

## CRITICAL REPORT

## Editorial Policy

- A Liszt's autograph manuscript, incomplete, Goethe- und Schiller-Archiv, Weimar, shelfmark 60/N4  
 OL original libretto, received by Liszt in 1849 with changes taking place that year; not extant  
 PL printed libretto in this edition  
 PT printed translations of the libretto in this edition  
 PM printed musical score in this edition

Here we consider the policies governing music and text separately, but the issues are intertwined and in the critical notes they are considered together. The critical notes consider issues of editorial concern in chronological order, indicating the bar number for purely musical matters, and both the bar and line number for textual matters. Regarding the libretto text, PM uses neither typographical distinctions (font / square brackets) to indicate editorial interventions; PL uses both typographical distinctions to do so. In each case, the critical notes provide the necessary information pertaining to the scholarly apparatus used to attain this text. PT are translations of the text of PL without the typographical distinctions in PL, and need not be discussed further.

## MUSIC

A contains virtually all the cardinal elements of Liszt's music – harmony, counterpoint, rhythm, melody, and texture – for bb. 1–1256 of *Sardanapalo*, and constitutes almost the entirety of Act 1. Occasionally these elements are given in shorthand and need extrapolating and writing out, but it is clear from the uninterrupted vocal lines – and their narrative – that Liszt was working towards a continuous score in A. The music contains at least two separate stages of revision, evidenced by corrections, cuts, deleted bars and multiple *ossia* passages, mostly written in darker ink or lead pencil over the existing music, or in the staves above or below; these developed stages of working might seem to corroborate Liszt's optimism, reported by Hans von Bülow on 21 June 1849, that '*Sardanapalo* (after Byron) is far on towards completion.'<sup>1</sup> In light of the extant notation alone and Liszt's intention to compose a three-act opera, this would seem something of an exaggeration, however. It is of course possible that Liszt had thought through elements of the music for Acts 2–3 in his head, but no documentation for this survives.

A remains incomplete as a full draft for Act 1, even accepting that the apparent 'gaps' in the piano accompaniment are misleading as to Liszt's understanding of his score (see 'gaps' within 'The Character of the Musical Source'). The music notation breaks off in the middle of a march (*Allegro maestoso*), following a 12-bar dominant pedal. It is possible that Liszt considered eliding Acts 1–2 (he had suggested eliding Acts 2–3 to Belgiojoso on 25 September 1846), and this may be the reason he did not conclude the Act after the march. No evidence currently exists to prove or disprove this speculation, however, and the critical edition therefore presents what is in A, without editorial continuation.

The music in PM adopts the following criteria:

- Clefs and key signatures are frequently missing. Changes of clef and key signature not notated in A are placed in square brackets; otherwise missing clefs and key signatures that do not affect a change from what precedes them are supplied tacitly.
- All editorial accidentals are noted in the critical notes only, except where they are given in the same bar at a different octave, or implied by an existing or editorially supplied key signature, in which case they are supplied tacitly. Editorial accidentals in footnotes and Appendix A are in brackets. Enharmonic spellings have been retained where possible; all exceptions are listed in the critical notes. Redundant accidentals in A are omitted tacitly.
- Missing time signatures are supplied in square brackets. Missing rests – where needed to complete the bar – are supplied in small notehead size (rather than brackets) to avoid a cumbersome appearance. All editorial value-lengthening dots are given in square brackets.
- Editorial articulation markings implied by comparable passages in A are supplied in square brackets. Editorial ties are given as dotted ties, editorial phrase markings as dotted phrase markings. No editorial dynamics and expression markings have been added. Those few markings given in A are:
  - b. 39 beats 1–3, right hand staccato
  - b. 58, beats 1–6, right hand staccato
  - bb. 136–37, 'colla parte' / 'rit.' / 'a piacere'
  - b. 200, beats 4–6, right hand staccato & phrase marking
  - b. 528, 'ritenuto'
  - b. 629, beat 2, accent & *forte*
  - bb. 972–74, crescendo & *fortissimo*

<sup>1</sup> Hans von Bülow to his mother, 21 June 1849, cited in Williams/Portrait, 255.