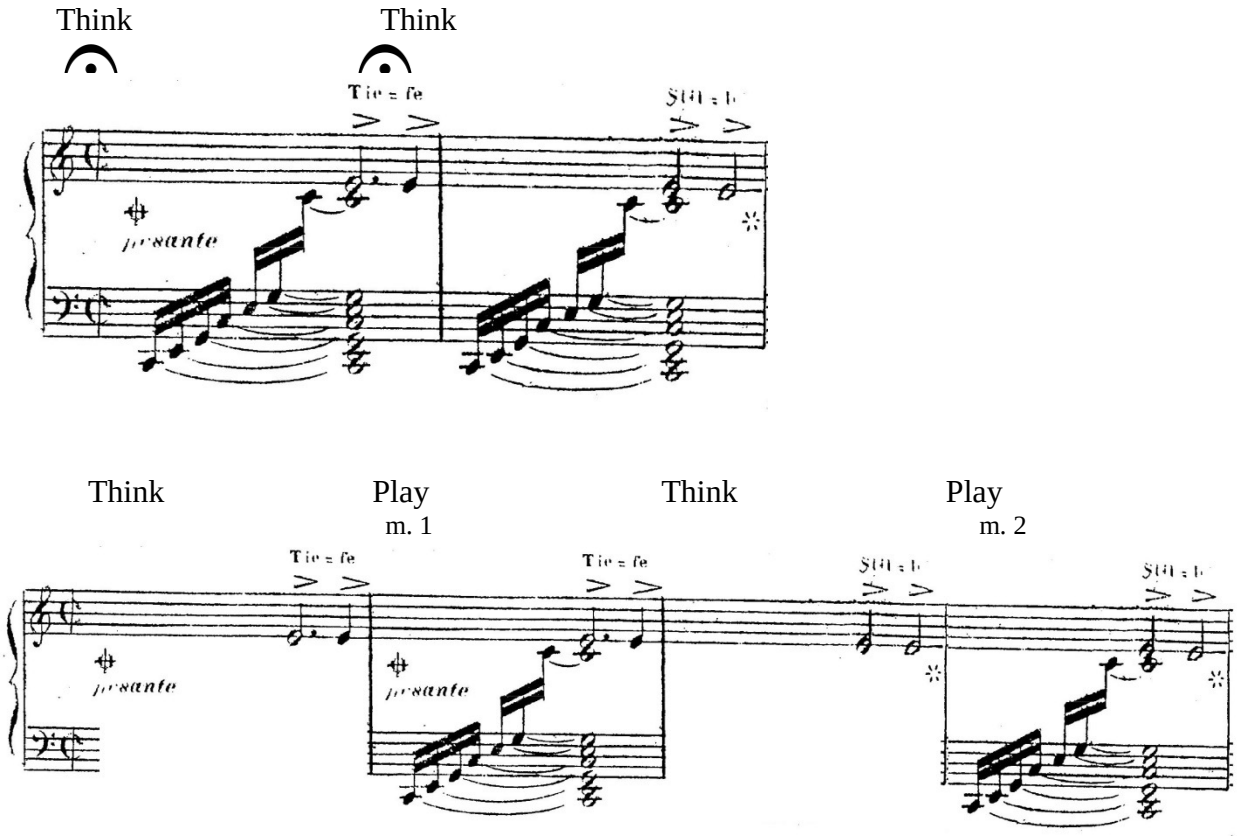
3.3. Mental Concentration for Breath-Planning with Inner Listening

Leschetizky remarked: "Think ten times and play once."[70] Correct thinking through mental concentration helps to plan breathing.[71] As a practice method, Merrick suggests that pianists leave breathing spaces for thinking (or singing in their heads) before playing.[72] Take a pause with a *fermata* and mentally rehearse what is to come. This practice helps pianists to decide how the phrases should sound and what kind of tone to create. See Example 3–15.

[69] In Example 8–1, the vowels from the text (Ave Mari–) are "a–e–a–i."
[70] Frank Merrick, *Practising the Piano* (London: Barrie & Rockliff, 1960), 1.
[71] Peterson, *Natural Singing*, 67.
[72] Merrick, *Practising the Piano*, 1–7.

Think “Tie-fe (deep)” before playing m. 1. Imagine how deep the tone color should be while speaking “Tie-fe.”

Example 3–15: Schubert–Liszt, *Meeresstille*, S. 558, No. 5, mm. 1–2[73]



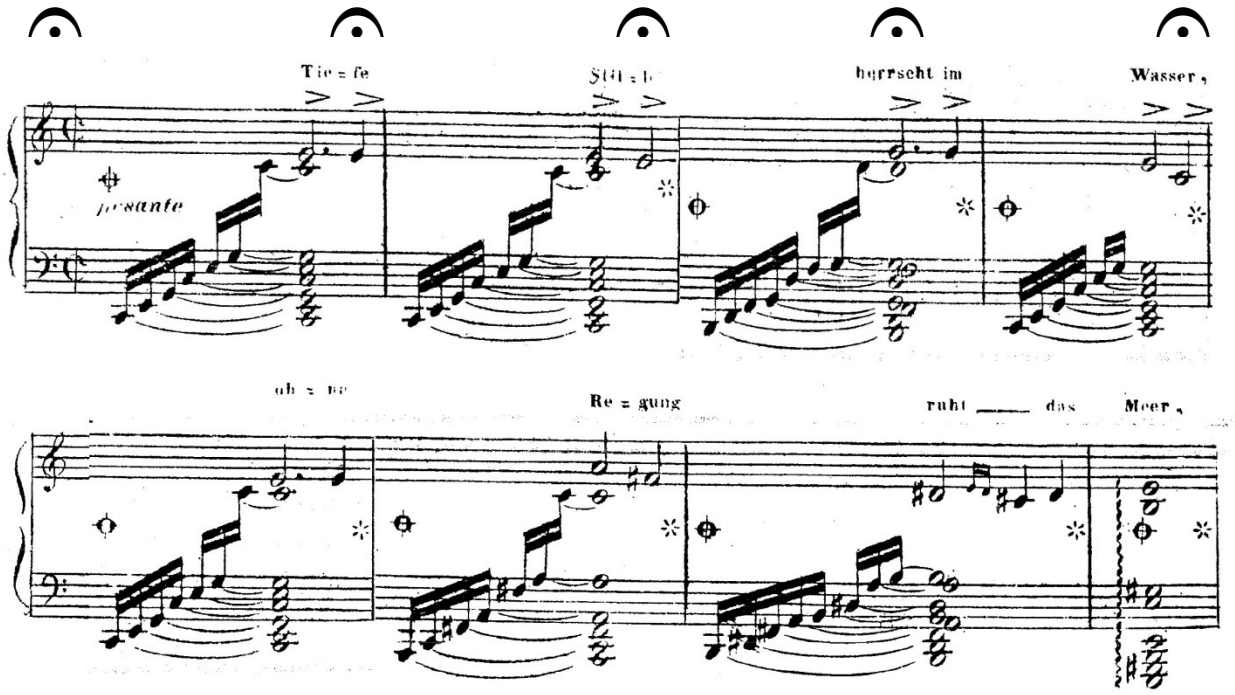

It is natural to have a longer note on “Tie,” because that is a stressed syllable and “fe” is unstressed (pressure on “Tie” and release on “fe”). This interpretation is also possible on the piano, since the mechanism for producing a singing tone on the piano is similar: pressure and

[73] It follows a similar format to Merrick’s example. Merrick, *Practising the Piano*, 1–5.

release of hand motions.[74] Therefore, pianists who understand this rule can naturally imitate "Tiefe" on the piano.

To have breathing spaces for mental concentration, pianists need to ask themselves where the logical stopping-places are. To find this spot for a single word (Example 3–16), in mm. 3–4, a stopping-place can be before "im Wasser (in the water)." It is the text that tells us this. In the same manner, another stopping-place is before "das Meer" in m. 7. By studying the text, pianists can find correct stopping-places, helping pianists to imagine what they will play and to prepare a breath. After practicing breathing before a single word, pianists can then try a longer phrase—perhaps as long as two or four measures.

Example 3–16: Schubert–Liszt, *Meeresstille*, S. 558, No. 5, mm. 1–8[75]

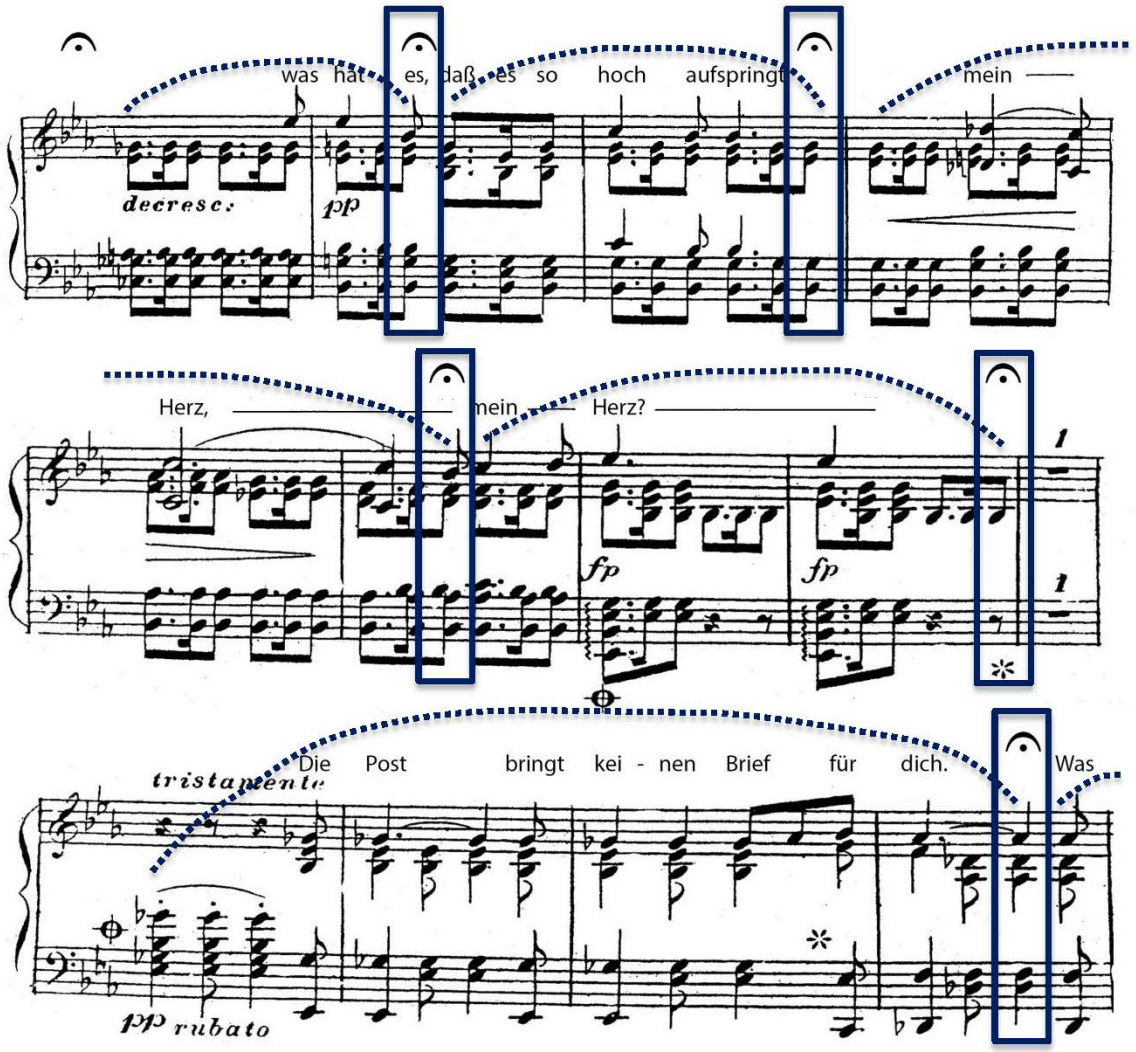



[74] "Piano Singing is the stroking of the air through up–and–down motions of the hand—as the bow strokes the string: pressure—reflex." Heinrich Schenker, *The Art of Performance* (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 8.

[75] Tiefe Stille herrscht im Wasser (Deep calm prevails in the water), ohne Regung ruht das Meer (without movement the sea rests).

When practicing a long phrase, sustain the last note (*fermata*) of the previous phrase while thinking about the connection to the new phrase (Example 3–17).[76]

Example 3–17: Schubert–Liszt, *Die Post*, S. 561, No. 4, mm. 19–30[77]




[76] Merrick, *Practising the Piano*, 3.

[77] Was hat es (What does it have), daß es so hoch aufspringt (that makes you leap so high), Mein Herz? (my heart?). Die Post bringt keinen Brief für dich (The mail brings no letter for you).

# CHAPTER 4

# ORNAMENTATION

Martha Elliott published a guide to the vocal performance practices of German Lieder, including articulation and expression marks, embellishments, notated ornaments, portamento, and rubato.[78] According to her, most lieder include relatively few articulation marks because composers expected that the text would help singers to shape the melody. Articulation marks and performance instructions in vocal accompaniments are intended to help pianists to play as if they had text and diction.

## 4.1. Notated Ornaments

Schubert's notation of appoggiaturas and grace notes is inconsistent. In the *Neue Ausgabe* of Schubert's complete works,[79] the editors offer some suggestions. Elliott mentions that Schubert's music can be considered as being in the transition period between late Classical and early Romantic style, so his notation could follow the performance practice of either subperiod. Liszt understood these practices when he transcribed the notated ornamentation of Schubert's songs. Liszt did, however, sometimes create his own ornamentation. Without knowledge of the original songs, it can be difficult to know what is vocal ornamentation and what is an ornament added by Liszt.

[78] Martha Elliott, *Singing in Style: a Guide to Vocal Performance Practices* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 160–93.

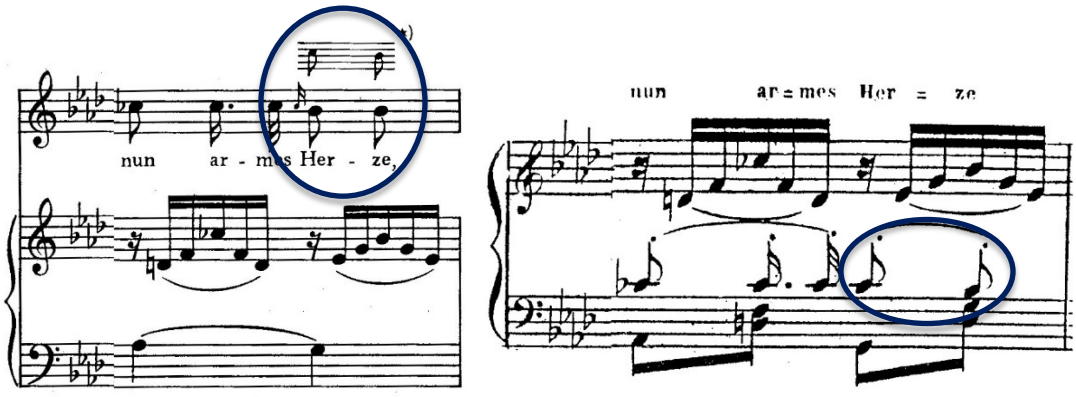
[79] Franz Schubert, *Neue Ausgabe sämtlicher Werke* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1964–).

4.1.1. Appoggiaturas

Understanding the execution of appoggiaturas is critical to interpreting the transcriptions from a vocal aspect. According to the suggestions in the *Neue Ausgabe* of Schubert's complete works, a small ornamental note should often be stressed and performed on the beat. In *Frühlingsglaube* (D. 686, No. 7), there is an appoggiatura in m. 18 (Example 4–1), for which Liszt notated what he wanted to be played (Example 4–2). An appoggiatura takes the entire value of the note it decorates, the following note being unaccented (see Example 4–1 for the suggestion from the *Neue Ausgabe*).[80] Since the vocal melody is played by alternating thumbs in the Liszt transcription, it would be easy to wrongly accent every note of the melody. Since the fourth note of the melody was originally an appoggiatura, the rule of appoggiaturas should be followed (ornament stressed, following note unstressed), according to the performance practice of that time.

Example 4–1: Schubert, *Frühlingsglaube*, D. 686, No. 7, m. 18

Example 4–2: Schubert–Liszt, *Frühlingsglaube*, S. 558, No. 7, m. 18



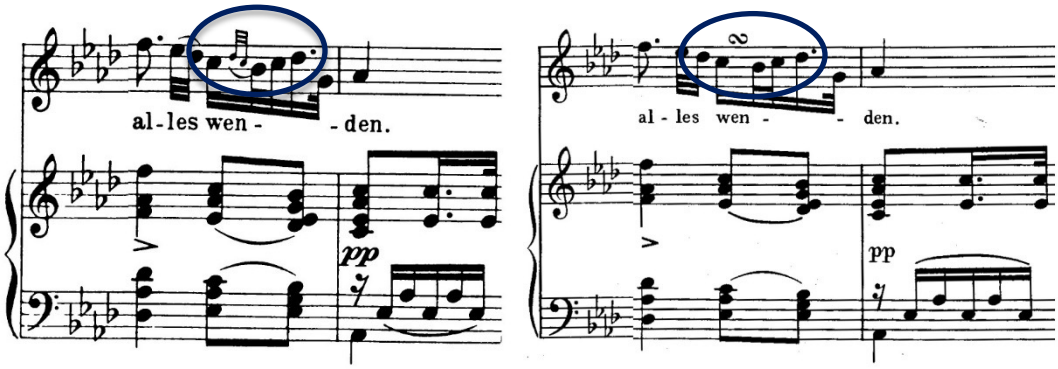

In m. 23 of *Frühlingsglaube*, there is a double appoggiatura (Example 4–3) and the *Neue Ausgabe* informs us that the small ornamental notes (Db–C) have the same value as the normal

[80] Elliott, *Singing in Style*, 174.

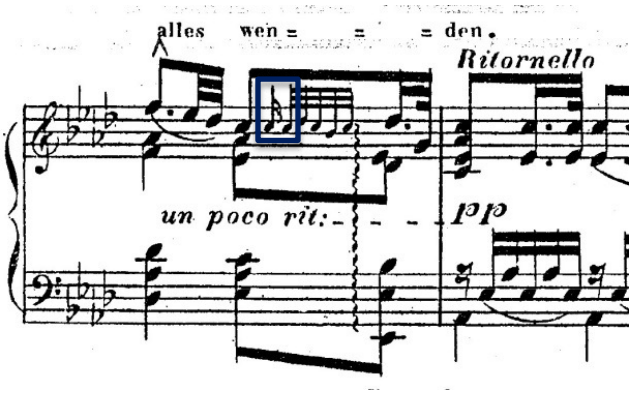
size notes (Bb–C). Liszt added C two more times (C–C–Db–C–Bb–C rather than following the Db–C–Bb–C of the original song), and this ornament, especially the double C, should be played smoothly without any accent on the repeated notes if it is to sound like the vocal rendering (Example 4–4).

Example 4–3: Schubert, *Frühlingsglaube,* D. 686, No. 7, mm. 23–24

*Neue Ausgabe




Example 4–4: Schubert–Liszt, *Frühlingsglaube,* S. 558, No. 7, mm. 23–24

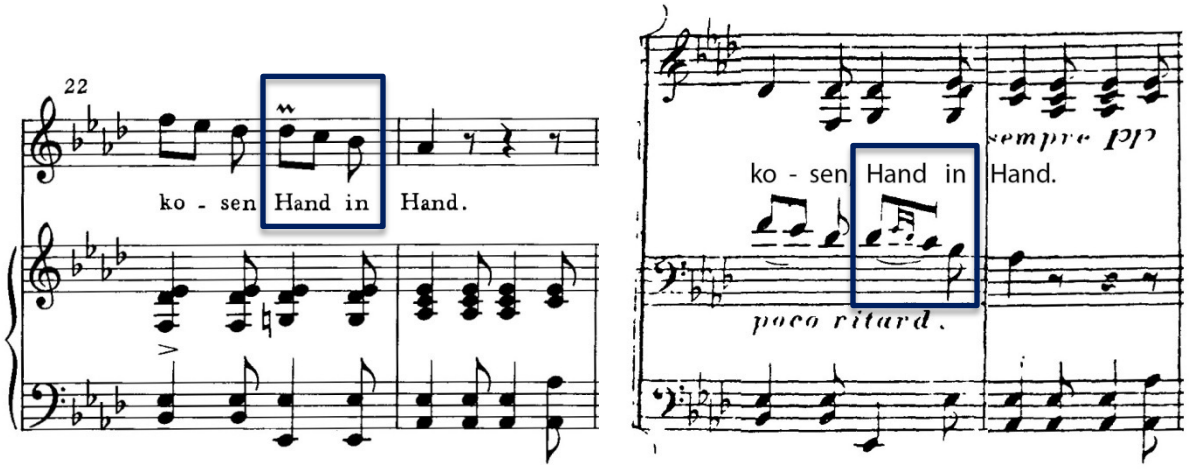


4.1.2. Trill (Shake)

According to Howard Ferguson, although both long and short trills begin with the upper auxiliary during the eighteenth century, nineteenth-century trills start on the main note.[81] He states that most of Schubert's trills start with the main note instead of the auxiliary. Ferguson also says that both eighteenth- and nineteenth-century trills generally begin on the beat. Examples 4–5 and 4–6 show how Liszt transcribed Schubert's trill in *Das Fischermädchen*.

Example 4–5: Schubert, *Das Fischermädchen*, D. 957, No. 10, mm. 22–23

Example 4–6: Schubert–Liszt, *Das Fischermädchen*, S. 560, No. 2, mm. 22–23



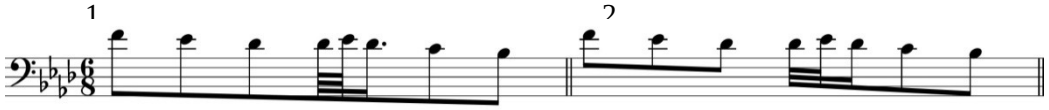

Example 4–6 raises the question of when the small notes should be played. It became the nineteenth-century practice to write out ornaments in full (normal size for rhythmically important notes, smaller size for extras) rather than to use ornament signs.[82] Nevertheless, it is clear here that the smaller notes are subordinate to D, the main note. Therefore, the trill should be played as follows (Example 4–7):

[81] Howard Ferguson, *Keyboard Interpretation from the 14th to the 19th Century: An Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), 119–24.

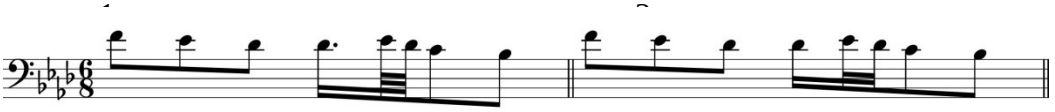
[82] Ferguson, *Keyboard Interpretation*, 123.

Example 4–7: Trill options, Schubert–Liszt, *Das Fischermädchen*, S. 560, No. 2, m. 22

Correct options




Incorrect options



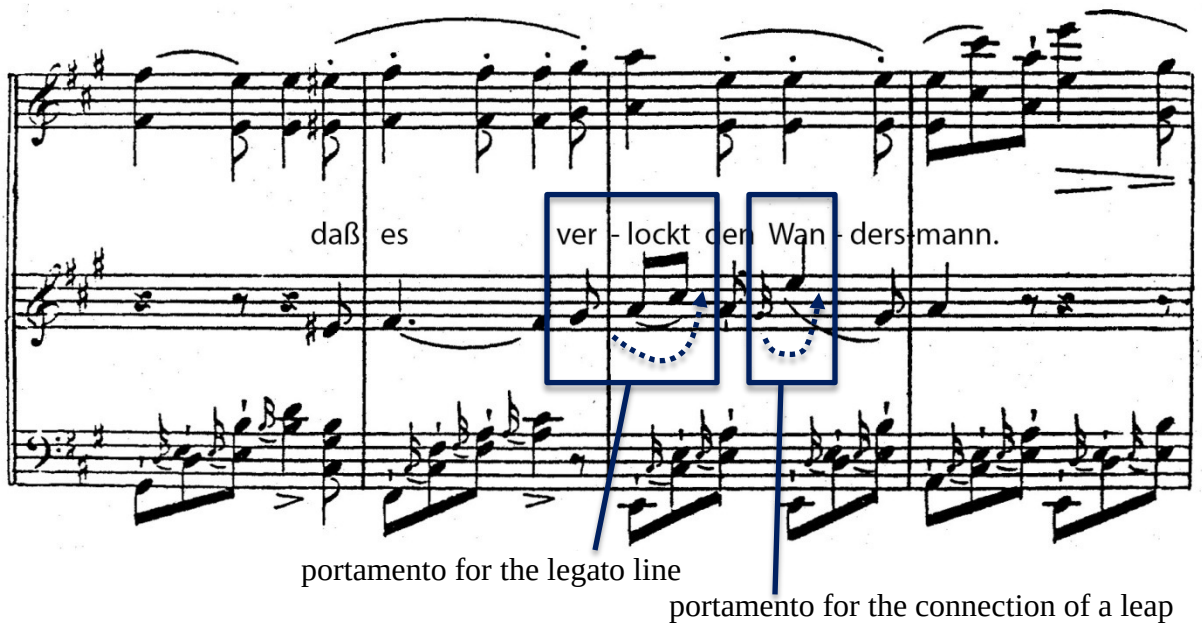
4.2. Portamento

Portamento helps to create a legato line and to connect leaps. It also emphasizes important words and intensifies emotion for expressive and dramatic purposes.[83] In *Täuschung* (S. 561, No. 9), there is a grace note in m. 19 ("Wandersmann") where portamento helps singers to smoothly connect the leap (Example 4–8).

[83] Elliott, *Singing in Style*, 183–84.

Example 4–8: Schubert–Liszt, *Täuschung*, S. 561, No. 9, mm. 17–20

daß es **verlockt** den **Wandersmann.**
(that it tempted the wanderer.)




Pianists should follow the appogiatura rule (ornament stressed, following note unstressed) mentioned in chapter 4.1 when imitating portamento in "Wandersmann" (m. 19). Keep the wrist flexible, as if gently bouncing a ball, feeling the weight on G# and then making E light. In the musical context, "verlockt" (tempted) is as important as "Wandersmann." Therefore, pianists need to articulate the stressed syllable "–lo–" (A) and play "–ckt" (C#) light and short.

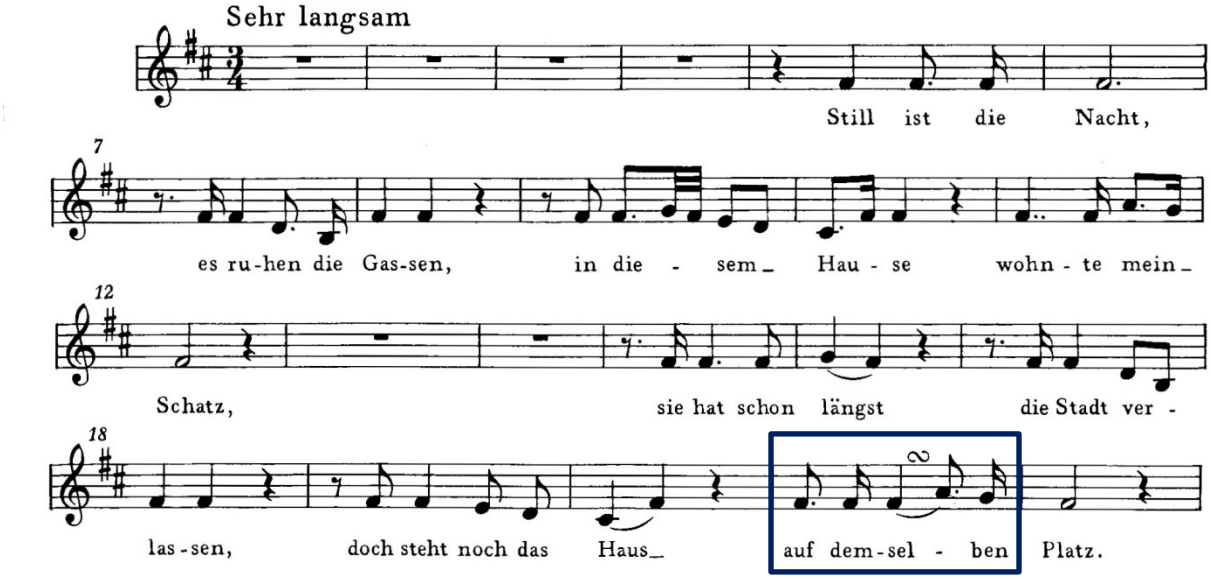
## 4.3. Rubato

Pianists can use rubato to shade a phrase and to color the particular notes of a phrase for dramatic reasons.[84] The first verse[85] of *Der Doppelgänger* (S. 560, No. 12) maintains a calm

[84] Rubinstein, *Outline of Piano Pedagogy*, 35.

mood. The stationary quality is intensified up to the end of the first verse and emphasized in the text, "auf demselben Platz" (in the same place) in mm. 21–22. Moore says that the turn (m. 21) should be sung as slowly as possible, stretching the time if necessary,[86] to express remaining motionless (Example 4–9 and 4–10):

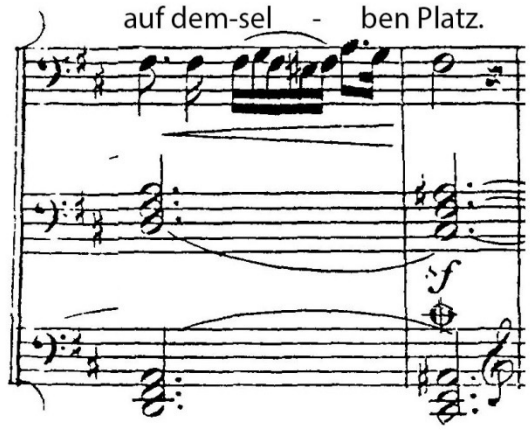
Example 4–9: Schubert, *Der Doppelgänger*, D. 957, No. 13, mm. 1–22




[85] Still ist die Nacht (The night is still), es ruhen die Gassen (the streets are silent), in diesem Hause wohnte mein Schatz (in this house my sweetheart lived); sie hat schon längst die Stadt verlassen (she already left the city a long time ago), doch steht noch das Haus auf demselben Platz (but still the house stands in the same place).

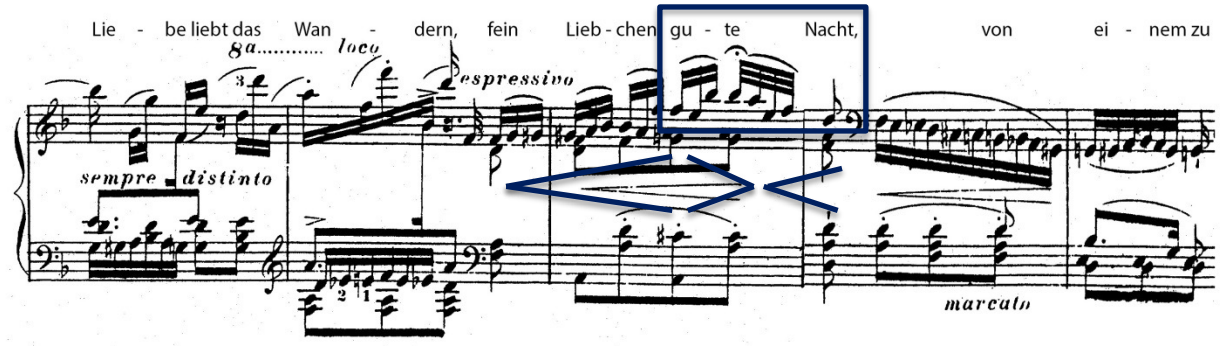
[86] Gerald Moore, *The Schubert Song Cycle: With Thoughts on Performance* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1975), 230.

Example 4–10: Schubert–Liszt, *Der Doppelgänger*, S. 560, No. 12, mm. 21–22




In *Gute Nacht*, Liszt inserted a *fermata* to emphasize the farewell to the wanderer's lover (mm. 61 and 65). The place for a *fermata* is musically perfect since it is at the top of a phrase. However, when singers sing "Gu–te," it is impossible to emphasize the unstressed syllable "–te." Therefore, avoid an accent on the *fermata* (Example 4–11).

Example 4–11: Schubert–Liszt, *Gute Nacht*, S. 561, No. 1, mm. 59–62



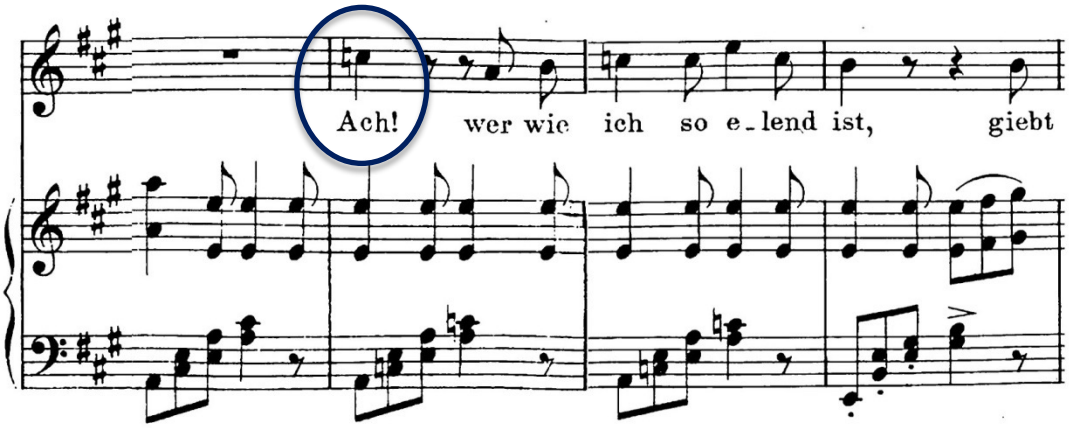
# CHAPTER 5

# STYLE

## 5.1. Use of Interjection and Speaking Gesture

Schubert's songs include various melodic styles: the cantabile style (e.g., *Ave Maria*, D. 839, and *Ständchen*, D. 957–4), the dramatic aria style (e.g., *Der Doppelgänger*, D. 957–13, and *Der Atlas*, D. 957–8), and the folk–tune style (e.g., *Das Fischermädchen*, D. 957–10, and *Täuschung*, D. 911–19). In all styles, Schubert's most common compositional method is to match the musical line to the text.[87] For example, in *Täuschung* (Example 16–1), the key changes abruptly from A major to A minor in mm. 22–24 to express the wanderer's self-abasement ("Ach! wer wie ich so elend ist--Ah! one who is as wretched as I"). The interjection is literally and vocally important for dramatic effect. In *Täuschung*, "Ach!"—the wanderer's sigh—is a turning point between being caught up in the illusion and facing a hopeless reality.

Example 5–1: Schubert, *Täuschung*, D. 911, No. 19, mm. 21–24

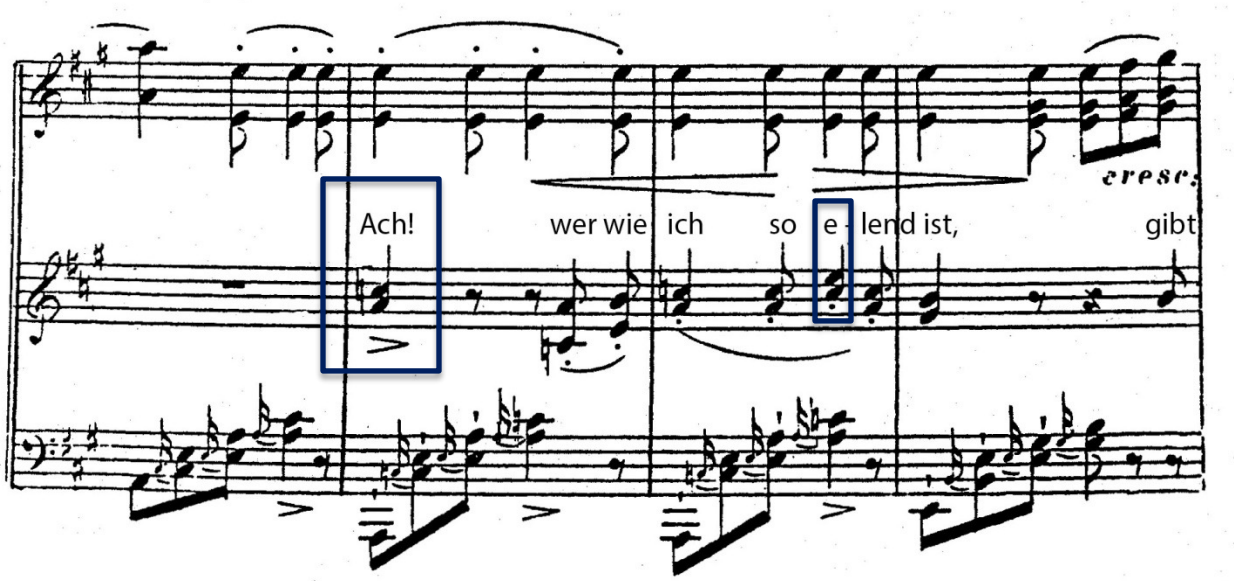



A major A minor

[87] Muxfeldt, "Schubert's Song.": 126.

Although strictly speaking the interjection is not a recitative, it is nevertheless more speech-like than melodic. Liszt inserted an accent mark on "Ach!" and staccato on each syllable of the text in mm. 22–24 to help pianists to recognize and interpret the speaking gestures (Example 5–2). Deborah Stein and Robert Spillman note that the syllables in parlando style are more disconnected from one another and often more stressed, in contrast with the syllables in legato singing.[88] Pianists who do not understand this can easily shorten the note values by mistake. Where Liszt marked a slur, the staccato in mm. 22–24 means disconnecting each note rather than making the notes short. Also by stressing "Ach" and the first syllable of "elend" (wretched) the intent of the text is intensified.

Example 5–2: Schubert–Liszt, *Täuschung*, S. 561, No. 9, mm. 21–24




5.2. Application of Parlando Style

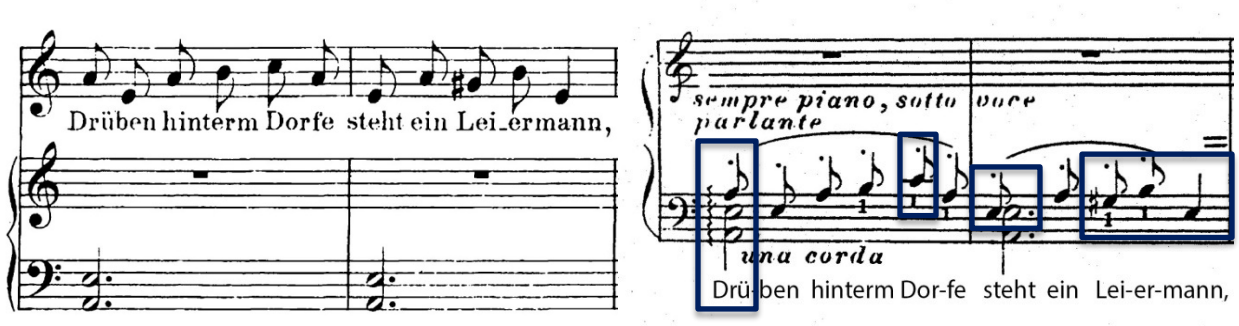
*Der Leiermann* (S. 561, No. 8) is a good example to use for studying the speaking style over an entire song. Liszt marked *parlante* (speaking) to help pianists, although that raises the

[88] Deborah Stein and Robert Spillman, *Poetry into Song: Performance and Analysis of Lieder*, foreword by Elly Ameling with Max Deen Larsen (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 61.

question of how to interpret speaking style on the piano. Schenker says that it is essential to differentiate light and shade in music, as in language. Speakers give a different emphasis to each syllable, with contrast in strength, color, and length.[89] In Example 5–4, the vocal line consists of equal staccato eighth notes. However, when singers speak "Drüben hinterm Dorfe steht ein Leiermann (Over behind the village there stands a hurdy–gurdy man)," the syllables are not equal. Therefore, pianists should play the vocal line irregularly, according to the length of the syllable (a little emphasis on "Drü-," "Dor-," and "ste-": see Example 5–5 for the IPA) and with a slight elongation on G#–B–E (Lei–er–mann, Example 5–4).

Example 5–3: Schubert, *Der Leiermann,* D. 911, No. 24, mm. 9–10

Example 5–4: Schubert–Liszt, *Der Leiermann,* S. 561, No. 8, mm. 9–10




Example 5–5: IPA,[90] Schubert, *Der Leiermann,* D. 911, No. 24, mm. 9–10

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ['dry:bən | 'hɪnt'ɐm | 'dɔrfə | ʃt'e:t' | laen | 'laeɐman,] |
| Drüben | hinterm | Dorfe | steht | ein | Leiermann |
| Yonder | behind | the village | stands | an | organ-grinder, |

(Over there behind the village an organ-grinder is standing,)

*The mark ['] means a stressed syllable.

[89] Schenker, *Art of Performance*, 45–46.

[90] Beaumont Glass. *Schubert's Complete Song Texts, Vol. II* (Geneseo, NY: Leyerle Publications, 1996), 965.

Although the vocal line of *Der Leiermann* maintains a speech-like style for the whole song, Liszt also marked *parlante, declamato* (declaimed), or *recitando* (reciting) on some melodious vocal lines:

*parlante – Gute Nacht*, S. 561, No. 1
*declamato – Muth (Mut)*, S. 561, No. 3
*recitando – Das Wirthshaus*, S. 561, No. 10

Because the vocal lines are melodic, these marks may be regarded as an indication of different tone colors based on the emotion of the text. For example, in *Gute Nacht*, each syllable can be more stressed to describe the depth of depression coming from a broken heart and a lingering affection. *Declamato* in *Muth* describes a powerful speech and a strong will to overcome all difficult circumstances with courage. In *Das Wirthshaus*, a speaker (the wanderer) is utterly exhausted and has no energy to resist, so pianists should avoid any harshness on the melody line and keep it simple.

### 5.3. Application of Recitative

Liszt partially used recitative style for several measures of some songs and actually marked “recitative” in:

*Am Meer*, S. 560, No. 4, mm. 12–18 and 33–39
*Der Wanderer*, S. 558, No. 11, mm. 8–9
*Die Nebensonnen*, S. 561, No. 2, mm. 16–19
*Erlkönig*, S. 558, No. 4, mm. 146–48

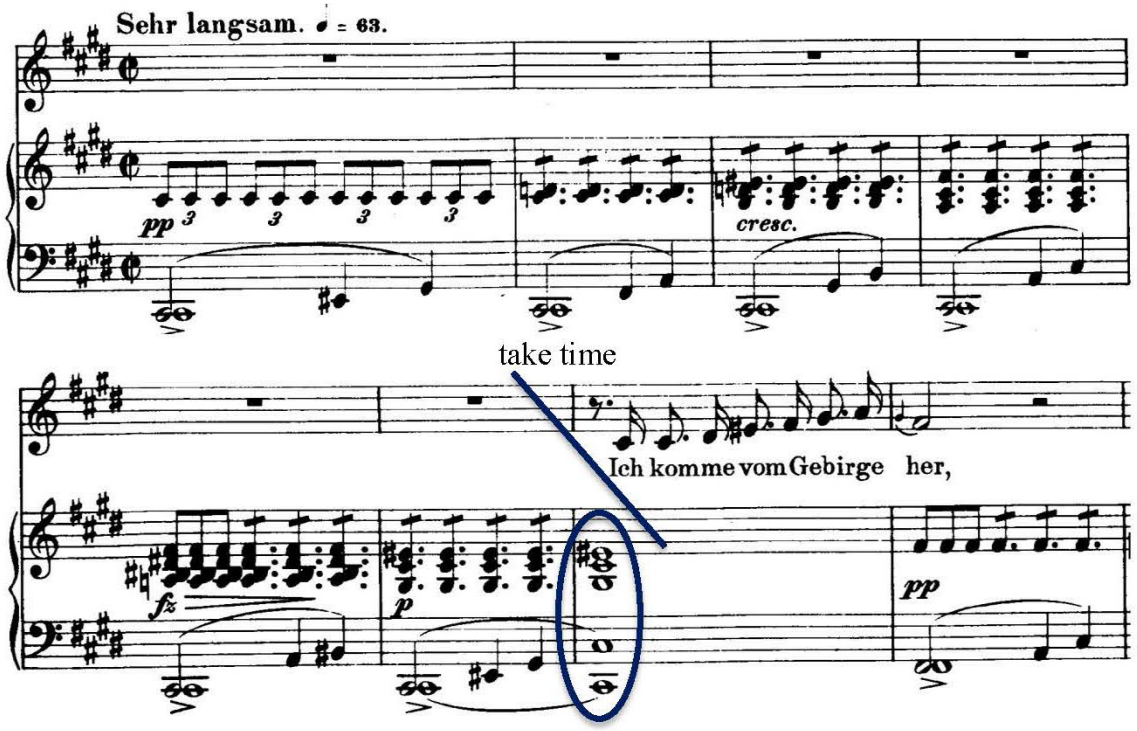
Schubert originally inserted a recitative at the end of *Erlkönig* (D. 328, mm. 146–47), and the recitatives of other three transcriptions were made by Liszt himself. However, the original songs show the possibility of recitative style, even though Schubert did not mention “recitative,” and pianists are confronted with technical issues in interpreting recitative on the piano. The following

subsections deal with the recitative style used in Liszt's transcriptions and its application to the piano, focusing on three issues: flexibility, use of tremolo, and change from monologue (narration) to dialogic (conversation) style.

### 5.3.1. Flexibility

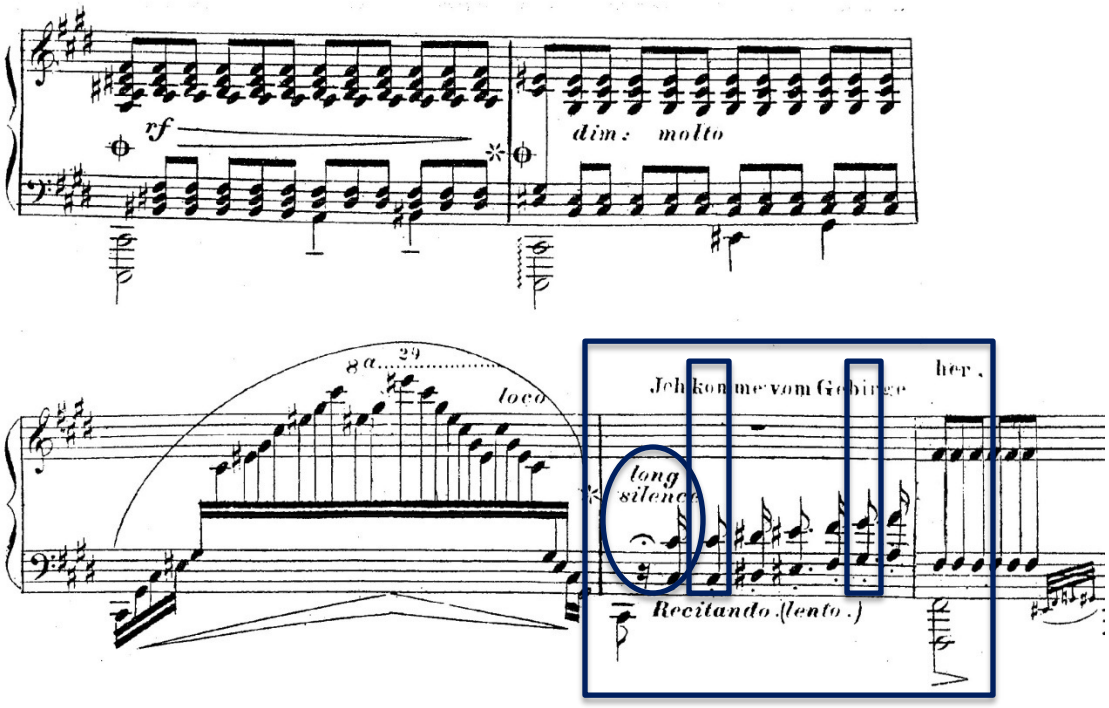
The beginning of *Der Wanderer* (D. 489) slowly starts with an introduction in opera-aria style, describing a wanderer roaming from place to place and trying to find happiness (Example 5–6). The wanderer stops roaming at the end of the introduction on a C-sharp minor chord in m. 7 and finally says, "Ich komme vom Gebirge her" (I am coming here from the mountains). Since the accompaniment part plays only one chord, singers have great flexibility; they can take their time before starting the first sentence.

Example 5–6: Schubert, *Der Wanderer*, D. 489, mm. 1–8



Liszt understood the original song and tried for an even more dramatic effect. After a six-measure introduction, he added one more measure for a cadence with a cadenza-like embellishment (m. 7) and inserted a *fermata* after the end of the introduction in m. 8 (Example 5–7). During the *fermata*, pianists should think of the text and imagine the speaking sound of m. 8, which will help them to be more immersed in the intensity of the emotion (see the discussion of concentration in chapter 3.3).

Example 5–7: Schubert–Liszt, *Der Wanderer,* S. 558, No. 11, mm. 5–9




The recitative consists of dotted rhythms, reflecting the rhythm of the German language, based on stressed and unstressed syllables (see Example 5–8). Therefore, pianists should emphasize "kom–" and "–bir–" a little and gently play "–bir–ge her" with a slight elongation, rather than keep the even dotted rhythm.

Example 5–8: IPA,[91] Schubert, *Der Wanderer*, D. 489, mm. 7–8

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| [ɪç | ˈkɔmə | fɔm | gəˈbɪɾgə | heːɐ̯] |
| Ich | komme | vom | Gebrige | her, |
| I am | coming | from | the mountains | here, |

*The mark [ˈ] means stressed syllable.

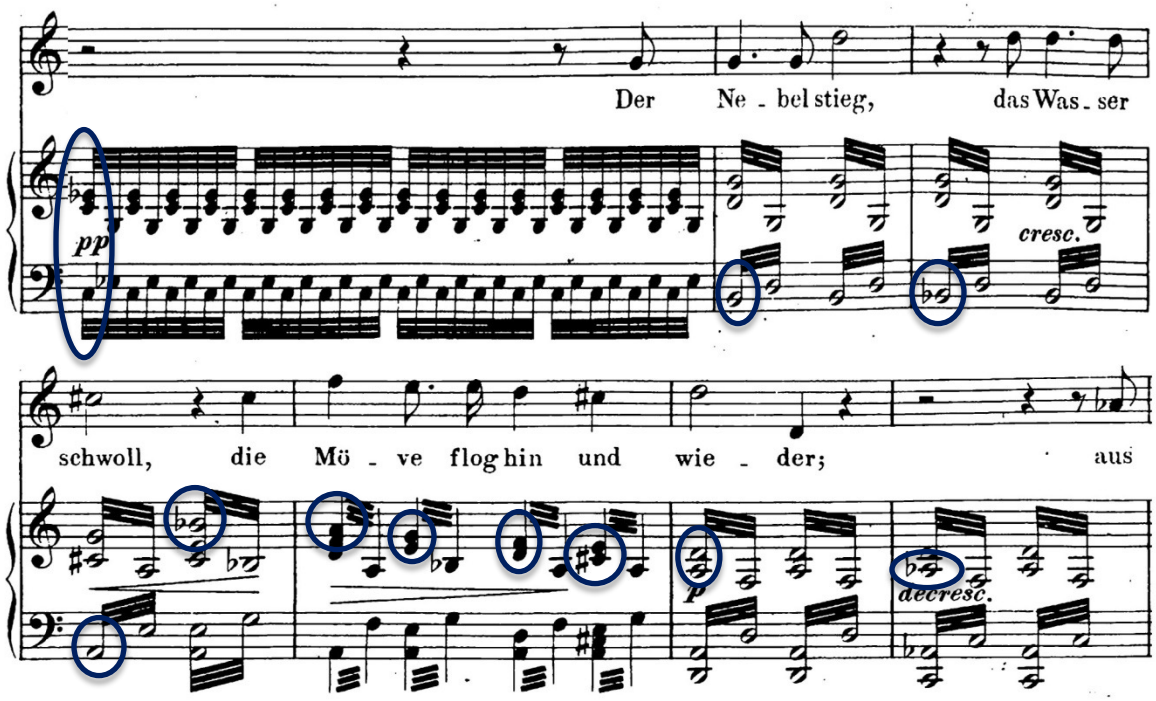
5.3.2. Use of Tremolo for Emotional Intensity

Whereas *Erlkönig* and *Der Wanderer* offer more flexibility in a recitative with chordal accompaniment, the recitative of *Am Meer* is accompanied by a *tremolo* reminiscent of strings creating a *recitativo accompagnato* (Example 5–9). Moore says that the *tremolo* should be played in a blurred manner with the sustaining pedal. The descending chromatic bass is more important than individual notes in creating the ominous mood, so pianists should make accents on the first bass note in each measure.[92]

[91] Beaumont Glass. *Schubert's Complete Song Texts, Vol. I* (Geneseo, NY: Leyerle Publications, 1996), 304.

[92] Moore, *Schubert Song Cycle*, 227.

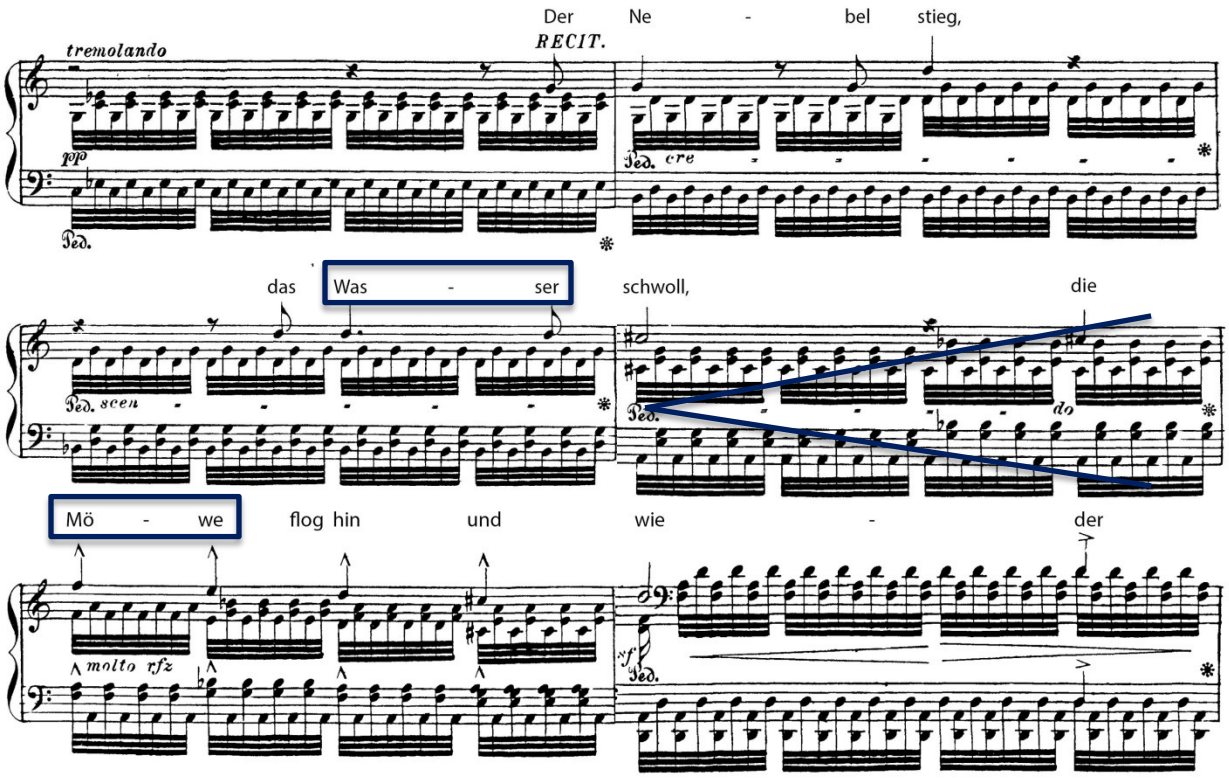
Example 5–9: Schubert, *Am Meer*, D. 957, No. 12, mm. 12–18[93]




The dynamic of the *tremolo* should match the text (Example 5–10). According to the 1840 Haslinger edition of Liszt's transcription, the *crescendo* starts from "Nebel stieg" (mist rising) in m. 13. This author suggests a gentle crescendo to sustain the mysterious mood of the mist rising, and then a big crescendo toward "die Möwe" (seagull) in mm. 15–16 to describe the scenery intensely from bottom (the water) to top (the seagull).

[93] Der Nebel stieg (The mist rose), das Wasser schwoll (the water swelled), die Möwe flog hin und wieder (the seagull flew back and forth);

Example 5–10: Schubert–Liszt, *Am Meer*, S. 560, No. 4, mm. 12–17

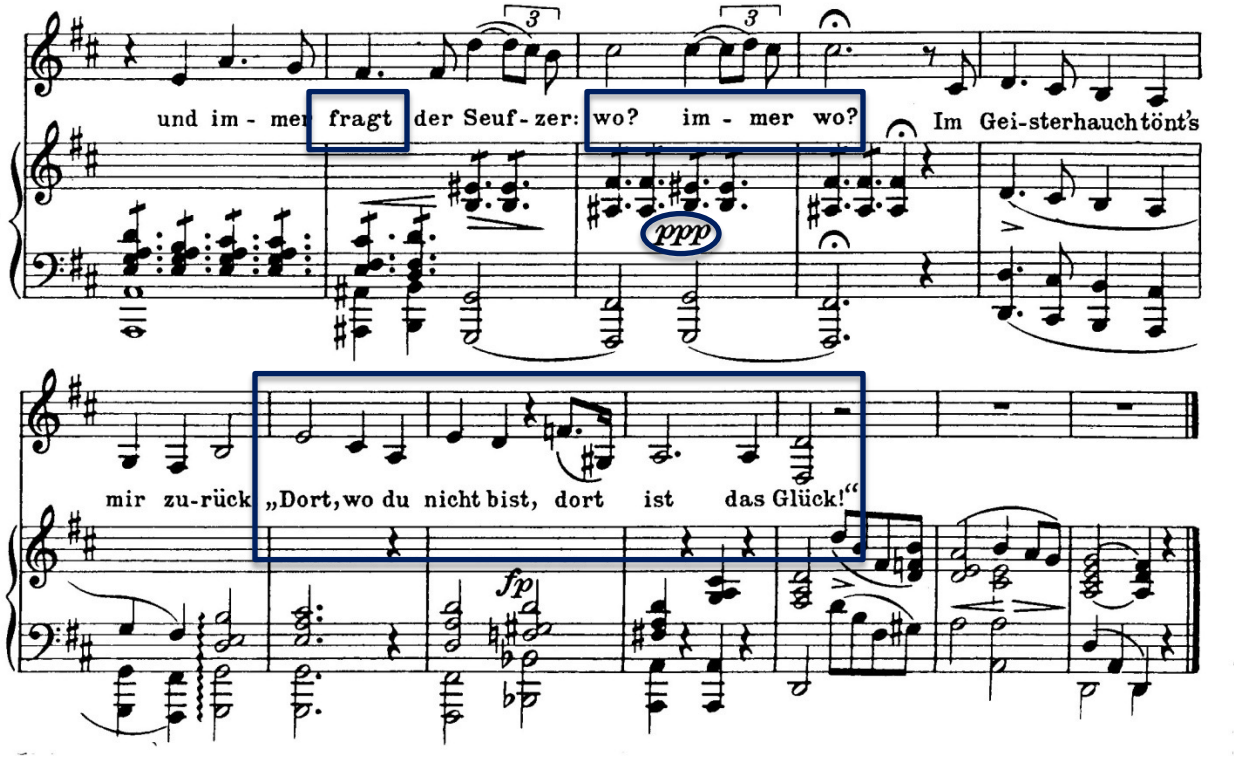



5.3.3. Change from Monologue (Narration) to Dialogic (Conversation) Style

Dialogue is important for dramatic effect in Liszt's Schubert song transcriptions. At the end of *Der Wanderer* (D. 489), question mark and quotation obviously indicate that the style of poem changes from monologue to dialogue:

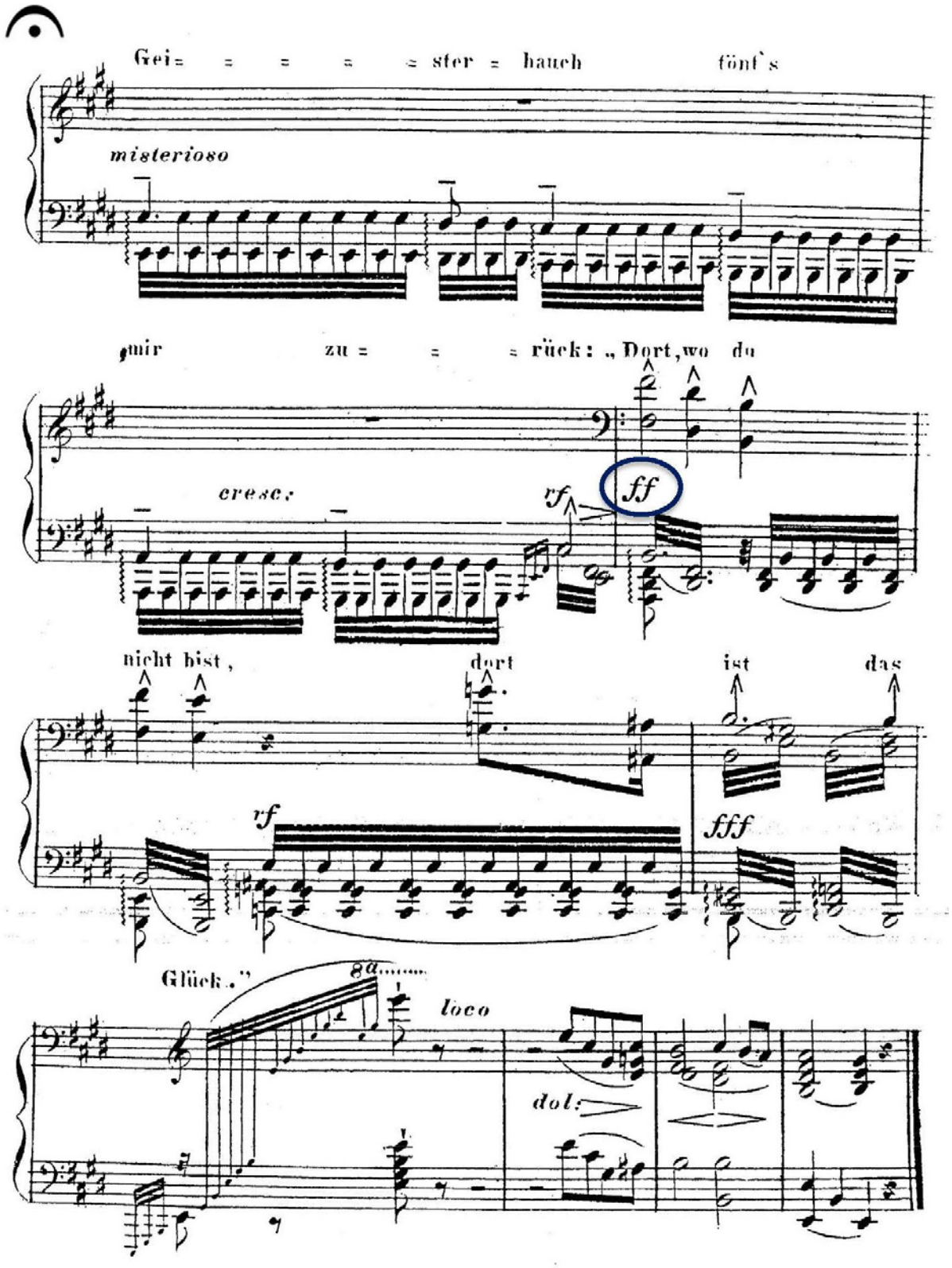
> Ich wandle still (I wander still), bin wenig froh (am without joy),
> und immer **fragt** der Seufzer: wo**?** Immer **wo?** (and always the sigh asks, **where? Always where?**)
> Im Geisterhauch tönt's mir zurück (The ghostly whisper sounds back to me):
> **"Dort, wo du nicht bist, dort ist das Glück** (There, where you are not, there is happiness)!**"**

Example 5–11: Schubert, *Der Wanderer*, D. 489, mm. 61–72




After a long silence (*fermata*) in m. 66, Liszt inserted a *tremolo* in the accompaniment to indicate the change of speaking style (mm. 67–71), and the dialogue part maintains *ff* (rather than *ppp*) to continue the emotional intensity (see chapter 5.3.2 for more on the use of *tremolo*).

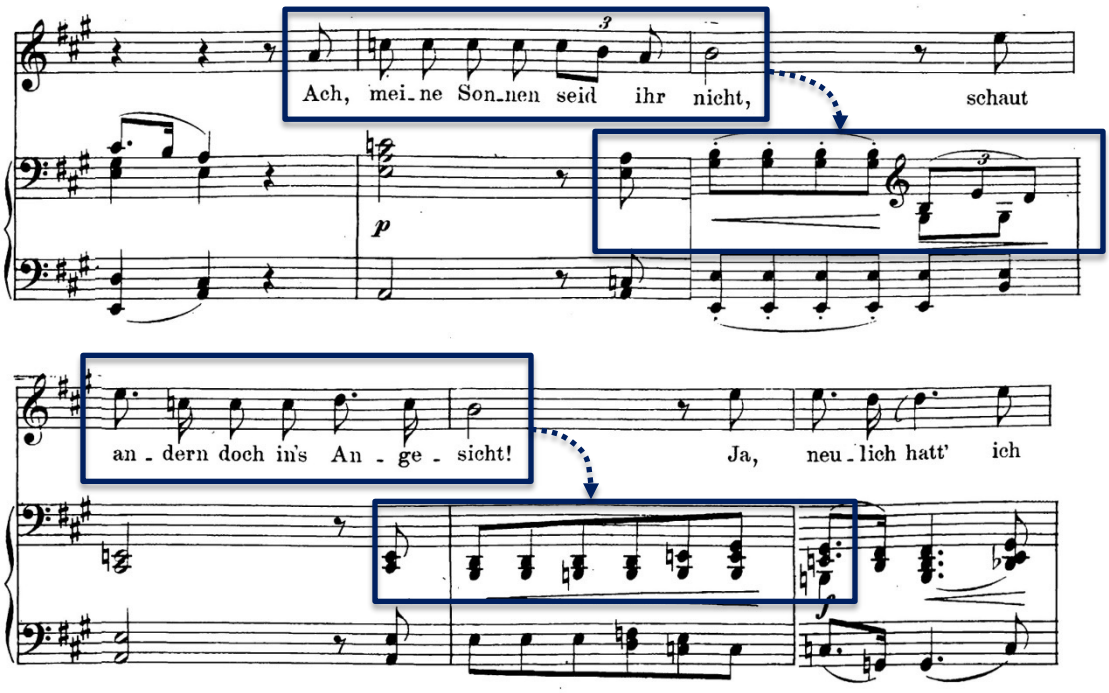
Example 5–12: Schubert–Liszt, *Der Wanderer*, S. 558, No. 11, mm. 67–75



Even though there is no quotation, a subject (I, me, my) in a poem mostly indicates the dialogic style. Liszt's rendition of recitative in *Die Nebensonnen* is experimental. The original song starts with the wanderer's monologue in a major key.[94] After the monologue, the wanderer shouts to the sun to express his desperation and anger in a minor key in mm. 15–19 (Example 5–13):

> Ach, meine Sonnen seid **ihr** nicht! (Ah, **you** are not my sun!)
> Schaut andern doch ins Angesicht! (Look into other faces!)

Example 5–13: Schubert, *Die Nebensonnen*, D. 911, No. 23, mm. 15–20

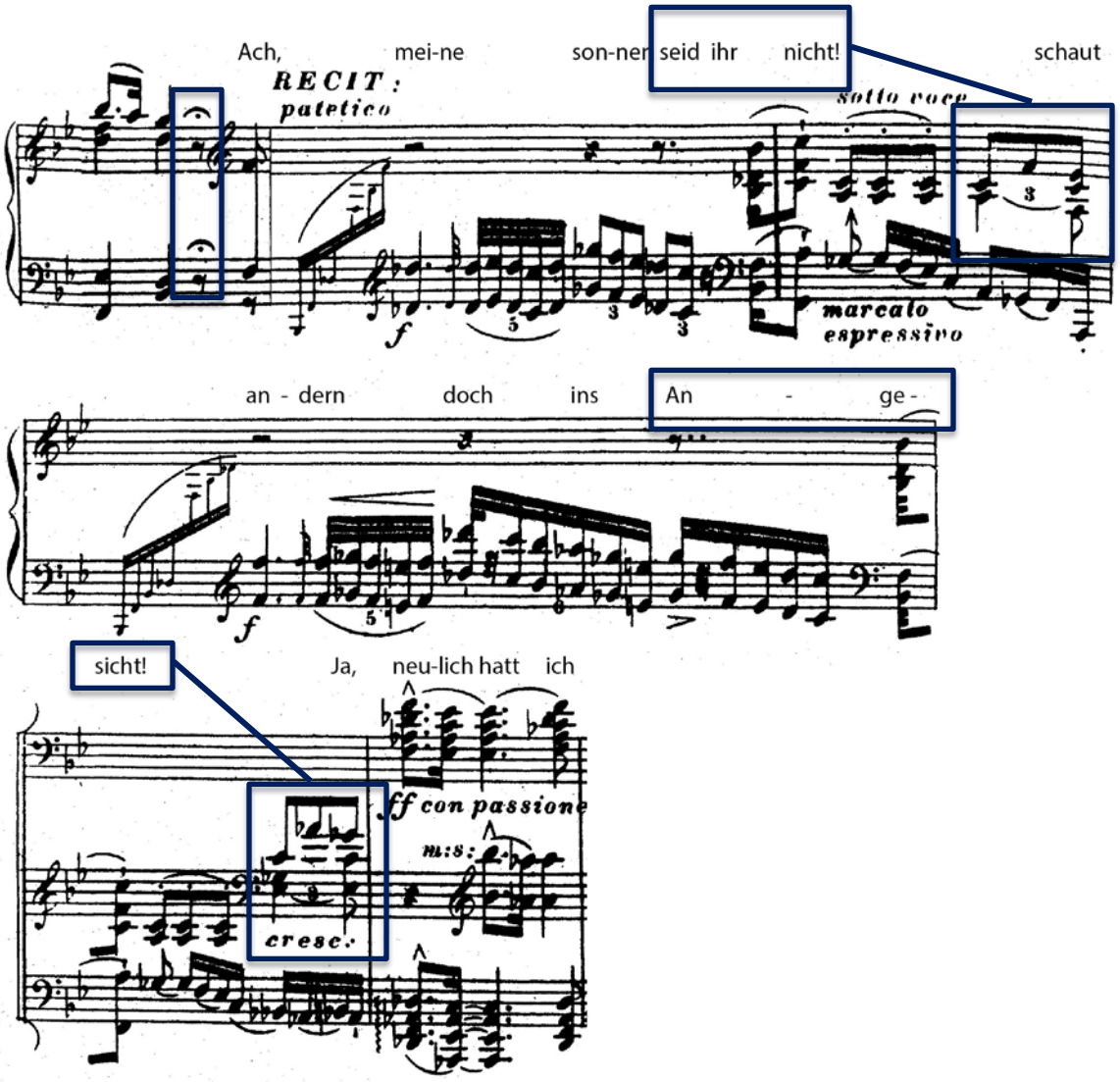



In the original song, the melody in mm. 15–19 does not sound like a recitative. However, Liszt transcribed mm. 15–19 this way (Example 5–14). This new approach grafts a form of description (from monologue to conversation) from the original song upon the change of dynamic (*p* to *f*)

[94] Drei Sonnen sah ich am Himmel stehn (I saw three suns standing in the sky), Hab lang' und fest sie angesehn (I stared at them long and fixedly); Und sie auch standen da so stier (And they, too, stood there staring), Ah wollten sie nicht weg von mir (As they did not want to leave me).

and the musical style (songful melody to recitative). The justification is that it is impossible to deliver the text literally on the keyboard, but it is still possible to satisfy the dramatic effect of the text.

Example 5–14: Schubert–Liszt, *Die Nebensonnen*, S. 561, No. 2, mm. 15–20

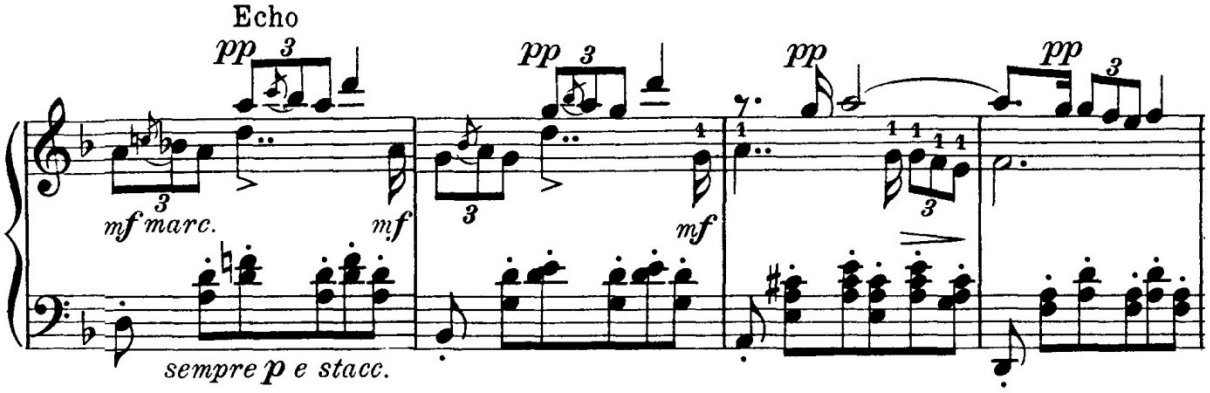



Liszt inserted a *fermata* to help pianists prepare for the dramatic change of mood before the recitative starts. In his recitative, the vocal melody is embellished so much that it is difficult to recognize the original melody. However, the following measures (mm. 17 and 19) maintain the original setting of the piano accompaniment, which reflects the vocal melody of the original song

as if two people were conversing (Example 5–13). Therefore, it is important for pianists to replicate the shape of the text (words and sentences) to recall the vocal parts, with a slight emphasis on “seid ihr nicht” (is not you), “Schaut” (look), and “Angesicht” (face) (Example 5–14).

As well as the literal conversation in the text, musical conversation is also important in Liszt’s Schubert song transcriptions. In regard to the reflection of the vocal line in the accompaniments, see *Die Nebensonnen* mentioned above (Example 5–13 and 5–14). As another example, *Ständchen* (S. 560, No. 7) displays Liszt’s own dialogue style (Example 5–15). In mm. 71–90, Liszt inserted a variation section, adding an *Echo*-like *canon*, although the original song has no echo. Walker notes that Liszt arranged the melody of the first verse in the soprano register and that of the second verse in the baritone register, so he created a love duet when the echo enters.[95] Pianists should be careful to play different ranges of dynamics between the registers, so that it sounds like a duet.

Example 5–15: Schubert–Liszt, *Ständchen*, S. 560, No. 7, mm. 71–74

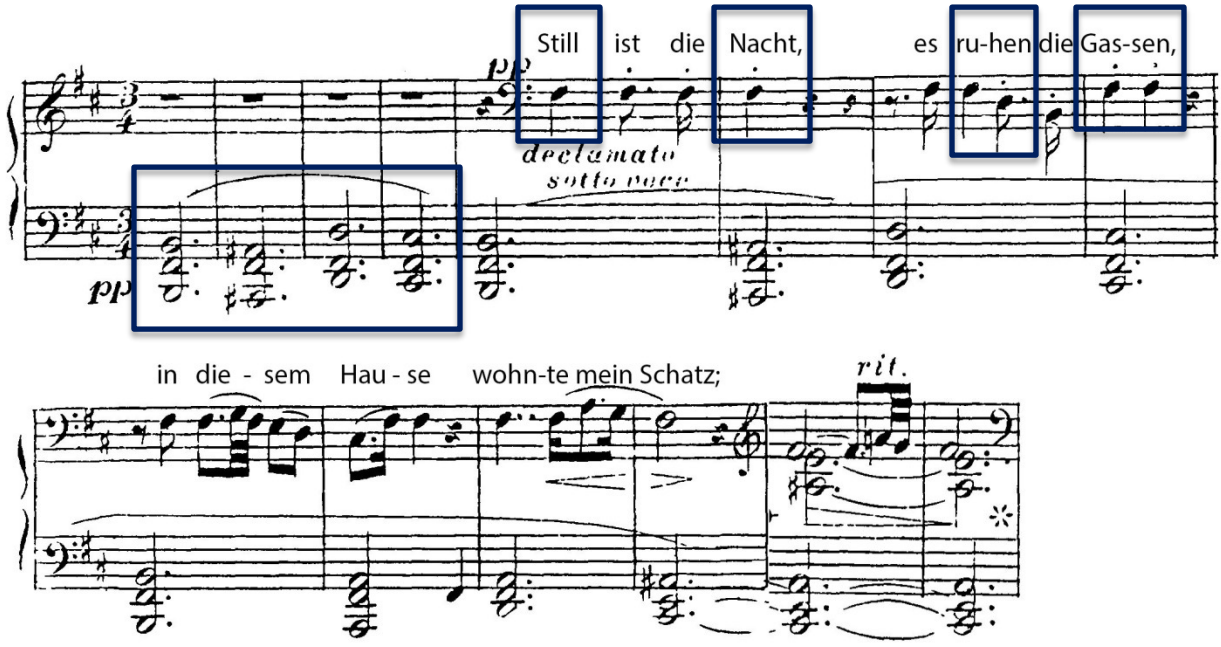



[95] Walker, “Schubert Song Transcriptions,” 258.

5.4. Integrated Application for Speaking Styles

*Der Doppelgänger* (S. 560, No. 12) is a good example of combining various practices of the speaking style mentioned above. Without a thorough study of speaking style, it is not possible to interpret the song well. The beginning of *Der Doppelgänger* is reminiscent of a dramatic aria from a dark and mysterious scene of a tragic opera. The opening starts with "declamato sotto voce," which indicates a speaking gesture. During the first and second verses (until m. 42), a four-measure *ostinato* is repeated in the accompaniment (Example 5–16). Because each measure has one chord in the accompaniment, the vocal phrases have flexibility. The song loses its spirit if the note values are too rigid. In m. 5, pianists should start the first note ("Still") slowly. This is not only because the tempo is *Sehr langsam* (very slow) or because "still" means calm: but also because singers need time to pronounce the double consonants, S–T.

Example 5–16: Schubert–Liszt, *Der Doppelgänger*, S. 560, No. 12, mm. 1–14[96]




[96] Still ist die Nacht, es ruhen die Gassen (The night is calm, the streets rest), in diesem Hause wohnte mein Schatz (in this house my sweetheart lived);

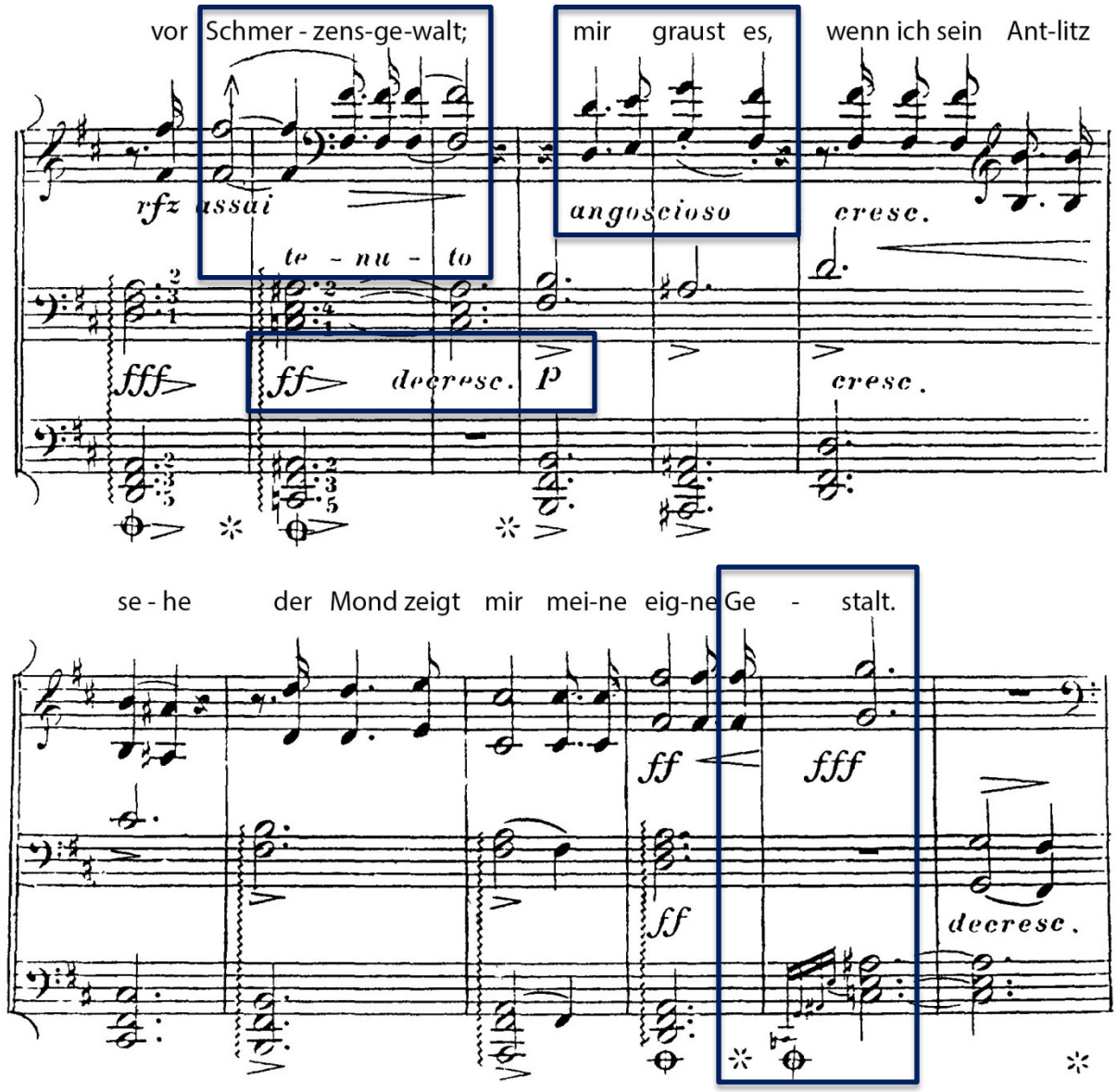
To best interpret the speaking style, pianists should study Liszt's notations and expression marks, as well as the text of the original songs. Most of his notations describe the shape of the sentences. For instance, in the beginning of the first verse, it is obvious that the key words, "Still" (calm), "Nacht" (night), "ruhen" (rest), and "Gassen" (streets), are important in a literary way. Liszt inserted *staccato* on "ist die Nacht" in mm. 5–6, and these three staccatos have different note values because of the text. Moore suggests hastening the third beat ("ist") and delaying the sixteenth note ("die") as much as possible, to avoid emphasizing these unimportant words.[97] Therefore, the first two staccatos ("ist die") should be light, and the third one ("Nacht") be closer to tenuto than staccato. Measure 7 is performed in a same manner. The first syllable of "ruhen" needs tenuto, then the following notes, D–B ("–hen die"), should be light. In m. 8, the staccato describes the double consonants of "Gassen," S–S. However, since "Gassen" is a single word, the two staccatos cannot be too short but must connect with each other. In m. 9, the thirty-second notes (G–F#) of "diesem" are shivers,[98] so they should be emphasized a little to describe trembling. In m. 10, singers make a portamento on C# to F# ("Hau–"), and the S of "–se" sounds gentle [z]. Therefore, pianists should imagine how gently the vocal part is sung. After the vocal phrase in mm. 11–12 ("wohnte mein Schatz"), the accompaniment (mm. 13–14) reflects "mein Schatz" like an echo. Since it takes time until this echo comes, it should be softer than the vocal phrase.

Liszt's expression marks help pianists match the mood of the text (Example 5–17). After the first verse, the speaker sees a man who stands and wrings his hands (mm. 25–30). With the elevation of emotion, Liszt marked *tenuto* on "Schmerzensgewalt" (overwhelming grief) and *angoscioso* (distressing) on "mir graust es" (I dread it) in mm. 32–35. After "Schmerzensgewalt"

[97] Moore, *Schubert Song Cycle*, 229.
[98] Ibid., 229.

marked *ff*, a sudden *decrescendo* and *p* portray the speaker's extreme emotional instability. The speaker trembles with fear. Even though the accompaniment of mm. 34–35 maintains *p*, the touch should be sharp, with an accent to continue the tension. The staccato in the vocal part ("graust es") describes the speaker's quivering voice. In mm. 39–41, the speaker cannot repress his astonishment because he sees himself ("meine eigne Gestalt"). In m. 41, the arpeggio should start together with the G of the vocal part ("–stalt"), because the second syllable of "Gestalt" is stressed. If pianists start the arpeggio in advance, they could easily mistakenly emphasize "Ge–", which should be unstressed.

Example 5–17: Schubert–Liszt, *Der Doppelgänger*, S. 560, No. 12, mm. 31–42[99]

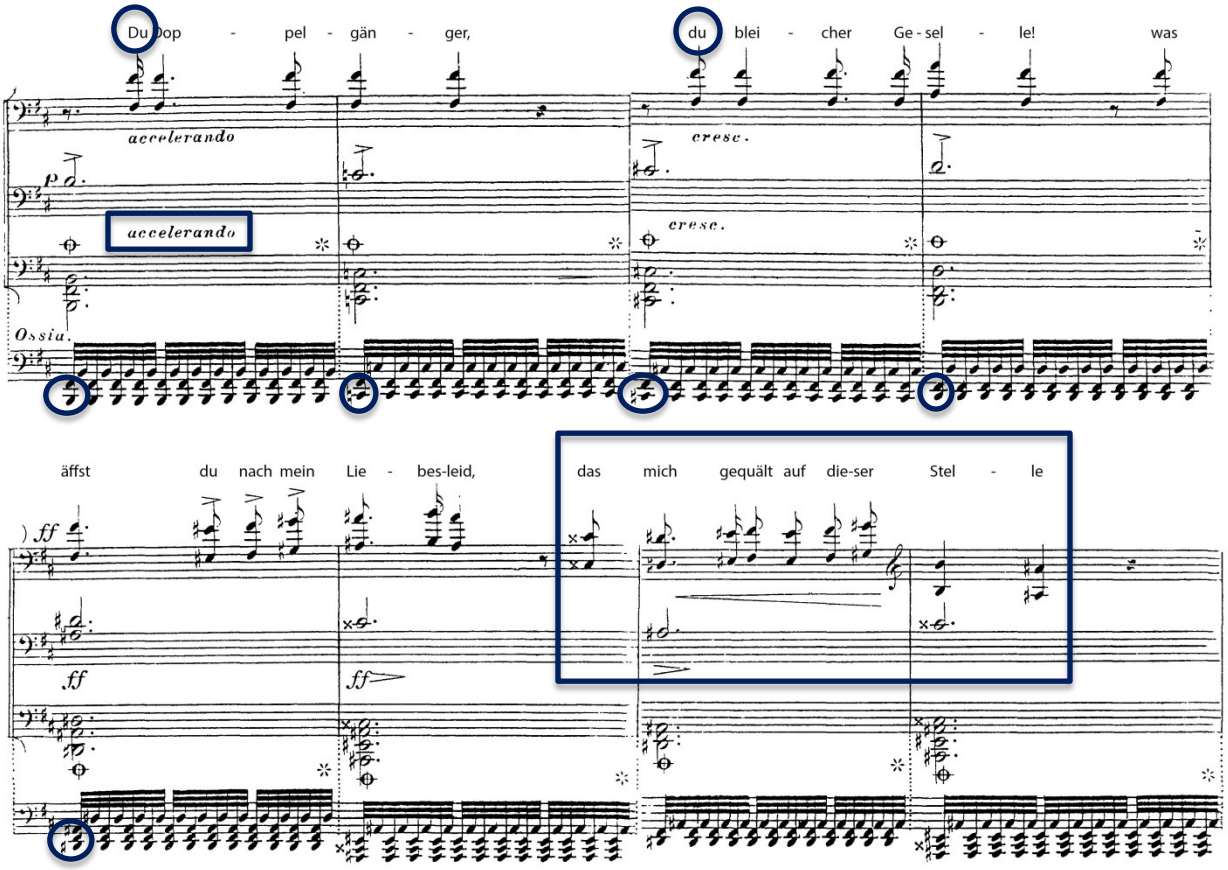



From m. 43, the form of speaking turns from monologue to dialogic style, and Liszt suggests *tremolo* as another option of the accompaniment (Example 5–18):

[99] vor Schmerzensgewalt (in overwhelming grief); mir graust es (I dread it), wenn ich sein Antlitz sehe (when I see his face) der Mond zeigt mir meine eigne Gestalt (The moon shows me my own form).

**Du** Doppelgänger, **du** bleicher Geselle (**You** phantom double, **you** pale-faced companion)!
Was äffst du nach mein Liebesleid (why do you ape my pangs of love)

Example 5–18: Schubert–Liszt, *Der Doppelgänger*, S. 560, No. 12, mm. 43–50




The tension rises with *accelerando* and ascending chromatic bass notes (see tremolo practice in chapter 5.3.2). There is no *a tempo* until the end, but the *accelerando* should be controlled during the singing, especially “mich gequält” (tortured me) in m. 49–50 (part of “das mich gequält auf dieser Stelle”- that tortured me in this place) to express how the speaker is suffering.

# CHAPTER 6

## TEXT COMPREHENSION

Singing is directly connected to the expression of emotion. Clifton Ware explains the origin of the "primal singing gesture" as human speech in a natural way, such as infants' birth cries or Tarzan's blood-curdling yells echoing through the jungle, reflecting their needs or feelings.[100] The various emotions prompt various styles of phrasing.[101] An understanding of the subtlety of language styles and the meaning of a text helps singers to create natural expression when singing. It is an important reason why the vocal parts of most lieder have few expression marks.

Robert Spillman observes that the successful performance of German lieder comes from an understanding of two languages, one musical and the other literary.[102] Understanding of the text helps pianists to shade the phrases from the vocal aspect. As Liszt himself said, "Nuances are the musician's palette,"[103] so pianists need to learn a wide variety of tone quality. Although Liszt encouraged publishers to print the song text above the staff, the text does not offer any guidelines on how to transfer the vocal interpretation to the piano. Therefore, it is essential for pianists to study the text of original songs from a vocal point of view in order to interpret Liszt's Schubert song transcriptions.

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[100] Ware, *Basics of Vocal Pedagogy*, 2.

[101] Rubinstein, *Outline of Piano Pedagogy*, 32.

[102] "Performing a song is nothing more or less than telling a story…. for the success of a lied performance depends not on the beauty of the voice but on how beautifully the beauty of the voice accords with the meaning of the text." Spillman, "Performing Lieder," 314–15.

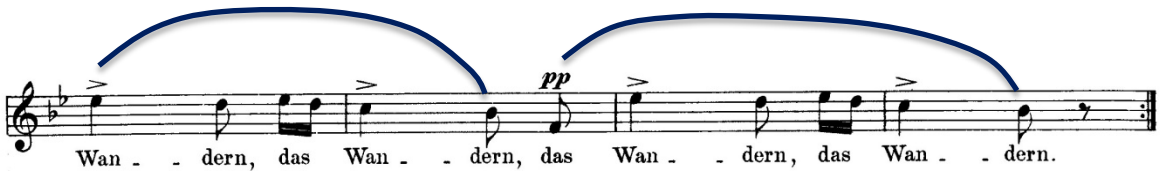
[103] Ruth Slenczynska and Ann M. Lingg, *Music At Your Fingertips: Aspects of Pianoforte Technique, Advice for the Artist and Amateur on Playing the Piano* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1976), 23.

6.1. Emphasis of Words

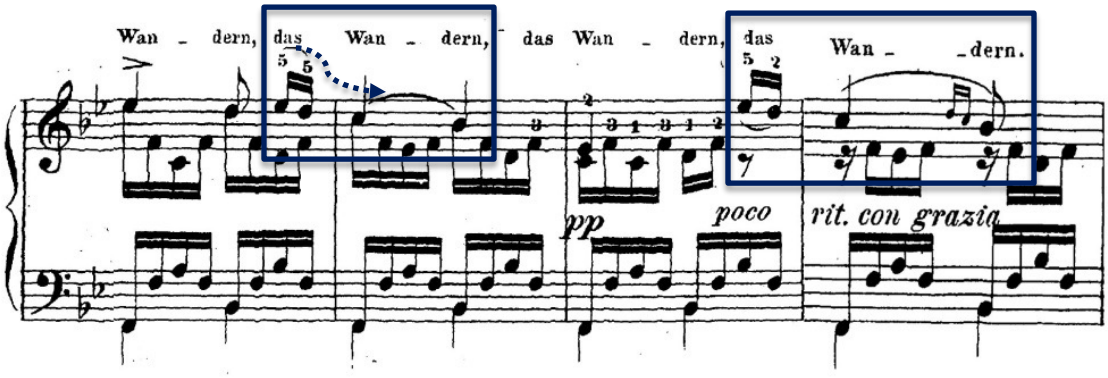
Schubert used an accent mark to slightly extend a stressed syllable or to emphasize an important word.[104] Also, appoggiaturas, portamento, and rubato can be used in lieder for expressive and dramatic purposes motivated by the words and the musical context.[105]

Technical considerations can sometimes result in accents being placed on the wrong notes. For example, in *Das Wandern*, D. 795, Schubert used an accent mark to emphasize the syllable "Wan–" in mm. 17–20 (Example 6–1). In Liszt's transcription, following this interpretation, the pianist should be careful not to make accents when playing Eb-D ("das") in mm. 17 and 19 (Example 6–2).

Example 6–1: Schubert, *Das Wandern*, D. 795, No. 1, mm. 17–20




Example 6–2: Schubert–Liszt, *Das Wandern*, S. 565, No. 1, mm. 17–20




Repeated words or phrases indicate reinforcement of feelings.[106] In Example 6–1, Schubert

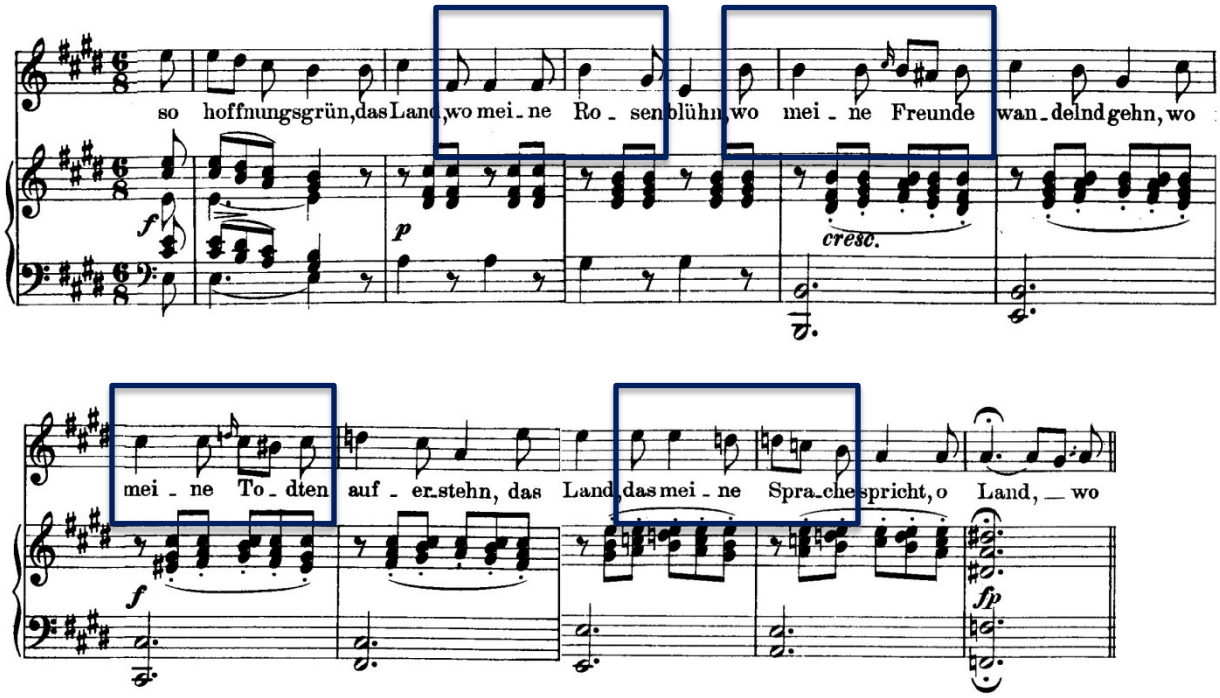
[104] Elliott, *Singing in Style*, 169.
[105] Ibid,. 176, 186.
[106] "Very often, composers repeat words, or even whole phrases of the text. Singers should be aware that this repetition must always be motivated. In general, it is done for one of two reasons: the composer wishes to intensify the feelings expressed the first time round, or, having expressed the feelings associated with the words very strongly first time, seeks to internalize those feelings—sometimes even to meditate on what has just been said. Never should they be treated as simple aimless repetition." Hemsley, *Singing and Imagination*, 132.

inserted *pp* to emphasize the repeated "wandern," so singers start the third "wandern" more gently but pronounce "Wan–" clearly with a slight tenuto. Pianists should interpret m. 19 in the same manner.

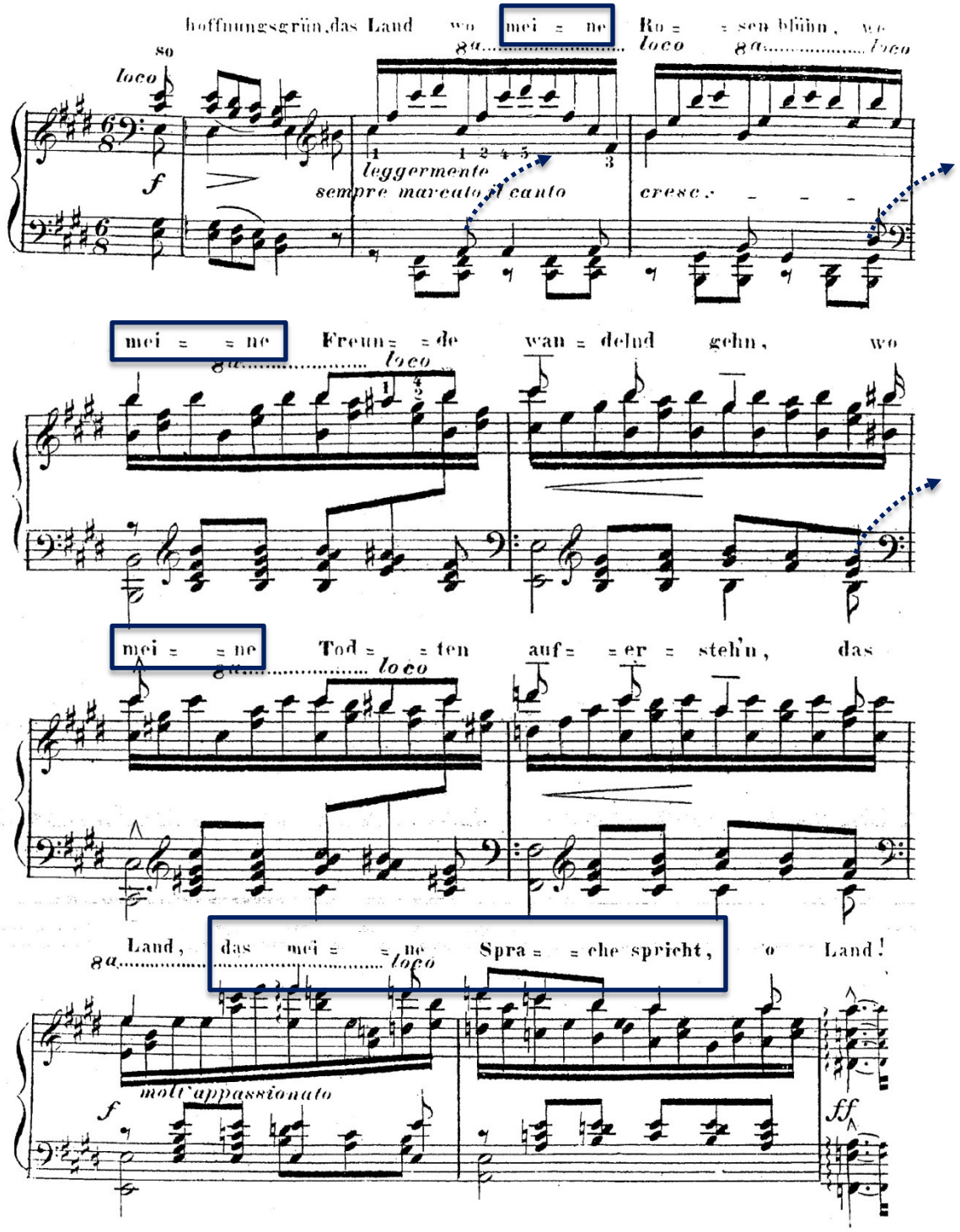
As another example, in mm. 45–54 of *Der Wanderer*, the word "meine" is repeated four times (Example 6–3). The shape of the phrase and the placing of emphasis depend on where "meine" is. Each phrase has a gradual crescendo group by group, and then has a big emphasis on the last "meine" (Example 6–4).

Example 6–3: Schubert, *Der Wanderer*, D. 489, mm. 45–54

> so hoffnungsgrün (so green with hope),
> das Land, wo **meine** Rosen blühn (that land where **my** roses bloom),
> wo **meine** Freunde wandelnd gehn (where **my** friends go wandering),
> wo **meine** Toten auferstehn (where **my** dead rises again),
> das Land, das **meine** Sprache spricht (the land that speaks **my** languege),



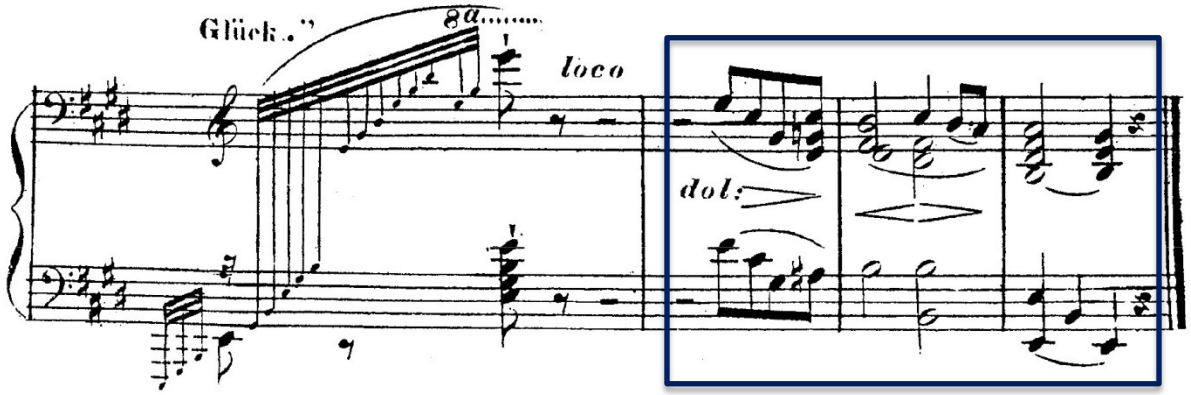
Example 6–4: Schubert–Liszt, *Der Wanderer*, S. 558, No. 11, mm. 47–55



6.2. Text and Mood

It is important for pianists to understand the text of the original songs in order to interpret the mood of Liszt's transcriptions. At the end of *Der Wanderer,* the three-measure postlude is calm and pretty, although the text describes the desperation of the wanderer ("Dort, wo du nicht bist, dort ist das Glück--There, where you are not, there is happiness!"). When the postlude concludes the whole song with extreme frustration, understanding the text will be critical for the interpretation (Example 6–5).

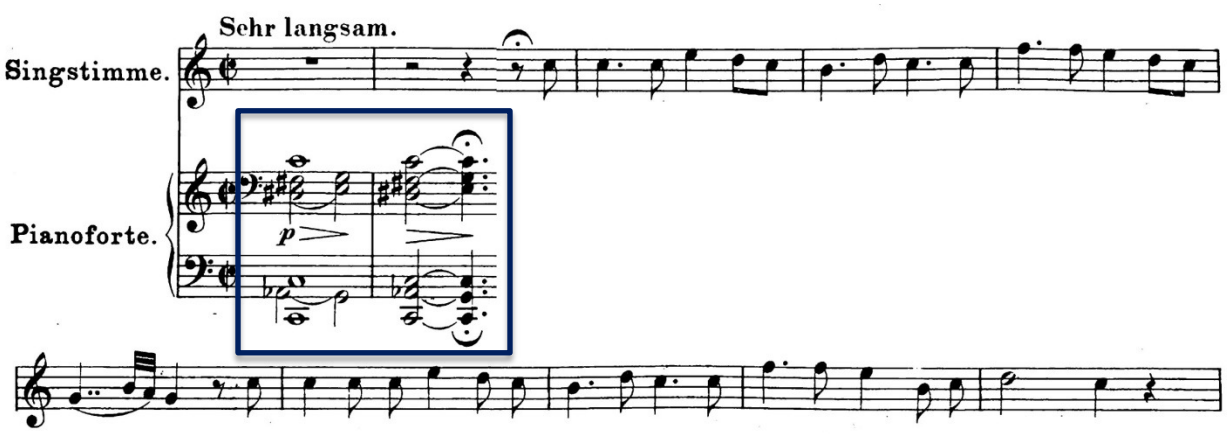
Example 6–5: Schubert–Liszt, *Der Wanderer*, S. 558, No. 11, mm. 72–75




As another example, Moore observes that *Am Meer* (D. 957, No. 12) begins with introductory sighs that suggest sadness[107] (Example 6–6). However, without knowing the text in advance, it is hard for pianists to recognize sadness, because the following melody line does not create a sad mood without the text.

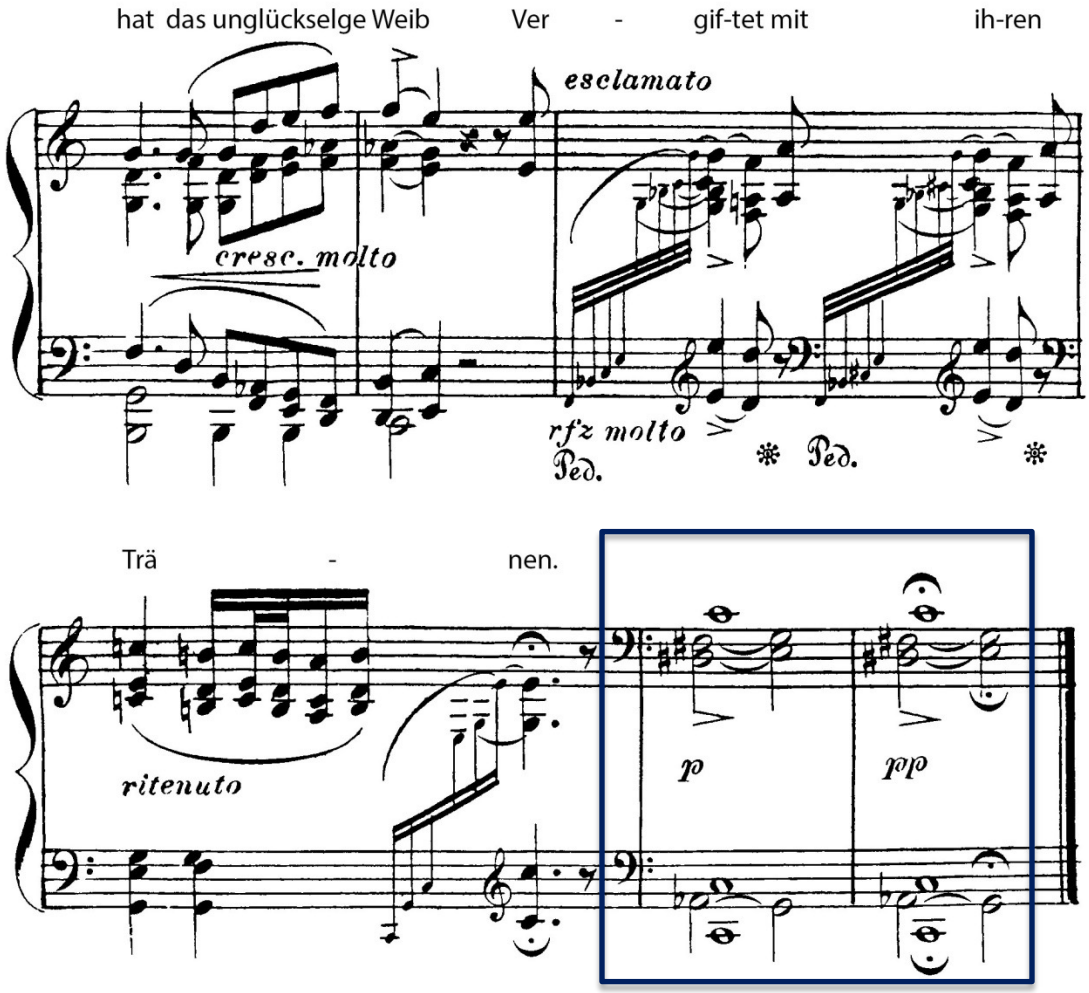
[107] Moore, *Schubert Song Cycles*, 225.

Example 6–6: Schubert, *Am Meer*, D. 957, No. 12, mm. 1–10




This sigh motif also comes at the end of the song. The song intensifies in emotion and the text drives the speaker to death ("mich hat das unglückselge **Weib Vergiftet** mit ihren Tränen"—The hapless **woman** has **poisoned** me with her tears). Therefore, the sighs at the end should be deeper and more desperate than those of the beginning (Example 6–7).

Example 6–7: Schubert–Liszt, *Am Meer*, S. 560, No. 4, mm. 40–45




6.2.1. Use of Pause and Fermata for Change of Mood

Hemsley remarks that the mood can change between phrases or paragraphs.[108] In Liszt's Schubert song transcriptions, pause and *fermata* often indicate a change of mood. For example, pause with *fermata* is used between verses in strophic songs (e.g., *Das Wandern*, S. 565, No. 1, and *Frühlings-sehnsucht*, S.560, No. 9). Most of the pauses and *fermatas* were added by Liszt himself to help pianists prepare the change of mood. For instance, the one-measure pause in *Die Post* (S. 561, No. 4, mm. 26 and 71) intensifies the contrast between the wanderer's expectation

[108] Hemsley, *Singing and Imagination*, 149.

("so hoch aufspringt"-leap so high) and disappointment ("keinen Brief"--no letter) by means of a key change from major to minor:[109]

> mm. 1–25 (E-flat major):
> Von der Strasse her ein Posthorn klingt (From the road a posthorn sounds),
> Was hat es (What does it have),
> dass es so hoch aufspringt (that it leaps so high),
> Mein Herz (my heart)?
>
> **Pause** (m. 26)
>
> mm. 27–46 (E-flat minor–E-flat major):
> Die Post bringt keinen Brief für dich (The mail brings no letter for you),
> Was drängst du denn so wunderlich (What are you so anxious about),
> Mein Herz (my heart)?

As a another example, the *fermata* in *Der Wanderer* (S. 558, No. 11, mm. 24, 33, and 66) also signals to pianists a change of emotion:[110]

> mm. 1–24: hopelessness and his monologue
>  (m. 24)
> mm. 25–33: futility and loneliness
>  (m. 33)
> mm. 34–66: aspiration for utopia
>  (m. 66)
> mm. 67–75: locked in despair

Liszt also used a *fermata* to combine two songs (e.g., *Ihr Bild* and *Frühlings-sehnsucht,* S. 560, Nos. 8 and 9). The purpose of the *fermata* is to help pianists keep the continuity rather than coming to a complete stop. In this instance, pianists need to keep imagining the change of mood between the two songs. Liszt also combined *Der Leiermann* and *Täuschung* (S. 561, Nos. 8 and

[109] See *Gute Nacht* (S. 561, No. 1, m. 72) and *Kriegers Ahnung* (S. 560, No. 14, m. 29) for similar examples.

[110] See *Am Meer* (S. 560, No. 4, m. 11 and 32) for a similar example.

9), using only the first half of *Der Leiermann*.[111] It is important for pianists to understand and imagine the rest of the text (Example 6–8) on the *fermata* before going on to *Täuschung*, because the last verse of *Der Leiermann* leaves room for questions.

Example 6–8: Second half of the text, *Der Leiermann*, D. 911, No. 24

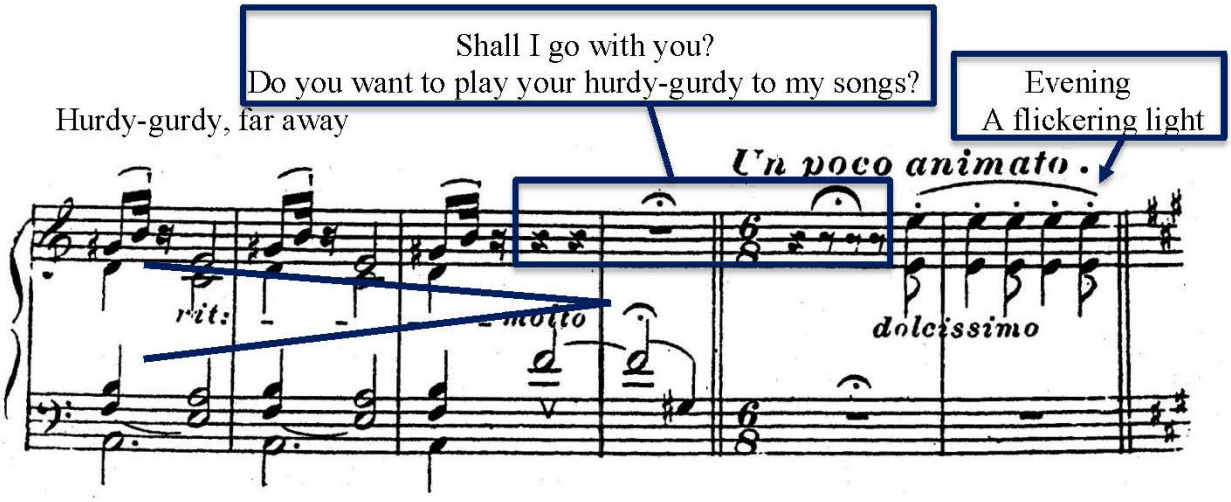
> Keiner mag ihn hören (No one wants to hear him),
> keiner sieht ihn an (nobody looks at him),
> Und die Hunde knurren um den alten Mann (And the dogs snarl around the old man),
> Und es lässt es gehen alles (And he lets it all go on), wie es will (as it will),
> Dreht, und seine Leier steht ihm nimmer still (Rotating, and his hurdy-gurdy is never still).
>
> Wunderlicher Alter (Strange old man),
> **sol ich mit dir gehn** (**shall I go with you**)**?**
> **Willst zu meinen Liedern deine Leier drehn** (**Do you want to play your hurdy-gurdy to my songs**)**?**

The narrator is indecisive about whether he should leave and where he should go. As time goes on (*fermata*), the evening shadows fall. In the next song, *Täuschung*, a flickering light makes the narrator delude himself with wishes for a warm house and lovingness (Example 6–9).[112]

[111] Drüben hinterm Dorfe steht ein Leiermann (Over there behind the village an organ-grinder is standing), Und mit starren Fingern dreht er, was er kann (And with numb fingers he grinds what he can), Barfuss auf dem Eise wankt er hin und her (Barefoot on the ice he staggers back and forth), Und sein kleiner Teller bleibt ihm immer leer (And his little plate remains ever empty for him).

[112] Ein Licht tanzt freundlich vor mir her (A light dances invitingly in front of me).

Example 6–9: Schubert–Liszt, *Der Leiermann*, S. 561, No. 8, mm. 29–34




6.2.2. Silence

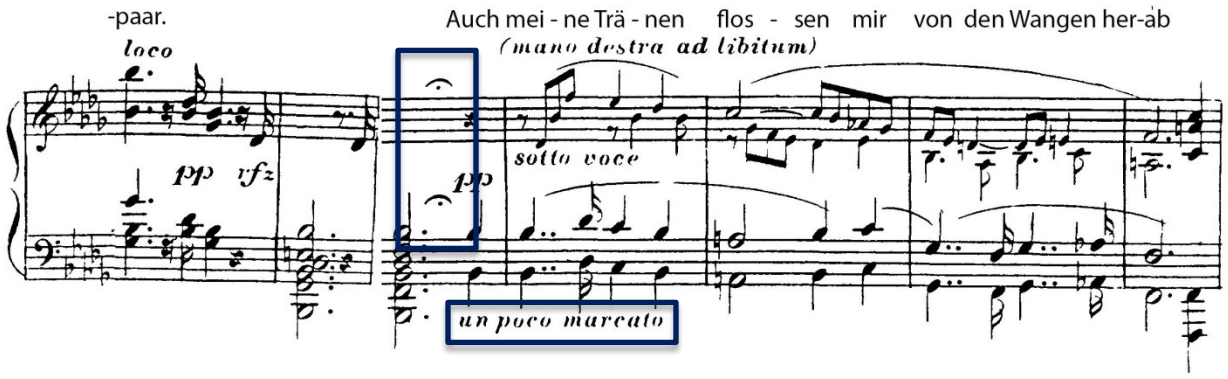
The silence caused by a pause or *fermata* creates a dramatic effect.[113] First, the silence helps pianists to intensify the inner feeling of a speaker. In *Ihr Bild* (S. 560, No. 8), a speaker (he) stares at the portrait of his lover (she), and the portrait comes to life. He sees her smile but also her sorrow.[114] In m. 22, the *fermata* demands a long silence, because the silence highlights his sadness in the next phrase,[115] which Liszt marked "*un poco marcato*" (Example 6–10).

[113] "*Silence is unquestionably the most dramatic tool a performer possesses*. It is available for theatrical moments, for setting something apart or highlighting it, for exploiting a musical or textual event just finished or the next to come." Katz, *Complete Collaborator*, 104.

[114] Ich stand in dunkeln Träumen (I stood in dark dreams) und starrt' ihr Bildnis an (and stared at her portrait), und das geliebte Antlitz (and the beloved face) heimlich zu leben begann (gently began to live).
Um ihre Lippen zog sich (Her lips were drawn) ein Lächeln wunderbar (a wonderful smile) und wie von Wehmutstränen (and how melancholy teardrops) erglänzte ihr Augenpaar (sparkled in her eyes).

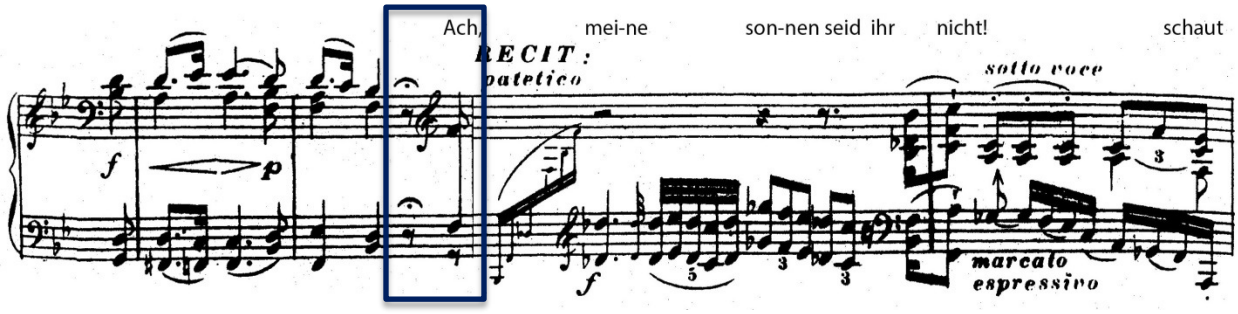
[115] Auch meine Tränen flossen (Also my tears flowed) mir von den Wangen herab (down my cheeks) Und ach! ich kann es nicht glauben (And oh! I cannot believe it), dass ich dich verloren hab (that I have lost you)!

Example 6–10: Schubert–Liszt, *Ihr Bild*, S. 560, No. 8, mm. 20–24




A similar example, the *fermata* in *Die Nebensonen* (S. 561, No. 2), emphasizes the despair of the speaker (Example 6–11).[116] The speaker mentions three suns (mm. 1–15), and then he suddenly expresses his anger to the sun. The silence produced by a *fermata* offers a dramatic moment to complete the narration and to highlight his lament ("Ach").

Example 6–11: Schubert–Liszt, *Die Nebensonnen*, S. 561, No. 2, mm. 14–17

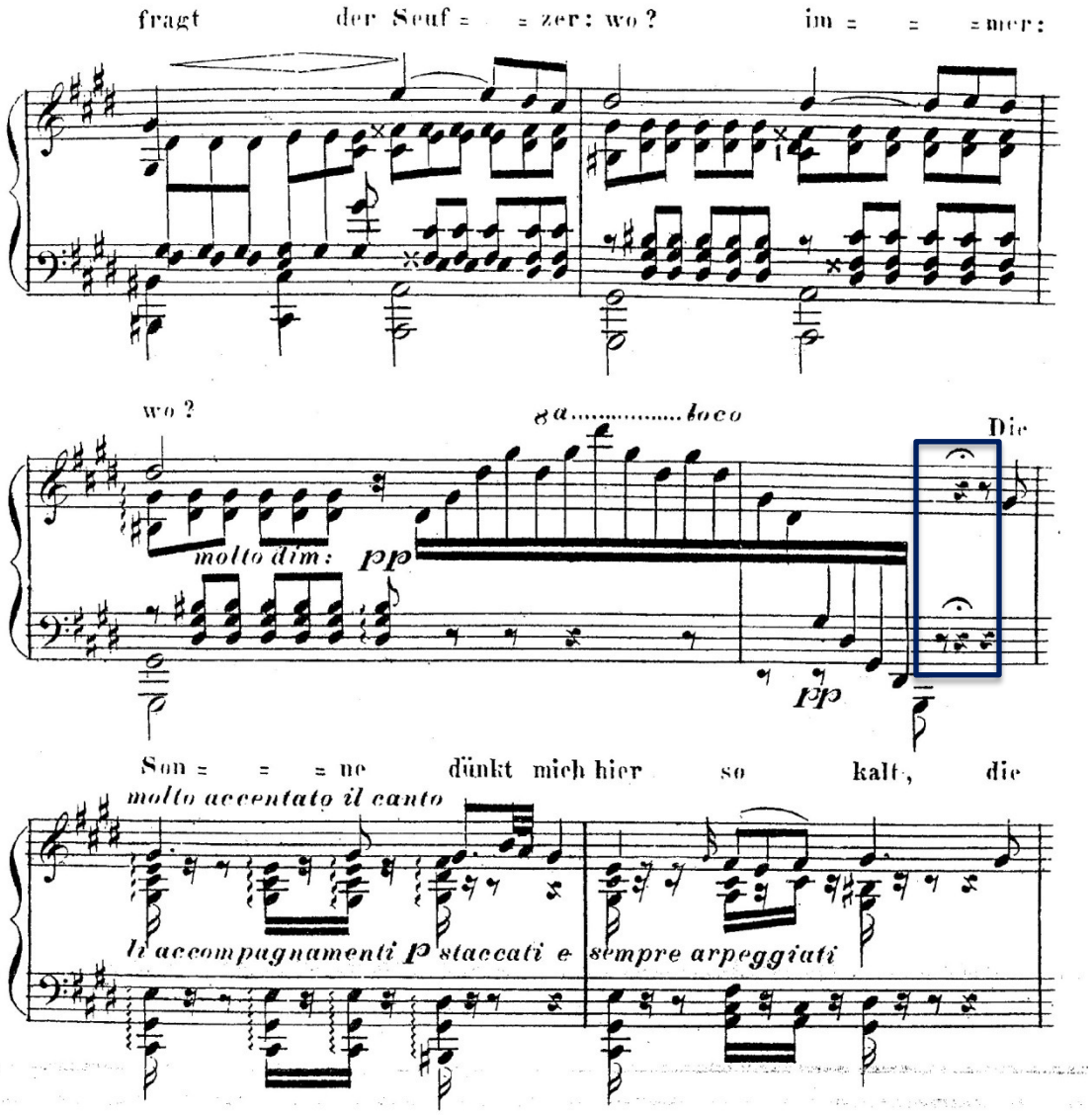



In addition to highlighting, silence can offer theatrical moments. In *Der Wanderer* (S. 558, No. 11), the speaker asks the question (where? always where?) in mm. 22–24 and 65–66. The desperate man awaits an answer. The silence suggests the man listening to the echo in the

[116] Ach, meine Sonnen seid ihr nicht (Ah, you are not my sun)! Schaut andern doch ins Angesicht (Look into the faces of others)!

distance. Therefore, pianists should imagine the theatrical moments while sustaining the long silence before starting the next sentence (Example 6–12).

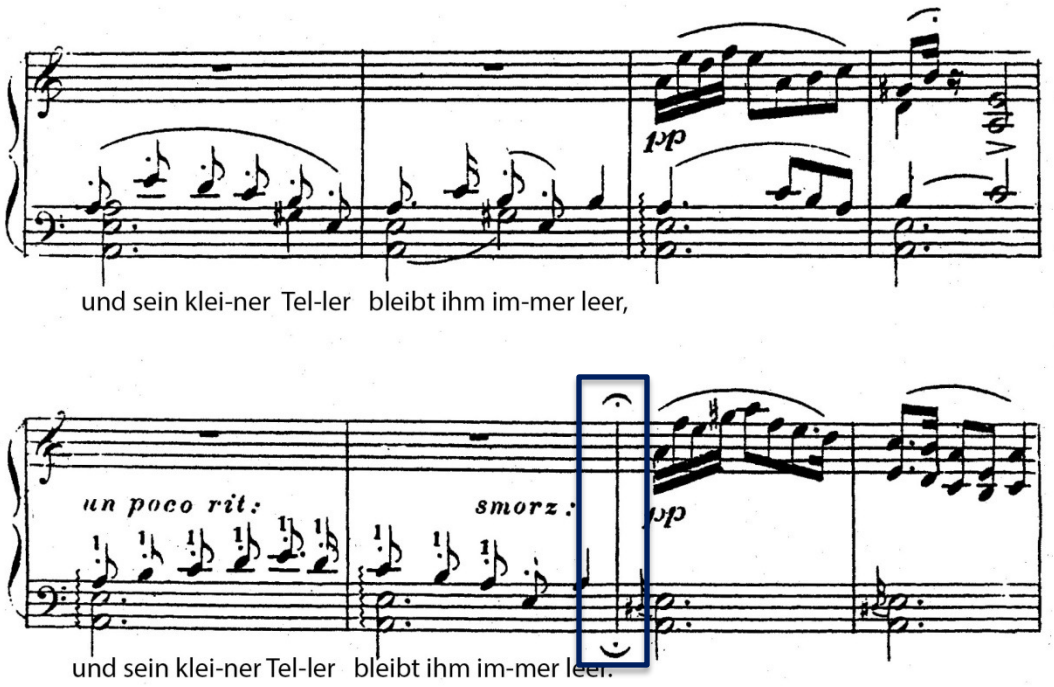
Example 6–12: Schubert–Liszt, *Der Wanderer,* S. 558, No. 11, mm. 21–26




In *Der Leiermann* (S. 561, No. 8), two characters appear: a narrator (I) and a hurdy-gurdy man behind the village (Example 6–13). Although only the narrator speaks, it is important for pianists to imagine two different places while interpreting the narrator's description, reflecting his feeling and the objective description of the hurdy-gurdy man. Pianists should play the

narrator's parts more emotionally but the hurdy-gurdy parts with composure, as if the sound is coming from afar. The location alternates every two measures, and at the end the silence with *fermata* in mm. 26–27 creates a theatrical moment, as if the hurdy-gurdy sound is becoming fainter and fainter in the distance.

Example 6–13: Schubert–Liszt, *Der Leiermann*, S. 561, No. 8, mm. 21–28

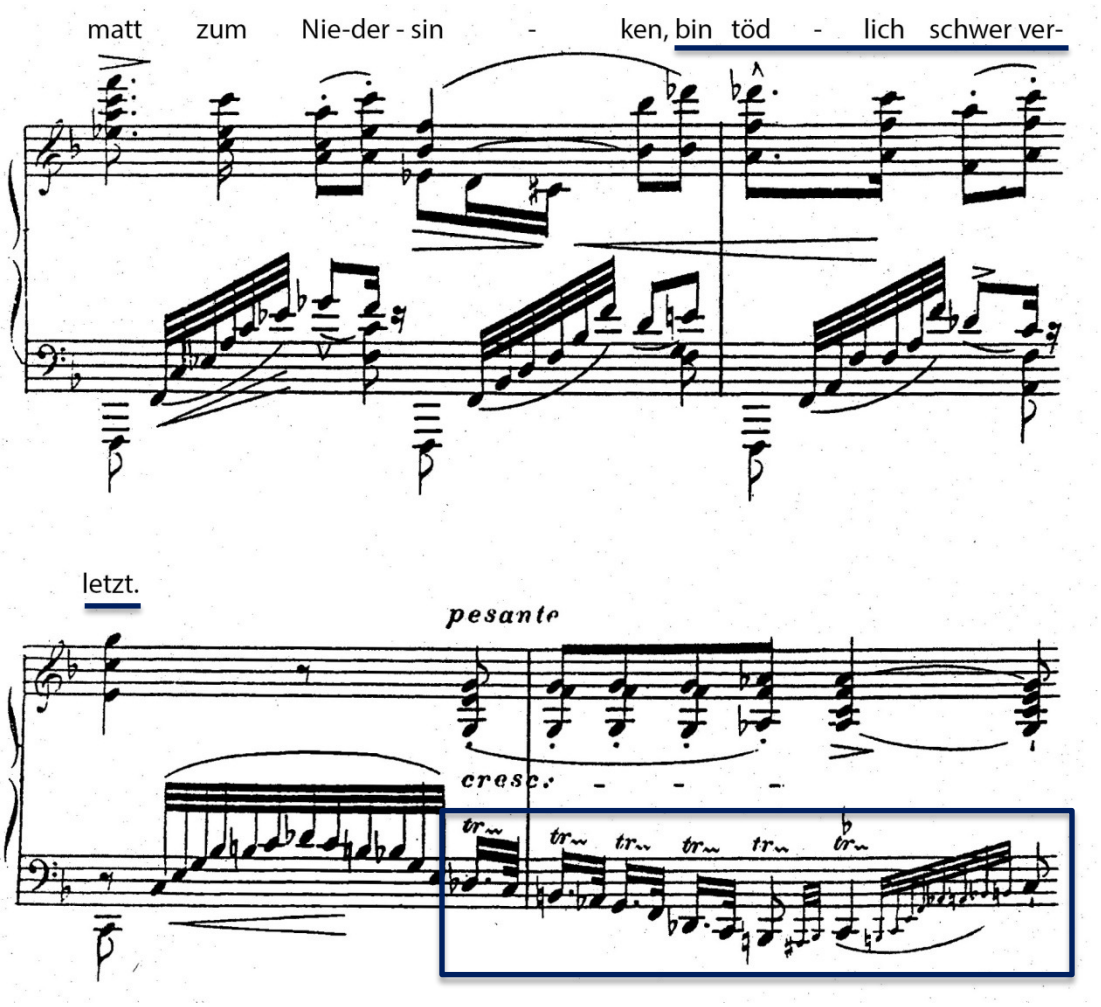



6.3. Reflection of Vocal Parts in the Piano Part

Because Liszt's song transcriptions preserve Schubert's sound-painting on the piano, it is important for pianists to understand the reflection of the vocal parts in the piano part. For example, George insists that the bass line of the piano part in m. 23 of *Das Wirtshaus* (S. 561, No. 10) should reflect the vocal part (Example 6–14).[117]

[117] George, "Franz Liszt's Transcriptions," 88–90.

Example 6–14: Schubert–Liszt, *Das Wirtshaus*, S. 561, No. 10, mm. 20–22[118]



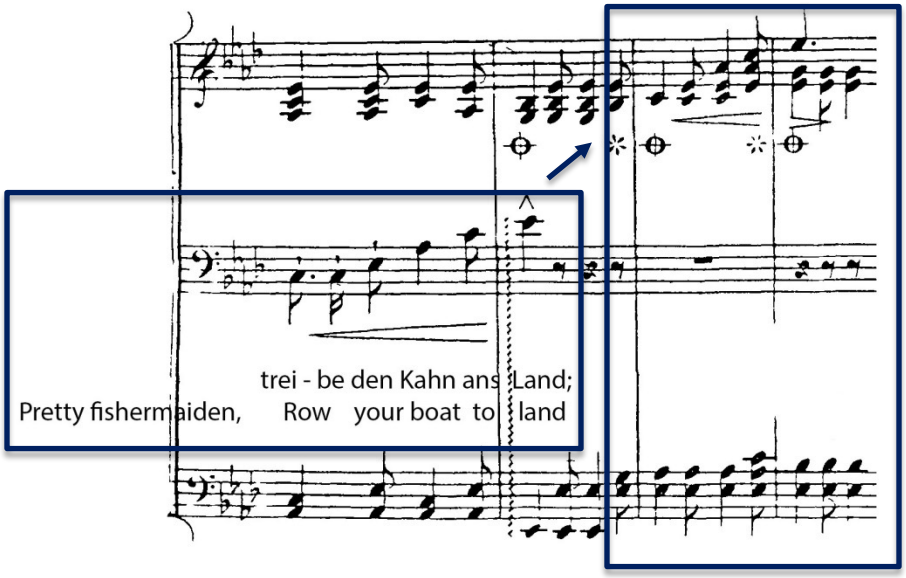

I am mortally injured.

In *Das Fischermädchen*, mm. 11–13 and mm. 32–34 are similar in rhythm, articulation, and dynamics. However, pianists need to interpret the accompaniment differently because of the meaning of the poem. In mm. 11–13 (Example 6–15), the speaker encourages a fishermaiden to come to the boat and row with him. After the piano accompaniment of mm. 11–13, the speaker repeats "Come to me and sit down. We will speak of love, hand in hand." Pianists need to play

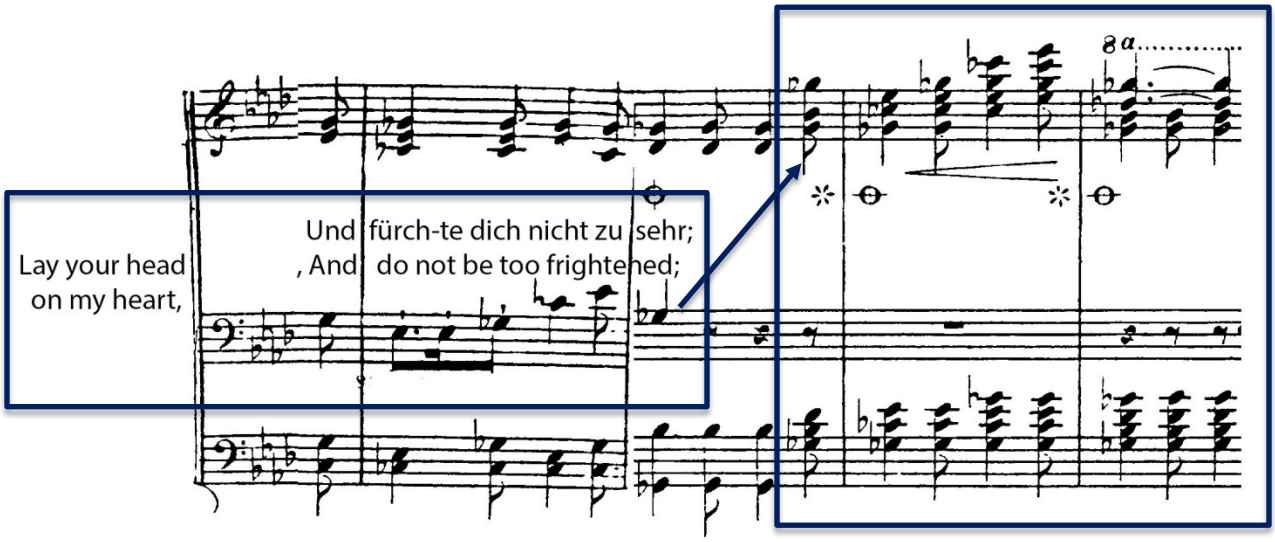
[118] bin tödlich schwer verletzt (I am mortally injured).

mm. 11–13 in a more lively way with an articulation that expresses the nervousness or excitement between the boy and girl. After the fishermaiden comes on the boat, they share their love (Example 6–16). The boy tempts the girl: “Lay your little head on my heart, and do not be too frightened.” So probably mm. 32–34 describes the girl laying her head on his heart. In these measures (mm. 32–34), pianists need to play more dolce and legato.

Example 6–15: Schubert–Liszt, *Das Fischermädchen*, S. 560, No. 2, mm. 10–13




Example 6–16: Schubert–Liszt, *Das Fischermädchen*, S. 560, No. 2, mm. 31–34



# CHAPTER 7

# CONCLUSIONS

The English baritone Thomas Hemsley describes how important it is for performers to understand the composer's mind:

> One of the greatest pleasures … lies in the examination of small details, and in trying to imagine why the composer bothered to write them down. Such an examination can sometimes completely change the approach to a passage.[119]

As both a composer and a pianist, Liszt's detailed notations in his transcriptions of Schubert's songs show how enthusiastic Liszt was about understanding what Schubert had written and about transferring the vocal aspects of the original songs to the piano. For pianists today, understanding the performance practices of the original songs helps to see Liszt's Schubert song transcriptions from a singer's viewpoint.

It is important for pianists to understand breathing in order to interpret the phrases of Liszt's transcriptions as a singer would interpret the songs. An understanding of breathing helps pianists to understand the direction of a phrase, as well as to maintain its continuity in legato. Pianists also can use a breath for dramatic effects.

It is crucial that pianists study the notated ornaments of Schubert's songs in order to distinguish the original vocal ornamentation from Liszt's pianistic ornamentation. In addition, understanding the vocal performance practices of German Lieder, including notated ornaments, portamento, and rubato, helps pianists to recreate vocal qualities on the piano.

Schubert's most remarkable accomplishment is to match the musical line to the text, and he used speaking style as a compositional method for dramatic effects. Liszt marked expression marks (e.g., *parlante*) and various notations (e.g., staccato with slur) to indicate speaking style,

[119] Hemsley, *Singing and Imagination*, 145.

but this alone does not guide pianists in how to interpret speaking style on the piano. It is necessary for pianists to study speaking style, including interjection, parlando style, and recitative, in order to interpret the songs well.

Although Liszt encouraged publishers to print the song text above the staff, the text does not offer any guidelines on how to transfer the vocal interpretation to the piano. The most effective way of doing this is for pianists to study the text of the original songs from a vocal point of view. An understanding of the text helps pianists to reflect the style of the language and to deliver the meaning of the text on the piano.

The noted collaborative pianist Gerald Moore speaks in detail about Schubert's compositional talent, stressing the importance of knowing the text as a key to understanding the musical content of Schubert songs.[120] A successful Lied performance comes from accurate understanding of a song and technique,[121] and the understanding of the vocal techniques mentioned above will make a Liszt transcription truly the equal of the original Schubert song.

[120] "… hearing *Der Leiermann* or *Der du von dem Himmel bist* we kiss Schubert's hand, and not only because these songs are close to God: their simplicity and purity defeat us and hold us, eternally hold us, through our inability to explain *why* or *how* they are so sublime." Eric Sams, *The Songs of Robert Schumann* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), viii.

[121] "… for the success of a lied performance depends not on the beauty of the voice but on how beautifully the beauty of the voice accords with the meaning of the text… this desire must be fulfilled by faithfulness, understanding, and technique… the great performers of lieder are remarkable in their unanimous devotion to being faithful—to reproducing the music accurately and understanding the poem thoroughly; personal expression that does not fit the music or text is intrusive." Spillman, "Performing Lieder," 315.

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