A STUDY OF GERMAN, FRENCH, AND ENGLISH VOCAL SETTINGS OF OPHELIA FROM SHAKESPEARE'S *HAMLET*

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Introduction

Work by Shakespeare has often been used as a source for Western vocal art music. A large number of opera librettos are based on his plays, and his poems have served as popular texts for song composers. However, Ophelia‟s songs in *Hamlet*, further analyzed throughout the paper, do not belong in any above categories. They are divided into two kinds: five songs that are performed by Ophelia within the play and songs that are set to the textual description of Ophelia‟s death by another character in the play.

The purpose of the paper is to provide historical background and basic information regarding Shakespeare and the play *Hamlet* to further increase the understanding of Ophelia as a character and the significance of her songs, with focus on vocal settings of Ophelia‟s songs set to three different languages: German, French, and English.

It is necessary for singers to understand the character of Ophelia to truly sing her songs or songs related to her. Hence, in order to grasp her character, *Hamlet* should be studied. Five songs of Ophelia in the play originate from the traditional tunes of England and have short and simple texts. However, their meanings within the play are not simple as Shakespeare intended for the texts to possess multilayered meaning. With further insight regarding Ophelia and *Hamlet*, singers have opportunities to develop their own interpretation in performance.

The paper will additionally discuss the analysis of German, French, and English vocal settings of Ophelia‟s songs. Although *Hamlet* was written towards the end of the

Renaissance period and staged frequently from 17th to 18th century, it was not until 19th century that composers started to show interest in using it as a source of their songs. It is related to Romanticism and the founding of song as an independent genre. The Romantic movement, which emphasized the human emotion and heightened individuality, allowed Shakespeare‟s works, which are highly dramatic and have various characters, to become a source of inspiration. Especially the character of Ophelia in *Hamlet* intrigued composers due to her purity, her devotion to love, and her madness.

In German settings, Zumsteeg‟s *Woran erkenn'ich deinen Freund* and *Sie senkten ihn kalten Grund hinab,* Brahms‟s *Fünf Ophelia Lieder*, and *Drei Lieder der Ophelia* by Richard Strauss will be studied. Each *La mort d'Ophélie* by Berlioz and Saint-Saëns, and Chausson‟s *Chanson d'Ophélie* are French settings, discussed in this paper. Finally, English settings: *Ophelia's song* by Maude Valérie White, *How should I your true love know?* by Roger Quilter and *Ophelia's song* by Elizabeth Maconchy are presented.

All the composers mentioned above used their personal style in setting music to their own interpretation of character of Ophelia. The differences in their approach to the same text deserve to be studied. Each song is valuable as it illuminates historical context of different settings of Ophelia. Study of these Ophelia settings and comparison between them deepen our knowledge of trends in song literature since the 19th century.

Chapter I.

Historical Background of *Hamlet*

1. Elizabethan Era of England

During the time that Shakespeare lived (1564-1616), England was under the reign of Queen Elizabeth I (1558-1603). The period in which Elizabeth ruled is known as the Elizabethan era, where the most notable change was made to the government, resulting in increasing stability and prosperity in England. Due to the change made to the government, the country thrived economically and expanded in power. Queen Elizabeth was unifying the nation. Patriotic sentiment was increasing. The arts in general were flourishing.[1] It was a period of great achievement in literature, the arts, the theatre, music and natural science.[2] This is the reason why the Elizabethan era has been christened England‟s "Golden Age,"[3] and is referred to as the English Renaissance.

Of all the cultural advancements, literature and drama especially bounded forward far more rapidly than in the earlier period. [4] The rapid progress of dramatic literature was thus linked with equally important developments in the theatrical arts.[5] Theatrical performances in the Elizabethan era took place all over the country, ranging from inns to the Queen‟s court itself.[6] As a popular genre, people from various socioeconomic classes

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[1] Stanley Wells, "William Shakespeare," in *British Writers*, ed. Ian Scott-Kilbert (New York: Charles Scribner‟s Sons, 1979), 297.

[2] Levi Fox, *Shakespeare's England* (New York: G.P. Putnam‟s Sons, 1972), 6.

[3] Ibid., 5.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Idib., 298.

[6] J.J.M. Tobin, "Elizabethan Theater," in *The tragedy of HAMLET Prince of Denmark*, William Shakespeare (Boston: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2012), 15.

were able to watch and enjoy the performances. Hundreds of performances were presented each year, where each company had thirty or more plays in repertory, which were chronicles of history, romance, tragedy, satire, and comedy.[7]

The plays were able to thrive at such an accelerating rate due to the genius playwright, William Shakespeare.

2. William Shakespeare (1564-1616) and His Plays

Known throughout the world, the works of Shakespeare have been translated into every major language and have been performed more often than those of any other playwright. He was baptized on April 26, 1564 in Holy Trinity church, Stratford-upon-Avon, located 103 miles west of London.[8] There is no birth record of him. His birth is traditionally celebrated on 23 April[9] in that probably he was born no more than two or three days previously.[10] At the age of 18, he married Anne Hathaway, with whom he had three children. Sometime in the late 1580s, Shakespeare left his hometown and family, and moved to London, where he began a successful career as an actor and playwright.[11] By 1592, he became to be a shareholder in the Lord Chamberlain‟s Men, an acting company in London.[12] As an important member of London‟s leading company,

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[7] Ibid., 17.

[8] Margaret Drabble, ed., *The Oxford Companion to English Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University press, 2006), 919.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Wells, 295.

[11] John A. Wagner, *Voices of Shakespeare's England: Contemporary accounts of Elizabethan Daily life* (Santa Barbara: Greenwood, 2010), 17.

[12] Derek A. Traversi, "Shakespeare, William," in *Great Writers of the English Language: Dramatist*, ed. James Vinson (London: Macmillan, 1979), 518.

Shakespeare worked and grew prosperous for the rest of his career.[13] He is the only prominent playwright of this time to have had so stable a relationship with a single company.[14] The quality and popularity of Shakespeare‟s work soon excited the admiration and envy of his contemporaries.[15] In the meantime, however, his son, Hamnet, died of unknown causes at the age of 11 in 1596 in London. In addition, his father, John Shakespeare, died in 1601. Towards the later years, Shakespeare retired to Stratford, his hometown, around 1613 at the age of 49, where he died in 1616.

Not surprisingly, his own experiences and events in his life affected his works and style. After the death of his son and father, it is speculated that these familial deaths caused Shakespeare to write works of tragedy as a main genre of 1600.[16] Shakespeare‟s own familial experiences, consisting of fluctuations in his father‟s fortunes, the strong influence of several female relatives, and the tragic loss of a beloved son, undoubtedly added heart and depth to the incisive portrayals of characters that he created in his plays and poems.[17]

Shakespeare produced the bulk of his known plays and poems between 1590 and 1613 while being in London.[18] He started his play writing with historical material such as *Henry VI* (1592) and *Richard III* (1592). After such early historical dramas, he mainly wrote comedies, including *The Comedy of Errors* (1593), *The Taming of the Shrew* (1594), and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1595). Around 1600, Shakespeare‟s interest turned toward tragedy. He completed his four major tragedies between 1600 and 1606:

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[13] Drabble, 920.
[14] Wells, 298.
[15] Fox, 11.
[16] Tobin, 3.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Wagner, 17.

Hamlet (1600), *King Lear* (1605), *Othello* (1604), and *Macbeth* (1606).[19] The last stage of Shakespeare"s play consists of series of romantic tragicomedy.[20]Among these are *Cymbeline* (1609), *The Winter's Tale* (1610), and *The Tempest* (1611).

Shakespeare was a well-known poet and playwright in his time, but his reputation was not recognized until the 19th century. Throughout the Romantic era, Shakespeare was praised by poets, philosophers, and critics like August Schlegel and Samuel Coleridge. [21] Since the 19th century, Shakespeare has been widely regarded as one of the greatest writers in the English language and the world"s pre-eminent dramatist.[22] He is often called England"s national poet. Since Homer, no poet has come near Shakespeare in originality, freshness, opulence, and boldness of imagery.[23] He utilized all the figures of speech known in formal rhetoric, such as similes and metaphors. His genius for writing was not only limited to poetry. In his plays, Shakespeare revealed his ability in different ways. For example, the rhythm of the emphasized syllables led the actor to deliver the lines in a way that stressed certain words more than the others, as we imagine Shakespeare to have intended, even as we know that stage delivery of lines with an unexpected stress can create fruitful tension in the ear of the audience.[24]

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[19] James E.Ruoff, *Crowell's Handbook of Elizabethan and Stuart Literature* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell company, 1975), 382.

[20] Traversi, 522.

[21] Harry Levin, "Critical Approaches to Shakespeare from 1660 to 1904," in *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare Studies,* ed. Stanley Wells (London: Pimlico, 2005), 11.

[22] Stephen Greenblatt, *Will in the world: How Shakespeare became Shakespeare* (London: Pimlico, 2005), 11.

[23] Henry Norman Hudson, *Shakespeare: His Life, Art, and Characters, Volume I.* (New York: Ginn and Co., 1872), Shakespeare Online. 20 Aug. 2009. http://www.shakespeare-online.com/biography/imagery.html (accessed by May, 2012).

[24] Tobin, 9.

The reason that Shakespeare is regarded as one of the greatest writers is because of not only his splendid writing skill, but the dramatic effect of his plots. He was the master of creating dramatic effects to heighten emotions and actions of his characters. By using a range of dramatic devices, Shakespeare was able to change the mood and setting of the play, which affected how the audience reacted and the placement of emphasis. One of the most representative dramatic devices that Shakespeare used was characterization of the protagonist. For example, he characterized Hamlet as an indecisive person. By Hamlet‟s hesitation and delay of the revenge, the drama became more complicated and caused a tragic ending. Shakespeare also gave characters different ages, genders, colors, ethnicities, religions, and social ranks. The relationship between the diverse characters and the interesting situations in which they were involved were enough to attract the audiences‟ attention. Shakespeare had the ability to create a plot structured with care and characters, which were subtly developed with an attitude quite fatalistic.[25]

Finally, the genius of Shakespeare‟s characters is that they demonstrate real human beings in a wide range of emotions and conflicts. Shakespeare had an uncanny ability to take "human interest" stories, and many of his characters have a deeply humanist view on life. The characters in his plays are very human, with positive and negative attributes, and constantly question the world around them. All the different individuals in the play show the rich diversity of humanity. We can identify with their aspirations, their strengths, and their failings, with which we sympathize and their moral dilemmas. Shakespeare appears to have been influenced by classical and Renaissance

[25] Ibid., 11.

ideas about the importance of reason, mankind, and human individualism.[26] Characters in Shakespeare‟s plays expose human nature, with its weaknesses, potential, and greatness, which resonate within us.

3. *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*

Hamlet is Shakespeare‟s longest play and among the most powerful and influential tragedies in the English language.[27] It has been and still is a large part of not only Western but also world culture.[28] The play was one of Shakespeare‟s most popular works during his life time.[29] Shakespeare wrote *Hamlet* approximately in 1600, around halfway through his career.[30] As mentioned before, he had devoted most of the first half of his career to writing historical plays and comedies. Although we can speculate Shakespeare‟s motive in starting to write more tragedy genre than histories and comedies from the events that happened in his life, it is also important to note that the genre of tragedy was a popular one, since the general public enjoyed blood and gore.[31] Shakespeare saw tragedy as something more than merely the main character‟s downfall from power to ruin, more than the death of the character, and certainly more than demonstration of justice via punishments for the character‟s errors and weakness.

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[26] British Humanist Association, "William Shakespeare (1546-1616)," http://www.humanism.org.uk/humanism/humanist-tradition/renaissance/shakespeare (accessed May, 2012).

[27] Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor, *Hamlet* (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2006), 74.

[28] Tobin, 27.

[29] Gary Taylor, "Shakespeare Plays on Renaissance Stage," in *The Cambridge companion to Shakespeare on stage*, ed. Stanley W. Wells (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 18.

[30] Tobin, 27.

[31] Ibid., 29.

Increasingly, he saw it as involving forces larger than one human being and the moral decisions made by that character, who always has imperfect information.[32]

Regarding the historical background of the play, a number of events happened in England. First of all, though the scene of *Hamlet* is medieval Denmark, most critics will agree that its characters and problems are those of England.[33] The kingdom was being ruled still by Queen Elizabeth, but she had begun to fail in her health. There were rumors and speculations as to the legitimate successor of the childless Elizabeth, most of which surrounded James VI of Scotland. He eventually did succeed her, and his own mother, Mary, Queen of Scots, had a violent and tangled set of relationships with a murdered husband and lover – elements thought to be indirectly echoed in *Hamlet*. In addition, sixteenth-century familial issues resonate in the play as well, from the historical fact that Henry VIII, the father of Elizabeth I, had married his late brother Arthur‟s widow to the conflicting views on interclass marriage.[34]

With regard to the other facts about the play, England had triumphed in its defeat of the Spanish Armada a dozen years before but still remained a small nation in the midst of foreign threats. Less sensational but nonetheless important were the economic tensions with Denmark over fishing rights. In addition, the War of the Theaters caused a tension between adult and children companies, ripe with personal satirizing as well as the hidden issues regarding the proper function of drama.[35]

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[32] Ibid., 28.
[33] John Erskine Hankins, "Politics in Hamlet," in *Corruption in William Shakespeare's Hamlet*, ed. Vernon Elso Johson (Detroit: Greenhaven Press, 2010), 53.
[34] Tobin, 30.
[35] Ibid., 31.

Critics have interpreted that *Hamlet* implies a number of important issues. First of all, Hamlet is a revenge tragedy. The focus of this genre is personal justice.[36] Dealing with such genre, Shakespeare shows the meaning of implementation of justice against corruption and chaos of society beyond the dimension of personal hatred. The accusation of political corruption and criticism of immorality of royal family are explicit in the play. The confusion Hamlet undergoes in the play originates from the immoral conduct of his mother, which develops his skepticism towards women and even to mankind and life.

Along with the issue of morality, the work reflects human nature and life profoundly. The work raises questions about human nature and life through the whole play. Hamlet himself questions the world as a philosophical character, expounding ideas that can be described as relativist, existentialist, and skeptical.[37] For example, he expresses a subjective idea: "there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so."[38] The clearest example of existentialism is found in the most famous line of the play: "to be, or not to be," where Hamlet uses "being" to allude to both life and action and "not being" to death and inaction.[39] However, Hamlet himself is characterized as an imperfect human being as well, who has various personality flaws such as depression, construed as sentimental and impractical, and the lack of decisiveness. Shakespeare did not create a perfect character as a hero but as an imperfect protagonist in order to describe who we really are. It represents the key concept of Renaissance ideology during the time that

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[36] Ellen Rosenberg, "Shakespeare, William, Hamlet" in *Encyclopedia of Themes in Literature,* ed. Jennifer McClinton-Temple, vol. 3 (New York: FactsOnFile, 2011), 921.

[37] Thomas MacCary, W., *"Hamlet": A Guide to the Play* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1998), 47-48.

[38] *Hamlet* Act 2. Scene 2. 237–238.

[39] MacCary, 49.

Shakespeare lived. We all struggle within the gap between the ideal and the real world in our pursuit of values we believe in, similar to Hamlet.

Also, Shakespeare suggests the concept of impossibility of certainty. There are a number of missing pieces of facts and presence of some figures in the play. First of all, Shakespeare complicates his hero‟s motives with ambiguous, enigmatic actions and speeches, and he employs the traditional soliloquy not to impart vital information, but to obfuscate and even contradict the hero‟s thoughts and situation.[40] With the ambiguity in Hamlet himself, the play draws questions from the uncertainty: Is the ghost real or a hallucination, the depth of the relationship between Hamlet and Ophelia, the exact nature of Gertrude and her involvement with Claudius before the death of Hamlet senior, not to mention that Gertrude knew of Claudius poisoning King Hamlet, and even the true nature of Claudius himself, who behaves soberly and quite competently but then is described by his hostile nephew as politically incompetent, physically ugly, and morally alcoholic and lecherous.[41] Some of the ambiguity is syntactical or grammatical: is “he” who is dead and gone in Ophelia‟s mad song her late father, Polonius, or her former love or lover, Hamlet or both?[42] The play shows us how much uncertainties our lives are built upon, how many unknown quantities are taken for granted when people act or when they evaluate one another‟s actions. Our difficulties in understanding these mysteries mirror those of our protagonist, who wrestles with so many of his own doubts and surrounding ambiguities.

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[40] Ruoff, 187.
[41] Tobin, 33.
[42] Ibid.

These mysteries only add to the depth of our intellectual and emotional involvement.[43] The pleasure that we find in the play is partly watching his struggles to resolve the tangled plot in which he is enmeshed and partly in our appreciation of the truth and beauty of his observations about life and its pressures. By the end of the play, we are grateful that he is our representative in these struggles. [44]

[43] Ibid., 34.
[44] Ibid., 27.

Chapter II.

Characterization of Ophelia and its Popularization as the Source of Vocal Works

1. Characterization of Ophelia in the Play

According to the plot of the play, Ophelia is the daughter of Polonius, the Lord Chamberlain of Denmark, and the lover of Hamlet. She appears only five times in twenty scenes and is mentioned in only two of the others. Her actions do not contribute to any forward movement in the plot.[45] From this reason, for most critics of Shakespeare, Ophelia has been an insignificant minor character in the play, her only notable features being weakness and madness.[46] In examining Shakespeare"s first and second Quarto of Hamlet, descriptions such as "Fair Ophelia," "Sweet Ophelia," "Poor Ophelia," and "Beautiful Ophelia…sweet maid…poor wretch," function as evidence that Ophelia is not a strong character.[47] Additional critical descriptions, such as frail, modest, pathetic, sedate, and innocent, have emphasized Ophelia"s weakness. Her madness has been interpreted as well. Virtually, however, those two characteristics are not separated. Ophelia is seen as too weak to deal with the traumatic events, the broken relations with Hamlet and the sudden death of her father. Her frailty and innocence work against her as she cannot cope with the unfolding of one traumatic event after another.[48] Furthermore,

[45] C. R. Restarits, "Ophelia"s Empathic Function," *Mississippi Review* 29, no. 3 (Summer, 2001): 215.

[46] Elaine Showalter, "Representing Ophelia: Women, Madness, and the Responsibilities of Feminist Criticism," in *Shakespeare and the Question of Theory*, ed. Patricia Parker and Geoffrey Harman (London: Methuen, 1985), 77.

[47] James M. Vest, *The French Face of Ophelia from Belleforest to Baudelaire* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1989), 1.

[48] Amanda Mabillard, "Ophelia," *Shakespeare Online* 20 (August, 2000). http://www.shakespeare-online.com/plays/hamlet/opheliacharacter.html (accessed by May, 2012).

in Ophelia‟s male dominated society, she is often made to repress her own thoughts and actions. She exhibits signs of independence and tries to express her thoughts and feelings, but they are rejected. Her father, brother, and Hamlet make decisions for her. She just obeys all those men. With the fatalistic incidents occurring around her, the pressure drives her into madness. Moreover, she is further pushed towards insanity as she becomes overburdened with guilt over thinking that she is the cause for Hamlet‟s insanity, which was thought to have driven Hamlet to kill her father.[49] However, in reality, Hamlet was just pretending to be mad for his plan of revenge.

Although the emphasis has been placed on just her weakness and madness, it is important to take into consideration her entire character. She has a number of significant functions in the play beyond being a minor character. First of all, she is the symbol of purity and serves as a contrast to Gertrude. Ophelia is portrayed as the epitome of innocence, purity, and goodness. Shakespeare created an ironic parallel in the characterization of Ophelia as the opposite of Gertrude, the Queen, whose equally simple, but carnal attitudes have led her into committing a grave sin.[50] Unlike Gertrude, Ophelia has a good reason to be unaware of the harsh realities of life due to being not involved with matters of state. Her whole character is that of simple unselfish affection.[51] However, the extent to which Hamlet feels betrayed by Gertrude is far more apparent with the addition of Ophelia to the play. Hamlet‟s feelings of rage against his mother are misguidedly directed toward Ophelia, who is, from his perspective, also hiding her base

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[49] Harold Bloom, *Shakepeare: The Invention of the Human* (Essex: Longman, 2001), 58-59.

[50] Linda Welshimer Wagner, “Ophelia: Shakespeare‟s pathetic plot device,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 14, no. 1 (Winter, 1963): 94.

[51] A.C.Bradely, *Shakespearean Tragedy: Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, Macbeth* (New York: St. Martin‟s Press, 1964), 130.

nature behind a guise of impeccability just like his mother.[52] She can be regarded as an indirect victim of Gertrude, and her purity can be further highlighted by this unfair treatment by her beloved, Hamlet. Of all the pivotal characters in *Hamlet*, Ophelia is the most static and one-dimensional.[53] Her personality traits are magnified through the play through the comparison to other complicated characters and contribute to dramatization of the plot.

Shakespeare‟s chief dramatic use of Ophelia is in the evocation of pathos and emotional impact.[54] Ophelia is created as an extremely sympathetic portrait. Her childlike purity, weakness, selflessness, dutifulness, sweetness, and simplicity are finally damaged regardless of any of her faults, and it is enough to arouse pity from the audience. Moreover, in every scene in which she appears, Ophelia is the receiver of seemingly unending verbiage, sometimes advice, sometimes instruction, and sometimes abuse. Yet, each time, she takes in the emotions behind the speech of others and gives back not more verbiage but an accurate reading of emotional concerns. In terms of how she reacts to emotions, she is Hamlet‟s emotional antithesis, not overthinking but over feeling.[55] She is as limited as Hamlet, responding too emotionally while Hamlet responds too intellectually, and she not only feels the madness which threatens Hamlet, she actually empathically takes it in. Ophelia provides everyone an empathic reflection of the soul caught inside a whirlwind of words.[56] During her mad scene, the audience‟s empathic involvement is heightened. Through this most highly tensional and pitiful scene of the

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[52] Mabillard.
[53] Ibid.
[54] Wagner, 96.
[55] Resetarits, 216.
[56] Ibid., 217.

play[57] the audience is able to experience the release of tension that has been mounting since the beginning of the play. With Ophelia‟s madness, the play undergoes the most dramatic moment, where the audience feels emotional catharsis by ejecting their feelings along with insane Ophelia.

A.C. Bradley interpreted that "in her wanderings we hear an undertone of the deepest sorrow, but never the agonized cry of fear or horror which makes madness dreadful or shocking. And the picture of her death is still purely beautiful."[58] In her insanity, she symbolizes incorrigibility and virtue, and her early death represents the preservation of such precious innocence that must not be defiled.

Ophelia remains memorable amidst Shakespeare‟s minor characters not only as a thematically symbolic character, but also as the device of dramatic effect and instrument of pathos.

2. Popularization as the Source of Vocal Works from the End of the 19th

1) Romanticism and Shakespeare

As mentioned before, Shakespeare and his works became more widely acclaimed along with Romanticism through the 19th century, and Ophelia‟s character gained more attention during this time.

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[57] Peter J. Seng, *The vocal songs in the plays of Shakespeare; a critical history* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1967), 131.

[58] A.C. Bradely, 132-133.

The movement of Romanticism began with literature during the 1790s, which advocated emotionalism while emphasizing man‟s inner self. Romantic art focused on the individual and on the expression of self as a reaction to classical, formal, and intellectual tradition of the 18th century.[59] From this movement, literary critics started to focus more on character and less on the plot.[60] For example, Romantic critics valued Hamlet for its internal, individual conflict reflecting the strong contemporary emphasis on internal struggles and inner character. Hamlet‟s delay of his revenge originates from his intellectual character that thinks too much and cannot make up his mind, while previously it could be seen as just a plot device.[61]

In addition, people during the 19th century tended to long to escape their life and long for somewhere they did not know. The Romantics desired to leave the concerns of the present through immersion within a more resonant past.[62] Especially, German Romantics sought new poetic subjects and images by translating English literature.[63] It offered a particular poetic distance through a certain foreignness.[64] In such context, Shakespeare and his works were enough to attract the Romantics throughout the Europe. Goethe‟s analysis of *Hamlet* is in his novel *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*, and Samuel Coleridge‟s observation of *Hamlet* can be also found in his *Shakespearean*

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[59] J. Peter Burkholder, Donald Jay Grout and Claude V. Palisca, *A History of Western Music* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2010), 602-603.

[60] Susanne L. Wofford, "A critical History of Hamlet," in *Hamlet : complete, authoritative text with biographical and historical contexts, critical history, and essays from five contemporary critical perspective,* William Shakespeare, ed. Susanne L. Wofford (Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1994), 186.

[61] Ibid., 187.

[62] Debora J. Stein, *Poetry into Song: Performance and Analysis of Lieder* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 13.

[63] Stein, 14.

[64] Ibid,.

Criticism.[65] The translation by August Schlegel and Ludwig Tieck contributed to developing such interest toward Shakespeare and *Hamlet* in German-speaking countries.[66] As a result, the character of Ophelia increasingly became a source of fascination since the beginning of the Romantic era.

On the other hand, France tended to be critical of Shakespearean characters. In his *Dissertation sur la tragédie ancienne et modern*, Voltaire describes Ophelia as Hamlet‟s "maitresse" and "l‟heroine," and suggests that her loss, madness, death, and burial provide continuity for the plot of *Hamlet*.[67] To further evidence his argument, he selectively recast lines from Hamlet to assert his views on class distinction to show Shakespeare‟s supposed baseness. Through this remodeling, Ophelia emerges as a social climber who still needs proper instruction.[68] This strong authoritative philosopher‟s critical views, coupled with anti-British sentiment, kept Shakespeare‟s works from fully flourishing in France until the 19th century. An 1827 production of *Hamlet* finally helped to establish Shakespeare and his works firmly with the early French Romanticists. French audiences were stunned and some of the most influential writers, artists, and musicians of the nineteenth century, including Hector Berlioz, witnessed the 1827 performance of *Hamlet* in Paris.[69] The whole idea of Ophelia grew in popularity during the 19th century.

Along with such current, Shakespeare‟s plays significantly affected Romantic music. The interest in literary works containing strong passions and emotions were found throughout the Romantic period, and especially literature was central to the work of most

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[65] Ruoff, 187.
[66] Wells, 329.
[67] Hector Berlioz, *The memoirs of Hector Berlioz*, ed. David Cairns (New York: W.W. Norton, 1975), 70.
[68] Vest, 71.
[69] Showalter, 84.

composers. From songs to choral works and opera, several leading genres required an integration of music and text. In setting words, composers sought to draw out the inner meanings and feelings suggested in the poetry or libretto.[70] Shakespeare‟s works, including plays and poems, provided high standard sources to composers. More editions and performances of Shakespeare were produced throughout Europe in the 19th century.[71] His plays inspired especially some great and popular operas such as Verdi‟s *Otello* and *Falstaff,* Gounod‟s *Roméo and Juliette*, and Thomas‟s *Hamlet*, and poems offered texts for songs. However, the source of the songs in regards to Ophelia originated from the play rather than poems.

2) Interpretation of Ophelia‟s Songs in the Play

The texts of Ophelia composers have set take place in the fourth act of Hamlet, when Ophelia enters at IV, v, 21, called „Ophelia‟s mad scene.‟ There are actually two separate appearances by Ophelia during this scene. The first takes place from the aforementioned entrance until line 74. The second appearance is at IV, v, 158-203. Both segments involve Ophelia in dialogue with other characters, interlaced with song fragments. Composers have taken these song fragments as their songs‟ text.

The stage direction for her entrance is “Enter Ofelia playing on her lute and her haire downe singing.” The flowing hair was a conventional Elizabethan sign of madness,

[70] Burkholder, 25.

[71] Eric Walter White and Christophe R. Wilson, “Shakespeare, William” in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell, vol. 23 (New York: Grove, 2001), 196.

and the presence of the lute meant that Ophelia is a musician and will play and sing.[72] After such entrance, she speaks to the other characters. However, her words have disjunctions in the scene and are not logically responsive to any remarks or questions directed toward her. Ophelia‟s abrupt mood changes and her failure to respond logically to stimuli from other characters on the stage create the impression that she is mad. Her song fragments amplify her insane mental condition, in which Shakespeare combines songs of vastly different moods to illustrate Ophelia‟s unbalanced state.

Songs in the play, like those of Ophelia, had particular meanings and functions in the Elizabethan era. The dramatic functions of the songs in Elizabethan plays were especially diverse. They were used to portray character, to establish settings, to foreshadow, and to forward action. The Elizabethan dramatists borrowed many of their musical devices from a common fund, and Shakespeare was not the only one, nor even the first, to use music in many ways.[73] On the other hand, it was the major device with which dramatists enriched their plays. For example, when madness is used to develop dramatic action, songs by mad figures are sometimes employed for the purpose of sustaining and directing that action along the desired course. This function is especially observable among lunatics, both feigned and real, who express in their song their efforts to escape misery, such as Hamlet‟s feigned madness and Ophelia‟s real madness.[74] Also, the most important function of songs by mad figures in tragedies is to intensify emotions as they and others suffer increasing distress. Ophelia‟s songs increase the perturbations of

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[72] Seng, 132.

[73] Phyllis Hartnoll, *Shakespeare in music* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1964), 8.

[74] Joseph T. McCullen, “The functions of songs aroused by madness in Elizabethan drama,” in *A Tribute to George Coffin Taylor: Studies and Essays, chiefly Elizabethan, by his students and Friends*, ed. Arnold Williams (Chaple Hill: The university of North Carolina Press, 1952), 185.

her friends who become more and more alarmed because of the disorder and danger in her behavior. Her singing also increases the tragic impression of her isolation in madness, and implies that tragic developments have already moved beyond the possibility of control.[75] Playwrights increased their dramatic effects by including lyrics that were sometimes lurid, sometimes gay or vulgar, or appropriately mournful. Shakespeare‟s interfusion of the lyrical in and through the drama is to be commended for its subtle concordance of plot and character development.[76]

In addition, Leslie C. Dunn suggests that the importance of understanding Ophelia‟s songs within the cultural background, where they have more meaning than just the representation of madness and the dramatic function it serves. According to Dunn, Ophelia‟s singing is not only of madness but also of music itself.[77] The dramatic use of music reflects the broader discourse of music in early modern English culture. First of all, the discursive status of song in *Hamlet* by Ophelia is grounded in its differentiation from speech. The singing voice behaves differently from the speaking voice. It is a dual production of language and of music, and the melody really works at the language in singing voice. She mentions Roland Barthes for supporting such point of view. Barthes suggests that the singing voice escapes the tyranny of meaning and liberates a suppressed voluptuousness in both language and listener. Through its identification with music in the song, the linguistic body, the materiality of its sound-signifiers, is released from semantic constraint. Music‟s power lies in its capacity to produce pleasure, the intense, ego-

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[75]McCullen, 193.

[76]Frederick W. Sternfeld, *Music in Shakespeare tragedy* (London: Dover Publications, 1967), 53.

[77] Leslie C. Dunn, “Ophelia‟s songs in Hamlet: music, madness, and the feminine,” in *Embodied voices: Representing female vocality in Western culture* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 52.

fragmenting pleasure that originates in "an excess of the text."[78] Furthermore, music is introduced as the semiotic bond with the mother, which is shattered with the acquisition of symbolic language under the paternal law of the logos. From this point of view, there are contrasts between melos vs. logos and music vs. meaning. The singing of music is associated with the unconscious and the irrational as well as with the feminine.[79]

Renaissance debates over the nature and uses of music bear striking similarities to contemporary debates over the nature and place of women. Like woman, music was held to have an essentially changeable nature, unpredictable and sometimes irrational in its behavior.[80] Music can encourage people to indulge in emotional excess, thought to be feminine. In women, music mirrors their own inherently excessive feminine nature; their musical pleasure thus generates unrestrained female desire. Additionally, it produces a breakdown in social order that is expressed in unruly utterances.

From such perspective, Ophelia‟s singing is "noisy." It is disruptive, indecorous, defying expectations – particularly the expectation of appropriate feminine behavior implicit in the epithet with which Claudius attempts to stop her: "Pretty Ophelia." But Ophelia in her madness refuses to be pretty, as she refuses to be silenced, and she continues to sing.[81]

As mentioned before, Ophelia‟s fragmentary songs seem inappropriate within the context of the play. They are also hard to understand just by themselves, even when the

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[78] Roland Barthes, "The Grain of the Voice," in *Image, Music, Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (New York: Noonday Press, 1977), 185.

[79] Dunn, 54-55.

[80] Ibid., 57.

[81] Ibid., 58-59.

songs are outside the context of the play, considered apart from the context. However, instead of dismissing her songs as nonsense due to her insanity, it is important to understand the abundance of meanings of Ophelia songs intended by the author.

Chapter III.

Study on the Text of Ophelia's Songs

There are five separate song texts among Ophelia‟s entrances and speeches in Act IV, Scene V. Her entrances occur two times in the same scene. She sings her first two songs before Gertrude and Horatio, her last three before Gertrude, Horatio, Claudius, and Laertes. The scene starts in the middle of discussion between Gertrude and Horatio, talking about Ophelia, and Gertrude says "I will not speak with her." But, Gentleman tells her that, "Ophelia is importunate, indeed distract, and her mood will needs be pitied. She speaks much of her father, says she hears there are tricks in the world, and coughs, and beats her breast, and gets angry over tiny matters, and talks nonsense. Her speech is nothing." After Gentleman‟s speech, Horatio persuades Gertrude to speak to Ophelia, since she might end up with dangerous conclusions. Gertrude allows her to come in. After entering, she first asks a question to the Queen, "where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark?" Gertrude is embarrassed by the question and asks back to Ophelia, "how now, Ophelia?" Instead of answering, Ophelia begins to sing her songs. Other characters try to stop her strange singing, but she is no longer the obedient Ophelia. She continues to sing regardless of any concerns without reacting rationally. The incoherence, abrupt alternation between prose and verse, speaking and singing, and the lack of continuity and congruity serve Shakespeare‟s purpose well. When Ophelia sings consecutive stanzas, Shakespeare portrays her madness by fickle change of thought, which fluctuates between

her concern for Hamlet‟s affection and her misery over her father‟s death.[82] Her mind wanders between these two tragic events.

All the five songs originate from old fashioned traditional English ballads. Seng and Sternfeld introduce the sources for original tunes of five Ophelia songs.[83] Seng also suggests that they would have been popular tunes in Shakespeare‟s day, and if the source was lost, Shakespeare made a number of other changes as well in adapting the popular ballad to his purpose. [84]

During the Elizabethan period in England, vocal music was widely spread, and especially folk song genre was convenient for theatrical purposes because it required neither highly trained singers nor instrumentalists for their performance.[85] Moreover, they were familiar to the public and appealed to them easily. However, Shakespeare had a more proper reason for his adaptation of old ballads along with their practical purposes. According to McCullen, whenever a sense of the inappropriate is aroused by any song, especially if it is read as an independent lyric, it is to suggest that a deranged mind is likely to snatch anything from memory or past experiences. Awareness of this fact enabled playwrights to adapt songs for characters and situations more naturally. They had opportunities, therefore, to avoid monotonous conventions and rely on somewhat novel means of arousing interest.[86] In this context, it can be understood that old ballads come flowing as music from the silent halls of memory, where they had entered when perhaps

[82] Sternfeld, 58-59.
[83] Sternfeld, 60-66. Seng, 135-137.
[84] Seng, 135-136.
[85] Hartnoll, 3.
[86] McCullen, 195.

Ophelia‟s old nurse sang her to sleep in days of her childhood.[87] In her distraught state, Ophelia reverts to the songs a nurse may have taught her; not the aristocratic ayre, but crude songs of the common folk.[88]

1. How should I your true love know from another one?

Original text	Modern Paraphrase
How should I your true love know *From another one?* *By his cockle hat and staff,* *And his sandal shoon.*	*How can you tell the difference* *Between your true lovers and other?* *By his pilgrim's hat and staff* *And his pilgrim's sandals.*
He is dead and gone, lady *He is dead and gone* *At his head a grass-green turf* *At his heels a stone*	*He is dead and gone, lady* *He is dead and gone* *At this head is a patch of green grass,* *And at his feet there is a tombstone.*
White his shroud as the mountain snow *Larded all with sweet flowers,* *Which bewept to the ground did not go* *With true-love showers*	*His death shroud was as white as snow* *Covered with sweet flowers* *Which did not fall to the ground* *In true-love showers.*

The first song, (IV, v, 23-26, 29-32, 35, 37-39), presents traditional dialogue ballad between a pilgrim returning from a shrine and a protagonist seeking her lost love. He may be known by "cockle hat, and staff, and sandal shoon." These were the honored insignia of religious pilgrims journeyed to sacred shrines across the seas and often to the Holy Land. In those ages of Faith, they not only afforded safety to the pious stranger in his wanderings through foreign regions, but even gave him respect and honor due to a

[87] Simon Augustine Blackmore, *The riddles of Hamlet and the newest answers* (Boston: Stratford & company, 1917), 374.

[88] Sternfeld, 65.

sacred personage. Hence, as a consequence of the prevalent sacredness of the pilgrim‟s habit, lovers in their adventures sometimes resorted to its guise.[89]

Shakespeare makes change from the traditional text of the ballad. He inserts a negative in the last quatrain, "which bewept to the ground did *not* go." He may have intended it to be regarded as an addition made to the quoted song by Ophelia herself. She suddenly remembers that the words of the song do not quite agree with the facts of her father‟s burial, which was hasty and without the usual ceremonies.[90] This negative language in the Shakespeare poem is not used in the German or French translations.

Additionally, some scholars have suggested that this song implies the criticisms directed towards Gertrude by Ophelia, even though sung superficially to the absent Hamlet. This scene is after Ophelia learns of how Claudius has probably come to his throne and obtained Gertrude‟s hand. It clearly implies that Gertrude once had a true-love whom she failed to distinguish from "another one"…[But] "He is dead and gone, lady." Also the true-love was one "which bewept to the grave did not go with true-love showers." This is an obvious disapproval towards Gertrude for her inadequate mourning for King Hamlet.[91] Even setting it aside, this song is enough to remind listeners that the two men are already dead, Polonius and King Hamlet. As soon as she enters, Ophelia asks the Queen "where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark?" and tells Claudius "may God give you what you deserve. We know what we are but know not what we may be. God be at your table."

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[89] Blackmore, 374.
[90] Seng, 135.
[91] Seng, 133-134.

2. Tomorrow is St. Valentine‟s day.

Tomorrow is Saint Valentine's day,
All in the morning betime,
And I a maid at your window,
To be your Valentine.
Then up he rose, and donned his clothes,
And dupped the chamber door.
Let in the maid that out a maid
Never departed more.

By Gis and by Saint Charity,
Alack, and fie, for shame!
Young men will do 't, if they come to't.
By Cock, they are to blame.
Quoth she, "Before you tumbled me,
You promised me to wed."
He answers,
"So would I ha' done, by yonder sun,
An thou hadst not come to my bed."

Tomorrow is St. Valentine's Day
And early in the morning
I'm a girl below your window
Waiting to be your Valentine.
Then he got up and put on his clothes
And opened the door to his room.
He let in the girl, and when she left
She wasn't a virgin anymore.

By the name of Jesus and Saint Charity
My goodness, what a shame it is,
Young men will do it if they get a chance:
By God, they're very bad.
She said, "Before you got me into bed,
You promised to marry me."
He answers:
"I would have married you, I swear,
If you hadn't gone to bed with me."

The second song (IV. v. 48-55, 58-66) is a lusty ballad about innocence lost. In apparent reply to Claudius‟s words, Ophelia rejects his interpretation and recites sixteen line of immodest verse even on sexual love.[92] The violent change of mood from the sad ballad reinforces the impression of her madness. On Valentine‟s Day, there was a myth that the first maiden girl a man sees on St. Valentine‟s Day was supposed to be his one true love. In her song, the mistress or the young maiden is betrayed by the lover. These coarse and uninhibited lines are the sort which might unconsciously and naturally float to the top of Ophelia‟s muddled mind if her thoughts had been dwelling on Hamlet‟s love and on her possible marriage to him.[93]

[92] Caroll Camden, "On Ophelia‟s Madness," *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 15 No.2 (Spring, 1964): 251.
[93] Ibid, 252.

3. They bore him bare-faced on the bier

They bore him barefaced on the bier,	*They carried him uncovered in the coffin*
Hey, non nonny, nonny, hey, nonny,	*Hey non nonny, nonny, hey nonny*.
And in his grave rained many a tear.	*And tears poured down into his grave*.

Before the 3rd song, Ophelia exits. Her brother, Laertes enters and is present for her second appearance. Ophelia‟s songs now become quite short, as she sings only two lines from a third songs and one from a fourth before her final exit verse, song five. This third song is a funeral dirge referring to Polonius‟s death and his unceremonious burial. Ophelia now speaks undoubtedly of her father, saying that she cannot help weeping "to think they should lay him i‟ the cold ground."

This Ophelia‟s outpouring song towards her brother with his return mingles a requiem for her father‟s death with unrelated and incongruous burdens of popular songs. The nonsense syllables of the second line relate more logically to lads, lasses and springtime than to lamentation and tears. Naylor suggests that the second line, a rather irreverent refrain, is a stage corruption characteristic of Ophelia‟s plaintive and wanton medley.[94] The German translators used the phrase "Leider, ach leider!" instead of "Hey non nonny," making Ophelia‟s sorrow sound sincere instead of flippant.

After her third song, Ophelia distributes several types of flowers to Laertes, King Claudius, and Queen Gertrude. The sad remembrance of her bereavement returns as Ophelia dispenses pansy, rue, rosemary, fennel and columbine. These flowers are indicative of her true feelings towards them. [95] [96]

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[94] John H. Long, *Shakespeare's use in music* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1971), 126.

[95] Blackmore, 385.

4. For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy

For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy

After the distribution of flowers, she suddenly sings the fragment of a Robin Hood ballad, probably sung by Maid Marian in the Old Whitsuntide folk play.[97] „Bonny Robin‟ songs deal with lovers, unfaithfulness and extra-marital affairs.[98] Shakespeare‟s bracketing of the "bonny sweet Robin" line by two dirge texts supports the contention that the causes of Ophelia‟s madness are twofold: both her father‟s murder and Hamlet‟s desertion of her.

5. And will he not come again?

And wil he not come againe?
And wil he not come againe?
No, no, he is dead,
Goe to thy death bed.
He never will come againe.
His beard was as white as snow,
All flaxen was his poll.
He is gone, he is gone,
And we cast away moan,
God a mercy on his soule.—

And won't he come again?
And won't he come again?
No, no, he's dead
Go to your deathbed
He'll never come again.
His beard was white as snow,
His hair was all white too.
He's gone, he's gone
And we moan as we're cast away
God have mercy on his soul.

The song which follows "Robin" is a second dirge, "And wil a not come againe?" Of all Ophelia‟s song texts, this song is most closely detailed to actual events in *Hamlet*.

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[96] Rosemary is emblematic of remembrance, and was distributed and worn at weddings, as well as funerals. The pansy is a symbol of thought, of pensiveness, and of grief. Fennel designates flattery and deceit. Colombine is a symbol of ingratitude. These two flowers Ophelia befittingly presents to Claudius. Rue is bitter plant and was in folk lore a symbol of repentance. Ophelia says to the Queen, "there is rue for you." In distribution, the demented maiden is seen naively but unwittingly to choose the flower most suited to each person.

[97] Seng, 149.

[98] Sternfeld, 58.

Her father‟s funeral is recently taken place, although without great ceremony. Ophelia begins this song immediately after distributing flowers at the stage. Even though "bonny sweet Robin" line provides a temporary impression, Ophelia seems here to be truly mourning the death of her father. Ophelia then prays for their souls with the lines "and of all Christian souls, I pray God. God bless you," and exits.

6. The description of Ophelia‟s death

Ophelia sings five songs in the play, but some composers set their music to the description of her death by Gertrude rather than to Ophelia‟s songs.

By Act IV, scene 7, Ophelia is dead. However, it is not enacted on the stage but rather reported by Gertrude, in one of the play‟s most lyrical speeches. We learn of the death of Ophelia from the beautifully poetic account of Gertrude.

There is a willow grows askaunt the brook,
That shows his hoary leaves in the glassy stream,
There with fantastic garlands did she make
Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples
That lieral shepherds give a grosser name,
But ou cull-cold maids do dean men's fingers call them.
There n the pendant boughs her crownet weeds
Clambring to hang, and envious sliver broke,
When own her weedy trophies and herself
Fell in the weeping brook.
Her clothes spread wide,
And mrmaid-like awhile they bore ther up,
Which time she chaunted snatches of old lauds,
As on incapable of her own distress,
Or likea creature native and indued
Unto tat element. But long it could not be
Till tht her garments, heavy with their drink,
Pull'dthe poor wretch from her melodious lay
To muddy death.

There's a willow that leans over the brook,
dangling its white leaves over the glassy water.
Ophelia made wild wreaths out of those leaves,
in crowflowers, thistles, daisies, and the orchises
that vulgar shepherds have an obscene name for,
but which pure-minded girls call "dead men's fingers."
Climbing into the tree to hang the wreath of weeds
on the hanging branches,
she and her flowers fell into the gurgling brook.
Her clothes spread out wide in the water,
and buoyed her up for a while
as she sang bits of old hymns,
acting like someone who doesn't realize the danger she's in,
or like someone completely accustomed to danger.
But it was only a matter of time before her clothes,
heavy with the water they absorbed,
pulled the poor thing out of her song,
down into the mud at the bottom of the brook.

According to Gertrude, to put it prosaically, Ophelia crowned herself with a garland of oddly assorted flowers and weeds, climbed a willow tree, and fell into a stream when the branch on which she sat broke. She floated for a while, continuing to sing "snatches of old tunes," then sank to "muddy death." Note that even at her watery end, the "envious silver" which let her fall is that of a willow, a tree linked in Shakespeare and elsewhere in Elizabethan literature with unrequited love.[99]

The description of her death recapitulates the earlier mad scene with its reference to singing and flowers. This time, however, we get only a description of Ophelia‟s song, rendered in someone else‟s speech. Ophelia‟s own voice is inaudible. Dunn again has argued that the speech by Gertrude is to restore Ophelia to her original iconic role of modest and delicate virgin. Gertrude‟s description of Ophelia‟s drowning aestheticizes her madness, makes it "pretty."[100] Also, instead of Ophelia‟s disjunctive fragments of popular song, Gertrude gives us the blank verse of high court culture. In telling her "pretty" story of Ophelia‟s death, Gertrude is implicitly submitting it to patriarchal authority, representing Ophelia the way the men want to see her.[101] Additionally, this final image of Ophelia being silenced can be understood as her being "a speaking picture," which being visual rather than aural, can be more easily read. This visualization process could be a response to Ophelia‟s singing, which is perceived by other characters as dangerous, not only because of the uncontrollable meaning it may suggest to others, but also because of the unruly emotions it provokes in them.[102]

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[99] Camden, 252.
[100] Dunn, 62.
[101] Dunn, 63.
[102] Ibid.

Chapter IV.

Study of Germany, French, and English vocal settings

1. German Settings

During the 1790s German writers sought new ways to deal with the characteristics of humankind. Unlike the Classic era, which was widespread of rationality and reason, German writers tried to look of individuals with a focus on their inner life and to describe the direct expression of their emotion. All of the various states which occur in the human psyche attracted German Romantics, including madness. Moreover, the abnormal and insane nature that had been restrained in its expression throughout the Classic period came into the spotlight in the 19th century. In such a background, Ophelia"s insanity was willingly accepted and her characteristics drew attentions of the authors, painters, and composers.

Within the current of the period, German composers especially tried to depict the inner conflict and confusion of Ophelia. They emphasized Ophelia"s psychological aspect or the root of her madness rather than just described her insane mental state itself.

Additionally, Germany had a strong folk song tradition. Based on the tradition, *volkstümliches Lieder* appeared in the eighteenth century. They are self-contained strophic songs with simple accompaniment and tuneful melodies. The *volkstümliches Lied* served as a model for early song composers.[103] This background suited the context

[103] Carol Kimball, *Song: A Guide to Style and Literature* (Redmond,WA: Pst...Inc, 1996), 51.

of Ophelia‟s songs, which originated from traditional old tunes. Furthermore, the interest in folksong increased throughout the 19th century.

All these characteristics, including the fascination with Ophelia‟s mental construction and affinity for traditional folk songs, increased the popularity of the vocal settings of Ophelia‟s songs in Germany from the beginning of the 19th century to the 20th century.

1) *Woran erkenn'ich deinen Freund* and *Sie senkten ihn in kalten Grund hinab* by Johann Rudolf Zumsteeg (1760- 1802)

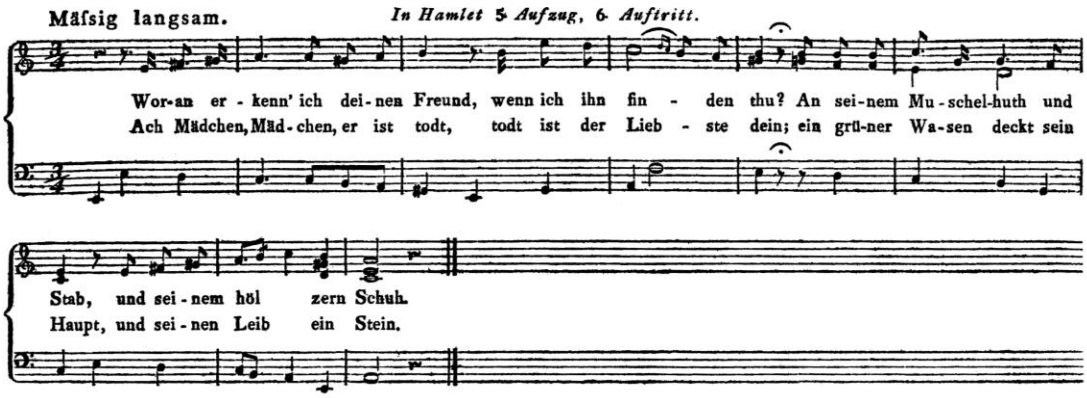
Zumsteeg is one of the composers influential to the birth of German Lieder. He was a pioneer who wrote numerous dramatic ballads that influenced Franz Schubert, who seized upon the dramatic qualities inherent in the ballad form. To illustrate the emotions and the dramatic story in the ballad, an expanded piano texture was needed. The ballads of Zumsteeg were thus a widening of the dramatic scope of the lied and developed a closer relationship between voice and piano.[104] However, Zumsteeg took a simple folk song style for two Ophelia‟s songs: "*Woran erkenn' ich deinen Freund* (How should I your truelove know)" and "*Sie senkten ihn in kalten Grund hinab* (They bore him barefac‟d on the bier)." They have been composed as early as 1785, as part of incidental music to *Hamlet*,[105] a reason Zumsteeg chose a folk style for these two songs. They are in a limited vocal range. The first song is in a strophic form. Both songs have short and

[104] Ibid., 52.

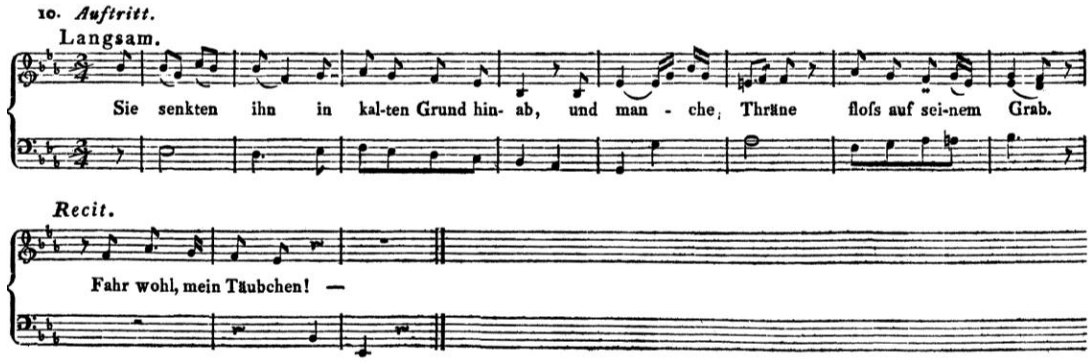
[105] Gunter Maier, "Zumsteeg, Johann Rudolf," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell, vol. 27 (New York: Grove, 2001), 884.

tuneful phrases. Their accompaniment is minimal. The stepwise motions and brief phrases make each song simple, as seen in example 1 and 2. However, while regular four-bar phrases form the first song with its half and perfect authentic cadences, the second song consists of more irregular phrases with frequent rests. A difference between the two songs is that Ophelia‟s grief is more directly reflected in the dirge text than in the dialogue between the pilgrim and the protagonist.

Example 1. *Woran erkenn'ich deinen Freund* by Zumsteeg, Entire song.



Example 2. *Sie senkten ihn in kalten Grund hinab* by Zumsteeg, Entire song.



2) *Fünf Ophelia Lieder* by Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Brahms wrote the *Fünf Ophelia Lieder* in 1873. He was one of the prolific Lieder composers in the Romantic era. However, this setting has no Opus number, unlike most of his other songs. The work is classified as WoO 22, which means Werk ohne Opuszahl (works without opus number) such as the collections of his folksong arrangements. It can be assumed that Brahms considered his Ophelia settings as a similar to folksong genre rather than his Lieder. His intention is clearer with the reason of composition. Brahms was approached by Joseph Lewinsky, who requested him to write settings of the Ophelia texts for a performance of *Hamlet* by actress Olga Precheisen, Lewinsky‟s fiancée.[106] Lewinsky was an eminent tragedian and a member of the famous Burgtheater.[107] He wrote to Precheisen on November, 1873 and said the following:

> Brahms has written a piano accompaniment for songs, so that you may learn them more easily…He is of the opinion that, on the stage, something simple often makes a greater effect. But you will surely be able to feel yourself into the spirit of folk-song in which they are conceived.[108]

Lewinsky‟s letter contains practically everything that can be said about these songs. Brahms wisely saw that only melodies of a plain and simple folk-type would properly fit into the old English drama. Indeed, these songs remind one of the appealing melodiousness and the straightforward, often merely supporting, piano accompaniments

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[106] Eric Sams, *Brahms Songs* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1972), 39.

[107] Karl Geiringer, *Fünf Ophelia-Lieder, für eine Sopranstimme und Klavierbegleitung* (Wien: Schönborn Verlag, 1960), 5.

[108] Ibid.

of Brahms‟ own folk-song arrangements.[109] Although five songs are sung without accompaniment in the play, Brahms provides them with simple piano accompaniments, in order to make it possible for the songs to be performed independently of the stage action.[110] The range of all songs from B2 to Eb3 is not too high or low for the amateur. . Brahms composed his songs to German translations by Schlegel and Tieck.

The first ballad of Ophelia, "*Wie erkenn ich dein Treulieb* (How should I your true love know)," is divided into two songs by Brahms. The first two quatrains are set to the first song and the last quatrain is used for the second song in Brahms‟ settings. The first setting is composed in G minor. Above all, this song is simple. The whole song consists of only one melodic phrase, as seen in example 3. The phrase is mainly composed of leaps by the third and fourth and it makes this simple song more stable. There is a small change from the half cadence to the perfect cadence at the second and fourth repetition to finish the section. Therefore, the structure of the song is AA‟AA‟ (example 3). Even though the song might have been in the strophic form with such structure, Brahms did not set it as a strophic song because of one small thing in the second repetition of A. In measure 9, the second note of the measure is given the quarter note instead of the eighth note. Through it, the syncopated rhythmic feature (♩𝅗𝅥) is created on the word "Fräulein (Lady)!" to stress it.

The two meter signatures, 4/4 and 3/2, are together indicated at the beginning. It means the second measure of the phrase is in 3/2, and it applies to every repetition. The variation of the accompaniment for each verse which is typical characteristic of Brahms‟ folksong arrangement does not occur in this setting.

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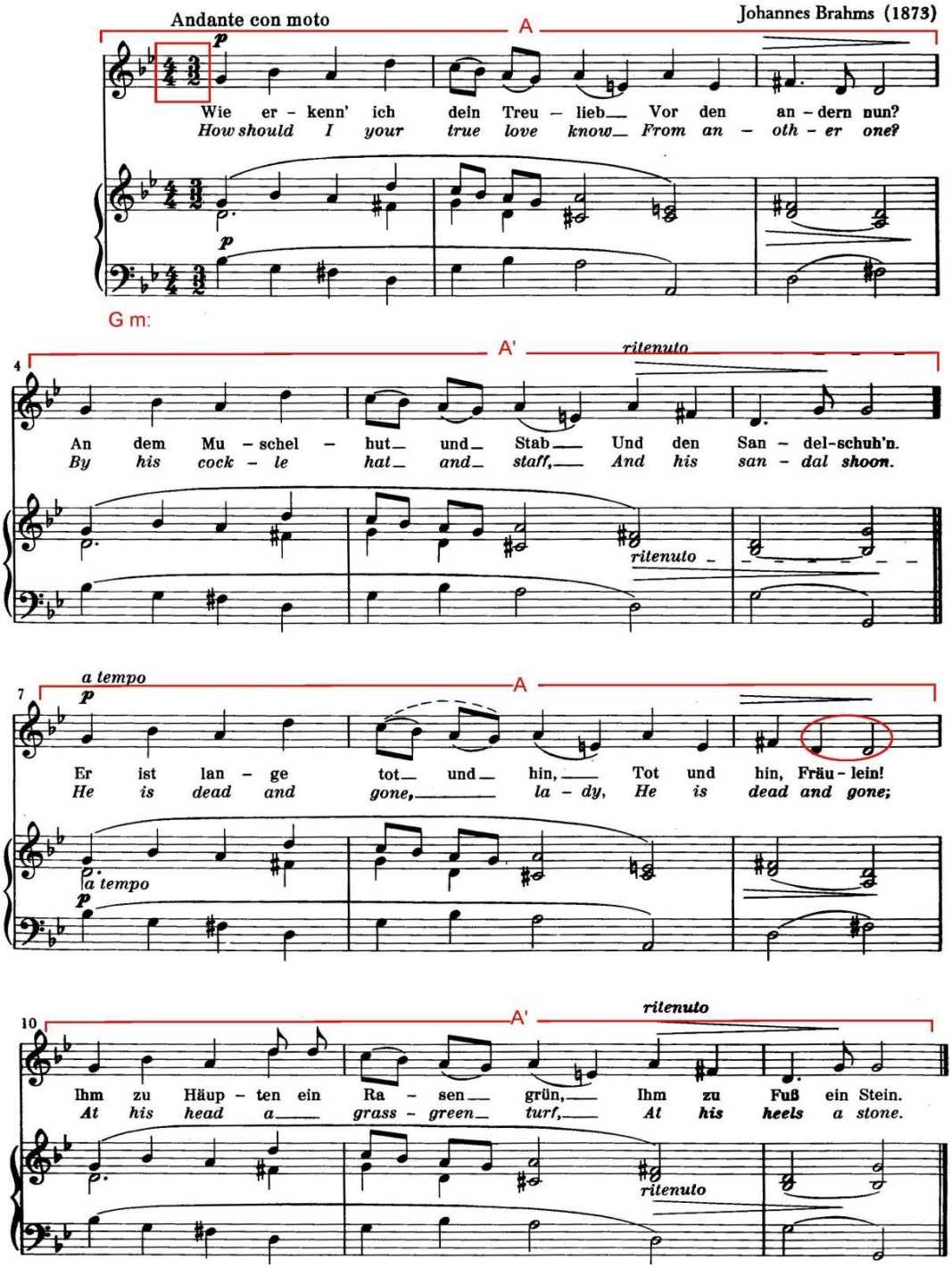
[110] Ibid., 6.

Example 3. *Wie erkenn ich dein Treulieb* by Brahms, Entire song.

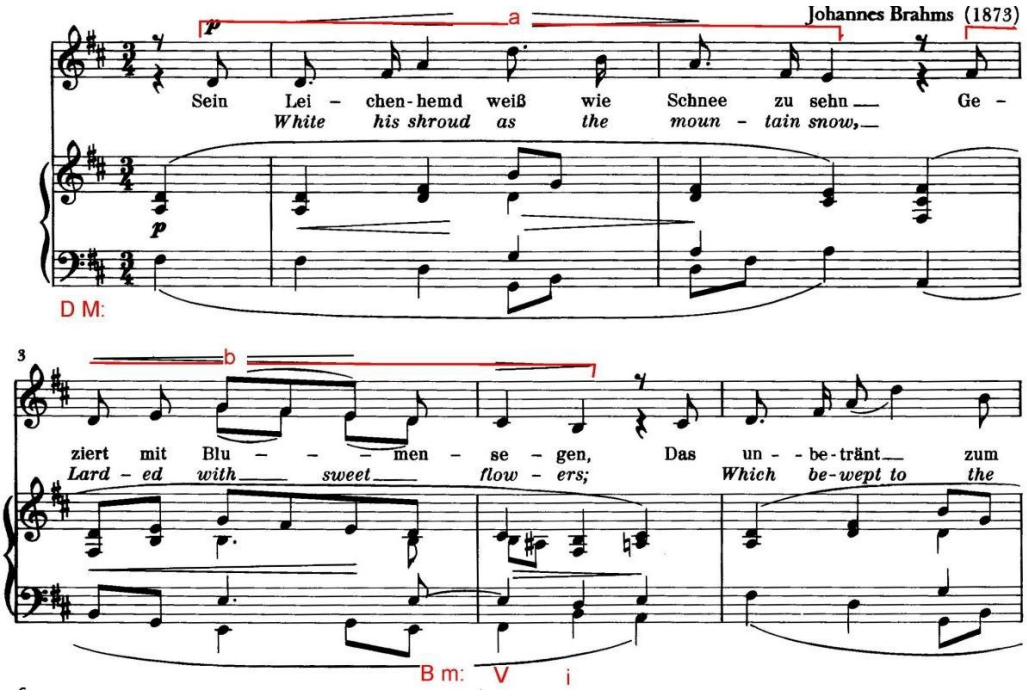


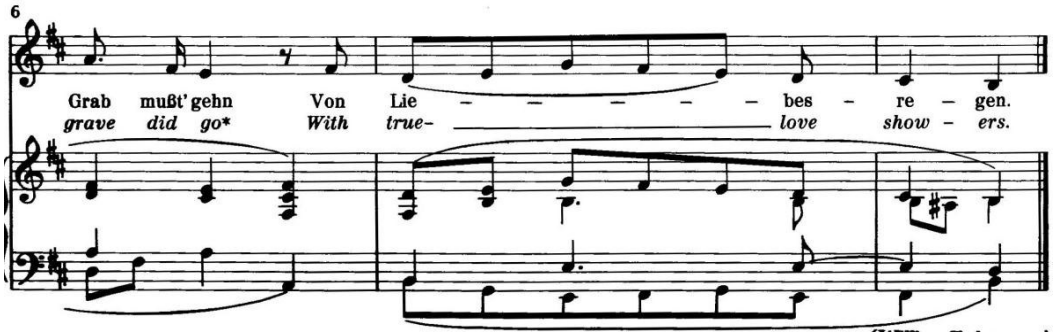
The text of the second song, "*Sein Leichenhemd weiss wie Schnee zu seh'n* (White his shroud as the mountain snow)" is the last quatrain of Ophelia‟s first ballad. The song

begins in D major and this lasts for three measures until the cadence in B minor at measure 4 (in example 4). As in the first song, there is only one melodic phrase. This phrase can be also divided into two parts (a-b). The contrast between them is achieved by following features. The first part has leaping notes with the dotted rhythm (mm.1-2 in the example 4) and the second one features stepwise motion with eighth notes and quarter notes (mm.3-4 in the example 4).

Brahms highlights the word “Liebes (love‟s)” with the longest melisma in the entire settings (m.7 in example 4).

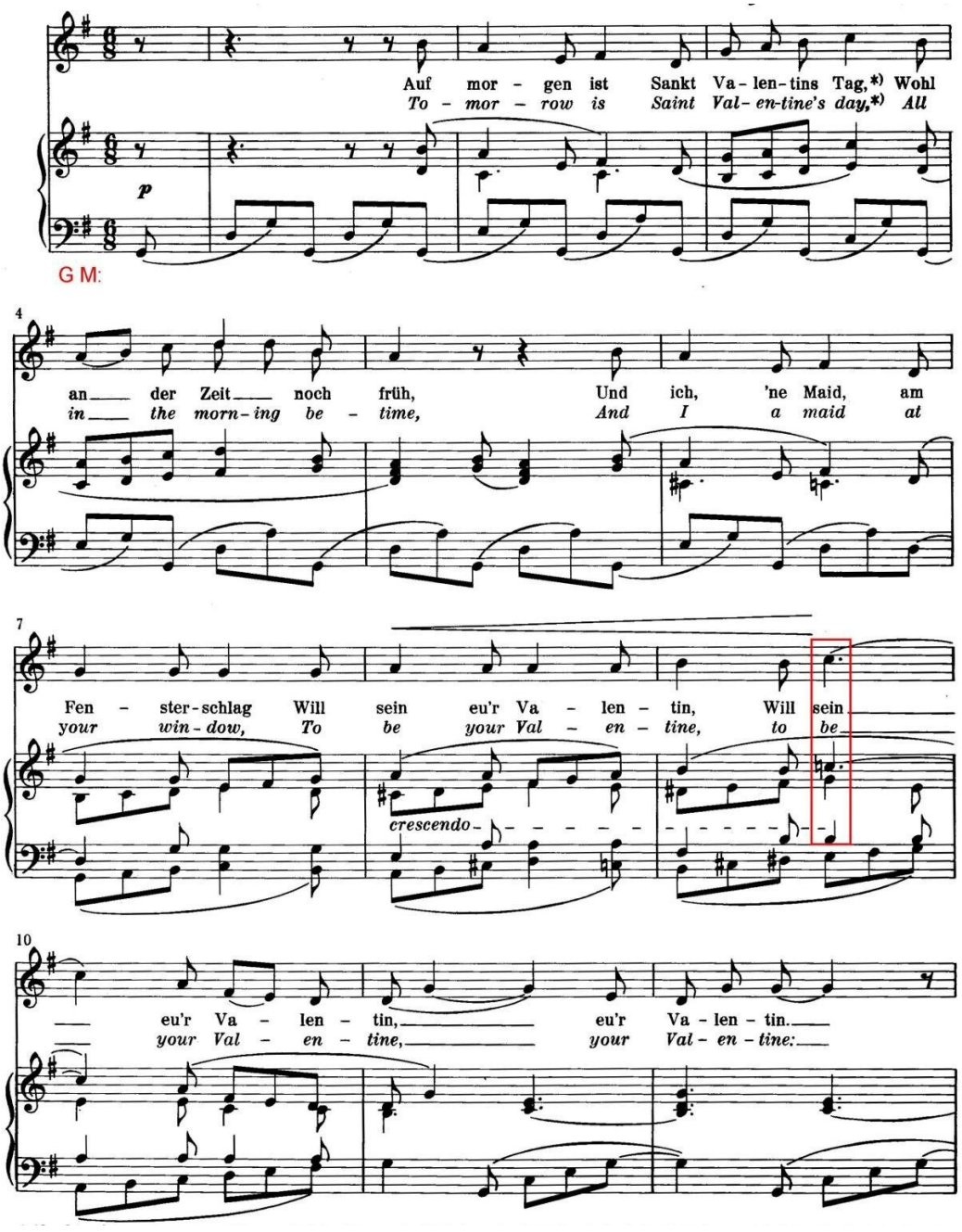
Example 4. *Sein Leichenhemd Weiss wie Schnee zu seh’n* by Brahms. Entire song.



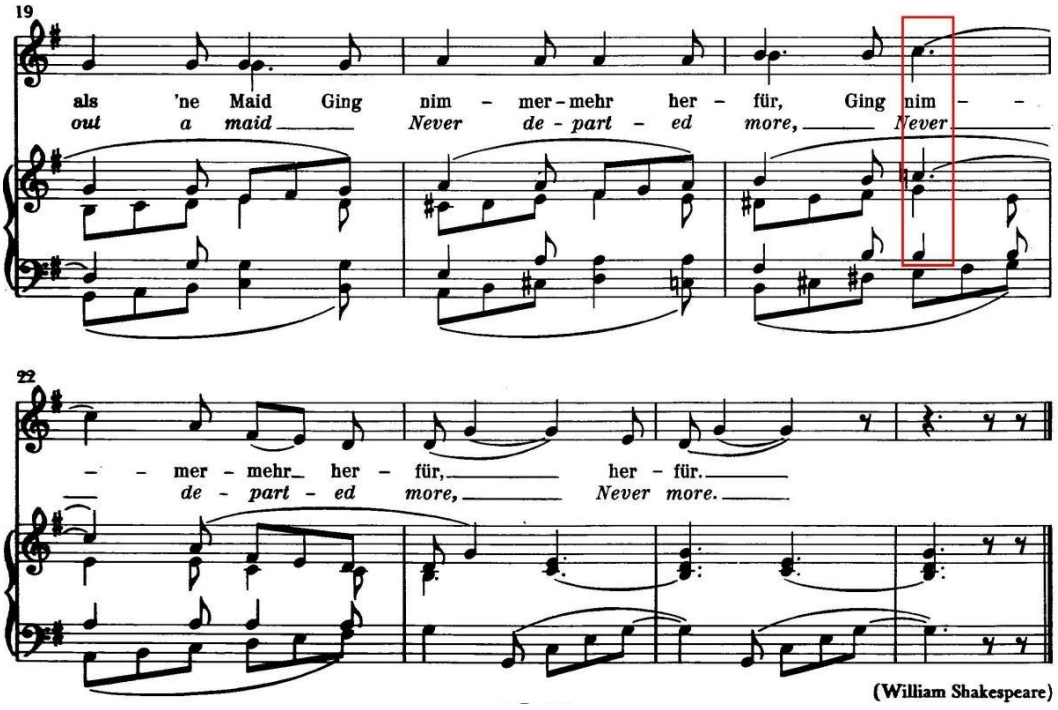


The third song has the St. Valentine‟s Day text. The bawdy text ironically is set with a merry mood in G major in a dancelike rhythm in 6/8. The barcarole rhythmic pattern with the pedal point on the tonic, G, even gives the piece the pastoral atmosphere. The calm mood of the beginning sounds continuous, but the song has a change in the middle of the piece. At measure 6, the voice melody repeats the beginning of the previous phrase but it has different music for next three measures, as seen in measures 7-9 of example 5. For these three measures, the voice melody, which flows tenderly in previous section, becomes steady with reiterated notes in each measure. It seems to express the struggling feeling of the maiden. In contrast to the voice, the accompaniment has more active motion with the sequence. Furthermore, the pedal point, G, moves up into A and B. The texts of the first and second verses are “am Fensterschlag Will sein eu‟r Valentin (at your window, To be your Valentin)” (in example 5) and “die als ‟ne Maid Ging nimmermehr herfür (a maid Never departed more)” (in example 6). Brahms‟ music represents the anxiety of the maiden and the pitifulness of the story. They are also represented by the dissonance of a minor 2nd between C and B in measure 9 and 21, on the longest and highest note of the song.

Example 5. *Auf morgen ist Sankt Valentins Tag* by Brahms, mm. 1-12.



Example 6. *Auf morgen ist Sankt Valentins Tag* by Brahms, mm. 19-25.

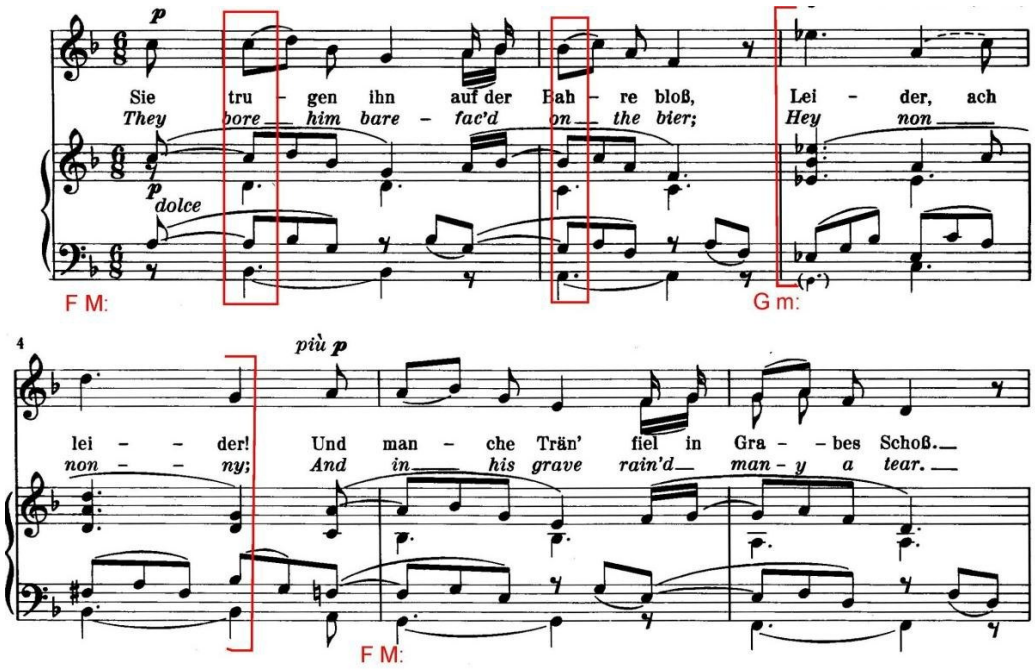


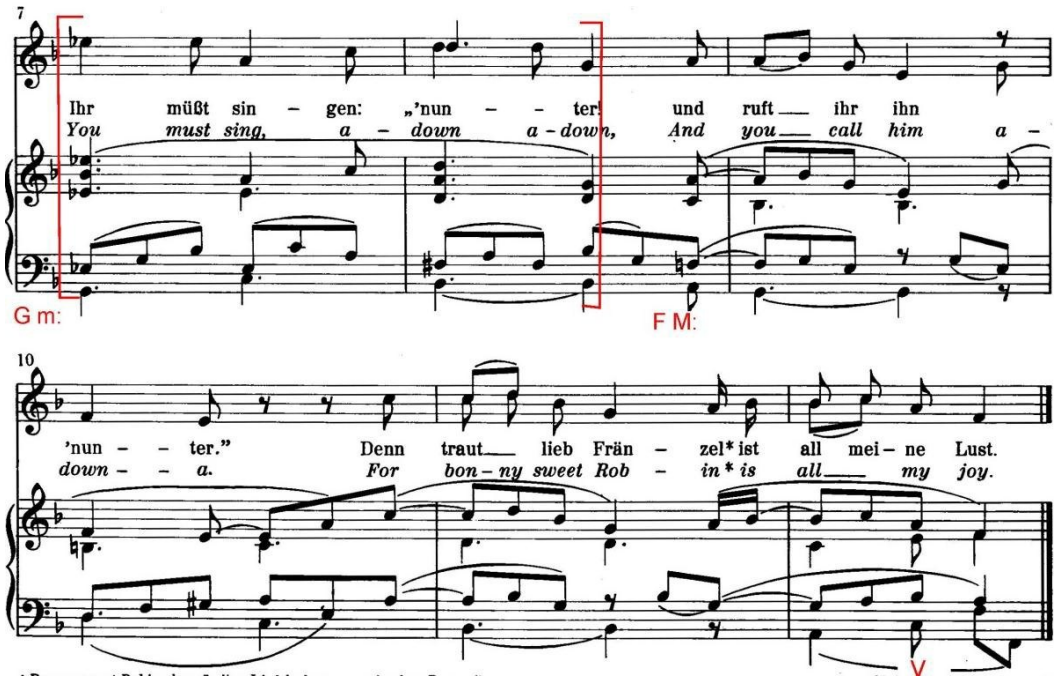
The fourth song, "*Sie trugen ihn auf der Bahre bloss* (They bore him barefaced on the bier)," has more ironical expression than the third. As previously mentioned, the original dirge text is interrupted by the phrases "Hey non nonny" and it is changed to "Leider, ach leider!" in Schlegel-Tieck version. The German translation fits better with the context. However, Brahms set his music with musical interruption. The first phrase is employed three times as a main source of the song. The suspension plays a significant role in forming this main melody. The suspended notes are placed on the voice part which is doubled by the right hand of the piano. Such a melodic line clashes with the bass in a minor 2nd interval (mm. 2-3 in the example 7). The same melodic figure is repeated from the last beat of the measure 4, transposed a 3rd below, as seen in the example 7. It comes back in the original position at the end of the piece. However, each repetition is

disrupted by the sudden and brief modulation to G minor. “Leider, ach leider” is set to such an interrupted section. In measure 3, Eb suddenly appears, forming a minor 7th with the previous note, F, and the tritone with the next note, A. More interestingly, the brief disturbing phrases start with the strong beat, whereas the piece and the main phrase begin with upbeat. Such sudden change reflects Ophelia‟s grief, which permeates the dirge.

The fragment of Robin Hood ballad, “Denn traut lieb Fränzel ist all meine Lust (For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy),” is set to the last phrase, which is the third repetition of the main melody. The cadence of this melody is weak with the progression, I6 -V- I. The dominant, which normally functions significantly in cadential motion, has an eighth note on the weakest beat in the measure, as seen in measure 12 of example 7.

Example 7. *Sie trugen ihn auf der Bahre bloss,* by Brahms, Entire song.

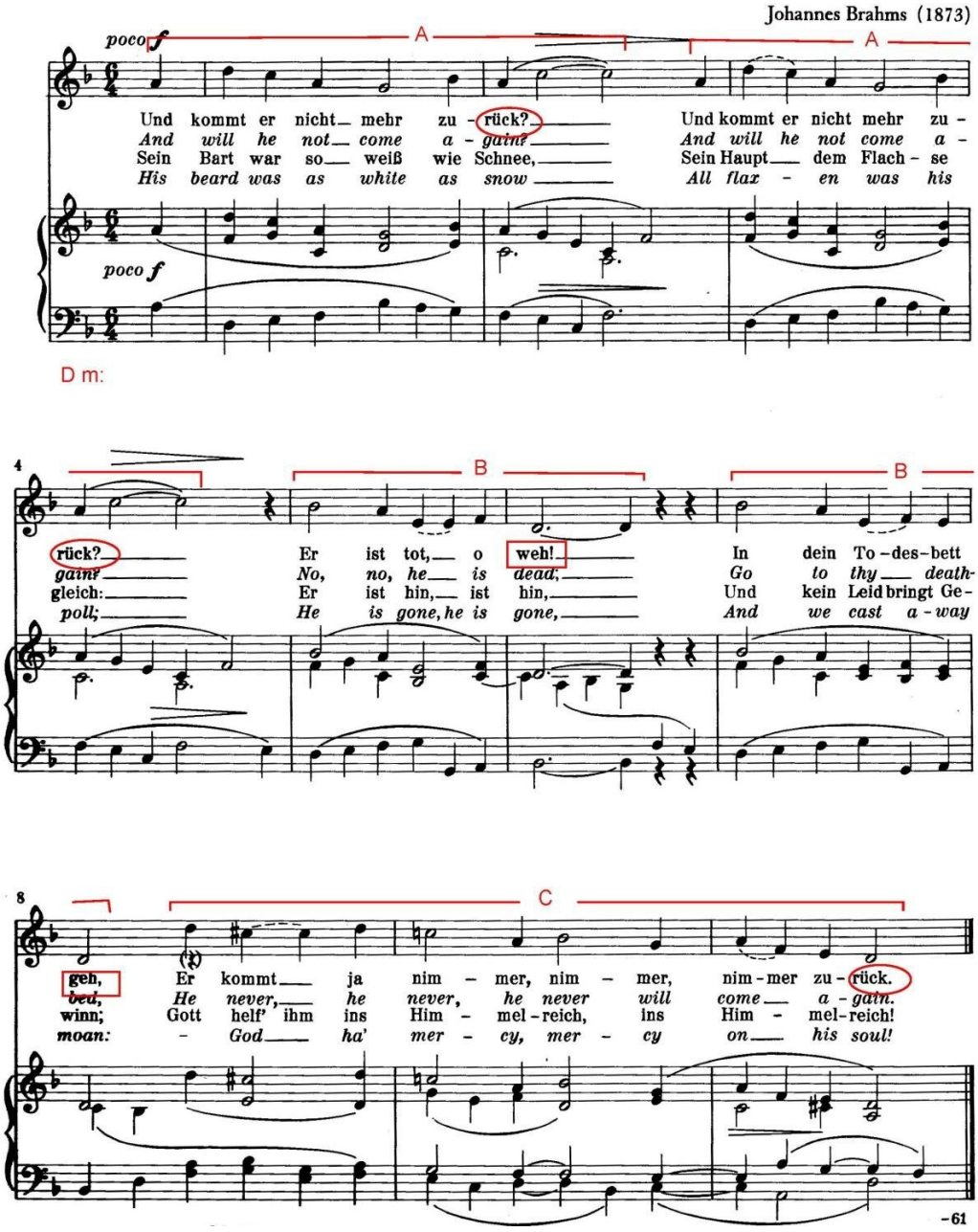




The fifth song, "*Und kommt er nicht mehr zurück* (And will he not come again)" is a strophic song and each verse has the form of AABBC, bar form. The pattern of AABBA in the Schlegel-Tieck translation is directly from Shakespeare and Brahms uses it in his melodic pattern of AABBC, as marked in example 8. The first two parts are parallel in terms of the text and music, while the last phrase seems different. However, one can still relate the last one with the first two in that they share the rhyme.

The descending melodic lines of all phrases and the key of D minor signify Ophelia‟s grief. Additionally, it is not until the last section that Brahms uses the leading tone, C#. After an indistinctive minor mode with a missing leading tone, the representation of the grief has strong impact. The entire fifth song follows in example 8.

Example 8. *Und kommt er nicht mehr zurück* by Brahms, Entire song.



3) *Drei Lieder der Ophelia* by Richard Strauss (1864-1949)

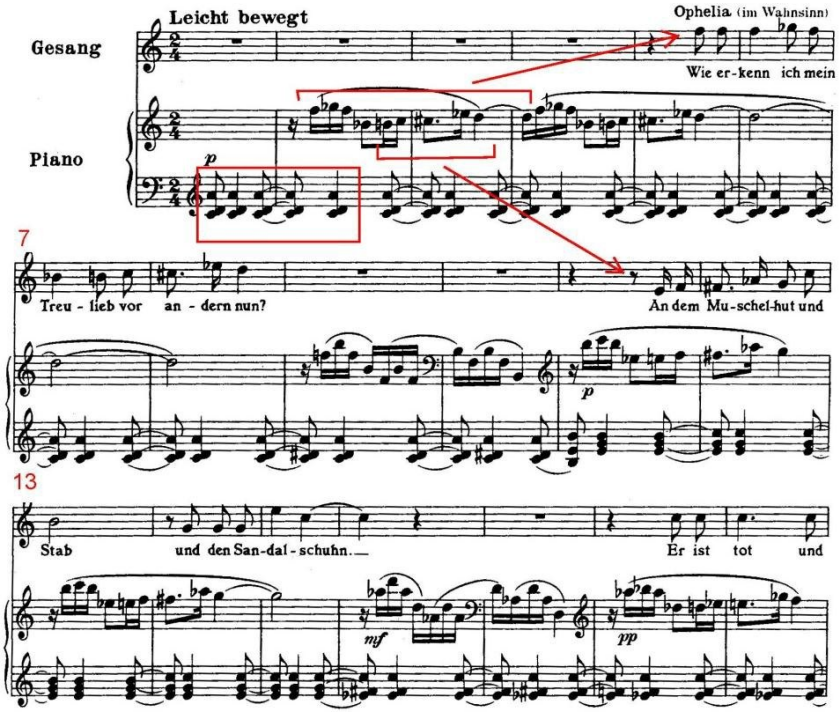
Richard Strauss set his music to Karl Joseph Simrock‟s translation. *Drei Lieder der Ophelia* is the first half of his Opus 67, *Sechs Lieder*. Strauss set all songs by Ophelia but he did not use them as separately. Instead he rearranged them into three songs. “Wie erkenn‟ ich dein Treu‟lieb (How should I your true love know)” and “Guten Morgen, „s Sankt Valentins Tag (Tomorrow is St.Valentine‟s day)” are each completed. However, in the third song, Strauss combines three of Ophelia‟s texts: “Sie trugen ihn auf der Bahre bloss (They bore him barefaced on the bier),” the fragment of Robin Hood ballad,“Mein junger frischer Hansel ist‟s (For bonny sweet Robin is),” and “Und kommt er nimmer mehr (And will he not come again).”

Simrock‟s translation of the first song, “*Wie erkenn ich mein Treulieb vor andern nun* (How should I your true love know)?” has a big difference from that of Schlegel-Tieck. Simrock changed the word “dein (your)” to “mein (mine).” Through such a change, the song becomes a monologue of the protagonist rather than the original dialogue between the pilgrim and the protagonist. Also, Ophelia‟s madness looks more obvious with the questioning and answering by herself.

The musical language by Strauss amplifies her insanity. First of all, the motive of the right hand begins with the distinctive chromatic line (mm. 2-3 in the example 9). It is repeated immediately and the voice part imitates it (mm.5-6 in the example 9). The second phrase of the vocal part in measure 11 also takes the motivic idea from the second half of the same motive, as seen in example 9.

The ostinato accompaniment figure with syncopated rhythm in the left hand expresses unstable state of Ophelia as well. Even the initial chord is in third inversion with the omission of the third of the chord. Along with syncopated rhythm, the nature of the chord adds instability to the song. These two musical devices, syncopated ostinato figure and chromatic melodic motif, play a main role in generating the whole song.

Example 9. *Wie erkenn ich mein Treulieb vor andern nun* by Strauss, mm.1-19.

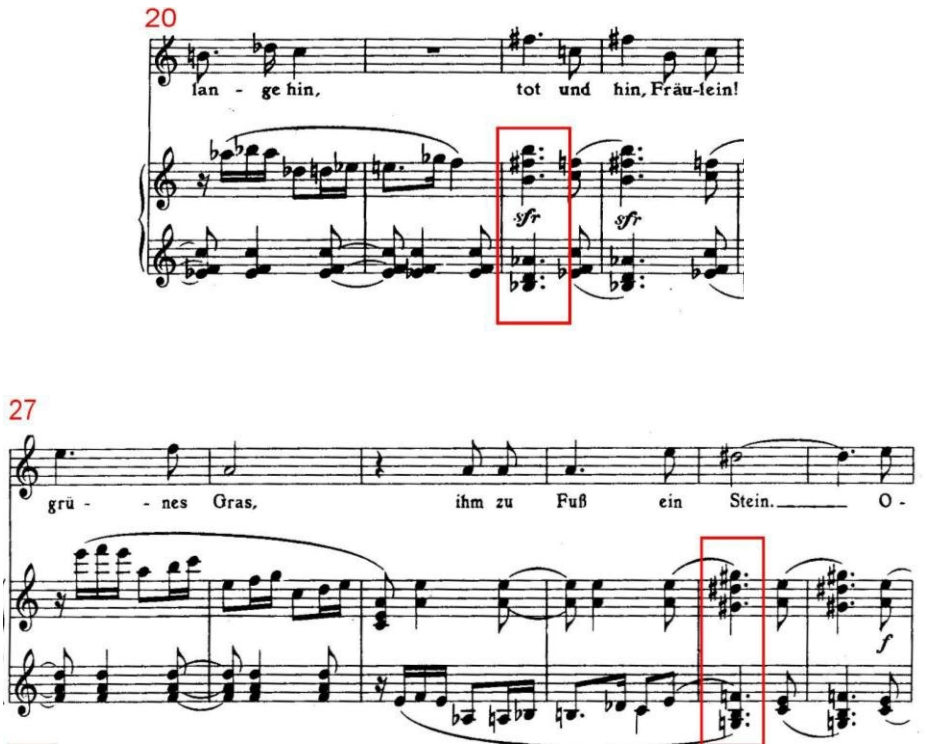


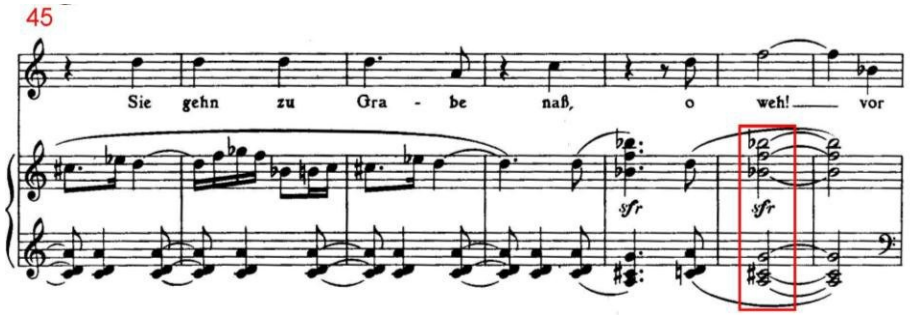
The mood of the whole song is dominated by oscillation between major and minor chords. The tonality is ambiguous. Instead of a specific key, particular chords lead each section. For example, the first section from measure 1 to 10 consists of the third inversion of seventh chord on D as shown in example 9. The same kind chord of on F# appears at measure 16. It lasts for 6 measures. Furthermore, the continued syncopated

rhythmic figuration blurs the bar line. The ambiguity of both tonality and a sense of meter makes song unstable and mysterious.

Strauss also uses the tone cluster to intensify such mood. In measure 20, the first tone cluster appears. It is basically composed of two chords, a Bb major seventh chord in the left hand and a B minor chord in the right hand. Such a shocking sonority is set on the word, “tot (dead).” The next one is built on G and G# in a same manner at measure 31. The last tone cluster comes with the word, “weh (pain),” on A and Bb. In addition, all of these chords lack the fifth of the chord on the lower chord (left hand) and the higher ones have no third (m.20, m.31, and m.50 in the example 10).

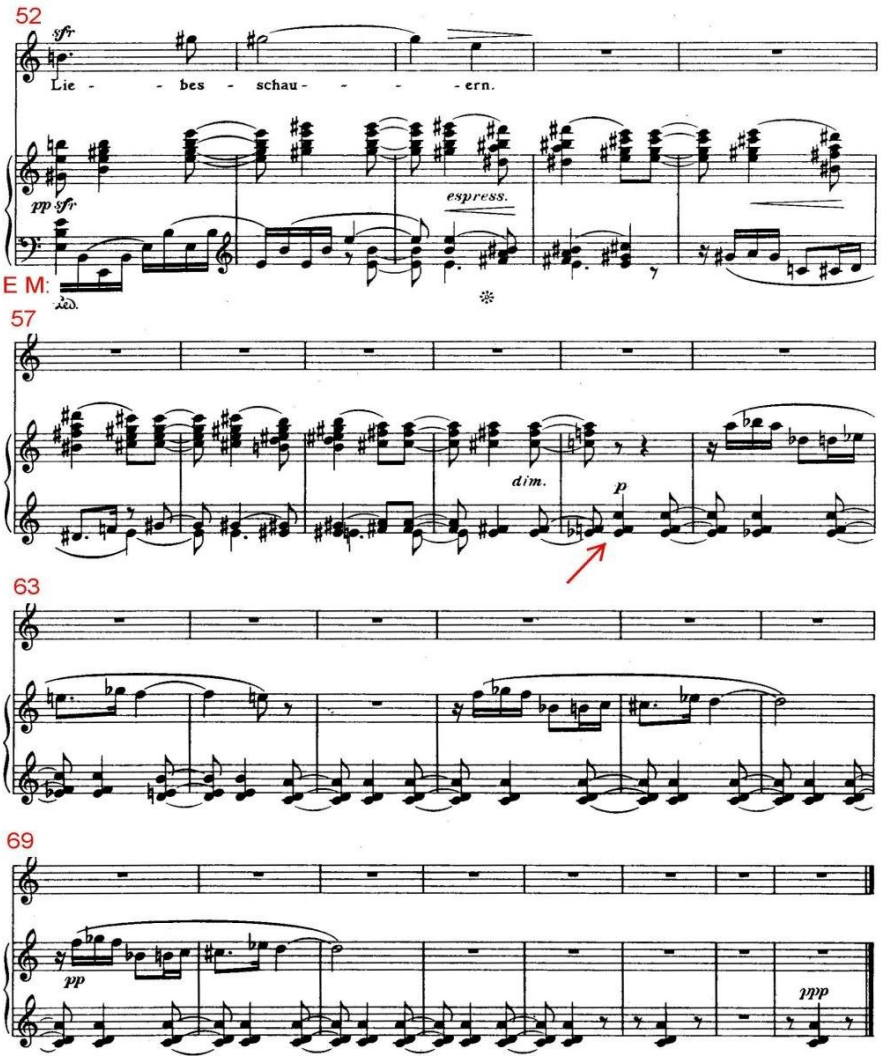
Example 10. *Wie erkenn ich mein Treulieb vor andern nun* by Strauss, mm.20-23, 27-32, and 45-51





After those progression, the sudden appearance of E major with conventional harmony, at measure 52 represents the word, “Liebesschauern (Love‟s shower),” the last word of the song (in example 11). It is the only section that has a clear tonality in the piece. Strauss employs the tonic chord of E major in root position, even with arpeggiated figuration. It not only represents the text itself, but it also can be considered that Ophelia‟s insanity can be healed with “Liebesshauern.”

Example 11. *Wie erkenn ich mein Treulieb vor andern nun* by Strauss, mm. 52-76.

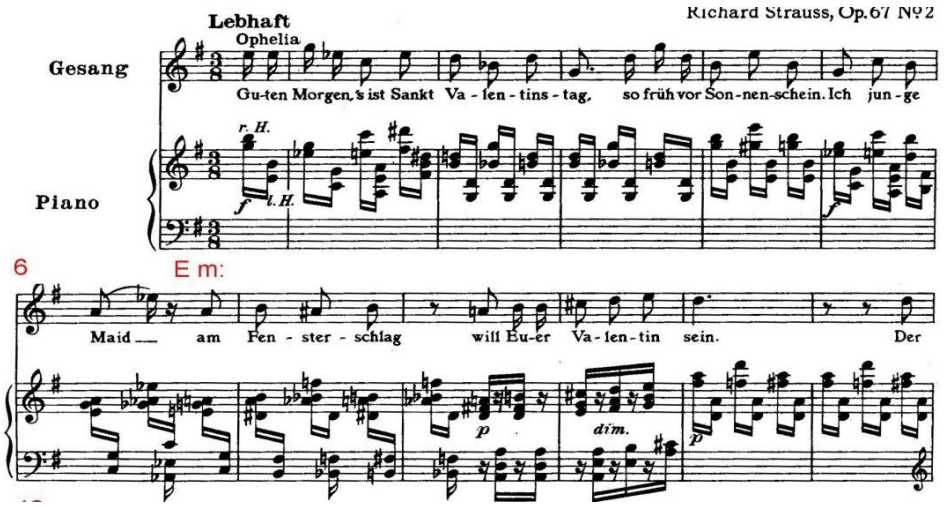


However, the piano plays a C# minor chord at measure 54 before the voice ends its E major phrase, and the beginning‟s ostinato figuration with the inverted seventh chord comes back at measure 61, as seen in example 11. The song finishes with the ambiguity of the first section. Strauss‟s musical interpretation implies that Ophelia‟s inner conflict or confusion is retained rather than resolved.

The second song, "*Guten Morgen,'s ist Sankt Valentinstag*," is the bawdy story of a maiden‟s innocence lost to an uncaring young man. Strauss set this text in 3/8 meter with the indication, *Lebhaft* (lively). At the beginning, the alternation between major and minor chords in the accompaniment reflects Ophelia‟s fragmented thinking and random chattering[111] as shown in example 12. By the alternation of the major and minor chords in every beat, the piano part has consistent half step motions especially in the middle voice such as three notes, B-Bb-B in measure 2 and 3, and G-G#-G in measure 4. Instead of alternating between the minor and major chords, the same quality of the chords are also arranged in order to create the chromatic motion. For example, a B major seventh chord is immediately followed by a Bb major seventh chords in measure 7, and their progression makes the half step melody with A-Ab-A, as seen in example 12. Such half step gesture appears through the whole piece and it expresses Ophelia‟s unstable mental state along with the wide leaps between the right and left hand in the accompaniment.

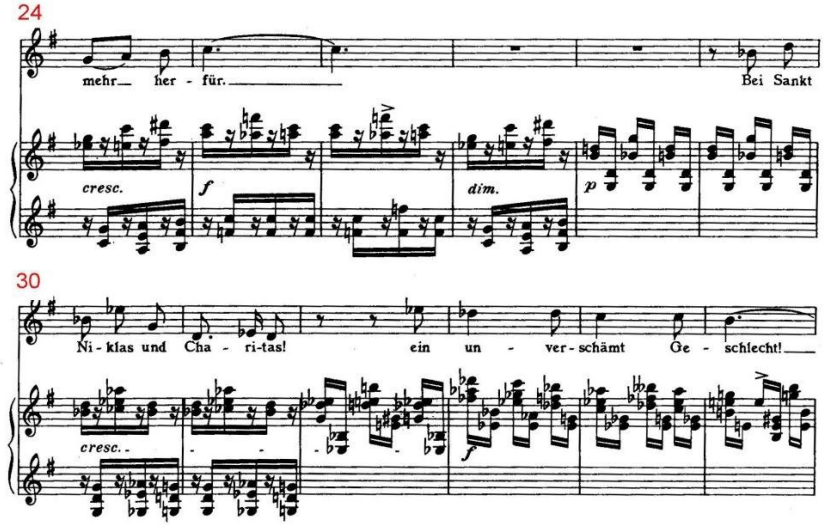
[111] Norman Del Mar, *Richard Strauss, A critical Commentary on his life and works* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986), 3: 356.

Example 12. *Guten Morgen,'s ist Sankt Valentinstag* by Strauss, mm.1-11.



After the first strophe, the music seems to go back to the beginning with the alternation between G major and G minor chords at measure 28 and 29. However, it is disturbed immediately by an Ab minor chord in third inversion in measure 30 and 31, shown in example 13. Disturbed musical flow is another factor that represents Ophelia"s inconsistent characteristic when she sings.

Example 13. *Guten Morgen,'s ist Sankt Valentinstag* by Strauss, mm. 24-35.

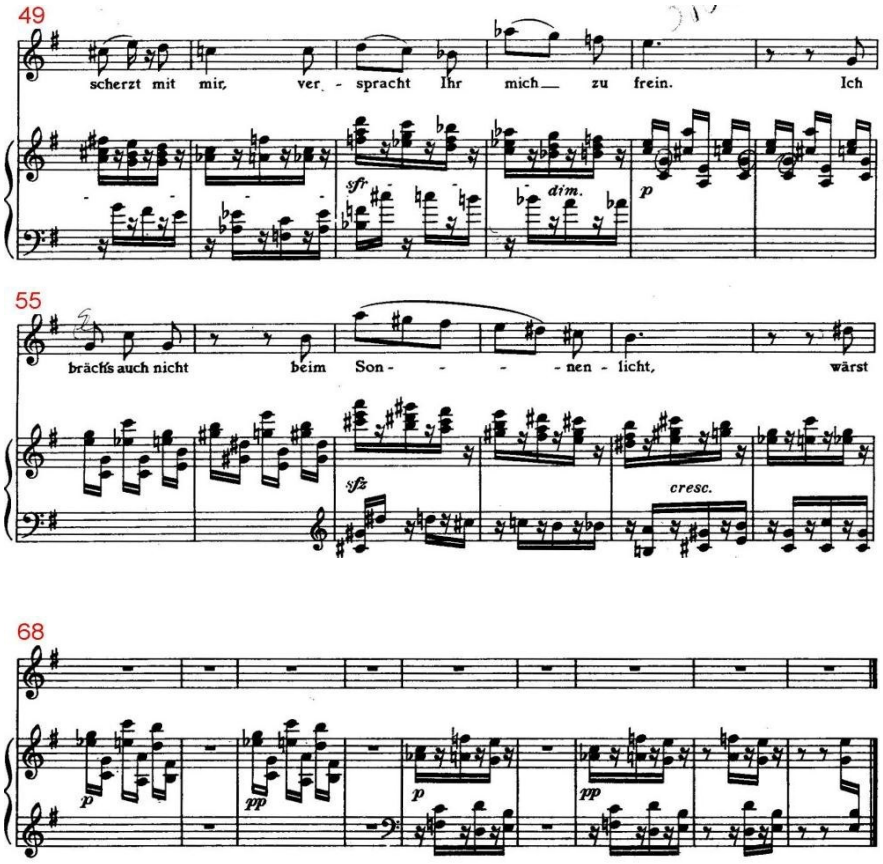


The dynamic contrast of the song is distinctive. Even though, there are *cresc.* and *dim.* markings, Strauss does not indicate any middle dynamic marks such as *mp* or *mf*. The changes between *p* and *f* continue throughout the song. With the fluctuation of the accompaniment and big leaping motion of the voice melody, such dynamic contrast adds the unstable atmosphere to the song and represents the state of Ophelia more dramatically.

Finally, the differentiation between the maiden and the young man in the last part of the poem should be mentioned. The maiden says "Before you got me into bed, you promised to marry me," and he answers "I would have married you, I swear, if you had not gone to bed with me." As shown in example 14, superficially they share the same musical material with the seventh interval and descending melodic line such as measures 51-53 and 56-59. However, Strauss differentiates their statements with subtle musical elements. First of all, the interval of the maiden includes the tritone (Bb-E, in measures 51-53) while the melody of the man begins and ends with B, in measures 56-59. The melody of the maiden stops on E and it sounds unfinished and anxious.

After the second strophe, the piano goes back to the beginning with the G major chord. All chords in the postlude are in root position and they provide more stable tonality than the previous parts. However, Strauss employs another musical device for creating instability. That is the abrupt stop of the music by a rest of whole measures, as in measures 69, 71, and 73, as seen in example 14. In addition, the last chord of the song is put on the third beat rather than the first beat as if the song has not ended.

Example 14. *Guten Morgen,'s ist Sankt Valentinstag* by Strauss, mm.49-70, mm.68-76.

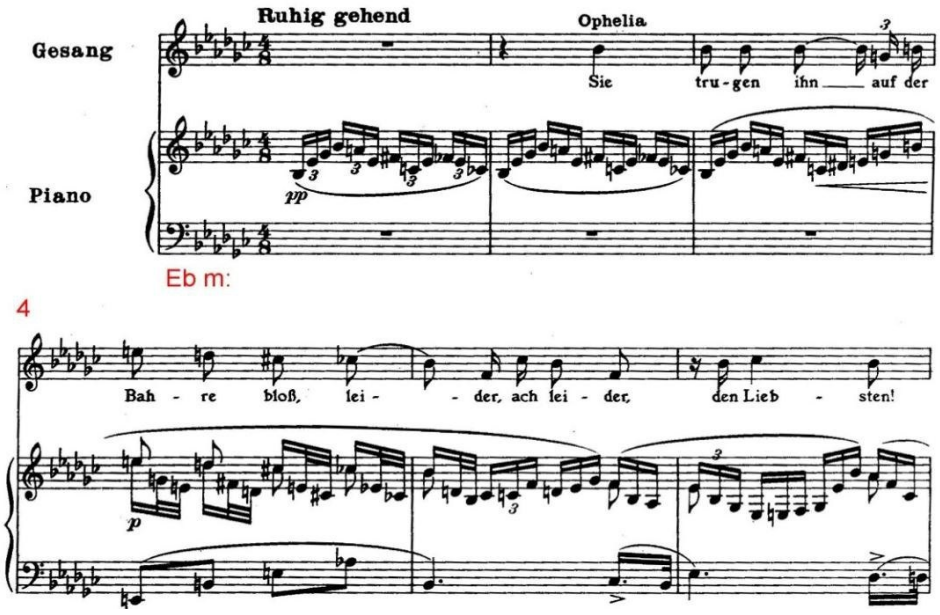


As mentioned before, Ophelia"s last three songs are combined in the third song, "*Sie trugen ihn auf der Bahre bloss* (They bore him barefaced on the bier)." The fragment of Robin Hood ballad is placed between two dirges. Although Ophelia"s independent texts are in the same song, the sectional qualities for each text are obviously marked by the composer.

The first dirge has fifteen bars. The song, in the key of Eb minor and time signature of 4/8, creates a somber and hopeless mood for the dirge. The initial accompaniment figuration moves chromatically in sixteenth note triplets as seen in example 15. The vocal part repeats Bb for two measures and it contrasts with the piano"s

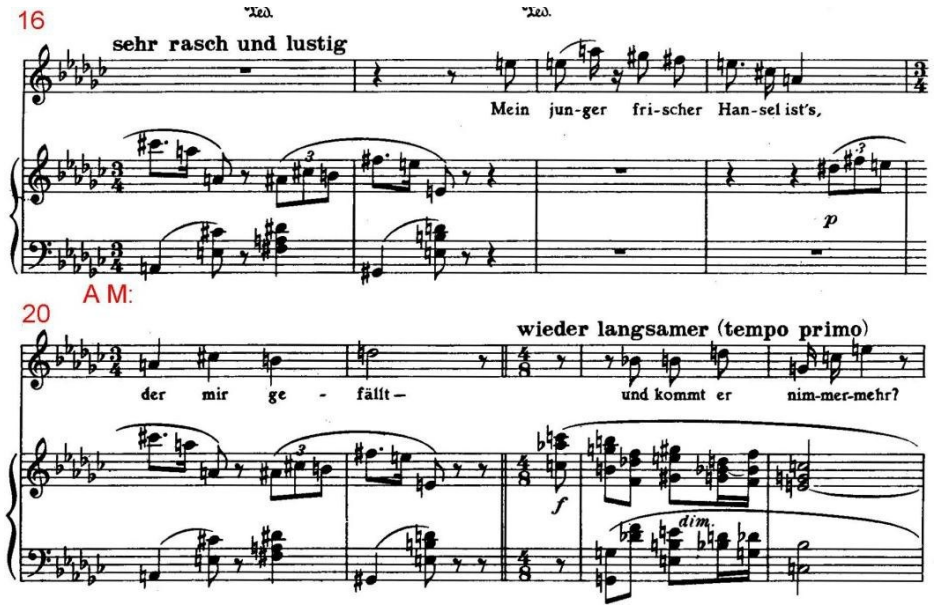
persistent chromatic motion (mm.2-3 in the example 15). In measure 5, a descending gesture to the fourth below after a stepwise motion on the word, “leider,” reflects Ophelia‟s deep sorrow. It is repeated after the interjection “ach,” as seen in mm. 4-5 in example 15.

Example 15. *Sie trugen ihn auf der Bahre bloss* by Strauss, mm.1-6.



In the next section from measures 16 to 21, “bonny sweet Robin” fragment is set with the instructions “*sehr rasch und lustig* (very quickly and merrily).” Strauss uses a completely different musical language for this section. It is set in 3/4 meter and the music abruptly modulates to A major. The sudden rhythmic change occurs as well. More interestingly, this brief part includes a passage for the voice solo (mm.17-19 in the example 16). While the text “Mein junger frischer Hansel ist‟s (For bonny sweet Robin)” is sung, there is no accompaniment. Through it, the freedom of the voice is emphasized and it also indicates Ophelia‟s state which is not concerned with any other things.

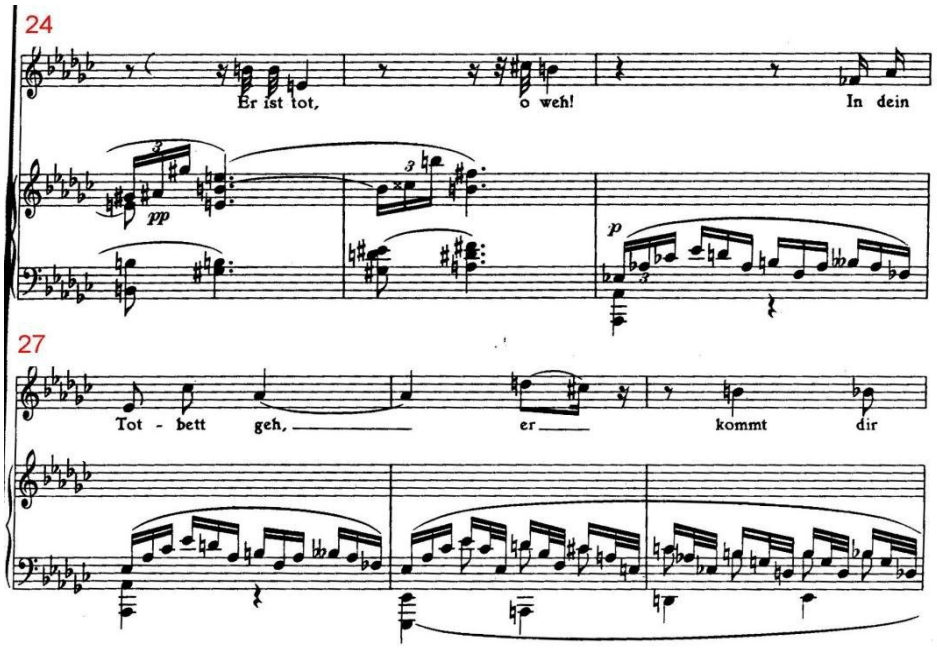
Example 16. *Sie trugen ihn auf der Bahre bloss* by Strauss, mm.16-23.



After the fragment of Robin Hood ballad, the first tempo suddenly comes back. Then the second dirge, "Und kommt er nimmermehr?"(And will he not come again) is started. The thick chordal progression in measure 22 and 23 opens the section, as shown in example 16. Although the key and tempo return to those of the beginning section, it is still recitative-like music until measure 25. At this point, Ophelia abandons the Robin Hood ballad and recovers her sense.

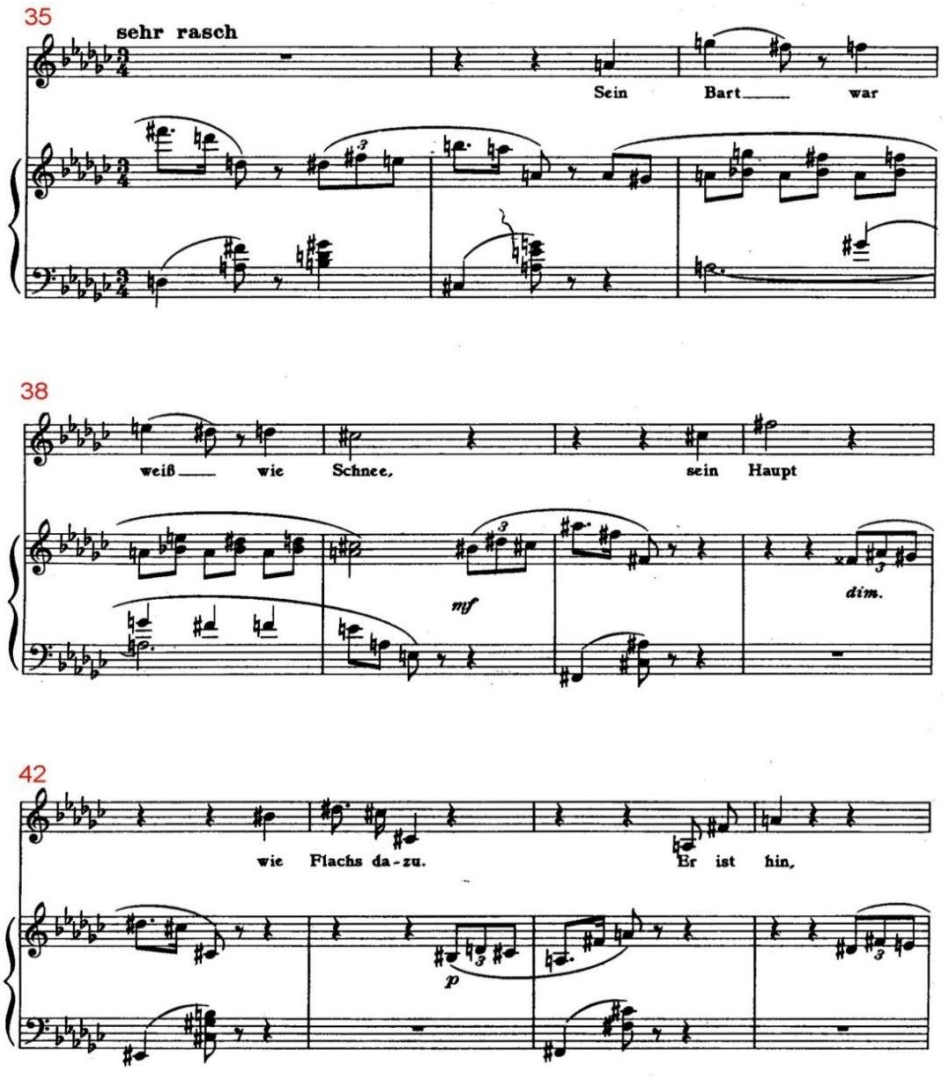
From measure 26 to measure 34, the music completely returns to the first section which features sixteenth note triplets in a chromatic figure (mm.26-29 in example 17).

Example 17. *Sie trugen ihn auf der Bahre bloss* by Strauss, mm.24-29.



Then, in measure 35, the waltz music of the second section reappears and the solo voice comes again. Especially from 39 through 49 the piano and voice seem to have a dialogue, echoing each other (mm.39-45 in example 18).

Example 18. *Sie trugen ihn auf der Bahre bloss* by Strauss, mm.35-45.



Finally, the last section begins with a thick chordal progression which appears in the beginning of the third section. This returning "langsam" slow section presents melody and accompaniment moving in homophonic texture, as seen in example 19. The musical elements that form the previous parts reappear in the second dirge or the last section of the song. The structure of the entire song is as following:

m.1 The first dirge m.15 Robin Hood Ballad fragment m.21

Chromatic 16th triplet figures ¾ Waltz figure with Recit. writing

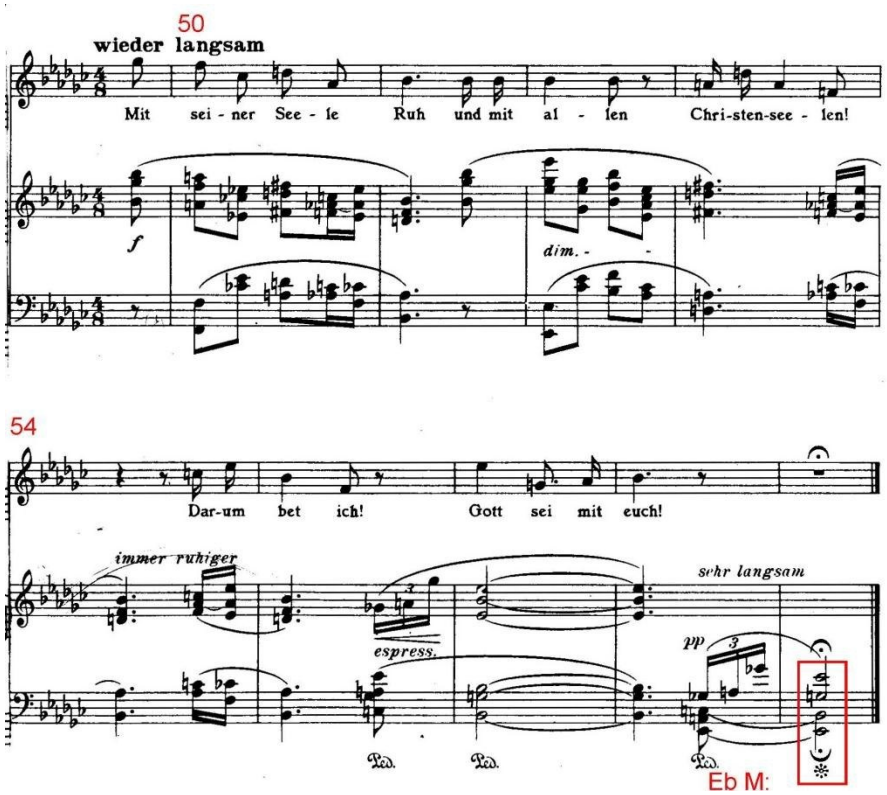
m.21 m.22 m.35 m.50 end

Chordal progression Chromatic 16th note triplet Waltz figure Chordal

The second dirge

The last chord of the song is the tonic of Eb major (m.58 in the example 19). In order to end the song and the song cycle, Strauss chose this chord which is traditionally used for representing the peace or heaven, contrasting to the Eb minor of the beginning which is often used as the representation of death.

Example 19. *Sie trugen ihn auf der Bahre bloss* by Strauss, mm.50-58.



From the first song through the third song, Strauss achieves a close connection through harmonic language. The blurred tonality at the beginning has its distinctive color, persisting to the last song. The alternation between major and minor chords finally concludes in major. Even though Ophelia‟s insanity is mainly highlighted in the setting, Strauss may have tried to send a positive message through the final chord of the whole cycle.

2. French settings

The French audiences were stunned by the performance of *Hamlet* in 1827 in Paris. Dumas recalled that "it was the first time I saw in the theatre real passions, giving life to men and women of flesh and blood." Especially in the Shakespearean theater Ophelia‟s Romantic revival began in France rather than England.[112] Harriet Smithson, the actress, playing the role of Ophelia, contributed to it. Her intensely visual performance influenced the picturesque madness of Ophelia in the 19th century in France.[113] Ophelia also was a popular subject for painters such as Eugène Delacroix (1798-1863).[114]

With this background, French composers tended to describe Ophelia‟s death through their songs rather than set the music to the text of Ophelia‟s five songs in the play. Ernest Legouvé‟s text[115] was chosen for Hector Berlioz and Camille Saint-Saëns‟ *La mort d'Ophélie* (The death of Ophelia). It closely follows Shakespeare‟s original text but does not exactly translate it like the German translators. It is based on Queen

[112] Showalter, 83.
[113] Ibid., 227.
[114] Delacroix (1798-1863), a French Romatic painter. He left various paintings of Ophelia.
[115] Ernest Legouvé (1807-1903), a French dramatist, poet, and critic. He was a close friend of Berlioz and in the 1830s, was Berlioz‟s great patron and confidant.

Gertrude‟s account in act IV of the death of Ophelia in the rippling brook, a garland of “dead men‟s fingers” in her hands, her lovely garment first lifting her up, then dragging her under. This is the text and English translation of Legouvé.

Après d'un torrent, Ophélie
Cueillait tout en suivant le bord,
Dans sa douce et tendre folie,
Des pervenches, des boutons d'or,
Des iris aux couleurs d'opale,
Et de ces fleurs d'un rose pâle,
Qu'on appelle des doigts de mort.

Puis élevant sur ses mains blanches
Les riants trésors du matin,
Elle les suspendait aux branches,
Aux branches d'un saule voisin;
Mais, trop faible, le rameau plie,
Se brise, et la pauvre Ophélie
Tombe, sa guirlande à la main.

Quelques instants, sa robe enflée
La tint encor sur le courant,
Et comme une voile gonflée,
Elle flottait toujours, chantant,
Chantant quelque vieille ballade,
Chantant ainsi qu'une naïade
Née au milieu de ce torrent.

Mais cette étrange mélodie
Passa rapide comme un son;
Par les flots la robe alourdie
Bientôt dans l'abîme profond;
Entraïna la pauvre insensée,
Laissant à peine commence
Sa mélodieuse chanson.

Beside a brook, Ophelia
gathered, along the bank
in her soft and tender madness,
the periwinkles, the buttercup
some opal colored irises,
and some of those pale pink flowers
that one calls dead men's fingers

Then, lifting in her white hands
the mornings happy treasures,
She hung them on the branches
to the branches of the nearby willow
But, too fragile, the branch bent
it broke, and the poor Ophelia
fell, with the garland in her hand

Some moments, her dress spread wide
and bore her on the current
and like a swelling sail,
She floated still singing
singing some old ballade
singing like naiade
born in the middle of the stream

But this strange melody
faded quickly like a passing sound;
the dress weighed down by the waters
soon into the profound abyss;
dragged-down the poor distracted girl
leaving hardly begun
her melodious song.[116]

[116] http://www.ipasource.com/view/song/Hector_Berlioz/La_mort_d%27Oph%C3%A9lie

1) *La mort d'Ophélie* by Hector Berlioz (1803-1869)

To Berlioz, the greatest of all the French Romantics, Shakespeare was a leading source of inspiration.[117] He made frequent reference to Shakespeare throughout his writings and was inspired to compose by Shakespeare right up to the end of his career. Berlioz resembles Shakespeare in his universality of dramatic sympathy, having a lyrical gift which distinguishes Shakespeare from many other dramatists.[118]

Berlioz"s *La mort d'Ophélie* was also inspired by his admiration for Shakespeare. After attending the first performance of Hamlet in Paris, the twenty-three-year-old Berlioz fell in love with and eventually married Harriet Smithson in 1833.[119] However, they were not happy. By the time *La mort d'Ophélie* was published, they were estranged. Berlioz associated this song with Harriet and her decline.[120]

La mort d'Ophélie was composed in 1842 and published in 1848 in the collection *Album de chant de la gazette musicale*. Berlioz arranged this solo song for a two-part women"s chorus with orchestration in 1848 as well. *Album de chant de la gagette musicale* was incorporated in *Trista*[121] in 1852.

Based on the form of the original poem by Legouvé, Berlioz"s *La mort d'Ophélie* consists of four balanced strophes. They are linked by Ophelia"s lament, which functions as the refrain featuring a sequence of appoggiatura figurations. This refrain is played not

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[117] Charles Cudworth, "Song and Part-Song Settings of Shakespeare"s Lyrics,1660-1970," in *Shakespeare's Use of Music,* ed. John H. Long (Gainesville: University of Florida, 1955), 77.

[118] Walter James Turner, *Berlioz; the man and his work* (New York: Vienna House, 1974), 93-94.

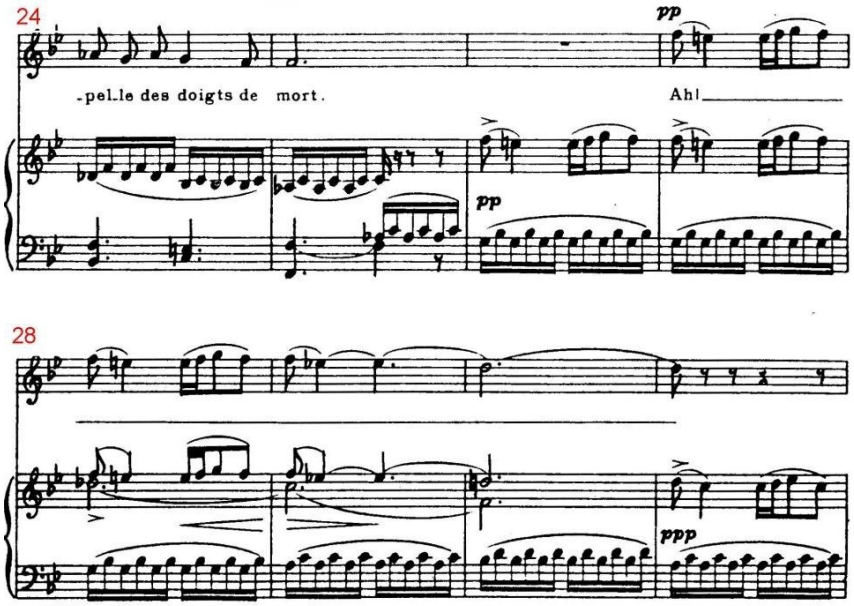
[119] Showalter, 84.

[120] Kern Holoman, *Berlioz* (Cambridge: Havard University Press, 1989), 364.

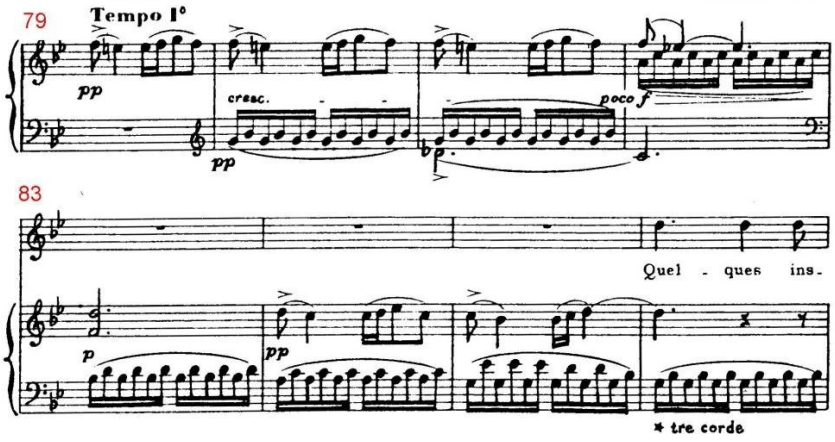
[121] *Trista* Op.18, a musical work consisting of three short pieces. The individual works were composed at different times and published together in 1852. Berlioz associated them in his mind with Shakespeare"s *Hamlet*. They were never performed during the composer"s lifetime.

only by the voice, but by the piano between each strophe (mm.27-31 in the example 20, mm.79-85 in the example 21).

Example 20. *La mort d'Ophélie* by Berlioz, mm.24-31.

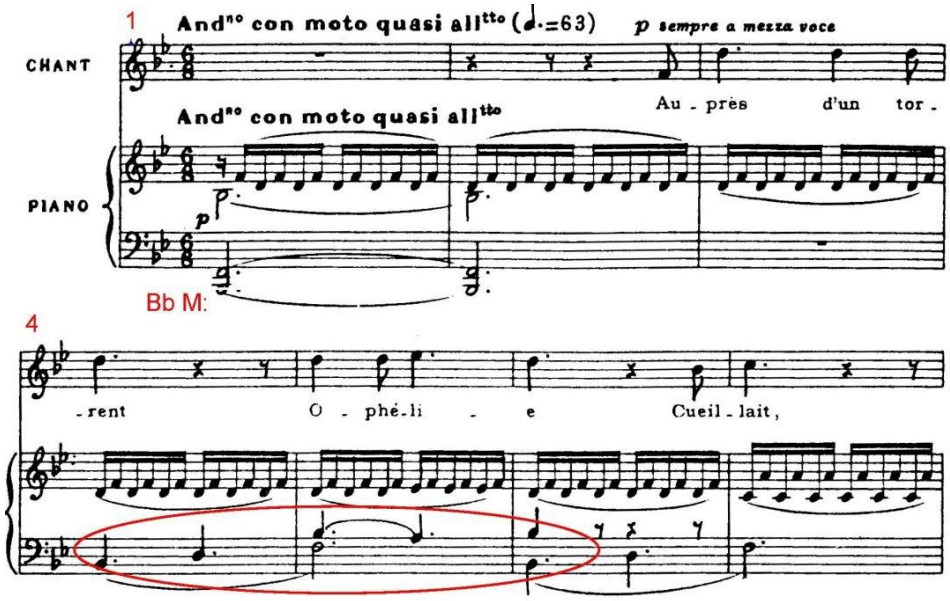


Example 21. *La mort d'Ophélie* by Berlioz, mm.79-86.

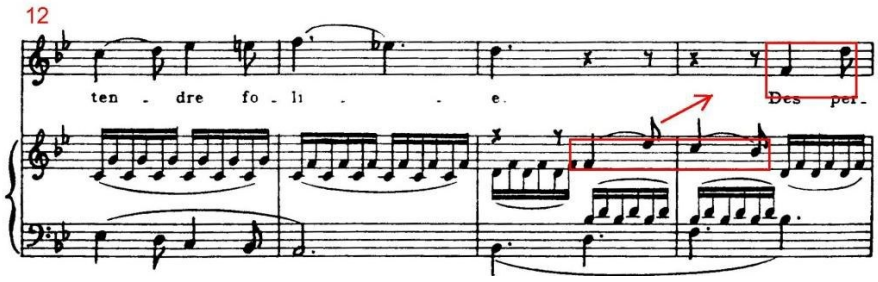


From the beginning, the vocal melody lyrically flows with barcarole rhythms. The watery accompaniment consists of simple undulations and arpeggiations in continuous sixteenth-note motion. The piano often plays a counter melody (mm.4-6 in the example 22) and generally leads the voice, announcing the motive (mm. 14-15 in the example 23).

Example 22. *La mort d'Ophélie* by Berlioz, mm.1-7.

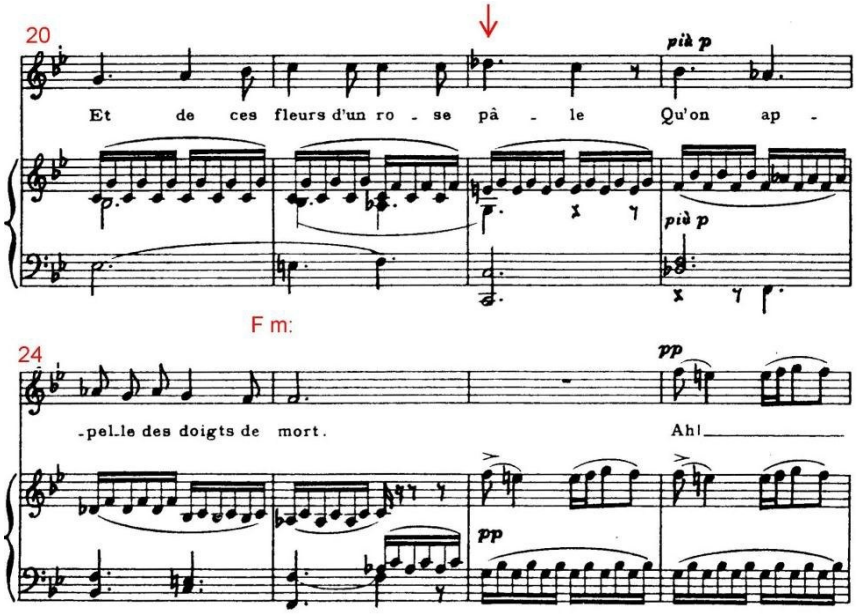


Example 23. *La mort d'Ophélie* by Berlioz, mm.12-15.



Before the first strophe ends, a dramatic modulation to the dominant minor F occurs. The half step gesture coming with this modulation, on the word “pâle (pale),” creates an ominous atmosphere (m.22 in the example 24), and the text, “des doigts de mort (the fingers of death),” follows it immediately (mm. 24-25 in the example 24). Then, the sobbing lament appears in the piano and the voice imitates it (mm. 26-27 in the example 24).

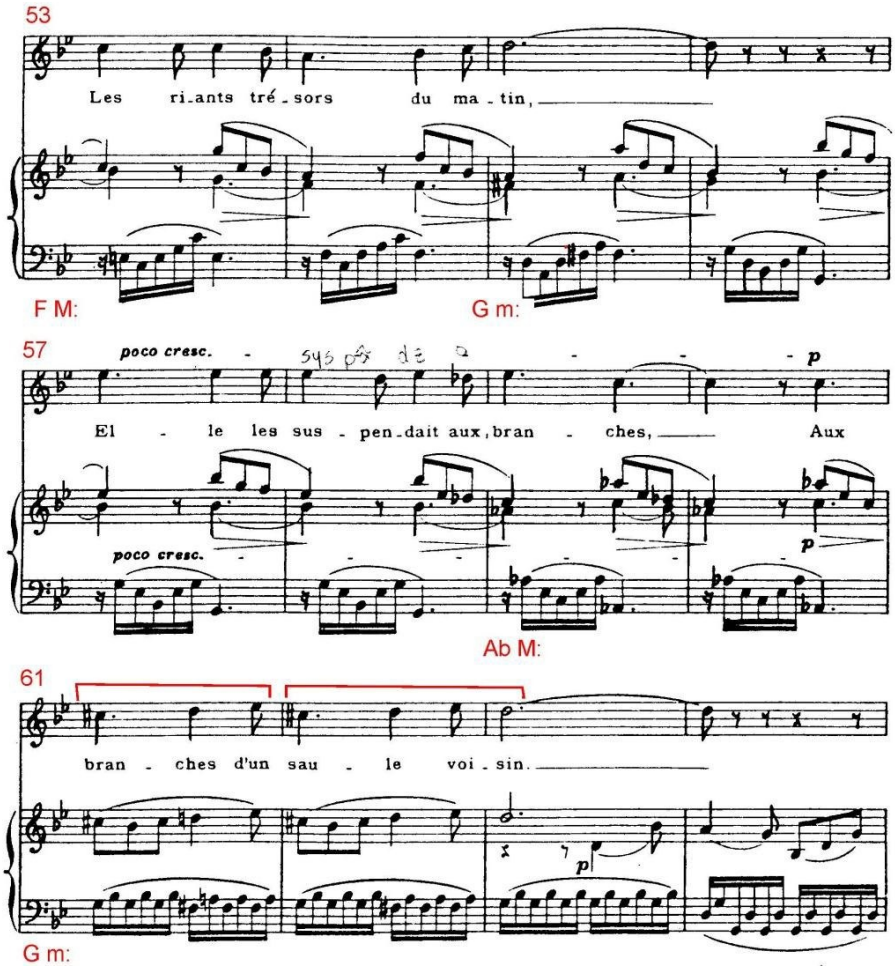
Example 24. *La mort d’Ophélie* by Berlioz, mm.20-27.



In the second strophe, the tension of the piece is intensified with more frequent modulation. The music modulates to F major at measure 53 and Ab major at measure 59. However, G minor which is the relative minor of Bb major, dominates this section (mm. 55 - 58 and mm. 61-64 in example 25). The transitional figuration from Ab major to G minor in measure 61-62 creates an unstable atmosphere with the repeated chromatic

melody line of voice (C#-D-Eb). It represents risky act of Ophelia, hanging her flowers on the branch (mm. 53-63 in example 25).

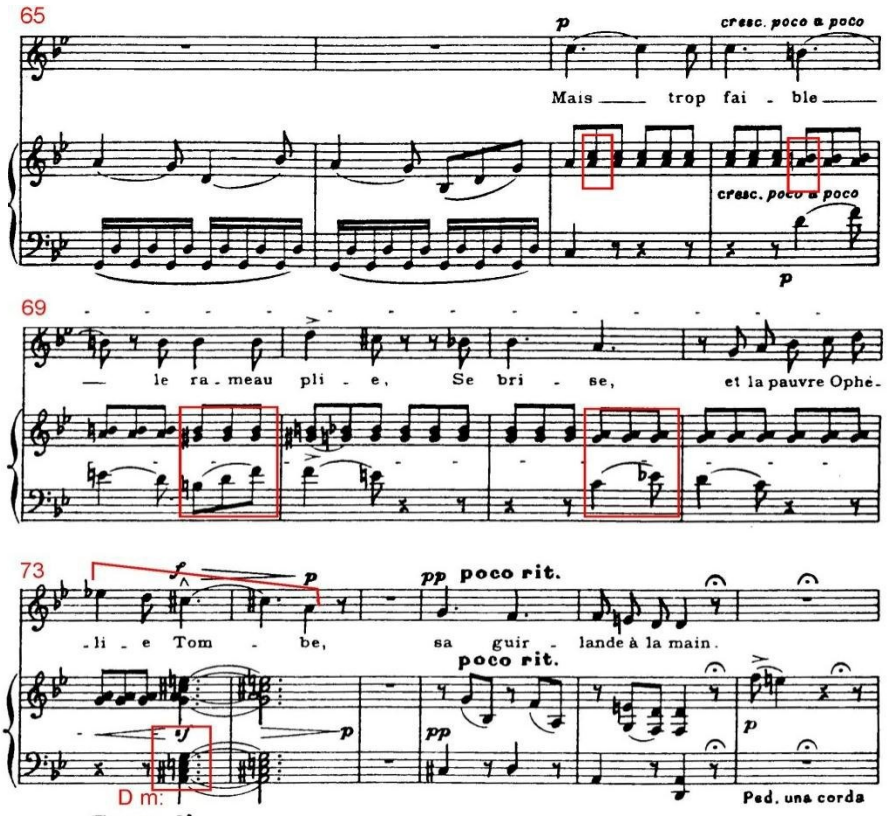
Example 25. *La mort d'Ophélie* by Berlioz, mm. 53-64.



In the next section, measure 67 to 77 of the second strophe, Berlioz"s dramatization of Ophelia"s drowning is effectively demonstrated throughout these ten measures. First of all, Berlioz quickly changes the accompaniment figure from the calm watery motion of arppegiated sixteenth note to the eighth note chordal figuration of minor third and major second, while the voice becomes urgent through increased

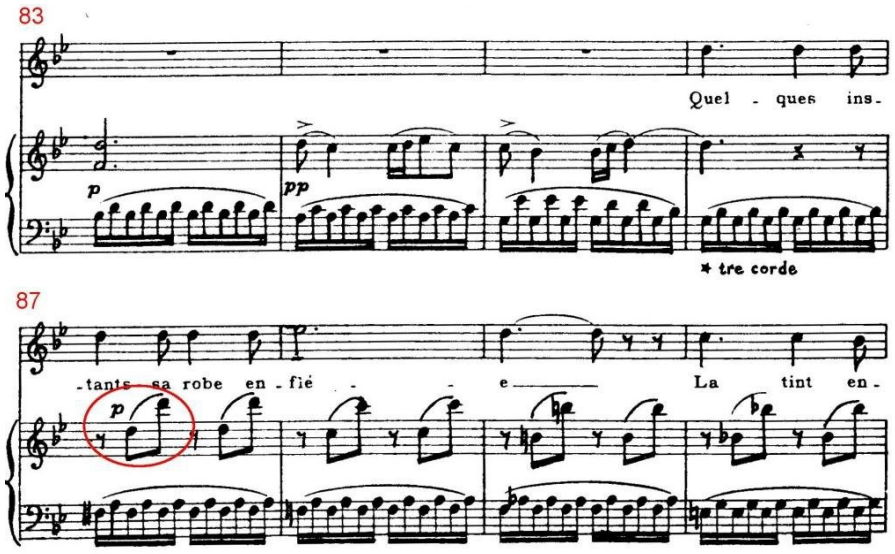
rhythmic intensity in a more fragmented phrase, and more rapid melodic motion, as shown in example 26. In measure 73-74, the melodic line which contains the word, “Tombe (fell),” falls a tritone, pausing on an accented C# in order to illustrate Ophelia‟s fall. Harmonically, the frequent appearance of diminished seventh chords through this section, such as G#-B-D-F in measure 69-70 and A-C-Eb-G in measure 71-72, heightens the dramatic tension. Its tension is somewhat relieved in measure 73 with the dominant seventh chord of the new key D minor. After the rest of one full measure, the voice continues to descend slowly in stepwise motion for two measures (mm.76-77 in the example 26), emphasizing Ophelia‟s helpless plight with the flowers still in her hand. D minor is finally set up and the tension is also relieved in measure 77 with the tonic.

Example 26. *La mort d’Ophélie* by Berlioz, mm.65-78.



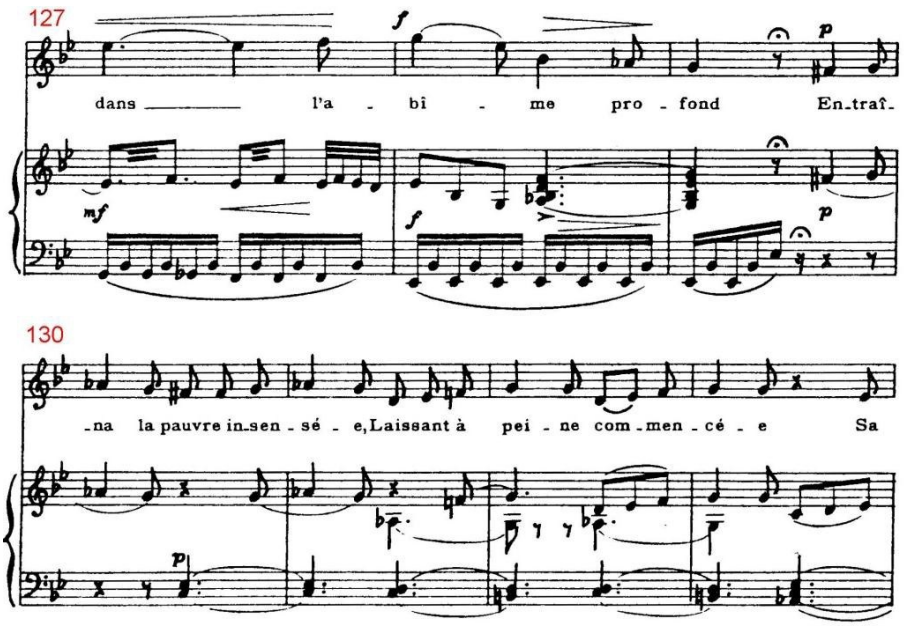
After Ophelia falls, the third strophe starts with a new musical idea in the piano. The characteristic of vocal melody is similar to the previous parts and the tremolo pattern of the left hand is also identical. The change of the right hand illustrates the text only, but effectively (mm.87-90 in the example 27). The rising octave gesture in measure 87 depicts Ophelia‟s floating on the water after falling. It continues for eight measures after the beginning of the strophe.

Example 27. *La mort d'Ophélie* by Berlioz, mm.83-90.



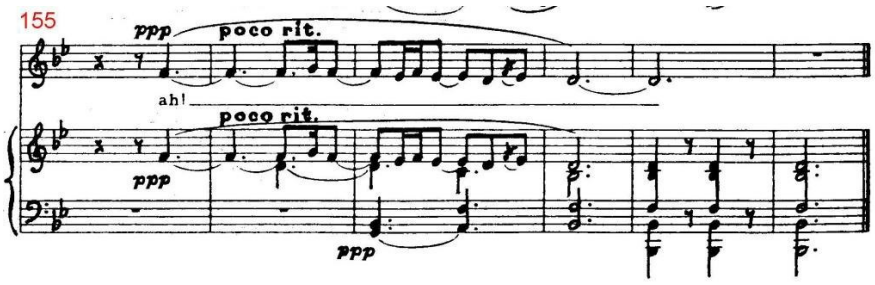
In the fourth strophe, the song moves forward to another climax. After floating for a while, Ophelia‟s wet dress finally drags her into the profound abyss and she disappears leaving a sorrowful melody. From measure 116, the strophe begins *pianissimo* and the tension mounts gradually with a crescendo. At measure 128, there is a *forte* on the word, "abime (abyss)." This is the second appearance of a *forte* marking in the song: the first one is on the word, "tombe (fall)." Then, from measure 130 the music becomes quiet and has a thin texture, and stops the sixteenth note figure (mm.130-133 in the example 28).

Example 28. *La mort d'Ophélie* by Berlioz, mm.127-133.



It stays pianissimo while the lament refrain is sung and the song is finished *pianississimo* at the last phrase in measure 155, shown in example 29. Ophelia"s melody finally disappears, too.

Example 29. *La mort d'Ophélie* by Berlioz, mm.155-160.



As in his symphonic poems, Berlioz describes a scene with his music. His text painting in musical devices is remarkable and real dramatic impact is also one of the distinctive characteristics of Berlioz"s setting. In addition, his lyrical vocal melody alone is enough to glorify the death of Ophelia.

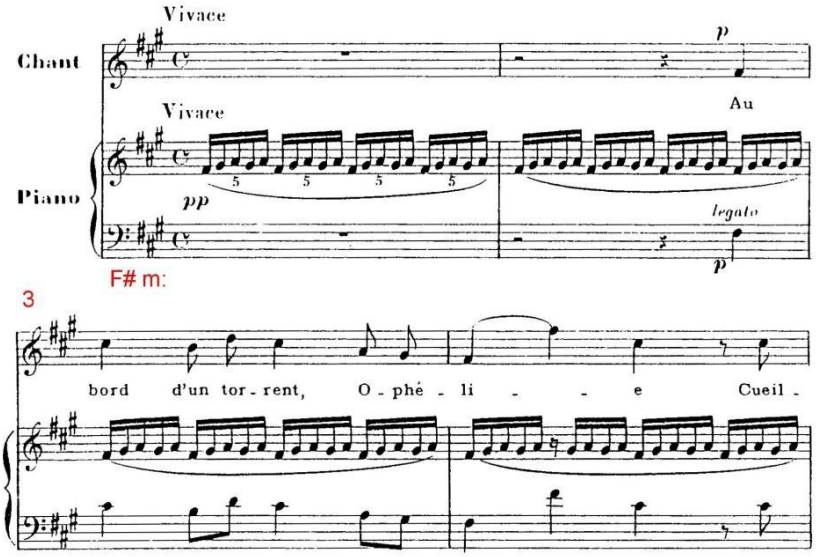
2) *La mort d'Ophélie* by Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)

Camille Saint-Saëns also set the Legouvé poem. He was a virtuoso pianist, organist, composer, and author. Saint-Saëns was influenced by Mendelssohn and Schumann, as illustrated by his conservative melodies, consisting of phrases of three or four bars.[122] However, his harmonies are distinctive, typically with modulations in thirds.[123]

He composed *La mort d'Ophélie* in 1857, and published it in 1858 and these qualities are evident in this song. This setting is written in F# minor and marked vivace. It starts with the repetition of sixteenth note figures in quintuplets in the right hand. Saint-Saëns changed the first word "aupre (near)" to "aubord (edge)." The change of the word and repeated sixteenth quintuplets, along with the vivace tempo and the minor tonality, foreshadow Ophelia"s tragic ending and make the song more urgent. These features are shown in the example 30.

[122] Sabina Teller Ratner, "Saint-Saëns, Camille," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell, vol. 22 (New York: Grove, 2001), 126.
[123] Ibid.

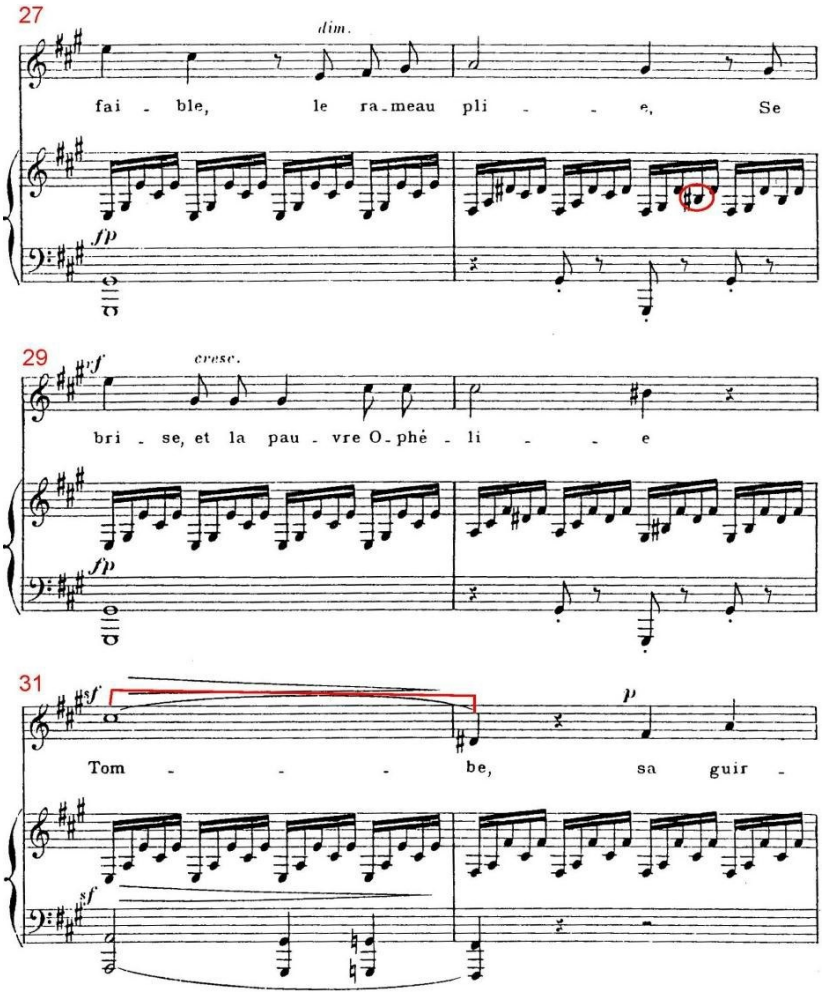
Example 30. *La mort d'Ophélie* by Saint-Saëns, mm.1-4.



Such urgent and ominous atmosphere dominates the whole song, and this song is very different from the Berlioz‟s setting, which is completely lyrical. Saint-Saëns focuses on the more dramatic and tragic aspects of the scene, which contrasts with Ophelia‟s glorified death in the Berlioz‟s setting.

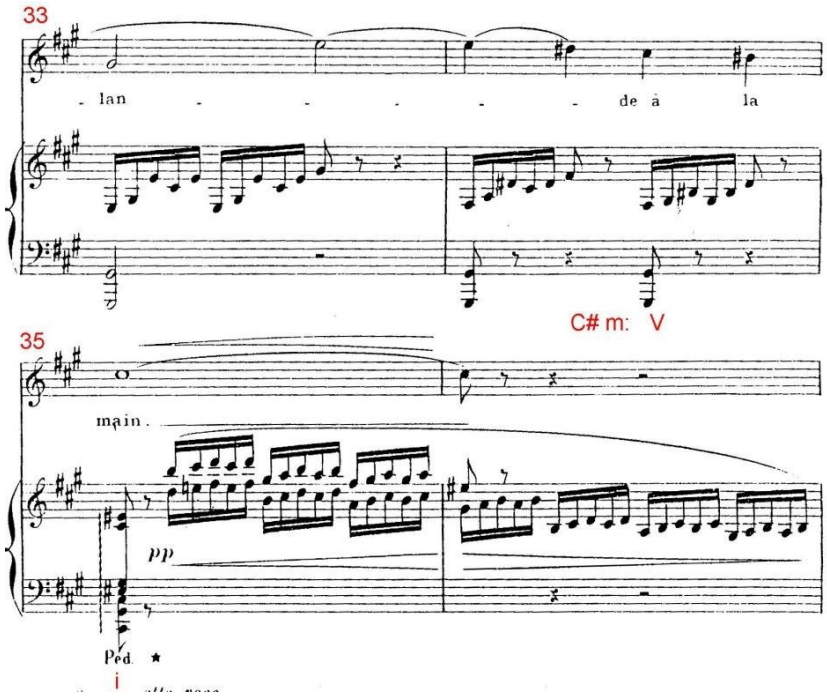
From measure 25 to 34, Saint-Saëns spends almost ten measures preparing the modulation to C# minor. Such long transitional music makes the atmosphere unstable, with unresolved tension, and it continues even after fall of Ophelia in measure 31. Through this section, Saint-Saëns adds a sharp to B in order to prepare the move to C# minor. However, the modulation is delayed for ten measures. Furthermore, the interval of seventh between C# and D# in measure 31-32 on the word, "tombe (fell)," gives the section a further nervous impression. During this passage, the bass also plays a chromatically descending phrase in octave figuration, as seen in example 31.

Example 31. *La mort d'Ophélie* by Saint-Saëns, mm.27-32.



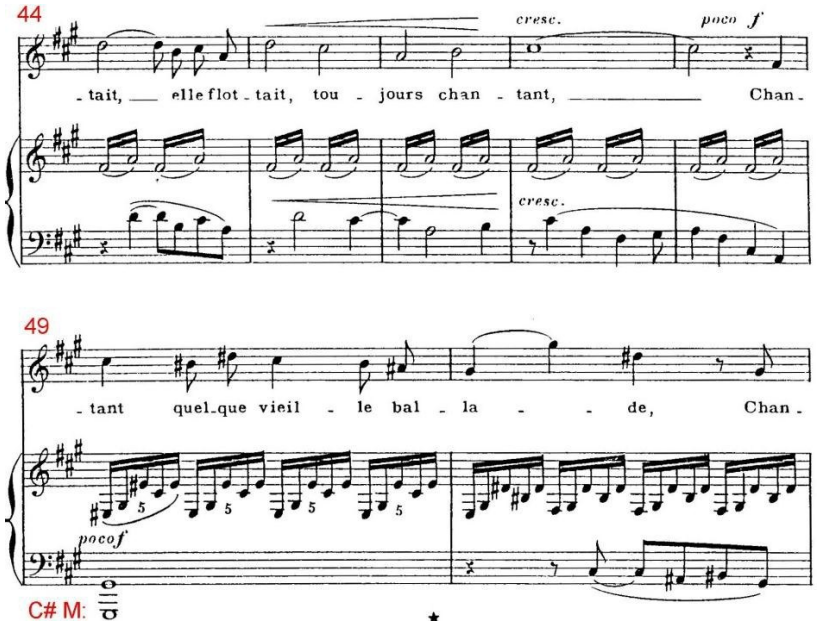
The tension is at last relieved in measure 34 and 35 with a dominant to tonic progression in C# minor, where the water, which was irregularly ruffled for a moment by falling of Ophelia, returns to calm, as seen in example 32.

Example 32. *La mort d'Ophélie* by Saint-Saëns, mm.33-36.



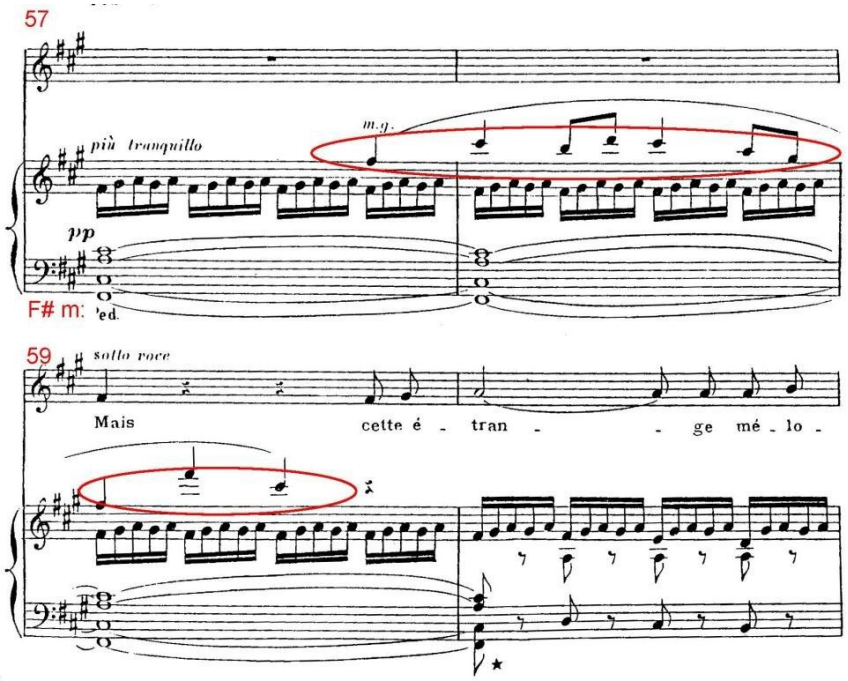
In order to end the third strophe, a sudden modulation to C# major appears dramatically (measure 49-50 in the example 33).

Example 33. *La mort d'Ophélie* by Saint-Saëns, mm.44-50.



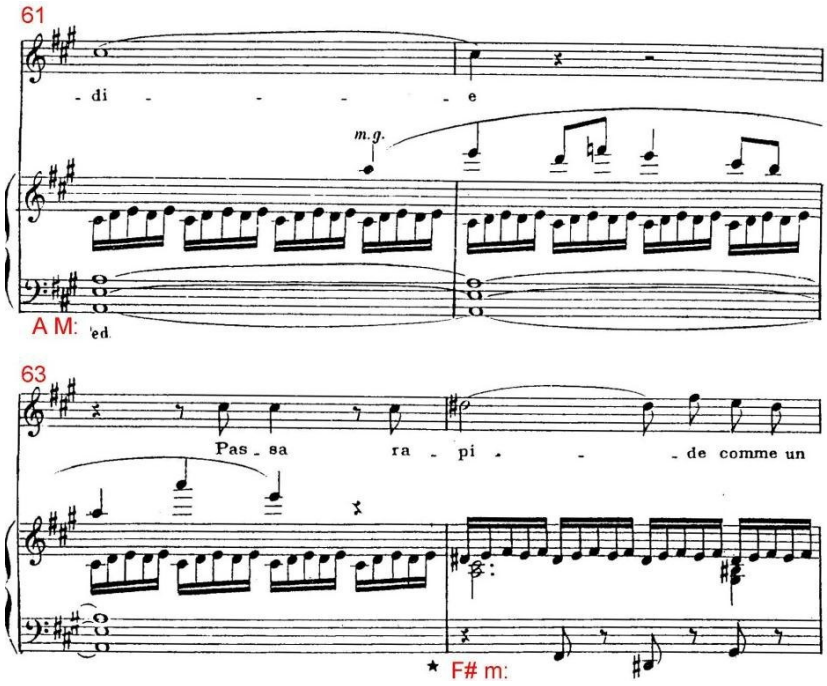
During the transition to the last strophe, F# minor, the home key of the piece, comes back with the initial melodic theme, as seen in example 34.

Example 34. *La mort d'Ophélie* by Saint-Saëns, mm.57-60.



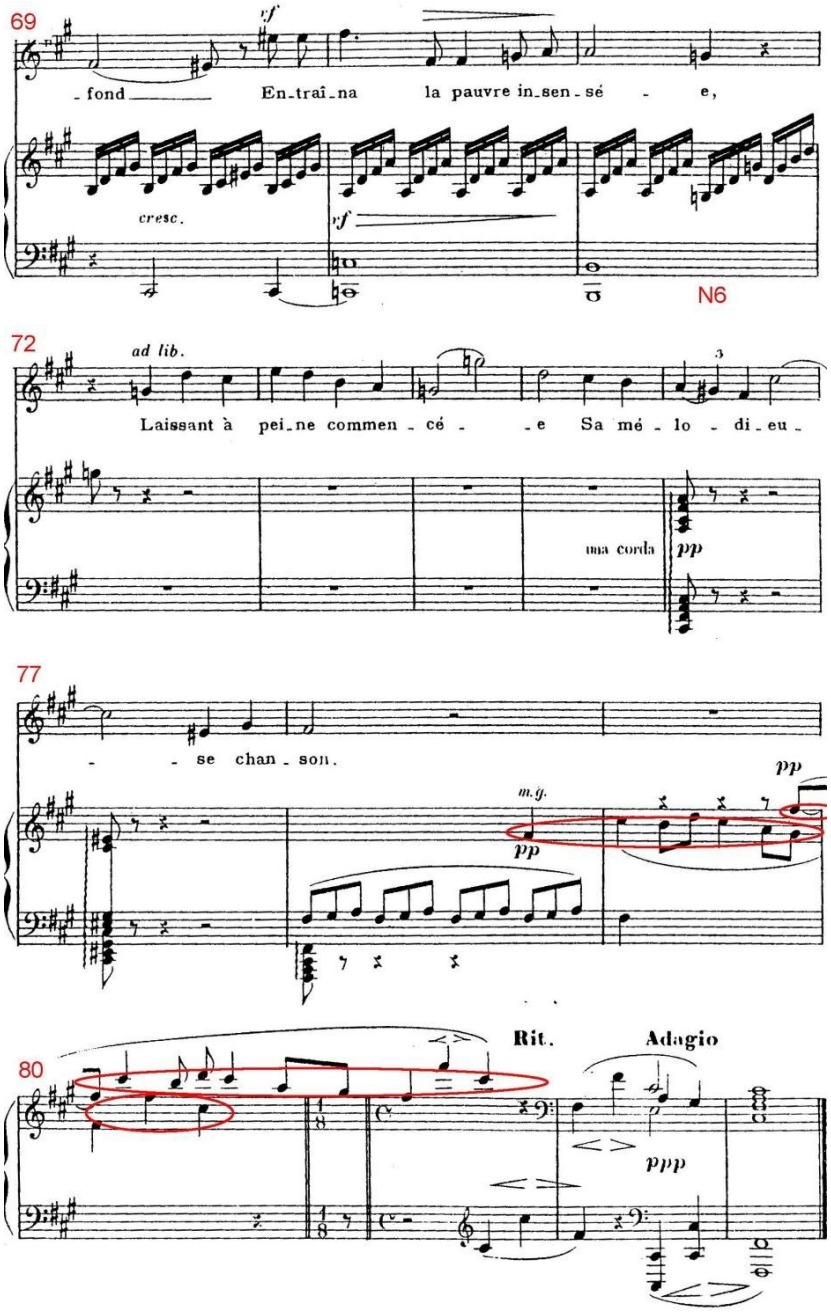
In the last strophe, the music modulates by a third, to A major, and comes back to F# minor again, continuing to the end of the song, as seen in example 35.

Example 35. *La mort d'Ophélie* by Saint-Saëns, mm.61-64.



Then, the last three lines of the poem are emphasized by a particular chord. In order to finalize the song, the musical device chosen by Saint-Saëns is a Neapolitan sixth chord. In measure 70, the dominant seventh chord of Neapolitan sixth (D-F#-A-C) creates completely different atmosphere from the previous part. Then, the Neapolitan sixth chord (G-B-D) comes out in the next measure on the third beat (m.71 in example 34). It changes the mood at once because it is a chord which has a major quality in minor key. The following section of solo vocal writing is also mainly composed of the notes (G-B-D), derived from previous Neapolitan chord (mm.72-75 in the example 36).

Example 36. *La mort d'Ophélie* by Saint-Saëns, mm.69-84.



After the voice ends, the piano plays a thinner texture, which consists of triplet rhythm, a change from the sixteenth figuration. The dynamic also changes to *pianissimo*. In measure 78-82, the initial melodic theme is played alone in strictly canonic imitation. The fragment of the theme finishes the song Adagio and *pianississimo*. This initial theme

represents the melody of Ophelia comparable to the refrain of Berlioz‟s setting. Finally, it disappears.

3) *Chanson d'Ophélie* by Ernst Chausson (1855-1899)

Although Chausson composed in other genres, he seemed at ease when working with smaller forms. He was intensely subjective, and the smaller form of song seemed to suit his aesthetics most comfortably. His songs are elegant, subtle, refined, and personal.[124] Chausson was a gentleman of means. He collected the paintings of Renoir and Degas and maintained a salon of his own which included the great musicians, poets, and performers of the day.[125]

Maurice Bouchor (1855-1929) was one of the members of Chausson‟s salon and his close friend. Bouchor‟s poems were Chausson‟s favorites. Their simplicity seemed to complement Chausson‟s aesthetic preference.[126] Bouchor was a great Shakespeare admirer and the text of Chausson‟s setting of Ophelia‟s song is from Bouchor‟s translation of Ophelia‟s first song, "*How should I your true love know.*"

It was written in 1896, and included in the work, *Chansons de Shakespeare*, Op.28. All of the texts are from Shakespeare‟s plays: *Chanson de Clown* from *Twelfth Night, Chanson d'amour* from *Measure for Measure, Chanson d'Ophélie* from *Hamlet,* and *Chant funèbre* from *Much Ado about Nothing*. The last song is composed for four-

[124] Kimball, 173.
[125] Graham Johnson and Richard Strokes, *A French Song Companion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 78.
[126] Kimball, 173.

part women‟s chorus and only the first three songs are occasionally bound separately as *Troi Chansons de Shakespeare.*

Bouchor translated all the texts with revisions following his own interpretation. For example, the words “He is dead and gone, lady/ At his head a grass green turf, / At his heels a stone” are among Shakespeare‟s simplest and most effective. Bouchor, therefore, felt he must expand them to “He is dead, having suffered much, Milady;/ He is gone, that is a fact.”[127] Bouchor‟s version is more dramatic than the original text. The remainder of the passage is also even more freely translated. He deleted the first quatrain which is composed of the question by the pilgrim and the answer of the protagonist, and began with the response of the pilgrim to the protagonist, “Il est mort (He is dead).” This is the Bouchor‟s poem and English translation.

Il est mort ayant bien souffert,
Madame; il est parti; c'es une chose faite
Une pierre à ses pieds et pour poser sa tête
Un tertre verte.
Sur le linceul de neige à pleins mains semées
Mille fleurs parfumées,
Avant d'aller soud terre
avec luis sans retour
Dans leur jeunesse épanouie
Ont bu, comme une fraîche pluie,
Les larmes du sincere amour.

He is dead, having suffered much,
Milady; He is gone, that is a fact.
At his feet a stone and at his head
A grass-green turf.
On the snow blanket are plentifully sewn
A thousand scented flowers,
Which, before going with him into the
earth without return,
In their bright youth
Drank, as if fresh rain drops,
The tears of true love.[128]

Chausson‟s setting is a combination of recitative in the vocal line and a very thin, economical supporting accompaniment. The simplicity and directness are subdued and

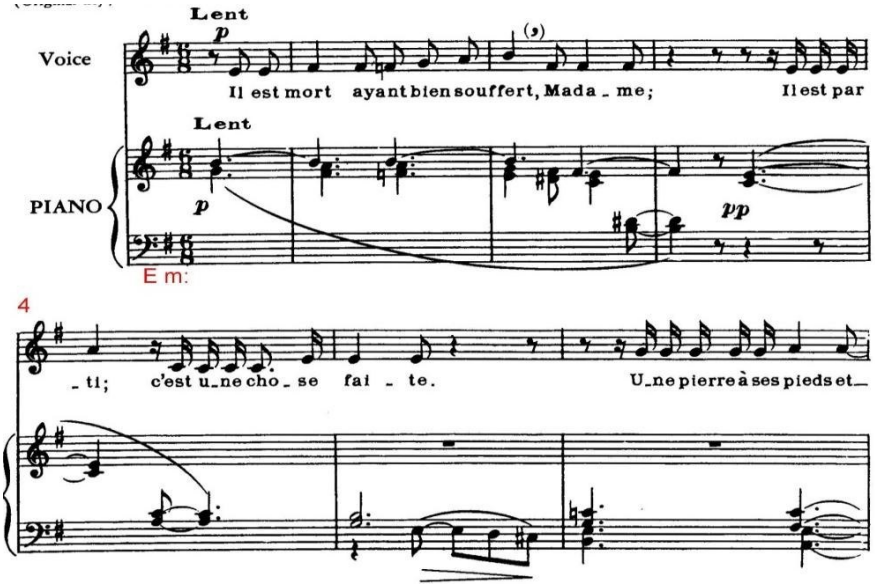
[127] Ralph Scott Grover, *Ernst Chausson: The Man and His Music* (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 1980), 111.

[128] http://www.ipasource.com/view/song/Ernest_Chausson/Chanson_d%27Oph%C3%A9lie

are keeping with the sad truth that Ophelia has lost her sanity. In its touching expressiveness, it is one of Chausson‟s most nearly perfect creations.[129]

The piece is composed in E minor and maintains the initial key, creating a monotonous mood. Moreover, Chausson set the song mainly with the recitative-like writing, as seen in example 37. With recitative writing in a *Lent* tempo the monotonous color of the song is more distinctive. The text should be also considered as another factor in the recitative style setting. Bouchor‟s translation is a prose poem rather than a verse. The text has no regular syllabic accents. Nonetheless, like other European song composers in the late 19th century, Chausson places his emphasis on the poem‟s accents.

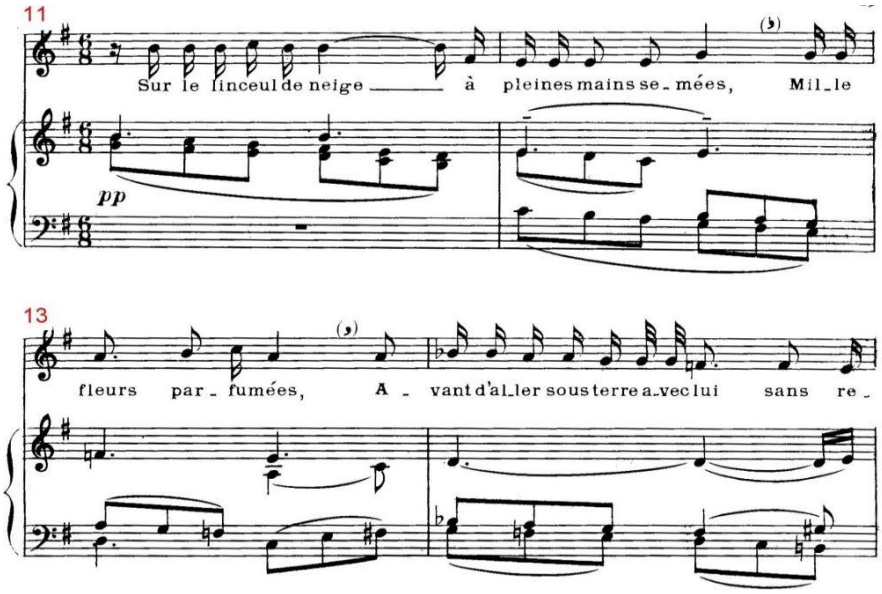
Example 37. *Chanson d'Ophélie* by Chausson, mm.1-6.



[129] Ibid.,111.

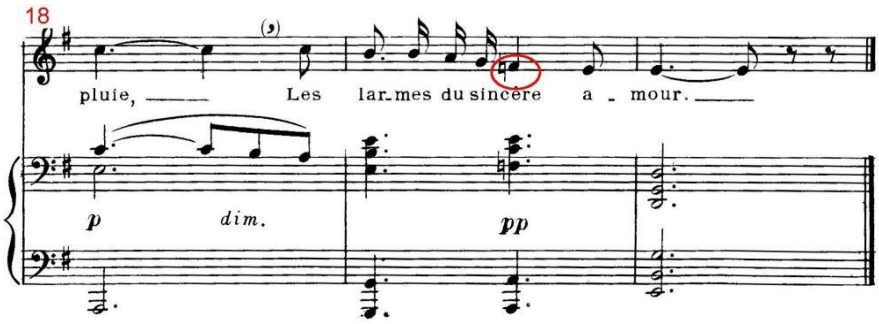
Recitative-like music is changed to arioso style in the middle of the song at measure 11. Above all, the piano‟s figuration is one of the influential factors that forms this change. The accompaniment begins to move continuously in consistent eighth-notes presenting more thinly the chords of the previous section, as seen in example 38.

Example 38. *Chanson d'Ophélie* by Chausson, mm.11-14.



The arioso style occupies just four measures. The recitative style reappears and ends the song calmly. The descending stepwise motion from the measure 18 through the end illustrates the last line, "Les larmes du sincère amour (The tears of true love)." Chausson also employs a Neapolitan chord before the last chord of the piece in measure 19. The major quality of the chord gives a coloristic feature to the calm minor mode, as seen in example 39. Additionally, the word, sincère(true), is sung, while the chord resonates. Such detailed musical devices by Chausson make this small piece special.

Example 39. *Chanson d'Ophélie* by Chausson, mm.18-20.



3. English settings

Interestingly, England, the country in which *Hamlet* was born, seemed to neglect the musical setting of Ophelia"s songs. However, it should be considered that England had not had the background of song history. As an island, being far away from the continent, it is evident that the appearance and development of song genre was relatively late in England. Though there was a period when songs were flourishing during the Elizabethan reign thanks to Shakespeare"s works, they were madrigals and lute songs. Therefore, it is hard to regard them as art song.

In the end of 19th and 20th century, British song experienced a resurgence as numerous composers wrote songs in various styles.[130] Above all, their interest in English traditional tunes and folk song is noticeable. Even though they did not have a strong historical background of art song, they did have long and abundant folk song sources.

[130] Kimball, 302.

With this background, composers began to show an interest in Ophelia"s songs which were from the English old tunes. Especially, English composers have preferred the first song, "How should I your true love know."

1) *Ophelia's song* by Maude Valérie White (1855-1937)

White was a French-born English female composer in the 19th century. She spent her childhood in Heidelberg, Paris, and England, and studied music in various areas of different countries. In 1876, for example, White went to the Royal Academy of Music, and in 1883 she stayed in Vienna for six months to study with Robert Fuchs. White composed diverse genres from a ballet to an unfinished opera, some early choral works and a few piano pieces. However, White concentrated on writing songs.[131] She published over 150 songs. From her experiences of living abroad, she was exposed to a wide range of lyrics. She set Spanish, Italian, French, German, and English poetry from the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries. White composed songs based on texts by not only the British poets such as Byron and Tennyson, but also poets from other countries like Heine, Schiller, Hugo, Verlaine, and even Tolstoy. White also explored songs on French, German, Swedish, Italian, Sicilian and Brazilian traditional melodies and arranged German and Italian folksongs as well.[132] She varied her musical style to suit each chosen text.[133] Although her songs are often facile and superficial, she also produced Debussy-like songs

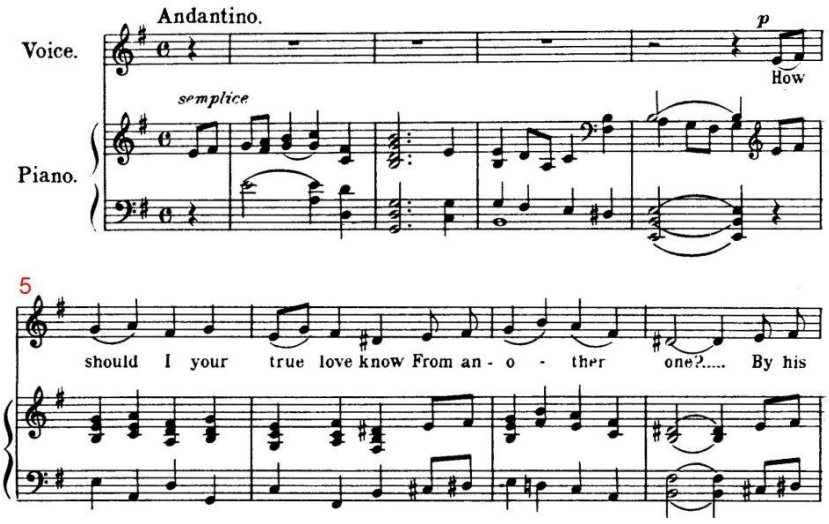
[131] Sophie Fuller, "White, Maude Valérie," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians,* ed. Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell, vol. 27 (New York: Grove, 2001), 341.
[132] Stephen Banfield, *Sensibility and English Song: Critical studies of the Early 20th Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 6.
[133] Fuller, 341.

such as *Le foyer* (Verlaine‟s poem) with an impressionistic sensibility, with a meticulous recitative setting of the French text.[134] Her polished style was an important influence on Roger Quilter (who dedicated his *Oh, the month of May*, to her) and on Frank Bridge (who was Benjamin Britten‟s teacher).

For the text of Ophelia, she chose folk song style. It is a clear strophic form in E minor, and the phrase is regular with four bars. It has a narrow voice range within the one octave (E3-F4). Simple rhythmic gestures enhance the folk song characters further. Also, only two types of cadences are used: half and perfect cadence. There is no specific text painting technique or representation of a certain story. The melody is the most important element in the song. The piano accompaniment is subordinated to the vocal melody and only functions to support the voice harmonically within homophonic or chorale texture. The tonic of the key, E, is strongly emphasized by repetitions, which gives the piece a sense of stability. However, above mentioned qualities are different from her other songs which are characterized by expansive melodies, a sense of rhythmic propulsion and an avoidance of clear-cut cadences. She adopted the simplicity and plain lyricism of the folk song tradition for her setting of Ophelia‟s text.

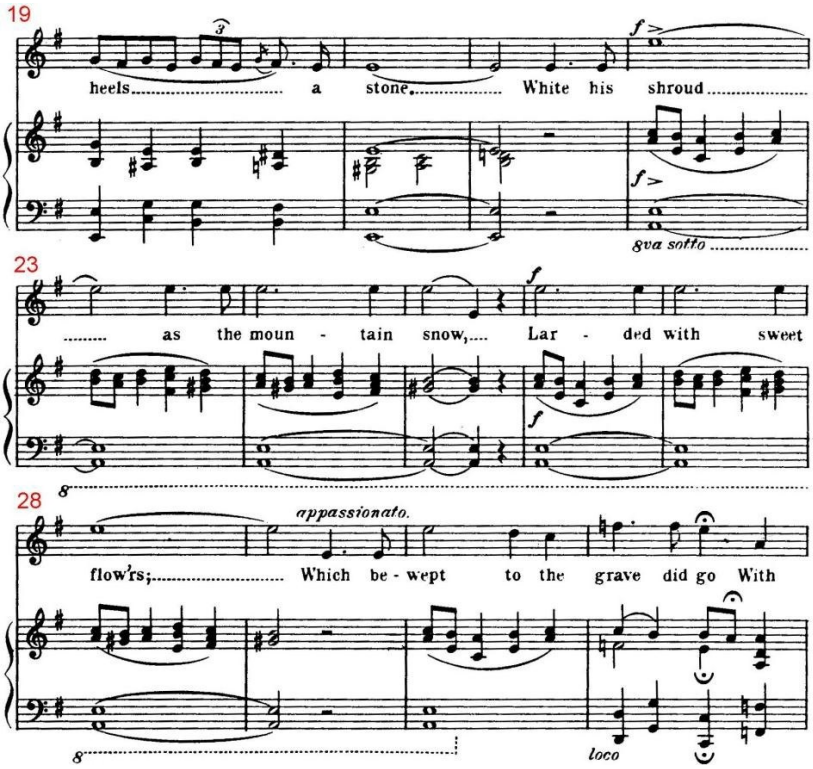
[134] Banfiled, 6.

Example 40. *Ophelia's song* by White, mm.1-8.



Dramatic expression is shown only in the big leap of the vocal melody and the sustained high notes (mm. 21-30 in the example 41).

Example 41. *Ophelia's song* by White, mm.19-31.



Another distinctive feature of the song is the combination of texts. White combines two Ophelia songs: the first song, "How should I your true love know," and the last one, "and will he not come again." They are set to the exact same music in a strophic form. As mentioned in previous chapter, it is obvious that the person whom Ophelia finds in the first song is Hamlet, her "truelove," and the last song is Ophelia"s mourning of the death of her father. Hamlet and her father must be the most important persons to Ophelia and they both left her at the same time. It is not surprising that her sorrow to lose them is filled with the same melody. White composed this song in 1881 when her mother died.

2) *How should I your true love know?* by Roger Quilter (1877-1953)

Above all, Quilter was a song writer. He loved English poetry and the majority of his works are songs. His songs are marked by a distinctive melodic sense and a refined taste in the choice and setting of texts. The songs did not deviate from a conservative approach, despite the "new paths" of musical style was taking.[135] He is also one of the British composers who continued the English lyrical tradition with an artful assimilation of modern techniques.[136] Comfortable aesthetics, lyrical melody line, and direct communicative appeal have kept his songs in the repertoire for many years.[137] Also, the rich and expressive harmonic usage for representing the mood and the content of the text contribute to the development of British art. The piano accompaniment supports the voice, but it is independent of the voice at the same time.

[135] Kimball, 316.
[136] Stephen, 11.
[137] Kimball, 316.

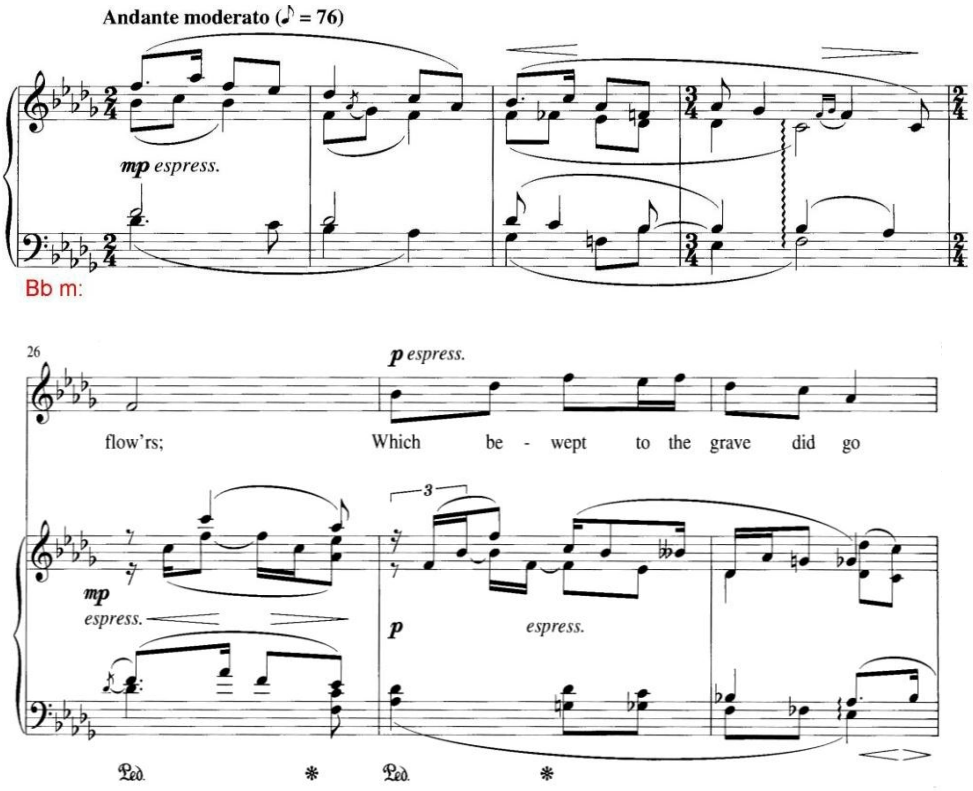
All the above mentioned characteristics are revealed in Ophelia‟s setting. Quilter‟s setting was composed in 1933, as the third song of *Four Shakespeare Songs*, op.30. Quilter, like White, took folk song style for this traditional source. It is composed in Bb minor, but Quilter does not use any naturals on Ab to form a leading tone. This diatonic figure is one of the main features of the folk song genre, giving it a mode character (mm.11-12 and 16-17 in the example 42).

Example 42. *How should I your true love know* by Quilter, mm.11-18.

Also the range of the song is quite narrow. All notes in the vocal melody move within an octave (from F3 to F4). Within narrow range, there are no big leaps, and stepwise motion or even progression dominates the melody as seen in example 38. Also, the overall structure of the piece is in A(m.5-12)-B(m.13-22)-A″(m.23-end), which is a traditional folk song form with the strophic form.

However, Quilter″s setting has characteristics of more advanced art song. It has the piano part as an independent voice. Though supporting voice strongly, the piano has also its own melody. Moreover, the piano has two different independent melody lines in itself, as seen in example 43.

Example 43. *How should I your true love know* by Quilter, mm.1-4 and 26-28.



Chromatic progression, which is not found in the voice part, is frequently used as a useful device of expressive harmony in the piano. In addition, the complicated rhythmic gestures of the piano not only contrast with the voice"s simple rhythmic figures, but also gives the piece a rich sound. The dynamics in the accompaniment are far more detailed than in the voice.

In terms of dynamics, there is no *f* or even *mf* throughout the song in both the voice and piano. In fact, the pilgrim, the third person, is telling what he knows, except for one line, "by his cockle hat and staff," by the protagonist. An overly emotional and sentimentally expressive setting may not fit this song. Even though its melody has such a beautiful and lyrical line, Quilter"s setting places the text calmly in a serene atmosphere.

3) *Ophelia's song* by Elizabeth Maconchy (1907-1994)

Maconchy is an English composer of Irish descent. She studied composition at the Royal College of Music with Charles Wood and Ralph Vaughn Williams and later in Prague. Her music always tended to focus on European toughness rather than English lyricism, and at its most original owed more to Bartók and Hindemith than to Vaughn Williams or Britten.[138] The evocations of the English countryside contained in pastoralist style held little appeal for the culturally Irish Maconchy. Vaughn Williams did steer Maconchy toward works by other twentieth-century composers. He suggested that after leaving the RCM she go not to Vienna, dominated by composers in the heavily systematic 12-tone style, but instead to Prague. There she expanded her knowledge of the

[138] Hugo Cole and Jennifer Doctor, "Maconchy, Dame Elizabeth," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell, vol. 15 (New York: Grove, 2001), 517.

music of the most innovative Central European modernist of the time, Hungary"s Bartók.[139] She concentrated on chamber music, inspired by Bartók"s example and tended to have short concise thematic material. Her preference for counterpoint is also influenced by Bartók.[140]

Maconchy moved to the edges of but did not abandon the system of keys and conventional harmonies in music, and though complex, her music remained accessible to audiences. The music is largely linear, involving counterpoint of rhythms as well as of melody. She wrote a number of vocal works including three one-act operas, cantatas for soloists, chorus, and orchestra, song cycles. She composed songs constantly throughout her life.

Ophelia's song was written in 1926 when Maconchy was nineteen. Like White and Quilter she set her music to the first song of Ophelia, "How should I your true love." The song is in strophic form which has two strophes. Maconchy uses the second strophe of the original text ("He is dead and gone, lady…At his heels a stone.") as a refrain. Each first and last quatrain is set to the first and second strophes in the song. This song is also simple without any complicated rhythm or melody, wide range of vocal line, and any modulation. The two main motives of the song features the reiteration of the same note (mm.1-4 in the example 44). The repetition of the same note adds a simple characteristic to the song. The sentimental sadness which dominates the song originates from the key. Maconchy uses the ancient Dorian mode rather than a specific key.

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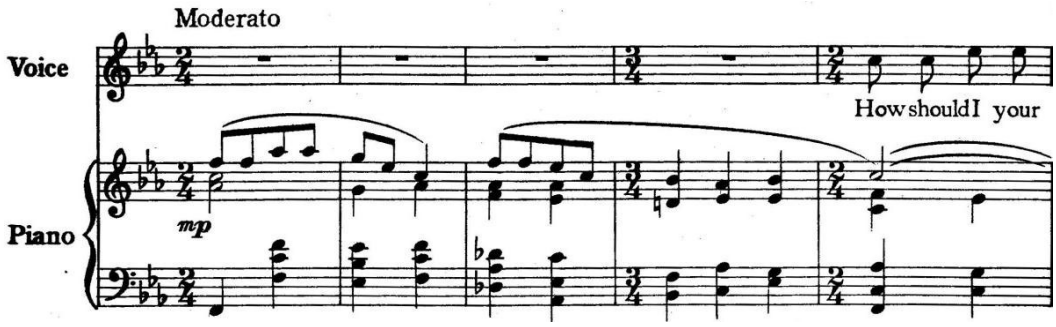
[139] Encyclopedia of World Biography, "Elizabeth Maconchy," http://www.notablebiographies.com/supp/Supplement-Ka-M/Maconchy-Elizabeth.html (accessed June 2012).

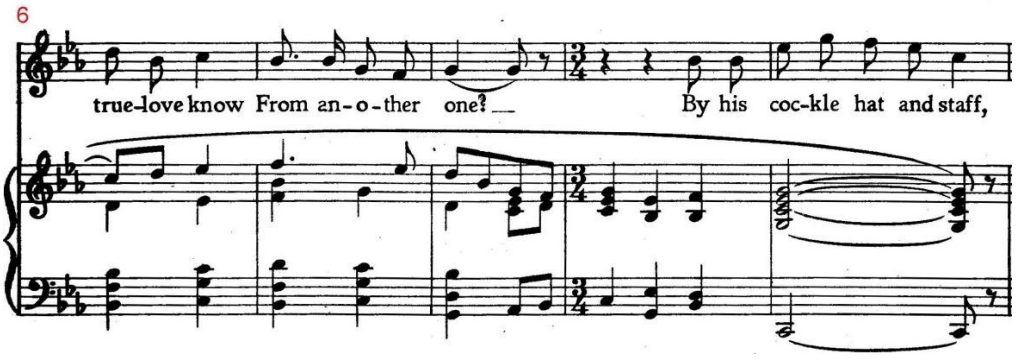
[140] Cole and Doctor, 517.

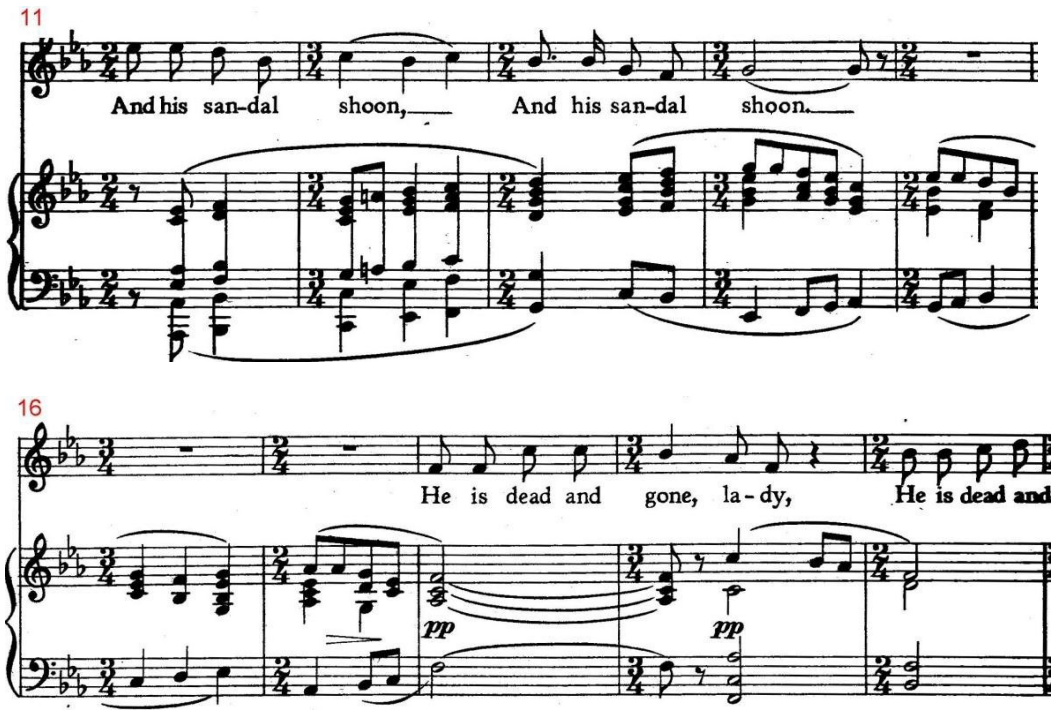
Example 44. *Ophelia's song* by Maconchy, mm.1-5.



The interesting feature of this song is the meter. The change of meter between 2/4 and 3/4 occurs through the whole song as seen in example 44. Maconchy uses such mixed meter for creating the main motive (mm.1-4 in the example 44). The motive is composed a rhythmic motive (♩♪♩♪♩♪ | ♩ ♩ ♩) based on the combination of 2/4 and 3/4 meters. This motive is repeated and so the constant meter change is necessary. The piano part also should be noted. Basically, block chords in the bass sound firm support to the voice, and occasionally, the voice and piano imitate each other (mm.11-16 in the example 45).

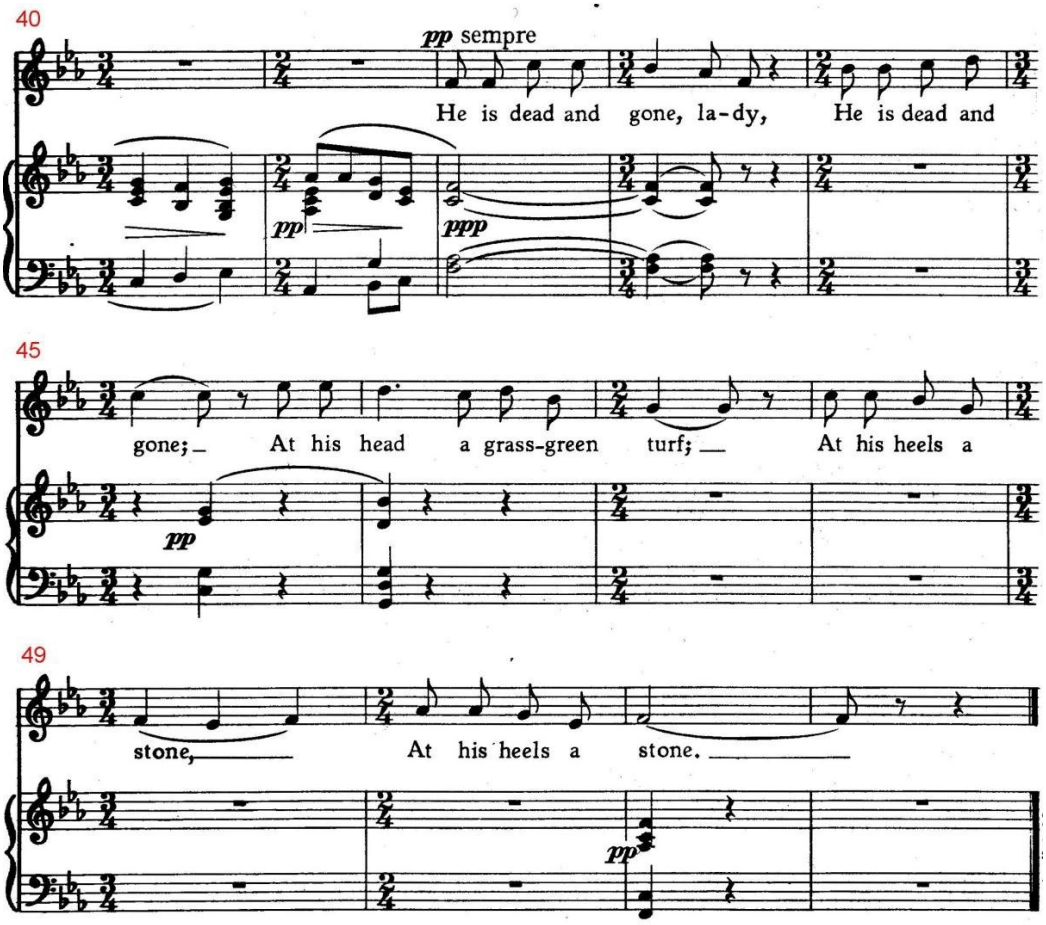
Example 45. *Ophelia's song* by Maconchy, mm.6-20.





However, the right hand plays an independent melody continuously. The unexpected stops of the piano effectively draw the attention of the audience to this simple song. Maconchy frequently uses this method (m.10, m.18, and m.20 in the example 45). Especially, the last part, the refrain of the second strophe, is written in solo vocal style that resembles a monologue. It describes that the shocking fact that, in the pilgrim‟s telling, “he is dead and gone,” still haunting to Ophelia‟s ear, as seen in example 46.

Example 46. *Ophelia's song* by Maconchy, mm.40-52.



Conclusion

Romantic and post-Romantic composers in Europe set their music to the distinctive characteristics of Shakespeare‟s *Hamlet* and Ophelia‟s songs, where the music effectively contains dramatic impact and emotional depth. Moreover, they were heavily focused on what it is to be human, while Shakespeare‟s emphasis was on the individual. These features were representative of the Romantic tendency, and composers started to compose their songs with the Ophelia texts. The reason for composers‟ interest in Ophelia is found in her quality of being the purest and the most tragic character in the play. In addition, she sings her most meaningful songs in the play within the context of madness. The ironically beautiful description of her death by the Queen is enough to attract song composers. Furthermore, the ambiguity intended by Shakespeare offered possibilities for their own interpretation.

Based on their purpose and interpretation, composers have demonstrated various styles of musical settings. However, as discussed in the paper, there is an observable trend of tendencies within the countries that spoke the same language. The German composers focus more on Ophelia‟s mental state or psychological aspect. Brahms reveals his own interpretation of Ophelia‟s confusion and trauma. The ironic expression of Brahms‟ musical language is hidden in the simple folksong settings. Even though, Strauss‟ settings are more direct, his emphasis is also on Ophelia‟s inner self.

On the other hand, the French composers tried to present an Ophelia who is lyrical and beautiful, focusing on the initial nature of Ophelia rather than her inner state. This is the reason why they chose the description by the Queen for their songs instead of

Ophelia‟s mad songs that she sings in her madness. The French songs give an overall picturesque view of Ophelia rather than concentrating on her inner self. Even though Chausson took the text from Ophelia‟s first song, Ophelia is made to look calm.

All of the three English composers maintained their folk song tradition and lyricism in their settings. They show more cohesive musical features than any other settings in other languages, even though the English settings were written during a longer period of time. The consistency in favoring the first song of Ophelia can be understood in the historical context. The pilgrim, the third person, offers the most indicative and objective view on content. It can be made sadder or given a different affect when another person recounts the fact of the death of the beloved. However, direct expression or emotional outburst is inappropriate to such content. In the same context, it can be considered that English composers did not choose to set their music to the second bawdy song and all the dirges. To keep their simple folk song features and lyrical aspect, the tendency to avoid heavy emotional expression would be necessary. In addition, they were more concerned with the musical elements, especially tuneful and lyrical melody line. It is hard to find any text-painting or dramatic expression in all the songs.

Out of all the characters in Hamlet, Ophelia is mostly deemed a minor character. However, Shakespeare‟s characterization of her and the dramatic device utilized through her are enough to hold the fascination of composers. Since the 19th century, composers have continuously composed their works around Ophelia with their own interpretation that deserves to be studied for its contextual knowledge of understanding her and her songs.

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