



NUI MAYNOOTH

Ollscoil na hÉireann Má Nuad

**Reinterpreting Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet* through Hermeneutic Windows**

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis seeks to reinterpret Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet* (1869, rev. 1870 and 1880) through a series of four hermeneutic windows. The first, 'historical context', presents an overview of the work's reception since the end of the nineteenth century. In doing so, certain ambiguities in our knowledge of the composition's protracted genesis become clear. The second, 'understandings of programme music', explores Tchaikovsky's perception of the genre. Fundamental to this investigation is an assessment of the aesthetics of a select group of Russian figures central to the developing arts of the nineteenth century. I propose a correlation between their views on realism and death and Tchaikovsky's treatment of these ideas in *Romeo and Juliet*. The third hermeneutic window, 'the correspondence between Tchaikovsky and Balakirev', serves as the foundation for my later discussions on 'self' and 'otherness'. Here, a comprehensive detailing of *Romeo and Juliet's* genesis from conception to completion is provided. Through this examination, insight is offered into previously unexplored aspects of the work's composition, and the developing relationship between both composers during this period is critiqued anew. The final hermeneutic window takes the form of Tchaikovsky's *Manfred* Symphony (1885). In my comparative analysis of this orchestral titan with the fantasy-overture, a shared representation of three figures becomes apparent: 1) the *persona*; 2) the *anima*; and 3) death. This thesis concludes that *Romeo and Juliet's* programme may be interpreted as a romance between the individual and death, more so than the traditionally accepted romance between Shakespeare's star-crossed lovers.



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## **DEDICATION**

To my parents, Bernadette and Patrick Nestor.

To my fiancé, Aidan McCarron.

## PREFACE

We are accustomed to judge a thing from the name it bears; we make certain demands upon a fantasy, others upon a sonata.<sup>1</sup>

[Robert Schumann, 1835]

This reinterpretation of Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky's fantasy-overture *Romeo and Juliet* (1869, rev. 1870 and 1880) is situated within the ever-evolving realm of musical hermeneutics.<sup>2</sup> As Lawrence Kramer has observed, hermeneutics seeks

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<sup>1</sup> This quotation, cited in John Daverio, *Robert Schumann: Herald of a 'New Poetic Age'* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 152, comes from Schumann's critical review of Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique*. The full English translation of this review appears in Robert Schumann, *On Music and Musicians*, ed. by Konrad Wolff (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983), pp. 164–192.

<sup>2</sup> For more information on musical hermeneutics see the following select sources: Ian Bent, 'Hermeneutics', *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 10 September 2012]; Arnold Whittall, 'Hermeneutics', in *The Oxford Companion to Music*, ed. by Alison Latham, *OMO*. [Accessed 10 September 2012]. See also the following chronological select list: Edward T. Cone, 'Schubert's Promissory Note: An Exercise in Musical Hermeneutics', *19<sup>th</sup>-Century Music*, 5/3 (1982), pp. 233–241; Erwin Ratz, 'Analysis and Hermeneutics and their Significance for the Interpretation of Beethoven', trans. by Mary Whittall, *Music Analysis*, 3/3 (1984), pp. 243–254; Joseph Kerman, *Contemplating Music: Challenges to Musicology* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1985); Judith A Eckelmeyer, 'Structure as Hermeneutic Guide to *The Magic Flute*', *MQ*, 72/1 (1986), pp. 51–73; Lawrence Kramer, *Music as Cultural Practice 1800–1900* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990); Peter Kivy, *Music Alone: Philosophical Reflections on the Purely Musical Experience* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1990); Lawrence Dreyfus, 'The Hermeneutics of Lament: A Neglected Paradigm in a Mozartian *Trauermusik*', *Music Analysis*, 10/3 (1991), pp. 329–343; John Williamson, 'Mahler, Hermeneutics and Analysis', *Music Analysis*, 10/3 (1991), pp. 357–373; Lee A. Rothfarb, 'Hermeneutics and Energetics: Analytical Alternatives in the Early 1900s', *Journal of Music Theory*, 36/1 (1992), pp. 43–68; Gary Tomlinson, *Music in Renaissance Magic: Towards a Historiography of Others* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993); Ian Bent, *Music Analysis in the Nineteenth Century II: Hermeneutic Approaches* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Ian Bent, ed., *Music Theory in the Age of Romanticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Arnold Whittall, 'Subjectivity, Synthesis, and Hermeneutic Narrative: Dissenting Voices', *MT*, 141/1873 (2000), pp. 7–14; Constantijn Koopman and Stephen Davies, 'Musical Meaning in a Broader Perspective', *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 59/3 (2001), pp. 261–273; Lawrence Kramer, *Musical Meaning: Toward a Critical History* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002); Aidan J. Thomson, 'Re-Reading Elgar: Hermeneutics, Criticism and Reception in England and Germany, 1900–1914', (Unpublished DPhil Dissertation, Oxford University, 2002); Andrew Cyprian Love, *Musical Improvisation: Heidegger and the Literary — A Journey to the Heart of Hope* (Lewiston, Queenston and Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press, 2003); Peter Kivy, ed., *The Blackwell Guide to Aesthetics* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004); Abigail Chantler, *E. T. A. Hoffmann's Musical Aesthetics* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006); J. P. E. Harper-Scott, *Edward Elgar, Modernist* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Benjamin David Collingwood, 'Methods of Analysing Early Tudor Sacred Polyphony: The Works of Robert Fayrfax (1464–1521)', (Unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of Exeter, 2008); Peter Kivy, *Antithetical Arts: On the Ancient Quarrel Between Literature and Music* (Oxford, New York:

meaning in places where meaning is often said not to be found — a theory which this body of research seeks to investigate through its examination of a well-established programmatic work.<sup>3</sup> Hermeneutics, (by which I mean ‘philosophical hermeneutics’) acknowledges the fact that no one interpretation is definite.<sup>4</sup> There will always be a counter interpretation. Through this evaluation of *Romeo and Juliet* I hope to add my voice to the growing corpus of research on musical hermeneutics (established by writers such as Joseph Kerman, Gary Tomlinson,

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Oxford University Press, 2009); and Lawrence Kramer, *Interpreting Music* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2010).

<sup>3</sup> Kramer, *Music as Cultural Practice*, p. 2.

<sup>4</sup> ‘Hermeneutics’ is a tradition of thinking concerned with the art of interpretation. The term is derived from the Greek verb *hermēneuein*, (‘to interpret’) and the noun *hermēneia* (‘interpretation’). In early history hermeneutics was divided into three traditions: 1) The critical examination of ancient Greek literature; 2) The assessment of Hebrew Scriptures and Christian interpretations of the Old and New Testaments through biblical hermeneutics; 3) The interpretation of the law and justice through juridical hermeneutics. During the Romantic era these individual fields of study were amalgamated into one single philosophical discipline by basing hermeneutics on the concept of understanding. During the German Romantic period hermeneutics began to develop into a purely philosophical hermeneutics, which culminated in the work of the German philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer in the 1960s. No longer relegated to text, hermeneutics expanded to include art and experience. For more information on the development of the term ‘hermeneutics’ from Ancient Greece onwards see the following select sources: Richard E. Palmer, *Hermeneutics: Interpretation Theory in Dilthey, Heidegger and Gadamer* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1969), pp. 12–32; Kurt Mueller-Vollmer, *The Hermeneutics Reader: Texts of the German Tradition from the Enlightenment to the Present* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986); Jean Grondin, ‘On the Prehistory of Hermeneutics’, in *Introduction to Philosophical Hermeneutics* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1994), pp. 17–44; and Thomas M. Seebohm, *Hermeneutics: Method and Methodology* (Dordrecht, Boston and London: Kluwer Academic, 2004), pp. 10–34.

For a more general overview of philosophical hermeneutics see the following select list of sources: Leo Treitler, ‘On Historical Criticism’, *MQ*, 53/2 (1967), pp. 188–205; Wilhelm Dilthey and Frederic Jameson, ‘The Rise of Hermeneutics’, *New Literary History — On Interpretation: I*, 3/2 (1972), pp. 229–244; Hans Peter Rickman, ed., *W. Dilthey: Selected Writings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976); Paul Ricoeur, *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences: Essays on Language, Action and Interpretation*, ed. by John B. Thompson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); Gerald L. Bruns, *Hermeneutics: Ancient and Modern* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992); Andrew Bowie, *Friedrich Schleiermacher: Hermeneutics and Criticism and Other Writings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Thomas Sheehan, ‘Heidegger, Martin (1889–1976)’, in *Concise Routledge Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, ed. by Edward Craig (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 340; and Andrew Bowie, *Aesthetics and Subjectivity: From Kant to Nietzsche* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn 2003).

Ian Bent and Lawrence Kramer), and the burgeoning movement of intellectualising Tchaikovsky's music (adopted by those such as Juri Keldish, Henry Zajaczkowski, Richard Taruskin, and Alexander Poznansky).

## **I Outline of Thesis**

This hermeneutic analysis of *Romeo and Juliet* is presented through the lens of four hermeneutic windows. Resultantly, the thesis is divided into four parts with a conclusion. 'Part One: *Romeo and Juliet* — Fragmented Understandings and Reception Issues' presents an overview of the fantasy-overture's reception from the end of the nineteenth century to the present via the first hermeneutic window, 'historical context'. In doing so, four fundamental questions are posited: 1) What are the traditional interpretations of *Romeo and Juliet* since the nineteenth century?; 2) Are there gaps in our knowledge regarding the fantasy-overture?; 3) What is the foundation for my reinterpretation of such an obvious programmatic work?; 4) What is the chosen methodology? As these questions are answered, certain ambiguities in our understanding of the composition's protracted genesis become clear. These interpretative 'gaps' function as the focal point for my hermeneutic investigation. Inspiration for the analytical methodology employed here has been drawn from the collective ideas of Richard Taruskin, Lawrence Kramer and Byron Almén.

As the subject of programme music lies at the heart of this thesis, it is necessary to explore Tchaikovsky's understanding of the genre. This leads us to

the second hermeneutic window, ‘understandings of programme music’, in ‘Part Two: Tchaikovsky’s Programme Music — “Sterling Coin vs Worthless Paper Money”’. Through an assessment of the aesthetics of a select group of Russian figures, central to the developing arts of the nineteenth century, I propose a correlation between their views on realism and death and Tchaikovsky’s *Romeo and Juliet*. The end of the chapter establishes a new set of hermeneutic windows through which my analysis of the fantasy-overture continues.

‘Part Three: *Romeo and Juliet* — Composition, Revisions and Proposed Opera’ determines the groundwork for my later discussions on ‘self’ and ‘otherness’. This is achieved through the third hermeneutic window, ‘the correspondence between Tchaikovsky and Balakirev’. Here, we learn how Tchaikovsky’s perception of *Romeo and Juliet*’s programme was contrary to that of Balakirev. Further evidence of Tchaikovsky’s preoccupation with this Shakespearean subject is discussed in relation to his unfinished duet for a proposed opera based on the play (1878–1881).

The fourth hermeneutic window employed in this analysis is Tchaikovsky’s *Manfred* Symphony (Op. 58, 1885). In ‘Part Four: *Manfred* — Exploring ‘The Self’ and ‘The Other’ in *Romeo and Juliet*’, this work is used as an analytical tool through which the programme of *Romeo and Juliet* is reinterpreted. Aside from the fact that Balakirev suggested both compositions to Tchaikovsky, this section of the thesis argues that the works share a similar programmatic content. This is carried out through a comparative analysis between

the symphony and the fantasy-overture. Through the interpretative lens of *Manfred*, this final chapter address the topic of death and female otherness within *Romeo and Juliet*. However, before this hermeneutic exercise can begin, it is necessary to provide a brief commentary on the sources, scores and editorial conventions employed throughout this thesis.

## II: Sources

### II (a): Tchaikovsky's Diaries and Correspondence

Any contemporary assessment of Tchaikovsky's extant diaries and correspondence must consider the composer's penchant for disguising his true feelings and opinions in his writings. By Tchaikovsky's own admission:

It seems to me that letters are never entirely sincere. I judge, at least, by myself. Regardless to whom or why I write, I always worry about what impression the letter will produce not only on the correspondent but even on some casual reader. Therefore, I am posing. Sometimes, I try to make the tone of the letter simple and sincere, i.e. make it seem so. But, except for letters written in a moment of emotion, I am never myself in a letter.<sup>5</sup>

This testimony, alongside issues of censorship, often creates difficulty in discerning Tchaikovsky's considered reactions to events and musical works. In an attempt to address this hermeneutic problem within this thesis, a variety of Tchaikovsky's available discourse has been consulted from an array of sources, both in English and Russian.<sup>6</sup> This affords a comprehensive understanding of the

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<sup>5</sup> Pyotr Tchaikovsky, *The Diaries of Tchaikovsky*, trans. by Vladimir Lakond (New York: Norton, 1945), pp. 249–250. This work was based on the earliest Soviet publication of Tchaikovsky's surviving diaries (1923).

<sup>6</sup> A chronological list of these sources is as follows: Modest Tchaikovsky, *The Life and Letters of Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky*, ed. by Rosa Harriet Jeaffreson Newmarch (Honolulu, Hawaii:



composer's perspective on programme music and his treatment of this genre within *Romeo and Juliet*.

Prudence has been exercised when evaluating Modest Tchaikovsky's extensive hagiographical three-volume biography on his brother (1900–1902).<sup>7</sup> In his study of Tchaikovsky's correspondance and diaries, Modest understandably tried to remove any references which might have painted his brother in a negative light. I have responded to this issue by including the Russian editions of Tchaikovsky's letters in situations where Modest's perspective appears questionable.<sup>8</sup>

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University Press of the Pacific, 2004, first edn 1904), hereafter referred to as *LL*; M. A. Balakirev and P. I. Tchaikovsky, *Perepiska M. A. Balakireva s P. I. Chaykovskim (1868–1891)* ('The Correspondence between Balakirev and Tchaikovsky') (St Petersburg: Yu. G. Tsimmerman, 1912), hereafter referred to as *PBC*; Michel-Dmitri Calvocoressi, 'The Correspondence between Balakirev and Tchaikovsky', *MT*, 52/837 (1912), hereafter referred to as 'The Correspondence'; Tchaikovsky, *The Diaries of Tchaikovsky*; Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky, *P. I. Chaykovskiy, Polnoe sobranie sochineniy: Literaturnie proizvedeniya i perepiska*, vol. 5 ('The Complete Works: Literary Works and Correspondence volume 5') 1848–1875, ed. by E. D. Gershovskim, K. Yu. Davydovoi, and L. Z. Korabel'nikovoi (Moscow: State Musical Publishing House, 1959), hereafter referred to as *PSSL*; Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky, *Letters to His Family — An Autobiography*, trans. by Galina Von Meck (New York: Stein and Day, 1982), hereafter referred to as *LF*; Alexander Poznansky and Ralph C. Burr Jr, 'Tchaikovsky's Suicide: Myth and Reality', *19<sup>th</sup>-Century Music*, 11/3 (1988), pp. 199–220; Alexandra Orlova, *Tchaikovsky: A Self-Portrait*, trans. by R. M. Davison (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1990); Edward Garden, Nigel Gotteri, eds, *To My Best Friend': Correspondence Between Tchaikovsky and Nadezhda von Meck*, trans. by Galina von Meck (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993); Alexander Poznansky, *Tchaikovsky's Last Days: A Documentary Study* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996); Alexander Poznansky, *Tchaikovsky: The Quest for the Inner Man* (London: Lime Tree, 1993), hereafter referred to as *TQ*; *Tchaikovsky Through Others' Eyes*, trans. by Ralph C. Burr Jr and Robert Bird (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1999), hereafter referred to as *TTOE*; Alexander Poznansky and Brett Langston, *The Tchaikovsky Handbook — Volume Two: Catalogue of Letters, Genealogy and Bibliography* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2002); and Polina Vajdman, Ljudmila Korabel'nikova and Valentina Rubcova, *Thematic and Bibliographical Catalogue of P. I. Tchaikovsky's Works* (Moscow: P. I. Jürgenson, 2006), hereafter referred to as *TBC*.

<sup>7</sup> Modest Il'yich Tchaikovsky's (1850–1916) three-volume biography of Tchaikovsky's letters, *Zhizn' P. I. Chaykovskogo*, was written in 1901–1902. The work was translated and abridged by Rosa Newmarch as *The Life and Letters of Tchaikovsky (LL)*. This English edition carries through the censorship of the original Russian edition. Modest was the founder of the Tchaikovsky State Archive and House Museum at Klin in Moscow. He also wrote biographical articles on the Russian critic Hermann Laroche (1913) and composer Sergey Taneyev (1916).

<sup>8</sup> *PBC* and *PSSL*.

## II (b): Scores

The scores cited in this thesis are as follows: *Romeo and Juliet Fantasy-Overture* 1869 (New York: Kalmus, 1970, No. 574); *Romeo and Juliet* 1870 (Petrucci Music Library);<sup>9</sup> *Romeo and Juliet* duet (New York: Kalmus, 1970, No. 589); *Romeo and Juliet Fantasy-Overture* 1880 (Leipzig: Eulenburg, 1900, No. 675); and *Manfred* Symphony, Op. 58 (Leipzig: Eulenburg, 1924, No. 500). I have supplied excerpts from all five pieces in the Appendix (Appendix IV: Musical Scores) of this thesis to aid the reader during the discussions on analysis.

## II (c): Manuscripts

The autograph scores of Tchaikovsky's first and second versions of *Romeo and Juliet* are housed in the Scientific Library of Gosudarstvenniy Tsentral'niy Muzei Muzikal'noy Kul'turi imeni M. I. Glinki (GTsMMK) in Moscow (Glinka State Central Museum of Musical Culture).<sup>10</sup> The manuscript score of the 1880 version of the fantasy-overture is not here present. According to Dr Alexander Komarov (research assistant, Manuscript Division, GTsMMK) Tchaikovsky handed it in to the German publishing firm, Bote & Bock, in Berlin, where the third version of

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<sup>9</sup> All scores are available to download from the IMSLP/Petrucci Music website: <[http://imslp.org/wiki/Romeo\\_and\\_Juliet,\\_overturefantasia\\_\(Tchaikovsky,\\_Pyotr\\_Ilych\)#Full\\_Scores](http://imslp.org/wiki/Romeo_and_Juliet,_overturefantasia_(Tchaikovsky,_Pyotr_Ilych)#Full_Scores)>.

<sup>10</sup> I have borrowed the abbreviation 'GTsMMK' from Pauline Fairclough, ed., *Shostakovich Studies 2* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). The Glinka Museum was renamed 'The M. I. Glinka All-Russian Museum Association of Musical Culture' in 2011. For the purposes of this thesis, and for ease of reference, I have retained the more recognised former title. More information on the museum is supplied on its home website: <<http://www.glinka.museum>>.

*Romeo and Juliet* was published in 1881. This is difficult to corroborate as all of Bote & Bock's documents were destroyed in a fire during World War II.<sup>11</sup>

The *GTsMMK* has kindly given permission to cite facsimile reproductions of the 1869 and 1870 manuscripts in this thesis. The Museum houses the following manuscripts under the call numbers given in square brackets here:

- Full autograph score of *Romeo and Juliet* (1869) [f. 88, No. 65].
- Autograph excerpts of *Romeo and Juliet* (1870) (bb. 1–101 and bb. 273–353) with references to the letters and pages of the original proof [f. 88, No. 66].
- Autograph excerpt of the development section of *Romeo and Juliet* (1870) beginning with b. 346 [f. 88, No. 67].

Apparently, the title pages of the first and second versions of *Romeo and Juliet* do not exist, nor did Tchaikovsky write any headings relating to a title on the opening pages of these manuscripts.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> This information was communicated to me through email correspondence with Anke Nikolai (Boosey and Hawkeys) on 14 June 2011.

<sup>12</sup> This information was conveyed to me through email correspondence with Dr Komarov on 3 November 2009 following his consultation of the autograph manuscripts. My facsimiles of these scores corroborate Komarov's observations. In his writings Tchaikovsky referred to the fantasy-overture by its Russian title, *Romeo i Dzhul'etta*. The first edition of *Romeo and Juliet*, published by Bote and Bock in 1871, used the French title, *Ouverture à la tragédie de Shakespeare 'Romeo et Juliette' pour l'orchestre*. The revised version was renamed, *Ouverture-fantaisie*, or in Russian, *Uvertiura-fantaziia* (this should translate as 'Overture-fantasia' in English, rather than 'fantasy-overture'). Bote and Bock's titles were carried out without Tchaikovsky's knowledge.

### **III: Editorial Conventions**

#### **III (a): Dates**

Tchaikovsky used both the Julian and Western Gregorian calendar dates in his diary entries and correspondence. All dates listed in this thesis are in the Old Russian calendar, with the modern date appearing in brackets.

#### **III (b): Spellings**

British spelling is used throughout. The standard western tradition of spelling Tchaikovsky's name with a 'T' is preferred here over the Russian 'C'. For Russian names which use 'ks', such as Aleksandr, this thesis employs the western 'x' instead (i.e. Alexander). All composers' names, and the titles of their respective works, appear as cited within *Grove Online*.

#### **III (c): Transliteration**

In the main text and notes Russian has been transliterated from the Cyrillic following the system adopted by the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (Table 1):

**Table 1: Table of Transliteration**

<i>Cyrillic</i>	<i>Roman</i>	<i>Cyrillic</i>	<i>Roman</i>	<i>Cyrillic</i>	<i>Roman</i>
а	a	й	y	х	kh
б	b	к	k	ц	ts
в	v	л	l	ч	ch
г	g	м	m	ш	sh
д	d	н	n	щ	shch
е	e/ye	о	o	ъ	"
ё	yo	п	p	ы	ï
є	ye	р	r	ь	'
ж	zh	с	s	э	è
з	z	т	t	ю	yu
и	i	у	u	я	ya
и	i	ф	f		

For excerpts that appear in Cyrillic from *Perepiska M. A. Balakireva s P. I. Chaykovskim (1868–1891)*, and *Polnoe sobranie sochineniy: Literaturnie proizvedeniya i perepiska*, vol. 5 (1848–1875), including each volume’s title, the authentic Russian spelling has been retained.<sup>13</sup> For bibliographical references I have kept the authors’ original spelling. Extracts from *PBC* have been edited in accordance with the literary reforms of 1917–1918 in which the redundant ‘Ъ’ has been replaced with ‘е’, while the hard sign ‘Ъ’ has been dropped in final position following consonants.

<sup>13</sup> M. A. Balakirev and P. I. Tchaikovsky, *Perepiska M. A. Balakireva s P. I. Chaykovskim (1868–1891)* (St Petersburg: Yu. G. Tsimmerman, 1912), hereafter referred to as *PBC*. Pyotr Il’yich Tchaikovsky, *P. I. Chaykovskiy, Polnoe sobranie sochineniy: Literaturnie proizvedeniya i perepiska*, vol. 5 (1848–1875), ed. by E. D. Gershovskim, K. Yu. Davydovoi, and L. Z. Korabel’nikovoi (Moscow: State Musical Publishing House, 1959), hereafter referred to as *PSSL*.

#### IV: List of Abbreviations

b.	Bar
bb.	Bars
<i>DRM</i>	Richard Taruskin, <i>Defining Russia Musically</i> (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2000)
edn.	Edition
fn.	Footnote
GDMC	Gosudarstvennĭy arkhiv doma-muzeia P.I.Chaykovskogo (P. I. Tchaikovsky State Archive and House-Museum), in Klin, Moscow
<i>GMO</i>	<i>Grove Music Online</i>
GTsMMK	Gosudarstvennĭy tsentral'niy muzey muzikal'noy kul'turĭ imeni M. I. Glinki (Glinka State Central Museum of Musical Culture) <sup>14</sup>
<i>LF</i>	Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky, <i>Letters to His Family — An Autobiography</i> , trans. by Galina Von Meck (New York: Stein and Day, 1982)
<i>LL</i>	Modest Tchaikovsky, <i>The Life and Letters of Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky</i> , ed. by Rosa Harriet Jeaffreson Newmarch (Honolulu, Hawaii: University Press of the Pacific, 2004, first edn 1904)
LTa	Love Theme a
LTb	Love Theme b
<i>ML</i>	<i>Music and Letters</i>
<i>MQ</i>	<i>The Musical Quarterly</i>
<i>MT</i>	<i>The Musical Times</i>
No.	Number
<i>OHWM</i>	Richard Taruskin, <i>The Oxford History of Western Music</i> , vol. 3 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005)

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<sup>14</sup> I have borrowed this abbreviation from Pauline Fairclough, ed., *Shostakovich Studies 2* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). The Glinka Museum was renamed 'The M. I. Glinka All-Russian Museum Association of Musical Culture' in 2011. For the purposes of this thesis, and for ease of reference, I have retained the more recognised former title. More information on the museum is supplied on its home website: <<http://www.glinka.museum>>.

OMO	Oxford Music Online
Op.	Opus
<i>PBC</i>	M. A. Balakirev and P. I. Tchaikovsky, <i>Perepiska M. A. Balakireva s P. I. Chaykovskim (1868–1891)</i> (St Petersburg: Yu. G. Tsimmerman, 1912)
<i>PSS</i>	Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky, <i>Polnoe sobranie sochineniy</i> , vol. 23, ed. by Anatoly Drozdov and Igor Belza (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe Muzykal'noe Izdatel'stvo, 1950)
<i>PSSL</i>	Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky, <i>P. I. Chaykovskiy, Polnoe sobranie sochineniy: Literaturnie proizvedeniya i perepiska</i> , vol. 5 (1848–1875), ed. by E. D. Gershovskim, K. Yu. Davydovoi, and L. Z. Korabel'nikovoi (Moscow: State Musical Publishing House, 1959)
RMS	Russian Music Society
TA	Theme of the <i>Allegro</i>
<i>TBC</i>	Polina Vajdman, Ljudmila Korabel'nikova and Valentina Rubcova, <i>Thematic and Bibliographical Catalogue of P. I. Tchaikovsky's Works</i> (Moscow: P. I. Jürgenson, 2006), <i>Thematic and Bibliographical Catalogue</i> (2006)
TI	Theme of the Introduction
<i>TQ</i>	Alexander Poznansky, <i>Tchaikovsky: The Quest for the Inner Man</i> (Great Britain: Lime Tree, 1993)
<i>TTOE</i>	Alexander Poznansky, <i>Tchaikovsky Through Others' Eyes</i> trans. by Ralph C. Burr, Jr and Robert Bird (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1999)
Vol.	Volume

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<sup>15</sup> This title is cited in Cyrillic as it appears in Tchaikovsky's thematic sketches, which he sent to Balakirev in 1869. See *PBC*, pp. 46–47; and *PSSL*, pp. 186–187. My transliteration appears in brackets, accompanied by my English translation.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*



## VII: List of Musical Examples Continued

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<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

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This thesis conforms to the MHRA Style Guide (2008) in accordance with the guidelines of the Music Department (NUI Maynooth).

## HERMENEUTIC WINDOW NO. 1: HISTORICAL CONTEXT

### **Part One: *Romeo and Juliet* — Fragmented Understandings and Reception Issues**

Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet* is one of the most enduringly popular works within the western musical repertoire. Frequently performed in auditoria worldwide, it has appeared on the syllabi of many educational institutions and assessment boards, including the Irish Leaving Certificate programme (2000–2007).

<sup>1</sup> Despite its prominence within the concert and academic canon however, there has been until now a significant lack of commentary on *Romeo and Juliet*'s genesis from conception (1869) to completion (1880). This chapter examines the possible reasoning for this dearth of scholarship by presenting an overview of the way in which musical figures, commentators and writers have received the fantasy-overture since the late nineteenth century. Through an assessment of secondary literature, concert programmes, critical reviews, and correspondence, it will become clear that Tchaikovsky's fantasy-overture has been mostly interpreted as a Romantic entertainment piece with an obvious programme based on its Shakespearean title.

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<sup>1</sup> Recordings and concert performances of the first version of *Romeo and Juliet* are few and far between. The *Chandos* label released a performance of it by the London Symphony Orchestra, under Geoffrey Simon, in 1981. The BBC played both the first and second (1870) versions of the fantasy-overture (London Symphony Orchestra) in a special series dedicated to Tchaikovsky in 2007. Most recently, the *Pentatone* label released a recording of the 1869 work in October 2008, performed by the Russian National Orchestra, under the direction of Vladimir Jürowski. See Tchaikovsky, Pyotr Il'yich, *Romeo and Juliet Fantasy-Overture* (Original 1869 version), Russian National Orchestra, conducted by Vladimir Jürowski (Pentatone, PTC 5186 330, 2008).

This thesis aims to challenge this perception by proposing that *Romeo and Juliet* may have an underlying programme darker than that to which we have become accustomed.

The foundation of this argument is developed further through my discussion of the labelling of musical themes in *Romeo and Juliet*. By contrasting the information presented in a select portion of the general literature on the work with my readings of primary documents concerning the fantasy-overture (i.e. Tchaikovsky's drafts of thematic sketches sent to Balakirev, the written correspondence between the pair, and the scores), gaps in current musicological knowledge regarding the work's protracted composition will become apparent. Fundamental to this examination is the relationship between Tchaikovsky and Balakirev during this process — a point of interest that has avoided comprehensive analysis in much of the literature on *Romeo and Juliet* to date. The purpose of this information is to clarify the need for a reinterpretation of Tchaikovsky's fantasy-overture and the circumstances surrounding its composition.

In order to strengthen the issue of reappraisal, this chapter considers the general movement of reevaluating musical pasts within the greater body of Russian musical hermeneutics over the past thirty years — a movement elucidated by the capacious contributions of Richard Taruskin. As with any discussion on musical hermeneutics it is necessary to evaluate Lawrence Kramer's latest writings on this field of scholarship. His ideas, alongside the narratological theories of Byron Almén,

form the central methodology of this thesis. However, before this hermeneutic inquiry can begin, it is essential to address first what we know about *Romeo and Juliet*. The following section examines popular interpretations of the fantasy-overture within the fields of concert and critical reception since the 1870s. In doing so a common discursive thread based on three central topics will be revealed: 1) programme; 2) form; 3) and Tchaikovsky's homosexuality.

### 1.1 *Romeo and Juliet*: Reception History

The perception of *Romeo and Juliet* within the nineteenth-century concert scene in Russia, Europe and America was primarily based on conversations about its programme and form.<sup>2</sup> Tchaikovsky's Russian contemporaries, such as Modest Tchaikovsky, Mily Balakirev, the *Kuchka*, Anton and Nikolay Rubinstein, were enamoured by the fantasy-overture's programme, but professed differing opinions on the work's form.<sup>3</sup> This perception was more pronounced on the European concert

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<sup>2</sup> This is hardly surprising as *Romeo and Juliet* is by definition a programmatic work. However, it is necessary to summarise the central interpretations based on this idea so that we can see how these interpretations influenced later twentieth-century critical commentaries on the work.

<sup>3</sup> Modest Il'yich Tchaikovsky (1850–1916); the *Moguchaya kuchka*'s ('the mighty handful/five') members were made up of Mily Alexandrovich Balakirev (1807–1891), César Antonovich Cui (1835–1918), Modest Petrovich Musorgsky (1839–1881), Nikolay Andreyevich Rimsky-Korsakov (1844–1908) and Alexander Porfir'yevich Borodin (1833–1887); Anton Grigor'yevich Rubinstein (1829–1894); and Nikolay Grigor'yevich Rubinstein (1835–1881). For all biographical details see the following articles available on *GMO. OMO.*: Richard Taruskin, 'Tchaikovsky, Modest Il'yich'; Edward Garden, 'Five, The'; Stuart Campbell, 'Mily Alexandrovich Balakirev'; Geoffrey Norris and Lyle Neff, 'Cui, César'; Robert W. Oldani, 'Musorgsky, Modest Petrovich'; Mark Humphreys et al., 'Rimsky-Korsakov', Nikolay Andreyevich'; and Robert W. Oldani, 'Borodin, Alexander Porfir'yevich'. [All accessed 16 September 2012].

scene by conductors such as Hans von Bülow, August Manns and Jules Pasdeloup.<sup>4</sup> The most scathing critique of *Romeo and Juliet*'s marriage of programme and form emerged from the pen of the Viennese critic, Eduard Hanslick in 1876 — an attack which may have influenced the work's poor reception in Paris (1876) and Berlin (1888).<sup>5</sup> Towards the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century, however, American audiences, according to *The Musical Courier* (1891) and *The New York Times* (1903), appeared to be more concerned with Tchaikovsky's representation of Shakespeare's love story than his musical style. The following discussion addresses these evolving attitudes towards *Romeo and Juliet*'s programme.

### 1.1.1 Concert Reception Russia: 'An Extraordinary Gifted Work'

Modest Tchaikovsky viewed *Romeo and Juliet* as a watershed in his brother's professional career and concluded that:

[...] in all Russian musical literature nothing so remarkable as *Romeo and Juliet* had appeared since Glinka. I can only repeat what has been said by many musical authorities — that my brother's higher significance in the world of art dates from this

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<sup>4</sup> Hans (Guido) von Bülow (1830–1894): German-born conductor, virtuoso pianist and composer. Sir August Manns (1825–1907): German-born conductor and director of music at the Crystal Palace, London from 1855 to 1901. Jules Etienne Pasdeloup (1819–1887): French-born conductor and administrator, famed for his championing of new works and the development of a French musical public. For all biographical details see the following articles available on *GMO. OMO.*: Christopher Fifield, 'Bülow, Hans (Guido) Freiherr von'; Keith Horner, 'Manns, Sir August'; and Elisabeth Berbard, 'Pasdeloup, Jules Etienne'. [All accessed 16 September 2012].

<sup>5</sup> Eduard Hanslick (1825–1904) was a fundamental figure in nineteenth-century music criticism. His concert reviews in Vienna were widely read across Europe, despite (and possibly because of) their frequently acerbic tone. As we know, Hanslick later cruelly commented on many of Tchaikovsky's works. He is most famous for his influential treatise in which he launched an attack on programme music: *Vom musikalisch-Schönen: Ein Beitrag zur Revision der Ästhetik der Tonkunst* (The Beautiful in Music: A Contribution to the Revisal of Musical Aesthetics) (1854).



work. His individuality is here displayed for the first time in its fullness, and all that he had hitherto produced seems to have been really preparatory work.<sup>6</sup>

Aside from his obvious desire to eulogise Tchaikovsky's significance upon the Russian and greater western musical stage, Modest's observations do contain a modicum of truth. *Romeo and Juliet* was the earliest written of Tchaikovsky's works to gain recognition outside of Russia. It was the first of his orchestral compositions to engage fully notable figures of his peer group in St Petersburg and Moscow, such as his brother Modest, Balakirev, the *kuchka* and the directors of the conservatories — Anton and Nikolay Rubinstein — whether positively or negatively.

Balakirev and his followers embraced *Romeo and Juliet* as a successful musical interpretation of the Shakespearean play. In a letter to Modest on 13 January (25) 1870, Tchaikovsky commented on Balakirev and Rimsky-Korsakov's collective opinion on his work:

Balakirev and Rimsky-Korsakov have been here. We saw each other every day. Balakirev begins to respect me more and more. Korsakov has dedicated a charming song to me. My overture pleased them both, and I like it myself.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> *LL*, p. 120. Modest's remark 'all that he had hitherto produced seems to have been really preparatory work' is a statement of the obvious. Tchaikovsky's main works prior to *Romeo and Juliet* were primarily student works, miscellaneous songs and piano pieces. The exceptions are *Festival Overture on the Danish National Anthem* Op. 15 (1866); Symphony No. 1, 'Winter Daydreams' Op. 13 (1866–1868); *The Voyevoda* Op. 3 (1867–1868); *Fatum* (1868); *Undine* (1869); and a piano-duet arrangement of '50 Russian Songs' (1869). Each of these works has their compositional faults — an unsurprising issue for a fledgling composer— but these do not constitute a large enough volume of work against which *Romeo and Juliet* could be judged as a superior work.

<sup>7</sup> *LL*, p. 112; and *PSSL*, p. 201. The song mentioned in this extract is Rimsky-Korsakov's Romance, 'Gde tī, tam mīsl' moya letayet' ['Where thou art, my thought flies to thee'], Op. 8, No. 1. See *PSSL*, fn. 2, p. 202.

This reference to the pleasing effect of his latest composition presumably refers to the first version of *Romeo and Juliet* (1869) as Tchaikovsky did not begin revisions until the following September 1870. It is likely that Balakirev and Tchaikovsky discussed the fantasy-overture in some capacity at this stage, but there seems to be an anomaly in the timeline of events surrounding the genesis of the work. According to the published correspondence between the pair, Balakirev should have received the complete orchestrated score by the time of his visits to Tchaikovsky, yet he made no critical commentary on the work until 22 January (3 February) 1871.<sup>8</sup> As *Romeo and Juliet* had not yet premièred in Moscow, it is possible to assume that Tchaikovsky performed a piano arrangement of his fantasy-overture for Balakirev and Rimsky-Korsakov during their stay in January 1870. This performance may then have shaped their initial perceptions of the work's central musical themes.

We know from Rimsky-Korsakov's later writings, that he considered *Romeo and Juliet*'s love theme to be devoid of complexity and 'elaboration' but nonetheless inspirational: 'what ineffable beauty, what burning passion! It is one of the finest themes in all of Russian music!'<sup>9</sup> According to Ivan Klimenko's reminiscences of

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<sup>8</sup> The chain of letters between Tchaikovsky and Balakirev is explored in detail in Part Three. In relation to the current timeline the details are as follows: On 1 (13) December 1869 Balakirev outlines his opinion on the draft of *Romeo and Juliet*'s four musical themes; on 20 December 1869 (1 January 1870) Tchaikovsky writes to Balakirev stating that *Romeo and Juliet* has been orchestrated. It is not conclusive whether Tchaikovsky sent the completed score to Balakirev at this stage, but a later letter dated 23 February (7 March) 1870 suggests that this was the case. In it, Tchaikovsky mentions that he sent the work over two months ago and hoped that it had been received.

<sup>9</sup> *TQ*, p. 119. Poznansky's source is V. V. Yastrebtsev, *Nikolay Andreyevich Rimskiy-Korsakov: Vospominaniya* ['Reminiscences'], ed. by A.V. Ossovsky, in 2 vols (Leningrad, 1959–1960), pp. 81–82. Presumably, these remarks were made after Rimsky-Korsakov had heard the full orchestral rendering of the work, with all its vibrancy, in both its original and revised form.

Tchaikovsky and his music, Cui's impression of *Romeo and Juliet* was also one of approval:

Once Cui, on the occasion of Tchaikovsky's visiting Petersburg, gathered the members of the Mighty Handful at his home and repeatedly asked Tchaikovsky to play the Romeo theme and the marvellous chords depicting the billing and cooing of the lovers from his *Romeo and Juliet*. Each time Cui expressed his delight, and toward the end of the evening Stasov, taking Tchaikovsky by the arm and drawing him aside to a secluded corner, whispered to him that Cui used to say about the development in the Romeo theme, "It's beautiful! It's even more passionate than the duet in *Radcliff*" (such modesty!), and that he also had high praise for the love theme.<sup>10</sup>

Following a performance of the revised *Romeo and Juliet* in February 1872, by the Russian Music Society (RMS) in St Petersburg, Cui's opinion of the work remained unchanged. In his review of the concert in the *Sankt-Peterburgskie vedomosti* (9 February) Cui praised the fantasy-overture's excellence, declaring it 'an extraordinary gifted work'.<sup>11</sup>

By contrast, if we are to believe the words of the conductor Ralph W. Wood, Tchaikovsky's contemporaries were not all in agreement over the fantasy-overture's virtues. Wood states that Anton Rubinstein disliked *Romeo and Juliet* vigorously because of its 'adventurousness', 'crudity and callowness'.<sup>12</sup> Likewise, his brother Nikolay also allegedly dismissed Tchaikovsky's composition and pronounced a

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<sup>10</sup> *TTOE*, p. 75. Ivan Alexandrovich Klimenko (1841–1914) was a Russian amateur musician, architect, railway official and close friend of Tchaikovsky. See *TQ*, pp. 57–58; and *TTOE*, pp. 55–56. Klimenko's memoirs, *Moi vospominaniya*, were written between 1899 and 1900 at the request of Modest Tchaikovsky. The excerpts taken from Klimenko's memories, as cited in *TTOE*, appear in English for the first time in Poznansky's book.

<sup>11</sup> *TQ*, p. 154.

<sup>12</sup> Ralph W. Wood, 'Miscellaneous Orchestral Works', in *Tchaikovsky: A Symposium*, ed. by Gerald Abraham, Music of the Masters Series (London: Lindsay Drummond, 1946), p. 78.

performance of the fantasy-overture out of the question.<sup>13</sup> This is an interesting statement to make in light of the fact that Nikolay actually conducted *Romeo and Juliet*'s première at a concert of the RMS in Moscow on 16 March 1870. Also, if Anton had truly disapproved of the fantasy-overture then why did he include it in his programme at a *concert populaire* at the Cirque d'Hiver, the traditional home of the Padeloup concerts in Paris, on 19 February 1882?<sup>14</sup> Had Anton made apparent his supposedly negative perception of *Romeo and Juliet*, then why was this work quoted in his honour in Alexander Glazunov's *Prelude-Cantata*, on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the St Petersburg Conservatory (1912), which commemorated both Rubinstein and Tchaikovsky?<sup>15</sup>

Therefore, while it may not be obvious whether or not the Rubinsteins were fans of *Romeo and Juliet*, they recognised its popularity and played their parts, whether directly or indirectly, in helping to keep the work a constant part of the Russian repertory in the latter nineteenth century. As the fantasy-overture drew acclaim throughout Russia, foreign conductors began to take interest in the work also.

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<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> Philip S. Taylor, *Anton Rubinstein: A Life in Music* (USA: Indiana University Press, 2007), p. 180. This concert included works by Glinka, Dargomizhsky (*Kazachok*) and Rimsky-Korsakov (*Sadko*).

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.* Alexander Konstantinovich Glazunov (1865–1936). See Boris Schwarz, 'Glazunov Alexander Konstantinovich', *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 16 September 2012]. Obviously, the commemoration of Tchaikovsky influenced Glazunov's decision to reference *Romeo and Juliet* in his cantata. The work also contains quotations from Rubinstein's Fourth Piano Concerto.

### 1.1.2 Concert Reception England: ‘An Uncommonly Interesting Overture’

In a discussion on Glinka, which appeared in the *Allgemeine Zeitung* on 1 June 1874 Hans von Bülow described *Romeo and Juliet* (the revised version of 1870) as an ‘uncommonly interesting overture’, which ‘commends itself by its originality and luxuriant flow of melody’.<sup>16</sup> This view was reiterated in England following the première of *Romeo and Juliet* at the Crystal Palace in 1876, under August Manns.<sup>17</sup> The critique of this performance in the *Musical Times* commented on the beauty of the fantasy-overture despite its peculiar structure:

[*Romeo and Juliet* is] a most elaborate composition, which requires repeated hearing and careful study in order to be appreciated. It is full of beauties, but at the same time contains much that is hard to be understood.<sup>18</sup>

The *Monthly Musical Record* also found the fantasy-overture difficult to grasp, because it was ‘unusual in form’ and had a ‘strange sequence of its tonalities.’<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> *LL*, p. 157. These remarks were made following von Bülow’s critique of the première of Glinka’s *A Life for the Tsar* at Milan. See Hans von Bülow, ‘Musikalisches aus Italien’, *Allgemeine Zeitung*, No. 148 (1 June 1874). Here, he spoke of a new composer who had the potential to exceed the greatness of Glinka and ‘not be neglected abroad’ — Tchaikovsky. See *LL*, p. 157. Modest Tchaikovsky wrongly cites the date of this article in *LL* (p. 157) as 29 May 1874, No. 148. The excerpt reads as follows: ‘Es ist dieb der in jugendlichem mannesalter stehende compositionsprofessor am kaiserlichen conservatorium in Moskau, Dr Tschaikovsky. Ein schönes streichquartett von ihm hat sich bereits in vielen deutschen städten eingebürgert; gleiche beachtung verdienen viele seiner claviercompositionen, zwei sinfonien und vor allem eine ungemein interessante, durch originalität und blühenden melodienflup. Sich empfehlende ouvertüre zu ‘Romeo und Julie’, welche unseres wissens auch schon durch eine musikalienhandlung in Berlin publicirt worden ist.’ This excerpt was kindly supplied by Dr Peter Stoll (newspapers) at the library of the Augsburg University.

<sup>17</sup> August Manns served as director of music at the Crystal Palace, London, from 1855 to 1901. During this time, Tchaikovsky’s music figured prominently in the orchestral repertory. For more information see Michael Musgrave, *The Musical Life of The Crystal Palace* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 106.

<sup>18</sup> See ‘Crystal Palace Concerts’, *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*, 17/406 (1876), p. 695.

<sup>19</sup> Gerald Norris, *Stanford, The Cambridge Jubilee and Tchaikovsky* (London: David & Charles, 1980), p. 251. Stanford does not cite the original journal source.

Nevertheless, the piece was considered ‘in every way a remarkable one’ and of ‘striking originality’.<sup>20</sup> The French musical press also attested to the successful reception of *Romeo and Juliet* in England, but remarked on the work’s strangeness in places (‘... étrange parfois, mais portant la marque d’un talent viril.’).<sup>21</sup> It is quite possible to assume that these initial reactions to *Romeo and Juliet* may have been influenced by England’s lack of exposure to Tchaikovsky’s music prior to hearing his fantasy-overture.

The only other composition of Tchaikovsky’s to be performed on the English concert circuit before *Romeo and Juliet* was the Piano Concerto No. 1, which debuted at the Crystal Palace, London on 11 March 1876.<sup>22</sup> The following excerpt, taken from an article which appeared in *The Examiner*, on Saturday 18 March 1876 (Issue 3555), gives an impression of England’s early opinions on Tchaikovsky and his music:<sup>23</sup>

Another interesting novelty was introduced at the Saturday concert of the past week, interesting both by its intrinsic merits and by the nationality of its composer [...]. Mr. Tchaikovsky [’s...] attempts at chamber music, opera and the symphonic forms have given him an extensive reputation in his own country, in Germany, and quite lately in America.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.* It should be observed that it was the 1870 version of *Romeo and Juliet* that was performed at the British première in 1876.

<sup>21</sup> *Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris*, vol. 43, No. 46 (Paris, 12 November 1876), p. 406. The translation here is my own. The author remarks that while the fantasy-overture is ‘strange in places, it marks a virile talent’ in the compositional skills of Tchaikovsky.

<sup>22</sup> The piano concerto was performed by Edward Dannreuther (1844–1905) under the baton of August Manns. Dannreuther was an English pianist, writer and teacher of German origin. For more information see Jeremy Dibble, ‘Dannreuther, Edward’, *GMO*. OMO. [Accessed 25 September 2012].

<sup>23</sup> This paper can be viewed on the ‘Nineteenth-century British Newspapers’ segment available on the British Library website: <<http://www.bl.uk>>.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.* This reference to America’s recent familiarity with Tchaikovsky’s music relates to the première of his Piano Concerto No. 1 in 1875, and the debut of *Romeo and Juliet* (the second version) in 1876.

Here, it appears that early excitements were attributed to the ‘novelty’ factor, associated with a new foreign work, and the ‘enigma’ factor, associated with a composer of whom little was known beyond Russia.<sup>25</sup> As there is no programme as such to investigate within the piano concerto, the author of this article proceeds to review the work, non-surprisingly, in terms of Tchaikovsky’s nationality and his use of Germanic musical models — a common approach taken by many European musical commentators, such as Edwin Evans, Gerald Abraham, David Brown, and Edward Garden, throughout the twentieth century.<sup>26</sup> Overall, the general impression appears to be one of approval for this new composer and his Piano Concerto.

However, as we have seen, the reception of Tchaikovsky’s next work, *Romeo and Juliet*, was not as forgiving. This was due mostly to the fact that the compositions’s programmatic title instilled particular interpretative expectations within its future audiences and critics. As a result, the fantasy-overture, through its name, invited types of analysis that questioned its ability to represent its alleged

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For more information on American performances of Tchaikovsky’s music at the end of the nineteenth century, see fn. 44 below.

<sup>25</sup> Stephen Muir has written an article on the English reception of Russian composers at the end of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, with particular emphasis on Rimsky-Korsakov. See Stephen Muir, ‘About As Wild and Barbaric as Well Could Be Imagined...’: The Critical Reception of Rimsky-Korsakov in Nineteenth-Century England’, *Music and Letters*, 93/4 (2012), pp. 513–541. England’s perception of Russia at the end of the nineteenth century was heavily influenced by the fractured political relationship between the two nations. See Andrei Lobanov-Rostovsky, ‘Anglo-Russian Relations through the Centuries’, *Russian Review*, 7 (1948), pp. 41–52. While the work of Russian ‘Nationalist’ composers failed to charm the English musical press at this time, Tchaikovsky and Rubinstein appeared to be exceptions. Possibly, this was due to the perception of these composers as being ‘un-Russian’ (as understood by the English musical press in terms of the Balakirev circle). See Muir, ‘About as Wild and Barbaric as Well Could Be Imagined’, pp. 518–519.

<sup>26</sup> For more information on these authors see the following articles available on *GMO*. *OMO*: H.C. Colles, et al, ‘Evans, Edwin’; David Lloyd-Jones and David Brown, ‘Abraham, Gerald’; Peter Le Huray and Rosemary Williamson, ‘Brown, David’; and David Scott, ‘Garden, Edward J.C.’. [All accessed 9 May 2013].

programme (as implied through its Shakespearean title) through its form. These questions punctuated musical discussions of *Romeo and Juliet* throughout Europe in 1876.

### 1.1.3 Concert Reception Europe: ‘A Knife Being Dragged Across a Glass Plate’<sup>27</sup>

Following its Austrian première on 26 November 1876, Hanslick wrote an abrasive review of Hans Richter’s production of *Romeo* in the *Neue Freie Presse* on 12 December 1876.<sup>28</sup> He believed that Tchaikovsky’s fantasy-overture had failed to portray its Shakespearean programme effectively, claiming that the ‘racket’ ‘killed the principal feeling [mood] of the piece’. In a cynical aside, Hanslick proposed that any *adagio* from Mozart or Beethoven would be a more suitable illustration of Shakespeare’s romantic-tragedy. It appears that the passion-fuelled sonata-allegro with its first-subject theme contradicted Hanslick’s interpretation of the work’s programme, whatever that may have been. He found the fantasy-overture’s representation of love unconvincing.

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<sup>27</sup> This was Eduard Hanslick’s description of *Romeo and Juliet*’s love theme in the *Neue Freie Presse*, 12 December 1876. The article is available at: <<http://anno.onb.ac.at/cgi-content/anno?aid=nfp>>.

<sup>28</sup> Hans Richter (1843–1916). See Christopher Fifield, ‘Richter, Hans’, *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 17 September 2012]. The background to this performance unfolded as follows: In a letter to the Austrian pianist Anton Door on 10 (22) February 1876 Tchaikovsky asserted his desire for a Viennese performance of one of his instrumental works. He recommended *Romeo and Juliet*, as he believed it would give ‘the Viennese public as good an impression as possible’ of his style, and asked Door to pass on these wishes to the relevant individuals. Tchaikovsky also recommended *The Tempest* and the Third Symphony. This letter appears in Appendix I: Letters, Articles and Programme Notes (A.I.1), pp. 295–297, and is also available to view at: <<http://www.tchaikovskyresearch.net/en/letters/1876/0444.html>>. Anton Andreyevich Door (1833–1919) was an Austrian pianist and Professor of the Vienna Conservatory (1869–1901). See *TTOE*, p. 214 and pp. 218–219.



Interestingly, Hanslick asserted that ‘clearly it is Juliet’s burial, which enhances Tchaikovsky’s tone picture, a solemn, half choral, *Andante* in F sharp minor that finally ends in a wild B minor-*Allegro*’. Here, Hanslick does not interpret the fantasy-overture’s opening theme as a portrayal of Friar Lawrence. For him, this musical idea is a reflection of Juliet’s fate. At this ‘funeral feast’, ‘a lot of liquor is consumed and monetary fines are dealt out’. Such reference to licentious behaviour negates the solemnity of the apparent funeral. These words insult Tchaikovsky’s alleged attempt (as understood by Hanslick) to represent Juliet’s tragic demise. Hanslick viciously likened the love theme to the sound of ‘a knife being dragged across a glass plate’ as the ‘happiness of love runs over our backs like a creased snakeskin’. For him, the ending of *Romeo and Juliet* demonstrated fate banging on a big drum.

In his description of the structure and style of *Romeo and Juliet*, Hanslick compared it to a ‘symphony composition in Lisztian form’. He then pondered why Shakespeare’s romantic tragedy had escaped Liszt’s symphonic treatment, speculating that this was either due to a ‘commendable respect for Berlioz which held him back’, or a wish ‘to leave one or two other famous compositions for his successors’. This statement suggests that Hanslick did not consider Tchaikovsky a worthy successor. He concludes that Tchaikovsky’s poor attempt at representing Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet* elevated Berlioz’s representation of the tale to ‘celestial’ heights.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> In this instance it is difficult to ascertain whether Hanslick is insulting both composers or just Tchaikovsky.

According to Modest's description of the Viennese debacle in *LL*, the reception of the fantasy-overture was not as bad as Hanslick first reported. Modest stated that Richter 'declared that the comparative failure of the work did not amount to a fiasco'.<sup>30</sup> In an attempt to play down the poor critical reception of *Romeo and Juliet*, Modest claimed that even though 'a few hisses were heard, and Hanslick wrote an abusive criticism of it in the *Neue Freie Presse*', 'much interest, even enthusiasm was shown for the new Russian work'.<sup>31</sup>

Concerned by the news of this event, Tchaikovsky wrote to Sergey Taneyev on 2 (14) December, 1876 declaring his apprehension regarding future performances of *Romeo and Juliet*:<sup>32</sup>

I have just heard that my *Romeo* was hissed in Vienna. Do not say anything about it, or Padeloup may take fright; I hear he is thinking of doing it!<sup>33</sup>

Indeed, Padeloup did première *Romeo and Juliet* at the Cirque d'Hiver in the French capital on 10 December. According to Taneyev, the work was poorly performed:

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<sup>30</sup> *LL*, p. 191.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> Sergey Ivanovich Taneyev (1856–1915) was a composer, critic and pedagogical commentator. He was a former pupil of the Moscow Conservatory where he studied composition with Tchaikovsky. Taneyev was instructed in piano lessons by Nikolay Rubinstein and performed many Russian premières of Tchaikovsky's works for piano and orchestra. For more information see David Brown, 'Taneyev, Sergey Ivanovich', *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 28 February 2009]. Anastasia Belina-Johnson has recently completed doctoral research on 'A Critical Re-Evaluation of Sergey Taneyev's *Oresteia* (1894)' at the University of Leeds.

<sup>33</sup> *LL*, p. 191. According to Modest's correspondence with Tchaikovsky on 14 (26) March 1876, Camille Saint-Saëns (1835–1921) had discussed the possibility of organising the French première of *Romeo and Juliet*. The pair had previously met during the French composer's tour of Moscow in November 1875 and struck up a friendship. In Modest's letter to his brother, he remarks that he had met Saint-Saëns at a concert and had asked him if he could say anything specific about when this performance of *Romeo and Juliet* might take place. The Frenchman promised that he would write as soon as a date had been decided.

I have just come from Padeloup's concert where your *Romeo* overture was shamefully bungled. The tempi were all too fast [...]. The second subject was played by the wind as if they had only to support the harmony, and did not realise they had the subject. [...] not a single crescendo, not a single diminuendo. At the repetition of the accessory theme in D minor the bassoons played their fifth in the bass so energetically that they drowned the other parts. There were not absolutely false notes, but the piece produced a poor effect. Padeloup obviously understood nothing about it, and does not know how such a piece should be played. No wonder the Overture did not please the public and was but coolly received. It was as painful to me as if I had been taking part in the concert myself. Padeloup alone, however, was to blame, not the public. The Overture is by no means incomprehensible; it only needs to be well interpreted<sup>34</sup>

Taneyev's report attempts to sugar-coat *Romeo and Juliet's* frosty reception by blaming the orchestra. However, from a reading of the concert review which appeared in the *Gazette Musicale de Paris* on 17 December, it appears that it was in fact Tchaikovsky's musical style and interpretation of Shakespeare's tragedy that was at fault:

All we'll say is that Tchaikovsky's style is similar to Wagner's, that clarity is not its principal quality, especially in the absence of a programme which details the work. His phrases are too often finely chopped and convoluted, though he handles the orchestra with real skill, his harmony is bold and interesting, he knows, when necessary, how to create moments of real power, and the section in the middle (probably the love scene) is characterised by a delicious sweetness. Nevertheless, these qualities do not jump out quite enough against the rather vague orchestral background to really strike the public and tip the scale in the right direction. The response was generally cold; there were even traces of unequivocal hostility, which were fairly numerous, next to some rather feeble applause<sup>35</sup>

It is possible that French audiences and critics were disappointed by Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet* because they had been led to believe by their musical press that this Russian work was written in the same style as Berlioz's earlier representation of this

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<sup>34</sup> *LL*, p. 192

<sup>35</sup> *Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris*, vol. 43, No. 51 (Paris, 17 December 1876), p. 406. My translation.

Shakespearean tragedy. If we look at the review of the London première of the fantasy-overture, which appeared previously in the *Gazette Musicale de Paris* on 12 November 1876, the commentator remarks that Padeloup would soon be bringing *Romeo and Juliet* to Paris, describing it as programme music in the style of Berlioz ('*C'est, comme la symphonie de Berlioz, de la 'musique à Programme'*').<sup>36</sup> Therefore, the French public's interpretative expectations had been disappointed. This appears to be the principal reason for the fantasy-overture's negative reception in Paris. Tchaikovsky remarked on the news of the event as follows:

I have just received your letter [Taneyev's report on the concert]. As is well known, good and bad things come all at once, and so I was not in the least surprised that my overture [*Romeo and Juliet*] was a flop, just as all my works are turning out to be flops now, wherever they are played.<sup>37</sup>

Unfortunately, for Tchaikovsky, *Romeo and Juliet* continued to attract mixed reviews throughout Europe, and the Berlin reaction, twelve years later, was just as frustrating as that of Vienna and Paris.<sup>38</sup>

While touring throughout Europe in 1888, the Berlin Philharmonic invited Tchaikovsky to conduct a selection of his music at a forthcoming concert. However, a debate ensued over details of the proposed programme. Otto Schneider, the Society's

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<sup>36</sup> *Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris*, vol. 43, No. 46 (Paris, 12 November 1876), p. 367. My translation.

<sup>37</sup> See Letter 518, from Tchaikovsky to Taneyev, on 5 (17) December 1876 (Moscow) at: <<http://www.tchaikovsky-research.net/en/letters/1876/0518.html>>. [Accessed 23 September 2012]. The website cites *P. I. Chaykovskiy, Polnoe sobranie sochineniy*, vol. vi (1961), p. 90–91 as its source.

<sup>38</sup> Rosa Harriet Jeaffreson Newmarch, *Tchaikovsky: His Life and Works, With Extracts from His Writings, and The Diary of His Tour Abroad in 1888* (New York: The Bodley Head, 1900), pp. 222–223.

director, wished to select pieces that would impress upon the Berlin audience.<sup>39</sup> However, his choices appeared surprising to Tchaikovsky whose suggestion that they perform *Romeo and Juliet* was met with reluctance — similar to, and maybe because of, Vienna. Tchaikovsky's astonishment regarding this situation is obvious in the following excerpt taken from his diary of 1888:<sup>40</sup>

I thought that my *Romeo and Juliet* fantasia ought to be the chief item on the programme, and Herr Schneider, who is a very charming and amiable man, finally agreed to do this, but very unwillingly. He thought it would be a great risk to perform such a difficult work, which, in his opinion, was not likely to please. I decided to consult Hans von Bülow, who was well acquainted with my music as well as with the tastes of the Berlin public, and to my great surprise, he sided with Herr Schneider. I then gave in<sup>41</sup>

Nonetheless, despite these apprehensions, *Romeo and Juliet* was heard in Berlin on 8 February 1888. The *Berliner Börsen-Courier* commentated on the performance as follows:

The *Romeo and Juliet* overture is already known here; it is a symphonic poem which describes more or less the tragic fate of the two lovers. The Introduction shows deep emotion, while the Fugue displays great contrapuntal skill (of which the modern Russian composers give astonishing evidence) and force of ideas.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Otto Schneider (1851–1890) was a member of the directorate of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. See Tchaikovsky, *The Diaries of Tchaikovsky*, p. 359.

<sup>40</sup> Interestingly, following *Romeo and Juliet's* negative reception in Paris in 1876 Tchaikovsky suggested it again to Saint-Saëns, along with the *Andante* from String Quartet No. 1, a selection of songs, Piano Concerto [No. 1], *The Tempest*, the finale of the 2nd Symphony, and a selection of *Dances* from *The Oprichnik*, for a forthcoming concert at Cologne. As with Berlin, the entire programme was proposed to illustrate Tchaikovsky's musical style and suit the aesthetics of his intended French audience. The details of the planned concert can be seen in letter 518, from Tchaikovsky to Taneyev, on 5 (17) December 1876 (Moscow) at: <<http://www.tchaikovsky-research.net/en/letters/1876/0518.html>>. [Accessed 24 September 2012]. The website cites *P. I. Chaykovskiy, Polnoe sobranie sochineniy*, vol. vi (1961), p. 90–91 as its source.

<sup>41</sup> Newmarch, *Tchaikovsky: His Life and Works*, pp. 222–223.

<sup>42</sup> *LL*, p. 768.

The reference to the fugue here is noteworthy as it was the 1869 version of *Romeo and Juliet* that contained the fugue and not the 1870/1880 revision. Resultantly, we are faced with a hermeneutic quandry. Is the journalist in question actually referring to the first version of the fantasy-overture here in his critique? If so, then he seems oblivious of the changes Tchaikovsky made to the work in his rewrites. Perhaps the commentator did not attend the concert and based his observations on his previous knowledge of the work. Despite this ambiguity, it is interesting that he would consider the original introductory theme as a convincing representation of emotion (whatever he understood that to mean), when both Balakirev and Tchaikovsky did not appear to share the same opinion.

Notwithstanding such a speculative digression, the more liberal *Vossische Zeitung* did not look as favourably on the Berlin production of *Romeo and Juliet* as its afore-mentioned competitor:

The overture to *Romeo and Juliet*, and the Pianoforte Concerto, played by Herr Siloti, are full of characteristic animation and originality of rhythm, harmony, and instrumentation. But here also the defects to which we have alluded are clearly perceptible. The overture becomes wearisome by the spinning out of the same idea, while, according to our conception of the play which inspired this work, the use of the big drum seems rather a coarse effect.<sup>43</sup>

This lack of enthusiasm for Tchaikovsky's fantasy-overture in Europe was not shared by American audiences who were more familiar with Tchaikovksy's orchestral music previous to hearing his *Romeo and Juliet*.

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<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

#### 1.1.4 Concert Reception America: ‘A Noble and Most Beautiful Work’

Following its American debut, the fantasy-overture was described by *The Musical Courier* (13 May 1891) as a tribute to passionate love: ‘He [Tchaikovsky] had loved, else his *Romeo and Juliet* overture is a farce and make-believe, and the passionate heartbeats it causes in you lie, too’.<sup>44</sup> In March 1903 the *New York Times* referred positively to the Boston Symphony Orchestra’s performance of the fantasy-overture at Carnegie Hall as follows:

And in Tchaikovsky’s broad and deeply felt *Romeo and Juliet* overture there was the feeling of the elemental tragedy, the ‘wind of Death’s imperishable wing’, that pervades it; a nobly beautiful performance of one of Tchaikovsky’s noblest and most beautiful works.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> The article was written by Marc A. Blumenberg and is cited in *TTOE*, p. 196. The Americans would have been familiar with a considerable portion of Tchaikovsky’s works prior to his visit to the country in May 1891, (Tchaikovsky arrived in New York on 26 April 1891 following his invitation to take part in the festival that opened Carnegie Hall on 5 May). The following select list provides an example of American performances of Tchaikovsky’s music from 1875 to 1890: 25 October 1875 — Piano Concerto No. 1 in B flat minor première (Music Hall, Boston); 17 April 1876 — *Romeo and Juliet* (1870 version) première (Steinway Hall, New York); 21 December 1879 — *Francesca da Rimini* (Academy of Music, New York); 8 February 1879 — Symphony No. 3, Op. 29 (Academy of Music, New York); 15 January 1880 — Suite No. 1, Op. 43, minus its fourth movement (Steinway Hall, New York); 12 November 1881 — Piano Concerto No. 2, Op. 44 (Academy of Music, New York); 7 March 1883 — Slavonic March Op. 31 (Music Hall, Boston); 24 January 1885 — Serenade for String Orchestra, Op. 48 (Academy of Music, New York); 24 November 1885 — Suite No. 3, Op. 55 (Metropolitan Opera House, New York); 5 November 1886 — Italian Capriccio, Op. 45 (Metropolitan Opera House, New York); 3 December 1886 — *Manfred* (Metropolitan Opera House, New York); 4 February 1888 — Suite No. 4, Op. 61 (Steinway Hall, New York); 6 April 1888 — Violin Concerto, Op. 35 (Chickering Hall, New York); 5 March 1889 — Symphony No. 5, Op. 64 (Chickering Hall, New York); 15 March 1889 — Suite No. 1, Op. 43, complete performance (Academy of Music, Brooklyn); 1 February 1890 — Symphony No. 4, Op. 36 (Metropolitan Opera House, New York). From this list we can glean that American audiences were quite familiar with Tchaikovsky’s orchestral style prior to the afore-mentioned articles of 1891 and 1903, respectively. All details listed here, relating to dates of performances, can be found on the Tchaikovsky research website at: <<http://www.tchaikovsky-research.net/>>.

<sup>45</sup> This excerpt is taken from the *New York Times* article, ‘The Boston Orchestra — Its Last Evening Concert of the Season in Carnegie Hall’, which appeared on 20 March 1903. The extract was kindly supplied by Mr Rob Hudson (assistant archivist at Carnegie Hall). Mahler conducted the work in 1910 at the seventh concert of the Philharmonic at Carnegie Hall, which the *New York Times* described as follows: ‘There was a superb performance of Tchaikovsky’s *Romeo and Juliet* fantasy-overture, a work of large proportions, which Mr Mahler played with a splendid stress of passionate utterance and with a sonority that never encroached upon euphony’. This article, ‘The Philharmonic Concert —

One wonders if this article may have drawn inspiration from Tchaikovsky's treatment of death and tragedy in his *Francesca da Rimini* and *Manfred* — works which had appeared on the United States concert circuit before this review was written.

Ultimately, the positive American reception of Tchaikovsky's programmatic representation of *Romeo and Juliet* still remained contrary to that of some English audiences at the end of the nineteenth century. This is particularly evident in A. J. Jaeger's commentary on a production of *Romeo and Juliet* by Richter at St James' Hall, London in *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular* (1 July, 1896).<sup>46</sup> In his letter to the editor Jaeger blamed the concert programme notes for the fantasy-overture's apparent inability to impress its audience. The notes described *Romeo and Juliet's* programme as follows:

Unlike Berlioz in his *Romeo and Juliet* Symphony, Tchaikovsky, beyond the mere title, has furnished no clue as to the particular points of the drama which it has been his aim to translate into music. It is, therefore, left to each individual hearer to draw his own conclusions as to its poetical content. At the same time, it may be suggested that the Introduction, with its solemn chorale-like opening and subsequent ecclesiastical progressions, might be taken to represent the music accompanying Juliet's obsequies; in the quick movement which follows it is easy to recognise the feud and combats between the two rival houses of Montagues and Capulets; the Prince's attempts to reconcile them and finally reconciliation on the death of the lovers.<sup>47</sup>

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Debussy's Nocturnes, with the Help of a Chorus of Women, Given', appeared on 18 February 1910. The excerpt was also kindly supplied by Rob Hudson.

<sup>46</sup> A. J. Jaeger, 'Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet* Overture', *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*, 37/641 (1896), pp. 484–485. August Johannes Jaeger (1860–1909) was the 'Nimrod' of Elgar's *Enigma Variations* and editor at Novello publishing house. For more information on Jaeger see: Christopher Kent, 'Jaeger, August (Johannes)', *GM.O. OMO*. [Accessed 17 September 2012].

<sup>47</sup> Charles Ainslie Barry, 'Programme of the Third and Last Concert: Monday 8 June at 8.30', in *St James's Hall Richter Concerts* (Summer 1896), p. 81. Here, the author actually encapsulates Tchaikovsky's overall philosophy of music, whereby he never really forced his interpretation of his own programmes on his audiences.



Jaeger responded to this interpretation of the fantasy-overture:

Sir [to the editor], in his analysis of Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet* overture (or rather 'overture-fantasie' to give the work its correct designation), played at the Richter Concert of the 8<sup>th</sup> ult., the writer of the analytical note says that the composer 'beyond the mere title, has furnished no clue as to the particular points of the drama which it has been his aim to translate into music'. With your permission I should like to correct this statement for it is not strictly accurate.<sup>48</sup>

In his attempt to right this interpretative wrong, Jaeger draws upon Tchaikovsky's later unfinished duet of the same name as a means of explaining the love element of the fantasy-overture, which had been overlooked by the concert notes.<sup>49</sup> This is carried out through a rather superficial comparative observation between the love melodies sung by Romeo and Juliet in the duet, and those of the fantasy-overture. Jaeger chastises the analytical notes for only speaking of 'Juliet's obsequies', the feuding Montagues and Capulets, the 'Prince's attempt to reconcile them', and 'the reconciliation on the death of the lovers'.<sup>50</sup>

Maybe, the commentator in question was unaware of the fantasy-overture's supposed programme.<sup>51</sup> After all, it had never been explicitly stated in any of

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<sup>48</sup> Jaeger, 'Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet* Overture', p. 484.

<sup>49</sup> Tchaikovsky composed sketches for a duet (soprano and tenor) intended as part of a proposed opera based on *Romeo and Juliet* in 1885. This will be discussed in detail in Part Three.

<sup>50</sup> Jaeger, 'Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet* Overture', p. 484.

<sup>51</sup> The author in question is not mentioned in Jaeger's article but it was the English-born writer and composer Charles Ainslie Barry (1830–1915) who often supplied programme notes for Richter's concerts in London under 'C. A. B.'. Barry was editor of the *Monthly Musical Record* from 1875 to 1879. See W. L. Hubbard, *The American History and Encyclopedia of Musical Biography: Musical Biographies Part One* (London: Irving Squire, 1910), p. 43; and Nigel Simeone, 'Programme note' on *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 9 September 2012]. See Appendix I: Letters, Programme Notes and Articles (A.I.2), pp. 298–305 for a facsimile copy of Barry's full programmatic description of *Romeo and Juliet*.

Tchaikovsky's writings. In attributing the opening musical idea to Juliet's funeral ceremony, like Hanslick, the author of the programme notes does not specifically indicate the presence of Friar Lawrence.<sup>52</sup> However, an allusion to this character may be implied via the overall representation of the burial scene. The reference to the Prince suggests that the concert notes may have been written with Hector Berlioz's *Roméo et Juliette* (1839) in mind, as there never has been any mention of a Prince in relation to Tchaikovsky's fantasy-overture.<sup>53</sup>

Jaeger neglects to consider any of this, and posits Barry's possible ignorance, or apathy towards the presence of love as a theme within the Shakespearean tragedy, against Tchaikovsky's possible inability to represent love musically — this interpretation depends very much on how the tone of the following quotation is read,

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<sup>52</sup> Maybe Barry had drawn influence from Hanslick's review of *Romeo and Juliet* (1876) in his programme notes.

<sup>53</sup> Hector Berlioz (1803–1869). Berlioz's *Roméo et Juliette* (1827–1839) was based on Pierre Letourneur's (1736–1788) French translation of the English actor and playwright, David Garrick's (1717–1779), version of the play (London 1748–1750). During the Shakespeare season in Paris (1827) Berlioz attended a theatrical production of *Romeo and Juliet*. The emotional power and dramatic flair of each scene impressed him. As he could not yet speak English, Berlioz's understanding of the play was derived from his reaction to the visual spectacle. No doubt his evolving feelings for Harriet Smithson (who played Juliet) influenced his positive reception of the play. However, Berlioz's next encounter with *Romeo and Juliet* was not as favourable. In 1832 he attended a production of Vincenzo Bellini's (1801–1835) *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* (1830). This experience 'so offended his sensibilities, with its lack of attention to what he (mistakenly) thought was its Shakespearean source, that he wrote a bitter critique in which he listed all the essential ingredients of any musical adaptation of this play, none of which could be found in Bellini's opera'. Enthused by this reaction Berlioz decided to compose his own musical representation of *Romeo and Juliet* in January 1839. He sent a scenario of *Roméo et Juliette* to the French poet Émile de Saint-Amant Deschamps (1791–1871) 'for poeticising' and by September the dramatic symphony was completed. See Peter Bloom, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Berlioz* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 61. See also the following sources: Julian Rushton, *Berlioz's Roméo et Juliette* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Arthur Graham, *Shakespeare in Opera, Ballet, Orchestral Music and Song: An Introduction to Music Inspired by the Bard* (New York: Edwin Mellon, 1997), p. 62; Hugh Macdonald, 'Berlioz, Hector', *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 3 October 2012]; and Mary Ann Smart, et al, 'Bellini, Vincenzo', *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 3 October 2012].

whether we consider it as genuinely pondourous or sarcastic (the latter seems to be more likely):

Did he [the author of the programme notes] not look for such love-music or has Tchaikovsky so signally failed in his attempt to portray 'la grand passion' that it required a clue before intentions could be rightly interpreted?<sup>54</sup>

From Jaeger's article it appears that, to him, the programme of Tchaikovsky's fantasy-overture centred first and foremost upon the theme of love, and failure to realise this warranted reprimand.

As we have seen, concert reception of Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet* from 1870 to 1902, within Russia, Europe and America was divided in its respective perception of the composition's programme and structure. Russians praised Tchaikovsky's interpretation of Shakespeare's tragic tale while Europeans were distracted by this new musical style. Americans focused more on the emotional themes of love and conflict, which they believed to be expressed within the fantasy-overture. These interpretative issues also carried forward to the developing body of Tchaikovsky literature from the early twentieth century onwards.

### **1.1.5 Critical Literary Reception**

An examination of the critical literary reception of *Romeo and Juliet* since the early 1900s reveals a shared interpretative dichotomy premised on the relationship between

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<sup>54</sup> Jaeger, 'Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet* Overture', p. 485.

programme and form. Intrinsic to this discussion is the role of Balakirev within the compositional process. Towards the end of the twentieth century we see a shift in perceptions of *Romeo and Juliet*. Here, the new movement of intellectualising Tchaikovsky's music emerges. The following section addresses these developments.

#### 1.1.5.1 1900s–1950s

Rosa Newmarch's English translation of Modest Tchaikovsky's *The Life and Letters of Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky (LL)* in 1904 provided the first detailed summary of the circumstances surrounding the writing of *Romeo and Juliet*.<sup>55</sup> Here, readers were furnished with a selection of extracts taken from the correspondence between Tchaikovsky and Balakirev during the composition of the fantasy-overture. The information gleaned from this collage of letters presented the idea that Balakirev was solely responsible for *Romeo and Juliet*'s programme and his criticisms spurred Tchaikovsky to revise the work in 1870, and again in 1880. Little was expressed in relation to the fantasy-overture's musical structure. Modest's commentary served as the backdrop for many later writings on *Romeo and Juliet*.

In his biography of Tchaikovsky (1906), Edwin Evans discussed *Romeo and Juliet*'s programme as an exercise in the characterisation of Friar Lawrence, the feuding Montagues and Capulets, and the 'love-stricken' duo.<sup>56</sup> Six years later

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<sup>55</sup> *LL*, pp. 107–112, 114–116, and 119–120.

<sup>56</sup> Evans, *Tchaikovsky*, p. 134.

Michel-Dmitri Calvocoressi published an informative article detailing his summary of the genesis of *Romeo and Juliet* from conception to completion.<sup>57</sup> It repeated the sentiments expressed in Modest's recollection of the composition, but Calvocoressi supplied extracts from six letters, previously unexplored in Newmarch's edition of the letters.<sup>58</sup> Ralph Wood's commentary on the fantasy-overture thirty-nine years later (1951) reiterated the same information as had Evans.<sup>59</sup> He remarked that despite *Romeo and Juliet*'s 'extreme hackneyedness' the work might 'be described as a masterpiece'.<sup>60</sup> Wood appraised the love theme as barely avoiding 'vulgarity' and 'certain passages of contemplative melancholy' as 'eloquent'.<sup>61</sup>

Although the 'remarkable genesis of the work' was noted, Wood avoided any further elaboration on the subject. He commented on the fact that Balakirev suggested the composition to Tchaikovsky due to their 'recently formed acquaintanceship', and Balakirev's belief that 'the newcomer had a future'.<sup>62</sup> Wood professed that the composers shared a common notion of programme music but failed to supplement this statement with any substantiation:

It is, of course, evident that Balakirev's notions about the relationship between literary subjects and musical compositions were exactly similar to those of the composer of the overture to *The Storm*. It is thus quite likely that, for instance the fact that the material of the introductory *andante non tanto quasi moderato* of *Romeo*

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<sup>57</sup> Calvocoressi, 'The Correspondence', pp. 712–715. Calvocoressi's article was published the same year as the Russian edition of *PBC*.

<sup>58</sup> The content of these letters is discussed in detail in Part Three.

<sup>59</sup> Wood, 'Miscellaneous Orchestral Works', in *Tchaikovsky — A Symposium*.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 79.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

*and Juliet* undergoes an immediate restatement a semitone lower was due to Balakirev.<sup>63</sup>

The use of semitonal relationships cannot be the only justification for illustrating a commonality between Balakirev and Tchaikovsky's philosophy on the relationship between literary subjects and musical compositions. Both composers had their own differing views on how a programme should be realised in musical form, and Wood is mistaken here in his assertion that 'Balakirev's notions about the relationship between literary subjects and musical compositions were exactly the same as' those of Tchaikovsky.<sup>64</sup>

Further reference to Balakirev's role within the compositional process appeared in the Russian edition of Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet* (1950).<sup>65</sup> The brief passage, which deals with the background of the work merely, observes the fact that Balakirev suggested the initial composition to Tchaikovsky. As with most of the literature on the fantasy-overture, the editors attributed the revisions to Balakirev's criticism of the original 1869 *Romeo and Juliet* without any detailed commentary.<sup>66</sup> Much of this is due to the fact that the earliest reference to the writing of the fantasy-overture, by Modest Tchaikovsky, insists that the genesis of the work was solely

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<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 80.

<sup>64</sup> Comparisons between Tchaikovsky and Balakirev's respective understandings of programme music will be discussed in Part Two.

<sup>65</sup> Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky, *Polnoe sobranie sochineniy*, vol 23, ed. by Anatoly Drozdov and Igor Belza (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe Muzykal'noe Izdatel'stvo, 1950), p. 3, hereafter, referred to as *PSS*.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

attributed to Balakirev.<sup>67</sup> In considering this assertion as truth, a thorough investigation into Tchaikovsky's role within the creation of *Romeo and Juliet* has been neglected.

As the twentieth century progressed writers continued to discuss the programme of *Romeo and Juliet* in a superficial manner. A serious assessment of the reasoning behind the central musical themes of the fantasy-overture, beyond their presumed connection to the work's Shakespearean title, remained unexplored. After all, no reason had been given so far by any writer as to why any deeper inquiry into the composition was necessary. Most critical observations were based on the previous findings of those such as Modest Tchaikovsky, Calvocoressi, Newmarch, Evans and the Russian editors of *PSS*.

#### 1.1.5.2 1960s–1970s

Moving forward to 1968, Lawrence and Elisabeth Hanson proclaimed *Romeo and Juliet* a representation of tragic fate and passionate love — the epitome of Tchaikovsky's skill as a dramatist:

*Romeo and Juliet* presents for the first time virtually the whole range of the great composer. He revealed himself a born dramatist, moving from scene to scene and mood to mood with vivid contrasts of pace and feeling and always with the utmost economy. The speed never slackens, the listener is carried from one superb melody to another, from one climax to another. Such rich orchestral writing had not been heard in a concert hall in Russia; the composer was clearly in complete command of

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<sup>67</sup> *LL*, pp. 107–108.

his forces from first note to last, never thickening the texture and making highly inventive use of the orchestra. The score is dominated by a controlled rapport between composer and subject; he understood the fate which would part the lovers but he felt that love too, and recreated it with a touching blend of passion and compassion; never before had the fire and poetry of young love been communicated with such truth and charm.<sup>68</sup>

This description resembles the perspective expressed in Modest's appraisal of his brother's fantasy-overture. In their assessment of the composition, the Hansons, for the first time in the literature on the subject, stated that the work did not aim to retell the story of the literary text:

[...] the composer held strictly to his title; the work is a fantasy-overture and not a symphonic poem. Tchaikovsky makes no attempt to tell the *Romeo and Juliet* story in order or in detail; what interests him and what he does to portray a series of impressions of action and character just as he would have done if this had actually been the overture to an opera. *Romeo and Juliet* is, in short, an extension of his principle in song writing, to illustrate states of soul.<sup>69</sup>

The final remark in which the authors attest to *Romeo and Juliet*'s ability to 'illustrate states of soul' presumably stems from Tchaikovsky's statement that the aim of music was to picture the very emotions of the soul.<sup>70</sup> The Hansons' interpretation of *Romeo and Juliet* influenced other writers of the 1970s onwards. Issues of structure and sonata form appeared insignificant. However, it must be noted that these observations were based primarily on the 1880 version of the score with virtually no consideration of the 1869 version.

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<sup>68</sup> Lawrence Hanson and Elisabeth Hanson, *Tchaikovsky: A New Study of the Man and His Music* (London: Cassell, 1965), pp. 101–102.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 101.

<sup>70</sup> Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky, *Guide to the Practical Study of Harmony* (Mineola, New York: Dover, 2005), p. 15.



Writing in 1973, Edward Garden devoted three full pages to a discussion of *Romeo and Juliet* in the third chapter of his *Master Musician Series* volume on Tchaikovsky.<sup>71</sup> Here, the composer was evaluated under the banner of ‘nationalism’. Like his predecessor Wood, Garden sketchily commented on the similarities in musical style between Tchaikovsky and Balakirev by referring to the use of repeated alternating chords and the use of semitonal relationships. According to Garden, this musical style, also evident in Glinka’s opera, *Ruslan and Lyudmila* (1837–1842), appeared in both *Romeo and Juliet* and Balakirev’s *King Lear* overture.<sup>72</sup> Aside from general references to structural changes, Garden’s narrative fails to add anything new to the developing knowledge surrounding Tchaikovsky’s fantasy-overture at this time.

The general thrust of Garden’s argument follows tradition by premising his discussion of *Romeo and Juliet* on Balakirev’s influence. Evidence within my research suggests that Tchaikovsky may also have gained inspiration from Berlioz’s symphonic setting of the Shakespearean play. As we will see later, there is also an interesting reference in Tchaikovsky’s letters, which shows that he was not the only Russian who intended to set *Romeo and Juliet* to music in 1869.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Edward Garden, *Tchaikovsky* (London: Dent, 1973), pp. 31–34.

<sup>72</sup> For more information on Glinka’s opera see Stuart Campbell, ‘Glinka, Mikhail Ivanovich’, *GMO*. [Accessed 19 January 2013].

<sup>73</sup> This will be discussed in detail in Part Three.

John Warrack's evaluation of the fantasy-overture in 1973 developed Garden's ideas, but focused more on the work's programme — a successful representation of tragic love. Warrack rightly observes that this was a subject that had obsessed Tchaikovsky throughout his compositional life:

Balakirev had hit upon a subject that exactly matched Tchaikovsky's talents and his whole approach to music. No longer bound by formal requirements, he was free to fashion his own design for the music; yet whereas in his previous orchestral tone-poems he had either attempted to follow the drama too slavishly with disjointed musical results as in *The Storm*, or lacked a compelling formal idea at all to give expression to a general mood as in *Fatum* [...]. Though he disliked programme music, he always needed a subject; and he finds it here in the one that was to obsess him all his life and to form the substance of all his greatest work, the crushing of love by a hostile fate.<sup>74</sup>

A similar interpretation was found in David Brown's lengthy analysis of Tchaikovsky's fantasy-overture in 1978.<sup>75</sup> This was the first in-depth critical survey of *Romeo and Juliet* since Calvocoressi. Readers were given insight into the compositional differences between the first and final versions of the work, along with a review of the exterior factors that may have influenced its genesis, including Balakirev's input. Examples from Tchaikovsky's First Symphony were employed as a means of contextualising his musical style within the early drafts of the fantasy-overture. Brown's critique attempted to expand the musicological lens beyond the traditionally static view of *Romeo and Juliet's* alleged programme, towards an

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<sup>74</sup> John Warrack, *Tchaikovsky* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1973), p. 58. This 'dislike' of programme music is also referred to in Gerald Abraham's *Slavonic and Romantic Music* (presumably the source of Warrack's comment): 'He [Tchaikovsky] disliked genuine programme music — that is to say, music with a literary or pictorial as distinguished from a merely emotional programme because the impulse to it came from outside, as it were'. See Gerald Abraham, *Slavonic and Romantic Music: Essays and Studies* (London: Faber and Faber, 1968), p. 110.

<sup>75</sup> David Brown, *Tchaikovsky: A Bibliographical and Critical Study; The Early Years 1840–1874* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1978).

academic discussion of its compositional merits. Despite this attempt to elevate Tchaikovsky's fantasy-overture as a serious piece of music through scholarly analysis, writers continued to focus their respective attentions on the work's alleged subject.

Wilson Strutte's appraisal of *Romeo and Juliet*'s programme in 1979 agreed with the previous ideas expressed by Warrack and claimed that:

In *Romeo and Juliet* he [Tchaikovsky] had found a perfect subject, and had woven the ingredients of Shakespeare's tragedy into an abstract musical drama. In it, the fate of the lovers is his main concern and he leaves the listener in no doubt that their tragedy was, in fact, their spiritual triumph.<sup>76</sup>

However, unlike Warrack, who considered the fate of death as a destructive force, Strutte perceived it as 'spiritual triumph'. Warrack contended that Tchaikovsky's overture was not a direct portrayal of the play but an emotional representation of the tragic consequence of fateful love:

The threefold exposition of the themes does not parallel the course of the play, and Tchaikovsky's intention is really to take it not as subject so much as analogy. The subjection of this emotional and musical material to a kind of sonata form has its own expressive force; for as well as conferring a coherent form upon the music, it can embody the notion of something inexorable guiding the music, a course of events imposed from outside the actual themes and thus seeming to rule them arbitrarily [...].<sup>77</sup>

Warrack looks beyond the interior programme of *Romeo and Juliet* in his view that the work's form actually serves a programmatic role in conveying a sense of fate to

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<sup>76</sup> Wilson Strutte, *Tchaikovsky: His Life and Times* (Kent: Midas, 1979), p. 32.

<sup>77</sup> Warrack, *Tchaikovsky*, p. 58.

the interpreter, beyond that which is expressed by musical content. Nonetheless, both Strutte and Warrack interpret *Romeo and Juliet*'s programme as an expression of tragic love — a view shared by their Russian contemporaries.

### 1.1.5.3 1980s–1990s: A Russian Perspective

Writing in 1981, the Russian musicologist Alexander Naumovich Dolzhansky credited *Romeo and Juliet* as ‘one of the highest achievements’ in Tchaikovsky’s arsenal of symphonic writing.<sup>78</sup> The popularity of this work, both in Russia and the wider European stage, was due to the ‘novelty’ of its ‘unusual style’, unfamiliarity with the music of its composer, and the music’s expression of the ‘Russian character’ — traits which others found offputting.<sup>79</sup> Dolzhansky felt that the concepts of hatred and love form the main theme, while the ‘particular important, preceding theme’ reflects the morality which governs the lives of the play’s heroes (i.e. ‘Friar Lawrence Theme’).<sup>80</sup> He claims that Tchaikovsky does not attempt to represent the Friar in a specific manner — his presence is merely implied through ‘an imaginative embodiment in the form of prayerful chants (chorale)’.<sup>81</sup>

For Dolzhansky, *Romeo and Juliet*'s opening theme serves as an all-encompassing reflection of Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox chant. As this

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<sup>78</sup> Alexander Naumovich Dolzhansky, *Symphonic Music of Tchaikovsky: Selected Works* (Simfonicheskaya muzika Chaykovskogo izbrannie proizvedeniya) (Leningrad: Leningrad Branch, 1981), p. 38. The translations are my own.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.* The previous section, 1.1 above, has demonstrated this observation.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*

‘blessing/holy’ music develops, the hidden hatred of the warring families begins to unfold, thus leading to the ‘Conflict Theme’.<sup>82</sup> Dolzhansky applauds Tchaikovsky’s successful depiction of the ‘warlike character’ of the feuding factions.<sup>83</sup> His analysis of the fantasy-overture does not add anything new to previous interpretations of the work.<sup>84</sup> Dolzhansky admires the sensuality and splendour of the love theme, and concludes that the fantasy-overture is a convincing representation of the tragic love story — a perspective familiar to writers and readers of the 1980s.

Perceptions of the programme of *Romeo and Juliet* remained static for the next twelve years. Alexander Poznansky’s brief commentary on the fantasy-overture in 1993 revisits the previous views of Warrack and Strutte:

There is no doubt that he [Tchaikovsky] wrote the overture with extraordinary enthusiasm. Here, for the first time, he joined the main emotional themes of all his subsequent *oeuvre* — the psychological drama of unfulfilled and frustrated love and of impossible youthful passion consumed by omnipresent death.<sup>85</sup>

Poznansky’s observation that the central themes of *Romeo and Juliet* pre-empted the programmatic narratives of later works is noteworthy in light of my later discussions on the similarities between the fantasy-overture and the *Manfred* symphony. His contextualisation of *Romeo and Juliet* within Tchaikovsky’s corpus of orchestral writing was also echoed in the writings of Jurij V. Keldish, who considered the

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<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 40.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, see pp. 40–44.

<sup>85</sup> *TQ*, p. 119.

importance of *Romeo and Juliet* within the ‘formation of Tchaikovsky’s symphonic thinking’.<sup>86</sup>

Keldish repeats the commentary of former scholars who perceived Balakirev as the guiding force behind the genesis and revisions of the fantasy-overture. However, he does comment on the difference between the 1869 and 1870 ‘Friar Lawrence Themes’. Unlike earlier writers, Keldish disagrees with the rewrite. He believed the original theme to be a convincing depiction of the ‘calm and blessed image of the good Friar’, criticising its replacement — ‘a grim, harsh-sounding chorale theme, to some extent echoed by the opening theme of the Fifth Symphony, which combines elements of the funeral march and choir’.<sup>87</sup>

For Keldish, the composition conveys ‘extraordinary imagery, expressive brilliance and vividness’ in its retelling of the Shakespearean play, and he applauds the love theme as ‘the most beautiful and poetic lyrical themes in the entire world of music’ — a view, as we have seen, also shared by Tchaikovsky’s Russian peers.<sup>88</sup> Regarding its programme, Keldish concludes that Tchaikovsky ‘did not aspire to a coherent transfer of all the vicissitudes of the dramatic action of Shakespeare’s tragedy: it highlights its major active forces, and their contrast and combat builds a

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<sup>86</sup> Jurij V. Keldish, ‘Uvertura-fantaziya *Romeo u Zhul’etta* i ee rol’ v formirovanin simfonizma Chaykovskogo’ (‘The fantasy-overture *Romeo and Juliet* and its role in the development of Tchaikovsky’s symphonic music’), *P. I. Chaikovskij: K 100-letiju so dnja smerti 1893–1993* (in *P. I. Chaikovskij: The 100th Anniversary of His Death (1893–1993)*, ed. by Aleksej Ivanovich Kandinskij, and Elena Gennadieвна Sorokina (Moscow: Gosudarstvennaya Konservatoriya imeni P. I. Chaikovskogo, 1995), p. 27.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28.

clear final form sonata-allegro with introduction and conclusion'.<sup>89</sup> Through his contextualisation of *Romeo and Juliet* within Tchaikovsky's greater symphonic style, Keldish's critique of the work allocated more analytical weight to the fantasy-overture than that of previous commentaries. As a result, Keldish was contributing to the developing movement of intellectualising Tchaikovsky's music.<sup>90</sup>

#### 1.1.5.4 Shifting Perceptions: Intellectualising Tchaikovsky's Music<sup>91</sup>

This shift in perception of the fantasy-overture, whereby the work was no longer trivialised as an entertainment piece, was also demonstrated in the writings of Catherine Coppola in 1998.<sup>92</sup> Her doctoral dissertation explores the development of the fantasy as a genre from 1870 to 1920. In it Coppola examines the concept of 'mixed genres' indicative of the era: 'fantasia quasi una sonata', 'symphonic fantasia' and 'fantasy-overture'.<sup>93</sup> Coppola discusses Tchaikovsky's use of fantasy form in his programmatic works and his deviations within this style, which she merits as an intrinsic part of the fantasy genre itself.<sup>94</sup> Her work contributed to the sphere of

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<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 29.

<sup>90</sup> See also the works of Henry Zajaczkowski: Henry Zajaczkowski, *Tchaikovsky's Musical Style*, ed. by Malcolm Hamrick Brown, *Russian Music Studies* 19 (London: UMI Research Press, 1987); Henry Zajaczkowski, 'Tchaikovsky's Musical Style', *ML*, 71/3 (1990), pp. 474–476; and Henry Zajaczkowski, 'Not to Be Born Were Best...Henry Zajaczkowski Proposes a Secret Programme for Tchaikovsky's Pathétique', *MT*, 134/1808 (1993), pp. 474–476. By 'intellectualising' I am referring to the treatment of Tchaikovsky's music in a serious, critical, scholarly manner as opposed to the tabloid-like approach of earlier biographers such as Orlova, Evans and Abraham.

<sup>91</sup> This concept of 'intellectualising' Tchaikovsky's music also extends to Russian music in general. See parts 1.2.3 and 1.2.4 below for further discussion of this movement in Russian musicology.

<sup>92</sup> Catherine Coppola, *Form and Fantasy: 1870–1920* (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, The City University of New York, 1998).

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.

<sup>94</sup> Coppola's commentary is primarily based on the 1880 version of Tchaikovsky's fantasy-overture.

developing knowledge in its assessment of *Romeo and Juliet* as a hermeneutic tool through which Tchaikovsky's personal interpretation of western musical models could be better understood. Notwithstanding, as the twenty-first century dawned, *Romeo and Juliet*'s place within the hermeneutic circle shifted position, yet again.

#### 1.1.5.5 2000s–Present: Return to Programme and Form

In the revised article on Tchaikovsky in the *Grove Online* (2001) Roland John Wiley brings the discourse on the fantasy-overture back to the relationship between form and programme, with a brief reference to the differences between the first and final revision:

Balakirev planned *Romeo and Juliet* in sonata-allegro, associating the introduction with Friar Lawrence, the *allegro* first theme with the hostility of the Capulets and Montagues, the second theme with the lovers. Tchaikovsky's music strikes a nice balance between characterisation (the introduction decidedly so after revision) and the improvisation called for in a development, from which he later excised a fugue too learned for the programmatic sense. The revised ending, a funeral march based on the lovers' theme, also improved on the first version, a reprise of Friar Lawrence's music from the introduction.<sup>95</sup>

The reference to Balakirev 'associating the introduction with Friar Lawrence' must be noted, as my research discloses the fact that Tchaikovsky did not originally name the introductory theme, in his musical sketches as anything other than, 'I Theme of the Introduction'.<sup>96</sup> While this does not clearly mean that Tchaikovsky did not intend the opening musical idea to represent the Friar, it does suggest the possibility of

<sup>95</sup> Roland John Wiley, 'Tchaikovsky, Pyotr Il'yich', *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 10 September 2012].

<sup>96</sup> *TBC*, p. 355,



interpretative ambiguity, which lends itself to hermeneutic inquiry. Perhaps *Romeo and Juliet*'s introductory theme may have had another programmatic function beyond the representation of Friar Lawrence. As with the majority of literature on Tchaikovsky's works, the article in *Grove Online* does not explore the programme of the fantasy-overture beyond the information expressed by 'received wisdom' (i.e. the body of writers discussed in this chapter) thus far. Perhaps this is primarily due to the issue of editorial space in a volume of this nature.

David Brown's updated study of Tchaikovsky (2007) also adds little to the body of research relating to *Romeo and Juliet*.<sup>97</sup> Like Wiley, he focuses his observations on the effect of the fantasy-overture's structure over its programme. Brown queries the limitations of such a form (sonata-allegro), where the 'preordained course of musical events is unlikely to have any plausible parallel to the narrative sequence of the play'.<sup>98</sup> He justifies its use by asserting that the 'point of music by itself (i.e. not as in opera, where it is tethered to a text and the events onstage) is that it can concentrate single-mindedly on the essence of the play'.<sup>99</sup> Brown observes that 'we learn little from Tchaikovsky's music of Shakespeare's actual plot except that its outcome is catastrophic'.<sup>100</sup> As with previous commentaries on the subject, the Friar's role is accepted and justified within the narrative of the musical plot. Brown deems the cleric's inclusion relevant since 'he is the activist who enables the course of love,

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<sup>97</sup> David Brown, *Tchaikovsky: The Man and His Music* (New York: Pegasus, 2007).

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 51.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*

but who stands outside the central conflict'.<sup>101</sup> Brown is possibly one of the few writers who actually rationalises his perception of the importance of Friar Lawrence within the programme of Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet*.

As we have seen, the literature concerned with detailing *Romeo and Juliet* since 1904 has been primarily occupied with issues of programme and structure. A fundamental element to this discussion has been the influence of Balakirev on both Tchaikovsky's impetus to write the fantasy-overture in the first place, and the programme itself. However, if we look at the corpus of scholarship, by writers such as Modest Tchaikovsky, Alexandra Orlova, David Brown, and Timothy Jackson, we see an underpinning argument that suggests Tchaikovsky was motivated to write *Romeo and Juliet* by his failed relationships — both homosexual and heterosexual. Even though this stance of examining Tchaikovsky's music in terms of his sexuality is no longer fashionable, its significance within a select portion of musicological writings relating to *Romeo and Juliet* merits careful consideration. As musicologists we should not shy away from this controversial, and maybe over-examined, perception just because it dominated western writings on Tchaikovsky throughout the twentieth century. Yes, Tchaikovsky was gay, and yes it is highly likely that his personal, or yearned for, relationships with men influenced his artistic manifesto, whether explicitly or covertly.

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<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*

### 1.1.6 *Romeo and Juliet* Influences: Tchaikovsky's Love Affairs

According to Orlova, Modest claimed that during his formative academic days his brother was able to write *Romeo and Juliet* 'solely because in his youth Tchaikovsky had suffered the torments of an unrequited love for his school-fellow Vladimir Gerard'.<sup>102</sup> This seems quite unlikely as the fantasy-overture was written ten years after the alleged crush, during which time Tchaikovsky's affections had turned to another. Nonetheless, the implications of this relationship must be explored.

#### 1.1.6.1 Vladimir Gerard

Despite Orlova's claims, references to a romantic relationship between Tchaikovsky and Gerard do not appear in the extant commentary on the composer. Writing in 1978, Brown briefly acknowledges Gerard as an acquaintance of Tchaikovsky but makes no remarks on any amorous connection. He comments on their friendship as follows:

Pyotr fired Gerard with a love of opera by taking him to a performance of Rossini's *Guillaume Tell*, and subsequently the two friends often attended the opera together, as well as French plays. They also shared in their social life. 'I remember', wrote

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<sup>102</sup> Orlova, *Tchaikovsky: A Self-Portrait*, p. xi. Orlova mentioned that, at the time of writing, Modest's references to this subject were held in the archives of the GDMC and access to them was not then granted. Orlova studied these papers and diaries while working at the Museum between 1938 and 1939. See also *TQ*, pp. 39–40. Even though much of Orlova's claims have been discredited, her writings shaped early perceptions of Tchaikovsky and *Romeo and Juliet*, and are worthy of inclusion in my discussion of the work's historiography within the interest of hermeneutic balance.

Vladimir Nikolayevich Gerard (1839–1903) was a classmate of Tchaikovsky's at the School of Jurisprudence. He worked his way up from a jurist to a senator and delivered the following oration at the funeral of the composer: 'Farewell, dear, beloved colleague. The earth will rest lightly upon you, there is no doubt of this. It always rests lightly on him who leaves behind good memories of himself; and for Tchaikovsky's "eternal memory" lies in his work, and in the love of them who knew him. Farewell!' See Wiley, *Tchaikovsky*, p. 387.

Gerard, ‘how, thanks to a meeting with the pretty sister of one of the law students we both got an invitation to a ball at the Zalivkina boarding school, and that we both danced assiduously’.<sup>103</sup>

Wiley’s latest biography of Tchaikovsky also excludes mention of any noteworthy relationship between the pair. He speaks of ‘the senator’, Gerard, on three occasions, but only as a point of reference — as a former class-mate of Tchaikovsky and orator at his funeral, and nothing more.<sup>104</sup> Due to the lack of documentary evidence to corroborate the possibility of ‘unrequited love’ on Tchaikovsky’s part, it is difficult to say for certain whether Gerard had any lasting influence on the love element of *Romeo and Juliet*’s programme. This appears to be due to another — Eduard Zak (1854–1873) — the man whom Poznansky considers to be the true source of inspiration for *Romeo and Juliet*.

### 1.1.6.2 Eduard Zak

Poznansky perceived an ‘intimate link’ between ‘this fervent piece [*Romeo and Juliet*] and an obscure drama unfolding in the composer’s life at the time of its composition’.<sup>105</sup> Timothy Jackson also considers the possibility that Zak may have inspired the ‘Love Theme’ of Tchaikovsky’s fantasy-overture:<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> Brown, *Tchaikovsky: The Early Years*, p. 41.

<sup>104</sup> Wiley, *Tchaikovsky*, pp. 22, 387 and 445.

<sup>105</sup> *TQ*, p. 119. The ‘obscure drama’ refers to Tchaikovsky’s infatuation with Zak.

<sup>106</sup> Timothy L. Jackson, *Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 6* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 38.

In *Romeo and Juliet*, the theme first presented in D $\flat$  major, [...] the ‘Love’ theme, might be further interpreted as ‘Romeo’s perception of Juliet’, or more simply, as the ‘Love/Juliet-Zak theme’.<sup>107</sup>

Continued speculation regarding the connection between Zak and *Romeo and Juliet* carried forward to the literature on the subject as recently as 2002. James Loehlin believes that the fantasy-overture was ‘written under the spell of his [Tchaikovsky’s] infatuation’ with Eduard Zak’.<sup>108</sup> Loehlin does not elaborate on this statement and concludes that Tchaikovsky’s *Romeo and Juliet* reflects ‘the psychological drama of unfulfilled and frustrated love and of impossible youthful passion consumed by omnipresent death’.<sup>109</sup> Obviously, Loehlin, a non-music scholar, has used Poznansky as his source of musical information.<sup>110</sup>

Frustratingly, there is very little written evidence discussing the relationship between Tchaikovsky and Zak, who was fifteen years old at the time of *Romeo and Juliet*’s composition — the age that Tchaikovsky allegedly ‘always considered to be the peak of male adolescent beauty’.<sup>111</sup> Even though Tchaikovsky briefly referred to Zak in his diary No. 8, the English version of *Life and Letters* failed to discuss the matter.<sup>112</sup> In his editorial commentary on Tchaikovsky’s diaries, Vladimir Lakond

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<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 51.

<sup>108</sup> James N. Loehlin, ed., *Romeo and Juliet* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 43.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>110</sup> While Loehlin’s book belongs to the realm of English literary studies I feel that his study of *Romeo and Juliet* is worthy of mention here as his research claims to present a comprehensive overview of how the play has been adapted and performed in the worlds of theatre, music and literature, since the seventeenth century.

<sup>111</sup> *TQ*, p. 120.

<sup>112</sup> Tchaikovsky, *The Diaries*, pp. 210–211.

remarked that ‘all efforts to identify this individual [Zak] have proved fruitless’.<sup>113</sup>

We cannot be sure if this was a deliberate act on the part of Tchaikovsky’s censors and brother Modest or not. Poznansky considers this lack of information ‘a significant loss’, because ‘there is reason to believe that he [Zak] was one of the great passions of Tchaikovsky’s life’.<sup>114</sup> If we look to the existing documentary evidence, sparse as it is, it seems that Poznansky may have a point.

Zak was not a student of Tchaikovsky but the cousin of a Moscow Conservatory student, Rudolph Köber.<sup>115</sup> Brown offers some background information on Zak as follows:

In October [1871] he [Tchaikovsky] had written an urgent letter to his brother Nikolay about a certain Eduard Zak, a cousin of one of his Conservatory pupils. Nikolay had been showing some kindness to the youth, and Tchaikovsky now proposed that the boy should come to stay in Moscow.<sup>116</sup>

At this stage, Zak would have been seventeen. It appears, then, that Tchaikovsky knew the boy prior to the writing of *Romeo and Juliet* in 1869, and during its subsequent revision in 1870. In his letters Tchaikovsky continued to plead with Nikolay to send Zak to Moscow, proving that he had struck up an acquaintance with the boy and was beginning to miss him dearly:

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<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, fn. 30, p. 210.

<sup>114</sup> *TQ*, p. 120.

<sup>115</sup> Poznansky notes in *TQ* that Köber was one of Tchaikovsky’s students at the Moscow Conservatory. However, little is known about his biography. See *TQ*, p. 120.

<sup>116</sup> Brown, *Tchaikovsky: The Early Years*, p. 248. Nikolay Vasilyevich Tchaikovsky (1851–1926). For more information on Nikolay see *LL*, p. 4.

I beg you, old chap, if you find that my view is sound, to let him [Zak] — and even order him — to travel to Moscow; in doing this you'll cause me great pleasure. I have missed him a great deal, and I'm fearful for his future. I fear that manual work will kill all higher aspirations in him. I'll tell you frankly that, if I notice in him a moral and intellectual decline, I shall take steps to find alternative employment for him. But whatever happens, it's absolutely necessary that I see him. For God's sake, arrange it!<sup>117</sup>

Brown remarks that 'beyond this, there is no evidence that might illuminate this relationship, and Zak himself remains a shadowy figure'.<sup>118</sup> However, the young man did eventually come to Moscow to spend time with Tchaikovsky. Tragically, Zak committed suicide in 1873. Tchaikovsky was devastated. His diaries mention Zak three times in an ardent, despairing, fashion. The most specific reference to the death appears in a diary entry written on 4 September 1887: 'Before going to sleep, thought much and long about Edward; Wept much; Is it possible *he* is not here now at all??? I don't believe it'.<sup>119</sup> A day later Tchaikovsky wrote:

Was recalling and thinking about Zak again. How amazingly lifelike my memory of him is: the sound of his voice, his motions, but, in particular, the rarely beautiful expression of his face at times. I cannot realise that he is not here at all now. Death, i.e. his complete non-existence is beyond my understanding. It seems to me that I never loved anyone so intensely. God! What they did not say to me then; and no matter how I console myself, my guilt is terrible regarding him! And in the meantime, I loved him, i.e. did not love, and also love him now and his memory is sacred to me!<sup>120</sup>

Although an examination of these words can lead to subjective interpretation it is necessary, as there is very little documentary verification to corroborate the existence of any union between the pair. Without doubt, the above words illustrate

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<sup>117</sup> Brown, *Tchaikovsky: The Early Years*, p. 248.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 249.

<sup>119</sup> Tchaikovsky, *The Diaries of Tchaikovsky*, p. 210.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 211.

Tchaikovsky's deep feelings for the young boy. The fact that he recalls memories of Zak's movements and mannerisms suggests an intense study or awareness of the boy's actions when he was alive (or an exaggerated memory of him in death). The clarification of the meaning of death — 'non-existence' — as being beyond Tchaikovsky's comprehension, demonstrates a sense of despair at the eternity of the situation.<sup>121</sup> It appears from this excerpt that Tchaikovsky may have been coerced into ending his relationship with Zak reluctantly ('what they did not say to me then'), hence his 'terrible' guilt. Tchaikovsky's final languishing declaration of love cannot be ignored. It speaks for itself.

As has been seen, the writings of Modest Tchaikovsky, Orlova, Poznansky, Wiley and Jackson have highlighted Zak, with Orlova claiming ownership of the Gerard link, as influential figures in determining Tchaikovsky's representation of love within *Romeo and Juliet*. Even so, these homosexual relationships cannot be perceived as the sole impetus for the work's composition, beyond the advice of Balakirev. Tchaikovsky also engaged in two major heterosexual unions during the writing of *Romeo and Juliet*: the first occurred prior to the writing of the work (1868–1869); while the second prefaced the final revision of 1880 (1877). If we are to consider the effect his homosexual relationships may have had on the programme of

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<sup>121</sup> In Part Four of this thesis I discuss Tchaikovsky's confrontation and celebration of death in his music, with particular reference to *Manfred* and *Romeo and Juliet*. In this extract Tchaikovsky perceives death fearfully, without hope of a reunion in the afterlife. Perhaps, he used his music to play out this internal struggle with the finality of death and the hopelessness of life.



*Romeo and Juliet* then, in the interest of hermeneutic balance, we must also consider Tchaikovsky's heterosexual relationships.

### 1.1.6.3 Désirée Artôt

Susan McClary remarks that prior to 1988, 'most biographers either drew a veil of secrecy around the homoerotic aspects of a male composer's life or else sought to prove that he was heterosexual' — a feat that often required extensive rummaging for possible girlfriends.<sup>122</sup> Some exceptions existed: 'Tchaikovsky's homosexuality had been established beyond question'.<sup>123</sup> Despite this deep-seated acknowledgment of Tchaikovsky's sexuality, early twentieth-century commentators still scoured his biography for instances of possible heterosexual liaisons.

It is known that for most of his professional life Tchaikovsky circulated within the upper echelons of society in which homosexuality was either accepted or ignored.<sup>124</sup> However, the composer was often worried by the impact of harmful rumours on his family's reputation. According to Wiley, the pressure of public gossip forced Tchaikovsky to 'confront public attitudes about homosexuality; indignant and contemptuous'.<sup>125</sup> Consequently, Tchaikovsky's thoughts were directed towards the idea of heterosexual love. Reflections of this idea appeared in 1869, previous to the

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<sup>122</sup> Susan McClary, 'Music and Sexuality: On the Steblin/Solomon Debate', *19th-Century Music*, 17/1, Schubert: Music, Sexuality, Culture (1993), p. 83.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>124</sup> See *TTOE*, p. 77; and *TQ*, pp. 51–52.

<sup>125</sup> Wiley, *Tchaikovsky*, p. 26.

writing of *Romeo and Juliet*. The lady in question was the Belgian mezzo-soprano, Désirée Artôt.<sup>126</sup>

Early literature on Tchaikovsky, by writers such as Evans and Lockspeiser, tells us that he was involved in an amorous relationship with Artôt.<sup>127</sup> They met in 1868 while she was on tour with an Italian opera troupe under the direction of the impresario Eugenio Merelli.<sup>128</sup> Konstantin de Lazari, a society acquaintance of Tchaikovsky, remarked on Artôt's favourable reception in Moscow at this time as follows:<sup>129</sup>

[...] at this time she [Artôt] was the embodiment of operatic perfection. Whoever saw her then would remember all his life the highly artistic impression made by her inimitable performance. While on stage she was the subject of universal adoration in Moscow; she was no less popular in private life. Her face was not beautiful: her nose was too broad, her lips a bit thick; but, despite this, there was such charm in the expression of her eyes, her exquisite and gracious manners, her conduct, her ability to utter a kind word to everyone and show her respect with warmth, etc..., that her charm was communicated to literally everyone.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Désirée Artôt (1835–1907) was the professional name of the Belgian mezzo-soprano, Marguerite Josephine Montagney. She began singing with the Paris Opéra in 1858. See *TQ*, pp. 109–110 and Harold Rosenthal, 'Artôt, Désirée', *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 25 September 2012].

<sup>127</sup> In 1906 Edwin Evans discussed Tchaikovsky's 'enthusiasm 'for Artôt 'as an artist' which had 'developed into love for her as a woman', leading him to 'contemplate marriage'. See Evans, *Tchaikovsky*, p. 23. Writing in 1945, Edward Lockspeiser situated the composition of *Romeo and Juliet* 'shortly after the abortive love affair with Désirée Artôt'. See Lockspeiser, 'Tchaikovsky The Man', in *Tchaikovsky A Symposium*, p. 14. Poznansky also refers to the 'affair' between the pair under the chapter heading, 'Desires and Flames', in *TQ*, pp. 109–116.

<sup>128</sup> The Italian opera manager Eugenio Merelli (1825–1882) was the son of the famous Bartolomeo Merelli (1794–1879), who was the director of Milan's *La Scala* opera house, librettist for some of Donizetti's operas and worked with Verdi. Eugenio's Italian company began performing at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow on 9 (21) September 1868. See John Rosselli, 'Merelli, Bartolomeo', *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 25 September 2012].

<sup>129</sup> Konstantin Nikolayevich de Lazari (1838–1903). See *TTOE*, p. 301.

<sup>130</sup> *TTOE*, p. 88.

The above excerpt suggests that Artôt's artistry seduced many, and Tchaikovsky's similar reception of her could be more appropriately considered as admiration rather than love. An equal sentiment was observed by Herman Laroche who remarked that:

[For Tchaikovsky, Artôt appeared] as the virtual personification of dramatic singing, a goddess of opera uniting within herself alone gifts usually scattered among various contrasting natures.<sup>131</sup>

Like Lockspeiser and Evans, Richard Taruskin went so far as to assert that the soprano was 'the only woman known to have aroused his [Tchaikovsky's] sexual interest' — despite the lack of any data to support this idea.<sup>132</sup> Taruskin linked the writing of *Romeo and Juliet* with Artôt in his attestation that the work was composed 'just as the composer was getting over his infatuation with the soprano'.<sup>133</sup> Apparently, Tchaikovsky's feelings for Artôt, regardless of their intensity, persuaded him to contemplate marriage, possibly for the first time.<sup>134</sup>

Notwithstanding, all hopes of wedlock were quashed in January 1869 when Tchaikovsky discovered that Artôt had secretly married a Spanish baritone in Warsaw.<sup>135</sup> Poznansky believes that Artôt's mother may have found out about Tchaikovsky's sexual orientation and subsequently 'encouraged the union'.<sup>136</sup> The

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<sup>131</sup> *TQ*, p. 110.

<sup>132</sup> Richard Taruskin, *Defining Russia Musically* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2000), p. 182, hereafter referred to as *DRM*.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>134</sup> For more discussion on the potential marriage between Artôt and Tchaikovsky, see *TQ*, pp. 111–113.

<sup>135</sup> Don Mariano Padilla y Ramos (1842–1906). See Rosenthal, 'Artôt, Désirée', *GMO. OMO*.

<sup>136</sup> *TTOE* p. 79.

initial shock of the situation disillusioned Tchaikovsky, as it halted his future plans, but, according to all reports, he recovered swiftly.<sup>137</sup> In this instance it appears that it was his ego, and not his heart, that was wounded. *Romeo and Juliet* was written nine months later. It is possible that Tchaikovsky's desire to adhere to social norms may have been reflected in his choice to represent Shakespeare's tragic love story — the epitome of heterosexual *amore* — in musical form.

In 1870, following the writing of the fantasy-overture, and possibly during the first revision, Tchaikovsky remained preoccupied with his heterosexual cause. He even tried to dissuade his brother, Modest, from following a homosexual life, urging him to 'fight his homoerotic inclinations'.<sup>138</sup> Tchaikovsky advised his brother as follows: 'If there is the least possibility, try not to be a *bugger*; That would be very sad; At your age you can still force yourself to love the fairer sex: try it once, perhaps it will work'.<sup>139</sup> Tchaikovsky attempted to follow his own advice seven years later, but with catastrophic results.

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<sup>137</sup> Tchaikovsky did not let these events impact on his admiration for Artôt, the performer. His high opinion of her was reflected in his dedication of the following works to her: Romance in F minor, Op. 5 (1868); 'None but The Lonely Heart' (1869); 'Six French Songs', Op. 65 (1888). Writing in 1888, Tchaikovsky commented on his tour in Berlin saying: 'Among those who were especially friendly to me in Berlin I will mention the well-known concert agent Wolff; the fine violinist Emil Sauret; the celebrated Moritz Moskovsky, whose personality seemed to me as interesting as his creative gift; the publisher and charming man Hugo Bock; and finally Madame Artôt — so well remembered by the Moscow public. This talented singer had been living for some time in Berlin, where she was particularly appreciated and loved by the Court and the public, and where she sang with great success and also gave lessons. I was invited, together with Grieg, to spend an evening at Madame Artôt's house, the memory of which will never be effaced. Both the personality and the art of this singer are as irresistibly fascinating as ever'. See Newmarch, *Tchaikovsky: His Life and Works*, p. 245.

<sup>138</sup> Wiley, *Tchaikovsky*, p. 54.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*

#### 1.1.6.4 Antonina Milyukova

Tchaikovsky entered into an unsuccessful relationship with Antonina Milyukova on 6 (18) July 1877.<sup>140</sup> The pair had met in 1873 while Antonina was a student at the Moscow Conservatory. In March of 1877 she penned her first letter of courtship to him. In it she claimed that she had loved him for many years. His diary entry of 22 June 1877 reveals that this letter ‘agitated’ him, ‘though not greatly’.<sup>141</sup> Nonetheless, flattered by Antonina’s attention, Tchaikovsky continued to correspond with her. Again, he began to consider the prospect of marriage and proposed to Antonina in May.<sup>142</sup> Their brief relationship lasted only four months. Modest remarked that ‘from the first hour of his married life Tchaikovsky had to pay the penalty of his rash and ill-considered act and was profoundly miserable’.<sup>143</sup>

Antonina’s possible significance within the shaping of *Romeo and Juliet*’s programme appears unlikely, given that the majority of the revisions had been put in place earlier in 1870. Even so, David Brown associated a connection, albeit vague,

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<sup>140</sup> Antonina Ivanovna Milyukova (1848–1917). She enrolled as a student of the Moscow Conservatory in the early 1870s but never completed her studies. See TQ, pp. 205–206.

<sup>141</sup> Tchaikovsky, *The Diaries of Tchaikovsky*, pp. 91–92.

<sup>142</sup> For more information on the marriage between Tchaikovsky and Antonina see Wiley, *Tchaikovsky*, pp. 146–157. See also TQ, pp. 204–230. However, Poznansky’s retelling of the events is quite judgemental and he clearly sides with Tchaikovsky in his condemnation of Antonina’s character and intelligence.

<sup>143</sup> LL, p. 220. Allegedly, the failure of his marriage left Tchaikovsky considering self-harm and Antonina spending the remainder of her days in an asylum. According to Nikolay Kashkin, Tchaikovsky attempted suicide by wading into the Moscow river in the hope of catching some fatal illness. Antonina was admitted to a mental hospital near St Petersburg in 1896 where she stayed for four years. She was committed to an asylum in 1901 and remained there until her death in 1903. For more information see Wiley, *Tchaikovsky*, p. 154, and <[http://www.tchaikovsky-research.net/en/people/tchaikovskaia\\_antonina.html](http://www.tchaikovsky-research.net/en/people/tchaikovskaia_antonina.html)>.

Nikolay Dmitriyevich Kashkin (1839–1920) was a Russian composer, music critic, teacher and friend of Tchaikovsky. He served as Professor of piano, music theory and history at the Moscow Conservatory from 1866 to 1896, and 1905 to 1908. See David Brown, ‘Kashkin, Nikolay Dmitriyevich’, *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 25 September 2012].

between the failed marriage and the fantasy-overture under the chapter heading ‘Aborted Marriage: *Romeo and Juliet*’.<sup>144</sup> In so doing, Brown attributes some worth to Tchaikovsky’s failed marriage to Antonina in the construction of the work’s programme.<sup>145</sup>

While we can never be sure if *Romeo and Juliet*’s programme drew inspiration from Tchaikovsky’s relationships with men and women, we cannot dismiss such a possibility, in the interest of hermeneutics, when there is no solid evidence to prove otherwise. It is possible that Tchaikovsky may have been reminded of these liaisons during the composition of his fantasy-overture — after all it was allegedly based on a tale of tragic love — as his philosophy of music extolled the expression of emotion in music.<sup>146</sup>

### **1.1.7 Summary: What Do We Know about Tchaikovsky’s *Romeo and Juliet*?**

Thus far, this chapter has presented an overview of how *Romeo and Juliet* has been perceived in composers’ reminiscences, concert commentaries and secondary literature since the end of the nineteenth century. We have learned that Russian and American concert audiences and critics were more forgiving of the fantasy-overture than their European counterparts. Issues with the Russian musical style contributed to

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<sup>144</sup> Brown, *Tchaikovsky: The Man and His Music*.

<sup>145</sup> A similar perspective is evident in Jeremy Siepmann’s CD biography of Tchaikovsky. He employs the ‘love theme’ music of *Romeo and Juliet* to accompany the following sections: ‘Abortive Engagement’; ‘The Advent of Balakirev’; ‘The Disastrous Road to Matrimony’; and ‘Marriage Trauma’. See Jeremy Siepmann, *Pyotr Il’yich Tchaikovsky: His Life and Works* (Naxos, 2002).

<sup>146</sup> This will be discussed in Part Two.

much of the negativity surrounding *Romeo and Juliet*'s early reception. Preconceived notions of the work's programme, based on the expectation that Tchaikovsky's representation of the Shakespearean tale was similar in style to that of Berlioz, caused confusion for French and German audiences.

More detailed discussions of *Romeo and Juliet*'s programme and structure punctuated the mass of research dedicated to Tchaikovsky from the early twentieth century to the present day. Here, writers began to move away from the idea that the fantasy-overture was a characterisation of Friar Lawrence, the feuding Montagues and Capulets, and the 'star-crossed lovers', towards an interpretation of the work as an abstract representation of love and fate. In the evolving movement of intellectualising Tchaikovsky's music, writers from the late 1980s onwards began to discuss *Romeo and Juliet* within the larger context of Tchaikovsky's musical style — no longer relegating the work to a mere entertainment piece with not much left to say. Now that the main arguments of the literature concerning *Romeo and Juliet* since the end of the nineteenth century have been synthesised, it is necessary to look at the information surrounding the work's composition to elucidate the gaps in our knowledge regarding the composition.

## **1.2 Refocusing the Lens: Why Reinterpret *Romeo and Juliet*?**

The editors of the recently published *Thematic and Bibliographical Catalogue (TBC)* acknowledge, without elaboration, the fact that 'nothing is known on the

circumstances of Tchaikovsky's work on drafts and orchestration' of his *Romeo and Juliet*.<sup>147</sup> However, this statement appears questionable when we consider the information contained in Tchaikovsky's writings during the work's protracted composition. In crediting Balakirev with the sole inspiration for the work's programme, 'including the tonal design', and subsequent revisions, the *TBC* repeats the sentiments of received wisdom thus far.<sup>148</sup> As a result of this perspective, Tchaikovsky's role within the design of his fantasy-overture's programme has appeared passive.

While researching the vast literature detailing Tchaikovsky's life and music, the need for further examination of his correspondence with Balakirev during *Romeo and Juliet*'s composition became apparent.<sup>149</sup> Aside from Calvocoressi's article, 'The

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<sup>147</sup> *TBC*, p. 354; (pp. 354–356 deal specifically with *Romeo and Juliet*).

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.* All of the literature which deals with *Romeo and Juliet* attributes the construction of its programme to Balakirev. This is based on an inadequate survey of the correspondence between the pair. A select list of the sources which purport this belief reads as follows: *PSSL*, p. 3; *TBC*, p. 354; *LL*, p. 107; Rosa Harriet Jeaffreson Newmarch, *Tchaikovsky: His Life and Works, With Extracts from His Writings, and The Diary of His Tour Abroad in 1888* (New York: The Bodley Head, 1900), p. 22; Edward Lockspeiser, 'Tchaikovsky', in *Tchaikovsky: A Symposium*, p. 14; *Taruskin, DFM*, p. 183; and *TTOE* p. 51. Wiley's article on Tchaikovsky in the *GMO* challenges earlier citations that Tchaikovsky's revisions were proof of his subordination to Balakirev. He concludes that by 1869 Tchaikovsky 'did not need anybody's advice on how to write music, nor does much in the works he produced under nationalist auspices show allegiance to their philosophy'. See Wiley, 'Tchaikovsky', *GMO. OMO*. This thesis adds to this developing discourse through its reevaluation of the roles of both Tchaikovsky and Balakirev in the writing of *Romeo and Juliet*.

<sup>149</sup> See the following chronological list of select works which discuss Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet*: Newmarch, *Tchaikovsky: His Life and Works*; Edwin Evans, *Tchaikovsky*; Calvocoressi, 'The Correspondence'; Rosa Harriet Jeaffreson Newmarch, *The Concert-goer's Library of Descriptive Notes* (London: Oxford University Press, 1928); John Mann, 'Tchaikovsky', in *The Men Behind the Music* (London: Routledge, 1931); Gerald Abraham, 'Tchaikovsky: Some Centennial Reflections', *ML*, 22/2 (1940), pp. 110–119; Abraham, *Tchaikovsky: A Symposium*; Lawrence and Elisabeth Hanson, *Tchaikovsky: A New Study of The Man and His Music*; David Brown, *Tchaikovsky* (London: Dent, 1973); Warrack, *Tchaikovsky*; Vladimir Volkoff, *Tchaikovsky: A Self-Portrait* (Boston: Crescendo Publishing, 1974); David Brown, *Tchaikovsky: A Biographical and Critical Study i, The Early Years 1840–1874* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1978); Strutte, *Tchaikovsky: His Life and Times*; Edward Garden, 'The Influence of Balakirev on Tchaikovsky', *Proceedings of the Royal Musical*



Correspondence between Balakirev and Tchaikovsky' (1912), there has been no further English translation of the full exchange between both composers during this period.<sup>150</sup> Calvocoressi's work charts only a handful of these letters (seven). My analysis examines twenty-two, including a further twenty-eight communications from Tchaikovsky to friends, family and publishers from 1869 to 1888. This evaluation provides comprehensive details of the evolution of *Romeo and Juliet*. Crucially, it reveals that Tchaikovsky had a more controlling influence on the fantasy-overture's programme than has been previously understood. In considering the content of Tchaikovsky's letters, alongside his musical sketches and final autograph scores, this thesis explores the ambiguities — neglected by contemporary scholarship — surrounding the categorisation of *Romeo and Juliet* as a 'fantasy-overture', and the labelling of its musical themes.

### 1.2.1 *Romeo and Juliet*: Reconsidering Thematic Labels

My assessment of the correspondence between Tchaikovsky and Balakirev shows that neither composer ever referred to *Romeo and Juliet* as anything other than

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*Association*, 107 (1980–1981), pp. 86–100; Dolzhansky, *Symphonic Music of Tchaikovsky: Selected Works*; Orlova, *Tchaikovsky: A Self-Portrait*; David Brown, *Tchaikovsky Remembered* (London: Faber and Faber, 1993); *TQ*; Anthony Holden, *Tchaikovsky* (London and New York: Bantam Press, 1995); Keldish, 'The fantasy-overture *Romeo and Juliet* and its role in the development of Tchaikovsky's symphonic music'; Alexander Poznansky, 'Tchaikovsky: The Man Behind The Myth', *MT*, 136/1826 (1995), pp. 175–182; *TTOE*; Richard Taruskin, 'Tchaikovsky', ed. by Stanley Sadie *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* 25 (London: Macmillan, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, 2001); Brown, *Tchaikovsky: The Man and His Music* (2007); Alexander Poznansky, *Pyotr Tchaikovsky: A Biography* (St Petersburg: Vita Nova, 2009); Roland John Wiley, *Tchaikovsky* (USA: Oxford University Press, 2009); and Wiley, 'Tchaikovsky, Pyotr Il'yich', *GMO. OMO*.

<sup>150</sup> Calvocoressi, 'The Correspondence', pp. 712–715.

‘overture’ (увертюра/overtyura). Even though their respective vocabularies employed the term ‘fantasy’ (фантазия/fantaziya) in the discussion of other compositions, it was not used in relation to *Romeo and Juliet*.<sup>151</sup> None of the autograph scores bears the title ‘fantasy-overture’. According to *TBC*, marks by an unidentified person were made on the title page of the first version of *Romeo and Juliet* as follows: ‘Orig[inal] version *Romeo and Juliet*’.<sup>152</sup> At the beginning of the sonata-allegro the words ‘*Romeo and Juliet*’ are found.<sup>153</sup> A similar anonymous note appeared on the title page of the second version of the work: ‘Ov[erture] *Romeo and Juliet*’.<sup>154</sup> The omission of the word ‘fantasy’ on these pages is noteworthy. This term also escaped inclusion in the concert programme of the Tiflis Russian Music Society’s (RMS) première of the third version on 19 April 1886.<sup>155</sup> Thus, the perception of *Romeo and Juliet* as a ‘fantasy-overture’ has entered scholarship retrospectively, as a result of the analysis of Tchaikovsky’s later works within this genre.<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> There are many examples of the use of the word ‘fantasy’ (фантазия/fantaziya) in the exchange of letters between Balakirev and Tchaikovsky. See *PBC*, pp. 35, 54 and 73. I have selected these pages as they occur during the period in which *Romeo and Juliet* was discussed.

<sup>152</sup> *TBC*, p. 355.

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>155</sup> See Appendix II: Miscellaneous (A.II.1), p. 325, for a list of the works performed at this concert in honour of Tchaikovsky. *Romeo and Juliet* appeared as: ‘Uvertura k rame Shekspire *Romeo u Dzhul’eta* ispolnit’ orkestr’ (Overture to the Shakespearean play, *Romeo and Juliet*). The facsimile was kindly supplied by Tamara Zakirovna Skvirsky from the following source: Vasily Yakovlev, ed., *The Days and Years of P. I. Tchaikovsky: Annals of His Life and Works (Dni i godi P. I. Chaikovskogo. Letopis’ zhizni i tvorchestva)* (Muzgiz, Moscow-Leningrad, 1940), p. 369.

<sup>156</sup> In 1896 we see one of the first English references to *Romeo and Juliet* as a ‘fantasy-overture’ by August Jaeger (see ‘Tchaikovsky’s *Romeo and Juliet* Overture’, p. 484). Rosa Newmarch described *Romeo and Juliet* as an ‘overture’ in her discussion of Tchaikovsky in 1900 (see *Tchaikovsky: His Life and Works*, pp. 23–24). However, she later labeled ‘The Tempest’ as an ‘orchestral fantasia’ (see p. 38), and *Hamlet* as an ‘overture fantasia’ (see p. 93). It is noteworthy to observe the fact that Tchaikovsky did not refer to *Hamlet* as an ‘overture-fantasia’ in his brief published references to its composition. Evans used the term ‘fantasy-overture’ in his discussion of the work in 1906 (see

Twentieth- and Twenty-first-century studies on *Romeo and Juliet* endorse the popular idea that the work opens with an introductory theme entitled ‘Friar Lawrence’, is followed by a turbulent feuding section representative of the Montagues and Capulets, and a bipartite love theme suggestive of ‘Romeo’ and ‘Juliet’.<sup>157</sup> However, the autograph scores reveal that the labels ‘Friar Lawrence’, ‘Romeo’ and ‘Juliet’ do not appear on any of the three versions.<sup>158</sup> The question therefore arises: where did these labels originate? Although Tchaikovsky refers to the introductory theme on one

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*Tchaikovsky*, p. 28). The labeling of Tchaikovsky’s *Romeo and Juliet* as a ‘fantasy-overture’ was thus standardised in musicological discussions of the work. This thesis agrees with the contemporary title of ‘fantasy-overture’.

<sup>157</sup> See the following sources for references to the opening Friar Lawrence Theme and the warring Montagues and Capulets: Evans, *Tchaikovsky*, p. 130; Newmarch, *The Concert-goer's Library of Descriptive Notes*, p. 80; Dolzhansky, *Symphonic Music of Tchaikovsky*, p. 38; Keldish, ‘The fantasy-overture *Romeo and Juliet*’, p. 27; Loehlin, *Romeo and Juliet*, p. 43; Wiley, ‘Tchaikovsky, Pyotr Ilyich’, *GMO. OMO.*; and Wiley, *Tchaikovsky*, p. 63.

Timothy Jackson appears convinced by the representation of Friar Lawrence within *Romeo and Juliet*’s programme in his discussion of the presence of a ‘cruciform motif’ within the Friar’s theme: ‘The appearances of the cross-motif in the new introduction casts a dark shadow over the rest of the overture, suggesting that as the instrument of Divine Judgement, Friar Lawrence presides over, perhaps even instigates, the sacrificial “crucifixion” of the lovers. This emphatically sinister view of Lawrence and his role as an instrument of divine “justice” is supported by the terrifying effect of his reiterated chorale-like theme in the revised development’. See Jackson, *Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 6*, p. 52. Without the association of the Friar and the lovers Jackson’s theory of crucifixion becomes diluted. His entire interpretation is based on an acceptance of the introductory theme as a valid representation of Friar Lawrence.

See the following list of sources for discussion on the individual ‘Romeo’ and ‘Juliet’ themes: Francis Maes (1996) states: ‘The second theme represents the world of love. It consists of two parts: the broad love theme — generally associated with Romeo in the commentaries — framed by a theme of gently oscillating chord combinations, generally associated with Juliet’. See Francis Maes, *A History of Russian Music — From Kamarinskaya to Babi Yar*, trans. by Arnold J. Pomerans and Erica Pomerans (California: California Press, 2002), p. 74. Richard Taruskin also remarks on the traditional perspective of dividing the Love theme into singular ‘Romeo’ and ‘Juliet’ themes as follows: ‘[...] the first love theme (generally associated with Romeo) [...]’. See *DRM*, p. 183. David Brown comments on the possibility that each ‘Love Theme’ may represent the individual characters of Romeo and Juliet: ‘[...] are we to hear these two themes as complimentary, the first spacious and ardent, conveying the warmth and strength of love, the second (on muted strings) intimate, delicate, and breathing love’s gentleness and tenderness? Or are they, in fact, separate representatives of the lovers themselves, the first of Romeo, full of masculine but tender ardour, the second of Juliet and her feminine adoration?’. See Brown, *Tchaikovsky: The Man and His Music*, p. 52. Interestingly, Brown did not make any such assumption in his earlier critique (1978) of *Romeo and Juliet* in *Tchaikovsky: The Early Years 1840–1874*.

<sup>158</sup> See Appendix III: Autograph Manuscripts (Facsimiles), pp. 336–341.

occasion as being suggestive of a religious figure (Father/Friar) in a letter to Balakirev (9 November 1869), he neither lists this title on his original thematic sketches (sent later to Balakirev on 29 November 1869), nor on his final autograph scores.<sup>159</sup> Maybe Tchaikovsky did not feel the need to rename the introductory theme as ‘Friar Lawrence’ in his thematic sketches. After all, he had previously mentioned this intention in his letter to Balakirev, prior to his sending the outline of the musical themes. If that was the case then why did Tchaikovsky decide to label the ‘Love Theme’ in both his letter and his sketches? Surely, the love element would have been the most obvious theme in *Romeo and Juliet*, and therefore did not warrant such deliberate pointing out — unlike, the ‘Friar Lawrence’ theme, which needed illumination.<sup>160</sup>

Later remarks to Balakirev in respect of his revisions to *Romeo and Juliet* in 1870 suggest that Tchaikovsky may not have intended this opening theme to represent Friar Lawrence at all. In fact, Tchaikovsky states that his objective was ‘to express a lonely soul whose spirit reached towards the sky’.<sup>161</sup> While this does possibly suggest a clerical figure with aspirations towards heaven, it is not explicitly stated. It could also represent Tchaikovsky himself and his searching of the heavens for clarity or inspiration. Also, Tchaikovsky never separated the ‘Love Theme’ into the specific divisions of ‘Romeo’ and ‘Juliet’ with which we are familiar today. In his

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<sup>159</sup> See *PBC*, pp. 40–41; *PSSL*, pp. 180–181; and Calvocoressi, ‘The Correspondence’, p. 712.

<sup>160</sup> However, we are reminded of English audiences’ earlier reception of *Romeo and Juliet*, whereby the love theme was not as obvious as I, and Jaeger, assume.

<sup>161</sup> This letter was written to Balakirev, on 20–23 October 1870. See *PSSL*, pp. 236–7; and Orlova, *Tchaikovsky: A Self-Portrait*, p. 25.

correspondence he only designated the bipartite theme as ‘Love Theme’, and in the thematic sketches sent to Balakirev he used the titles ‘Love Theme “a” and “b”’.<sup>162</sup> In order then, to get a clearer picture of Tchaikovsky’s labelling of themes, and an informed overview of the way in which he revised *Romeo and Juliet* in 1870 and 1880, it is essential that we examine his letters to Balakirev, along with his autograph sketches and the full orchestral scores.

### **1.2.2 Emerging Gaps in Contemporary Knowledge of *Romeo and Juliet***

As we have seen, a considerable amount of the literature concerned with providing western readers with insight into the details surrounding the composition and programme of Tchaikovsky’s *Romeo and Juliet* has proclaimed Balakirev as the driving force behind its revisions. However, a closer look at the correspondence between Tchaikovsky and Balakirev during this period shows that this was not the case. Therefore, it is important that we look to the available published writings of both composers to decipher the possible reasons behind the fantasy-overture’s revisions.

From an analysis of a select portion of the primary and secondary literature available to us regarding *Romeo and Juliet*, it appears that no nineteenth, twentieth or twenty-first-century writer has queried the presence of the Friar in Tchaikovsky’s

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<sup>162</sup> The reference to ‘Love Theme “a” and “b”’ appear in Tchaikovsky’s letter to Balakirev on 29 November 1869. See *PBC*, pp. 46–47; and *PSSL*, pp. 186–187.

programme above other equally important characters from the play, such as the Nurse or Mercutio. Even though Friar Lawrence is undeniably responsible for the uniting of the ‘star-crossed lovers’, and their eventual tragic demise, this is also true of the Nurse who acts as Juliet’s confidant and surrogate mother.<sup>163</sup> Therefore, the question arises: Why did Tchaikovsky include this clerical figure in his programme (if we believe that it was his intention to do so — as suggested by the literature on the composition)?<sup>164</sup>

This issue of character representation was alluded to by the Russian critic Vladimir Stasov who, in a letter to Tchaikovsky on 2 February 1873, questioned the programme of the revised *Romeo and Juliet* (1870) in his discussion of the *Tempest*: ‘In your first overture you have unfortunately omitted all reference to Juliet’s nurse, that inspired Shakespearean creation, and also the picture of dawn, on which the love-scene is built upon’.<sup>165</sup> In Tchaikovsky’s reply to this letter on 27 January (8 February) he neglected to respond to the issue of the Nurse’s absence.<sup>166</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> In Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet* the Nurse had a daughter, Susan, who was born around the same time as Juliet but died soon after. She then became the young Capulet’s wet nurse and the strong bond between the pair was established.

<sup>164</sup> While this thesis proposes that Tchaikovsky may not have intended to represent the character of Friar Lawrence in *Romeo and Juliet*, it is hermeneutically important to also consider the possibility that he may have intended to represent this figure in his fantasy-overture.

<sup>165</sup> *LL*, p. 136. Interestingly, Tchaikovsky later included the Nurse in the duet for his proposed *Romeo and Juliet* opera (1878–1881). The libretto for this composition was based on the orchard scene mentioned by Stasov above. The Russian critic Vladimir Vasil’yevich Stasov (1824–1906) was an advocate and member of the Nationalist group, *Kuchka*. See Stuart Campbell, ‘Stasov, Vladimir Vasil’yevich’, *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 26 September 2012].

<sup>166</sup> *PSSL*, pp. 299–300; and *LL*, p. 137.

To my knowledge neither Tchaikovsky nor his peers addressed this observation in their respective correspondence at this time. The absence of commentary is noteworthy. If Tchaikovsky had a definite programme in mind then we would hope to find an expression of this intention in his later writings.<sup>167</sup> However, we really cannot presume such things as Tchaikovsky was not always prone to revealing his true interpretations of programmatic works.

While researching Tchaikovsky's perception of programme music, it became apparent that his treatment of this genre throughout his compositional career reflected an underlying belief that all instrumental music was representational. However, his view on the extent to which music could reveal either its exterior programme (as suggested by an accompanying programme note or title), or its internal programme (as idealised by its composer) is unclear. Therefore, it falls upon the interpreter to offer possible elucidations on the matter. As *Romeo and Juliet* preoccupied Tchaikovsky for the majority of his professional career, I have selected it as a hermeneutic window through which Tchaikovsky's comprehension of programme music may be better understood. My reappraisal of the fantasy-overture looks to recent developments in the field of Russian Musical Hermeneutics to establish its hermeneutic foundation.

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<sup>167</sup> I have used the term 'later writings' here for a reason. As we will see, Tchaikovsky's opinion on the meaning behind his programmatic works often changed. In relation to his Fourth Symphony (1877) Tchaikovsky set out a detailed description of its programme in a letter to Nadezhda von Meck in 1878. However, in a letter to Taneyev three weeks later, Tchaikovsky admitted that he was not quite sure of the details of the work's programme after all. See Part Four.

### 1.2.3 Russian Musical Hermeneutics: Reappraising Musical Pasts

Writing in 1984, Richard Taruskin observed the need for revision within the historiography of Russian music.<sup>168</sup> A move away from the writings of its western (mostly British) champions, such as Rosa Newmarch, Dmitri Calvocoressi, Montagu Montagu-Nathan, Gerald Abraham, Edward Garden, Alexandra Orlova and David Brown, was necessary.<sup>169</sup> Undoubtedly, these authors were crucial in developing musicological knowledge about Russia beyond the Motherland, but much of their speculative commentaries contributed to a series of mythologies. As a result, whether directly, or indirectly, Russian composers ‘have been confined to an exotic ghetto that bears little resemblance to the country they actually inhabited’.<sup>170</sup> For Taruskin, the task of revising Russia’s musical past thus fell to American musicologists, and presumably scholars from the greater western divide, as they had a significant part to play in the creation of this historical picture.<sup>171</sup> However, this reappraisal could, at that time, only be carried out through interpretative and critical inquiries, rather than philological or factual-based examinations. Taruskin based this conclusion on the fact that access to Russian archives in the 1980s was extremely restricted. As a means of

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<sup>168</sup> Richard Taruskin, *On Russian Music* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2009), p. 28. These remarks were originally published in the *Journal of Musicology* 3 (1984).

<sup>169</sup> Rosa Newmarch, who was influenced by the writings of Cui and Stasov, had as her followers Michel-Dmitri Calvocoressi and Montagu Montagu-Nathan. Gerald Abraham took inspiration from Calvocoressi, while Edward Garden and Gerald Seaman were disciples of Abraham. Alexandra Orlova’s most faithful supporter was David Brown.

<sup>170</sup> Richard Taruskin, ‘The Nineteenth Century’, in *The Oxford History of Western Music*, vol. 3 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 787, hereafter referred to as *OHWM*.

<sup>171</sup> The symposium for which these remarks were intended was entitled ‘Fifty Years of American Research in Slavic Music’ given at the fiftieth national meeting of the American Musicological Society on 27 October 1984.



tackling this problem, he implored the need for a more critical assessment of Soviet secondary writings.

According to Taruskin, western understandings of western ‘nationalism’ could add ‘something unique’ to the historiography of Russian music in revisiting its own definition of a Russian nationalism (*narodnost*).<sup>172</sup> A new corpus of analytical techniques, with more sophisticated modes of inquiry, was essential to this developing historiography.<sup>173</sup> Russian music needed to free itself from the condescending shadows of the greater western repertoire and stand as an equal. Perceptions of Tchaikovsky needed to move beyond issues of nationalism vs westernism. His music no longer belonged to the realm of Romantic kitsch.<sup>174</sup> Taruskin observes that ‘the German-dominated literatures of music history and music appreciation’ have tended to treat Tchaikovsky’s instrumental music, particularly his symphonies, ‘as debased specimens, appealing to audiences, but nevertheless revealing some innate deficiency in the composer’.<sup>175</sup>

Tchaikovsky was an intellectual and his *oeuvre* deserves to be understood accordingly. On the surface, his music acquiesces to the artistic tastes of his peers, for the most part, but on a deeper level, Tchaikovsky’s works reflect a deep engagement

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<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34. *Narodnost*’ encompasses Russian nationality, national character and national self-awareness. See *DRM*, p. xxxi.

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39.

<sup>174</sup> Taruskin discusses the idea of kitsch in relation to the Belgian music commentator Robert Wangermée who holds Tchaikovsky responsible for the proliferation of musical kitsch in the twentieth century. Wangermée defines ‘kitsch’ as ‘a type of music that mimics high art while remaining in actuality a form of applied or functional art’. See *DRM*, pp. 264–265.

<sup>175</sup> Taruskin, ‘The Nineteenth Century’, in *OHWM*, p. 792.

with the psychological issues of his time — the relationships between the individual and death, and between the obvious and the subverted. This required musicological attention — an endeavour that lies at the heart of this thesis.<sup>176</sup>

Since Taruskin's observations of 1984 a great deal has changed within the world of 'Russian music'. Writers such as Henry Zajaczkowski, Francis Maes, Marina Ritzarev, Marina Frolova-Walker, Pauline Fairclough, David Fanning, Phillip Ross Bullock, Solomon Volkov, Stephen Muir, Taruskin, Poznansky, Laurel E. Fay, Stuart Campbell, Alexander Ivashkin, and Ildar Damirovich Khannanov, to name but a few, have collectively contributed to new ways of thinking about Russia and her composers.<sup>177</sup> Access to archives has aided this shared movement of reappraisal

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<sup>176</sup> Taruskin has addressed this need for a deeper interpretative engagement with Tchaikovsky's music in his chapter 'Chaikovsky and the Human' in *DRM*. Here, he locates Tchaikovsky hermeneutically as one of the four cruxes of Russian music.

<sup>177</sup> See the following select sources: Maes, *A History of Russian Music*; Ildar Damirovich Khannanov, *Russian Methodology of Musical Form and Analysis* (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of California Santa Barbara, December 2003); Marina Ritzarev, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006); Marina Frolova-Walker, 'Russian Federation: Art Music', *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 21 September 2012]; Marina Frolova-Walker, 'All Russian Music is so Sad: Two Constructions of the Russian Soul, through Literature and Music', in *Musicology and Sister Disciplinary: Past, Present, Future: Proceedings of the 16<sup>th</sup> International Congress of the International Musicological Society*, ed. by David Grear (London: Oxford University Press, 2000); Marian Frolova-Walker, *Russian Music and Nationalism: From Glinka to Stalin*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007); Stuart Campbell, 'Balakirev, Mily Alekseyevich', *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 23 September 2012]; Stuart Campbell, 'Laroche, Herman', *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 13 September 2012]; Stuart Campbell, 'Odoyevsky, Prince Vladimir Fyodorovich', *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 23 September 2012]; Stuart Campbell, Stasov, Vladimir Vasil'yevich', *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 23 September 2012]; Stuart Campbell, *Russians on Russian Music 1800–1917: An Anthology* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Stuart Campbell, *Russians on Russian Music 1830–1880: An Anthology* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Pauline Fairclough, *A Soviet Credo: Shostakovich's Fourth Symphony* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006); Pauline Fairclough, and David Fanning, eds, *The Cambridge Companion to Shostakovich* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Pauline Fairclough, *Shostakovich Studies 2* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Phillip Ross Bullock, Rosa Newmarch and Russian Music in Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth-Century England, Royal Musical Association Monographs: 18 (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009); Stephen Muir, 'Russia', in *The Oxford Companion to Music* ed. by A. Latham (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Solomon Volkov, Shostakovich and

tremendously. Biographies on Russian composers, based on an analysis of primary documents, have dominated Russian-centred musicology of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Of particular importance are the works of Poznansky (*TQ*, 1993; *TTOE*, 1999; *Pyotr Tchaikovsky: A Biography*, 2010), Taruskin (*Stravinsky and the Russian Traditions: A Biography of the Works through Mavra I*, 1996); Harlow Robinson (*Sergei Prokofiev: A Biography*, 2002), Fay (*Shostakovich: A Life*, 2005), Wiley (*Tchaikovsky*, 2009) and Fairclough (*Shostakovich Studies 2*, 2010).<sup>178</sup> From this select list, we can see that some central Russian figures of the nineteenth century have yet to have their histories rewritten: Balakirev, Stasov, Serov and the members of the *kuchka*. Hermeneutics could play an important role within such a process.

#### 1.2.4 Richard Taruskin's *Defining Russia Musically: The Value of Hermeneutics*

For the past thirty years or so, Taruskin has been flying the musicological flag for hermeneutics within the interpretation of Russian music — an ideology explicitly realised in *Defining Russia Musically* (a title which in itself illustrates a hermeneutic task). His defense for such philosophical consideration is weighted on the fact that Russia's artistic past is 'heavily fraught with subtexts'<sup>179</sup> — a situation particularly

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Stalin: The extraordinary relationship between the great composer and the brutal dictator (New York: Knopf, 2004); and Phillip Ross Bullock, 'Chamber Music and Song', in Rosamund Bartlett (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Russian Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming).

<sup>178</sup> Harlow Robinson, *Sergei Prokofiev: A Biography* (New England: Northeastern University Press, 2002).

<sup>179</sup> *DRM*, p. xviii.

conducive to hermeneutic inquiry. Taruskin takes his hermeneutic cue from a fusion of the ideas of Gary Tomlinson, Michael Bakhtin and Hans Georg Gadamer.<sup>180</sup> Taruskin's broad hermeneutical model integrates a close-textual analysis of the music itself with an archaeological approach.<sup>181</sup> He also takes into consideration the extra-musical conditions which may have influenced the composition process, alongside an assessment of the way in which 'the composers were responding to issues and circumstances that one can only presume, lay below the threshold of their conscious intending as they went about the act of composing'.<sup>182</sup>

The latter part of Taruskin's hermeneutic equation is risky for any musicologist, as the results yielded from such an inquiry tend to mostly err on the side of speculation in instances where factual evidence is unavailable. However,

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<sup>180</sup> See Gary Tomlinson, *Music in Renaissance Magic: Towards a Historiography of Others* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993). Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin (1895–1975) was a Russian philosopher, literary analyst and critic. For more information on Bakhtin see the following select sources: M. M. Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, trans. by Vern W. McGee and ed. by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986); Barry, Peter, *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1995); Ken Hirschkov and David Shepherd, eds, *Bakhtin and Cultural Theory* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989, 2001); and Valerie Z. Nollan, *Bakhtin: Ethics and Mechanics* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2004). Hans Georg Gadamer (1900–2002) was a German philosopher and famed hermeneutist. His most famous commentary on philosophical hermeneutics was *Wahrheit und Methode: Grundzüge einer philosophischen Hermeneutik* (Truth and Method) in 1960. For more information on Gadamer see the following select sources: Robert J. Dostal, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Gadamer* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Jean Grondin, *The Philosophy of Gadamer*, trans. by Kathryn Plant (New York: McGill Queens' University Press, 2003); Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (USA: Continuum, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, 2004); Bruce Krajewski, ed., *Gadamer's Repercussions: Reconsidering Philosophical Hermeneutics* (London: University of California Press, 2004); Philippe Eberhard, *The Middle Voice in Gadamer's Hermeneutics* (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2004); Chris Lawn, *Gadamer: A Guide for the Perplexed* (London, New York: Continuum, 2006); and Francis J. Mootz III and George H. Taylor, eds, *Gadamer and Ricoeur: Critical Horizons for Contemporary Hermeneutics* (London: Continuum, 2011).

<sup>181</sup> This archaeological approach stems from the ideas of Tomlinson and Bakhtin.

<sup>182</sup> Taruskin, *DRM*, p. xxxi.

within the realm of hermeneutics, sometimes speculation can be positive. It enriches the process of interpretation by infusing its subject matter with new interest, which in turn, motivates the search for possible new meanings. Taruskin's campaign for bridging the worlds of notational analysis with hermeneutics gives the sometimes-dubious philosophical movement substance and context within the discipline of musicology. Even though Taruskin cites Tomlinson's argument that analysis, close text readings of music and their technical explication, can only 'see sameness and converse only with itself', he still uses these elements to support his hermeneutic findings.<sup>183</sup> As Lawrence Kramer observes, 'to practice hermeneutics you have to give up the hunger for certainty, security, validity, and so on, without feeling diminished by their absence'.<sup>184</sup>

Does writing about music, or 'analysing music' need to be presented in an over-saturated, complicated rhetoric, punctuated with Dahlhausisms and loquacious musical hyperbole? Is a notational-based observation any more significant than a hermeneutic observation? Evidence can be found in both cases to substantiate the respective notational/hermeneutic argument, either interiorly within the score itself, or exteriorly within the extramusical. However, regardless of how convincing each set of results is, in the end, are they both not based on a form of speculative inquiry, whereby the prejudices and perspectives of the interpreter mould the interpretative results to fit their analytical methodology? Therefore, how can we conclude that one

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<sup>183</sup> Gary Tomlinson, 'Approaching Others (Thoughts before Writing)', in *Music in Renaissance Magic: Towards a Historiography of Others* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), p. 19.

<sup>184</sup> Kramer, *Interpreting Music*, p. 27.

type of interpretative inquiry is better than the other? In the overall balance of hermeneutics, then, maybe Taruskin has a point in employing as many analytical tools at his disposal as possible. Such multi-layered thinking, alongside the act of renewing past understandings, allows the interpretative process to develop continually and expand. Lawrence Kramer has discussed this extensively in his redefinition of musical hermeneutics.<sup>185</sup>

### 1.2.5 Lawrence Kramer: Redefining Musical Hermeneutics

Kramer's latest publication, *Interpreting Music* (an ambitious feat in itself), attests to the tenuous relationship between hermeneutics and musicology thus far. In his introductory comments he remarks that:

This is a book about musical hermeneutics. A generation ago, no one would have wanted to write it. Music by nature seemed to rule it out. Music did not seem to mean the way other things do if it seemed to mean at all. This book tries to show why and how that situation has changed — changed dramatically.<sup>186</sup>

The guiding premise of Kramer's work is to present hermeneutics as the 'third term of cognition, along with the dogmatic and the empirical', within musical understanding.<sup>187</sup> Fundamental to this idea is the differentiation between the terms

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<sup>185</sup> See the following: *Music as Cultural Practice, 1800–1900*; *Musical Meaning: Toward a Critical History*; Lawrence Kramer, 'Culture and Musical Hermeneutics: The Salome Complex', *Cambridge Opera Journal*, 2/3 (1990), pp. 269–294; Lawrence Kramer, 'Haydn's Chaos, Schenker's Order: Or, Hermeneutics and Musical Analysis: Can They Mix?', *19<sup>th</sup>-Century Music*, 16/1 (1992), pp. 3–17; and Lawrence Kramer, 'Musicology and Meaning', *MT*, 144/1883 (2003), pp. 6–12.

<sup>186</sup> Kramer, *Interpreting Music*, p. 1.

<sup>187</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

‘interpretation’ and ‘hermeneutic interpretation’/‘open interpretation’. Kramer considers ‘interpretation’ (i.e. general interpretation as we know it) as possessing no independent cognitive value.<sup>188</sup> He defines the concept as follows:

In everyday parlance *interpretation* refers to the expression of a viewpoint based on a fixed predisposition — either a personal inclination or a system of belief. The first case produces a statement of opinion, the second a statement of orthodoxy. Both follow an implicit narrative that ends at its point of origin. The interpretation absorbs the specific matter it addresses into a generic order. It assumes that a certain meaning is transparently present in both the expressive form of the thing interpreted and in the language of the interpreter.<sup>189</sup>

Here, the interpretative conclusions lie in the original premise upon which the interpretation was built. Contrastingly, ‘hermeneutic interpretation’ ‘aims not to reproduce its premises, but to produce something from them’.<sup>190</sup> While this process depends on prior knowledge, it expects that knowledge to be transformed as the interpretation unfolds.<sup>191</sup>

Kramer’s conceptualisation of a ‘new’ musical hermeneutics stems from the fact that musicology has now become ‘more critical and less positivistic, more concerned with interpretations and less with facts’.<sup>192</sup> It has also become more interdisciplinary ‘as the boundaries between different types of music are partially erased and the search for new critical models pushes way beyond the limits of a

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<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.

<sup>189</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1–2.

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xiv.

traditional musicology'.<sup>193</sup> The application of hermeneutical analysis to the interpretation of music thus finds justification in the need to challenge and develop our vision and vocabulary. This in turn provides 'endless stimulus and motivation for current and future research'.<sup>194</sup>

Kramer proposes that interpretation is 'neither the uncovering of a hidden meaning nor the enunciation of a fixed one — it neither decodes nor deciphers'.<sup>195</sup> The meaning it produces is always 'another' meaning.<sup>196</sup> The role of interpretation, therefore, is to 'enunciate meaning that has always already been inscribed by the object, but only after the interpretation has intervened, altering the view through a hermeneutic window'.<sup>197</sup> Interpretation does not necessarily need to be 'profound or original' to be considered valuable.<sup>198</sup> It may 'reuse' an already available interpretation by invigorating it with a new perspective — an idea which lies at the core of this study.<sup>199</sup> As 'hermeneutic windows' play such a fundamental role within this ideology it is necessary to define them from a Kramerian perspective.

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<sup>193</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>195</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

<sup>197</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>199</sup> *Ibid.*



### 1.2.6 Hermeneutic Windows

Hermeneutic windows are interpretative portholes through which the individual can see the potential interpretation of a work. They are employed as a ‘means of recognising performativity in action, of responding to it in kind, and of expanding the understanding of its means and ends’.<sup>200</sup> Kramer divides hermeneutic windows into the following three categories:

- 1) Textual inclusions: This type includes texts set to music, titles, epigrams, programmes, notes to the score, and sometimes even expression markings. In dealing with these materials, it is critical to remember [...] that they do not establish a meaning that the music somehow reiterates, but only invite the interpreter to find meaning in the interplay of expressive acts. [...].
- 2) Citational inclusions: It includes titles that link a work of music with a literary work, visual image, place, or historical moment; musical allusions to other compositions; allusions to texts through the quotation of associated music; allusions to the styles of other composers or of earlier periods; and the inclusion (or parody) of other characteristic styles not predominant in the work at hand.
- 3) Structural tropes: These are the most implicit and ultimately the most powerful of hermeneutic windows. By *structural trope* I mean a structural procedure, capable of various practical realisations, that also functions as a typical expressive act within a certain cultural/historical framework. Since they are defined in terms of their illocutionary force, as units of doing rather than units of saying, structural tropes cut across traditional distinctions between form and content. They can evolve from any aspect of communicative exchange: style, rhetoric, representation, and so on.<sup>201</sup>

According to Kramer, the final category of ‘structural tropes’, or hermeneutic breaking-points, can only be reached after the interpreter has considered the impact of textual and citational inclusions on their respective subject of inquiry. Recognising structural tropes is experiential. They emerge as the interpretation develops. Tropes

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<sup>200</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 27.

<sup>201</sup> Kramer, *Music as Cultural Practice*, pp. 9–10. Kramer’s overall explanation of structural tropes is at times ambiguous. As an example he offers ‘impossible objects’, ‘other voicedness’, expressive doubling’ and ‘self-citation’.

appear in hermeneutic situations where the scope of reflection is widened. When guided by the problem posed by the breaking-point (for example: the gap in knowledge, or the missing connection), the interpreter begins to experiment with analogies and recategorisations in a bid to illuminate one object by seeking out its multiple affiliations with others.

Kramer suggests then, that a strategic map for musical hermeneutics, based on his list of hermeneutic windows, might thus read more or less as follows: ‘Locate the hermeneutic windows of the work, starting with the most explicit (textual inclusions) and working up to the least explicit (structural tropes)’.<sup>202</sup> However, does this idea then not contradict the fundamental philosophy of hermeneutics that meaning is not linear? How can we justify carrying out any hermeneutic inquiry in such a confined and logical (step-by-step) manner? Kramer addresses this by proposing that we dispense with the ‘strategic map’ after we construct it — a precarious stance to take by any measure, yet illustrative of hermeneutic thinking.

Establishing the ‘strategic map’ is actually quite important within the interpretative act as it locates the ‘hermeneutic situation’. This is the situation in which the interpreter finds himself or herself within the act of interpretation. Shaped by the past, it influences the manner in which an interpretative exercise is approached. Therefore, Kramer is justified in using textual and citational inclusions as starting points within the hermeneutic circle of interpretation. These hermeneutic

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<sup>202</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

windows, or ‘switching points’, allow the interpreter to move in a multi-directional manner throughout the hermeneutic circle.<sup>203</sup> The results gleaned from such an exercise determine the identity of any possible structural tropes that come into view along the hermeneutic journey.

### 1.3 Conclusion: The Hermeneutic Plan

This thesis employs Kramer’s strategic map of hermeneutic windows as a starting point for the following interpretative exercise.<sup>204</sup> As we know, *Romeo and Juliet* is, as its title suggests, a programmatic work. This reality brings us towards the consideration of both ‘textual’ and ‘citational’ inclusions in our reevaluation of the fantasy-overture. Through this process, the next hermeneutic window is established: ‘Understandings of Programme Music’. Here, the relationship between ‘the self’ and

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<sup>203</sup> Kramer, *Interpreting Music*, p. 68. The concept of the ‘hermeneutic circle’ was theorised by the German philosopher Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher (1768–1834). Associated with the establishment of the birth of a general science of hermeneutics (*allgemeine Hermeneutik*) his theories sought to expand hermeneutical consideration beyond specific texts to linguistic meaning. Schleiermacher argued that in understanding the ‘whole’ of a specific object it is necessary to examine the individual constituent ‘parts’, which make up that whole. Each part can, in turn, be subsequently viewed as a whole in its own right. For a detailed overview of the whole and parts theory see Seebohm, *Hermeneutics: Method and Methodology*, pp. 174–182. The circularity of understanding is an important element within this ‘whole and parts’ theory and within hermeneutics, in general. Schleiermacher maintained that ‘complete knowledge always involves an apparent circle’ — a hermeneutic circle. See Bent, *Music Theory in the Age of Romanticism*, p. 113. While the hermeneutic circle facilitates constant movement between the whole and its parts within the interpretative process, its use can often lead to an impasse (*aporia*). Schleiermacher addressed this problem by changing levels within the hermeneutic circle, in which previous ‘wholes’ were subsequently examined as ‘parts’ and *vice versa*. See Bent, *Music Theory*, p. 111.

<sup>204</sup> This hermeneutic plan appears at the end of Part One, rather than the beginning, for a specific reason. If we recall Kramer’s afore-mentioned interpretative map, we remember the importance of ‘textual inclusions’ in establishing the starting point for any inquiry. This means that we must first look to the title of this thesis, ‘Reinterpreting Pyotr Il’yich Tchaikovsky’s *Romeo and Juliet* through Hermeneutic Windows’. As a result, it became necessary to provide the historical context to this work and the hermeneutic methodology employed throughout, so that the course of the hermeneutic map could then be plotted.

‘the other’ becomes apparent. From this, we journey on towards the third hermeneutic window: ‘The correspondence between Tchaikovsky and Balakirev’. The final of these interpretative portholes, *Manfred*, becomes in itself a structural trope through which the programme of *Romeo and Juliet* is reevaluated. I have selected the analytical ideas of Byron Almén, to elucidate Kramer’s perception of structural tropes within this interpretative endeavour.

In Almén’s (2003) deconstruction of the anti-narratological views of those such as Peter Kivy and Carolyn Abbate, he proposes that narrative ‘does not rely upon text, narrator, or causality’.<sup>205</sup> Therefore, we are left with ‘fewer obstacles to finding it in music’.<sup>206</sup> Almén suggests that if analysis ‘involves the determination of function, independent of reference, then music can be organised as narrative’.<sup>207</sup> Thus, a theory is required that ‘need only be concerned with the identity of musical events insofar as they manifest a series of hierarchical relationships that, over time, become subject to rearrangement’.<sup>208</sup> This process allows the interpreter then to explore the nature of the narrative landscape in music. Almén defines ‘narratology’ as follows:

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<sup>205</sup> Byron Almén, ‘Narrative Archetypes: A Critique, Theory, and Method of Narrative Analysis’, *Journal of Music Theory*, 47/1 (2003), p. 10. See also: Carolyn Abbate, *Unsung Voices: Opera and Musical Narrative in the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991); Peter Kivy, *Music Alone: Philosophical Reflections on the Purely Musical Experience* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1990); and Peter Kivy, *Antithetical Arts: On the Ancient Quarrel between Literature and Music* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>207</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

<sup>208</sup> *Ibid.*

Musical narrative is the process through which the listener perceives and tracks a culturally significant transvaluation of hierarchical relationships within a temporal span.<sup>209</sup>

He explains that a musical work's initial network of hierarchical relationships possesses a certain positive or negative cultural value, and that the subsequent changes in these relationships instigates a crisis that will be resolved in a manner either acceptable or unacceptable to the culturally informed listener.<sup>210</sup> This idea brings to mind Gadamer's differentiation between true and false prejudices in the interpretative process.<sup>211</sup>

Almén proffers a systematic model for understanding and classifying musical narrative according to four archetypes: 1) Romance ('a victory of a desired order over an undesired transgression or opposition'); 2) Tragedy ('the failure of a desired transgression, or an exercise of freedom, against a restricted or undesired order'); 3)

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<sup>209</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12. 'Transvaluation' is a term used by James Jakob Liszka in his semiotic theory of myth, which denotes a process by which meaning emerges via the reconfiguration of simultaneous and successive relationships between musical elements in the course of a temporal succession as perceived or conceived by the listener. See *Ibid.*, pp. 11–12.

For more information on musical narrative see the following select sources: Anthony Newcomb, 'Schumann and Late Eighteenth-Century Narrative Strategies', *19th-Century Music*, 11/2 (1987), pp. 164–174; Jean-Jacques Nattiez, and Katharine Ellis, 'Can One Speak of Narrativity in Music?', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 115/2 (1990), pp. 240–257; Anthony Newcomb, 'Narrative Archetypes and Mahler's Ninth Symphony', in *Music and Text: Critical Inquiries*, ed. by Steven Paul Scher (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Anthony Newcomb, 'The Polonaise-Fantasy and Issues of Musical Narrative', in *Chopin's Studies 2*, ed. by John Rink (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Warren A. Shibles, 'Is Music a Language?', in *Emotion in Aesthetics* (The Netherlands: Kluwer, 1995); Fred Everett Maus, 'Narrative, Drama, and Emotion in Instrumental Music', *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 55/3 (1997), pp. 293–303; Fred Everett Maus, 'Music as Drama', *Music Theory Spectrum*, 10 (1998), pp. 56–73; and Fred Everett Maus, 'Narratology, narrativity'. *GMO. OMO*.

<sup>210</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>211</sup> Gadamer defined a prejudice as a condition of understanding. It is a pre-judgement that gives one an implicit sense of how any subject matter may be approached. Therefore, nothing can be understood without making some preliminary assumptions. As a result, the interpreter is faced with the dilemma of true and false prejudices. These postulations are either confirmed or disappointed through our hermeneutic investigation. For more information see Gadamer, *Truth and Method*.

Irony ('the suppression or removal of a pre-existent order, resulting in an undesirable condition, whether chaos or a differently-valued order'); 4) Comedy ('the emergence of a new desired order, through a transgressive act, out of an undesired one').<sup>212</sup> This narrative model does not depend on the presence of a narrative agent or narrator that comments upon or manipulates its activity. With this in mind, my assessment of *Romeo and Juliet's* programme employs Almén's first and second archetypes, 'Romance' and 'Tragedy', as respective horizons of interpretation. It also considers another set of emerging narrative archetypes in the form of the *Persona* (Tchaikovsky himself) and the *Anima* (the female other) — terminology borrowed from the Swiss psychologist Carl Jung.<sup>213</sup> As the question of programme is fundamental to this hermeneutic inquiry, the following Part Two addresses Tchaikovsky's understanding of the genre and its relationship with Realism. From this, a dialogue between 'the self' and 'otherness' emerges.

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<sup>212</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 29–30.

<sup>213</sup> These terms will be discussed in detail in Part Four.

## HERMENEUTIC WINDOW NO. 2: UNDERSTANDINGS OF PROGRAMME MUSIC

### Part Two: Tchaikovsky's Programme Music — 'Sterling Coin vs Worthless Paper Money'

Writing retrospectively in 1883, Vladimir Stasov remarked that 'programme music' was a characteristic feature of the New Russian School (in the mid-nineteenth century), and boldly claimed that 'virtually all Russian symphonic music is programmatic'.<sup>1</sup> In his characteristically biased-led observations, Stasov testified that the propensity for this kind of music was much stronger in Russia than almost anywhere else in Europe.<sup>2</sup> This view, of course, depends very much on what was understood as 'programme music' at the end of the nineteenth century. By the time Stasov's views were published the following select 'programmatic' works were in circulation (as understood by the critic and his sympathisers), excluding those of Tchaikovsky: Balakirev's *King Lear* overture (1859) and *Islamey* (Oriental fantasy) (1869, 1902); Borodin's 'In The Steppes of Central Asia' (1880); Musorgsky's 'St John's Night on Bald Mountain' (1866–

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<sup>1</sup> Vladimir Vasilievich Stasov, *Selected Essays on Music*, trans. by Florence Jones (London: Barrie and Rockliff, 1968), pp. 73–74. In this remark Stasov was discussing the emergence of the new 'Russian School' of music as it developed from Glinka to the *Moguchya Kuchka*. The essay stems from 'Our Music during the last 25 years', which appeared in *Vestnik Evropy*, October 1883. Stasov's use of the term 'symphonic music' here refers to instrumental music.

This notion of the Russian eclectic understanding of 'programme music' was also referenced in the concluding speech at a conference of Soviet music workers (1948). Here, the soviet politician, Andrei Alexandrovich Zhdanov (1896–1948) observed the presence of such music in the Russian repertoire at that time, and asserted 'it is well known that Russian classical music was as a rule Programme Music'. See Ruth Katz and Carl Dahlhaus, *Contemplating Music: Source Readings in the Aesthetics of Music* iv (New York: Pendragon, 1993), p. 132.

For more examples of current literature which extols this view that the majority of Russian music of the late nineteenth century was programmatic see the following select sources: Maes, *A History of Russian Music*; DRM; Taruskin, *Stravinsky and the Russian Traditions*, pp. 8, 24, 65, and 71; Nasser Al-Tae, *Representations of the Orient in Western Music: Violence and Sensuality* (Surrey, England: Ashgate, 2010), p. 230; and Paul Bushkovitch, *A Concise History of Russia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University press, 2012), pp. 232–23.

<sup>2</sup> Stasov, *Selected Essays on Music*, p. 74.

1867) and ‘Pictures at an Exhibition’ (1874); and Rimsky-Korsakov’s *Sadko* (1867).

Intertwined with this concept of programme music was the Russian fascination with orientalism and national subjects. Taruskin observes that ‘to accentuate “the oriental” aspect was for Russian composers a way of asserting their individual identity, and their claim to respect and attention as independent musical creators at a time when Russia was just joining the European fine art tradition’.<sup>3</sup> In essence, this was a means of situating ‘the self’ within ‘otherness’. Examples of works within this orientalist genre can be seen in the following select list of compositions by the *kuchka*: Cui’s *A Prisoner in the Caucasus* (1857, rev. 1882); Rimsky-Korsakov’s *Antar* (1868); Balakirev’s *Tamara* (1882); Borodin’s *Prince Igor* (posthumously, 1890); and Musorgsky’s unfinished opera *Salammbô*.<sup>4</sup> The portrayal of figures and characters from history and legends such as Ivan the Terrible, Mazeppa the Cossack leader, Stenka Razin, Pugachof, the water-nymph Rusalka, and Baba Yaga, were a source of attraction for many of these composers. A particular penchant for the setting of Pushkin’s poems to music also featured prominently in the music of this New School.<sup>5</sup>

For the most part, it appears that Russian composers of the mid-nineteenth century, especially the members of the Balakirev circle, considered programme music as a medium through which ‘concrete’ ideas/subjects (a term, employed by

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<sup>3</sup> Taruskin, ‘The Nineteenth Century’, in *OHWM*, p. 392.

<sup>4</sup> See *Ibid*, pp. 393–397.

<sup>5</sup> Alexander Sergeyeovich Pushkin (1799–1837). For more information see Martin Cooper and April Fitzlyon, ‘Pushkin, Aleksandr Sergeyeovich’, *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 16 October 2012].



Stasov and borrowed from Glinka) could be represented in a musical form.<sup>6</sup> Stasov believed that concrete facts were the basis of musical creativity.<sup>7</sup> The popularity of this idea is here assessed through an analysis of the writings of a select group of Russian figures central to the developing arts of the nineteenth century. These include the critics Herman Laroche and Alexander Serov, Balakirev, the philosopher Nikolay Chernishevsky, and the novelists Lev Tolstoy and Fyodor Dostoyevsky. From an examination of their fundamental aesthetics, Tchaikovsky's possible interpretation of these ideas within his *Romeo and Juliet* is proposed. The topics in question here are programme music, realism, the woman question, death and suicide. Before a synopsis of these ideas can be presented, it is necessary to first summarise what programme music meant to the composers and musicians of nineteenth-century Russia.

## 2.1 Programme Music in Nineteenth-Century Russia: Perceptions

The most prominent commentator on the issue of programme music in Europe was Eduard Hanslick. His well-documented treatise, *Vom musikalisch-Schönen: Ein Beitrag zur Revision der Ästhetik der Tonkunst* ('The Beautiful in Music: A Contribution to the Revisal of Musical Aesthetics') triggered a wave of controversy spanning the western divide.<sup>8</sup> Hanslick's commentary propounded a

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<sup>6</sup> Stasov attributed the birth of Russian programme music proper to Glinka who, in a letter to Nestor Kukolnik, remarked that his 'unbridled imagination' had 'need of a text or concrete facts'. See Stasov, *Selected Essays*, p. 74. Nestor Vasilievich Kukolnik (1809–1868) was a Russian playwright and prose writer. He provided Glinka with both libretti for his operas, *A Life for the Tsar* and *Ruslan and Lyudmila*. For more information see Martin Banham, ed., *The Cambridge Guide to Theatre* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 617.

<sup>7</sup> Stasov, *Selected Essays*, p. 74.

<sup>8</sup> Eduard Hanslick, *The Beautiful in Music: A Contribution to the Revisal of Musical Aesthetics* trans. (of the 7<sup>th</sup> edn of 1885), ed. by Gustav Cohen (London and New York: Novello and Ewer,

perception of music as an ‘absolute, self-sufficient art’, in which the ‘beautiful’ lay ‘not in its expressiveness or its uncertain ability to carry a programme meaning, but in its independent relations of form and structure’.<sup>9</sup> For him, ‘sounding forms in motion are the one and only content of music’.<sup>10</sup> Resultantly, no instrumental composition could ‘describe the ideas of love, wrath, or fear, since there is no casual nexus between these ideas and certain combinations of sound’.<sup>11</sup> However, Hanslick conceded that music could suggest the momentum felt (‘dynamic properties’) when particular emotions are experienced.<sup>12</sup> For musical works that claimed to represent something not obvious within the music, Hanslick believed that an accompanying programme note was necessary. Without this explanatory addition, programme music was therefore unintelligible, in his eyes.

Hanslick’s assault on programme music struck a nerve both in Europe and Russia.<sup>13</sup> Theorists such as Johann Lobe, Karl Brendel and August Ambros

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1891). The work went through nine editions. The first edition excluded mention of Liszt, but the assault on his music began after the second. For more information on Hanslick’s attack on programme music see the following select list of sources: Thomas S. Grey, ‘Hanslick, Eduard’, *GMO*. OMO. [Accessed 16 October 2012]; Max Schoen, *The Beautiful in Music* (London: J. Curwen, 1928); Alan Walker, *Franz Liszt* (London: Cornell University Press, 1987), pp. 361–363; R. Larry Todd, ed., *Mendelssohn and His World* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1991), p. 275; Antoon van den Braembussche, *Thinking Art* (New York: Springer, 2001), p. 64; and Nicole Grimes, Siobhain Donovan and Wolfgang Marx, eds., *Rethinking Hanslick: Music, Formalism and Expression* (University of Rochester Press, forthcoming March 2013).

<sup>9</sup> Todd, *Mendelssohn and His World*, p. 275.

<sup>10</sup> Hanslick, *The Beautiful in Music*, p. 32.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 38.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 34–35.

<sup>13</sup> For more information on programme music of the nineteenth century see the following select sources: Frederick Niecks, ‘Programme Music’, *MT*, 65/73 (1904), pp. 163–165; Frederick Niecks, *Programme Music in the Last Four Centuries: A Contribution to the History of Musical Expression* (London: Novello, 1907); Michel-Dmitri Calvocoressi, ‘The Problem of Programme-Music’, *MT*, 54/844 (1913), pp. 371–373; L. N. Higgins, ‘Absolute and Programme Music’, *MT*, 65/981 (1924), pp. 987–988; Leslie Orrey, *Programme Music: A Brief Survey from the Sixteenth Century to the Present Day* (London: Davis-Poynter, 1975); Vera Micznik, ‘The Absolute

expressed their concern that ‘Hanslick’s rigorous, unsentimental objectivity threatened music’s precarious new status as a significant cultural product’.<sup>14</sup> Although Hanslick argued in favour of a ‘specifically musical’ aesthetic, ‘his advocates came principally from the ranks of philosophers and writers rather than musicians’.<sup>15</sup> This was not the case in Russia. Hanslick’s opponents were primarily composers, and musicians of the emerging New Russian School. There was, however, one figure who deviated from this set, and went about extolling the Viennese detractor’s views in the Russian musical press. His name was Herman Laroche.<sup>16</sup>

### 2.1.1 Herman Laroche: Russia’s Hanslick

Laroche, commonly referred to as ‘the Russian Hanslick’, described his guru as ‘the writer whom I cannot do other than call my mentor’.<sup>17</sup> His determination to acquaint the Russian reader comprehensively with Hanslick’s work led Laroche to translate ‘On the Beautiful in Music’ into Russian (1895).<sup>18</sup> Even though this edition was published after Tchaikovsky’s death, it is likely that the composer

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Limitations of Programme Music: The Case of Liszt’s ‘Die Ideale’, *ML*, 80/2 (1999), pp. 207–240; and Roger Scruton, ‘Programme music’, *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 16 October 2012].

<sup>14</sup> Grey, ‘Hanslick, Eduard’, *GMO. OMO*. Johann Christian Lobe (1797–1881) was a German writer on music, composer and flautist. See Torsten Brandt, ‘Lobe, Johann Christian’ *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 11 February 2011]; Thomas S. Grey, ‘Brendel, Karl Franz’, *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 11 February 2011]; August Wilhelm Ambros (1816–1876) was an Austrian music historian, critic and acquaintance of Hanslick. See Philipp Naegele, ‘Ambros, August Wilhelm’, *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 11 February 2011].

<sup>15</sup> Grey, ‘Hanslick, Eduard’, *GMO. OMO*.

<sup>16</sup> Herman Augustovich Laroche (1845–1904) was a notable Russian music critic and became a professor at the Moscow Conservatory in 1867. He was Tchaikovsky’s classmate and friend at the St Petersburg Conservatory. See Stuart Campbell, ‘Laroche, Herman’, *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 13 October 2012].

<sup>17</sup> Geoffrey Newton Sharp, ‘Herman Laroche: “The Russian Hanslick”’, *The Music Review*, 54 (1993), p. 232.

<sup>18</sup> Herman Laroche, *O muzikal’no-prekrasnom* (Moscow, 1895).

encountered the ethos of Hanslick's aesthetics through Laroche's numerous articles and their friendship.

Under the influence of Hanslick's ideologies, Laroche attacked Russia's increasing fascination with the European phenomenon of programme music. He shared the formalist's belief that music could not depict concrete phenomena of the physical world. Laroche was of the opinion that composers should allow interpreters to imagine whatever comes to mind while listening to a piece of music. For him, a programme inhibited their freedom to do so: 'a programme brings it [a musical work] down from the height it alone can attain to the level of other inferior arts'.<sup>19</sup> Laroche's peers did not share these Hanslickian ideas.

Borodin found issue with Laroche's reverence for Hanslick and disagreed with the idea that music could not express feelings. Such a notion was, in his eyes, ridiculous. In a letter to his wife (1873) Borodin exclaimed 'what the devil is this all about?', and concluded that 'Laroche's brains are out of order'.<sup>20</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov echoed this sentiment and charged the Russian critic's theories as being guilty of 'mere grimace and gesticulation, lies and paradoxes, exactly like the activity of his Viennese prototype [Hanslick]'.<sup>21</sup> Writing later in 1896 the musicologist Emily Rozenov chided followers of the Viennese critic as 'ignoramuses' and 'musical sceptics'.<sup>22</sup> Nonetheless, despite this backlash

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<sup>19</sup> Garden, 'To My Best Friend', p. 402.

<sup>20</sup> Taruskin, *Stravinsky and the Russian Traditions*, p. 93.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> These remarks were made in Rozenov's review of a concert in aid of the fund for Artist's Widows and Orphans in *Novosti dnya (News of the Day)* on 14 February 1896, No. 4536. Tchaikovsky's Sixth Symphony was on the programme and Rozenov's defamatory remarks on

Laroche remained steadfast in his defence of Hanslick, and his views on programme music. This is particularly evident in Laroche's review of Tchaikovsky's *Fatum* in the Moscow press in 1869.

In this article Laroche advised Tchaikovsky to dispense with any further attempts to compose such music (defined as music capable of representation). He implored the young composer to 'return to the great masters of the past', an era in which 'petulant programmes and formless rhapsodies were equally unknown, when musical compositions did not present such profound philosophical ideas as today, but showed more musical polish, when composers did not seek the resolution of problems of existence but always found the resolution of a dissonance'.<sup>23</sup> This scornful reference to the 'philosophical ideas' of the day possibly refers to the Balakirev circle's penchant for adopting such thinking in their aesthetic outlook.

Laroche's advice came at an early stage in Tchaikovsky's professional career. He possibly wanted to steer the fledgling composer, and friend, away from the path favoured by Balakirev and his contemporaries. Laroche bemoaned the fashionable musical 'seasonings which for some reason are considered essential once a title has been taken from some famous poet: long sequences in an uncertain key, pauses, instrumental recitatives, a colossal din on the diminished

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Hanslick were made in relation to this composition. See Campbell, *Russians on Russian Music 1880–1917*, p. 40. Emily Karlovich Rozenov (1861–1935) was a Russian musicologist, pianist and composer. She studied with Laroche at the Moscow Conservatory. See *ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> Maes, *A History of Russian Music*, p. 53. Laroche did not agree with the connection between the attached verse and the music of *Fatum* itself. This work will be discussed in detail later in this chapter: see section 2.5.2 'The Other — Developing Friendship between Balakirev and Tchaikovsky', below.

seventh, unfinished short phrases transposed from key to key and the obligatory 'tam tam' — traits which were particularly lauded in Tchaikovsky's programmatic works.<sup>24</sup> Ultimately, Laroche longed for the day when Tchaikovsky would desist with such a practice. His anti-programme views were also echoed in the writings of his fellow critic Alexander Serov.<sup>25</sup>

### 2.1.2 Alexander Serov: The Anti-Programme Camp

Stasov's nemesis and previous friend, the outspoken Serov, rejected the idea of instrumental programme music, *à la* Berlioz.<sup>26</sup> His writings of the 1860s extolled the virtues of the New German school and his idol Wagner, whose operas were, in Serov's opinion, 'the embodiment of the modern ideal of operas, the ultimate in the art of music drama'.<sup>27</sup> As Rosamund Bartlett observes, Wagner found in Serov 'a gifted ally, for his animated and well-informed articles raised the quality of music criticism in Russia to unprecedented levels of professionalism'.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> This quotation was taken from Laroche's review of *Manfred* and *Hamlet* at a concert on 11 August 1893 at Pavlovsk in *Teatral'naya gazeta* (*Theatre Gazette*) (15 August 1893, No. 7, p. 6). See Campbell, *Russians on Russian Music 1880–1917*, pp. 13–14.

<sup>25</sup> Alexander Nikolayevich Serov (1820–1871) was a Russian composer (famed by his peers for his operas which did not survive inclusion in the repertory despite their success) and critic. During the 1860s Serov was acquainted with Wagner and became a champion of the composer's style and work. See Edward Garden and Stuart Campbell, 'Serov, Aleksandr Nikolayevich', *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 23 October 2012]. Serov also contributed to raising Chopin's profile within the Russian press throughout the 1860s. See Anne Swartz, 'Chopin as Modernist in Nineteenth-Century Russia', in *Chopin Studies 2*, ed. by John Rink and Jim Samson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 42.

<sup>26</sup> Stasov, *Selected Essays*, p. 89. Stasov remarked that this rejection of instrumental programme music was heavily influenced by Serov's appreciation of the music of Wagner. See Stasov, *Selected Essays*, p. 89.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 88.

<sup>28</sup> Rosamund Bartlett, *Wagner and Russia* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 14.

Serov's musical aesthetics favoured the conceptualisation of the metaphysical/other worldliness (as demonstrated by Wagner) over Russian realism (as understood by Balakirev and the *kuchka*).<sup>29</sup> Like Nietzsche and the New Germans, Serov sought metaphysical truth in art — an ideal truth not of this world. As Taruskin notes, the favoured medium for this collective group was instrumental music, 'a language of ineffable expression'.<sup>30</sup> Influenced by such aesthetics, Serov's understanding of realism drew inspiration from the idea that music was 'expressive of a philosophy of life'.<sup>31</sup>

In spite of Serov's strong musical views however, his principles sometimes became muddled by his desire for professional success and notoriety. He was able to look beyond his renowned anti-Italian opera stance to write his first opera, *Judith* in 1863. Ironically, this work was set to an Italian text written by an *improvisatore* resident in St Petersburg, Ivan Antonovich Giustiniani.<sup>32</sup> The objective of this venture was to have the production performed by the elite musicians of the Italian Opera, and the European stage would follow.<sup>33</sup> Serov even forsake a teaching position at the newly established Moscow Conservatory

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<sup>29</sup> Influenced by the philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900), Wagner 'gave substance to the thesis that the metaphysical uniqueness of music, that which distinguishes it from all other forms of art, was the result of its own aesthetic regime, or rather the fact that it alone belongs to the sphere of the sublime, while all other arts should be understood through the category of the beautiful'. See Nuno Nabais, *Nietzsche and The Metaphysics of The Tragic* (London: Continuum, 2006), p. 29. See also Gary Tomlinson, *Metaphysical Song: An Essay on Opera* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1999).

<sup>30</sup> Taruskin, *OHW*, p. 446.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> *DRM*, p. 228.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

in 1866 because of his thirst for fame (a fortuitous situation for Tchaikovsky as he was offered the role in Serov's place).<sup>34</sup>

If we consider this occasional compromising of personal beliefs, then it is possible that Serov's attack on programme music, as realised in the music of Berlioz and Balakirev, may have been motivated by his dislike of Balakirev and his followers, more so than a specific aversion to the style of music itself.<sup>35</sup> Serov's yearning for musical recognition in Russia may have been threatened by the burgeoning profile of those such as the *kuchka*, whose successful programmatic works invited a barrage of vituperations on his behalf.<sup>36</sup> As the relationship between realism and programme music appeared to be at the core of Serov's criticisms, it is necessary to explore this dichotomy before we can acquire a better understanding of Tchaikovsky's interpretation of these issues.

### 2.1.3 Balakirev and Chernishevsky: Programme Music as Realism

The Russian critic, Vyacheslav Kartigin noted that throughout the 1860s and 1870s, Balakirev and the *kuchka* garnered inspiration from the popular ideologies

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<sup>34</sup> Serov had recently completed his opera *Rogneda* (1865) which was based on a historical drama of the time on Vladimir the Great. See Garden and Campbell, 'Serov, Aleksandr Nikolayevich', *GMO. OMO*. Due to the success of the opera in St Petersburg Serov believed that his new-found popularity would develop better in the then-flourishing city, so he dismissed the Moscow offer.

<sup>35</sup> For a detailed discussion on the rivalry between Serov and Balakirev, and other Russian figures on the nineteenth century, see Robert C. Ridenour, *Nationalism, Modernism and Personal Rivalry in Nineteenth-Century Russian Music* (Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1981). See also Maes, *A History of Russian Music*, pp. 40–45.

<sup>36</sup> Serov not only attacked the programmatic works of the New Russian School but also the efforts of Anton Rubinstein and the St Petersburg Conservatory. See Francis Maes, *A History of Russian Music*, pp. 40–44.



of the day.<sup>37</sup> Stasov, who was an official of the St Petersburg Imperial Public Library and had privileged access to censored literature, provided access to a great deal of these concepts to the Balakirev circle.<sup>38</sup> Under the influence of popular thinking, and possibly Stasov, Balakirev became particularly charmed by the philosophical ideas of Nikolay Chernishevsky, who formulated the aims and ideas, the ‘catechism’, of Russia’s radical generation, throughout the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>39</sup>

Of particular stimulus was Chernishevsky’s seminal work, based on his Masters dissertation, *The Aesthetic Relations of Art to Reality* (*Esteticheskie otnosheniia isjusstva k deistvitel’nosti*, 1855).<sup>40</sup> In its rejection of the aesthetics of German Idealism, which viewed art as a function of man’s desire to ‘improve the imperfections of nature in the name of the ideal’, Chernishevsky’s thesis brought into question the relationship between art and life.<sup>41</sup> Through his assertion that art can only be a pale reflection of real life, Chernishevsky proposed that art’s true function was to improve life through the process of critical examination (that is a critical examination of life itself).<sup>42</sup> He concluded that ‘at the very least, art can

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<sup>37</sup> This idea appeared in Kartigin’s commemorative article on Anatoly Konstantinovich Lyadov (1855–1914) in the *Apollo* in 1914. See Campbell, *Russians on Russian Music 1880–1917*, p. 163. Vyacheslav Gavrilovich Kartigin (1875–1925) was a Russian critic, composer and champion of new music. See *ibid*, p. 159. For more information on Lyadov see Jennifer Spencer and Edward Garden, ‘Lyadov, Anatoly Konstantinovich’, *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 9 November 2012].

<sup>38</sup> *DRM*, p. 145.

<sup>39</sup> Joseph Frank, *Dostoyevsky: A Writer in His Time: Volumes 1–5* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2010), p. 249. See also Joseph Frank, *Through the Russian Prism: Essays on Literature and Culture* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1990), p. 188. Nikolay Gavrilovich Chernishevsky (1828–1899) was a Russian Realist, philosopher and writer. For more information on his early career see Frank, *Dostoyevsky: A Writer in His Time*, pp. 249–253.

<sup>40</sup> An English translation of this dissertation, along with Chernishevsky’s review of the work, appears in Nikolay Gavrilovich Chernishevsky, *Selected Philosophical Essays* (Honolulu, Hawaii: University of the Pacific, 2002), pp. 281–422. This work is a reprint of the 1953 edition by the Foreign Languages Publishing House in Moscow.

<sup>41</sup> Frank, *Dostoyevsky: A Writer in His Time*, p. 251.

<sup>42</sup> Kenneth A. Lantz, *The Dostoyevsky Encyclopedia* (Westport, USA: Greenwood, 2004), p. 57.

acquaint people' with elements of reality 'with which they are unfamiliar'.<sup>43</sup> While arguing that art is the reproduction of reality in artistic images, Chernishevsky did not 'imply that this can be achieved merely by copying'.<sup>44</sup> For him, 'artistic creation is the process that calls for a vivid imagination, a penetrating mind and fine taste'.<sup>45</sup>

Joseph Frank summarises Chernishevsky's perception of art as follows:

[...] Beauty is life, and [...] nature, far from being less perfect than art, was the sole source of true pleasure and infinitely superior to art in every respect. Indeed, art exists only because it is impossible for man always to satisfy his real needs; hence, art is useful, but solely as a surrogate until the genuine article comes along.<sup>46</sup>

However, by making art subordinate to nature, as Frank notes, Chernishevsky was thus telling the artist 'that his task was to fulfil the social needs of the moment — whatever these needs happen to be in the opinion of the critic'.<sup>47</sup> But how does this ethos apply to the musical realm and the ideologies of Balakirev and the *kuchka*, who saw programme music as a form of realism?<sup>48</sup> This question is important in light of the idea, promulgated by the majority of the literature on Tchaikovsky and *Romeo and Juliet*, that Balakirev was the guiding influence in the design of the fantasy-overture's programme.

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<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> Chernishevsky, *Selected Philosophical Essays*, p. 41.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> Lantz, *The Dostoyevsky Encyclopedia*, p. 57.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>48</sup> For insight into Musorgsky's conceptualisation of Realism see Taruskin, 'The Nineteenth Century', in *OHW*, pp. 617–631.

### 2.1.3.1 Music and Reality: Art vs Nature

Chernishevsky's discussion on music centres on the question: 'in what relation does instrumental music stand to vocal music, and in which cases can vocal music be called an art?'.<sup>49</sup> He proceeds to address these issues in reverse order. Firstly, Chernishevsky sets about defining the conditions by which singing 'becomes art'.<sup>50</sup> In his likening of the practice to conversation, he argues that singing is therefore 'a product of practical life and not of art'.<sup>51</sup> However, Chernishevsky concedes that 'like every other accomplishment, singing requires knack, training and practice to reach a high degree of perfection'.<sup>52</sup> Therefore, through this technical process of improvement and skill, 'natural singing' becomes an art, but this is only achieved on a practical level (as defined by an ability to carry out a process such as writing, or counting), as opposed to an aesthetic level.<sup>53</sup>

For the Russian philosopher, folk song was equal to 'natural singing' — singing that arises spontaneously from the emotions.<sup>54</sup> By contrast, its subordinate, 'artificial singing' (Chernishevsky's term for art music) 'is the province of the prima donna' — a pejorative perception which the *kuchka*

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<sup>49</sup> Chernishevsky, *Selected Philosophical Essays*, p. 345. This question mirrored the nineteenth-century European discourse on the debate between instrumental music and vocal music under the concept of autonomy. For more insight into this discussion see the following select sources: L. N. Higgins, 'Absolute and Programme Music', *MT*, 65/981 (1924), pp. 987–988; Carl Dahlhaus, 'Neo-Romanticism', *19<sup>th</sup>-Century Music*, 3/2 (1979), pp. 97–105; Carl Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, trans. by J. Bradford Robinson (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1989); Carl Dahlhaus, *Idea of Absolute Music*, trans. by Roger Lustig (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991); Carl Dahlhaus, *Foundations of Music History*, trans. by J. B. Robinson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); and Daniel K. L. Chua, *Absolute Music and the Construction of Meaning* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

<sup>50</sup> Chernishevsky, *Selected Philosophical Essays*, p. 345.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> Maes, *A History of Russian Music*, p. 4.

possibly considered as a validation of their lack of formal training.<sup>55</sup>

Chernishevsky then asks ‘what comparison can there be between an aria of an Italian opera and the simple, pale, monotonous melody of a folk song?’<sup>56</sup> The difference between the pair pivots on the question of emotion and representation.

Chernishevsky explains this as follows:

In what relation does this artificial singing stand to natural singing? It is more deliberate, calculated, embellished with everything with which human genius can embellish it: [...] But all the training in harmony, all the artistry of development, all the wealth of embellishment of a brilliant aria, all the flexibility and incomparable richness of the voice of the one who sings it cannot make up for the absence of the sincere emotion that permeates the pale melody of a folk song and the ordinary, untrained voice of the one who sings it, not from a desire to pose and to display his voice and art, but from the need to express his feelings.<sup>57</sup>

As Taruskin points out, these views were premised on Chernishevsky’s knowledge of Italian opera, ‘the only kind of art music with which he was familiar, and which thus became for him the paradigm of musical artistry’.<sup>58</sup>

What is the impact of this concept of ‘natural singing’/folk singing (‘the genuine thing’), on the ideology of other musical styles, such as instrumental music (‘the imitation’), within the larger debate of art vs nature?

For Chernishevsky, instrumental music was a subordinate to ‘natural singing’:

The original and essential purpose of instrumental music was to serve as an accompaniment to singing. True, later on, when singing became for the upper classes of society mainly an art, when listeners began to be very exacting towards the technique of singing, satisfactory singing became rare, and

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<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> Chernishevsky, *Selected Philosophical Essays*, p. 347.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>58</sup> *DRM*, p. 225.

instrumental music tried to fill the gap and become an independent branch of music. [...] the true relation of instrumental music to singing is preserved in opera, the completest form of music as an art, and in some branches of concert music. And we cannot but observe that in spite of the utter artificiality of our taste and refined partiality for all the difficulties and devices of brilliant technique, everybody continues to prefer singing to instrumental music.<sup>59</sup>

Chernĭshevsky thus concludes that instrumental music is an ‘imitation of singing, its accompaniment, or substitute: and singing as a work of art is only an imitation of, and substitute for, singing as a work of nature’.<sup>60</sup> This train of thought leads to his assertion that ‘in music art is only a feeble reproduction of the phenomena of life, which are independent of our strivings for art’.<sup>61</sup> However, a composition written under ‘the overwhelming influence of involuntary emotion’ will consequently be a work of nature (of life) in general, and not a work of art.<sup>62</sup> As we will see later, Tchaikovsky shared a similar aesthetic, which carried through to the nineteenth-century discourse on the conflict between content and form within programme music. Chernĭshevsky considered this dialogue fundamental to the defining of the beautiful in art.

### 2.1.3.2 Beauty as Reality: Content vs Form

Beauty, argued Chernĭshevsky, is something objective, and a matter of content rather than form.<sup>63</sup> An assessment of Balakirev’s music reveals a similar perspective. He did not appear to look upon music as a medium capable of representing abstract themes, but, like Glinka and Stasov, considered it as the

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<sup>59</sup> Chernĭshevsky, *Selected Philosophical Essays*, p. 348.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 347.

<sup>63</sup> Andrzej Walicki, *A History of Russian Thought — From The Enlightenment To Marxism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), p. 191.

faithful portrayal of concrete content.<sup>64</sup> Musical/melodic inspiration and form, for Balakirev, were subordinate to the overall musical representation of the work's subject matter (the programme), thus placing the *idée concrète* at the heart of the compositional process. In the case of *King Lear*, for example, Balakirev drafted his programme first following his reading of the play, before he set about creating the musical ideas through which his programme could be expressed. Perhaps he needed the security of the programme to cloak his own compositional insecurities (by that I mean his insecurities regarding his musical technical skills) and his self-perceived lack of musical inspiration.

The importance of content is also more clearly reflected in Balakirev's Second Overture on Russian Themes (1863–1864), which he initially entitled *1000 Years* (1869), and described as a musical picture. But, in 1890 it was renamed as the symphonic poem 'Rus'.<sup>65</sup> While the revision of the composition barely touched the form, the concrete content/programme, which Balakirev sought to portray, altered. Originally, the overture's programme drew inspiration from the writings of the radical democrat Alexander Herzen who actively campaigned for political reform in Russia.<sup>66</sup> Then in its 1869 publication, *1000 Years*, the programme became associated with the millennium of the Russian state founded in 862 C.E.<sup>67</sup> Finally, Balakirev settled on 'the less specific ancient 'Rus' — a form of the title upon which he insisted, wishing to avoid the modern term

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<sup>64</sup> Maes, *A History of Russian Music*, p. 54.

<sup>65</sup> Campbell, 'Balakirev', *GMO. OMO*.

<sup>66</sup> *DRM*, p. 147. Alexander Herzen (1812–1870). For information on his life and works see: Alexander Herzen, *My Past and Thoughts*, ed. by Dwight MacDonal (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1982); and Kathleen Parthé, ed., *A Herzen Reader* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2012).

<sup>67</sup> Campbell, 'Balakirev', *GMO. OMO*.

Rossiia.<sup>68</sup> But what was Balakirev's motivation for altering the programme (content) three times, yet essentially retaining the musical form?

Richard Taruskin has proposed that this was probably due to the composer's evolution from a 'progressive', a 'man of the sixties', to 'the Slavophile obscurantist of his final years'.<sup>69</sup> Regardless of Balakirev's reasons, it remains that within the hermeneutic balance between content and form, more weight was placed on the former of the pair. For him, the content of programmatic works had as its source, concrete subjects. This idea of concrete content as a representation of truth served as the foundation upon which Balakirev's understanding of realism was formed — a foundation that was not shared by Musorgsky.

## 2.2 Empirical Experience as Truth: Musorgsky's Realism

Like Balakirev, Musorgsky was heavily influenced by Chernishevsky's views on realism in art, in particular the belief that art cannot exist for its own sake, but must educate and uplift mankind, and reveal 'artistic truth'.<sup>70</sup> Musorgsky's realism gave truth to empirical experience, to the conditions of daily life, without the possibility of compromise.<sup>71</sup> He believed that speech was tantamount to the imitation of emotion, and therefore a reflection of reality.<sup>72</sup> The ultimate in musical truth (in an opera) could be achieved only if composers set librettos in

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<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.* See also *DRM*, p. 147.

<sup>70</sup> Oldani, 'Musorgsky', *GMO. OMO*.

<sup>71</sup> Taruskin, *OHWM*, p. 632.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 618–619

conversational prose, with the music faithfully mirroring the tempo and contour of actual conversational speech.<sup>73</sup> Such a notion harked back to the principal of ‘mimesis’ – the idea that art derives its power from the mimicking of reality.<sup>74</sup> Musorgsky employed this form of realism to assert the individuality of Russian people in his music.<sup>75</sup> An element of this aesthetic can also be traced in Tchaikovsky’s perception of realism, who, as described by Taruskin, ‘viewed people primarily in social contexts’, while drawing on ‘his power of expression from irony’.<sup>76</sup>

### 2.3 Tchaikovsky’s Realism: Concrete Music vs the Emotions of the Soul

Taruskin has recently proposed that Tchaikovsky’s sense of realism lies in his awareness that art lives in ‘the compromise’, and does not trade in the ‘verbatim transcripts of existence, but in metaphors’.<sup>77</sup> This thesis does not subscribe to such a theory — an ambiguous postulation at the least. According to Tchaikovsky’s definition of the term, all symphonic (instrumental) music was ‘programme music’.<sup>78</sup> In his letters the composer used the word ‘программна’/‘programmna’ (‘programmatic’) to refer to specific programmatic compositions such as his Fourth Symphony and the *Tempest*.<sup>79</sup> Tchaikovsky’s explanation of the genre is

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<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>75</sup> Stephen Walsh, *The Music of Stravinsky* (London: Routledge, 1988), p. 7.

<sup>76</sup> Taruskin, *OHW*, p. 632.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.* This quotation refers to Musorgsky’s understanding of realism, which Taruskin believes to be also evident in Tchaikovsky’s aesthetics.

<sup>78</sup> *LL*, p. 330.

<sup>79</sup> See Appendix I: Letters, Articles and Programme Notes (A.I.3), pp. 306–311, in which Tchaikovsky remarks on the programmatic aspect of his Fourth Symphony to Taneyev, and PSSL, p. 299 in which Tchaikovsky discusses the *Tempest*’s programme with Stasov in a letter dated 27 February (11 March) 1973. Tchaikovsky also used the same term ‘программа’/‘programma’



revealed in his most commonly cited letter to Nadezhda von Meck (December 1878). The aim of this communication was to address Laroche's labelling of Tchaikovsky as 'an anti-programme composer'.<sup>80</sup>

Laroche does not call me the enemy of programme music, but thinks I have no gift for this kind of work; therefore he describes me as an anti-programme composer. He takes every opportunity of expressing his regret that I so frequently compose programme music. What is programme music? Since for you and me a mere pattern of sounds has long since ceased to be music at all, all music is programme music from our point of view. In the limited sense of the word, however, it means symphonic, or, more generally, instrumental music which illustrates a definite subject, and bears the title of this subject.

Beethoven partly invented programme music in the *Eroica* symphony, but the idea is still more evident in the *Pastoral*. The true founder of programme music, however, was Berlioz; every one of those works not only bears a definite title, but appears with a detailed explanation. Laroche is entirely opposed to a programme. He thinks the composer should leave the hearer to interpret the meaning of the work as he pleases; that the programme limits his freedom, that music is incapable of expressing the concrete phenomena of the physical and mental world. Nevertheless, he ranks Berlioz very highly, declares him to be an altogether rare genius and his music exemplary; but, all the same, he considers his programmes superfluous.

If you care to hear my opinion on the subject, I will give it in a few words. I think the inspiration of a symphonic work can be of two kinds: subjective or objective. In the first instance it expresses the personal emotion of joy or sorrow, as when the lyric poet lets his soul flow out in verse. Here, a programme is not only unnecessary, but impossible. It is very difficult when the composer's inspiration is stirred by the perusal of some poem, or by the sight of a fine landscape, and he endeavours to express his impressions in musical forms. In this case a programme is indispensable, and it is a pity Beethoven did not affix one to the sonata you mention. To my mind, both kinds of music have their own *raison d'être*, and I cannot understand those who will only admit one of these styles. Of course every subject is not equally suitable for a symphony, any more than for an opera; but, all the same, programme music can and must exist. Who would insist in literature upon ignoring the epic and admitting only the lyrical element?<sup>81</sup>

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(programme) in reference to concert programmes: See *PSSL* p. 150, Letter 126 from Tchaikovsky to Balakirev in which he thanks him for adding 'Dance of the Chambermaids' to the middle of his programme for the forthcoming concert. Tchaikovsky also used the French equivalent, 'programme', in reference to concert schedules ('au programme du concert'): See his unpublished letter to an unidentified male correspondent, 8 (20) September 1887, which appears in 'TR Bulletin 02', Letter 3342a, available at:

<<http://www.tchaikovsky-research.net/en/news/index.html>>. This site lists a variety of previously unseen Russian letters which have been translated into English.

<sup>80</sup> Laroche referred to Tchaikovsky as 'an anti-programme' in his critique of *Francesca da Rimini* in 1876. Ironically, it was Laroche who first presented Tchaikovsky with the musical possibilities of this piece.

<sup>81</sup> *LL*, pp. 330–331.

In his assertion that programme music was ‘instrumental music which illustrates a definite subject, and bears the title of this subject’, Tchaikovsky was employing Liszt’s conceptualisation of the term. The Russian composer’s claim that ‘all music’ was programme music suggests that Tchaikovsky’s understanding of the term extended beyond that of the Hungarian and the Russian New School. For him, the inspiration of a work was a determining condition for the type of programme involved.<sup>82</sup>

### 2.3.1 Inspiration

If the subject naturally stimulated the expression of the composer’s emotions on its own terms then, Tchaikovsky argued, an attached programme or title would not be necessary. A consideration of Tchaikovsky’s musical philosophy, based on the thesis that the aim of music was to ‘picture the many various emotions of the soul’ — a concept in direct contrast to the views of Hanslick and his followers — implies that a programme is not required if the artistic muse is metaphysical.<sup>83</sup> However, if a composer decided to write music based on a specific subject or poem, or was commissioned to do so, then a programme was warranted, as music could not represent ‘concrete’ matter on its own merit — as proposed by Hanslick and Laroche. It appears that Tchaikovsky’s understanding of ‘programme music’ was thus two-fold.

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<sup>82</sup> Current Russian musicologists ‘distinguish between the two types of programatism: literal (as in Berlioz’s *Symphonic Fantastique*), and so-called ‘philosophical’, like Liszt’s tone poems’. See Khannanov, *Russian Methodology of Musical Form and Analysis*, p. 32.

<sup>83</sup> Tchaikovsky, *Guide to the Practical Study of Harmony*, p. 15.

Further reference to his struggle with defining the genre is evident in Tchaikovsky's letter to Taneyev, dated 13 (25) June 1885. In this communication Tchaikovsky discussed his difficulty in completing his *Manfred* symphony — the programme had been suggested to Tchaikovsky by Balakirev:

No! It is a thousand times pleasanter to compose without any programme. When I write a programme symphony I always feel I am not paying in sterling coin, but in worthless paper money.<sup>84</sup>

By adhering to a pre-ordained programme, inspiration was thus confined within a creative boundary, and was therefore unable to develop naturally/organically. In such instances then, according to Tchaikovsky, the composer should try to manipulate his technical skills to compensate for such restrictive confines. This idea is especially evident in Tchaikovsky's earlier correspondence to von Meck on 9 December 1878. Here, he offers his critique of Édouard Lalo's 'Cello Concerto' (1877), and concludes that 'if a man cannot keep his inspiration within the limits of balanced form, then he should strive, at least, to vary the rhythms of his themes'.<sup>85</sup> What then does Tchaikovsky mean by 'inspiration'? Does he understand this term to refer to the initial impetus to compose a work with its incumbent muses, or does he in fact mean the developmental process of the musical idea itself through the medium of notation — the *modus operandi*? It appears that Tchaikovsky perceived the term in both manners, depending on both his mood at the time of writing, and the addressee of his correspondence. Such equivocality is particularly evident in his categorisation of his Fourth Symphony.

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<sup>84</sup> *LL*, p. 484.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 328. Letter to Nazheda von Meck dated 27 November (9 December) 1878. Édouard Lalo (Victoire Antoine) (1823–1892) was a French composer. See Richard Smith, 'Lalo, Édouard (Victoire Antoine)', *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 30 October 2012].

### 2.3.2 Fourth Symphony: Issues in Defining its Programme

Vladimir Volkoff's analysis of Tchaikovsky's afore-mentioned letter to von Meck (9 December 1878), regarding programme music, questions Tchaikovsky's grasp of this genre. He argues that if the composer believed that writing a programme symphony is comparable to 'worthless paper music', then 'how could he then confess that his Fourth Symphony had a programme, but refuse to see that this was a fault?'<sup>86</sup> Volkoff pointed out this paradoxical ethos by pondering why Tchaikovsky could 'explain the programme of the Fourth in great detail, decline to disclose the programme of the Sixth, and declare for instance that he wanted to describe in the introduction to *Romeo and Juliet* "a solitary soul striving to reach heaven"?'<sup>87</sup>

This incongruous view on programme music was further illustrated in Tchaikovsky's letter to Taneyev on 27 March (8 April) 1878 regarding his Fourth Symphony:

As to your [Taneyev] remark that my symphony is programmatic, then I am in complete agreement. I do not understand why you consider this to be a defect. I fear the opposite situation — i.e. that I should not wish symphonic works to flow from my pen that express nothing [...] which consist of empty playing with chords, rhythms and modulations. My symphony is, of course, programmatic, but the programme is such that it is impossible to formulate in words. Such a thing would provoke ridicule and laughter. Ought not a symphony, which is the most lyrical of all musical forms, express everything for which there are no words, but which the soul wishes to express and cries out to be expressed? However, I must confess to you: in my naivety I imagined that the idea of the symphony was very clear, that in general outline its sense could be understood even without a programme. Please do not think that I am trying to plume myself in front of you with my depth of feelings and grandeur of thoughts that are not susceptible of verbal expression. I was not even seeking to express a new idea. In essence my symphony is an imitation of Beethoven's Fifth, that is, I was imitating not his musical thoughts, but the fundamental idea. [...] Furthermore, I'll add that there is

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<sup>86</sup> Volkoff, *Tchaikovsky*, p. 296.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 297.

not a note in this symphony (that is, in mine) which I did not feel deeply, and which did not serve as an echo of sincere impulses within my soul. A possible exception is the middle of the first movement, in which there are contrivances, seams, glued-together bits — in a word, *artificiality*.<sup>88</sup>

This letter differs from Tchaikovsky's communication to Nadezhda von Meck, three weeks earlier, on 17 February (1 March) 1878, in which he described in detail the programme of his Fourth Symphony:

You ask if in composing this symphony I had a special programme in view. To such questions regarding my symphonic works I generally answer: nothing of the kind. In reality it is very difficult to answer this question. How do you interpret those vague feelings which pass through one during the composition of an instrumental work, without reference to any definite subject? It is a purely lyrical process. A kind of musical shriving of the soul, in which there is an encrustation of material which flows forth again in notes, just as the lyrical poet pours himself out in verse. The difference consists in the fact that music possesses far richer means of expression, and is a more subtle medium in which to translate the thousand shifting moments in the mood of a soul. [...]

Our symphony has a programme. That is to say, it is possible to express its contents in words, and I will tell you — and you alone — the meaning of the entire work and of its separate movements. Naturally I can only do so as regards its general features. The Introduction [...] is Fate, that inevitable force which checks our aspiration towards happiness ere [sic] they reach the goal, which watches jealously lest our peace and bliss should be complete and cloudless. [...] This force is inescapable and invincible. There is no other course but to submit and inwardly lament. [...] So all life is but a continual alternation between grim truth and fleeting dreams of happiness. There is no haven. The waves drives us hither and thither, until the sea engulfs us. This is approximately, the programme of the first movement.

The second movement expresses another phase of suffering. [...] In the third movement no definite feelings find expression. [...] The fourth movement: if you can find no reasons for happiness in yourself, look at others. [...] Happiness does exist, simple and unspoilt. Be glad in others' gladness. This makes life possible.

I can tell you no more dear friend, about the symphony. Naturally my description is not very clear or satisfactory. But there lies the peculiarity of instrumental music; we cannot analyse it. Where words leave off, music begins. [...].

P.S. — Just as I was putting my letter into the envelope I began to read it again, and to feel misgivings as to the confused and incomplete programme which I am

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<sup>88</sup> Orlova, *Tchaikovsky: A Self Portrait*, p. 116; and *LL*, pp. 293–295. The full letter is reproduced in Appendix I: Letters, Articles and Programme Notes (A.I.3), pp. 306–311.

sending you. For the first time in my life I have attempted to put my musical thoughts and forms into words and phrases. I have not been very successful. I was horribly out of spirits all the time I was composing this symphony last winter, and this is a true echo of my feelings at the time. But only an echo. How is it possible to reproduce it in a clear and definite language? I do not know. I have already forgotten a good deal. Only the general impression of my passionate and sorrowful experiences has remained.<sup>89</sup>

Caution must be exercised in taking the words of this letter literally. After all, Mme von Meck was Tchaikovsky's benefactress, and his eagerness to please her sometimes diluted his real thoughts, whatever they may have been. Nonetheless, while Tchaikovsky may be expressing his fear that his music could be interpreted as the type of programme music despised by Hanslick (his scathing attack of the Viennese première of *Romeo and Juliet* in 1876 was still fresh) in his communication, it appears that this letter reflects a struggle with whether the true programme of any work should be revealed.

From a comparison of both letters to von Meck and Taneyev, it seems that Tchaikovsky may not have wished to disclose the 'real' programme of his Fourth Symphony to his benefactress, deciding instead to offer her a superficial programme, which he knew would be readily accepted by her if packaged in the customary rhetoric of flattery which punctuated their correspondence. However, when speaking to his professional peer (Taneyev), Tchaikovsky appears to hint at the possibility that his symphony is a serious representation of sincere impulses emanating from his soul.<sup>90</sup> Perhaps this could be construed as his understanding of realism.

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<sup>89</sup> *LL*, pp. 274–278.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 293–295.

In a letter to Vladimir Pogozhev on 6 (18) January 1891 Tchaikovsky offers his definition of the concept of realism as follows:

I think that I really am endowed with the ability to truthfully, honestly, and straightforwardly express through music those feelings, moods and images which the text of a libretto or poem awakens in me. In this sense I am a realist and a deeply Russian person.<sup>91</sup>

This quotation harks back to Chernĭshevsky's argument that music, which originates from the emotional preserve of the composer, is a true representation of nature, and thus a valid representation of a reality. If we are to believe then that Tchaikovsky's 'realism', based on the idea that the purpose of music was to illustrate the many emotions of the soul, drew partial influence from the ideas of Chernĭshevsky, then, in the interest of hermeneutic balance, is there a possibility that Tchaikovsky may have also absorbed other types of 'realism' from other prominent nineteenth-century commentators such as Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky (an opponent of Chernĭshevsky)?<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> *DRM*, p. 295. This excerpt is taken from *Vospominaniia o P. I. Chaikovskom* (Leningrad, 1980), p. 193. Vladimir Petrovich Pogozhev (1851–1935) was a Russian military officer, lawyer and archaeologist. In 1883 he was appointed manager of the office of the Imperial Theatres in Saint Petersburg where he remained until 1908. He was an admirer of Tchaikovsky's work, and helped to promote the staging of the composer's operas and ballets in the Russian capital. See 'Vladimir Pogozhev' under 'People' at: <<http://www.tchaikovsky-research.net.com>>.

<sup>92</sup> I have selected Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky specifically because of the fact that Tchaikovsky was an admirer of their respective writings. For more information on Realism in the Russian arts see the following select sources: Carol Adam, 'Realism Aesthetics in Nineteenth-Century Russian Art Writing', *The Slavonic and East European Review*, 83/4 (2005), 638–663; Carl Dahlhaus, *Realim in Nineteenth Century Music*, trans. by Mary Whittall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); and David Jackson, *The Wanderers and Critical Realism in Nineteenth-Century Russian Painting* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011).

## 2.4 Realism: Tolstoy — The Inevitability of Death

Tchaikovsky's admiration for the writings of Tolstoy is well documented.<sup>93</sup> Both artists were writing in an age when the philosophical discourse on man was undergoing a fundamental shift from the psychological to the scientific.<sup>94</sup> They each remained steadfast in their artistic expression of the former. Like Tchaikovsky, the topic of death featured heavily in Tolstoy's writings (the most obvious major works are *War and Peace*, *Anna Karenina*, and *The Death of Ivan Il'yich*).<sup>95</sup> Embedded within these explorations of mortality is the conflict between inner truth and superficial reality — a dialogue which I argue is present in Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet*. Tolstoy's treatment of the inevitability of death in his literature, and its power over the human psyche, reflected his own fear of humanity's fate. Rather than enduring death's unpredictable presence, Tolstoy considered suicide, but refrained from acting upon his anxiety and chose to address the situation in his writings instead.<sup>96</sup> Similarly, Tchaikovsky set about a similar conceptual voyage in his music (i.e. confronting death through music).

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<sup>93</sup> See the following select list of sources: *LL*, pp. 194–195; Tchaikovsky, *The Diaries of Tchaikovsky*, p. 245; Edward Garden, 'Tchaikovsky and Tolstoy', *ML*, 55/3 (1974), pp. 307–316; Brown, *Tchaikovsky the Man and His Music*, p. 130; Volkoff, *Tchaikovsky — A Self-Portrait*, p. 75; and Donna Tussing Orwin, ed., *Anniversary Essays on Tolstoy* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 11–12. Count Lev Nikolayevich Tolstoy (1828–1910). See Rosamund Bartlett, *Tolstoy: A Russian Life* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2011).

<sup>94</sup> See Valeria Sobol, *Febris Erotica: Lovesickness in the Russian Literary Imagination* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2009), p. 123. Chernishevsky had previously addressed this issue in his novel *What is to Be Done?* See Sobol, *Febris Erotica*, pp. 134–157.

<sup>95</sup> The following list of Tchaikovsky's programmatic compositions, excluding *Romeo and Juliet*, deal with the subject of death in one form or another: *The Storm* (Catherine is killed by the storm, 1864); *Undine* (Undine murders her husband, 1869); *Swan Lake* (Odette and Siegfried die to break the spell and be reunited in heaven, 1875–1876); *Eugene Onegin* (Lensky meets his end in the duel, 1877–1878); *The Maid of Orleans* (Joan of Arc is burned at the stake 1878–1879); *Mazeppa* (Death of Andrei, Kochubey and Iskra, 1881–1883); *Francesca da Rimini* (Francesca's death results in her descent into hell, 1876); *The Enchantress* (Kuma and Prince Yuri die, 1887); *Manfred* (Manfred dies in the finale, 1885); and *The Queen of Spades* (The countess dies of fright, 1890).

<sup>96</sup> For a more comprehensive discussion of Tolstoy's relationship with the reality of death see the following select sources: David Holbrook, *Tolstoy, Woman and Death: A Study of War and Peace and Anna Karenina* (London: Associated University Press, 1997); Maureen Cote, *Death and the*



### 2.4.1 Tchaikovsky: Death and the Woman Question

Throughout the 1870s and 1880s Tchaikovsky became increasingly aware of the omnipresent reality of mortality. For him, death was ‘already beginning to lie in ambush around the corner’.<sup>97</sup> Tchaikovsky struggled with the conceptualisation of an afterlife. This is particularly evident in a letter written to von Meck on 23 November (5 December) 1877:

Like you I am convinced that if there is a future life at all, it is only conceivable in the sense of the indestructibility of matter, in the pantheistic view of the eternity of nature, of which I am only a microscopic atom. I cannot believe in a personal, individual immortality.

How shall we picture to ourselves eternal life after death? As endless bliss? But such endless joy is inconceivable apart from its opposite — eternal pain. I entirely refuse to believe in the latter. Finally, I am not sure that life beyond death is desirable, for it would lose its charm but for its alterations of joy and sorrow, its struggle between good and evil, darkness and light. How can we contemplate immortality as a state of eternal bliss? According to our earthly conceptions, even bliss itself becomes wearisome if it is never broken or interrupted. So I have come to the conclusion, as the result of much thinking, that there is no future life. But conviction is one thing, and feeling and instinct another. This denial of immortality brings me face to face with the terrible thoughts that I shall never, never, again set eyes upon some of my dear dead.<sup>98</sup>

From these words, it appears that Tchaikovsky did not find the prospect of an immortal bliss an attractive possibility. For him, such a utopian ideal, or reality of sameness, would eventually prove tiresome. Therefore, if a life of constant happiness can prove boring, then it would be equally so in death. However, Tchaikovsky concedes that such a perspective brings the reality of never meeting those whom he has loved to the forefront of his mind — a truth which he deems

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*Meaning of Life: Selected Spiritual Writings of Lev Tolstoy* (New York: Nova Science, 2000); and Bartlett, *Tolstoy: A Russian Life*.

<sup>97</sup> This quotation comes from Tchaikovsky’s diary entry on 21 September 1887. See Tchaikovsky, *The Diaries*, p. 249

<sup>98</sup> *LL*, p. 238.

the ultimate tragedy. Perhaps Tchaikovsky looked to his music as a means of reconciling this dichotomy between death and the afterlife.

Further reference to this philosophical dilemma is also portrayed in Tchaikovsky's letter to von Meck on 16 March (28) 1881:

My brain is obscured today. How could it be otherwise in the face of those enigmas — Death, the aim and meaning of life, its finality or immortality?<sup>99</sup>

By 1883 Tchaikovsky had moved away from considering life after death as improbable. His correspondence of 15 June 1883, again to von Meck, attests to this shift in perspective:

Experience has taught me that suffering and bitterness are frequently for our good, even in this life. But after this life, perhaps there is another, and — although my intellect cannot conceive what form it may take — my heart and my instinct, which revolt from death in the sense of complete annihilation, compel me to believe in it.<sup>100</sup>

This acceptance of otherworldliness as an antidote to death appeared to permeate the subject matter of many of Tchaikovsky's works throughout his professional career. Fundamental to this perspective is the female figure who, in some instances, exists conceptually as the programmatic vessel through which the character of death is paradoxically brought to life.

Excluding *Fatum*, *Manfred* and *Eugene Onegin*, Tchaikovsky allows his female characters to herald in the presence of death in a selection of his programmatic works and operas. In *The Storm* (1864) Tchaikovsky employs the

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<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 402.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 440.

physical storm as a metaphor and realisation of death. Catherine's spiritual struggle and desperate longing for true love are both quashed and set free by the destructive, tragic force of nature. This is her fate — a theme familiar to many of Tchaikovsky's later works.

In *Romeo and Juliet* (1869) the unbearable situation faced by Shakespeare's star-crossed duo invariably drives Juliet to bring about their solemn demise. Her attempts to feign death are cruelly rewarded with real death. It is through death that the love between Romeo and Juliet can finally be realised. A similar idea materialised in *Swan Lake* (1875–1876) in which Odette and Siegfried escape their enchantment through suicide. Death facilitates their freedom and allows their passion to exist in the eternity of the heavens.

This is not the case however, in *Francesca da Rimini* (1876). Here, Tchaikovsky considers the morality of forbidden ardent love through the eternal torment of hell. Death is retribution. *The Maid of Orleans* (1878–1879) depicts the powerful force of Joan of Arc and the tragedy of her premature death by the fiery flames of martyrdom. In this opera, death expedites Joan's spiritual emancipation — a theme not shared by Tchaikovsky's *The Enchantress* (1887). Here, the princess, deranged by jealousy, poisons Kuma, the seducer of both her husband and son. As commented on by Tchaikovsky, death brings a sense of peace and reconciliation to the spectator.<sup>101</sup> Like *Francesca da Rimini*, death becomes the penance for forbidden love in *The Enchantress*.

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<sup>101</sup> *LL*, p. 482.

From this select list of Tchaikovsky's *oeuvre*, we see that his perception of death fluctuated from composition to composition. He wavered from representations of death as spiritual reward or fulfilled love, to representations of death as punishment for love. This dialogue between love and death was also especially evident in the writings of Dostoyevsky. His ideologies surrounding these forces made use of the topic of suicide as a by-product of the relationship between love and death. While the subject of killing oneself was not a feature of Tchaikovsky's music *per se*, I propose that it is an important issue to consider in relation to the programme of *Romeo and Juliet*, in which the lovers are drawn into fabricating their own demise (suicide) through the act of misinterpretation — an idea fundamental to philosophical hermeneutics. The following section presents an overview of Dostoyevsky's thoughts on this subject as a means of contextualising Tchaikovsky's programmatic aesthetics regarding the conflict between man and death.

#### **2.4.2 Dostoyevsky's Realism**

We know from Tchaikovsky's letters that he was particularly attracted to the dark realism, inexorably bound up in the world of acerbic wit, of Charles Dickens.<sup>102</sup> A similar style was also found in the fictional musings of Russia's Dickens, Dostoyevsky — albeit his was a more sinister foray into the psychological themes of his era (such as man's struggle with death, ideal love, failure, suffering, and

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<sup>102</sup> For references to Dickens in *LL* see the following pages: p. 72 (1866); p. 284 (1880); p. 422 (1882) and p. 590 (1889).

suicide). Solomon Volkov summarises the connection between Tchaikovsky, Dostoyevsky and the dialogue between love and death as follows:

Tchaikovsky conveyed in music this Dostoyevskian confusion about life's mysteries and contradictions using techniques characteristic of Dostoyevsky's novels, including the writer's favourite piling up of events and emotions leading to a catastrophic, climactic explosion. The frenzied longing for love, which saturates many pages of Tchaikovsky's symphonies, also fills Dostoyevsky's novels, while the other pole of the same passion, typical of both, is the fascination with and fear of death, combined with the need to confront it.<sup>103</sup>

In Dostoyevsky's tale, 'The Meek One', which appeared in the November 1876 issue of his *Diary of a Writer*, he chose not to focus on the person who faced death, but on the one who was faced with the other's death and had to comprehend its meaning.<sup>104</sup> This thesis suggests that Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet* and, more obviously his *Manfred* symphony, explore a similar theme.

If we consider the possibility of the presence of a persona who is faced with the death of 'the other' then, the opening 'Friar Lawrence' Theme of the fantasy-overture is no longer a representation of the clerical figure from Shakespeare's play. This musical idea is perhaps a portrayal of the composer himself. The unfolding fantasy-overture narrates his dialogue between the metaphysics of ideal love and the realism of death.<sup>105</sup> On the other hand, the fantasy-overture could also be Friar Lawrence's interpretation of the catastrophic love story. The deaths of Romeo and Juliet are cataclysmically entwined within

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<sup>103</sup> Solomon Volkov and Antonina W. Bouis, *St Petersburg: A Cultural History* (New York: Free Press, 1995), p. 116.

<sup>104</sup> Irina Paperno, *Suicide as a Cultural Institution in Dostoyevsky's Russia* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1997), p. 183.

<sup>105</sup> This idea will be discussed at length in Part Four.

the desperate act of suicide — a theme particularly explored in Dostoyevsky's writings.

### 2.4.3 Suicide as facilitator of Death

Throughout the centuries suicide has been associated with a myriad of meanings. Irina Paperno has noted that culture has come to use suicide as 'a laboratory for the investigation of crucial philosophical and social problems, such as the immortality of the soul, free will, the connection between the individual and God, or society, and the relationship between subject and object'.<sup>106</sup> Nineteenth-century Russia bore particular witness to this phenomenon. Between the 1860s and the 1880s 'suicide became an object of vigorous discussions in science, law, fiction and the periodical press' and ultimately a symbol of the age.<sup>107</sup> Dostoyevsky drew influence from this tragic situation. He employed suicide as a hermeneutic tool through which the dichotomy between the metaphysical and the real, and the debate between science and nature, could be played out in his literary world. While Tchaikovsky did not explicitly set out to address this issue in his music, this thesis suggests that the fascination with the topic in Russia at this time may have influenced the genesis of *Romeo and Juliet*, through Balakirev's suggestion that Shakespeare's tragedy should be represented in musical form.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Paperno, *Suicide as Cultural Institution*, p. 2.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3. During this period Paperno informs us that Russia experienced an epidemic of suicides which left voluminous records. See *ibid.*

<sup>108</sup> Tchaikovsky experienced the tragic effects of suicide through his relationship with his alleged lover, Eduard Zak (as noted in Part One above), his wife Antonina, and the figure of Tkachenko in 1880. Antonina had threatened suicide in 1877 if Tchaikovsky refused to answer her declaration of love. See *TQ*, p. 208. Three years later, a man named Tkachenko had written to Tchaikovsky seeking employment as his servant, with the hope of acquiring musical instruction from the composer. Tchaikovsky decided that the young man was too old to receive lessons (23 years old)

As we have seen, the projection of death as ‘the other’ featured heavily in the Realism of nineteenth-century Russian aesthetics. Within this discourse the woman question and suicide appeared as hermeneutic agents through which this idea could be better understood. Intrinsic to this ideology are the figures of the *persona* and the *anima*, as it is their collective discourse that narrates the programme of death and ‘otherness’ in *Romeo and Juliet*.<sup>109</sup>

#### 2.4.4 The *Persona* and the *Anima*: Representing ‘The Self’ in ‘Female Otherness’

This thesis suggests that Tchaikovsky’s representation of the feminine figures of Juliet and Astarte, in both *Romeo and Juliet* and *Manfred*, serves as a hermeneutic window through which the persona of Tchaikovsky, and indeed man in general, is presented. *Persona* is an ancient Latin word meaning ‘mask’.<sup>110</sup> Carl Jung defines the *persona* as ‘only a mask of the collective psyche, a mask that feigns individuality, making others and oneself believe that one is individual, whereas

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and rejected the proposal. Nine months later Tkachenko replied with the threat of suicide. Obviously shaken by such a response, Tchaikovsky contacted the relevant authorities who reached the desolate Tkachenko in time. See *LL*, pp. 393–394.

The most notable connection between Tchaikovsky and suicide is found in Orlova’s much-debunked claim that Tchaikovsky was forced to poison himself as part of a ‘Court of Honour’ set up by his former School of Jurisprudence classmates in 1893. Allegedly, a former pupil who had heard a discussion on the subject in 1913 imparted this information to Orlova in 1966. For more information see the following sources: Orlova, *Tchaikovsky — A Self-Portrait*, pp. 406–414; Poznansky, *Tchaikovsky’s Last Days*, pp. 217–221; and Poznansky and Burr, ‘Tchaikovsky’s Suicide: Myth and Reality’, pp. 199–220. Orlova’s far-fetched theory was supported by Brown and Holden and opposed by Poznansky and Taruskin. See also Taruskin, *On Russian Music*, pp. 84–88.

<sup>109</sup> I have borrowed the terms ‘persona’ and ‘anima’ from the Swiss psychoanalyst, theorist and philosopher Carl Gustav Jung (1875–1961). For more information on his life and ideologies see the following select sources: Deirdre Bair, *Jung: A Biography* (London: Little, Brown and Company, 2004); Lucy Huskinson, *Nietzsche and Jung: The Whole Self in the Union of Opposites* (New York: Brunner-Routledge, 2004); and Thomas T. Lawson, *Carl Jung, Darwin of the Mind* (London: Karnac, 2008).

<sup>110</sup> Walter A. Shelburne, *Mythos and Logos in the Thought of Carl Jung: The Theory of the Collective Unconscious in Scientific Perspective* (New York: State University of New York, 1988), p. 31.

one is simply acting a role through which the collective psyche speaks'.<sup>111</sup> This archetype is 'nothing real'; it is 'a compromise between the individual and society as to what a man should appear to be'.<sup>112</sup> For Jung, the *persona* was ultimately a 'two-dimensional reality'.<sup>113</sup> Fundamental to this idea is the opposing figure of the *anima*.

According to the Swiss psychologist, the *persona* 'is inwardly compensated by feminine weakness, and as the individual outwardly plays the strong man, so he becomes inwardly a woman (i.e. the *anima*), for it is the *anima* that reacts to the persona'.<sup>114</sup> Both elements require each other to function within the dichotomous psychological whole. While the *persona* represents the outer conscious attitude, the *anima* represents the inner unconscious attitude.<sup>115</sup> As the *anima* operates as an opposite to the *persona*, the *anima* contains within it all that is lacking in the *persona*.

The unfurling dialogue between the *persona* and the *anima* in both *Romeo and Juliet* and *Manfred* propels each programme's narrative forward to their respective exciting climax. In each composition, I argue that the opening musical ideas represent the *persona* of Tchaikovsky and inquisitive man, under the masks of Friar Lawrence and Manfred, while the *anima* assumes the form of the female themes traditionally associated with Juliet and Astarte. It is their interaction with

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<sup>111</sup> Carl G. Jung, *Two Essays on Analytical Psychology* (London: Routledge, 1999, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn), p. 157.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 158.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 194–195.

<sup>115</sup> Huskinson, *Nietzsche and Jung*, p. 46.



the theme of death/mortality that feeds Tchaikovsky's musical grappling with the topic of realism throughout both compositions. This sense of dualism and conflict also carried forward to his conceptualisation of programme music in general.

## **2.5 Tchaikovsky's Dualistic Perception of Programme Music**

As has been seen, Tchaikovsky's writings reveal a dualistic perspective of programme music reflective of nineteenth-century sentiments. Like their European counterparts, Russian critics and composers were divided in their opinions on the genre. The Balakirev circle believed that a programme imbued a musical work with a defined content. Those in opposition felt that a programme inhibited the musical imagination and forced the listener into a fixed interpretation. Tchaikovsky's understanding of programme music was more eclectic than that of his peers. He valued both the 'concrete' and metaphysical aspects of this genre. For compositions that aimed to represent specific subjects then an accompanying explanatory title or programme note was required (Tchaikovsky struggled with such music). However, if the music reflected an emotional idea or response, then there was no need for any extramusical addition. Tchaikovsky preferred situations where musical ideas were inspired by his reaction to a subject. This aesthetic was not yet apparent in his early days as a student at the St Petersburg Conservatory.

As a result, Tchaikovsky had to look beyond his academic training to the newly emerging Russian repertoire for inspiration within the realm of

programme music. By the time he had completed his formal musical education the Russian musical landscape was beginning to change. Programme music was now the prominent genre and if Tchaikovsky desired notoriety as a professional composer, competence in it was necessary. This situation cultivated an emerging conflict between self and other which was grounded in Tchaikovsky's burgeoning relationship with Balakirev — the alleged force behind the genesis of *Romeo and Juliet*.

## 2.6 Emerging Conflict Between 'The Self' and 'The Other'

Taruskin notes that nineteenth-century Russian composers were conscious of the presence of 'the other within the self' long before the rest of Europe.<sup>116</sup> He remarks that Tchaikovsky, who was particularly in tune with this movement, 'was far less inclined' than the *kuchka* 'to emphasise his "otherness" from Western European culture, less inclined to present himself as an exotic'.<sup>117</sup> However, this of course depends on one's perspective of 'otherness' and 'self' — definitions of which will unfold throughout this thesis. The first categorisation of the 'self' is based on Tchaikovsky the fledgling professional composer.

### 2.6.1 'The Self': Tchaikovsky the Professional Composer

Following his successful graduation from the St Petersburg Conservatory, Tchaikovsky was chosen to assume the teaching position of Professor of Harmony

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<sup>116</sup> Taruskin, 'Self and Other', in 'The Nineteenth Century', *OHWM*, p. 406.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*

at the Moscow Conservatory in 1866. With his new appointment, Tchaikovsky's profile within Moscow artistic circles began to reach new heights, along with his developing sense of 'self' within 'the otherness' of western art music. He was invited to speak at the inauguration of the Moscow Conservatory on 1 September 1866 and played the first piece to be heard in the institution — the overture to Glinka's *Ruslan and Lyudmila* on piano.<sup>118</sup> Tchaikovsky's range of composition at this time demonstrated his enthusiasm for improving his technical command of form and instrumentation in tangent with his professional status.

Aside from his unsuccessful Overture in C minor, his revised Overture in F major and his First Symphony, Tchaikovsky was commissioned to write a festival overture on the Danish national anthem, Op. 15. (1866). The work was selected to celebrate the marriage of the Grand Duke Alexander Alexandrovich (1818–1881), the second son of Alexander II, to Princess Maria Dagmar of Denmark (1847–1928).<sup>119</sup> 1867 saw the composition of *Scherzo à la russe* Op. 1 No. 1, and three piano pieces entitled *Souvenir de Hapsal*.<sup>120</sup> His opera, *Voyevode* and first symphonic poem, *Fatum*, followed in 1868.<sup>121</sup> The latter of these works

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<sup>118</sup> Newmarch, *Tchaikovsky*, p. 10

<sup>119</sup> Apparently the thirteen-minute overture was never actually played for the imperial couple. Rubinstein conducted it at a charity concert three months prior to their visit. It was later revised in 1892. See Newmarch, *Tchaikovsky*, p. 46.

<sup>120</sup> *Scherzo à la Russe* was composed for piano solo and first performed in 1867 under its dedicatee, Nikolay Rubinstein, as a capriccio; *Souvenir de Hapsal* contained three pianoforte pieces: 'The Ruin', 'Scherzo' and 'Chant sans Paroles'.

<sup>121</sup> *Voyevode*, an opera in three acts and four scenes, was begun in March 1867 and completed in 1868. It was based on a libretto by the playwright and composer, Alexander Nikolayevich Ostrovsky (1823–1886). See April Fitzlyon, 'Ostrovsky, Aleksandr Nikolayevich', *GMO*. OMO. [Accessed 11 October 2012]. Work on the *Voyevode* was halted in 1867 to write the *Scherzo à la russe*. When Tchaikovsky returned to the work in April he realised that the libretto which Ostrovsky had penned from memory, was lost and had to be rewritten. See Warrack, *Tchaikovsky*, p. 38. The score was later destroyed in the 1870s by Tchaikovsky who reused some of the material in his later opera, *The Oprichnik* (1870–1872). There also exists a symphonic ballad with the same title, *Voyevode* in A minor Op. 70 (1890–1891), which was initially performed in St Petersburg in

was responsible for igniting a chain of correspondence between Balakirev and Tchaikovsky, upon which a relationship was established — albeit a one-sided union at times.

### 2.6.2 ‘The Other’: Developing Friendship Between Balakirev and Tchaikovsky

While Tchaikovsky was teaching at the Moscow Conservatory, Balakirev was appointed as conductor of the Russian Music Society (RMS) with Berlioz (1867).<sup>122</sup> This ‘represented a considerable change of direction’ on the part of the RMS, ‘to engage a known champion of modern and Russian music, who while not without admirers, lacked the stature of Anton Rubinstein’.<sup>123</sup> The following year saw Balakirev replace Gavril Lomakin as director of the Free Music School in St Petersburg.<sup>124</sup> This position ‘enabled Balakirev to promote the performance of composers he favoured and who were sometimes neglected’ by the RMS.<sup>125</sup>

At this time Balakirev and his followers would have been familiar with Tchaikovsky’s Symphony No.1 in G minor. The second and third movements (*adagio* and *scherzo*) had been performed at a RMS concert in February 1867.<sup>126</sup> Tchaikovsky’s graduation cantata, setting Schiller’s *An die Freude*, was also made

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1891 and conducted by Tchaikovsky. See Wiley, ‘Tchaikovsky’, *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 11 October, 2012].

<sup>122</sup> Berlioz was chosen as guest conductor to control Balakirev’s choice of concert programme.

<sup>123</sup> Campbell, *Russians on Russian Music 1830–1880*, p. 186.

<sup>124</sup> Gavriil Yakimovich Lomakin (1812–1885) was a Russian choral conductor, teacher and composer. In 1862 he aided Balakirev with the opening and running of the Free School of Music in St Petersburg. For more information see Jennifer Spencer, ‘Lomakin, Gavriil Yakimovich’, *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 15 July 2012].

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 181.

<sup>126</sup> *LL*, p. 80.

known to the group through Cui's unfavourable review of it in 1865.<sup>127</sup> The correspondence between Tchaikovsky and Balakirev commenced in late 1868/early 1869.

During this period Pyotr Jürgenson commissioned Tchaikovsky to arrange pianoforte duets of fifty Russian folksongs.<sup>128</sup> The album was divided into two parts and the last three songs of the first volume were later incorporated into Tchaikovsky's opera, *Voyevode*. The first instalment of the edition of folksongs was issued in December 1868. Here, Tchaikovsky drew inspiration from Villebois's *100 Russian Folksongs* (1860) for twenty-three of the twenty-five first set of these songs.<sup>129</sup> Song No. 23 was notated by Ostrovsky, and No. 24 was notated by Tchaikovsky.<sup>130</sup> Wiley notes that 'in exceptions to typical practice, he [Tchaikovsky] omitted the text and classifications of the songs, revised them

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<sup>127</sup> Cui's review reads as thus: 'The Conservatory composer, Mr Tchaikovsky, is utterly feeble. It's true that his composition, a cantata, was written under the most unfavourable circumstances: to order, to a deadline, on a given subject, and with adherence to well-known forms. But all the same, if he had any gift, then at least somewhere or other it would have broken through the fetters of the Conservatory. To avoid saying much about Mr Tchaikovsky, I will say only that Messrs Reinthaler and Volkmann would rejoice unutterably at his cantata, and would exclaim ecstatically: "Our numbers have been increased!"' See Brown, *The Early Years*, p. 84. Karl Martin Reinthaler (1822–1896) was cathedral organist and choir director at Bremen. He studied music with A. B. Marx and, as a friend of Brahms, conducted the first performance of the *German Requiem* in 1868. He composed various choral works based on the psalms, an oratorio, *Jephtha und seine Tochter*, and two operas, *Edda* (1875) and *Das Käthchen von Heilbronn* (1881). See Franz Gehring and Bernd Wiechert, 'Reinthaler, Karl', *GMO*. OMO. [Accessed 26 November 2011]. Friedrich Robert Volkmann (1815–1883) was a German composer of orchestral and chamber music and teacher of both voice and piano. Also a friend of Brahms, he was professor of harmony and counterpoint at the National Academy of Music in Budapest. See Thomas M. Brawley, 'Volkmann, Robert' *GMO*. OMO. [Accessed 26 November 2011].

<sup>128</sup> Pyotr Ivanovich Jürgenson (1836–1904) was the chief Russian publisher of Tchaikovsky's works. For more information see *LL*, pp. 67–68; and Poznansky, *TTOE*, p. 280.

<sup>129</sup> Konstantin Petrovich Vil'boa [Villebois] (1817–1882) was a Russian military man and composer. See Richard Taruskin, 'Vil'boa, Konstantin Petrovich', *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, ed. by Stanley Sadie. *GMO*. OMO. [Accessed 30 October 2012].

<sup>130</sup> Wiley, *Tchaikovsky*, p. 62.

where Villebois had violated principles of diatonicism or modality, and changed the format of the arrangements'.<sup>131</sup>

The second part of the collection was issued in the autumn of 1869. This set reworked Balakirev's *Collection of Russian Folk Melodies* (1866) as the model for the majority of the arrangements. Tchaikovsky added song No. 47 and notated it himself.<sup>132</sup> Brown notes that Tchaikovsky's approach to using Balakirev's material differed to the way in which he had approached Villebois's songs:

Whereas Tchaikovsky had borrowed freely from Villebois's collection, not only substituting his own harmonisations but also having no compunction about altering the editor's bowdlerised folk tunes in an attempt to restore as much as possible of their former character, he approached Balakirev's volume with great circumspection.

Tchaikovsky wrote to Balakirev seeking his approval and opinion on the project:

I should now like to take twenty-five [folk] tunes from your collection', he wrote to Balakirev, 'and I am afraid that this may cause you some displeasure. Let me know (1) whether you want me to retain your harmonisation literally, and merely arrange it for four hands, or (2) whether, conversely, you don't want me to do this at all, or (3) whether you'll be cross with me either way, and are completely opposed to me taking your songs.'<sup>133</sup>

This proffering of three possible options to Balakirev lends Tchaikovsky's eagerness to please a sense of desperation. His comments appear to dilute his personal sense of professional identity. Tchaikovsky obviously wished to satisfy Balakirev at this early stage in his career, but at a price. Interestingly, John

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<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 63.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>133</sup> Brown, *The Early Years*, p. 161.

Warrack regards this wish to acquiesce to the opinions of respected members of the arts as part of the nineteenth-century Russian aesthetic:

It has, moreover, been a long-enduring habit for Russians, concerned about the role of their creative work, to introduce the concept of ‘correctness’ as a major aesthetic consideration, hence to submit to direction and criticism in a way unfamiliar to the West, from Balakirev and Stasov organising Tchaikovsky’s works according to plans of their own, to, on our own terms, official intervention and the willingness of even major composers to pay attention to it.<sup>134</sup>

If this is indeed so, then Tchaikovsky’s apparently subservient approach may be less indicative of personal weakness and more a display of the practice of artistic society. Nonetheless, eager to forge an association with Balakirev, Tchaikovsky set about writing his first post-student programmatic composition, the symphonic fantasia *Fatum* (Fate) in 1869. In dedicating the work to Balakirev, Tchaikovsky hoped that a performance in St Petersburg would follow suit. However, *Fatum*’s programme failed to impress his peers.

### 2.6.3 *Fatum*: Confronting ‘The Other’ — Death

Ivan Klimenko remarked retrospectively that his friend Tchaikovsky ‘flatly refused to offer any explanation’ on *Fatum*’s title, saying that its meaning ‘was a purely personal matter, concerning him and him alone’.<sup>135</sup> While Rubinstein was preparing the concert booklets for a performance of the work in December 1868 he felt that the sole title of ‘*Fatum*’ would not appeal to the tastes of the intended audience. At this time, Sergius Rachinsky, an admirer of Tchaikovsky, was visiting Rubinstein and, upon learning of the dilemma, came up with the idea of

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<sup>134</sup> Warrack, *Tchaikovsky*, p. 72.

<sup>135</sup> *TTOE*, p. 66. Ivan Alexandrovich Klimenko (1841–1914). See Poznansky, *TQ*, pp. 56–57.

using a verse from the poet Konstantin Batiushkov as an explanatory note to the orchestral work.<sup>136</sup> According to Modest Tchaikovsky, Rachinsky was requested to write these lines down in order for Rubinstein to add them to the programme notes, with Tchaikovsky's consent:<sup>137</sup>

Thou knowest what the white-haired Melchisedeck  
Said when he left this life: Man is born a slave,  
A slave he dies. Will even Death reveal to him  
Why thus he laboured in this vale of tears,  
Why thus he suffered, wept, endured — then vanished?<sup>138</sup>

If we consider Tchaikovsky's later understanding of programme music, then it seems questionable that he would have allowed this verse to accompany his work — an excerpt which was alien to the initial compositional process and not part of Tchaikovsky's inspiration. Perhaps, it is simply yet another example of his attempt to humour his peers in the silent hope of professional acceptance. Modest did not agree with this intrusion on the work's meaning and considered Batiushkov's words to be an added 'epigraph' to the score, rather than a true representation of its programme.<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> *LL*, p. 103. Sergius Rachinsky (1833–1902) was a Professor of Botany at the Moscow University. Konstantin Nikolayevich Batiushkov (1787–1855). See *TQ*, p. 116.

<sup>137</sup> *LL*, p. 103. Klimenko stated that Rachinsky went to Tchaikovsky offering him the idea of attaching the epitaph. However, it is important to note that Rachinsky chose the verse before he had actually heard the work. Klimenko did not agree with the chosen poem and was surprised that Tchaikovsky agreed to the matter. There does not seem to be any explanation of why Tchaikovsky conceded to the addition of the verse when it clearly did not match the original intention of the work. Perhaps this was merely as case of commercial interest and he just wanted his work to be performed.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 103.

<sup>139</sup> *LL*, p.p. 102–103.



*Fatum*'s première on 17 (30) March 1869 failed to impress Balakirev, despite his famous 'taste for "modernism"'.<sup>140</sup> According to Modest, Balakirev allegedly drafted a scathing letter but, upon careful consideration, later revised it and disguised his criticism in a much milder tone.<sup>141</sup> Here, in a letter dated 31 March (12 April), Balakirev charged Tchaikovsky's academic training at the St Petersburg Conservatory as reason for the overture's frailties:

Your *Fatum* has been played, and I venture to hope the performance was not bad — at least everyone seemed satisfied with it. There was not much applause, which I ascribe to the hideous crash at the end. The work itself does not please me; it is not sufficiently thought out, and shows signs of having been written hastily. In many places the joins and tacking-threads are too perceptible. Laroche says it is because you do not study the classics sufficiently. I put it down to another cause: you are too little acquainted with modern music. You will never learn freedom of form from the classical composers. You will find nothing new there. They can only give you what you knew already, when you sat on the student's benches and listened respectfully to Zarembo's learned discourses upon 'The Connection between Rondo-form and Man's First Fall.'<sup>142</sup>

The reference to the 'hideous crash at the end' is interesting if we bear in mind that Balakirev also found fault with the 'thumped out chords' that would later conclude *Romeo and Juliet*.<sup>143</sup> Balakirev continued in his letter by discussing the other piece performed at the same concert, Liszt's *Les Préludes*. He advised Tchaikovsky to study the form of this work, alongside Glinka's *Night in Madrid*, so that he might work on organic coherence and connection within his future compositions.<sup>144</sup> On 3 (15) May Tchaikovsky replied to Balakirev's letter by stating:

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<sup>140</sup> Zajaczkowski, *Tchaikovsky's Musical Style* (1987), p. 144.

<sup>141</sup> *LL*, p. 104.

<sup>142</sup> *LL*, p. 104; and *PBC*, pp. 30–31.

<sup>143</sup> This is discussed in Part Three.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*

I absolutely agree with all your remarks on my cuisine, but I must say that I should have been altogether happy had you found some little thing to praise, however slightly. Your letter contains nothing but censure — just, it is true: not an atom of gilding on the pill. I acknowledge that your answer did not delight me, but I heartily render honour to that sincerity and frankness that are one of the most lovable traits of your individuality as a musician. The dedication to you, of course remains; but I hope at some time to write for you something better.<sup>145</sup>

The final statement of this extract is interesting given that *Romeo and Juliet* was the next work Tchaikovsky would send to Balakirev for approval.

According to Modest, Tchaikovsky was not upset by these remarks.<sup>146</sup> This seems unusual as the composer revealed in his diaries and letters that self-doubt often surrounded his compositions, and he did not take negative criticism very well. Modest concluded that after a short period of some months Tchaikovsky came to agree with ‘Balakirev’s opinion of his work, and destroyed the score’.<sup>147</sup>

Crucially, it was at this time, in May 1869, that Balakirev’s infamous dismissal from his position as conductor of the RMS took place. This was primarily due to his ‘policy of broadening the programmes to include some of the newest and more radical music’, which annoyed the Grand Duchess Elena.<sup>148</sup> She had been lobbying for the German Max Seifritz to replace Balakirev but he was

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<sup>145</sup> Calvocoressi, ‘The Correspondence’, p. 712; and *PSSL*, pp. 162–163.

<sup>146</sup> *LL*, p. 105.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>148</sup> Brown, *The Early Years*, p. 171.

Elena Pavlovna (1784–1803) was born Princess Friederike Charlotte Marie of Württemberg to Tsar Paul I of Russia. Support from the Imperial family was the only source of funding for the St Petersburg Conservatory — a point of contention for nationalists. Pavlovna was a distant relation of Dostoyevsky through marriage. For more information see Volkov, *St Petersburg: A Cultural History*, p. 73.

unavailable.<sup>149</sup> Eduard Nápravník was appointed and remained as principal conductor until 1881.<sup>150</sup> Tchaikovsky scripted a passionate article in the *Sovremennaya letopis* newspaper one week later.<sup>151</sup> Here, he expressed his abhorrence at Balakirev's unjust treatment. In light of this blow to Balakirev's professional status, he may have desired a new project — Tchaikovsky.<sup>152</sup> Perhaps, however, the nationalist leader was merely grateful for the young composer's support over his untimely dismissal.

Balakirev's father died at Klin on 2 (15) June soon after his departure from the RMS. While settling his affairs in Moscow Balakirev attended a concert series by Berlioz and had the opportunity to meet with Tchaikovsky.<sup>153</sup> The young composer's impression of Balakirev was revealed in a letter to Modest on 3 (15) August 1869:

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<sup>149</sup> Max Seifritz (1827–1885) was a German violinist, composer, teacher at the Stuttgart University and conductor of the Stuttgart Royal Orchestra. See Jane M. Hatch, *The American Book of Days* (New York: Wilson, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn 1978), p. 133.

<sup>150</sup> The Czech-born Eduard Nápravník (1839–1916) was famous as a composer and conductor in Russia. He directed many premières of important Russian works, including five of Tchaikovsky's operas at the Mariyinsky Theatre in St Petersburg: *The Oprichnik* (1874), *Vakula the Smith* (1876), *The Maid of Orleans* (1881) — which was dedicated to Nápravník, *The Queen of Spades* (1890) and *Iolanta* (1892). He also gave the first performances of many of Tchaikovsky's other works at the RMS. See Montagu Montagu-Nathan, 'Russian Literature and Russian Music', *Proceedings of the Musical Association, 41<sup>st</sup> Session 1914–1915* (1915), p. 114.

<sup>151</sup> See Appendix I: Letters, Articles and Programme Notes (A.I.4), pp. 312–315, for an English translation of the article written by Tchaikovsky in defence of Balakirev.

<sup>152</sup> Edward Garden, *Balakirev: A Critical Study of his Life and Music* (London: Faber & Faber, 1967), p. 87. Balakirev's desire to mould other young composers within his own nationalist quarters is well documented. 'By taking amateur musicians of prescribed musical education but enormous potential, he made of Musorgsky, Rimsky-Korsakov and Borodin composers of national and eventually international rank, whose music represented Russia through its history, literature and traditions to the world beyond the Empire's frontiers. In doing so Balakirev imparted what he had himself concluded, so that a great deal of his thinking underlies the music of his pupils'. See Campbell, 'Balakirev', *GMO. OMO*.

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*

Rubinstein is still in Lipzek [sic], but Balakirev is here and I must be honest, his presence weighs upon me. He is a very good man and is well disposed towards me, but somehow I just cannot see soul to soul with him. I do not very much like his exclusive musical opinions and critical manner.<sup>154</sup>

These are interesting remarks when we consider the role that Balakirev was to play within the genesis of *Romeo and Juliet*. In a further letter to Anatoly Tchaikovsky, dated 11 (23) August 1869, his brother referred again to the effect that Balakirev's stay in Moscow had on him:

Balakirev is still here, we see each other often but I understand more and more that, in spite of all his good traits, his presence would have been a heavy burden for me if he had stayed here for good. Worst of all are his narrow-minded opinions and the stubborn way he sticks to his prejudices. At the same time, in some ways he has been of use to me during his short stay.<sup>155</sup>

The reference to Balakirev being 'of some use' to Tchaikovsky at this time possibly refers to his suggestion to compose an overture based on *Romeo and Juliet*.

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<sup>154</sup> *LF*, p. 50; and *PSSL* p. 166. The remark, 'I do not very much like his exclusive musical opinions and critical manner' is noteworthy. In his letter to Balakirev regarding *Fatum*, Tchaikovsky appeared to acquiesce to some sort of subservient tone and accepted the nationalist's harsh criticism of his work. We see this same reaction to Balakirev's views on *Romeo and Juliet* in 1869, but in this instance Tchaikovsky invariably had his own way.

<sup>155</sup> *LF*, pp. 51–52; and *PSSL*, p. 168. Galina von Meck inserted the following remarks after her translation of this letter: 'The Relationship between Balakirev and Tchaikovsky was a complex one. Kashkin thought that it was at this time Balakirev suggested the subject of 'Romeo and Juliet' for an opera, but Klimentko thought it unlikely since at the time he was being unpleasant about the 'Valse Caprice', Op. 4'. See *LF*, p. 52.

Nikolay Dimitrievich Kashkin (1839–1920) was a Russian musician, teacher, critic and friend of Tchaikovsky. He taught alongside the composer at the Moscow Conservatory as Professor of piano, music theory and history (1866–1896), and (1905–1908). See David Brown, 'Kashkin, Nikolay Dmitriyevich', *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 13 June 2012].

## 2.7 Conclusion: New Hermeneutic Windows

In summary, this chapter has presented an overview of the central artistic and philosophical ideologies of Russian culture in the 1860s that were influential in moulding the ethos and aesthetics of its emerging band of professional composers, whether directly or indirectly. Particular emphasis has been placed on the factors that stimulated Balakirev's artistic vision, as he was the figure allegedly responsible for the design of *Romeo and Juliet's* programme. The knowledge acquired from this assessment has established a new series of hermeneutic windows through which Tchaikovsky's fantasy-overture can be interpreted.

Hermeneutic window No. 2, as illustrated by this chapter, has been concerned with Tchaikovsky's reading of programme music as a representational genre (we recall his belief that all instrumental music was in some form representational). For him, there were two types of such music. The first, 'sterling coin', was derived from the inner depths of the composer's soul, while the second, 'worthless paper', was manufactured in accordance with an extramusical influence. From our engagement with this first hermeneutic window, the premise of another hermeneutic window, No. 2.I, has been established — Tchaikovsky's understanding of realism.

He defined this as music capable of expressing the composer's aesthetic reaction to a concrete subject such as a poem, libretto or literary work. This concept draws inspiration from Chernishevsky's ideology of nature as reality. Hermeneutic window No. 2.II develops the notion of 'the woman question' and

female otherness in *Romeo and Juliet*. This is derived collectively from the ideas of Chernišhevsky, Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky and Jung. For Tchaikovsky, the female figure functioned as an alternative version of the *persona*. Through her, death was given access to the mortal world, and in some cases, the *persona* himself. Hermeneutic window No. 2.III borrows from Tolstoy's notion of death and man's need to challenge and confront its inevitability. This sense of dualism is also shared by Hermeneutic window 2.IV, in which the dichotomy between 'self' and 'otherness' is established. The final emerging hermeneutic window, No. 2.V, is built upon Dostoyevsky's tripartite discussion on death, love and suicide as a foundation for realism.

All of these windows can, through their function as representational activities of interpretation, be perceived as structural tropes. As a result, I have decided to employ Tchaikovsky's *Manfred* as a hermeneutic tool through which these final tropes can be accessed within my reinterpretation of *Romeo and Juliet*. Before this can be carried out, however, it is important that the details surrounding the writing of the fantasy-overture from conception to completion be explored. The following Part Three achieves this through an engagement with the written correspondence between Balakirev and Tchaikovsky from 1869 to 1881. The results garnered from such an assessment illustrate the burgeoning emergence of 'Tchaikovsky the *persona*' — an important aspect within my later discussion on the representation of this figure within *Romeo and Juliet*.

## HERMENEUTIC WINDOW NO. 3: THE CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN TCHAIKOVSKY AND BALAKIREV

### **Part Three: *Romeo and Juliet* — Composition, Revisions and Proposed Opera**

Over the past one hundred and thirty-three years *Romeo and Juliet*'s historiography has been founded on a series of fractured summaries. This has created a rather synopsis version of the chain events surrounding its genesis. The repetition of particular extracts, taken from Tchaikovsky's letters, and the failure to examine other documental evidence, has limited the hermeneutic development of knowledge of the fantasy-overture's programme. In a bid to address potential missing links in our understanding of the work's background, this section of the thesis engages with Tchaikovsky's written correspondence to Balakirev, his family and peers, during the writing of the fantasy-overture. Through an assessment of these fifty letters, a comprehensive detailing of *Romeo and Juliet*'s composition from conception to completion is presented. Here, Tchaikovsky and Balakirev's individual perspectives on the work's evolution are assessed. Resultantly, we learn that Tchaikovsky's role within this process was not as sedentary as we have been led to believe. Thus, we encounter the figure of Tchaikovsky, the *persona*.

From 1869 to 1881 *Romeo and Juliet*'s progress was charted across twenty-two letters, shared between Tchaikovsky and Balakirev.<sup>1</sup> For ease of navigation these writings, along with Tchaikovsky's further twenty-eight letters to friends, family, musicians and publishers, are catalogued here (Table 2) by subject matter.<sup>2</sup>

**Table 2: Table of Letters, referring to *Romeo and Juliet*, written by Tchaikovsky to Balakirev, Friends, Family, Musicians and Publishers (1869–1888)**

Letter No.	Date	Exchange	Details
1	2 (14) Oct 1869	Tchaik–Bal	Refers to his inability to compose.
2	7 (19) Oct 1869	Tchaik–Anatol	Irritated over Bal's response to his inactivity.
3	4 (16) Oct 1869	Bal–Tchaik	Compositional approach to <i>King Lear</i> overture.
4	12 (24) Oct 1869	Tchaik–Mod	Mentions his intention to begin work on <i>RJ</i> .
5	18 (30) Oct 1869	Mod–Tchaik	Proposal for the programme of <i>RJ</i> .
6	28 Oct (9 Nov) 1869	Tchaik–Bal	Reports on <i>RJ</i> 's progress.
7	30 Oct (11 Nov) 1869	Tchaik–Anatol	Informs him of his rough draft of <i>RJ</i> .

<sup>1</sup> This number is based on the extant published letters. With recent strides in Russian scholarship and archival access, other letters between Balakirev and Tchaikovsky may surface in the future.

<sup>2</sup> Each of these letters mentions *Romeo and Juliet*. The following abbreviations apply: *RJ* (*Romeo and Juliet*); Tchaik (Tchaikovsky); Bal (Balakirev); Anatol (Anatoly Tchaikovsky); Mod (Modest Tchaikovsky); Klim (Ivan Klimentko); Azan (Mikhail Azanchevsky); Jürg (Pyotr Jürgenson); Bes (Vasily Bessel); Stas (Vladimir Stasov); Dupont (Joseph Dupont); v. Meck (Nadezhda von Meck); Laube (Julius Laube); and Bergson (Édouard Bergson). However, in the attempt to discuss these letters chronologically, the interpreter faces a hermeneutic problem. Within the time span of their respective correspondence, Tchaikovsky and Balakirev's reactions to specific letters sometimes crossed due to various delays in postal deliveries. I have addressed this issue by prioritising each letter in relation to subject matter rather than chronological dating. For the most part, my discussion of the letters between Tchaikovsky and Balakirev is chronological, but there are some occasions where this is not possible. For example see letters 3, 22, 28 and 30.



**Table 2 Continued:**

<b>Letter No.</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Exchange</b>	<b>Details</b>
8	12 (24) Nov 1869	Bal–Tchaik	Requests sketches of <i>RJ</i> .
9	17 (29) Nov 1869	Tchaik–Bal	Lists the four musical themes of <i>RJ</i> .
10	18 (30) Nov 1869	Tchaik–Anatol	Rejoices at finishing <i>RJ</i> and its impending performance by the RMS.
11	18 (30) Nov 1869	Tchaik–Mod	Admits the completion of the overture ‘ordered’ by his brother.
12	1 (13) Dec 1869	Bal–Tchaik	Outlines his opinion on the sketches.
13	18 (30) Dec 1869	Tchaik–Bal	Thanks him for his comments and promises to send the full overture soon.
14	19 (31) Dec 1869	Tchaik–Anatol	Relays news of his completed <i>RJ</i> .
15	20 Dec (1 Jan) 1869/1870	Tchaik–Bal	Asserts completion of <i>RJ</i> ’s orchestration.
16	13 (25) Jan 1870	Tchaik–Mod	Celebrates Rimsky-Korsakov and Jürgenson’s mutual appreciation of <i>RJ</i> .
17	23 Feb (7 Mar) 1870	Tchaik–Bal	Acknowledges sending <i>RJ</i> (over two months ago) and hopes that it had been received.
18	2–3 (14–15) Mar 1870	Tchaik–Mod	Worried over the impending première of <i>RJ</i> .
19	7 (19) Mar 1870	Tchaik–Anatol	Reports of <i>RJ</i> ’s première and his contentment.
20	26 Mar (7 April) 1870	Tchaik–Modest	Speaks of his satisfaction with <i>RJ</i> .
21	1 (13) May 1870	Tchaik–Klim	Upset by the première of <i>RJ</i> .

**Table 2 Continued:**

<b>Letter No.</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Exchange</b>	<b>Details</b>
22	16 (28) Mar 1870	Bal–Tchaik	Unfinished letter, praises <i>RJ</i> 's 'Love Theme'.
23	7 (19) July 1870	Tchaik–Mod	Discusses his holiday at Bad Soden.
24	6 (18) Sep 1870	Tchaik–Bal	Informs him of his revision to <i>RJ</i> .
25	17 (29) Sep 1870	Tchaik–Mod	Mentions revision to <i>RJ</i> .
26	25 Sep (7 Oct) 1870	Tchaik–Bal	Admits to conclusion of his revision.
27	20–23 Oct (2–5 Nov) 1870	Tchaik–Bal	Apologises for delay in sending the revised <i>RJ</i> to Balakirev and discusses introductory theme.
28	5 (17) Oct 1870	Tchaik–Anatol	Admits knowledge of the Berlin publication of <i>RJ</i> .
29	26 Oct (7 Nov) 1870	Tchaik–Klim	Notifies him of completion of <i>RJ</i> .
30	19 (31) Oct 1870	Bal–Tchaik	Wonders why he had not written or sent <i>RJ</i> .
31	Nov 1870 (date undisclosed)	Tchaik–Bal	Apologises for not sending his revised <i>RJ</i> , laying blame with his copyist.
32	10 (22) Jan 1871	Tchaik–Bal	Professes hope of a future performance of <i>RJ</i> at one of his concerts.
33	22 Jan (3 Feb) 1871	Bal–Tchaik	Discusses his reaction to the revised <i>RJ</i> .
34	15 (27) May 1871	Tchaik–Bal	Expresses his upset at Rubinstein's delivery of <i>RJ</i> to Bote and Bock without his consent, and the omitted dedication to Balakirev.

**Table 2 Continued:**

<b>Letter No.</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Exchange</b>	<b>Details</b>
35	19 (31) May 1871	Bal–Tchaik	Conveys his disapproval of the rushed publication of <i>RJ</i> .
36	29 May (10 June) 1871	Tchaik–Bal	Informs him that Bote and Bock took his 1870 revisions into consideration and revised their publication accordingly.
37	11(23) Sep 1871	Tchaik–Azan	Enquires about future performance of <i>RJ</i> in St Petersburg.
38	29 Sep (11 Oct) 1871	Bal–Tchaik	Wishes to perform <i>RJ</i> at a forthcoming concert.
39	8 (20) Oct 1871	Tchaik–Bal	Discusses performance issues relating to Nápravník and <i>RJ</i> .
40	8 (20) Aug 1872	Tchaik–Jürg	Expresses annoyance at the actions of Bote and Bock.
41	16 (28) Mar 1873	Tchaik–Bes	Requests him to send two copies of <i>RJ</i> to Klindworth.
42	13 (25) Sep 1874	Tchaik–Bes	Acquiesces to his request of a copy of <i>RJ</i> .
43	28 Sep (10 Oct) 1874	Tchaik–Stas	Agrees to send him a copy of <i>RJ</i> .
44	26 Nov (8 Dec) 1874	Tchaik–Mod	Angry over Laroche’s article on <i>RJ</i> .
45	9 (21) Nov 1875	Tchaik–Bes	Lists his corrections to <i>RJ</i> ’s score.
46	25 Oct (6 Nov) 1876	Tchaik–Dupont	Tchaikovsky muses over possible orchestral works suitable for Dupont’s concert in Brussels. <i>RJ</i> is offered.
47	19 (31) Mar 1878	Tchaik–v. Meck	Disappointed with European reception of <i>RJ</i> .

**Table 2 Continued:**

Letter No.	Date	Exchange	Details
48	1 (13) Sep 1881	Tchaik–Bal	Notes final revision to <i>RJ</i> and his torment over previous Bote and Bock publication.
49	10 (22) Jan 1888	Tchaik–Laube	Refers to <i>RJ</i> as a difficult work.
50	28 April (10 May) 1888	Tchaik–Bergson	Apologises to Bergson and offers a 6-bar quotation of the ‘Love Theme’ from <i>RJ</i> as a peace offering.

The most commonly repeated extracts, taken from these letters, are as follows: Modest cites examples from Letters 3, 8, 10, 12, 18, 21, 28, 29, 33 and 34;<sup>3</sup> Calvocoressi cites excerpts from Letters 6, 9 (without musical quotations), 12 (a two-sentence excerpt), 13, 22, 24, 30, and refers to the content of letter 47;<sup>4</sup> Brown cites excerpts from Letters 1, 3, 6, 8, 9 (with musical quotations), 12, 21, 22 (Brown neglects to mention that this letter, 22, never reached Tchaikovsky; its inclusion here in the examination of the written interchange between the pair is questionable as it suggests an awareness of content on Tchaikovsky’s part), 24, 27 and 33;<sup>5</sup> Maes cites excerpts from Letters 3 and 12;<sup>6</sup> Wiley refers to letters 1 and

<sup>3</sup> *LL*: p. 108 (letter 3); p. 109 (letter 8); p. 112 (letter 10); pp. 109–110 (letter 12); p. 114 (letter 18); p. 116 (letter 21); p. 122 (letter 28); p. 121 (letter 29); and p. 111 (letters 33 and 34). Modest misdates letters 10 and 11 as September, when they should both read as November. See *PSSL*, pp. 188–189.

<sup>4</sup> Calvocoressi, ‘The Correspondence’: pp. 713–714. Calvocoressi misdates letter 13 as 14 December when in fact it should be 18 (30) November.

<sup>5</sup> Brown, *Tchaikovsky: The Early Years*: p. 180 (letter 1); pp. 180–181 (letter 3); p. 182 (letters 6 and 8); pp. 182–183 (letter 9); pp. 183–184 (letter 12); p. 184 (letter 21); and p. 185 (letters 22, 24, 27 and 33).

<sup>6</sup> Maes, *A History of Russian Music*: pp. 54–55 (letter 3); and p. 55 (letter 12).

12, while alluding to the content of letters 5 and 11 (he was the first of the long list of Tchaikovsky western scholars to do so).<sup>7</sup>

From this select list we see that twenty-eight references to *Romeo and Juliet* have gone virtually unnoticed in the various commentaries on the fantasy-overture's background. While a portion of these letters (letters 4, 7, 14, 15, 25) are merely repeated records of Tchaikovsky informing his brothers that composition had either begun or ceased, the other letters provide insight into *Romeo and Juliet*'s revisions and publication. Such knowledge is important to our current understandings of the fantasy-overture's genesis and the relationship between Tchaikovsky and Balakirev.

This survey of Tchaikovsky's written correspondence also illustrates how Shakespeare's tragic love-story preoccupied his compositional psyche for over thirteen years, even after the fantasy-overture's final completion. References to a proposed opera based on *Romeo and Juliet* appear in Tchaikovsky's writings of 1878, but work did not begin until 1881. Unfinished sketches of a duet for soprano and tenor, based on the love music of the fantasy-overture, were found among Tchaikovsky's manuscripts after his death, and completed by Sergey Taneyev in 1895. In what follows, the duet is treated as a hermeneutic window through which the original programme of the fantasy-overture is reassessed — an approach initiated by Jaeger in 1896, but only on a superficial level.<sup>8</sup> Before this

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<sup>7</sup> Wiley, *Tchaikovsky*: p. 52 (letters 1, 5 and 12); p. 53 (letter 11).

<sup>8</sup> The use of the fantasy-overture's love music in the duet was mostly added posthumously to Tchaikovsky's sketches. Therefore, the final work is more of a commentary on Taneyev's

can be addressed, it is necessary to discuss the details surrounding Tchaikovsky's motivation for composing *Romeo and Juliet*.

### 3.1 Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet*: Inspiration

Uncertainty surrounds many of the particulars concerning the inspiration and writing of Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet*. Even the earliest commentaries on the work are contradictory. According to Nikolay Kashkin's memoirs, the idea for the fantasy-overture was suggested by Balakirev in May 1869.<sup>9</sup> Modest makes no reference to this in his brother's biography, but proposes 'the end of September' as the starting date.<sup>10</sup> Writing at the end of the nineteenth century, Rosa Newmarch claimed that composition commenced at some point during spring, following Balakirev's move to Moscow.<sup>11</sup>

In 1912 Sergey Lyapunov, the editor of *PBC*, commented that there was no indication of an initial conversation between Tchaikovsky and Balakirev regarding *Romeo and Juliet* in their available letters.<sup>12</sup> He posited that the work probably came to fruition during Balakirev's stay in Moscow during the summer

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perception of the fantasy-overture's programme than Tchaikovsky's. This will be discussed later in Part Three.

<sup>9</sup> Kashkin's reminiscences appeared in *Vospominaniia o P. I. Chaikovskom* (Moscow, 1954). See Brown, 'Kashkin, Nikolay Dmitriyevich', *GMO. OMO*.

<sup>10</sup> *LL*, p. 107. Modest states that composition began on 25 September (7 October), sketches were completed by 7 (19) October and the work was orchestrated by 15 (27) November 1869. See *LL*, p. 729.

<sup>11</sup> Newmarch, *Tchaikovsky*, p. 22. Her comments on *Romeo and Juliet* are based on an early edition of Kashkin's *Reminiscences*, published by Pyotr Jürgenson in Moscow (1897).

<sup>12</sup> *PBC*, p. 34. Sergey Mikhailovich Lyapunov (1859–1924) was a Russian composer and pianist. See Edward Garden, 'Lyapunov, Sergey Mikhaylovich', *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 13 November 2012].

months of 1869, which corresponds with Kashkin's recollection of the events.<sup>13</sup> David Brown predicated August as the month of inspiration, and 7 October as the first date of composition.<sup>14</sup> Alexander Poznansky also agreed upon autumn as the period in which *Romeo and Juliet* was first mentioned.<sup>15</sup> It is because of this uncertainty regarding specific dates, that received wisdom (and the present interpreter) agree that *Romeo and Juliet* was offered to Tchaikovsky in the summer of 1869, and the writing process took place between the months of October and November.<sup>16</sup>

As Kashkin's commentary was one of the first to refer to an initial conversation between Balakirev and Tchaikovsky regarding the fantasy-overture, it is important that we consider his perspective. His 'reminiscence', as translated by Newmarch, reads as follows:

This [Balakirev's suggestion to compose the work] is always associated in my mind with the memory of a lovely day in May, with verdant forests and tall fir trees, among which we three [Tchaikovsky, Balakirev and Kashkin] were taking a walk. Balakirev understood, to a great extent, the nature of Tchaikovsky's genius and knew that it was adequate to the subject he suggested. Evidently he himself was taken with the subject, for he explained all the details as vividly as though the work had been already written. The plan, adopted to sonata form, was as follows: First, an introduction of a religious figure, representative of Friar Lawrence followed by an *Allegro* in B minor which was to depict the enmity between the Montagues and Capulets, then the street brawl etc... Then was to follow the 'Love' of Romeo and Juliet (second subject in D<sup>b</sup> major), succeeded by the elaboration of both subjects [...] the recapitulation — in which the first theme, *Allegro*, appears in its original form, and the 'Love'-theme (D<sup>b</sup> major) now appears in D major, the whole ending with the death of the 'Lovers'. Balakirev spoke with conviction that he at once kindled the ardour of the young composer to whom such a theme was extremely well suited.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> *PBC*, p. 34.

<sup>14</sup> Brown, *Tchaikovsky: The Man and His Music*, p. 47.

<sup>15</sup> *TTOE*, p. 51.

<sup>16</sup> *TBC*, p. 354.

<sup>17</sup> Newmarch, *Tchaikovsky*, pp. 22–23.

Even though Kashkin dated this occurrence as May, Tchaikovsky's writings suggest that he did not meet with Balakirev until late June of that year.<sup>18</sup>

Kashkin's recollection is striking in its inclusion of details of the work's tonal structure. The insertion of specific keys in bracketed commentary may have been added retrospectively, following the work's notoriety within the musical repertoires of Russia and Europe. However, Kashkin's words, via Newmarch, that 'he [Balakirev] himself explained all the details as vividly as though the work had been already written' imply that Balakirev was solely responsible for the choice of form, keys and programme of *Romeo and Juliet*, prior to composition. As we know, this idea has fed a considerable portion of writings on the fantasy-overture, culminating in the claim that Balakirev set out a comprehensive structural plan of the work, including key relationships, in a letter to Tchaikovsky. This supposed directive is notably absent from the available correspondence of both composers, and is excluded from Modest's collection of his brother's writings.<sup>19</sup>

Despite the lack of available evidence to support the existence of this communication, Tchaikovsky scholarship attests to its significance within musicology's collective knowledge of the genesis of *Romeo and Juliet*.<sup>20</sup> This

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<sup>18</sup> *LF*, p. 50; and *PSSL*, p. 166.

<sup>19</sup> The GDMC does not have a copy of this alleged letter. My request for such was answered with a copy of a later letter (4/16 October), which details Balakirev's advice to Tchaikovsky on how to begin the writing of *Romeo and Juliet*.

<sup>20</sup> Brown remarks that Balakirev's suggestions for the key scheme of *Romeo and Juliet* cannot be found, but scholars tend to rely on Tchaikovsky's response of three weeks later to substantiate the nationalist's influence on the work (Letter 6, dated 28 October 1869). See Brown, *Tchaikovsky: The Early Years*, p. 182. The *TBC* states that Tchaikovsky 'used Balakirev's plan, including the tonal design' for the layout of *Romeo and Juliet*. See *TBC*, p. 354.



letter has held a significant place within the hermeneutic equation built on understanding *Romeo and Juliet*. Through an examination of the correspondence between Balakirev and Tchaikovsky, the following section proposes that this record of instruction never reached Tchaikovsky, and therefore, cannot be held as justification for the revision of the fantasy-overture in 1870.

### 3.2 *Romeo and Juliet* (1869): Influences

Following Tchaikovsky's initial agreement to compose an overture based on Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, his enthusiasm for the project waned. Conceivably, he may have felt overwhelmed by the prospect of tackling such a well-known subject. On balance, Berlioz's dramatic symphony, *Roméo et Juliette* (1827–1839), had long since been a favourite within the Russian concert repertory.<sup>21</sup> Possibly, this may have been the reason for Balakirev's suggestion to compose the work in the first place. In light of such a notion it is also noteworthy to observe the fact that Berlioz died in 1869 (8 March). This could have inspired Balakirev's desire for a Russian *Romeo and Juliet* as an *homage* to his favourite French composer. While Tchaikovsky may have feared such a formidable task,

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<sup>21</sup> During Berlioz's concert tour of Russia in 1847, the 'Queen Mab' scherzo from *Roméo et Juliette* was performed in St Petersburg. The overture and 'Queen Mab' scherzo were later performed at the anniversary concert of Shakespeare's 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary on 23 April (4 May) 1864 in St Petersburg. See Campbell, *Russians on Russian Music 1830–1880*, p. 178. For more information on Berlioz and *Roméo et Juliette* see the following select sources: Jacques Barzun, *Berlioz: The Romantic Century II* (New York and London: Cambridge University Press, 1969); Julian Rushton, *The Musical Language of Berlioz* (Cambridge, London: Cambridge University Press, 1983); Julian Rushton, *Berlioz's Roméo et Juliette* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Arthur Graham, *Shakespeare in Opera, Ballet, Orchestral Music and Song: An Introduction to Music Inspired by the Bard* (New York: Edwin Mellon, 1997), p. 62; Peter Bloom, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Berlioz* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 61; Julian Rushton, *The Music of Berlioz* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001); and Hugh MacDonald, 'Berlioz, Hector', *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 16 October 2012].

his concerns regarding the writing of the fantasy-overture centred on the issue of content, and his difficulties in reconciling personal inspiration with a pre-ordained programme.

On 2 (14) October (Letter 1) Tchaikovsky took pen to paper to voice his concerns in a letter to Balakirev:

But just imagine, I'm [Tchaikovsky] completely played out, and not one even mildly tolerable musical idea comes into my head. I'm beginning to fear that my muse has flown off to some distant place [...] and perhaps I'll have to wait a long time for her to return — and that is why I have decided to write forewarning you that I have become a museless [...] musician.<sup>22</sup>

Here, Brown's translation omits Tchaikovsky's remarks that 'aside from classroom harmonic examples' he had 'not written anything in the past two months'.<sup>23</sup> Even allusions to musical ideas were impossible for him to act upon.<sup>24</sup> This compounds Tchaikovsky's utter lack of motivation during this period. Further mention of this compositional malaise surfaces in a letter to Tchaikovsky's brother, Anatoly, on 7 (19) October 1869 (Letter 2):

The Conservatory [Moscow] is already getting boring and the lessons, the same as last year, have begun to be tiring. I am not composing at all; however I have finished 50 Russian songs and yesterday I had a letter from Bessel from Petersburg, begging me to adapt Anton Rubinstein's *Ivan the Terrible*. Balakirev writes nasty letters because I am not writing anything.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.* See *PSSL*, p. 174; and *PBC*, pp. 34–35. Much of Tchaikovsky's apathy here may be attributed to the recent failure of his opera *Undine*. In August 1869, to Tchaikovsky's horror, the Imperial Theatre in St Petersburg had rejected a performance of his *Undine* with no inclination of producing it in the future. See Brown, *Tchaikovsky: The Early Years*, p. 180.

<sup>23</sup> *PSSL*, p. 174.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> *LF*, p. 53; and *PSSL*, p. 176.

This letter reveals that by 19 October Tchaikovsky still had not advanced in the writing of his fantasy-overture, despite an unfolding correspondence with Balakirev. His above reference to the latter's abusive commentary is interesting. The accompanying editorial notes to *PSSL* state that this remark pertained to an earlier letter sent by Balakirev to Tchaikovsky, dated 4 (16) October (Letter 3).<sup>26</sup> However, the tone of this letter is far from 'nasty' in its encouragement of the young Tchaikovsky. If we examine the 'available' (for that is the hermeneutic issue, as some letters could be still missing) discourse between the pair, prior to Balakirev's alleged offence, nothing but polite respect and enthusiasm is to be found. Accordingly, it seems that Tchaikovsky's negative comments to Anatoly were most likely a reflection of his bad humour at the time of writing.

### 3.2.1 Balakirev's Programme

Balakirev's letter of 4 (16) October (Letter 3) was intended to motivate Tchaikovsky's musical creativity by setting out a methodical description of the compositional approach taken in his *King Lear* overture (1859):

It strikes me that your inactivity proceeds from your lack of concentration, in spite of your 'snug workshop'. I do not know your method of composing, mine is as follows: when I wrote my *King Lear*, having first read the play, I felt inspired to compose an overture (which Stasov had already suggested to me). At first I had no actual material; I only warmed to the project. An Introduction 'maestoso', followed by something mystical (Kent's Prediction). The Introduction dies away and gives place to a stormy allegro. This is Lear himself, the discrowned, but still mighty lion. By way of episodes the characteristic themes of Regan and Goneril, and then — a second subject — Cordelia, calm and tender. The middle section (storm, Lear and the Fool on the heath) and repetition of the allegro: Regan and Goneril finally crush their father, and the overture dies away softly (Lear over

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<sup>26</sup> *PSSL*, pp. 176–177.

Cordelia's corpse), then the prediction of Kent is heard once more, and finally the peaceful and solemn note of death. You must understand that, so far, I had no definite musical ideas. These came later and took their place within my framework. I believe you will feel the same, if once you are inspired by the project. Then arm yourself with galoshes and a walking-stick and go for a constitutional on the Boulevards, starting with the Nikitsky; let yourself be saturated with your plan, and I am convinced by the time you reach the Sretensky Boulevard some theme or episode will have come to you. Just at this moment, thinking of your overture, an idea has come to me involuntarily, and I seem to see that it should open with a fierce 'allegro with the clash of swords.' Something like this (Example 1):<sup>27</sup>

**Example 1: Balakirev's Proposed Introductory Theme (*Romeo and Juliet*)<sup>28</sup>**

In his opening comments Balakirev attributed the layout of his programme to a reading of the Shakespearean text. As noted in Part Two above, he believed that musical inspiration could only follow from the subject matter of the work.<sup>29</sup> Therefore, for Balakirev, knowledge of the subject predicated decisions on musical programme, hence his implied suggestion to Tchaikovsky to follow suit and read the dramatisation of *Romeo and Juliet* prior to commencing the composition. The letter concludes with Balakirev's wish that his words would encourage Tchaikovsky to begin writing *Romeo and Juliet*: 'If these lines have a

<sup>27</sup> *LL*, p. 108; and *PBC*, pp. 36–37.

<sup>28</sup> *PBC*, p. 37.

<sup>29</sup> Maes, *A History of Russian Music*, p. 54.

good effect upon you I shall be very pleased; I have a certain right to hope for this, because your letters do me good'.<sup>30</sup>

Balakirev's letter demonstrates a two-tiered programme for *King Lear* in which provision is made to unite character representation with that of the central events of the dramatic plot — an approach that Tchaikovsky found difficult. The details of this correspondence contradict Kashkin's earlier recollection of the initial discussion that took place regarding *Romeo and Juliet*. This letter shows that Balakirev imagined the overture to begin with an 'allegro', whereas Kashkin claimed that the initial conversation agreed upon a slow introduction. If Balakirev had indeed set out the tonal plan specifically in May, as remembered by Kashkin, then why did this information not appear in detail in the above-cited advisory notes to Tchaikovsky (Letter 3)? There is currently no definitive proof to substantiate the idea that Balakirev ever marked out a distinct harmonic map for *Romeo and Juliet* in his correspondence with Tchaikovsky. Be that as it may, Balakirev's inspirational writings of 4 (16) October had the desired effect on Tchaikovsky, who soon began work on the fantasy-overture.

### 3.2.2 Modest's Proposal

Modest received a letter from his brother on 12 (24) October 1869 (Letter 4) confirming Tchaikovsky's intention to start writing *Romeo and Juliet*, without any elaboration.<sup>31</sup> Modest's reply on 18 (30) October (Letter 5) is intriguing. Here,

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<sup>30</sup> *LL*, p. 109; and *PBC*, p. 37.

<sup>31</sup> See *PSSL*, p. 179.

Tchaikovsky's brother reveals that he too had drafted the plan of an overture based on Shakespeare's tragic love story. This is an interesting admission when we consider the fact that Modest did not generally dabble in music composition, but preferred to write libretti and commentaries instead. His letter reads as follows:<sup>32</sup>

I have been extremely surprised to learn that you have written an overture to *Romeo and Juliet*, firstly, because I, after recently reading through this work, have composed an overture on it, and secondly because you have unsuspectingly executed one of my secret desires [...]. Here is the programme of my overture: First, the enmity of the two families represented by *ff* and *presto*, then little by little from all of the noise and nonsense (representing enmity) emerges a marvellous hymn of 'Love' *pp*, trumpets and violoncellos represent 'Love' and Romeo's character, and on violins and flutes — Juliet. At last this hymn reaches horrifying passion and accepts an ominous tone, all the time interrupted by the first theme of quarrel. But suddenly from a terrible *ff*, a pause, and then the gloomy phrase, terminating in silent reconciling chords. Whether a lie, not bad [not bad, is it?!]!!<sup>33</sup>

Modest's proposal shows that he did not consider dramatising the clerical figure, Friar Lawrence, in his musical interpretation of the play. This is especially noteworthy when we consider the fact that Modest admitted to having read the Shakespearean text before sketching his draft of the work. Tchaikovsky's brother appears to have found no significance in the clerical character whatsoever. His programme suggests independent characterisation of the figures of Romeo and Juliet under the banner of the 'Love Theme' — a feature which received wisdom

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<sup>32</sup> To my knowledge this letter has only appeared of late in the literature on the subject on two occasions: See the article on *Romeo and Juliet* under the 'Tchaikovsky-Research' internet site and Wiley's latest book on Tchaikovsky (see pp. 52–53). Wiley's account of this event differs from my observations. He states: 'The day after Tchaikovsky sent his themes for *Romeo* to Balakirev, he queried Modest about Modest's own Overture to *Romeo and Juliet*, written to the following plan' [Wiley cites the extract quoted above]. See Wiley, *Tchaikovsky*, p. 52. 'The day after Tchaikovsky sent his themes' was 18 (30) November 1869, but there does not appear to be any mention of Tchaikovsky's letter of 'query' to Modest at this time in the published letters. Wiley does not cite any reference for his dating of the event, as 'the day after' to back up his statement.

<sup>33</sup> *PSSL*, fn. 3, p. 190. See Appendix 1: Letters, Programme Notes, and Articles (A.I.5), pp. 316–317, for a digital photograph of this letter from the archives at GDMC.

recognises in Tchaikovsky's adaptation of the tale (as noted in Part One, above). The relationship between the lovers amid the conflict of the feuding families was prioritised in Modest's design for an overture — again a theme traditionally accepted as evident within Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet*. Tchaikovsky's published letters offer no further information on Modest's overture.

Fuelled by Balakirev's words of encouragement, and possibly Modest's programmatic draft, Tchaikovsky set to work on *Romeo and Juliet*. Choosing to write it in 4/4 time, instead of the recommended 3/4 time, Tchaikovsky made use of the dramatic chords and agitated semiquaver passage-work (Example 1) originally suggested in Balakirev's encouraging letter (Letter 3). In this communication, Balakirev had advised Tchaikovsky that if he 'were going to write the overture', he 'should become enthusiastic over this germ' (the semiquaver pattern) and 'brood over it, or rather turn it over' in his mind 'until something vital came of it'.<sup>34</sup> However, this musical idea was not utilised for the Introduction. The following discussion explores Tchaikovsky's interpretation of Balakirev's programmatic advice.

### **3.2.3 Tchaikovsky's Progress Report**

Tchaikovsky's progress report, sent to Balakirev on 28 October (9 November) 1869 (Letter 6), has prompted scholars to conclude that Balakirev did stipulate a specific harmonic path for *Romeo and Juliet* in his correspondence with

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<sup>34</sup> *LL*, p. 109; and *PBC*, p. 37.

Tchaikovsky.<sup>35</sup> This letter does not appear in Newmarch's edition of *LL* as part of Modest's discussion of the fantasy-overture. M. D. Calvocoressi printed one of the first English translations of the text in 1912 as follows:

My Overture is advancing pretty fast: the greater part is already quite planned, and I hope to have finished, if nothing prevents me, in about a month and a half. When I launch it into the world, you will see that as it stands — and principally on account of your advice — it has been made according to your suggestions. First, the plan is yours: Introduction, representing the Friar, the broil — Allegro and 'Love' — second motif. Secondly, the modulations are yours: Introduction in E major, Allegro in B minor, and second motive in D flat major. I cannot say at all what in it is passable, and what worse. I have often told you that I cannot adopt an objective attitude towards my progeny. I write as best I can; I find it always difficult to fix my choice upon a musical idea from all those that roam through my head. But as soon as I have chosen one, I grow accustomed to it, to its merits and defects, so that to alter or recast it costs me an incredible amount of labour. By my behaviour to the children of my imagination, I resemble a mother who, not being able to change the person of her homely daughter, takes her to the ball just as she is, trying to find charm in her warts and humped back. I tell you all this for you to understand why I do not intend to send you the Overture in its actual state, and want you to see it when finished. Then, censure it as hard as you choose. I will accept all as a lesson, and in my following work will strive to do better. But should you tear it to pieces now, when all is practically composed though not yet come to light — then I should be disheartened and give it up. From what I write, do not deduce that I expect the Overture to displease you. On the contrary, I cherish the hope to satisfy you at least a little — although God knows that more than once I have noticed that you found unsatisfactory what I found tolerable, and *vice-versa*.<sup>36</sup>

It seems to me that the statement here, 'the plan is yours', refers to Tchaikovsky's use of Balakirev's programmatic plan for *King Lear* as a model for the structural layout of his *Romeo and Juliet*. While my view is of course speculative, I do not think that the statement relates to a specific direction given by Balakirev, which outlined the tonal design of the work. The phrase, 'the modulations are yours', in

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<sup>35</sup> *PBC*, p. 41; and *PSSL*, pp. 180–181. Tchaikovsky uses the word 'патера'/'patera' (Father) to suggest a Friar. He does not specifically label the theme as 'Friar Lawrence', but states that the introduction represents a Friar. In Shakespeare's tale there are two friars: Friar Lawrence and Friar John. While Friar Lawrence obviously has a greater part within the unfolding tragedy, Friar John also possesses a relevant role within the drama.

<sup>36</sup> Calvocoressi, 'The Correspondence', p. 712; *PBC*, pp. 40–41; and *PSSL*, pp. 180–181.



this letter is also significant. Perhaps Tchaikovsky was referring to his borrowing of Balakirev's modulations from *King Lear*, which moved between the keys of B minor, B $\flat$  minor, D major and D $\flat$  major, rather than from an explicit written instruction to adhere to a particular set of keys. It also appears that the reason for introducing the work with a 'Friar Theme' may be attributed to the fact that this character from *Romeo and Juliet* bore the closest resemblance to the spiritual element of Kent's prophecy in *King Lear*.

As work on the fantasy-overture advanced, Tchaikovsky contacted his brother Anatoly on 30 October (11 November) 1869 (Letter 7) informing him that he had nearly completed his 'rough draft' of his *Romeo and Juliet* 'overture'.<sup>37</sup> Meanwhile, enthused by Tchaikovsky's earlier assertion that the fantasy-overture was near completion, Balakirev wrote to him on 12 (24) November (Letter 8) requesting the sketches of the work 'with the promise to express no opinion'.<sup>38</sup>

Five days later, 17 (29) November (Letter 9), Tchaikovsky replied with news that *Romeo and Juliet* was at the copiers:

You probably will be a little astonished to learn that the Overture is not only finished, but copying, so as to be performed at one of the coming concerts. I will send it to you only if, having heard it, I find at least a modicum of merit in it. At present, as it is finished and not yet performed, I know less than ever what it may be worth: I only know that it is not bad enough for me to fear on its account a humiliation here in Moscow [...] I copy for you at the end of my letter the principal motifs. Afterwards I shall send a score, copied for you, and of course with the dedication to you.<sup>39</sup>

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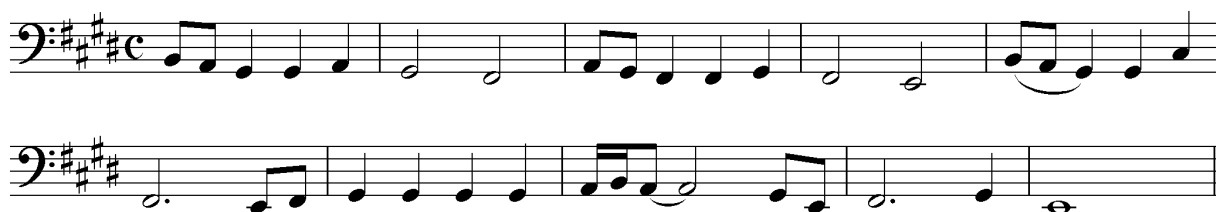
<sup>37</sup> *PSSL*, p. 182.

<sup>38</sup> Calvocoressi, 'The Correspondence', p. 713; and *PBC*, p. 43.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid*; *PBC*, p. 45; and *PSSL*, p. 185.

With thoughts of Balakirev’s previous critique of *Fatum* still fresh, Tchaikovsky wished to avoid similar disappointment with *Romeo and Juliet*, and consequently hesitated revealing the entire work. His developing confidence as a professional composer was in a fragile state at this time. In sending the main musical themes for evaluation, Tchaikovsky maintained respect for Balakirev, but retained his own sense of musical independence. The four themes (Examples 2–4), of *Romeo and Juliet* were quoted as follows:<sup>40</sup>

**Example 2: ‘I Тема Интродукция’ (‘I Tema Introduktsiya’/‘I Theme of the Introduction’) [*Romeo and Juliet*, 1869]**



<sup>40</sup> *PBC*, pp. 46–47; and *PSSL*, pp. 186–187: See Appendix III: Autograph Manuscripts (facsimiles) (A.III.1–A.III.4), pp. 336–340, for a copy of Tchaikovsky’s autograph orchestration of these themes. This is the first time in which these autograph scores have appeared collectively in print. My English translation of Tchaikovsky’s thematic labels appears in brackets here. This collection of autograph scores has never before appeared in print. However, a digital copy of a transcription of the traditionally accepted ‘Romeo Theme’ is cited in *PSSL*, p. 368. This picture appears in the album of Vasily Bezekirsky (1835–1919). He was a Russian violinist, conductor, composer and Professor of Music and Drama School of the Moscow Philharmonic Society. Bezekirsky regularly performed as a soloist of the Bolshoi Theatre Orchestra from 1861 to 1890. See I. M. Yampol’sky, ‘Bezekirsky, Vasily Vasil’yeovich’, *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 20 November 2012].

**Example 3: ‘II Тема *Allegro*’ (‘II Tema *Allegro*’/‘II Theme of the *Allegro*’)  
[*Romeo and Juliet*, 1869]**

The following description appears beneath this musical quotation in *PBC*:

Затем идет беготня в стиле того маленького образчика, что, помните, Вы мне прислали?<sup>41</sup> (‘Zatem idet begotnya v stile togo malen'kogo obrazchika, chto, pomnite, Vi mne prislali?’/Then, there is a bustle in a similar style to that of small sample, which, you remember, you sent me?).<sup>42</sup>

**Example 4: ‘III (a) Любви Тема’ (‘III a *Lyubvi Tema*’/‘III a Love Theme’)  
[*Romeo and Juliet*, 1869]**

<sup>41</sup> *PBC*, pp. 46–47; and *PSSL*, pp. 186–187.

<sup>42</sup> Brown, *Tchaikovsky: The Early Years*, p. 183.

‘(b)’

It is interesting to observe that Tchaikovsky quoted the second subject themes of the ‘Love’ section in reverse order to their appearance in the score, even though he had admitted to completing the fantasy-overture at this time.<sup>43</sup> Also, he did not specifically name the four musical ideas in his autograph scores as anything other than ‘*Andante non troppo*’, ‘*Allegro giusto*’, and ‘*Andante non tanto, quasi moderato*’.<sup>44</sup> Convention accepts the bipartite ‘Love Theme’ as a collective musical idea that unites the individual themes of ‘Romeo’ and ‘Juliet’, respectively.<sup>45</sup> This interpretation possibly stems from Tchaikovsky’s labels of ‘a’ and ‘b’ in his sketches to Balakirev.

<sup>43</sup> ‘Love Theme b’ appears in the introduction at b. 68 and enters before ‘Love Theme a’ in the exposition at b.156. See Appendix IV: Musical Scores (A.IV.1) for a reproduction of the full score.

<sup>44</sup> See Appendix III: Autograph Manuscripts (A.III.1–A.III.4), pp. 336–340.

<sup>45</sup> See Part One above, fn. 151. In Part Three I refer to the themes by their original titles (as cited in the sketches Tchaikovsky sent to Balakirev) in an abbreviated form with the more traditional titles of ‘Romeo’ and ‘Juliet’ following in brackets.

Following the submission of his thematic sketches to Balakirev for approval, Tchaikovsky wrote to Anatoly on 18 (30) November 1869 (Letter 10) rejoicing at his finishing *Romeo and Juliet*, and its impending performance by the RMS.<sup>46</sup> His satisfaction at this time is expressed in his words ‘it seems a success’.<sup>47</sup> A letter was also written to Modest on the same day (Letter 11) reporting that the overture ‘ordered’ by his brother was complete, and would be performed in the immediate future.<sup>48</sup> The word ‘ordered’ is immediately arresting. It probably refers to the brothers’ previous discourse in October (Letter 5) detailing Modest’s admission to having written an overture based on *Romeo and Juliet*. Tchaikovsky’s use of the word ‘ordered’ could be interpreted in two ways: 1) As a reference to his borrowing of Modest’s earlier plan for the work’s programme; 2) or that Modest may have requested Tchaikovsky to write the overture. The latter option appears unlikely as Modest had designs on fulfilling that task himself. Nonetheless, the fantasy-overture was completed and Tchaikovsky nervously awaited Balakirev’s reaction.

### 3.2.4 Balakirev’s Reaction to *Romeo and Juliet*’s Musical Themes

In a letter dated 1 (13) December 1869 (Letter 12) Balakirev gave his opinion on the four musical ideas central to the programme of *Romeo and Juliet*. The introductory theme, labelled ‘Theme of the Introduction’ in the delivered musical sketches, but ‘Introduction, depicting the Friar’ (‘интродукция, изображающая

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<sup>46</sup> *PSSL*, p. 188. The original Russian letter was mistakenly labeled ‘September’. See *PSSL* editorial note, p. 188.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>48</sup> *PSSL*, pp. 189–190. The date was also mistakenly listed as ‘September’ in the original Russian letter. See *PSSL* editorial note p. 189.

нарепа’/’Introduktsiya izobrazhayushchaya patera’) in Tchaikovsky’s correspondence (Letter 6), failed to impress Balakirev.<sup>49</sup> He chastised the opening idea, which he mistakenly took as the first subject, for its inadequate representation of the clerical figure:

The first subject does not please me at all. Perhaps it improves in the working out — I cannot say — but in the crude state in which it lies before me it has neither strength nor beauty, and does not sufficiently suggest the character of Friar Lawrence. Here something like one of Liszt’s chorales — in the old Catholic Church style — would be very appropriate (*The Night Procession*, *Hunnenschlacht*, and *St. Elizabeth*); your motif is of quite a different order, in the style of a quartet by Haydn, that genius of “burgher” music which induces a fierce thirst for beer. There is nothing of old-world Catholicism about it; it recalls rather the type of Gogol’s *Comrade Kunz*, who wanted to cut off his nose to save the money he spent on snuff.<sup>50</sup>

Interestingly, Balakirev refers specifically to ‘Friar Lawrence’ in his letter here, even though Tchaikovsky had not confirmed the Friar’s identity in his earlier correspondence.

Following Balakirev’s dismissal of the Introduction for being too ‘Haydnesque’, he conceded: ‘but possibly in its development your motif may turn out quite differently, in which case I will eat my own words’.<sup>51</sup> Balakirev’s interpretation is understandable in light of Tchaikovsky’s previous claim, ‘the plan is yours’.<sup>52</sup> In admitting to a similar representation of programme to that of *King Lear*, Balakirev may have anticipated a quasi-religious opening theme. Also, in sending the skeletal musical idea, devoid of harmonic context or orchestral

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<sup>49</sup> See Letter 6. Tchaikovsky uses the word *нарепа*’/’*patera*’ (Father) in this letter to Balakirev. See *PBC*, p. 41.

<sup>50</sup> *LL*, pp. 109–110; and *PBC*, pp. 48–49. Tchaikovsky only sent a sketch of the introductory theme in a single melody line format to Balakirev.

<sup>51</sup> *LL*, p. 110; and *PBC*, p. 49.

<sup>52</sup> See Letter 6 above.

colouring, Tchaikovsky's introductory theme did little to capture Balakirev's overall vision for the work's programme.

Balakirev also deemed the second theme in B minor as questionable. He considered it as 'less a theme than a lovely introduction to one, and after the agitated movement in C major, something very forcible and energetic should follow; I take it for granted that it will really be so, and that you were too lazy to write out the context.'<sup>53</sup> The reference here to 'C major' is unclear. Presumably, Balakirev meant the final bar of the second musical theme in which the notes C and F are no longer sharpened.

Balakirev's commentary on the third and fourth themes confirms that Tchaikovsky listed them in reverse order to their chronology in the finished score:

The first theme in D flat is very pretty, although rather colourless. The second, in the same key, is simply fascinating. I often play it and should like to hug you for it. It has the sweetness of 'Love', its tenderness, its longing, in a word, so much that must appeal to the heart of that immoral German, Albrecht.<sup>54</sup> I have only one thing to say against this theme: it does not sufficiently express a mystic, inward, spiritual 'Love', but rather a fantastic passionate glow which has hardly any nuance of Italian sentiment. Romeo and Juliet were not Persian Lovers, but Europeans.

I do not know if you will understand what I am driving at — I always feel the lack of appropriate words when I speak of music, and I am obliged to have recourse to comparison in order to explain myself.

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<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> Richard Taruskin translates this line as: 'I often play it and have a great wish to kiss you for it. It has everything: nega, and Love's sweetness [...].' See Richard Taruskin, 'Russian Musical Orientalism: A Postscript', *Cambridge Opera Journal*, 6/1 (1994), pp. 81–84. The word 'nega' is the important omission, which Taruskin has translated from *PBC*. See Taruskin, *On Russian Music*, pp. 187–188. Marina Frolova-Walker explained that 'nega' is a Russian term for sensual pleasure, and in the nineteenth century it was defined as 'complete sensual contentment and enjoyment'. See Frolova-Walker 'The Beginning and the End of the Russian Style', pp. 143–160. For more discussion on the concept of nega see Richard Taruskin, 'Entoiling the Falconet: Russian Musical Orientalism in Context', *Cambridge Opera Journal*, 4/3 (1992), pp. 253–280.

[...] I am impatient to receive the entire score, so that I may get a just impression of your clever overture, which is — so far — your best work; the fact that you have dedicated it to me affords me the greatest pleasure. It is the first of your compositions which contains so many beautiful things that one does not hesitate to pronounce it good as a whole. It cannot be compared with that old Melchisedek, who was so drunk with sorrow that he must dance his disgusting *trepak* in the Arbatsky Square [*Fatum*]. Send me the score soon; I am longing to see it.<sup>55</sup>

Here, Balakirev's 'colourless' theme in D flat relates to the second musical idea from the 'Love Theme' (sometimes referred to as 'Juliet'), while 'the second' relates to the first musical idea from the 'Love Theme' (sometimes referred to as 'Romeo'). Even though Balakirev admired the 'Love Theme' element of the fantasy-overture, he did not agree with what he considered to be the musical representation of the feuding Montagues and Capulets.

Tchaikovsky's choice of tonality in *Romeo and Juliet* bears significance to Balakirev, who was particularly fond of the key signatures of B flat minor, D flat major, B minor and D major.<sup>56</sup> So enamoured was he with the tonality of D flat

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<sup>55</sup> *LL*, p. 110. This letter appears in *PBC* pp. 49–50 as follows [Information which is not translated in the above English translation appears in square brackets after the Russian text]: 'То мне представляется, что вы лежите голенький в бане, и что сама Артиха Падилла трет вам животик горячей пеной душистаго мыла'. ('To mne predstavlyaetsya, chto vi lezhitye golen'kiy v bane, i chto sama Artiha Padilla tret vam zhyvotik goryachey penoy dooshistago mila'.) [Here, Balakirev says that this theme ('Love Theme') makes him think of Tchaikovsky in a bath with Artôt rubbing hot soapy suds on his body.] 'Называю вам первую попавшуюся под руку тему, в которой помоему мнению, выражено чувство любви более внутренно: 2-я тема (As-dur) увертюры Шумана 'Мессинская невеста'Тема имеет свои недостатки, болезненна, под конец немного сентиментальна но коренное чувство, которым она преисполнена — верно'. ('Nazivayoo vam pervooyoo popavshooyoosya pod rookoo temoo, v kotoroy pomoo mnoyoo, virazheno choovstvo lyoobvi bolee vnootrenno: 2-ya tema (As-dur) oovertyoori Shoomana 'Messinskaya nevesta'Tema imet' svoi nedostatki, boleznenна, pod konets nemnogo sentimental'na no korennoe choovstvo, kotorim ona preispolnena — verno'.) Here, Balakirev refers to Schumann's second theme in A flat from his overture 'The Bride of Messina' in which he believes the theme of love is more effectively expressed.

Balakirev's jibe regarding the 'Persian lovers' concerns Tchaikovsky's use of the English horn and its association with oriental passion in late nineteenth-century Russian programme music of the Balakirev circle.

<sup>56</sup> Garden, *Balakirev*, p. 305. Marina Frolova-Walker also remarks on this in 'The Beginning and The End of The Russian Style', in *Russian Music and Nationalism: From Glinka to Stalin* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007), pp. 157–160. For further insight into key



major, that Balakirev took to using it as a term of endearment.<sup>57</sup> We cannot be sure if Tchaikovsky's choice of such unusual tonality (for that time) was an attempt to flatter Balakirev. As we will see later, in Part Four, the key of B minor played an important programmatic role in Tchaikovsky's subsequent compositions. Notwithstanding these speculations, Balakirev was not wholly convinced by Tchaikovsky's thematic sketches for the fantasy-overture.

Burdened with feelings of apprehension Tchaikovsky addressed Balakirev's comments on his sketches on 18 (30) December 1869 (Letter 13):

You cannot imagine how delighted I was by your kind letter. I had been very much afraid of your severe, though equitable, sentence. I was horrified with my own audacity in attempting to write music to Shakespeare, deplored the attempt, and at times wished to throw my music into the fire. Having read your letter, I have dispelled all such thoughts. And I am so glad that even without knowing more, you are sympathetically inclined towards the work dedicated to you.<sup>58</sup>

Tchaikovsky's reference to Shakespeare here is noteworthy. Does it reflect a sense of professional insecurity regarding the musical treatment of the work of such an iconic figure, or is it more likely related to Tchaikovsky's issue with composing music to pre-ordained programmes? Arguably, both suggestions have merit in this case. Tchaikovsky concluded his letter by promising Balakirev a copy of the full overture and expressed his hope for a future meeting in Moscow.<sup>59</sup> Still occupied with thoughts of his overture, Tchaikovsky informed

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signatures and their meaning see Rita Steblin, *A History of Key Characteristics in the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries* (Essex, England: Bowker, 1983, 1981).

<sup>57</sup> In an encounter with Stasov he exclaimed: "How glad I am to again kiss your Des-dur cheeks, your uncouth face, to embrace your absurd figure". See Mikhail Zetlin, and Olga Oushakoff, 'Balakirev', *Russian Review*, 4/1 (1944), p. 72.

<sup>58</sup> Calvocoressi dates this letter incorrectly in 'The Correspondence' as 14 December, p. 713. The original Russian text appears in *PBC*, pp. 51–53; and *PSSL*, pp. 194–195.

<sup>59</sup> *PBC*, p. 53.

Anatoly of its completion, along with that of his 6 Romances on 19 (31) December 1869 (Letter 14).<sup>60</sup>

Notification of *Romeo and Juliet*'s orchestration reached Balakirev in January 1870, 20 December (1 January) (Letter 15).<sup>61</sup> It is probable that Tchaikovsky attached a copy of the score with this note. A later exchange with Modest on 13 (25) January (Letter 16) confirms Tchaikovsky's satisfaction with the fantasy-overture, along with an attestation of Rimsky-Korsakov and Jürgenson's mutual appreciation of it.<sup>62</sup> Balakirev's silence during this period frustrated Tchaikovsky.<sup>63</sup> This is particularly evident in his letter of 23 February (7 March) 1870 (Letter 17) in which Tchaikovsky states 'I sent my overture to you [Balakirev] a long time ago and I hope that you have received it — at last it will be performed in a forthcoming concert'.<sup>64</sup> Despite Balakirev's failure to comment immediately on the fantasy-overture, *Romeo and Juliet* was premièred at the Imperial Russian Society in Moscow, under the direction of Nikolay Rubinstein, on 4 (16) March 1870.

### 3.2.5 Première

Two nights before *Romeo and Juliet*'s debut performance, 2–3 (14–15) March 1870 (Letter 18), Tchaikovsky wrote to Modest stressing his trepidation:

<sup>60</sup> *PSSL*, pp. 195–196.

<sup>61</sup> *PBC*, p. 53; and *PSSL*, p. 197. Balakirev's later response suggests that he had received the overture, so we presume that a copy of the score accompanied this Letter 15.

<sup>62</sup> This excerpt appears in a footnote in *PBC*, p. 55, whereas it is produced in full in *PSSL*, p. 201.

<sup>63</sup> *PBC*, pp. 53–54. These letters from December to January are primarily concerned with securing the approval of Rubinstein for a concert programme suggested by Balakirev.

<sup>64</sup> *PBC*, p. 55; and *PSSL* pp. 204–205. Tchaikovsky concludes by stating that he has tried to fulfill Balakirev's wishes. He may have done so to stimulate a response from Balakirev.

The day after tomorrow, my overture *Romeo and Juliet* will be performed. There has been a rehearsal already. The work does not seem detestable. But the Lord only knows!<sup>65</sup>

In this translated excerpt, Newmarch neglects to include Tchaikovsky's statement which implicates Modest in the compositional process: 'my overture *Romeo and Juliet* of which I am greatly obliged to you'.<sup>66</sup> Tchaikovsky's doubts surrounding the impending performance of his *Romeo and Juliet* were realised. The première was hindered by a sensational court case surrounding Nikolay Rubinstein and a female student.<sup>67</sup> The court had ruled against the director of the Conservatory the previous day, and a noisy demonstration ensued in his favour as he mounted the concert platform — a development which invariably proved much more interesting to the audience than the new overture. Kashkin, who attended the concert, was angered by the overshadowing of Tchaikovsky's fantasy-overture in such a manner:

From the moment Nikolay Rubinstein came on the platform, until the end of the concert, he was made the subject of an extraordinary ovation. No one thought of the concert or the music, and I felt indignant that the first performance of *Romeo and Juliet* should have taken place under such conditions.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> *LL*, p. 114; and *PSSL*, p. 207.

<sup>66</sup> *PSSL*, p. 207.

<sup>67</sup> According to Modest the decision regarding the case of Schebalsky vs Rubinstein was made public on 3 (15) March. 'The director of the Conservatory had been ordered to pay 25 roubles damages for the summary and wrongful dismissal of this female student. Rubinstein refused to pay and gave notice of appeal, but the master's admirers immediately collected the small sum, in order to spare him the few hours' detention, which his refusal involved. This event gave rise to a noisy demonstration when he appeared in public.' See *LL*, pp. 114–115.

<sup>68</sup> *LL*, p. 115.

### 3.2.5.1 Reactions to the Première

Despite the apparent eclipse of *Romeo and Juliet*, the event did not at first appear to perturb Tchaikovsky. In a letter to Anatoly on 7 (19) March 1870 (Letter 19) he reported that the work had finally been performed, and recorded the fantasy-overture as one of his finest compositions to date.<sup>69</sup> Modest proclaimed that ‘in all Russian musical literature nothing so remarkable had appeared since Glinka’.<sup>70</sup> For him, Tchaikovsky’s ‘higher significance in the world of art dates from this work’, and his ‘individuality’ was ‘here displayed for the first time in its fullness’.<sup>71</sup> At first, Tchaikovsky appeared to agree with such sentiments, as demonstrated in his letter to Modest on 26 March (7 April) 1870 (Letter 20), in which Tchaikovsky reiterated his satisfaction with *Romeo and Juliet*.<sup>72</sup>

Divergently, Tchaikovsky suddenly spoke of his upset over the circumstances surrounding the first performance of his fantasy-overture to his friend Klimenko a month later, on 1 (13) May 1870 (Letter 21):

My overture, *Romeo and Juliet*, had hardly any success here, and has remained quite unnoticed [...] After the concert we supped, a large party, at Gourin’s (a famous restaurant). No one said a single word about the overture during the evening. And yet I yearned so for appreciation and kindness!<sup>73</sup>

According to Modest’s reports, Tchaikovsky’s creative urges were stifled by his belief that *Romeo and Juliet* had been poorly received:

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<sup>69</sup> *PSSL*, p. 208.

<sup>70</sup> *LL.*, p. 120.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>72</sup> *PSSL*, p. 209.

<sup>73</sup> *LL.*, p. 116; and *PSSL*, p. 214. Newmarch’s translation omits Tchaikovsky’s mention of his respectful love for Klimenko and his thoughts of him during this ‘disgusting evening’. See *PSSL*, p. 214.

So it came about that the long-desired evening, which he hoped would bring him a great success, brought only another disillusionment for Tchaikovsky. The composer's melancholy became a shade darker. 'I just idle away the time cruelly', he writes, 'and my opera, *The Oprichnik*, has come to a standstill at the first chorus'.<sup>74</sup>

Had Tchaikovsky received Balakirev's review of the première then maybe such melancholy could have been averted.

In a letter to Tchaikovsky, begun on 16 (28) March 1870 (Letter 22), Balakirev's admiration for *Romeo and Juliet* was clear.<sup>75</sup>

Illness only prevented my writing to you at once to say how enchanted we all are with your D flat major, Stasov says 'you were five, now you are six: The beginning and the end, viz., the alpha and omega, are harshly criticised. But I say that they do not call for criticism because you must alter them'.<sup>76</sup>

Despite the strong likelihood that this letter never reached Tchaikovsky, reference to its content has been included by writers such as Brown in their discussions of the fantasy-overture, as if the composer had indeed received it. Balakirev's epistle was continued on 9 (21) May with further expressions of appreciation for the fantasy-overture.<sup>77</sup> It was discovered among his papers following his death.<sup>78</sup>

Like Balakirev, the other members of the *kuchka* were equally impressed by Tchaikovsky's latest musical offering. Klimenko documents their reactions as follows:

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<sup>74</sup> *LL*, p. 115.

<sup>75</sup> Calvocoressi, 'The Correspondence', p. 712; and *PBC*, p. 56. Brown remarks that when the Balakirev circle met at the home of Glinka's sister, Lyudmila Shestakova, 'there was always a demand that Balakirev should play it [*Romeo and Juliet*] through at the piano, a feat he learned to perform from memory'. See Brown, *Tchaikovsky: The Early Years*, p. 185. Shestakova (1816–1906) was a Russian music publisher. See Tchaikovsky, *The Diaries*, p. 360; and Brown, *Tchaikovsky: The Early Years*, p. 125.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>77</sup> *PBC*, pp. 56–58.

<sup>78</sup> We cannot be sure if the letter found in Balakirev's papers was the original letter, or indeed a copy of the original letter, as it was the practice of the time to keep a duplicate of any correspondence.

Once Cui, on the occasion of Tchaikovsky's visiting Petersburg, gathered the members of the Mighty Handful at his home and repeatedly asked Tchaikovsky to play the Romeo theme and the marvellous chords depicting the billing and cooing of the lovers from his *Romeo and Juliet*. Each time Cui expressed his delight, and toward the end of the evening Stasov, taking Tchaikovsky by the arm and drawing him aside to a secluded corner, whispered to him that Cui used to say about the development of the Romeo theme, "It's beautiful! It's even more passionate than the duet in *Ratcliff*" (such modesty!), and that he also had high praise for the love theme.<sup>79</sup> Pytor Il'yich, when he told me about all this, said: "How Cui and the whole of the Five would gloat and scoff at me should they ever guess that the melody of the love theme resembles a song of 'tip-cat' [...]."<sup>80</sup>

This extract reveals that the broad love theme was understood by many Russians of the late nineteenth century to be a portrayal of the character of Romeo. However, at the end of the quotation we see, from Tchaikovsky's own words (via Klimenko), that his programmatic representation of love may have derived inspiration from other musical factors.

### 3.2.6 'Chizhik-Pizhik': Questioning the Source of *Romeo and Juliet's* 'Love Theme'

If we take into consideration the possibility that the 'love melody' from *Romeo and Juliet* may have been influenced by, or is a coincidental resemblance of, a children's rhyme, 'tip-cat' ('Chizhik-Pizhik'), then, what effect does this have on our understanding of the work's programme?<sup>81</sup> It is important to note here, that there is a danger, as with many translated sources, of over-interpreting statements.

<sup>79</sup> Here, Cui is referring to his opera, *William Ratcliff* (1869).

<sup>80</sup> *TTOE*, p. 75. According to Poznansky, 'tip-cat' is actually a popular Russian children's song *Chizhik-pyzhik*. See *TTOE*, p. 75 and Appendix II: Miscellaneous (A.II.2), p. 326 for an illustration of the 'tip-cat' theme. 'Tip-cat' is also the name of a game that children played in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

<sup>81</sup> Gerard McBurney notes that 'Chizhik-Pizhik' 'was the most famous popular tune of all in Russian culture'. See Gerard McBurney, 'Fried Chicken in the Bird-Cherry Trees', in *Shostakovich and His World* ed. by Laurel E. Fay (Princeton and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 241. Shostakovich made reference to this theme in his *Moscow Cheryomushki* and in the first movement of his first Cello Concerto. See *ibid.*, pp. 241–243.

However, in the broader context of philosophical hermeneutical progression this cannot be avoided, as all elements must be considered within the interpretative melting-pot.

If we look at the outline of this nursery tune (see Appendix II: Miscellaneous, A.II.2, below), we can see a vague melodic connection between it and Tchaikovsky's 'Love Theme b' ('Juliet').<sup>82</sup> This rhyme, and its title, had cultural meaning within Russian society at the time. 'Chizhik-Pizhik' (siskin) was the nickname given to the students of Tchaikovsky's *alma mater*, the School of Jurisprudence, due to the likeness of their uniform to the eponymous bird's plume. A bronze statue of this bird, seen as a 'monument to the common man', stands in St Petersburg. Such a possible cultural, and biographical, reference suggests that *Romeo and Juliet*'s programme could also allude to other meanings, beyond its obvious association with Shakespeare. If we consider 'LTb' then as a structural trope (i.e. an episode of self-reference), then this musical idea could be suggestive of 'Tchaikovsky the *persona*'. This allusion to self-reference in *Romeo and Juliet* (albeit an allusion observed by the present interpreter) did not appear obvious to nineteenth-century audiences.

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<sup>82</sup> See Appendix II: Miscellaneous (A.II.2), p. 326. 'Love Theme b' is hereafter referred to as 'LTb'.

### 3.3 *Romeo and Juliet* (1870): Revision I

Despite the fact that *Romeo and Juliet* was popular in Tchaikovsky's homeland, he set about revising it throughout the summer of 1870, while travelling through Paris, Switzerland, Munich and Vienna. Reporting from Bad Soden, Germany on 7 (19) July (Letter 23), Tchaikovsky relays to Modest details of his long walks in the inspiring Drei Linden forest.<sup>83</sup> These secluded moments in nature stirred his creative faculties. The editors of *PSSL* confirm Tchaikovsky's revisions to the fantasy-overture during this time.<sup>84</sup>

The process of rewriting carried forward to September while Tchaikovsky visited Switzerland. In an address to Balakirev, dated 6 (18) September 1870 (Letter 24), Tchaikovsky mentioned his ongoing work on *Romeo and Juliet* with hopes of its imminent delivery.<sup>85</sup> Apparently, the lack of available manuscript paper to write upon hindered progress on the composition's orchestration.<sup>86</sup> In his exchange with Balakirev Tchaikovsky refers to his alterations to the revised fantasy-overture. He begins by stating 'I do not know if you will be pleased, but to this end I can do no better'.<sup>87</sup> A summary of the corrections follows: 'The introduction is new, the development almost new, and the recapitulation of the second subject in D major has been completely rescored'.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> *PSSL*, pp. 222–223. Bad Soden is a town and spa set in the Main-Taunus-Kreis, Hesse, Germany.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>85</sup> *PBC*, p. 60; and *PSSL*, pp. 230–231.

<sup>86</sup> *PBC*, p. 60.

<sup>87</sup> *PSSL*, p. 231.

<sup>88</sup> Brown, *Tchaikovsky: The Early Years*, p. 185; and *PSSL*, p. 231.



Tchaikovsky's letters and diaries at this time fail to offer any clue as to the specific stimulus for his revision. The accompanying editorial notes to his letter from Switzerland (*PBC*) state that Tchaikovsky 'did not like revising completed works, but under Balakirev's instruction' he altered *Romeo and Juliet* accordingly.<sup>89</sup> Further reference to his advancement appears in a letter to Modest on 17 (29) September 1870 (Letter 25) in which he claims that he had not engaged in any serious composition during the summer months, aside from completely revising *Romeo and Juliet*.<sup>90</sup> Tchaikovsky's letter to Balakirev, on 25 September (7 October), (Letter 26), refers to the fantasy-overture's completion, with delivery to Balakirev planned as soon as parts were copied.<sup>91</sup> Tchaikovsky followed up on 20–23 October (2–5 November) 1870 (Letter 27) with further apologies for his delay in sending the revised work to Balakirev.<sup>92</sup> He blamed his preoccupied copier who was working on various transcriptions for the RMS.<sup>93</sup> Most importantly, however, Tchaikovsky made reference to his revision of the introductory theme.

It is noteworthy that he did not label the theme as 'Friar Lawrence' in any of his writings, at any point during this period, beside his earlier mentioning of it in a letter to Balakirev in 1869 (Letter 6). Tchaikovsky observed Balakirev's previous desire that his introduction should resemble a passage from Liszt's *Faust*, but admitted that this was not possible.<sup>94</sup> He concluded the letter by saying

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<sup>89</sup> *PBC*, p. 60.

<sup>90</sup> *PSSL*, pp. 231–232.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 232–233.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 236–237.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*

that he was unsure of his success, but prayed that Balakirev would approve of his alterations.

As Balakirev awaited a copy of the revised *Romeo and Juliet*, repeated assertions of its completion continued to filter through Tchaikovsky's correspondence. In a letter to Anatoly dated 5 (17) October 1870 (Letter 28) Tchaikovsky noted the Berlin publication of *Romeo and Juliet* and its anticipated performance within 'several German cities'.<sup>95</sup> By 26 October (7 November) 1870 (Letter 29) Klimentenko was also aware of this news: 'I have written three new pieces [Three pieces for piano Op. 9, *Rêverie*, *Polka de Salon*, *Mazurka*], and a song ['So schnell vergessen'], as well as going on with my opera [*The Oprichnik*] and revising *Romeo and Juliet*'.<sup>96</sup> The dates of revision are uncertain, but from Tchaikovsky's letters we can conclude that work began in the summer of 1870 and finished around October of that year.<sup>97</sup>

### 3.3.1 Revised Structure

In his first revision of *Romeo and Juliet* (1870) Tchaikovsky wrote a new introductory theme which was in stark contrast to that of the 1869 version (Example 5):

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<sup>95</sup> *PSSL*, p. 236.

<sup>96</sup> *LL*, p. 121; and *PSSL*, p. 238.

<sup>97</sup> The *TBC* is vague in its reference to the revision of 1870 stating that 'in the summer of 1870 Tchaikovsky, influenced by criticism of the first performance, as well as by Balakirev's opinion, reworked the overture considerably'. See *TBC*, p. 354. The editors fail to provide any further details of the date of completion.

**Example 5: Introduction Theme (*Romeo and Juliet* 1870/1880) [bb. 1–10]<sup>98</sup>**

*Andante non tanto quasi Moderato*

The musical score is presented in two systems. The first system contains measures 1 through 5. It begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The music features a simple harmonic structure with chords in the right hand and single notes or dyads in the left hand. A crescendo hairpin is shown over measures 4 and 5, leading to a *poco più f* dynamic. The second system contains measures 6 through 10. It starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The harmonic structure continues with similar chords and dyads. A crescendo hairpin is shown over measures 8 and 9, leading to a *poco più f* dynamic. The score is written in B minor (two sharps) and common time (C).

If we are to believe that this theme was intended to infer Friar Lawrence then we can interpret its chorale-like modal structure, bare harmony, grounded in the work's central tonality of B minor, as a suggestion of the pseudo-liturgical.<sup>99</sup> Tchaikovsky erased the extensive fugal passage which had appeared in the 1869 Development, and included a new passage leading to the concluding section, *Moderato assai*, with a newly designed Coda.<sup>100</sup> The overall harmonic path was rearranged by drawing upon more closely related key relationships than those of the original version, thus creating a more traditionally comprehensive sonata

<sup>98</sup> See Appendix III: Autograph Manuscripts (A.III.5), p. 341 for the autograph score of this theme.

<sup>99</sup> McBurney describes these elements as being particular to the 'mock ancient Russian style' or 'à la russe medievalism'. See 'Fried Chicken in the Bird-Cherry Tree', in *Shostakovich and His World*, p. 240.

<sup>100</sup> See Appendix IV: Musical Scores (A.IV.1, bb. 407–448), pp. 350–351 below for the *Moderato assai* and Coda of the 1869 version, and (A.IV.2, bb. 486–539), pp. 355–364 for the *Moderato assai* and Coda of the 1870 version. The fugal passage demonstrated in the 1869 *Romeo and Juliet* may be seen in Appendix IV: Musical Scores (A.IV.1, beginning at b. 245, p. 342).

structure than that of the 1869 *Romeo and Juliet*. This is revealed in the following Tables 3 and 4:

**Table 3: *Romeo and Juliet* (1869): Sonata Structure and Key Relationships**

SECTION	KEY	THEME TITLE	BARS
<b>Introduction</b>	E Major	‘TI’	1–30
	F Major,	Fragment of ‘TI’	31–32
	G Major,	Suggested ‘LTa’	33–34
	E Major with	Fragment of ‘TI’	35–36
	hints of B	Suggested ‘LTa’	37–38
	minor	Fragment of ‘TI’	41–44
		Fragment of ‘TI’	47–50
		<i>Tutti</i> ‘TI’	55–60
	Fragment of ‘LTb’ with suggested ‘LTa’	68–72	
<b>Exposition</b>	B Minor-D	1 <sup>st</sup> Subject / ‘TA’	84–122
	Minor-G	Suggested ‘LTa’	90–91
	Minor-B Minor	Fragment ‘TA’	92–94
	Db Major	Suggested ‘LTa’	94–98
		‘TA’ Counter Melody	98–106
		Suggested ‘LTa’	107–115
		Hidden reference to ‘TI’	115–116
		Element of ‘TA’	133–151
		Suggested ‘LTb’	136–141
		Suggested ‘LTa’	136–151
		2 <sup>nd</sup> Subject / ‘LTb’	156–164
		2 <sup>nd</sup> Subject / ‘LTa’	164–184
		2 <sup>nd</sup> Subject / ‘LTa’+ ‘LTb’	185–214
		Distorted ‘LTa’	214–242
	Suggested ‘LTb’	217–231	
<b>Development</b>	C# Minor- F#	1 <sup>st</sup> Subject / ‘TA’	245–294
	Minor-C#	2 <sup>nd</sup> Subject / ‘LTb’	286–290
	Minor	Fragment of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Subject / ‘LTb’	290–292
	B Major	‘TI’	295–304
	B Major	Fragments of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Subject / ‘LTb’	296–304
<b>Recapitulation</b>	B Minor	1 <sup>st</sup> Subject / ‘TA’	310–324
		2 <sup>nd</sup> Subject / ‘LTa’	324–345
	D Major	2 <sup>nd</sup> Subject / ‘LTa’+ ‘LTb’	346–383
	B Minor	1 <sup>st</sup> Subject / ‘TA’	385–406
<b>Coda</b>	B Minor	2nd Subject / ‘LTa’	407–414
		2nd Subject / ‘LTb’	412–414
		‘TI’	419–430
		Codetta	433–448
	B Major	Final Chords	447–448

**Table 4: *Romeo and Juliet* (1870/1880): Sonata Structure and Key Relationships**

SECTION	YEAR	KEY	THEME TITLE	BARS
<b>Introduction</b>	1870 +	F# Minor F Minor	'TI' 'TI' Counter Melody Suggested 'LTa' 'TI'	1–20 21–37 21–28 41–51
	1880	E Minor End F# Minor Suggests B Minor	'TI' Counter Melody Suggested 'LTa' Altered 'TI' 'TI' Counter Melody	51–77 61–68 86–96 97–111
<b>Exposition</b>	1870 +	B Minor-D Minor- G Minor-B Minor	1 <sup>st</sup> Subject / 'TA'	112–161
	1880	Db Major	2 <sup>nd</sup> Subject / 'LTb' 2 <sup>nd</sup> Subject / 'LTa' 'LTb' and 'LTa' Fragments of 'LTb' and 'LTa'	184–192 192–212 213–243 243–272
<b>Development</b>	1870 +	B Minor F# Minor	1st Subject/ 'TA' Fragment 'TI' Fragment 'TI' Fragment 'TA' over Fragment 'TI' Fragment 'TI' Fragment 'TA' Fragment 'TA' over 'TI' Fragment of 'TA' and Suggested 'TI'	273–279 280–285 293–297 298–307 315–320 321–334 335–342 343–352
	1880	B Minor		
<b>Recapitulation</b>	1870 +	B Minor D Major	1st Subject 'TA' 'LTa' Fragment of 'LTa' under 'LTb' Fragment of 'LTb' Tutti 'TA' 'TI' peals above 'TA' Tutti 'TA' Tutti 'TA' 'TI' peals above 'TA' element Altered 'TA'	353–365 367–387 387–397 389–419 419–440 441–449 450–454 455–458 459–461 462–479
	1880	Dominant F# End implies B Minor		
<b>Coda</b>	1870	B Major	Suggestion of 'LTb' Fragment of 'LTb' Altered 'TI' Final Chords	486–506 507–513 515–529 536–539
<b>Coda</b>	1880	B Major	Fragments of 'LTb' Altered 'TI' Altered 'LTb' Final Chords	486–492 494–508 510–518 519–522

Writing on 19 (31) October 1870 (Letter 30) Balakirev expressed his frustration at Tchaikovsky's long silence (he had written to Tchaikovsky three weeks ago: Letter 24), and asked why he had still not sent 'the eagerly-awaited *Romeo*'.<sup>101</sup> Answering in November (Letter 31), Tchaikovsky apologised citing his copyist's preoccupation with other work as reason for the delay.<sup>102</sup> No further mention of *Romeo and Juliet* appeared in the correspondence until 10 (22) January 1871 (Letter 32) in which Tchaikovsky expressed his desire for Balakirev to perform his fantasy-overture at one of the RMS concerts.<sup>103</sup> From a letter dated 22 January (3 February) 1871 (Letter 33), it appears that Balakirev was in receipt of the revised *Romeo and Juliet* at this time. Here, he discusses his reaction to the reconsidered work along with details of an impending four-part piano arrangement of it by Rimsky-Korsakov's wife, Nadezhda Purgold.<sup>104</sup>

### 3.3.2 Balakirev's Reaction to the Revision

Even in its altered form, *Romeo and Juliet* did not meet with Balakirev's complete approval, although he considered the new version to be far superior to the first. On 22 January (3 February) 1871 (Letter 33) Balakirev wrote:

I am very pleased with the introduction, but the end is not at all to my taste. It is impossible to write of it in detail. It would be better if you came here, so that I could tell you what I think of it. In the middle section you have done something

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<sup>101</sup> *PBC*, p. 61.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.* The date of this letter was not disclosed in the original copy.

<sup>103</sup> *PSSL*, p. 250.

<sup>104</sup> *PBC*, p. 64. Nadezhda Nikolayevna Rimsky-Korsakov (1848–1919) was a Russian composer and pianist. She arranged the works of composers such as Dargomyzhsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, Tchaikovsky, Borodin and Glazunov. See Mark Humphreys, et al., 'Rimsky-Korsakov', *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 20 November 2012]. Her four-hand piano arrangement is available to download at: <[http://imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/9/9c/IMSLP17501-Tchaikovski\\_Romeo\\_et\\_Juliette\\_piano\\_4\\_hands.pdf](http://imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/9/9c/IMSLP17501-Tchaikovski_Romeo_et_Juliette_piano_4_hands.pdf)>.

new and good; the alternating chords above the pedal-point, rather à la *Ruslan*. The close becomes very commonplace, and the whole of the section after the end of the second subject (D major) seems to have been dragged from your brain by main force. The actual ending is not bad, but why those accentuated chords in the very last bars? This seems to contradict the meaning of the play, and is inartistic. Nadezhda Nicholaevna has scratched out these chords with her own fair hands, and wants to make the pianoforte arrangement end *pianissimo*. I do not know whether you will consent to this alteration.<sup>105</sup>

The reference here to Nadezhda Rimsky-Korsakov relates to her piano arrangement of *Romeo and Juliet*.<sup>106</sup> In the original Russian letter Balakirev informs Tchaikovsky of the delay in Nadezhda's four-hand piano arrangement of the fantasy-overture due to illness and the death of her mother.<sup>107</sup> However, he trusts that her adaptation is nearing completion.<sup>108</sup> According to the *TBC* this publication did not enter into circulation until 1881, under the Berlin publishers Bote and Bock.<sup>109</sup> Presumably, if Purgold was working on a piano arrangement of *Romeo and Juliet* then she must have had a published copy of the original score at this time. Interestingly, she appears to have been in possession of an edition of Tchaikovsky's first version of the fantasy-overture by the same German publishers who would later produce her piano reduction of the fantasy-overture. This unauthorised publication of *Romeo and Juliet* upset Tchaikovsky and Balakirev in equal measure.

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<sup>105</sup> *PBC*, pp. 64–65; *LL*, p. 11; and *TQ*, p. 154. In Modest's footnote on Nadezhda Nicholaevna he writes, 'Madame Rimsky-Korsakov, née Purgold. In his final arrangement Tchaikovsky omitted these chords himself'. See *LL*, p. 11. One wonders if Madame Rimsky-Korsakov was influenced in her decision to close the arrangement *pianissimo* — after all, Balakirev had expressed issue with the 'thumped-out chords' of the Coda in 1869.

<sup>106</sup> *PBC*, p. 64.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>109</sup> *TBC*, p. 356. The publishing house of Bote and Bock was **founded on 1 February 1838 by Eduard Bote and Gustav Bock** in Berlin. The offices were destroyed during the War in 1943, but reconstructed in 1945. The business continued until 1995 when it was sold to Boosey and Hawkes. See Rudolf Elvers, 'Bote & Bock', *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 21 November 2012].

Tchaikovsky's reaction is telling, since he had previously acknowledged his awareness of the Berlin publication of the fantasy-overture to *Anatoly* on 5 (17) October 1870 (Letter 28).<sup>110</sup> It seems odd then that he would suddenly disapprove of the edition a year later. The following section details the events surrounding Bote and Bock's acquisition of *Romeo and Juliet*. The nature of Tchaikovsky's dissatisfaction with the publishing firm is revealed.

### 3.3.3 Publication

Nikolay Rubinstein and Karl Klindworth were so impressed by the première of *Romeo and Juliet* in 1869 that they set about arranging its publication by the German firm, Bote and Bock, without the composer's knowledge.<sup>111</sup> Writing to Balakirev on 15 (27) May 1871 (Letter 34) Tchaikovsky speaks of his 'great grief' regarding this premature publication, as the stolen score was devoid of its title and dedication to Balakirev.<sup>112</sup> Much to the fury of Tchaikovsky, the titling of his composition was now under the publishers' control. According to the *TBC* Bote and Bock printed the work as: '*Ouverture à la tragédie de Shakespeare/ Romeo et Juliette/ pour l'Orchestre par/ P. Tschaikovsky/ Partition*'.<sup>113</sup> Equally

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<sup>110</sup> *PSSL*, p. 236.

<sup>111</sup> Karl Klindworth (1830–1916) was a German composer, violinist, publisher, critic and Wagnerian fanatic. He was invited by Rubinstein to teach pianoforte at the Moscow Conservatory and Modest Tchaikovsky remarked that it was highly unusual for the music of his brother to interest such a man. He asserted that 'Tchaikovsky charmed him from the first, not merely as a man, but as a composer'. 'Klindworth was one of the first to spread Tchaikovsky's works abroad'. 'It was owing to him that they became known in London and New York; and it was through him also that Liszt made acquaintance with some of them.' See *LL*, p. 120.

<sup>112</sup> *PBC*, p. 65; and *PSSL*, p. 255.

<sup>113</sup> *TBC*, p. 356. Interestingly, this title does not refer to the work as a 'fantasy-overture'.

Bote and Bock retained the rights to publish *Romeo and Juliet* from 1871 onwards. In a bid to boost sales, the French publisher Félix Mackar (1837–1903) purchased from Jürgenson the distribution rights to Tchaikovsky's works in France and Belgium. He wished to acquire the fantasy-overture as it had gained notoriety towards the end of the nineteenth century. This desire is



irritated by these events, Balakirev conveyed his anger to Tchaikovsky on 19 (31) May 1871 (Letter 35) as follows:

It is a pity that you, or rather Rubinstein, should have hurried the publication of the overture. Although the new introduction is a decided improvement, yet I had still a great desire to see some other alterations made in the work, and hoped it might remain longer in our hands for the sake of your future compositions. However, I hope Jürgenson will not refuse to print a revised and improved version of the overture at some future time.<sup>114</sup>

Modest neglected to include the following smite in his translation of the letter:

‘The matter is even worse if Rubinstein has given the original copy of the score with the E Major introduction to the publishers; if this is so then it is best to halt the release of this publication unless it is too late’.<sup>115</sup> Apparently, Balakirev’s original disapproval of this musical theme (which he first encountered in the sketches Tchaikovsky sent to him in October 1869) remained resolute, even after it had been fully orchestrated.

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expressed in a letter written by Felix Macker to Tchaikovsky on 2 (14) September 1885 which is cited in fn. 4 of ‘letter 2762’ available at:

<<http://www.tchaikovsky-research.net/en/letters/1885/2762.html>>. [Accessed 4 December 2012].

In Tchaikovsky’s response to Macker, the composer explained that Bote and Bock owned the copyright for all countries including Russia (see the afore-mentioned letter ‘2762’). In a letter to Tchaikovsky from Paris on 18/30 November 1885, full of various plans to popularise his music in the French capital and beyond, Macker lamented: ‘I am very sorry that your *Romeo* overture isn’t in my catalogue!’; ‘Could you not help me to come to terms with Bote & Bock in Berlin regarding the possibility of acquiring your *Romeo*; or, if that is not possible, at the very least to obtain the right to include it in my catalogue, which would become more complete with this work?’. Tchaikovsky agreed to help. As a result the German firm gave Macker permission to circulate *Romeo and Juliet* in France alone, while they retained distribution rights in all other countries. See ‘TR Bulletin 01’, Letter 2839a (unpublished), available at:

<<http://www.tchaikovsky-research.net/en/news/index.html>>. [Accessed 4 December 2012].

<sup>114</sup> *LL*, p. 111; *PBC*, p. 66.

<sup>115</sup> *PBC*, p. 66. Tchaikovsky’s reasons for writing his introductory theme in E major are unclear. However, the keys of E major and E minor are generally associated with the tonality of *Fatum*. Perhaps, Tchaikovsky may have selected this key to imply the presence of fate in his early draft of *Romeo and Juliet*.

Tchaikovsky addressed Balakirev's disquiet on 29 May (10 June) 1871 (Letter 36) by elaborating on the details of the German publication of *Romeo and Juliet*.<sup>116</sup> He admitted to Rubinstein's delivery of the 1869 version of the fantasy-overture, with its E Major introduction, to Bote and Bock. Following his revisions, Tchaikovsky claimed that he advised the publishers of his disapproval of the contentious publication in autumn, and insisted upon its reprinting with the appropriate alterations included.<sup>117</sup> According to his letter, Bote and Bock agreed. The revised edition went to press.

A three-month period of silence between Tchaikovsky and Balakirev ensued. Disturbed by the unsettling details of the revised edition, Tchaikovsky continued to campaign for a future performance. With this in mind, he contacted the director of the St Petersburg Conservatory, Mikhail Azanchevsky, on 11 (23) September 1871 (Letter 37) inquiring about Nikolay Rubinstein's claim that the RMS wished to perform *Romeo and Juliet* at one of their concerts.<sup>118</sup> Tchaikovsky relayed his appreciation as follows: 'Allow me to thank you for this courtesy, I have long wished for this composition to be played in St. Petersburg'.<sup>119</sup> A list of corrections from the edited score was appended with the assurance that any missed errors could easily be changed during rehearsals.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> *PBC*, p. 67; and *PSSL*, p. 256.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>118</sup> *PSSL*, pp. 259–260. Mikhail Pavlovich Azanchevsky (1839–1881) was a Russian composer and music teacher. He entered into the library of the St Petersburg Conservatory in 1870 and succeeded Zaremba as Director in 1871. See *TTOE*, p. 170.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 259–260.

Eighteen days later, Balakirev reignited his discourse with Tchaikovsky. In his brief note on 29 September (11 October) 1871 (Letter 38) Balakirev recognises the advancing performance of the work by the RMS.<sup>121</sup> Tchaikovsky's reply of 8 (20) October 1871 (Letter 39) queries performance issues relating to tempi.<sup>122</sup> He urges either Balakirev or Rimsky-Korsakov to assist Nápravník in establishing the correct speed of the fantasy-overture, as the score does not include a metronome recommendation.<sup>123</sup> This letter appears to end Tchaikovsky and Balakirev's written exchange regarding *Romeo and Juliet* for the rest of the decade.<sup>124</sup>

The letters from 1869 to 1871 have therefore revealed a shared belief that the original 1869 fantasy-overture should never have reached publication. Balakirev's writings suggest that he considered *Romeo and Juliet*'s opening theme as just cause for revision. However, Tchaikovsky's reasons for rewriting *Romeo and Juliet* are not as clear. His letters fail to offer any real proof of his motivation for returning to the work in 1870 and 1880. Regrettably, the Russian edition of Tchaikovsky's letters (*PSSL*) only documents his correspondence up to 1875. The following section examines the eight remaining letters from 1872 to 1878 which refer to *Romeo and Juliet*, post-première.

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<sup>121</sup> *PBC*, p. 68.

<sup>122</sup> *PBC*, p. 68; and *PSSL*, pp. 263–264.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>124</sup> There could be other letters but it seems unlikely. This cessation of correspondence between Tchaikovsky and Balakirev corresponds with Balakirev's withdrawal from musical life and his apparent mental breakdown. Edward Garden describes this period in Balakirev's life as follows: 'The earliest hint of the crisis may be traced to early 1871, when rumours about his [Balakirev's] mental state circulated. He sought consolation in rigorous observance of the prescriptions of the Orthodox Church (he dated his conversion to the anniversary of his mother's death, 9/21 March 1871) and gradually withdrew from the world of music and his friends there. He found clerical employment with a railway company, starting work on 6/18 July 1872.' See Stuart Campbell, Balakirev, Mily Alekseyevich', *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 24 April 2013].

### 3.3.4 Première and Aftermath

Despite having sent his corrected *Romeo and Juliet* to Azanchevsky in September 1871, the work was not performed until 5 (17) February 1872 under Eduard Nápravník, at the fourth Symphony Concert of the RMS at St Petersburg.<sup>125</sup> Following its success, Cui admitted to ‘the excellence of the overture and described it as “an extraordinarily gifted work”’.<sup>126</sup> According to *PSSL* Tchaikovsky and Balakirev remained mute in relation to *Romeo and Juliet* from 1871 onwards. In spite of that, brief allusions to publication matters and requests for copies of the score speckle Tchaikovsky’s letters throughout the 1870s. These fleeting exchanges contribute little to our developing knowledge of the programme of the fantasy-overture, but they demonstrate the positive reception of the work by Russian critics and collectors.

On 8 (20) August 1872 (Letter 40) Tchaikovsky engaged in a friendly exchange of information with Jürgenson regarding his compositional progress.<sup>127</sup> Yet again, the actions of Bote and Bock had caused him annoyance through their seemingly unreasonable request of a payment of 35 thalers to print *Romeo and Juliet*.<sup>128</sup> This imposition was communicated to the Russian publisher Vasily Bessel who kindly offered to pay the German firm on the composer’s behalf.<sup>129</sup> At this time, Bessel had secured permission to produce a piano transcription of

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<sup>125</sup> *PSSL*, p. 261.

<sup>126</sup> *TQ*, p. 154.

<sup>127</sup> *PSSL*, pp. 284–285.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.* The ‘thaler’ (modern day dollar) was a silver coin used as currency throughout Europe from the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.* Vasily Vasil'yevich Bessel (1843–1907) was a Russian publisher whose firm printed the works of the great Russian composers of his time. See Geoffrey Norris and Carolyn Dunlop, ‘Bessel, Vasily Vasil'yevich’, *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 21 November 2012].

*Romeo and Juliet*. At the letter's close, Tchaikovsky pledged his preference for Jürgenson's publishing house over the Berlin company.

Seven months later, 16 (28) March 1873 (Letter 41), Bessel found himself in receipt of another letter by Tchaikovsky requesting two copies of *Romeo and Juliet* to be sent to Klindworth before his departure on 23 May — presumably the piano transcriptions of the score.<sup>130</sup> As the year passed, the correspondence between Bessel and Tchaikovsky developed.<sup>131</sup> On 13 (25) September 1874 (Letter 42), the composer acknowledged the publisher's request, regarding *Romeo and Juliet*, and promised to attend to the matter immediately.<sup>132</sup> According to the editorial notes, Bessel had previously sought a copy of the autograph score. Another petition followed on 28 September (10 October) 1874 (Letter 43) with Stasov pleading for a sketch of the 'famous second theme' [broad 'Love Theme'] along with a complete copy of the manuscript which he hoped to transcribe.<sup>133</sup>

Bessel and Stasov's appreciation for *Romeo and Juliet* was manifested in their respective attempts to circulate it throughout Russia. However, not all critics were impressed by the work. An angry Tchaikovsky wrote to Modest on 26 November (8 December) 1874 (Letter 44) revealing his disgust at an article written by Laroche.<sup>134</sup> In this offensive discourse, *Romeo and Juliet* was accused

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<sup>130</sup> *PSSL*, p. 319.

<sup>131</sup> By this time, Bessel's publishing house had produced copies of Tchaikovsky's Six Romances Op. 16 (1872–1873), Six Pieces on a Single Theme Op. 21 (1873), and Six Romances Op. 25 (1875).

<sup>132</sup> *PSSL*, p. 364.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 367.

<sup>134</sup> *PSSL*, pp. 380–381. The excerpt appears as follows with my translation appearing in square brackets: 'Статья Лароша меня просто разозлила. С какою любовью он говорит, что я подражаю и Литольфу, и Шуману, и Глинке, и Берлиозу, и еще кому-то'. (Stat'ya Larosha

of mirroring a similar programmatic style to the music of Litolff.<sup>135</sup> The harmonic development was interpreted as an uninteresting *homage* to Glinka and Schumann with slight indications of contemporary practices. Laroche observed that the fantasy-overture was ‘completely free of the influence of Wagner’.<sup>136</sup> As the diatribe continues, he charges Tchaikovsky’s *The Tempest* (1873) as redolent of Liszt’s symphonic poems and *Les Preludes* in particular. Tchaikovsky’s response to these charges illustrates a strong sense of self. One wonders why then did Tchaikovsky not react to Balakirev’s words on *Fatum* and *Romeo and Juliet* in a similar fashion.

By the end of his letter, Tchaikovsky’s mood had softened. He addressed Modest’s request for a copy of *Romeo and Juliet*. However, he conceded that an original, ‘genuine’, manuscript is ‘not preserved’ in final form with the ‘amendments and additions made by me at the insistence of Balakirev’.<sup>137</sup> This final statement of 1874 is the first mention Tchaikovsky makes of Balakirev’s

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menya prosto razozlila. S kakoyoo lyoobov’yoo on govorit, chto ya podrazhayoo i Litol’foo, i Shoomanoo, i Glinke, i Berliozoo, i eshshe komoo-to’). [Laroche’s article has angered me. With what cause has he to say that I emulate Litolff, Schumann, Glinka and Berlioz etc...].

<sup>135</sup> *PSSL*, pp. 380–381. Laroche’s article appeared in the newspaper ‘The Voice’, on 22 November 1874. The excerpt reads as follows with my translation appearing in square brackets: ‘Прежние программные вещи г-на Чайковского, особенно *Ромео и Джульетта*, в значительной мере приближались к Литольфу: по гармонии они представляли комбинацию Глинки и Шумана и некоторых современных элементов, но не Вагнера, от влияния которого г-н Чайковский в значительной степени оставался свободен. В форме его новейшей пьесы (*Буря*) видно значительное приближение к симфоническим поэмам Листа. Она составлена (именно составлена) почти так же, как *Les Preludes* Листа.’ [Regarding Mr Tchaikovsky’s programme music, especially *Romeo and Juliet*, it is largely reflective of the music of Litolff: the harmony represents a combination of Glinka, Schumann and some modern elements, but not Wagner, from the effects of which Mr Tchaikovsky largely remained free. The form of his latest composition (*The Tempest*) shows significant similarity to the symphonic poems of Liszt. Its composition is almost the same as Liszt’s *Les Preludes*.]

Henry Charles Litolff (1818–1891) was a French composer and pianist. He was particularly famous for his four piano concertos entitled *Concertos Symphoniques*. For more information see Ted M. Blair and Thomas Cooper, ‘Litolff, Henry’, *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 24 April 2013].

<sup>136</sup> *PSSL*, pp. 380–381

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*

input into the revision process. Presumably, he is referring to the earlier exchange in 1869 where Balakirev chastised the opening theme. On the other hand, perhaps Tchaikovsky is speaking of Balakirev's remarks regarding the publication of the work.

Writing on 9 (21) November 1875 (Letter 45) Tchaikovsky provided Bessel with a complete list of corrections to the revised score of *Romeo and Juliet*.<sup>138</sup> It is unclear at this stage whether Bessel was working from the autograph score, his earlier piano transcription, or the Bote and Bock publication. However, with Tchaikovsky's previous letter in mind to Modest (Letter 34), it appears that the German publication may have been Bessel's source. The accompanying editorial commentary in *PSSL* states that these errors in the score were corrected in subsequent editions.<sup>139</sup> Nonetheless, during this period of correction and editing, *Romeo and Juliet* still remained present in Tchaikovsky's compositional psyche.

In an attempt to raise his professional profile in Europe, Tchaikovsky tried to persuade various conductors to include his *Romeo and Juliet* in their concert programmes, as he felt this piece best represented his musical style. To Tchaikovsky's surprise, the fantasy-overture was not as well-received by foreign audiences as he had hoped.<sup>140</sup> In a reply to a letter from the Belgian conductor Joseph Dupont (1838–1899) on 25 October (6 November) 1876 (Letter 46), Tchaikovsky proposed three orchestral works for a forthcoming concert of his

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<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 373–376.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>140</sup> Refer to Part One above.

works in Brussels.<sup>141</sup> Here, he included *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Tempest*, and *Francesca da Rimini*, but settled on the former as his preferred choice:

On mature deliberation it is the *Romeo and Juliet* overture, which of all my works, I believe to have the greatest chance of being able to please foreign audiences. A symphony by an unknown author never inspires confidence. The public says: there are so many famous composers; why should we have to be bored for an hour with the work of an unknown one? An overture is a different matter. If it fails to please, people say that after all it did just last a brief quarter of an hour. And so it is this particular overture which I submit to your benevolent attention. It has been engraved by Bote & Bock in Berlin, and I have written to the director of this firm to ask him to send you the full score and individual parts as soon as possible.<sup>142</sup>

We do not know if Dupont carried out a performance of *Romeo and Juliet* following this proposal. Meanwhile, the work was premièred in Vienna and Paris with disastrous results. Upset by reactions to the work in Austria, France, England and Germany, Tchaikovsky sought comfort from Nadezhda von Meck on 19 (31) March 1878 (Letter 47):

My overture to *Romeo and Juliet* has been played in every capital, but always without success. In Vienna and Paris it was hissed. A short time ago it met with no better reception in Dresden. In some other towns (London and Hamburg) it was more fortunate, but, all the same, my music has not been included in the standard repertory of Germany and other countries.<sup>143</sup>

Hanslick's scathing criticism of the Viennese performance exacerbated Tchaikovsky's insecurity surrounding the acceptance of *Romeo and Juliet* on the foreign stage. Driven by the need for approval, he returned to the fantasy-overture in 1880.

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<sup>141</sup> This letter is unpublished but can be viewed under the heading 'Tchaikovsky Research Bulletin 01'. This letter is catalogued as 'letter 508a' at:

<<http://www.tchaikovsky-research.net/en/news/index.html>>.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>143</sup> *LL*, p. 289. See also Garden, 'To My Best Friend', pp. 89 and 224.



### 3.4 *Romeo and Juliet* (1880): Revision II

In this second revision, the original dedication to Balakirev was restored.<sup>144</sup> The concluding bars surrounding the approach to the *Moderato assai* were altered. In a dualistic act of defiance and assertion of musical independence, Tchaikovsky emphasised the ‘thumped out chords’ that Balakirev had previously found so offensive by repeating them over four bars. By this time, Balakirev had retired from public life and his influence on Tchaikovsky had diminished considerably. The correspondence between the pair had literally come to a halt until September 1881 (Letter 48). Tchaikovsky wrote to Balakirev, care of his publishers, announcing the new edition of *Romeo and Juliet*.<sup>145</sup>

This final version was premièred on 19 April 1886 at the Tiflis branch of the RMS organised in honour of Tchaikovsky.<sup>146</sup> The work was conducted by M. M. Ippolitov-Ivanov.<sup>147</sup> The presence of this ‘difficult work’ within the celebratory nature of the event was fitting.<sup>148</sup> As we know, *Romeo and Juliet* was

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<sup>144</sup> *TBC*, p. 355.

<sup>145</sup> Calvocoressi, ‘The Correspondence’, p. 714.

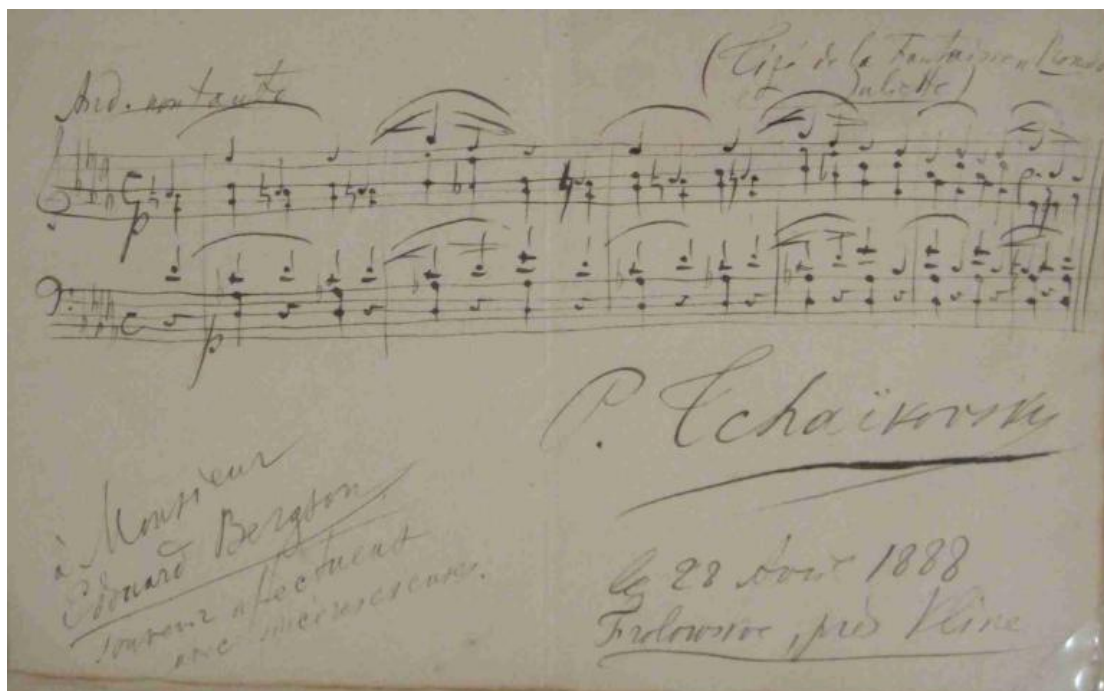
<sup>146</sup> *TBC*, p. 356. The entire concert programme was devoted to Tchaikovsky’s music. In my email correspondence with the GDMC, Ada Ainbinder (researcher) revealed that the following pieces were also performed: Serenade for String Orchestra, Op. 48; Scene of Tatyana’s letter from the opera *Eugene Onegin* (the performer — Varvara Mikhailovna Zarudnaya: Soprano, 1857–?); Serenade melancolique for Violin and Orchestra (the performer — K. K. Gorsky); Romances: ‘Not a Word, O My Friend’ Op. 6, No. 2, and ‘The Canary’ Op. 25, No. 4 (the performer — V. M. Zarudnaya); The Chorus ‘There is no small bridge here’ from the opera *Mazepa*; Lensky’s aria from the opera *Eugene Onegin* (the performer — Peter Andreyevich Lody: Tenor, 1852–1920); Nocturne (F-dur) and Scherzo (h-moll) for Piano (the performer — Gennady Osipovich Korganov: composer and pianist, 1858–1890); Romances: ‘The Fearful Minute’ Op. 28, No. 6, ‘Why?’ Op. 6, No. 5 (the performer — P. A. Lody) and the Overture *Romeo and Juliet*. Interestingly the GDMC did not refer to *Romeo and Juliet* as a fantasy-overture in their correspondence with me.

<sup>147</sup> Mikhail Mikhailovich Ippolitov-Ivanov (1859–1935) was a Russian composer, conductor, director and teacher of harmony, orchestration and composition at the Moscow Conservatory. See *TTOE*, pp. 458–459.

<sup>148</sup> In a letter to the conductor Julius Laube (1841–1910) on 10 (22) January 1888, Tchaikovsky thanked him for his ‘marvelous performance’ of his ‘difficult work’ (*Romeo and Juliet*) in Hamburg (Letter 49). This unpublished letter is available under the heading ‘TR bulletin 01’. It is catalogued as ‘letter 3467a’ at: <<http://www.tchaikovsky-research.net/en/news/index.html>>.

the first composition of worth to launch Tchaikovsky's professional musical career in Russia. Its fame, at that time, is evident in a letter written by Tchaikovsky to an unidentified Édouard Bergson on 28 April (10 May) 1888 (Letter 50).<sup>149</sup> The note appears to be an apology for Tchaikovsky's lengthy delay in replying to Bergson. As an act of atonement, he adds a musical quotation of 6 bars from 'Love Theme a' (hereafter referred to as 'LTa') [bb. 192–198] as follows (Example 6).<sup>150</sup>

**Example 6: Quotation from 'Love Theme' (*Romeo and Juliet*) for Bergson (1888)**



<sup>149</sup> This unpublished letter is available under the heading 'TR bulletin 01'. It is catalogued as 'letter 3558a' at: <<http://www.tchaikovsky-research.net/en/news/index.html>>. The letter was found on the website of Christie's which described an autograph letter in French by Tchaikovsky that the firm had auctioned in London on 3 December 2003.

<sup>150</sup> This image is available to download from the following website: <<http://www.tchaikovsky-research.net/en/news/index.html>>.

Interestingly, the musical quotation cited here, the reflected ‘Chizhik-Pizhik’, as a representation of the entire fantasy-overture, is that of the traditionally accepted lesser love theme (‘Juliet’). In light of the context of the letter it appears that Tchaikovsky may have considered this theme the epitome of *Romeo and Juliet*’s programme — after all it was the first theme listed under the banner of ‘love theme’ in his original sketches to Balakirev.

Unlike similar programmatic works, the representation of this Shakespearean tale preoccupied Tchaikovsky for most of his musical career. Following his first revision to *Romeo and Juliet* he envisaged writing an opera on the tragic drama in 1878. However, work did not begin until after Tchaikovsky’s completion of the fantasy-overture in 1880. With this in mind, sketches were made in 1881. This time, Balakirev was not involved. The following section discusses Tchaikovsky’s proposed *Romeo and Juliet* opera. In doing so, I employ the duet from this unfinished work as a hermeneutic window through which Taneyev’s perception of the original fantasy-overture’s programme is considered. This builds upon Jaeger’s brief comparative analysis between the two compositions in 1896.

### 3.5 *Romeo and Juliet: Proposed Opera*

In a letter to Taneyev on 2 (14) January 1878, Tchaikovsky expressed his wish to write an opera.<sup>151</sup> Here, he postulated on an appropriate subject for this endeavour:

You [Taneyev] may be wondering what I'm looking for. Well, I'll tell you. What I need is something without any kings or queens, without any popular revolts, battles, marches — in short, without all those attributes of grand opera. I am looking for an intimate but powerful drama, based on a conflict of situations which I have experienced or witnessed myself, and which are able to touch me to the quick. I am not averse even to have some fantastic element, since there is no need to restrain oneself then, and one can give free rein to one's imagination.<sup>152</sup>

In his search for a theme which he could relate to personally, Tchaikovsky dismissed the programme of operas such as *Aida* (Verdi, 1871) and *L'Africaine* (Meyerbeer, 1854–1855):

Well, in short, *Aida* is so remote from me, I am moved so little by her unhappy love for Radames, whom I likewise cannot picture to myself, that my music would not be heart-felt, as is necessary for all good music. [...]

I recently saw *L'Africaine* in Genoa. How wretched this poor African Girl is! She has to endure slavery, imprisonment, death under a poisoned tree, and the triumph of her rival as she is dying — and yet I don't feel sorry for her in the least. But of course there you have plenty of effects: a ship, fighting scenes, you name it! Well, I say to hell with them, to hell with these effects!<sup>153</sup>

Still preoccupied with his quest to write an opera four months later, Tchaikovsky decided upon *Romeo and Juliet* as his source. He wrote two letters indicating this desire: The first was addressed to Nadezhda von Meck on 23 May (June 4) 1878, while the second was intended for Modest two days later. This correspondence gives the impression that this was the first time Tchaikovsky contemplated an

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<sup>151</sup> See Appendix I: Letters, Programme Notes and Articles (A.I.6), pp. 318–324, for a full copy of this letter.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*

explicit musical representation of the subject of the play — unlike his fantasy-overture. In his communication to von Meck, Tchaikovsky deliberated over the impetus to compose this opera:

Do you know what I am preoccupied with at present? When I was sitting alone one evening at Kiev, while my sister and Modest had gone to the theatre, to see Rossi in *Romeo and Juliet*, I read the play through once more. Immediately I was possessed with the idea of composing an opera on the subject. The existing operas of Bellini and Gounod do not frighten me. In both of them Shakespeare is mutilated and distorted until he is hardly recognisable. Do you not think that this great work of the arch-genius is well adapted to inspire a musician? I have already talked it over with Modest; but he shrank from the magnitude of the task. Nothing ventured nothing gained. I shall think over the plan of this opera and throw all my energies into the work for which I am reserving them.<sup>154</sup>

Vincenzo Bellini's rendition of 'Romeo and Juliet', *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* (1830), was based on Masuccio Salernitano's earlier Italian version of the love story.<sup>155</sup> With a reduced entourage of characters (in comparison to the original Shakespearean play), the removal of the balcony and orchard scenes, in which Romeo and Juliet extol their love, and prominence allocated to the feuding aspect of the plot, Bellini's opera emphasises the theme of civil conflict.<sup>156</sup> This vision

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<sup>154</sup> *LL*, p. 304. Here, Tchaikovsky was referring to Bellini's opera *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* (Venice, 1830) and Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette* (Paris, 1867; rev. 1888).

<sup>155</sup> Vincenzo Salvatore Carmelo Francesco Bellini (1801–1835). See Mary Ann Smart, et al, 'Bellini, Vincenzo', *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 21 November 2012]. Masuccio Salernitano (1410–1475) was an Italian poet and writer. His *Cinquante Novelle* (1476) told the tragic tale of Mariotta and Giannozza. Following their secret marriage, a broil ensues between Mariotta and a citizen, Resultantly, he is banished from the city and Giannozza's father promptly arranges for her to marry another. She turns to the Friar for help. He provides her with a sleeping potion. Giannozza writes to her lover informing him of her plan to affect death. The misdirection of her letter leads Mariotta to believe that his bride has died. He returns home. While attempting to open Giannozza's tomb Mariotta is arrested and sentenced to death by his father-in-law. Later that evening Giannozza regains consciousness to the news of her lover's fate and dies of a broken heart. See Cedric Watts, *Harvester New Critical Introductions to Shakespeare* (New York, London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991). For a full English translation of *Cinquante Novelle* see Adolph Casso, ed., *Romeo and Juliet* (Boston: Dante University of American Press, 1992), pp. 15–22.

<sup>156</sup> See Simon Maguire et al., 'Capuleti e i Montecchi, I', *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, ed. by Stanley Sadie, *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 21 November 2012].

was not shared by Charles Gounod.<sup>157</sup> His grand opera *Roméo et Juliette* (1867) attempted to present a more faithful adaptation of the Shakespearean tale.<sup>158</sup> This is especially evident in his compliment of characters which includes Nurse Gertrude. Despite minor alterations to the plot, the overall concepts of love, conflict and misunderstanding remain. Gounod alludes to material from Shakespeare's orchard scene (Act III/sc. v) in which the young lovers appear inconsolable over impending dawn and their imminent separation.<sup>159</sup> Tchaikovsky chose the same scene upon which his duet was based.

In his second letter regarding his proposed opera, on 25 May (8 June) 1878, Tchaikovsky remarked to Modest that this would be his 'finest work' to date:<sup>160</sup>

Modi, ever since I reread *Romeo and Juliet*, *Undine*, *Berthalde*, *Gulbrand*, and the rest seem to me a pack of childish nonsense. Of course, I shall compose an opera on *Romeo and Juliet*. All your objections will vanish before the vast enthusiasm which possesses me. It shall be my finest work. It seems absurd that I have only just found out that fate has to some extent ordained me for this task. Nothing could be better suited to my musical temperament. No kings, no marches — in a word, none of the usual accessories of Grand Opera. Nothing but love, love, love. And then how delightful are the minor characters: Friar Lawrence, Tybalt, Mercutio! You need not be afraid of monotony. The first love duet will be very different from the second. In the first, brightness and serenity; in the second, a tragic element. From children, happily and carelessly in love, Romeo and Juliet have become passionate and suffering beings, placed in a tragic and inextricable dilemma. How I long to get to work on it!<sup>161</sup>

<sup>157</sup> Charles-François Gounod (1818–1893). See Steven Huebner, 'Gounod, Charles-François', *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 21 November 2012].

<sup>158</sup> See Steven Huebner, 'Roméo et Juliette (ii)', in *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, ed. by Stanley Sadie, *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 21 November 2012]; and Steven Huebner, *The Operas of Charles Gounod* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992).

<sup>159</sup> See Appendix II: Miscellaneous (A.II.3), pp. 327–328, for a copy of Act III, sc. v (Capulet's Orchard) from Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, and Appendix II: Miscellaneous (A.II.4), pp. 329–331, for a copy of Gounod's libretto for this scene.

<sup>160</sup> *LL*, p. 304.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*

Tchaikovsky's passion for the project is immediately striking.<sup>162</sup> This reaction was not found in relation to his earlier fantasy-overture based on the same subject. Our attention is drawn to the presence of two love duets. Presumably, Tchaikovsky considered 'the first, brightness and serenity' as representative of the balcony scene, while the second, with its 'tragic element' refers to the orchard scene. If we are to entertain Taruskin's view that the fantasy-overture was a representation of the balcony scene, then it appears that the orchard scene would follow naturally, as was the case with the duet for the proposed opera.<sup>163</sup>

From these two letters, it seems that Tchaikovsky intended a more faithful operatic representation of *Romeo and Juliet* than his predecessors, Bellini and Gounod. It is quite possible to believe that his renewed interest in the musical portrayal of this tale inspired him to revise the fantasy-overture for the final time in 1880. However, it was not until October and November 1881 that work began on the opera. Tchaikovsky sketched a duet for soprano and tenor based on the music of the 'Love Theme' of his earlier fantasy-overture — after all, the intended theme of the duet was 'love, love, love'. The libretto of Alexander Sokolovsky was employed, with an accompanying quotation of Act III/Scene V, of the play.<sup>164</sup>

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<sup>162</sup> Tchaikovsky's enthusiasm for this project questions Arthur Graham's perception that Tchaikovsky was dissatisfied with the duet and consequently avoided publication. See Graham, *Shakespeare in Opera, Ballet, Orchestral Music and Song*, p. 61.

<sup>163</sup> *DRM*, p. 183.

<sup>164</sup> Tchaikovsky's annotated sketches appear in his third volume of the *Complete Works of Shakespeare*. See Appendix II: Miscellaneous (A.II.5), pp. 332–335, for a copy of Tchaikovsky's libretto for this scene. The text is taken from Boris Zhutnikov's translation which appears on the *Bridge Records* BCD 9033 CD production of the work. It is performed by the Moscow Radio and Television Orchestra, conducted by Peter Tiboris (1992).

Tchaikovsky's layout of this work clearly demonstrates that he envisaged not only a duet, but an entire scene, since besides Romeo and Juliet, the Nurse also appears.<sup>165</sup> Tchaikovsky's knowledge of the play, based on his rereading of the text, merited the addition of the Nurse here — an inclusion which escaped him in his representation of the play in the previous fantasy-overture of 1880.

Since Tchaikovsky never completed the duet, his brother Modest employed Taneyev with the task of finishing the composition, and presumably supervised the assignment.<sup>166</sup> In a letter to Herman Laroche of 9 (21) September 1894, Modest wrote:

Pyotr reworked *Romeo and Juliet* himself, basing it on Sokolovsky's translation (he made pencil notes by the relevant passage in the book), but it had no proper ending so I provided one myself. Moreover I had a say in the final form of the music; though only in trying to preserve the character of the scene, which does not always come over in the translation.<sup>167</sup>

As Tchaikovsky's sketches recycled the 'Love Theme' of the fantasy-overture, Taneyev continued on in a similar vein by borrowing other musical ideas from the work as a framing model. He opens the duet with transitional material derived

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<sup>165</sup> Tchaikovsky's sketches for the proposed duet are housed at GDMC under the catalogue number 'à' 1118'.

<sup>166</sup> Tchaikovsky dedicated his orchestral fantasia *Francesca da Rimini*, Op. 32 (1876) to Taneyev. The manuscript of Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1, Op. 23 (1874–1875) contains an inscription to Taneyev as he gave one of the earliest performances of the work. However, this was later removed in favour of the eventual dedicatee, Hans von Bülow, whose interpretation of the work impressed upon Tchaikovsky and the greater concert community. Following Tchaikovsky's death in 1893, Modest requested Taneyev to complete a number of works left unfinished: the duet scene for an opera on *Romeo and Juliet*, the Andante & Finale for piano and orchestra, Op. 79, and the piano piece *Momento lirico* (unaware that the latter work had already been published in a completed form as the *Moment lyrique*). Taneyev was also involved in founding the Tchaikovsky House-Museum at Klin in 1895. See Brown, 'Taneyev', *GMO. OMO*. Taneyev's version of the *Romeo and Juliet* duet is housed at GDMC under the catalogue number 'à' 1454'. Taneyev's full autograph score of the duet is housed at GTsMMK under the catalogue number 'ô.85 137'.

<sup>167</sup> This letter is archived in the GDMC but cited in the *Tchaikovsky Research-Net* site at: <<http://www.tchaikovsky-research.net/en/Works/Unfinished/TH215/index.html#note05>>.



from the fantasy-overture's introduction (b. 10 onwards in the original fantasy-overture) which Tchaikovsky used to move away from the introductory theme towards the first element of the Love Theme.

At b. 29 the key changes to the familiar D flat of the fantasy-overture's 'LTa' with a 1-bar solo harp arpeggio, based on the D flat chord, announcing the entrance of the 'LTa' melody in the strings. At this point the directions on the score state that the curtain opens to reveal Juliet's room where the young lovers appear seated at the window. Taneyev's editorial choice of music here is interesting as it gives us insight into his interpretation of the original fantasy-overture's programme. His decision to do so may be interpreted dualistically: 1) Due to this theme's ('LTa') association with the female character of the play, Taneyev employed it to illustrate Juliet's room; 2) He may have employed this theme as a simultaneous representation of both lovers as they each appear in this musical scene. If we consider the manner in which Tchaikovsky used 'LTa' ('Juliet') in his fantasy-overture as pretence to 'LTb' ('Romeo'), then it seems possible that Taneyev would also use this as a programmatic device to herald the 'Love Theme' proper.

Tchaikovsky's sketches of the duet begin at b. 58 (A.IV.4, p. 399) where both lovers express their anguish over impending dawn and Romeo's subsequent departure from the garden. Juliet tries to convince Romeo that it is the nightingale singing (the keeper of the night) and not the lark (the herald of the dawn). She begs him to stay and he acquiesces to the words: 'If I stay and am taken I shall

die; but if it is your command, I will die happy' (bb. 102–106, A.IV.4, p. 400). A 1-bar D flat arpeggio on the harp (b. 107, A.IV.4, p. 400) draws musical attention to 'LTa' (*allegro giusto*), which is quoted directly from the fantasy-overture. Here, both lovers continue to procrastinate over the situation of time through the melody of 'LTa'. This prompts us to reconsider previous interpretations of this theme as being suggestive of one character, that is, Juliet, in the original fantasy-overture. In the libretto, Juliet declares her love and convinces Romeo that it is still 'blissful night' and not dawn. She does this because the concealing darkness allows them to be together in love. Day-break signifies Romeo's departure and agony for Juliet.

The music gains momentum as a solo Romeo sings the words 'O night, O blissful moment, stay; O night of love, enfold us, comfort us' (bb. 125–133, A.IV.4, p. 401) to the melody of 'LTb'. The lovers dissolve into conversation about the nightingale and the lark (b. 142 onwards, A.IV.4, p. 402). The nurse interjects at b. 165 (A.IV.4, p. 403) pleading with Juliet to leave as it is now morning and her mother will soon arrive. After a turbulent passage the music dies away to a solo assertion of the horns (b. 181, A.IV.4, p. 404) — a device often used by Tchaikovsky to link sections together and draw our attention to a significant musical moment — followed by a 1-bar D flat arpeggio in the harps (b. 183, A.IV.4, p. 405). This is used again to signify the return of 'LTa' while the lovers sing:

O night, time of love, of bliss, rapturous dreams, gentle whispers.

O night, must you pass?

Linger a moment more.

O night, O stay! (bb. 184–197, A.IV.4, p. 405)

Romeo soliloquises at b. 201 (A.IV.4, p. 406) to the melody of ‘LTb’ above an instrumental statement of ‘LTa’ in the strings and horns. He implores the night to stay and ‘hide us in your sweet dreaming darkness’ (bb. 201–209, A.IV.4, pp. 406–407). The lovers return to their dialogue through ‘LTa’ at b. 210 (A.IV.4, p. 407). Suddenly, for the first time in the duet, Juliet sings the ‘LTb’ musical idea at b. 224 (A.IV.4, p. 408) as she finally admits to the ensuing morn and her departure from her beloved. This dilutes any previous perceptions of ‘LTb’ as reflective of the character of Romeo.

The Coda, documenting the lovers’ farewell, is an adaptation of the fantasy-overture’s finale. This time however, Taneyev does not employ the striking chordal ending of the original *Romeo and Juliet*. He instead uses a rising string figure to close the duet (b. 243–276, A.IV.4, pp. 409–411) — a device which would probably have impressed Balakirev more than Tchaikovsky as he had hoped for such an ending to the fantasy-overture. This finale may have been influenced by the ideas of Modest Tchaikovsky who also had a role in the completion of the duet. After all, his original plan for the programme of his *Romeo and Juliet* overture stipulated a quiet ending to the work.

The duet for the proposed opera on *Romeo and Juliet* was premièred in Saint Petersburg in October 1894 under Julius Bleichman.<sup>168</sup> However, it has not shared the fantasy-overture's popularity within the concert repertoire. Perhaps, this is a reflection of Taneyev's input into the compositional process. Scholarship has reduced the duet to footnotes and asides in literary commentaries throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. This is primarily due to the lack of documentation supporting its details and the fragmentary nature of its composition. We can but hope that future explorations of Tchaikovsky's unpublished archives will reveal more behind his reasons for his incompleteness of this opera, despite his earlier passionate testimonies.

### **3.6 Conclusion: Questioning an Alternative Programme in *Romeo and Juliet***

This comprehensive reassessment of the correspondence between Tchaikovsky and Balakirev from 1869 to 1881 has revealed that the two composers differed in their conceptualisation of *Romeo and Juliet*. Balakirev believed that in tackling any programmatic work, it was necessary first to draft the outline of the programme based on the intended subject's narrative of events. This concrete plan would then stimulate the emergence of musical ideas. Tchaikovsky found such an ideology irreconcilable with his aesthetics. Because of this, we find that

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<sup>168</sup> Very little is known about Julius I. Bleichman (1869–1909) beyond the fact that he was a composer and conductor. According to the *Russian Biographical Dictionary* he was a student at both the Leipzig and St Petersburg Conservatories, respectively. See the following web address: <<http://www.rulex.ru/01020091.htm>>.

Tchaikovsky's reactions to Balakirev's proposal for the programme of *Romeo and Juliet* were not as submissive as scholarship on the work commonly suggests.

As seen in Part Two (above), the initial discourse between the pair began in 1868 and their musical relationship followed. Their early exchanges portray Balakirev as an advisor with Tchaikovsky as the eager apprentice. It is noteworthy that Tchaikovsky's works in sonata form at this time were rudimentary and lacking in structural coherence.<sup>169</sup> Therefore, it is possible to perceive *Romeo and Juliet* as an attempt to improve on that form. Perhaps this was Tchaikovsky's primary motivation for seeking out Balakirev's counsel.

Despite his pursuit of advice from the experienced Balakirev, Tchaikovsky's writings suggest conflicting reactions to his instructions, indicative of his evolving personal sense of self. Although Tchaikovsky did adapt Balakirev's original musical idea for the representation of conflict, he did not open the work with this theme, nor did he act upon his suggestion for a quiet conclusion to the fantasy-overture. Choosing to write *Romeo and Juliet* within a 4/4 time signature, as opposed to the suggested 3/4 time, Tchaikovsky made use of the dramatic chordal sword-thrusts and agitated semiquaver passage-work proposed by Balakirev. Even though the work had been completed, Tchaikovsky sent Balakirev the four main musical themes of *Romeo and Juliet* in excerpt form. With thoughts of Balakirev's previous condemnation of *Fatum* still resonating,

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<sup>169</sup> These pieces include *The Storm*, Overture in C minor, Overture in F major, and Piano Sonata in C sharp minor, Op. 80 (1865).

Tchaikovsky was wary of the nationalist's reaction to his fantasy-overture. This may have prompted his choice to list the ideas in single-melody format.

Tchaikovsky's decision to cite the two elements of the broad 'Love Theme' in reverse order is unusual when we consider the fact that the work was finished at this stage of correspondence. Perhaps, he intended to mislead Balakirev in a bid to avoid the sting of disapproval. His attempts were futile as Balakirev's reception of the musical themes was mixed. He complained of the introductory theme's likeness to the style of Haydn, and remained unconvinced by the theme suggestive of the warring Montagues and Capulets. The 'Love Theme' escaped disparagement.

Even though Tchaikovsky received these comments in December 1869, he did not immediately set about revising the work. The original version was premièred in March 1870. Here, all of the composition's alleged frailties, as observed by Balakirev, were preserved. A letter was intended for Tchaikovsky in early March, relaying Balakirev's commentary on the performance, but it was never sent, despite its inclusion in scholarly discussions on the genesis of *Romeo and Juliet*. Therefore, by the summer of 1870, Tchaikovsky still had not received Balakirev's input. In spite of this, he still went ahead with his revisions to the score in 1870 and 1880.

Documentary evidence fails to offer any concrete reason for either Tchaikovsky's return to the work in 1880, or his intention to compose a duet on

the same subject. However, I argue that the reasons for the revisions can be attributed to *Romeo and Juliet*'s poor reception on the European concert scene, rather than Balakirev. It was the process of rewriting the fantasy-overture that led to Tchaikovsky's consideration of an opera based on the Shakespearean tale.

The proposed *Romeo and Juliet* opera is important within the overall circle of understanding Tchaikovsky's musical representation of this Shakespearean tale. In our reevaluation of the programme of the fantasy-overture from the perspective of the duet, it is possible to interpret the love music in a new light. Throughout the duet, both characters engage in a dialogue supported by elements from 'LTa'. Immediately, this dissipates the notion of the theme solely representing the figure of Juliet. Even though Romeo soliloquises to the 'LTb' idea for most of the work, Tchaikovsky allocates this theme to Juliet towards the end. This gesture reconsiders the traditional perception, associated with the original fantasy-overture, that 'LTb' is a specific representation of Romeo.

Part Three has added further weight to the reality that Tchaikovsky's peers of the late-nineteenth century were in agreement that his *Romeo and Juliet* was a convincing musical representation of the Shakespearean tale. Why would they believe otherwise? Tchaikovsky never gave them any reason to doubt his programmatic intentions. But what if there was an underlying meaning subconsciously attached to his fantasy-overture — a meaning attracted to the aesthetic ideologies of realism? Does the possible allusion to 'Chizhik-Pizhik', suggest that other interpretations of *Romeo and Juliet*'s musical themes may be

worthy of hermeneutic consideration? The following Part Four explores this possibility. I have selected Tchaikovsky's *Manfred* symphony as a hermeneutic window through which this perspective is investigated. Here, the archetypes of 'self' and 'otherness' are further explored through the figures of the *persona* and the *anima*.



## HERMENEUTIC WINDOW NO. 4: *MANFRED* AND OTHERNESS

### Part Four: *Manfred* — Exploring ‘The Self’ and ‘The Other’ in *Romeo and Juliet*

The period in which the *Manfred Symphony (in Four Scenes after Byron’s Dramatic Poem, Op. 58)* was written marked an important junction for Tchaikovsky, both personally and professionally. Throughout the 1880s fame encompassed him on a national and international level. His newly found sense of stability was reflected in the purchase of a home of his own at Klin in Moscow.<sup>1</sup> No longer a wanderer, Tchaikovsky had established a firm centre from which he could compose. However, this new abode was not as conducive to musical inspiration as Tchaikovsky had hoped.<sup>2</sup> The presence of death weighed heavily upon him. Contemporaries were expiring of lingering illnesses and Tchaikovsky’s own ill health exacerbated his awareness of mortality.<sup>3</sup> From his letters during this time Wiley notes that old comradeships made way for new.<sup>4</sup> Tchaikovsky’s relationship with von Meck began to fade, possibly due to her diminishing fortune. Perhaps his ever-increasing professional status meant that he no longer needed to placate her with flattery. Instead, he forged ties with the singer Emilia Pavlovskaya, and the composer Mikhail Ippolitov-Ivanov.<sup>5</sup> Tchaikovsky’s

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<sup>1</sup> Tchaikovsky lived in his country house in Maidanovo, Klin, until his death in 1893.

<sup>2</sup> Wiley, ‘Tchaikovsky, Pyotr Il’yich’, *GM.O. OMO*.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* Emilie Karlovna Pavlovskaya (1854–1935) was the Russian soprano who created the part of Maria in the Moscow performance of *Mazeppa* at the Bolshoi Theatre on 3 (15) February 1884. See *LL*, p. 450. Pavlovskaya worked as both a performer and teacher at the Bolshoi Theatre. She appeared in a variety of roles in operas such as *Eugene Onegin*, *Russalka*, *La Traviata* and *Carmen*. See Alexander Tumonov, *The Life and Artistry of Maria Olenina d’Alheim* (Edmonton,

correspondence with Balakirev and the Grand Duke Konstantin Romanov was also renewed at this time.<sup>6</sup>

It was news of the final revised version of *Romeo and Juliet* in 1881 (see letter 48, Part Three, above) that reignited the chain of communication between Tchaikovsky and Balakirev. Confident that a further compositional collaboration could prove interesting, Balakirev wrote to Tchaikovsky one year later. With the success of the fantasy-overture, and *Francesca da Rimini*, in mind, Balakirev suggested the writing of an orchestral work based on Lord Byron's *Manfred*.<sup>7</sup> Stasov had sown the seed for this idea earlier in the late 1860s, following Berlioz's final visit to Russia (1867–1888).<sup>8</sup> Initially, Balakirev had approached Berlioz with the task of setting *Manfred* to music in 1868, as Berlioz was a great admirer of Byron's style.<sup>9</sup> However, due to deteriorating health and old age the French composer declined. For Balakirev, Tchaikovsky, was the obvious alternative.

Like *Romeo and Juliet*, the extant commentary on Tchaikovsky's *Manfred* Symphony is sparse and fragmented. In a bid to present a more comprehensive overview of the work's genesis, this chapter examines Tchaikovsky's

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Canada: University of Alberta Press, 2000), pp. 331–332. Mikhail Mikhaylovich Ippolitov-Ivanov (1859–1935) was a Russian composer, teacher and conductor. He was a student of Rimsky-Korsakov and attended meetings of the Balakirev circle from 1879–1880. See Inna Barsova, 'Ippolitov-Ivanov, Mikhail Mikhaylovich', *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 10 December 2012].

<sup>6</sup> Konstantin Konstantinovich Romanov (1858–1916) was the grandson of Nicholas I, a poet and playwright. He frequently wrote under the pen name 'K. R.' See Kenneth A. Lantz, *The Dostoyevsky Encyclopedia* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2004), pp. 360–361.

<sup>7</sup> Lord George Gordon Byron (1788–1824). See Caroline Franklin, *Byron* (New York: Routledge, 2007), and John Warrack, 'Byron, Lord', *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 29 November 2012].

<sup>8</sup> See Campbell, 'Balakirev, Mily Alekseyevich', *GMO. OMO*.

<sup>9</sup> See Warrack, 'Byron, Lord', *GMO. OMO*.

correspondence during the compositional process. Through this assessment, the relationship between Tchaikovsky and Balakirev is further explored. In considering the central themes of death and female otherness, this portion of the thesis employs *Manfred* as a hermeneutic window through which *Romeo and Juliet* is reinterpreted. However, before this analysis can begin, it is necessary to provide an overview of the literary context to Tchaikovsky's interpretation of *Manfred*.

#### 4.1 Byron's *Manfred*

Written in 1817, this titan among nineteenth-century literary works intoxicated its readers with its Gothic-inspired exploration of the metaphysical dichotomy between man and death, and its underpinning reference to the scandalous realm of incest. Francis Jeffrey has remarked that Byron's *Manfred* has 'no action; no plot and no characters; *Manfred* merely muses and suffers from beginning to end'.<sup>10</sup> This is not necessarily a negative observation, as the struggle between consciousness and self drives the plot — a plot premised by the act of remembering — forward. Arguably, this yields a more effective interpretative result than that created by over-produced theatrics.

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<sup>10</sup> Drummond Bone, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Byron* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 137.

Drummond Bone summarises the tale of *Manfred* as follows:

Haunted by a crime committed in the past, recounted with deliberate obscurity but involving violence, incest, blood-shed and the death of his beloved sister, Astarte, Manfred alternatively seeks ‘self-oblivion’ and renewed contact with Astarte, or at least with her shade.<sup>11</sup>

Throughout the work, Byron never reveals the exact details of Manfred’s wrongdoings. The enigmatic ‘cloak and dagger’ style of the prose invites the interpreter to imagine the crimes on a deeper level than that which could be achieved through a direct description of the events. Manfred is not allowed to clearly state that Astarte was his sister. Even though the reader realises the truth, as the poem develops, the incestuous link is heightened through the fact that Manfred is unable to speak of her unequivocally as his sister. Byron uses Astarte as a mirror image of Manfred. She is the desired feminine counterpart to his destructive, deteriorating masculinity.

*Manfred* was a product of its time — a time in which the human condition and man’s place in the universal sphere of things was deliberated. Here, as Richard Cardwell notes, the themes of ‘love, beauty, mortality, sensuality: the loss of hope, of illusion, happiness’ and the desire for increased knowledge were all part of the philosophical discourse.<sup>12</sup> Fundamental to this developing conversation was the recognition that, as with Byron’s Manfred, ‘sorrow is knowledge’.<sup>13</sup> Manfred represented the type of artistic figure that much of the mid-late-

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<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Richard A. Cardwell, ‘El Lord Sublime’: Byron’s Legacy in Spain’, *The Reception of Byron in Europe*, ed. by Richard A. Cardwell (New York: Thoemmes Continuum, 2004), p. 153.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

nineteenth-century audiences anticipated in their dramatic works.<sup>14</sup> Hippolyte Taine remarked in his *Philosophie de l'art* (1865) that ‘the reigning personality, that is to say, the main character, to whom the audience attends with the greatest of interest in the art of the nineteenth century, is the pensive melancholy seeker (like Faust, like Werther, like Manfred), a heart constantly athirst, darkly apprehensive, and curelessly afflicted’.<sup>15</sup>

This Manfred figure captured the musical imaginations of Robert Schumann (*Manfred* overture, Op. 115, 1848), Friedrich Nietzsche (*Manfred-Meditation* for piano, 1872), and Ivan Turgenev (*Steno*, 1834), respectively.<sup>16</sup> Tchaikovsky was introduced to Byron’s *Manfred* by way of Stasov and Balakirev. The following discussion investigates the possibility that Tchaikovsky’s *Romeo and Juliet* may be perceived as a portent to the larger aesthetic issues demonstrated in *Manfred*’s first and final movements, regarding death and the feminine other. Before such an inquiry can commence, however, the details surrounding the genesis of the symphony must be explained.

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<sup>14</sup> Richard Taruskin, *On Russian Music*, p. 129.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.* Hippolyte Adolphe Taine (1828–1893) was a French philosopher and political commentator. See Robert Leroux and David M. Hart, eds, *French Liberalism in the Nineteenth Century: An Anthology* (New York: Routledge, 2012), p. 265.

<sup>16</sup> Schumann’s (1810–1856) composition alternates spoken dialogue with fifteen brief movements cast as vocal solos and ensembles, instrumental interludes, choruses and melodramas. See John Daverio and Eric Sams, ‘Schumann, Robert’, *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 29 November 2012]. For more information on Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche’s (1844–1900) reaction to Schumann’s *Manfred* see Stephen Downes, *Music and Decadence in European Modernism: The Case of Central and Eastern Europe* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge, 2010), p. 61. See also R. J. Hollingdale, ‘Nietzsche, Friedrich’, *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 30 November 2012]. For further information on Ivan Sergeyevich Turgenev’s (1818–1883) *Steno*, see Michael Allen Gillespie, *Nihilism Before Nietzsche* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1995), p. 151, and April Fitzlyon, ‘Turgenev, Ivan Sergeyevich’, *GMO. OMO*. [Accessed 30 November 2012].

## 4.2 Tchaikovsky's *Manfred* Symphony: Genesis

Gerald Abraham postulates that Stasov was so impressed by Berlioz's *Harold en Italie* (1833) during his concert tour of Russia (1867) that he suggested the composition of a work based on Byron's *Manfred* to Balakirev.<sup>17</sup> Stasov's programme reads as follows:

Part I: Manfred, wandering in the Alps. His life is shattered; importunate, fateful questions remain without an answer; nothing remains in his life but memories. From time to time steal into his mind memories of the ideal Astarte. Memories, thoughts — burn and gnaw at him. He seeks and asks for oblivion, and no one can give it to him.

Part II: Mode of life of the Alpine hunters, full of simplicity, of good-nature, of naïve patriarchism, which Manfred encounters and which presents, in itself, a sharp contrast. This to be a quiet, idyllic Adagio, introducing the theme of *Manfred*, which, as an *idée fixe*, must pervade the whole symphony.

Part III: The Alpine fairy, appearing to Manfred in the rainbow from the spray of a waterfall.

Part IV: A wild, unrestrained Allegro, full of wild audacity. Scene in the subterranean palace of the infernal Arimanes. — Further on must come the subterranean spirits and finally a charming contrast with this unbridled orgy will be the representation of the evocation and appearance of Astarte: this must be music, light and transparent, like air, and ideal. The pandemonium is resumed, ending Largo — with Manfred's death.<sup>18</sup>

Balakirev did not feel that he could do such a programme musical justice, so he proffered the idea to Berlioz instead, in a letter dated 10 (22) September 1868. Balakirev's plea to compose another instrumental symphony failed to mention that Stasov was the author of the draft. In his attempt to convince Berlioz of the Byronic task, Balakirev desperately attempted to draw rather far-fetched parallels between the French composer and *Manfred*:

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<sup>17</sup> Gerald Abraham, 'Introduction' to *Tchaikovsky: Manfred Symphony Op. 58* (Leipzig: Eulenburg, 1924, No. 500), p. iii.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

You love Byron, who offers so many fascinating subjects perfectly suited to you, e.g. Manfred. It is impossible to refuse one's sympathy to such a hero, or for that matter to Byron himself whose fate has so much in common with yours. Just as English society, permeated by pharisaical morality and by the conventional routine traditions of life, failed to understand him, so the French have not understood you because they have not yet matured enough in the art of music to rise a bit higher than someone like Gounod.<sup>19</sup>

Regardless of Balakirev's flattering words, Berlioz was not enticed to undertake the compositional challenge. The idea was buried for fourteen years, until 1882.

As we know, Tchaikovsky wrote to Balakirev in 1881 notifying him of the publication of the final revised *Romeo and Juliet*, replete with its dedication to him. The obstinate Balakirev did not immediately reply. However, as soon as he found use for Tchaikovsky again, contact was renewed a year later. On September 28 (October 10) 1882 Balakirev thanked Tchaikovsky for his last communication (even though a year had passed), adding that he 'should be glad to see' him, and would 'like to discuss the programme of a symphony', which he believed Tchaikovsky would 'carry out splendidly'.<sup>20</sup> Enthused by the prospect, Tchaikovsky asked Balakirev to send him an outline of the programme.

On 28 October (9 November) 1882 Balakirev charted his ideas for an instrumental work based on *Manfred* to Tchaikovsky. As with Berlioz, Stasov was neither mentioned, nor credited for the draft. In his inimitable style, Balakirev could not resist asserting his authoritarian voice in his recommendation, despite Tchaikovsky's status as a renowned professional composer at this time:

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<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. iv.

I first offered the subject about which I spoke to you to Berlioz, who declined my suggestion on account of age and ill-health. Your *Francesca* gave me the idea that you were capable of treating this subject most brilliantly, provided you took great pains, subjected your work to stringent self-criticism, let your imagination fully ripen, and did not hurry. This fine subject — Byron's *Manfred* — is no use to me, for it does not harmonise with my intimate moods.

Let me tell you first of all that your Symphony — like the Second Symphony of Berlioz — must have an *idée fixe* (the *Manfred* theme), which must be carried through all the movements. Now for the programme:

*First Movement.* Manfred wandering in the Alps. His life is ruined. Many burning questions remain unanswered: Nothing is left to him but remembrance. The form of the ideal Astarte floats before his imagination; he calls to her in vain: the echo of the rocks alone repeats her name. Thoughts and memories burn in his brain and prey upon him; he implores the forgetfulness that none can give him (F# minor, second theme D major and F# minor).

*Second Movement.* In complete contrast to the first. Programme: The customs of the Alpine hunters: patriarchal, full of simplicity and good humour. *Adagio Pastorale* (A major). Manfred drops into this simple life and stands out in strong contrast to it. Naturally at the beginning a little hunting theme must be introduced, but in doing this you must take the greatest care not to descend to the commonplace. For God's sake avoid copying the common German fanfares and hunting music.

*Third Movement. Scherzo Fantastique* (D major). Manfred sees an Alpine fairy in the rainbow above a waterfall.

*Fourth Movement.* Finale (F# minor). A wild *Allegro* representing the caves of Arimanes, whither Manfred has come to try and see Astarte once more. The appearance of Astarte's wraith will form the contrast to these infernal orgies (the same theme which was employed in the first movement in D major now reappears in D $\flat$  major; in the former it dies away like a fleeting memory, and is immediately lost in Manfred's phase of suffering — but now it can be developed to its fullest extent). The music must be light, transparent as air, and ideally virginal. Then comes the repetition of Pandemonium, and finally the sunset and Manfred's death.

Is it not a splendid programme? I am quite convinced that if you summon up all your powers it will be your *chef-d'oeuvre*. The subject is not only very deep, but in accordance with contemporary feeling; for all the troubles of the modern man arise from the fact that he does not know how to preserve his ideals. They crumble away and leave nothing but bitterness in the soul. Hence, all the sufferings of our times.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> *LL*, pp. 484–486. See also *PBC*, p. 75.



Balakirev's proposed programme for *Manfred*, as noted by Stephen Downes, lauded both 'the profundity, and contemporary resonance' of Lord George Gordon Byron's dramatic poem (1817), and the time in which it was written.<sup>22</sup> However, Balakirev's interpretation of this Byronic tale neglects to mention the underpinning theme of incest between Manfred and Astarte. The concept of the idealised feminine other is retained. Balakirev's draft appears to emphasise the relationship between Manfred and Astarte, rather than the dichotomy between Manfred and mortality. This may have been purposely constructed in such a manner for Tchaikovsky, as much of his music, to date, had demonstrated an affinity with the notion of love. Nonetheless, Balakirev's suggestions, like *Romeo and Juliet*, failed to stimulate Tchaikovsky's creative urges. At the end of the letter, Balakirev seems to preempt any glimmers of procrastination, which Tchaikovsky complained about while writing his fantasy-overture, by suggesting that Tchaikovsky should get on with things and not allow doubt to sway him from the task in hand.

#### **4.2.1 Tchaikovsky's Response to Balakirev's *Manfred* Programme**

News of Balakirev's proposed programme was the topic of Tchaikovsky's letter to Modest on 8 (20) November 1882 in which he stated: 'I'm now having a quite curious correspondence with Balakirev, which he initiated; He is inflamed with the notion that I should write a large symphony on the subject of *Manfred*'.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Downes, *Music and Decadence in European Modernism*, p. 80.

<sup>23</sup> See 'Letter 2156' at: <<http://www.tchaikovsky-research.net/en/letters/1882/2156.html>>. [Accessed 4 December 2012].

Tchaikovsky expressed his views on the project in a letter to Balakirev on 12 (24)

November 1882:

I don't have a translation of *Manfred* to hand, and I would rather not give you a definite answer with regard to your programme until I have read through Byron's text. Perhaps closer acquaintance with the latter will change my attitude towards the task you are proposing, though I doubt it very much. In any case, I would like to tell you already now, before reading Byron, about the feelings I had on reading your letter.

Despite the fact that you called *The Tempest* and *Francesca* my apogee (on this point I do not agree with you at all), for some reason I imagined that your programme would awaken in me a burning desire to reproduce it in music, and so I awaited your letter with great impatience. But when I received it I experienced disappointment. Your programme could in all probability serve as a design for a symphonist inclined to imitate Berlioz; I agree that this scheme might form an effective basis for a symphony in the style of that composer. But at the moment it leaves me completely cold, and when the heart and imagination are not warmed, it is hardly worth setting about composition. To please you I might perhaps, to use your expression, make an effort, and squeeze out of myself a whole series of more or less interesting episodes, in which one would encounter conventionally gloomy music to reproduce Manfred's hopeless disillusionment, and a lot of effective instrumental flashes in the 'Alpine fairy' scherzo, sunrise in the violins' high register, and Manfred's death with pianissimo trombones. I would be able to furnish these episodes with harmonic curiosities and piquances, and I would then be able to send all this out into the world under the sonorous title *Manfred. Symphonie d'après*, etc... I might even receive praise for the fruits of my labours, but such composing in no way appeals to me. It is very hard for me to explain why exactly your programme does not kindle the spark of inspiration within me.

[...] It is quite possible that the abject coolness with which I view your programme is the fault of Schumann. I love his *Manfred* extremely and am so used to merging in a single indivisible notion Byron's *Manfred* with Schumann's *Manfred*, that I cannot conceive how I might approach this subject in such a way as to elicit from it any music other than that which Schumann furnished it with.

I hope, dear friend, that you will not be upset with me for having spoken my mind frankly. It would be unpleasant for me not to be fully sincere towards you. [...] Thanks, a hundred thanks for your friendship and attention, and forgive me for not being up to your assignment. Nevertheless, I will definitely read through *Manfred*.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> For the full translation of this letter see 'Letter 2158' at: <http://www.tchaikovsky-research.net/en/letters/1882/2158.html>. [Accessed 4 December 2012]. See also Holden, *Tchaikovsky*, p. 249; *PBC*, pp. 77–80; and Orlova, *Tchaikovsky A Self-Portrait*, pp. 241–242.

Even though Tchaikovsky declined the proposed *Manfred* composition at this time, he still agreed to familiarise himself with Byron's text, as a means of appeasing Balakirev. Unfazed by such a response, Balakirev's interest in further developing his relationship with Tchaikovsky was merely heightened. According to Anthony Holden, Balakirev's wish was realised in a shared spiritual metamorphosis between the pair during the autumn months of 1884.

Here, Tchaikovsky met with 'the reborn Balakirev amid the seductive aesthetics of the Imperial Chapel', where they engaged in a series of lengthy religious discussions.<sup>25</sup> With this regenerated contact, Balakirev felt encouraged to suggest the composing of *Manfred* again to Tchaikovsky, and sent him a revised programmatic draft on 30 October (11 November) 1884, copied by Stasov.<sup>26</sup> The text is quite similar to the 1882 version. Some new amendments appeared in the margin, alongside specific directions for the tonalities of each section, as follows:

The symphony should be in B $\flat$  minor without B $\flat$  major. In the first movement the second theme is to be D major, and D $\flat$  the second time. The *Larghetto* is to be in G $\flat$  major. This should not be difficult for the orchestra since the tempo is slow, and as auxiliary keys one can take B $\flat$  major and A major. [The third movement] *Scherzo* D major. [The fourth movement] *Finale* in B $\flat$  minor, and Astarte's shade is to appear in D $\flat$  major *con sordini*. At the end a *Requiem*, a final chord on B $\flat$  major.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Holden, *Tchaikovsky*, p. 249.

<sup>26</sup> See *PBC*, pp. 81–83.

<sup>27</sup> Abraham, Tchaikovsky: *Manfred Symphony*, p. vi. See also the 'Manfred' entry at: <<http://www.tchaikovsky-research.net/en/Works/Symphonies/TH028/index.html>>. [Accessed 5 December 2012]; and *PBC*, pp. 81–83.

In his conclusion, Balakirev added the following remarks: ‘All the movements should include Manfred’s own theme; in the Scherzo this theme could be in the form of a trio’, and added a list of symphonic-programmatic works of a similar character by other authors; among the suggestions for the first and last movements was *Francesca da Rimini*, and for the Scherzo — the B-minor Scherzo from Tchaikovsky's Third Symphony, or Berlioz’s ‘Queen Mab’ scherzo.<sup>28</sup> Balakirev proposed that Tchaikovsky should involve the organ for the Requiem. His letter was successful.

Tchaikovsky’s response, a day later, confirms his interest in the project, and Holden’s previously-mentioned remarks on the developing spiritual bond between the two composers is substantiated:

I am leaving tomorrow morning. Today I shall pop into a bookshop and buy myself a copy of *Manfred*. As it happens, I will shortly be in the Alpine mountains, where the conditions for successfully depicting Manfred in music ought to be very favourable, were it not for the fact that I am going to visit a friend who is dying. In any event, I promise you that at all costs I will use all my strength to carry out your wish.<sup>29</sup>

Our conversation yesterday moved me deeply. How good you are! What a true friend you are to me! How I wish that the inner light which has come into your soul might also descend upon me! Without infringing one bit against the truth, I can say that I am yearning more than ever before to find peace and support in Christ. I shall pray for my faith in Him to be strengthened. Circumstances permitting, I will be returning to Russia anyway within a month approximately, and I hope to see you then and have a chat with you. For the time being, though, I embrace you, my most kind friend. Thank you for your friendship!<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Abraham, *Manfred Symphony*, p. vi.

<sup>29</sup> See ‘Letter 2580’ at: <<http://www.tchaikovsky-research.net/en/letters/1884/2580.html>>. [Accessed 4 December 2012]. See also *PBC*, pp. 83–84. At this time Tchaikovsky was en route to Switzerland to visit his dying friend, the Russian violinist Josef Kotek (1855–1885) who passed away due to tuberculosis on 23 December 1884 (4 January 1885). See Friedrich Baser and David Brown, ‘Kotek, Yosif’, *GMO. OMO.* [Accessed 4 December 2012].

<sup>30</sup> See ‘Letter 2580’ at: <<http://www.tchaikovsky-research.net/en/letters/1884/2580.html>>. [Accessed 4 December 2012]. See also Holden, *Tchaikovsky*, pp. 249–250; and *PBC*, pp. 83–84.

While in Switzerland Tchaikovsky wrote to Balakirev on 17 (29) November notifying him that he had read Byron's *Manfred* and would set about drafting a programme in the near future:

I am in a rather sad frame of mind: I am living in a most gloomy and depressing place, and, besides, all day long I hear the consumptive cough of my invalid. I have read through *Manfred* and thought about it a great deal, but I haven't started planning the themes and forms yet. I'm not going to rush, but I give you the firm promise that if I am still alive then, the symphony will have been written by the summer at the latest.<sup>31</sup>

Distracted by other professional duties and compositions, Tchaikovsky informed Balakirev on 1 (13) December that he had not 'embarked on *Manfred* in earnest yet', but was 'thinking about it a lot'.<sup>32</sup>

#### **4.2.2 Tchaikovsky's Struggle with *Manfred***

Six months later, Tchaikovsky revealed his decision to begin *Manfred* to Taneyev in a letter, dated 13 (25) June 1885 as follows:

After some hesitation I have made up my mind to compose *Manfred*, because I shall find no rest until I have redeemed my promise, so rashly given to Balakirev in the winter. I do not know how it will turn out, but meantime I am very discontented. No! It is a thousand times more pleasant to compose without any programme. When I write a programme symphony I always feel I am not paying in sterling coin, but in worthless paper money.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> See 'Letter 2594' at: <<http://www.tchaikovsky-research.net/en/letters/1884/2594.html>>. [Accessed 4 December 2012]. See also *PBC*, pp. 85–86.

<sup>32</sup> See 'Letter 2611' at: <<http://www.tchaikovsky-research.net/en/letters/1884/2611.html>>. [Accessed 4 December 2012]. See also *PBC*, p. 87.

<sup>33</sup> *LL*, p. 484. This letter was discussed in relation to Tchaikovsky's understanding of programme music in Part Two above.

A similar note was sent to von Meck on the same day.<sup>34</sup> The task, as predicted by Tchaikovsky, proved troublesome. In his communication to Laroche on 3 (15) July 1885 Tchaikovsky commented on *Manfred*'s progress as follows:

Balakirev so pestered me with *Manfred* that in a weak moment I gave him my word; after that I tried, I began — and then like a snowball turning into a huge avalanche, from these attempts a huge symphony crawled out into the light, à la Berlioz. I swear that I am writing a programme symphony for the last time in my life: what falsehood, how much conventionality in the spirit of the Mighty Handful, how cold and false all this is, in effect!<sup>35</sup>

The sentiments of this letter were carried forward to Taneyev on 8 (20) July, in which Tchaikovsky remarked: 'For a long time I was quite unwell, through working too much on proofs of the opera, and yet between business affairs and trifling matters, I completed the rough sketches for a symphony, which annoys me a great deal, and I feel the need to rid myself of it as soon as possible'.<sup>36</sup>

Interestingly, Tchaikovsky's irritation associated with this symphony did not dominate his letter to the Russian soprano, Emilie Pavlovskaya, on 20 July (1 August):

Now, I had been planning for a long time to write a symphony on the subject of [Byron's] *Manfred*. And so, in order not to let these three weeks be wasted in idleness, I set about the sketches for this symphony [*Manfred*], and became so carried away, as frequently happens, that I could not stop. The symphony has come out enormous, serious and difficult; it is absorbing all my time, and sometimes wearies me in the extreme; but an inner voice tells me that I am not labouring in vain, and that this will be, perhaps, the best of my symphonic compositions. All this must for the time being remain between you and me. I feel very ashamed, both with regard to Shpazhinsky, whom I had been urging so

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<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 486.

<sup>35</sup> See 'Letter 2730a' at: <<http://www.tchaikovsky-research.net/en/letters/1885/2730a.html>>. [Accessed 4 December 2012]. See also Wiley, *Tchaikovsky*, p. 285.

<sup>36</sup> See the reference to 'Letter 2733' in 'Manfred' at : <<http://www.tchaikovsky-research.net/en/Works/Symphonies/TH028/index.html>>. [Accessed 5 December 2012].

much to make haste, and with regard to all those who are expecting an opera from me. I fear that you, too, will rebuke me, my dear Emilie Karlovna! But I swear to you that it was beyond my power to abandon this piece once I had begun it and become carried away by it. I still have, approximately, some two months' hard work remaining on the symphony, but after that I shall set about the opera at full speed.<sup>37</sup>

Even though Tchaikovsky refers to the magnitude of writing this musical work, he seems to have been driven by a sense of satisfaction that he was on the right musical path. Perhaps this was due to his desire for Emilie to play the leading role in his *Enchantress*. As a result, he may have exaggerated the distracting *Manfred* as an excuse for his lack of work on the opera. It would not be long, however, before Tchaikovsky would begin to grumble again.

Further complaints of his difficulties with composing the symphony were reiterated to Tchaikovsky's benefactress, von Meck, on 3 (15) August as follows:

[...] my mental condition has been very gloomy of late. The composition of the *Manfred* symphony — a work highly tragic in character — is so difficult and complicated that at times I myself become a Manfred. All the same, I am consumed with the desire to finish it as soon as possible, and am straining every nerve: result — extreme exhaustion. This is the eternal *cercle vicieux* in which I am forever turning without finding an issue. If I have no work, I worry and bore myself; when I have it, I work far beyond my strength.<sup>38</sup>

The end of this excerpt somewhat negates Tchaikovsky's earlier statements regarding his struggle with the work's programme. His diatribe appears to be mainly due to fatigue and a sense of being stretched beyond his capabilities at that

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<sup>37</sup> See 'Letter 2741' at: <<http://www.tchaikovsky-research.net/en/letters/1885/2741.html>>. [Accessed 4 December 2012]. The untouched opera, which Tchaikovsky refers to in this excerpt is *The Enchantress*. Ippolit Vasilyevich Shpazhinsky (1848–1917) was a Russian dramatist and collaborated with Tchaikovsky on the libretto for *The Enchantress*. See *TQ*, pp. 440 and 453.

<sup>38</sup> *LL*, p. 487.

time. Modest attributes Tchaikovsky's mood here to the fact that he was composing *Manfred* in complete isolation at his new home at Maidanovo.<sup>39</sup>

A week later, Tchaikovsky's feelings towards *Manfred* altered, yet again. In his correspondence with Pavlovskaya on 10 (22) August, he proclaimed his satisfaction with the work and hoped that she would share his opinion:

I think that my symphony [*Manfred*] will turn out to be the best of all my compositions in the symphonic genre. You must give me your word of honour that when it is played in Petersburg you will go and hear it. I take great pride in this work and I want those people whose sympathy I value more than anything else in the world (among whom you are in the foremost row) to experience, when listening to it, a reflection of the delight with which I wrote this thing.<sup>40</sup>

It is possible that, in this instance, Tchaikovsky was merely looking for a sympathetic ear, and may have hoped that flattery would inspire the soprano to promote his new composition. News of *Manfred*'s completion was relayed to Pavlovskaya on 9 (21) September 1885 before Balakirev, who did not receive a progress update until 13 (25) September.<sup>41</sup>

In this letter Tchaikovsky summarised the details surrounding his composition and his amendments to Balakirev's original programme:

I have carried out your wish. *Manfred* is finished, and the full score will soon be engraved. I think you will be a bit displeased about the speed with which I wrote it. I know that you would have preferred me to write *Manfred* little by little, in between other jobs. It is very likely that you are quite right, and I would have gladly followed your advice not to rush if I had been able to. But that is precisely

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<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 490. See also Holden, *Tchaikovsky*, pp. 251–252. Tchaikovsky lived in his country house in Maidanovo, Klin, until his death in 1893.

<sup>40</sup> See 'Letter 2747' at: <<http://www.tchaikovsky-research.net/en/letters/1885/2747.html>>. [Accessed 4 December 2012].

<sup>41</sup> *LL*, p. 495. See also letter 2762a' available at: <<http://www.tchaikovsky-research.net/en/letters/1885/2762a.html>>. [Accessed 4 December 2012].



the point: I cannot do that. Once I have become captivated by some task, I cannot calm down until I have executed it completely. Such is my musical constitution.

[...] I have sat over *Manfred*, not rising from my seat, you might say, for almost four months (from the end of May until today). It was very difficult, but also very pleasant to work on, especially when, having begun with some labour, I became captivated. Of course, I have no way of foreseeing whether or not I shall satisfy you with this symphony, but believe me: never in my life have I made such an effort and so exhausted myself with work. The symphony is written in accordance with your programme, in four movements. But I ask your forgiveness — I have not been able to keep to the keys and modulations you proposed, even though I wanted to do so. The symphony is written in the key of B minor. Only the scherzo is in the key you indicated. This piece is very difficult, and requires an enormous orchestra, i.e. with a very large string section. As soon as the proofs of the symphony are ready, I shall send them to you. I have made the arrangement [for piano duet] myself, but before having it engraved I shall play it through a lot and make corrections. *Manfred*, naturally, is dedicated to you.<sup>42</sup>

The content of Balakirev's response to this letter on 16 (28) September caught Tchaikovsky unawares. After thanking him for letting him know that *Manfred* had been completed, Balakirev proceeded to chide Tchaikovsky for the information relayed in his previous letter to Taneyev, in which he complained about Balakirev and *Manfred*:

Your letter gladdened me very much also because I had been getting quite contradictory news about you and your *Manfred*: when your friend S. I. Taneyev visited me and I asked him about you, he said, to my amazement, that you were in a great fix with your detested *Manfred*, which you had apparently been forced (!) to write against your will, as a result of having promised me that you would do so, despite all your loathing of programme music (is that possible?). Having heard this, I wanted to write to you and beg you to drop this loathsome *Manfred*, which you did not promise categorically that you would compose, but, rather, just said: 'Maybe I will do it...' How glad I am that all this has turned out to be tendentious nonsense!<sup>43</sup>

<sup>42</sup> See 'Letter 2765' at: <<http://www.tchaikovsky-research.net/en/letters/1885/2765.html>>. [Accessed 4 December 2012]. See also *PBC*, pp. 89–90.

<sup>43</sup> See fn. 2 of 'Letter 2768' at: <<http://www.tchaikovsky-research.net/en/letters/1885/2768.html>>. [Accessed 4 December 2012]. The original Russian letter appears in *PBC*, pp. 90–92.

Naturally surprised by such an unfurling of events, Tchaikovsky made his excuses on 22 September (4 October) by charging Taneyev with misappropriated gossip, and proceeded to explain himself as follows:

That gossiping by S. I. Taneyev (I beg you not to be angry with him, because he is a wonderful person) is a rather childish gesture on his part, a kind of schoolboyish craze for blurting everything out at the wrong time. What happened is essentially this: that, in general, I am not very fond of my own programme music. This is something I have spoken to you about, and, if I remember correctly, also written to you about in detail. I feel infinitely freer in the sphere of pure symphonic music, and it is a hundred times easier for me to write a suite than a programme piece. I set about *Manfred* rather reluctantly and, if I may be frank, decided to write it precisely because I had promised you this — I made a firm promise, that I remember very clearly. The letter which I wrote to Taneyev after he had left for the Caucasus at the start of the summer refers to the period in which I was just starting, and was moreover doing so reluctantly, with difficulty, and lacking confidence in myself. In this letter I told him that I was having trouble writing and that I preferred to write suites. But very soon I became terribly infatuated with *Manfred*, and cannot remember ever having felt such pleasure in working, which stayed with me until the end. Sergei Ivanovich really shouldn't have spoken to you at the end of September about what I had written to him at the end of May as if it were something which applied to me now.<sup>44</sup>

This letter emphasises the dual persona of Tchaikovsky that we have come to know throughout this thesis. If he can admit to constantly changing his opinion on his music, then how can we ever truly trust his written word? Despite such a hermeneutic challenge, one truth remains — Tchaikovsky abhorred writing orchestral works that were interpretatively shackled to pre-ordained programmes. Nonetheless, his excuses appeared to appease Balakirev.

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<sup>44</sup> See 'Letter 2768' above. This letter also mentions Tchaikovsky's work on his four-hand arrangement of *Manfred*. See also 'Letter 2816', written on 21 November (3 December) 1885, at: <<http://www.tchaikovsky-research.net/en/letters/1885/2816.html>>. [Accessed 4 December 2012]. See also *PBC*, p. 92.

In an attempt to maintain an amicable chain of communication between the pair, Tchaikovsky continued to keep Balakirev informed on his progress with the piano duet arrangement of *Manfred*. On 21 November (3 December) Tchaikovsky wrote to Balakirev mentioning that the four-hand version had been posted to him.<sup>45</sup> Obviously impressed by his own accomplishment, Tchaikovsky wrote to Modest on 9 December 1885, while working on the score's proofs, and remarked that this symphony was his best work to date.<sup>46</sup> Seven days later the first movement of *Manfred* finally reached Balakirev for approval.<sup>47</sup>

#### 4.2.3 Tchaikovsky's Interpretation of Balakirev's Programme

Tchaikovsky took much inspiration from the programmatic draft set out by Balakirev and Stasov. However, alterations were made both structurally and tonally (see figure 1 below):

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<sup>45</sup> See 'Letter 2816' at: <<http://www.tchaikovsky-research.net/en/letters/1885/2816.html>>. [Accessed 4 December 2012].

<sup>46</sup> *LF*, p. 337. However, this remark is not to be taken too seriously as Tchaikovsky had a penchant for saying something similar on completion of the majority of his works. In a letter to Jürgenson on 22 December (3 January) 1886, Tchaikovsky again asserted his satisfaction with *Manfred* stating that he valued the work very highly. However, he believed that the complexity of the score would relegate the symphony to obscurity in later years. See Abraham, *Tchaikovsky: Manfred Symphony*, p. viii.

<sup>47</sup> See 'Letter 2824' at: <<http://www.tchaikovsky-research.net/en/letters/1885/2824.html>>. [Accessed 4 December 2012]. See also *PBC*, p. 93.

## Figure 1: Summary of *Manfred's* Programme<sup>48</sup>

### Movement 1 (*Lento Lugubre*)

#### Balakirev/Stasov's Programme:

Manfred is wandering in the Alps. His life is shattered, importunate questions remain without answers; nothing remains of his life except reminiscences. The image of the ideal Astarte rushes through his thoughts, and he calls out to her in vain. Only the echo of the crags repeats her name. Memories and thoughts consume and gnaw at him. He seeks and begs for oblivion, which no one can give him. Key: B flat minor with no temptation of B flat major.<sup>49</sup>

#### Tchaikovsky's Programme:

Manfred is wandering in the Alps. Wearing by fateful questions of existence, tormented by the burning melancholy of hopelessness and the memory of his criminal past, he is experiencing spiritual torments. Manfred is deeply imbued with the secrets of magic and imperiously in communication with the mighty powers of the netherworld, but neither these nor anything on earth can bring oblivion, which is the only thing he seeks and begs for in vain. Memories of Astarte, who has perished and whom he once loved passionately, consume and gnaw at his heart, and there is no limit or end to Manfred's despair. Key: B minor

### Movement 2 (*Vivace con Spirito*)

#### Balakirev/Stasov's Programme

A mood quite different to the first—the programme: The life of Alpine hunters, full of simplicity, good nature and a patriarchal character. *Adagio pastorale* (A major). Manfred clashes with this way of life, to which he is himself in such stark contrast. Of course, you should first have a hunter's tune, but you should be *particularly careful not to let it descend into triviality*. God preserve you from vulgarities like German fanfares and *Jägermusik*. Key: G flat major moving to B flat major or A major

#### Tchaikovsky's Programme

The spirit of the Alps [Alpine fairy] appears to Manfred in the rainbow over the waterfall.<sup>50</sup> Key: B minor

<sup>48</sup> The information presented in Figure 1 is an amalgamation of information presented in the letters between Tchaikovsky and Balakirev, and Wiley's summary of the individual programmes (see Wiley, *Tchaikovsky*, pp. 314–315).

<sup>49</sup> Presumably, Balakirev is writing here with *Romeo and Juliet* in mind in which the coda, in B minor, ends in B major.

<sup>50</sup> See Rosa Newmarch, *Tchaikovsky, His Life and Works*, p. 92 and Abraham, *Manfred Symphony*, p. 69.

### **Movement 3 (*Pastorale: Andante con moto*)**

#### Balakirev/Stasov's Programme

The way of life of Alpine huntsmen, full of simplicity, geniality, and patriarchal mores. Manfred clashes with this way of life, forming a stark contrast. Key: D major

#### Tchaikovsky's Programme

Scene of the simple, meager, free life of the inhabitants of the mountains. Key: G major

### **Movement 4 (*Allegro con fuoco*)**

#### Balakirev/Stasov's Programme

A wild, unbridled Allegro representing the halls of Arimanes (hell), where Manfred has made his way, seeking a meeting with Astarte. The calling and appearance of Astarte will represent a contrast to this hellish orgy. The music must be light, transparent as air, ideal and real. Further on, the pandemonium again, and then Manfred's sunset and death. Key: B flat minor moving to D flat minor and ending with a B flat chord.

#### Tchaikovsky's Programme

The subterranean halls of Arimanes. A hellish orgy. Manfred's appearance in the middle of the bacchanal. Calls and the appearance of Astarte's shade. He is forgiven. Manfred's death. Key: B minor and ending in B major.

Tchaikovsky reflected the epic quality of Byron's *Manfred* in his expanded use of instruments: Triple woodwind (2 flutes with piccolo alternating with 3<sup>rd</sup> flute); 2 oboes with English horn; 2 clarinets with bass clarinet; 3 bassoons; 2 cornets were added to the brass; percussion included timpani, bass drum, cymbals, gong, tambourine, triangle and bells, 2 harps and an organ; and strings were increased.

The tonality, which narrates the symphony's programme, bears striking similarity to that employed throughout *Romeo and Juliet*. This is especially evident in the juxtaposition of the keys of B minor and B major, with D major. In his orchestral works as a whole, Tchaikovsky appears to associate the key of B minor with fate and death. This is evident in the fantasy-overture, *Manfred* and the *Pathétique* Symphony. His committal to this tonality as a framing narrative device throughout *Manfred* heightens the despair of the protagonist's plight.

#### 4.2.4 *Manfred's* Russian Premiere

*Manfred* was premièred on 11 March 1886 in Moscow, on the fifth anniversary of Nikolay Rubinstein's death, under the direction of the German conductor Max von Erdmannsdörfer.<sup>51</sup> The performance was a success. However, in his unique style, Tchaikovsky downplayed the event to his sister-in-law, Praskovya Tchaikovskaya, on 13 March as follows:

It [*Manfred*] was excellently performed, but it seemed to me that the audience did not understand it well and in spite of the ovation at the end, which was more on account of my previous successes, it was only moderately successful.<sup>52</sup>

Cui's later review of the symphony, on 31 December, attributed much of *Manfred's* programmatic development to the style of Berlioz.<sup>53</sup> He questioned

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<sup>51</sup> Poznansky, *TQ*, p. 455. Max von Erdmannsdörfer (1848–1905) was a German composer and conductor of the Imperial Musical Society at Moscow. Tchaikovsky dedicated his Third Suite, Op. 55 to him. See Tchaikovsky, *The Diaries*, p. 345.

<sup>52</sup> *LF*, p. 345. Praskovya Vladimirovna Tchaikovskaya (1864–1956) was the wife of Anatoly Tchaikovsky. See *TQ*, pp. 404 and 406, and Tchaikovsky, *The Diaries*, p. 363.

<sup>53</sup> Campbell, *Russians on Russian Music, 1880–1917*, p. 10. The article appeared in the *Music Review*, No. 15, on 31 December 1886. Cui's observation that *Manfred* owed much of its programmatic style to Berlioz is a common criticism. Peter Bloom has described Tchaikovsky's *Manfred* Symphony as 'one of the most successful tributes to Berlioz', with its reference to the

Tchaikovsky's choice of representing certain aspects of Byron's poem with little regard to their importance within the overall narrative. For Cui, Tchaikovsky's fourth movement deviated from the original poem in its portrayal of an orgy, which Byron did not set out to convey in his work. Notwithstanding, the first movement impressed Cui for its 'profundity of conception and unity of development', and he honoured this section of the symphony as the 'finest' amongst Tchaikovsky's pages.<sup>54</sup>

Cui condoned Tchaikovsky's decision to deviate from Byron's plot by redeeming Manfred in his finale. The critic explained that such an 'all-forgiving conclusion is demanded by music' in its resolution of every discord, 'even the most inexplicable — the dissonance of life itself'.<sup>55</sup> Overall, Cui's commentary on the reception of the *Manfred* symphony was positive, and he considered the work 'a new contribution to the treasure-store' of Russia's burgeoning repertoire of symphonic music. By contrast however, Laroche's assessment of the work seven years later did not share the same sentiments.

In his review of *Manfred*, at a concert on 11 August 1893 at Pavlovsk, Laroche described the work as one of 'the most raw and unfinished' of Tchaikovsky's compositions.<sup>56</sup> In his observations, programme and musical

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idée fixe and the juxtaposition of its opening melancholy with its closing 'bacchanal'. See Bloom, *The Cambridge Companion to Berlioz*, p. 267. Arguably, a similar structural paradox may be interpreted in the fantasy-overture. If we recall Hanslick's critique of *Romeo and Juliet* in 1876, we observe his interpretation of the finale of *Romeo and Juliet* as a demonstration of bacchanalia: Here, at this 'funeral feast', 'a lot of liquor is consumed and monetary fines are dealt out'.

<sup>54</sup> Campbell, *Russians on Russian Music 1880–1917*, p. 11.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14. This review appeared in the *Theatre Gazette*, No. 7, p. 6 on 15 August 1893.

development failed to complement each other — this is hardly surprising when we recall Laroche's contemptuous opinion of Tchaikovsky's programme music in general. Laroche postulates as follows:

Harmonic sequences extend over whole pages, going somewhere — but not getting anywhere, leaving an impression of mystery and uncertainty cribbed from Liszt, though cribbed not in a mechanical fashion, but with the addition of some of the technical sequins which cost our deft and resourceful composer so little effort. There are particularly many such ultrapoetic pages in the symphony's first movement which, contrary to convention, is not an Allegro but a huge Adagio with various more or less faster episodes. And, while we are on the subject of poetry, why is this first movement scored so loudly? Has Manfred really endured a shipwreck or bombarded Paris?<sup>57</sup>

Here, it is difficult to ignore the subtle peppering of the Hanslickian spirit in Laroche's criticisms of the work's programme. Laroche found it difficult to reconcile his interpretation of Byron's *Manfred* with that of Tchaikovsky. In order to provide some positivity, the critic had momentarily to detach the musical style from its programmatic content. Through this, he conceded that the symphony was 'full of melodic warmth and sincerity, rich in graceful harmonic turns, in unforced and euphonious counterpoint, rhythmically interesting and original, inexhaustibly diverse and captivating in instrumentation'.<sup>58</sup>

Despite the lack of all things pastoral in the third movement, Laroche could not help but admire its enchanting, sublime elegance of form and musical development.<sup>59</sup> As for the finale, he deemed its 'superb polyphonic development', filled with 'fire' and 'compelling interest' as impressive.<sup>60</sup> Laroche may not have been convinced by Tchaikovsky's representation of Byron's *Manfred*, but its

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<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 14–15.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.



musical unfolding nonetheless satisfied him. His view was mirrored, to a greater extent, in the writings of the Grand Duke Konstantin Romananov (1889), in which he cited Tchaikovsky's *Manfred* as an example of prolixity in his postulations on the brevity of art.<sup>61</sup> Instead of defending himself directly, Tchaikovsky, in fear of upsetting a royal figure, slithered beneath a rather paltry response:

As for *Manfred*, without the least wish to appear modest I shall say that it is a repulsive work that I hate profoundly, with the exception only of the first movement..., and out of a large symphony, utterly impossible in length, I shall make a *Symphonische Dichtung*...I do not presume to be angry at Your Highness's observation about *Manfred*. You are completely correct and even too kind.<sup>62</sup>

Despite these remarks, Tchaikovsky never altered the symphony and left it in tact.

While *Manfred* may not have been the most successful of Tchaikovsky's orchestral *oeuvre*, merit lies in his attempt to converse with Byron's interpretation of realism — a sense of realism which I argue is present earlier in the 1870/1880 version of *Romeo and Juliet*. What follows herein is a comparative analysis between *Manfred*'s first and final movements and the fantasy-overture. Through this examination the following topics will be explored: recognising the self in the other; establishing the feminine other; narrative agents (static harmony, tonality, and orchestration); and death as the other.

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<sup>61</sup> Wiley, *Tchaikovsky*, p. 308.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 309. This letter was written on 21 September 1889.

### 4.3 Reinterpreting *Romeo and Juliet* through *Manfred*: A Comparative Analysis

This comparative analysis employs the narratological theories of Byron Almén as the hermeneutic tool of choice for this assessment. Of particular interest here is his conceptualisation of the ‘romantic’ and ‘tragic’ archetypes within music. In Almén’s article, ‘Narrative Archetypes: A Critique, Theory, and Method of Narrative Analysis’, he proposes a systematic model for understanding and classifying musical narrative according to four archetypes:<sup>63</sup> 1) Romance; 2) Tragedy; 3) Irony; and 4) Comedy. My hermeneutic assessment of *Romeo and Juliet*’s programme embraces Almén’s first and second archetypes as part of my analytical tool-kit. My reason for doing so lies in the belief that even though Tchaikovsky’s fantasy-overture exhibits allusions to its tragic Shakespearean title, there is an underlying romantic tale, not necessarily representative of *Romeo and Juliet*, but suggestive of Tchaikovsky/man and death.

My interpretation of Almén’s ‘romance’ archetype takes into consideration Tchaikovsky’s use of orchestra to expand a particular musical theme, which invariably, due to its sheer volume, becomes the victor over lesser themes struggling to be heard. This idea may also be associated with particular harmonic patterns, rhythmic ideas or specific chords, which attempt to upset the unfurling musical narrative. However, in my analysis, this ‘romance’ archetype struggles with a counter archetype — tragedy.

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<sup>63</sup> Almén, ‘Narrative Archetypes: A Critique, Theory, and Method of Narrative Analysis’, pp. 29–30.

Almén's tragic narrative prototype applies in situations where an intrusive musical element is employed and subsequently prevented from developing freely.<sup>64</sup> It may also be associated with a previously subordinate musical theme, which temporarily usurps the role of the initial material, but is then suppressed.<sup>65</sup> The 'tragedy' archetype is most prevalent in the association of musical ideas that represent sadness, fate or tragedy, to 'reinforce a tragic temporal unfolding' both of a specific character and a general character (in a minor key).<sup>66</sup>

This thesis suggests that both the romance and tragic archetypes converse equally throughout *Manfred* and *Romeo and Juliet* in the predominant dialogue between 'the self' and 'otherness'. The romance element concerns the relationships between the *persona* and death, while the tragic element occupies the musical moments when the *anima* yearns to escape her subservience to the *persona*. As a means of contextualising these interpretative possibilities, the profile of the *persona* must be established.

#### **4.3.1 Recognising 'The Self' in 'The Other': 'The Lonely Soul' or *Persona***

In later years, Tchaikovsky remarked in a letter to Yuliya Spazhinskaya that 'Manfred' was not 'simply a person'.<sup>67</sup> For him, the character superseded the banal representation of one mortal figure. Tchaikovsky firmly believed that Byron

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<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 29.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 30.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> Simon Alexander Morrison, *Russian Opera and the Symbolist Movement* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002), p. 107. This letter appears in *P. I. Chaikovskiy o muzika, ozhizni, o sebe*, ed. by Alexandra Orlova (Leningrad: Muzika, 1976), p. 179.

had embodied within Manfred ‘the tragedy of the struggle between our pettiness and our aspiration to grasp the crucial questions of existence’.<sup>68</sup> Interestingly, in 1906, Richard Streatfeild compared Tchaikovsky to Byron in his observation that both artists only had one subject in mind — himself.<sup>69</sup> This thesis takes such a view on board by suggesting that the opening musical ideas of both *Romeo and Juliet* and *Manfred* are reflections of the self (the *persona*), whether that is Tchaikovsky himself, or man in general, within the otherness of mortality.

As noted in Part One above, Tchaikovsky indicated that his introductory theme to *Romeo and Juliet* (the revised 1870 version) was representative of ‘a lonely soul whose spirit reached towards the sky’.<sup>70</sup> Many have taken this to refer specifically to the character of Friar Lawrence. After all, Tchaikovsky never argued otherwise in his correspondence. The religious aura of the opening *Romeo and Juliet* theme, with its chorale-like texture and allusions to the aeolian/dorian mode through the presence of the intervallic fourth, is striking (Example 7):

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<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>69</sup> See Richard Alexander Streatfeild, *Modern Music and Musicians* (New York: MacMillan, 1906), pp. 312–317 as cited in Lawrence Kramer, ‘Russian Anthology — Tchaikovsky, Psychology and Nationality: A View From the Archives’, in *19<sup>th</sup>-Century Music*, 35/2 (2011), p. 145.

<sup>70</sup> See *PSSL*, pp. 236–7.

**Example 7: Introduction Theme (*Romeo and Juliet*) [bb. 1–10]**

*Andante non tanto quasi Moderato*

The musical score for the Introduction Theme of *Romeo and Juliet* (measures 1-10) is presented in two systems. The key signature is F# minor (three sharps) and the time signature is common time (C). The tempo/mood is *Andante non tanto quasi Moderato*. The score is for piano accompaniment, with a dynamic marking of *p* (piano) at the beginning of each system. The first system (measures 1-5) features a steady accompaniment in the bass line and a more active treble line. The second system (measures 6-10) continues the accompaniment, with a dynamic marking of *poco più f* (poco più forte) indicating a slight increase in volume towards the end of the passage.

If we remove the traditional ‘Friar Lawrence’ connotation from the interpretative equation, then what significance has this on our perception of this musical theme as a reflection of the composer/‘the lonely soul’/the *persona*?

The essence of ‘the lonely soul’ figure harmonically alludes to the composition’s central tonality of B minor through the assertion of the tonic chord of B minor seven times, despite Tchaikovsky’s casting of the introduction in the key of F sharp minor. The harmonic structure of this introductory theme (based on the repeated use of chords I–IV) is uncomplicated and exposed. There are no chromaticisms, passing notes or ornamentations to distract our ear. ‘The lonely soul’ is laid bare. Neatly sheathed in a melody, which dares not to extend beyond the boundary of its octave, *Romeo and Juliet*’s opening theme affirms itself as a





Balakirev's letter to Tchaikovsky on 1 (13) December 1869 (Letter 12) to corroborate his theory as follows:

[...] simply enchanting. I often play it [love theme b from *Romeo and Juliet*] and have a great wish to kiss you for it. It has everything: *nega*, and love's sweetness, and all the rest... It appears to me that you are lying all naked in the bath and that Artôt-Padilla herself is rubbing your tummy with hot scented suds.<sup>74</sup>

Taruskin concludes that this love theme could in fact be autobiographical in its casting of Tchaikovsky as Romeo against Artôt's Juliet, thus making the theme a 'self-portrait'.<sup>75</sup> While I do not agree with the notion that the fantasy-overture ever had anything to do with Tchaikovsky's specific feelings for Artôt, I do believe that this theme may possibly be interpreted as a representation of the composer's *persona*. For me, the use of the falling sixth is more a reflection of anguish than sensuality in *Romeo and Juliet*. We also see its use, on a more subverted yet highly effective manner, in *Manfred*.

The harmonic scaffolding of *Manfred*'s introductory theme endorses the anguish-driven plummet into hopelessness of its eponymous character, and indeed that of the *persona*, through its use of 7ths and 9ths. Here, Tchaikovsky deploys the juxtaposition of the minor triad with an added major 6<sup>th</sup> in his portrayal of desolation.<sup>76</sup> The sense of despair is represented rhythmically through tumbling quaver strings (Example 10), punctuated with quaver rests as a means of conveying a sense of disconnection:

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 185. See also *PBC*, pp. 49–50. Taruskin further explains '*nega*' as 'a flexible amalgam of ethnic verisimilitude, sensual iconicity, characteristic vocal or instrumental timbres and Glinka-esque harmony'. See *DRM*, p. 185.

<sup>75</sup> *DRM*, p. 185.

<sup>76</sup> We see similar use of this chord in compositions such as *The Storm* (1864), 'Death' from *Six Romances* Op. 57, No. 5 (1884), the Fifth Symphony (1888), *The Enchantress* (1885–1887), and the *Pathétique* (1893).



**Example 10: Falling String Melody of *Manfred* Motto Theme [bb. 2–6]**

The musical score consists of three staves: Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Contrabasso (Cb.). The time signature is common time (C). The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The music is marked *ff* (fortissimo). The melody is characterized by a descending eighth-note pattern with accents and slurs. The Viola and Violoncello parts play the melody together, while the Contrabasso part plays a similar descending eighth-note pattern in the lower register.

The closing sections of both introductory themes share a similar rising musical idea as if ‘the lonely soul’/*persona* is desperately reaching towards the heavens, or the world of knowledge, for aid (Examples 11 and 12). For *Romeo and Juliet*, this idea is voiced politely and discreetly in *piano* strings, whereas the notion is depicted more forcefully and desperately in *Manfred* through brass and woodwind:

**Example 11: Pleading Theme (*Manfred*) [bb. 6–14]**

Musical score for Example 11: Pleading Theme (*Manfred*) [bb. 6–14]. The score is for a woodwind section, including Oboe (Ob.), Cor Anglais (C. A.), Clarinet (Cl.), Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.), Bassoon (Bsn.), and Horn (Hn.). The music is in common time (C) and features a pleading theme. Dynamics include *ff* (fortissimo) and *f* (forte). The score shows the first six measures of the piece, with various articulations and phrasing marks.

**Example 12: Pleading Theme (*Romeo and Juliet*) [bb. 11–20]**

Musical score for Example 12: Pleading Theme (*Romeo and Juliet*) [bb. 11–20]. The score is for a string section, including Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Double Bass (Db.). The music is in common time (C) and features a pleading theme. Dynamics include *p* (piano) and *sfz* (sforzando). The score shows the first six measures of the piece, with various articulations and phrasing marks.

The pleading musical ideas in both orchestral works are answered immediately with a string passage that displays an overarching oscillating contour. Again, *Romeo and Juliet* receives a sweeter reply in the cellos, via alternating major, minor and augmented thirds (Example 13), while Manfred must content himself with despondent falling sevenths and chromatic scalic motifs in full string voice (Example 14):

**Example 13: Reply Theme (*Romeo and Juliet*) [bb. 21–28]**

**Example 14: Reply Theme (*Manfred*) [bb. 14–22]**

A musical score for five instruments: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabasso. The score is in 3/4 time and features a key signature of one flat. The first two measures show a crescendo leading to a fortissimo (ff) dynamic. The third measure features a sforzando (sf) dynamic for the strings and a sforzando piano (sffp) dynamic for the cello and contrabasso. The cello and contrabasso parts include triplet markings in the third measure.

This counter melody of the main Manfred motto bears resemblance to the melodic contour of the opening *Romeo and Juliet* theme (Example 15):

**Example 15: Similarities Between *Manfred* Reply Theme and *Romeo and Juliet* Introductory Theme**

*Manfred* [bb. 15–18]

A single-staff musical notation in treble clef, showing a melodic line with a key signature of one flat and a common time signature. The melody consists of a sequence of eighth and quarter notes, with accents over the first and fourth notes.

*Romeo and Juliet* [bb. 1–4]

A single-staff musical notation in treble clef, showing a melodic line with a key signature of one flat and a common time signature. The melody consists of a sequence of quarter and eighth notes, ending with a quarter rest.

It is this driving, ascending, melodic idea that constantly begs to dominate the narrative throughout both programmatic works. After all, the central musical dialogue, as argued by this thesis, is between the *persona* and death. Tchaikovsky achieves this sense of supremacy through orchestration (woodwind against strings; brass against *tutti* orchestra; low-register woodwind and brass instruments), and rhythmic delegation — i.e. the use of long note-values as a foil to the shorter note-values of the rest of the orchestral voices and *vice versa*. However, before we can investigate this conversation between ‘the lonely soul’ and mortality, it is important that we firstly address the relationship between the *persona* and the *anima*.

### **4.3.2 Recognising the Feminine Other: The *Anima***

As mentioned previously in Part Two above, the *anima* is that which is contrary to the *persona*, and generally presented in a subsidiary role. It is through the *anima* that ‘the lonely soul’/*persona* can reflect his dichotomous inner self. The *anima* may be perceived as a vessel of fantasy, or an expression of a ‘guilty pleasure’. I propose that, for Tchaikovsky, his *anima*, or female otherness, is presented within the musical ideas representative of Astarte and Juliet.

#### **4.3.2.1 Astarte**

Astarte makes her appearance, following Manfred’s orchestral wandering in the first movement, at b. 171, sweetly in ‘con sordini’ strings (Example 16):

**Example 16: Astarte (*Manfred*) [bb. 171–181]**

The musical score consists of two systems of four staves each. The first system (measures 171-174) shows the following dynamics: Vln. I (p, mp, mf), Vln. II (p, mp), Vla. (p, mp), and Vc. (p, mp). The second system (measures 175-178) shows dynamics: Vln. I (sf, mf, sf, p), Vln. II (sf, sf, p), Vla. (sf, sf, p), and Vc. (sf, sf, p). The score includes trills and triplets in the first violin part.

For such an important figure within the dramatic poem, and indeed Manfred's tormented psyche, the melodic detailing of this theme is rather dull. It stands lyrically as a polar opposite to the dramatic contour of the *persona*. Perhaps, this was Tchaikovsky's intention, as our first encounter with Astarte in the Byronic text is a conjured, false, representation of the character.<sup>77</sup> This conceptualisation of the *anima* is scored for strings, as an immediate contrast to the gloomy tones of Manfred/the *persona*'s bass clarinet and bassoons.

<sup>77</sup> In Act I, sc. 1, Manfred begs the seven spirits of earth, ocean, air, night, mountains, winds and star, to appear to him in solid form. The seventh spirit assumes the form of Astarte. See Byron, Lord George, *Manfred: A Dramatic Poem* (London: John Murray, 1817), p. 14.

Her fractured phrasing, highlighted by the fact that Astarte’s theme begins on the offbeat, accentuates Manfred’s disconnection from her. The notion of detachment is further emphasised by the tonal ambiguity of the musical idea. In avoiding any real commitment to a tonic assertion, Astarte’s melody epitomises the *anima* as an inaccessible figure for Manfred, and in turn, the *persona*. This is not the case however in *Romeo and Juliet*.

#### 4.3.2.2 Juliet

The theme generally associated with Juliet in the fantasy overture (Example 17) appears to have a closer relationship to the theme representative of the *persona*:

#### Example 17: Juliet (*Romeo and Juliet*) [bb. 192–197]

Both musical ideas appear simultaneously throughout the work, with the *anima* assuming a submissive role, for the most part, to the *persona* (i.e. the second aspect/theme of the *persona* as noted in Ex. 9 above) [see bb. 213–230, A.IV.3, pp. 372–374; bb. 235–243, pp. 374–375; and bb. 389–405, pp. 387–389]. Like Astarte, Juliet is first presented in *con sordini* strings [b. 192, A.IV.3, p. 371], and her melody is similarly uninteresting. *Romeo and Juliet*’s *anima* also exhibits

similar phrasing to that of *Manfred*, beginning on the weak beat of the bar. However, when we come to examine the issue of tonality, we find that the *animas* differ. While Astarte fails to commit to any real allusion of a tonic, Juliet becomes a harmonic support to the side of the *persona* represented by the broad love theme (the traditionally accepted ‘Romeo Theme’). Here, the *persona* is granted musical access to the *anima*.

#### **4.3.3 Relationships Between the *Persona* and the *Anima*: Narrative Agents**

Aside from their melodic adjacency throughout *Manfred* and *Romeo and Juliet*, the relationship between the *persona* and the *anima* is highlighted through particular harmonic techniques. These narrative agents take the form of overstressed static chord patterns, tonality and orchestration. These devices are used in specific situations where the melodies of the *persona* and the *anima* fail to appear simultaneously. This is especially true of *Manfred*. In an attempt to address this apparent fragmented relationship, Tchaikovsky often turns to repeated fixed chords in a bid to establish some sense of unity between seemingly opposing musical ideas. As a result, the *persona* is allowed a sense of contact with its *anima*.



#### 4.3.3.1 Static Harmony

Throughout much of Tchaikovsky's music, static harmony (prolonged tied-chords, or repeated chords) serves as a linking point between musical sections.<sup>78</sup> This is used to particular effect in both *Manfred* and *Romeo and Juliet* as a portent to the arrival of a new theme [see the following examples: *Manfred* 1<sup>st</sup> movement — bb. 106–110 (E minor chord: A.IV.5, p. 412), bb. 168–170 (E diminished chord: A.IV.5, p. 413), bb. 332–338 (B minor chord: A.IV.5, p. 421–422); *Manfred* 2<sup>nd</sup> movement — bb. 278–281 (B minor chord: A.IV.5, p. 435), bb. 299–302 (E7 minor with diminished 5<sup>th</sup>: A.IV.5, p. 437), bb. 390–393 (E minor with added sharpened 6<sup>th</sup> chord: A.IV.5, p. 443), and bb. 458–463 (C major chord: A.IV.5, p. 444); *Romeo and Juliet* — bb. 105–111 (B minor chord: A.IV.3, p. 369), bb. 176–183 (A7 major: A.IV.3, p. 370), bb. 260–272 (D flat major alternating to the German sixth or diminished 7<sup>th</sup>:<sup>79</sup> A.IV.3, pp. 376–377), bb. 483–484 (F sharp major suggestion: A.IV.3, p. 394), and bb. 519–522 (B minor: A.IV.3, p. 398). In most cases these passages of repeated, unchanging, harmony are combined with a reduction in the orchestral voice to add momentum to their programmatic purpose, whatever that may be. The significance of this static harmony lies in its relationship to the chords that follow.

The first instance of such writing appears in *Manfred*'s first movement at b. 106 (A.IV.5, p. 412), *Moderato con moto*. Here, the sustained chord of e minor, in second inversion, is brought to our attention through the lower registers of the bass clarinet, bassoons, tenor trombones, viola, cello and double bass. Up to this

<sup>78</sup> For more information see Zajaczkowski, *Tchaikovsky's Musical Style* (1987), pp. 6–10.

<sup>79</sup> Zajaczkowski refers to this chord as the German sixth. See *ibid.*, p. 55.

point, the music has meandered without any specific tonic assertion — possibly reflecting the wandering Manfred, or the tormented *persona*. The sudden change in musical character here (b. 111 onwards, A.IV.5, p. 412) signifies the Alpine setting of the programme. In a bid to remind the listener that Manfred/*persona* is still present within the narrative, the previous static E minor chord, held over four bars, is reiterated within the harmonic scaffolding of this new, more lyrical, theme. We are momentarily supplied with a sense of grounding — the turbulent opening of the work has temporarily given way to a calmer musical narrative: Astarte's theme.

Our introduction to the *anima* is premised at b. 168 (A.IV.5, p. 248), again through the use of static harmony. Attention is drawn away from the programme's geographical setting through an unsettling alteration to the previously solid E minor tonic chord. Now the fifth of the chord (B) has been lowered to an A sharp with an added deformation of its tonal structure through C sharp. The result (E–G–A sharp–C sharp) is a cadential close on a diminished seventh chord, which implies that something turbulent may follow, as we have been denied a calmer harmonic resolution. However, this expectation is immediately dissolved in b. 171 (A.IV.5, p. 413) through the emergence of the *anima*/Astarte. The previously garish diminished seventh chord is now transformed into a dominant seventh version of the chord, via the simple chromatic adjustment of an A sharp to an A natural. Again, the harmonic essence of the static harmony has been employed as a connective device from one musical idea (the wandering Manfred/*persona*) to another (Astarte/*anima*).



Manfred's ultimate disembodiment occurs fourteen bars later at bb. 299–302 (A.IV.5, p. 437) through the addition of the diminished fifth to the repeated E minor chord (E–G–B flat–D), and again at bb. 390–393 (A.IV.5, p. 443) in which the E minor chord is further disrupted by the addition of the sharpened 6<sup>th</sup> (E–G—B–C sharp). This tonal shifting is possibly preparing the interpreter for the final acceptance of the *persona*'s fate.

This apparent sense of recognition is reflected in the musical section that appears to represent Astarte's forgiveness of Manfred (bb. 448–463, A.IV.5, p. 444). Tchaikovsky uses a held C major chord to signify this event (bb. 458–463). This tonal move, in which C major appears within a B minor context, implies a Neapolitan connection between Manfred and Astarte's themes. As the musical themes representative of the *anima* and *persona* fail to appear concurrently in the musical narrative of *Manfred*, static harmony then acts as an effective unifying narrative agent between the two ideas. This device is also employed, to a lesser extent, in *Romeo and Juliet* in sections where the *anima* and *persona* are not presented simultaneously.

One particular example of this occurrence may be seen at the close of the fantasy-overture's exposition (bb. 260–272, A.IV.3, pp. 376–377) following the duet between the *anima* and the *persona*'s second theme (bb. 213–243, A.IV.3, pp. 372–375). Here, Tchaikovsky alternates the harmonic support between the German sixth and the tonic as a reminder of the swaying melodic contour of the *anima*'s motto. This passage acts as a calming alternative to the previously

anguish-driven expression of the *persona* through its docile combination of long-value woodwind chords against descending harp inversions of the oscillating tonality. Such music almost suggests an onomatopoeic-like ‘sigh of relief’ at this point in the programme, as the *persona* has laid his despair bare for the first time in the unfurling narrative. Static harmony has played its part in creating a sense of relationship between both themes. However, unlike *Manfred*, the bond between the *anima* and *persona* of *Romeo and Juliet* appears stronger. They are permitted to sing simultaneously and share the same tonal landscape.

#### 4.3.3.2 Tonality and Orchestration

As we saw in *Manfred*, the remote correlation between the *anima* and the *persona* was highlighted by their differences in melodic make-up, instrumentation, and tonality. However, a sense of connection is inferred between the tonic key of the piece and the flattened supertonic tonal structure of the opening *anima* (Astarte) theme. Perhaps, this unexpected tonal liaison was intended to suggest the unnerving, morally improper, incestuous affair between Manfred and his twin sister. Likewise, such harmonic meandering impacts upon the perceived relationship between the *anima* and the *persona*. After all, the *anima* is supposed to represent all that is lacking in the *persona*. She functions as a subordinate to his dominant role and tonality, within the psychological discourse that narrates the symphony’s programme. A similar situation is also evident within *Romeo and Juliet*.

The *anima* in the fantasy-overture is without doubt an underling to the *persona*'s prevailing voice, which, this thesis argues, is presented in two musical ideas (i.e. the introductory theme, and the broad love theme). Her sweet sonority, played out in the ebb and flow of the strings (b. 192 onwards, A.IV.3, p. 371), appears to still the intensity of the previously asserted *persona*'s second theme (bb. 184–192, A.IV.3, pp. 370–371). While she shares the D flat major tonal colouring of the *persona* at this point, the *anima* structures her melodic theme over a fifth based on D flat in divisi violas (bb. 193–204, A.IV.3, p. 371). Even though the *anima* has a solo role at this musical juncture, albeit a subservient one, we are reminded of the *persona*'s yearning for her in her tonal construction.

A union of the pair is finally permitted at b. 213 (A.IV.3, p. 372), but the orchestral force of the *persona* in woodwind immediately masks the meager *anima*'s voice in the horn. Perhaps, this juxtaposition of the two musical ideas implies the *persona*'s desperate need to keep the *anima* close to him. Conversely, it may be a way of illustrating their intrinsic connection to each other, even though their melodic contour differs. Following the recapitulation at b. 367 (A.IV.3, p. 384) we notice a change in the *anima*'s character.

Suddenly the feminine other has acquired a more forceful presence in oboe, clarinets and horn. Momentum gathers as she gains orchestral voice in her dramatic rise towards the *persona* at b. 389 (A.IV.3, p. 387). Both musical ideas bellow out in triumphant D major as a solid confirmation of their union. In allowing the *anima* and the *persona* to intermingle in such a fashion, Tchaikovsky

almost loses himself within the celebration of their shared self. Both elements of the psyche, ‘the self’ and ‘the other’, are allowed to be present at the same time. This elevates the sense of power associated with the *persona* in his interaction with death.

#### 4.3.4 Establishing Death as ‘The Other’

Throughout 1885 the question of mortality haunted Tchaikovsky — a preoccupation certainly evident within *Manfred*, *Hamlet*, the Fifth and Sixth Symphonies and, as this thesis argues, *Romeo and Juliet*.<sup>80</sup> While I do not entertain the suicide claims, propagated by Orlova and Brown, I believe that Tchaikovsky perceived death as an ever-present companion.<sup>81</sup> This relationship with death was one celebrated by the composer in his music. Embroiled within this dichotomy were the themes of fate and hope. Like the rest of Tchaikovsky’s programmatic works, tonality plays a fundamental role in his representation of these ideals.

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<sup>80</sup> See Wiley, *Tchaikovsky*, p. 283.

<sup>81</sup> The suicide claims originated from Alexandra Orlova who asserted that Tchaikovsky intentionally poisoned himself as part of a ‘Court of Honour’ set up by his School of Jurisprudence classmates (1850–1859). Apparently this information was revealed in 1966 by a former pupil who claimed to have heard it personally in 1913. See Orlova, *Tchaikovsky — A Self Portrait*, pp. 406–414 and, Poznansky, *Tchaikovsky’s Last Days*, pp. 217–221. This theory was supported by Brown and Holden and opposed by Poznansky and Taruskin. See Taruskin, *On Russian Music*, pp. 84–88; and Alexander Poznansky and Ralph C. Burr Jr, ‘Tchaikovsky’s Suicide: Myth and Reality’, *19<sup>th</sup>-Century Music*, 11/3 (1988), pp. 199–220.

#### 4.3.4.1 Tonality as Emblems of Fate, Death and Hope

Prior to Tchaikovsky's writing of *Romeo and Juliet* the key of B minor had long since been 'associated with the darkest, grimmest, most "pathetic" moods', and had been avoided by earlier composers of symphonies.<sup>82</sup> Such tonality must therefore have appeared an attractive choice for Tchaikovsky's setting of *Manfred* and the fantasy-overture, where death acts as the driving force behind their respective programmes. Likewise, the keys of E major and E minor were employed throughout his earlier composition, *Fatum*. We see similar tonal allusions of this key throughout *Manfred* in the form of the *persona*. The sense of hope is primarily reflected in the closing bars of both the fantasy-overture and *Manfred*, as the manacles of B minor are finally cast off to give way to the redemptory B major.

While the ideas of death and tragedy are undoubtedly mirrored within the B minor framework of both programmatic works, Tchaikovsky employs the narrative masks of Arimanes and the feuding Montagues and Capulets to develop his discourse between the *persona* and death. The use of contrapuntal writing, combined with allusions to the Dies Irae theme, and specific musical entries on the harp and organ, highlight the formidable presence of this death figure within the narrative.

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<sup>82</sup> Taruskin, *OHWM*, p. 108. This excludes Joseph Haydn's Symphony of 1772, C.P.E. Bach's symphony of 1773, and Schubert's 'Unfinished Symphony' of 1822.



#### 4.3.4.2 Arimanes vs Montagues and Capulets: Dialogues with Death

Generally, the figures of Arimanes and the feuding Montagues and Capulets represent symbols of death, or the persona of death, in *Manfred* (fourth movement) and *Romeo and Juliet*, respectively. Both musical themes (Examples 19 and 20) are cast firmly in the tonic of B minor, thus compounding their dominant role within the tonal landscape of the programme:

##### Example 19: Arimanes/Death (*Manfred*) [bb. 1–2]



##### Example 20: Montagues and Capulets/Death (*Romeo and Juliet*) [bb. 112–115]



The melodic range of the Arimanes theme is striking. Based on a scalar rise of B minor, the climactic note of G sharp, and not G natural, intensifies the mood of anguish which punctuates the final movement of the symphony. As we have seen on previous occasions, Tchaikovsky used the interval of the sixth, and in particular the sharpened sixth, to imply despair. If we look at the melodic range of the opening first- subject theme of *Romeo and Juliet* (the feuding Montagues and Capulets), we also see the melody beginning on B and rising towards G (see Example 20 above).

A similar melodic rise towards a sixth is evident in Manfred's motto theme (see Example 15 above in which the melody rises from D sharp to B). Such likeness between the death theme and the *persona* theme in *Manfred* suggests a relationship between the pair from the very onset of the programme. This melodic connection demonstrates the fact that death is an intrinsic part of life, and the *persona* can never really be detached from this reality. We see an allusion to this relationship, albeit on a more subtle level, through repeated harmonic references to the tonic of the death theme in *Romeo and Juliet*'s opening musical idea. The assertion of the chord of B minor seven times in the *persona*'s theme (see Example 7 above) reminds us that death is ever present.

If we consider the melodic similarities between the second part of the opening Manfred motto (see Example 14 above) with the theme of Arimanes, then the intensity of this relationship between the *persona* and death becomes apparent in the symphony's finale. A possible expression of this idea may be seen at junctures in the musical narrative where the concept of death could be interpreted as the *persona* in disguise. This is particularly evident in bb. 57–59, 62–66 (A.IV.5, pp. 423–424) where the main theme, most likely death, but shadowing the *persona*, pleads above the din of anxious, semiquaver strings, in bassoons and brass. The juxtaposition of its long-note values against the shorter, fragmented, flurries of the strings and woodwind, gives weight to this melodic idea in its attempt to push it forward to a programmatic resolution.

This treatment of the *persona* and death also materialises in a more subtle form in *Romeo and Juliet* at bb. 335–342 (A.IV.3, pp. 379–380). In this example the trumpets try to force the *persona*'s despairing voice above the din of tutti, fractured excerpts based on the opening rhythmic motif of the death theme. The exciting momentum carries the *persona* away until it becomes consumed by death (bb. 343–345, A.IV.3, p. 381), and ultimately absorbed into a series of repeated B minor chords (bb. 345–349, A.IV.3, pp. 381–382). Concurrently, an equal fate awaits the *persona* of *Manfred*. He too is swept away by the orchestral fury and reduced to rising motifs in the bassoons and brass (bb. 68–72, A.IV.5, pp. 425–426) until the final chordal consummation of death's power over the *persona* at bb. 73–80 (A.IV.5, pp. 426–427). This is not defeat. It is a celebration — most readily revealed in the playing out of its musical ideas through fugue.

#### 4.3.4.3 Acceptance of Death: Fugue as Celebration

The entrance of the fugue in *Manfred* appears as an answer to the *persona*'s pleading theme (Example 21) in which the protagonist's motto (the second part) is melodically stretched upwards by a semitone at the close of each phrase:

#### Example 21: Manfred's Pleading Motto [bb. 192–204]





What follows at b. 206 (A.IV.5, p. 427) is a lively contrapuntal treatment of the death theme (Arimanes), which almost mocks the desperation of the *persona*'s previous despair. Each voice is orchestrated in a very precise manner and doubled by a section of the strings in a bid to emphasise its sonority — Tchaikovsky treated his fugue in the 1869 version of *Romeo and Juliet* in the same manner (see bb. 245–257, A.IV.1, p. 342). The first subject of the *Manfred* fugue (bb. 206–210) is sounded out in cor anglais, clarinets and viola; the answers appear at bb. 211–217 in oboes and second violins, at bb. 218–222 in flutes and first violins, and at bb. 224–228 in bass clarinet, bassoons, horns, cellos and double bass (see A.IV.5, pp. 427–428). An air of mischief is evoked in the passage beginning at b. 236, and continuing on to b. 257 (A.IV.5, pp. 429–433), through the playful almost polonaise-like (albeit a specter impression of such) rhythms in the woodwind and violins (Example 22):

**Example 22: Mischievous Death (*Manfred*) [bb. 236–238]**



Beneath this rhythmic orchestral distraction the driving Arimanes/death theme pulses forward in an act of dominance. Echoes of this style appear earlier in both

the first and second versions of *Romeo and Juliet*. In the 1869 fantasy-overture death duels with the *persona*'s bipartite themes, separately at first, then simultaneously (the broad love theme at bb. 286–290, followed by the introductory theme at b. 295, A.IV.1, pp. 345–347). However, the struggle is futile as death overpowers the D major theme forcing it into the B minor recapitulation from b. 310 onwards. The same section in the 1870/1880 version of *Romeo and Juliet* sees the musical conflict centre on the struggle for hierarchy between the first theme of the *persona* only (the introductory theme) and death. Unlike the fantasy-overture, which appears to attribute a deeper notion of seriousness to this melodic collaboration, *Manfred* seems to smirk at such an interaction.

Perhaps, the swathing of the driving Arimanes/death theme within the previously mentioned macabre musical texture adds a breath of frivolity to the seriousness of mortality. Maybe, if we consider the death theme as a reflection of the *persona*, then the *persona* at this point is so drunk with despair that the bacchanal-like spirit of this movement, exacerbated by contrapuntal writing, carries him away to thoughts far beyond the memory of his beloved Astarte/*anima*. Nonetheless, the weight of reality finally exerts its force on Manfred as he falls from the bosom of death's masquerade at b. 267 (A.IV.5, p. 434) towards his fate.

#### 4.3.4.4 Death as Empowerment

For the first time in the symphony, Manfred, now melodically altered by the swirling ‘orgy’ at Arimanes’ palace (See Example 18 above), comes musically face to face with the entity that can grant him oblivion. The *persona*, now weakened by the turmoil of his dilemma, sings out, as we first heard in the opening movement, in bass clarinets and bassoons. He is immediately answered by a fractured rhythmic motif derived from the death theme (Example 23):

#### Example 23: Fragment of Death Motif (*Manfred*) [b. 286]



This answer forces Manfred to sing again, but now he is empowered through the raising of his melodic contour by a semitone (b. 287, A.IV.5, p. 435). Death appears to give the *persona* courage. This is realised at b. 294 when the Manfred motto rises towards its triumphant close on the note D (Example 24), which is sustained for two bars after the rest of the orchestra has ceased:

#### Example 24: *Persona* (*Manfred*) [bb. 294–302]



In the music that follows, Astarte’s spirit is conjured up before Manfred (bb. 303–348, A.IV.5, pp. 437–439) whose despair and wish for death intensifies at b. 394

(A.IV.5, p. 443). The score repeats exactly the same musical narrative as that which appeared in the first movement also documenting Manfred's anguish at the loss of his beloved (see first movement, bb. 289–305, A.IV.5, pp. 417–420). This time however, the *persona* does not dissolve into the inner voices of the orchestra. He is no longer left to battle against the raging swell of death. Here, his despairing theme transforms into a rising triumphant celebration in woodwind, pitted above stabbing B minor chordal suggestions of death's tonality, in the brass and strings, — thus signifying their intrinsic relationship.

A similar tale does not unfold within *Romeo and Juliet* at this point in its musical narrative. The *persona* (i.e. the introductory theme) is constantly forced below the hierarchical stance of the woodwind (bb. 450–454, 459–460, A.IV.3, pp. 390–393), despite its voicing in the powerful brass. Rather than the enabling effect of death over the *persona* in *Manfred*, death has overpowered the *persona* in *Romeo and Juliet* and forced him unwillingly towards his end.

Perhaps, the difference between both *personas* lies in the fact that Tchaikovsky was only discovering himself as a professional artist while writing the fantasy-overture, and therefore his sense of self may not have been as strong as that of the older Tchaikovsky during the composition of *Manfred*. Notwithstanding, both representations of the *persona* are laid bare before their mortality. It is our acceptance of their death that is portrayed in the funeral processions suggested in both orchestral works. This sense of fatality is achieved

through orchestration, the use of specific rhythmic patterns, and a quotation from *Dies Irae*.

#### 4.3.4.5 The Trappings of Death: Tonality, Orchestration, Rhythm and *Dies Irae*

The funeral-like processions conveyed in the finales of both *Manfred* and *Romeo and Juliet* share certain similarities. On the other hand, they also differ significantly in their respective structures and programmatic narratives. Both sections are presented in an unexpected tonality. *Manfred* (at b. 448, A.IV.5, p. 444) seems to resign itself to C major at this point. Perhaps this is a reference to the Neapolitan harmony of Astarte's melody, as she is the reason Manfred yearns for oblivion. It is the *anima* that has allowed the *persona* to embrace the otherness of death. *Romeo and Juliet* also introduces us to its death scene through an equally unexpected modulation to the key of B major (at b. 485, A.IV.III, p. 395).<sup>83</sup> Perhaps, the move from B minor to B major here, suggests that the *persona* has finally found comfort in his relationship with death.<sup>84</sup>

Despite their shared sense of tonality, both finales differ in their orchestration and rhythmic texture. In relation to *Manfred*, we see an obvious reference to religion in the chorale-like interface of sustained chords combined with harmonium (bb. 448–463, A.IV.5, p. 444). By contrast, *Romeo and Juliet*

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<sup>83</sup> After all, if the interpreter follows the lead of the Shakespearean tale at this point in the programme, then we would expect the death scene to appear in the B minor tonality, which has punctuated the entire tragic aspect of this piece thus far.

<sup>84</sup> A similar tonal relationship between B minor and B major, symbolic of redemption or acceptance, is seen in Tchaikovsky's *Pathétique* Symphony.



relies on the tension created by the commanding drum roll of the timpani reminiscent of a march to the gallows (Example 25):

**Example 25: Death Procession Drum Roll (*Romeo and Juliet*) [bb. 485–486]**



While *Manfred* employs the full voice of the orchestra in its expression of death, *Romeo and Juliet* simply calls upon a reduced ensemble of instruments, which appears more conducive to the somber mood of the programme. The most telling portrayal of the presence of death in *Manfred* emerges in a citation of *Dies Irae* (Examples 26 and 27):

**Example 26: Death March (*Manfred*) [bb. 472–476]**



**Example 27: *Dies Irae* Theme**

Di-es i-rae, di-es il - la, Sol-vet sae - clum in - fa-wil-la: Tes-te Da - vid cum Sy-bil-la.

We also see an allusion to this theme in the coda of *Romeo and Juliet* (Example 28):

**Example 28: Allusion to *Dies Irae* Theme (*Romeo and Juliet*) [bb. 496–506]**

The musical score for Example 28 is arranged in two systems. The first system covers measures 496 to 500, and the second system covers measures 501 to 506. The instruments are Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet (Cl.), Cor Anglais (C. A.), Bassoon (Bsn.), and Horn (Hn.). The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 3/4. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings like *sfz* (sforzando). The first system ends at measure 500, and the second system ends at measure 506. The score is a woodwind ensemble score.

Aside from such an obvious inference of death, Tchaikovsky also calls upon the harp to suggest the presence of death.

#### 4.3.4.6 Ask Not for Whom the Harp Tolls...

The harp is used sparingly throughout *Manfred* and *Romeo and Juliet*, and it is for that very reason that we should take note of its significance as a narrative agent. Tchaikovsky seems to employ its voice bi-partly as an emblem of hope, in its association with the *anima*, and as an accompaniment to death. Our initial encounter with the harp occurs in the first movement of *Manfred* at bb. 213, 215 and 217 (A.IV.5, p. 414) amid inferences of the spirit of Astarte. These arpeggiated chords create a sense of mystery and optimism. As the music develops the chords are stretched across glissandi runs to match the pleading melody in the woodwind and strings, as Manfred's memory of Astarte begins to fade away (bb. 261–271, A.IV.5, pp. 415–416). A more developed version of this idea is presented in the fourth movement where Astarte finally grants Manfred the forgiveness he so desperately seeks (bb. 305–335, A.IV.5, pp. 437–441). This use of the harp in reflective moments of the *anima* is also echoed throughout *Romeo and Juliet*.

Following our introduction to the *persona*, we find a swaying reference to the *anima* in cellos (Example 29), which is closely followed by a series of arpeggiated harp chords (Example 30):

**Example 29: Allusion to the *Anima* (*Romeo and Juliet*) [bb. 21–25]**



**Example 30: Arpeggiated Harp Chords (*Romeo and Juliet*) [bb. 28–29]**

This musical combination is repeated again at bb. 32–37, and 68–77 (A.IV.3, pp. 367–368). Perhaps, the reason for the implementation of the harp at this stage is to ease the tension created by the brooding opening theme. It may also serve as a portent for the ensuing B minor theme, which this thesis recognises as the representation of death. A more extensive passage on the harp enters the din of the orchestra at b. 239 (continuing on to b. 270: see A.IV.3, pp. 375–377) as it unites with the *anima* (Juliet) beneath the broad love theme (the *persona*'s second theme). This unprecedented 26-bar section lends power to the *anima*'s delicate voice by imitating her wavering melodic contour. Again, this instrument comes to our attention before the onset of the mortality theme. A similar interaction presents itself later in the development at bb. 387–388 (A.IV.3, pp. 386–387) in which the harp supports the *anima* theme as she rises towards an expression of the love theme (*persona*). Our final musical liaison with the harp is met with at b. 508

(A.IV.3, p. 396), whereby a series of rising arpeggiated chords, this time against the backdrop of the *persona*'s theme (broad love theme), drive the fantasy-overture to a celebratory close in B major.

#### 4.4 Conclusion: 'Romance' and 'Tragedy' Archetypes

As this chapter has proposed, the primary musical narratives of both *Manfred* and *Romeo and Juliet* may be interpreted as a multi-layered discourse between the *persona*, the *anima* and death. Through their interactions within their respective programmes, we see an emerging conflict between the archetypes of 'Romance' and 'Tragedy', as theorised by Almén. Previously, I suggested that the former of the pair explored the dichotomy between the *persona* and mortality, and the *persona* and death, while the later considered the *persona*'s struggle with the *anima*. These issues were not only pondered in the artistic works of Lord Byron and his contemporaries, but they were also addressed, whether directly or indirectly, by Tchaikovsky and his Russian peers.

For Almén, the 'Romance' archetype was premised on the victory of a desired order over an undesired transgression or opposition. I have interpreted the 'desired order' here, as that of 'death', and the 'undesired transgression or opposition' as life/the *persona*. Throughout his life, the *persona*, or 'common man', spends much of his time either avoiding the inevitability of death, or philosophising about it. Eventually the acceptance of death becomes the desired order, whereby the *persona* is finally freed from his anguish. Throughout *Romeo*

*and Juliet* and *Manfred* this relationship is charted through orchestration, static harmony, rhythmic patterns, tonality, the use of specific intervals such as diminished 5<sup>th</sup>s and 7<sup>th</sup>s, added sixths, and of course the specific interaction of the respective musical themes suggestive of the *persona* and death. Ultimately, the notion of ‘Romance’ is conveyed through the celebration of death in both musical works.

The ‘Tragedy’ archetype purports the failure of a desired transgression, or an exercise in freedom against a restricted order. With this perspective in mind, I have interpreted the *anima* as the figure of freedom, while the *persona* takes on the role of restriction. Throughout both the fantasy-overture and the symphony the *anima* yearns for attention amid the powerful voices of the *persona* and death. In *Manfred* Tchaikovsky appears to suppress his *anima* by not allowing her to appear simultaneously to the *persona*. However, the connection between the pair is alluded to through the use of orchestration, repeated chords, and a tonal relationship (albeit unexpected), centred on the flattened supertonic and tonic. This is not the case however, in *Romeo and Juliet*. Here, the opposing musical ideas are allowed to duet, thus emphasising their unity within the overall psyche of ‘the self’/the *persona*. They share the same tonality, and the *anima* repeatedly emerges as a harmonic support to the languid theme of the *persona*. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that Tchaikovsky’s sense of self actually seemed more assured in 1869/1870 while composing *Romeo and Juliet* than that reflected in *Manfred* in 1885.

His perspective on death, however, appears more celebratory in the symphony than in the fantasy-overture. In *Manfred* we see similarities between the musical theme suggestive of death and the *persona*'s motto. This implies that the issue of mortality is already a part of the protagonist's make-up from the very beginning of the composition. By the end of the fourth movement, death has empowered the *persona* and both figures dissolve towards their inevitable union — a union suggestive of peace through the quiet fading out of the orchestral voices. In *Romeo and Juliet* death also consumes the 'lonely soul' but in doing so, both figures rise together in triumph at the work's close. The use of the 'thumped out chords' conveys a sense of easiness. Here, death rejoices.

## CONCLUSION

### *Romeo and Juliet — Interpreting Self and Otherness*

This thesis has interpreted Tchaikovsky's fantasy overture, *Romeo and Juliet*, through a series of hermeneutic windows. My interpretative cue for such an undertaking has come from the collective ideas of Richard Taruskin, Lawrence Kramer and Byron Almén. As a discipline, musical hermeneutics, and indeed philosophical hermeneutics, requires such amalgamative forces within the process of understanding. If we consider the actuality that there can be no one definitive interpretation, then it seems prudent that we should draw upon a variety of differing sources in order to contribute to the continuously developing hermeneutic circle of understanding. In doing so the questions of 'self' and 'otherness' have emerged within my examination of *Romeo and Juliet*. Fundamental to this dichotomy are the figures of the *persona*, the *anima*, and death. It is their respective interaction within the narrative archetypes of 'Romance' and 'Tragedy' that propel the programmes of the fantasy-overture, and indeed *Manfred*, forward.

In Part One we were introduced to Kramer's strategic plan for beginning the interpretative process — a hermeneutic roadmap. If we recall his advice the plotted course of action then assumes the following formation: 1) locate the hermeneutic windows of the work, beginning with the most explicit (historical context) and working up to the least explicit (structural tropes — employing



*Manfred* as a lens through which *Romeo and Juliet* could be reevaluated). The following overview presents a summary of these results.

## **1 Hermeneutic Window: ‘The Historical Context’**

The aim of this first hermeneutic window was to provide insight into *Romeo and Juliet*’s reception history from the late nineteenth century to the present day. Through this, we established the hermeneutic situation — the starting point within this interpretative exercise. From an assessment of the reminiscences, concert commentaries and secondary literature available to us, since the end of the nineteenth century, we learned that Russian and American concert audiences and critics were more forgiving of the fantasy-overture than their European counterparts. Issues with the Russian musical style contributed to much of the negativity surrounding *Romeo and Juliet*’s early reception. Preconceived notions of the work’s programme, based on the expectation that Tchaikovsky’s representation of the Shakespearean tale was similar in style to that of Berlioz, confused many French and German audiences.

Throughout the twentieth century critiques of the fantasy-overture focused on the polarity between programme and structure, and the possible influences of Tchaikovsky’s love affairs on the writing of *Romeo and Juliet*. Writers wavered between the perception of the work as a characterisation of Shakespeare’s Friar Lawrence, the feuding Montagues and Capulets, and the ‘star-crossed lovers’, and the interpretation of *Romeo and Juliet* as an abstract representation of love and

fate. From the 1980s onwards, understandings of the fantasy-overture as Romantic kitsch evolved beyond programmatic expectations, suggested by its title, to considerations of the work as a hermeneutic tool through which Tchaikovsky's general musical style could be better assessed.

Through this appraisal of *Romeo and Juliet*'s critical reception, gaps in our current knowledge of the work's genesis began to materialise. The need for further investigation into the correspondence between Tchaikovsky and Balakirev during the compositional process became clear. From this observation, the content of *Romeo and Juliet*'s programme came into question. As Tchaikovsky avoided commentary on his musical themes, and indeed his interpretation of the fantasy-overture itself, the desire for further clarification emerged. Resultantly, it became necessary to challenge the idea of Balakirev as the sole source of inspiration for the fantasy-overture's programme, tonal design, and subsequent revisions. The traditional perception of Tchaikovsky's apparently passive role throughout the work's composition warranted further investigation. These interpretative needs, created by our engagement with *Romeo and Juliet*'s historical context, stimulated the establishment of the second and third hermeneutic windows.

## 2 Hermeneutic Window: Understandings of Programme Music and Realism

In my reconsidering of the role of Balakirev within the composition of *Romeo and Juliet*, the drive for inquiry into his perception of programme music was made apparent. From this, we saw that the aesthetic values of Nikolay Chernĭshevsky were worthy of consideration, as his theories influenced much of Russia's radical generation throughout the mid-nineteenth century. The philosopher's views on the relationship between music and reality pivoted on the opposition between art and nature. For him, folk song ('natural singing'), was a product of nature, and the technicalities associated with 'artificial singing' were a product of art. He believed that a composition written under the influence of involuntary emotion was thus a work of nature, or a work of life (realism) — an aesthetic shared by Tchaikovsky. Fundamental to this perception was the debate on content *vs* form.

Chernĭshevsky, like Balakirev, considered beauty as something objective, and a matter of content rather than form. By contrast, musical inspiration and form, for Balakirev, were subordinate to the overall musical representation of the work's subject matter (the programme), thus placing the concept of concrete content at the heart of the compositional process. Tchaikovsky did not appear to share this ideology. His understanding of realism, and its relationship to programme music, appeared ambiguous.

Tchaikovsky's definition of programme music was more eclectic than that of his Russian peers who lay divided in their opinions on the genre. The Balakirev

circle believed that a programme allowed a musical work to possess concrete content, while those in opposition felt that a programme restricted the interpreter's musical imagination. Tchaikovsky, on the other hand, valued both the 'concrete' and metaphysical aspects of programme music. For compositions that aimed to represent specific subjects, then an accompanying explanatory title or programme note was required (Tchaikovsky struggled with such music). However, if the music reflected an emotional idea or response, then there was no need for any extramusical addition. This latter type of music was therefore a reflection of nature, and thus a representation of reality — as postulated by Chernishevsky. From this interaction with nineteenth-century aesthetics we learned that Tchaikovsky also derived inspiration from the realism of Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky in relation to death, suicide and the woman question.

Tolstoy's treatment of the inevitability of death in his literary works, and its power over the human psyche, mirrored his own fear of mortality. He employed his art as a hermeneutic means of confronting such issues. I argue that the same may be said of Tchaikovsky and his music. In a selection of his works, Tchaikovsky allocates a sense of empowerment to his female characters in permitting them to usher the figure of death into the musical programme. However, his treatment of this subject wavers between suggestions of death as spiritual reward or fulfilled love, and representations of death as punishment for love. Such fluctuating perceptions reflect Tchaikovsky's personal struggle with mortality and the afterlife. A similar dialogue between love and death was also especially evident in the writings of Dostoyevsky.

His ideologies concerning these psychological conflicts utilised suicide as a resulting force derived from the relationship between love and death. This association exacerbates the air of tragedy and hopelessness attached to this union — a union dependent on sacrifice. While the subject of killing oneself was not a feature of Tchaikovsky's music, I propose that it is an important issue to consider in relation to the programme of *Romeo and Juliet*, in which the duo are drawn into fabricating their own demise (suicide) through a series of misunderstandings. As we know, suicide was a familiar occurrence in Russia in the 1860s. This thesis proposes that this reality may have influenced Balakirev's decision to present the idea of *Romeo and Juliet* to Tchaikovsky. In a bid to further expand upon this idea, the third hermeneutic window was established.

### **3 Hermeneutic Window: The Correspondence Between Balakirev and Tchaikovsky**

My comprehensive reassessment of the correspondence between Tchaikovsky and Balakirev from 1869 to 1881 has illustrated that the two composers differed in their conceptualisation of *Romeo and Juliet's* programme. We find that Tchaikovsky's reactions to Balakirev's proposal for the programme of the fantasy-overture were not as submissive as scholarship on the subject commonly suggests. Their early exchanges portrayed Balakirev as a teacher with Tchaikovsky assuming the role of the eager student.

Despite his pursuit of advice from the experienced Balakirev, Tchaikovsky's writings suggest conflicting reactions to his instructions, indicative of his evolving personal belief in his own compositional skills. In such instances we see glimmers of the emerging *persona* of the composer. However, through the correspondence between both composers, we can see how easily Tchaikovsky allowed his emotions and moods to govern his interpretations of Balakirev's words. We are reminded of a letter to Anatoly (Letter 2) in which Tchaikovsky accused Balakirev of abusive commentary. My research proposes that the diatribe in question was the motivational communication (Letter 3) which suggested *King Lear* as a model for the programme of *Romeo and Juliet*. As there is no evidence of any other letter from Balakirev detailing a specific tonal plan for *Romeo and Juliet* we can only speculate that Tchaikovsky looked to this letter for his source.

In this document, Balakirev proposed a programme based on a musical dialogue between character representation and scenic representation. Assuming we accept this plan as an archetype for Tchaikovsky's fantasy-overture, then it appears that his attempt to elevate this style is one of confusion. If Tchaikovsky had intended to represent Friar Lawrence in the opening of his *Romeo and Juliet*, but neglected to label any other theme/character, then it appears that he may not have wished to follow through completely with Balakirev's suggested plan. Also, there appears to be no musical allusions to either specific scenes or surroundings fundamental to the Shakespearean play. In this regard, Tchaikovsky's programme for *Romeo and Juliet* seems to reflect his interpretation of the emotional aspect of the play.

An appraisal of the letters between Balakirev and Tchaikovsky has revealed Tchaikovsky's continued remodelling of his mentor's advice. Although Tchaikovsky adapted Balakirev's original musical idea for the representation of conflict, he refrained from opening the work with this theme. Tchaikovsky also refused Balakirev's suggestion of a quiet conclusion to the fantasy-overture. Choosing to write *Romeo and Juliet* in 4/4 time, as opposed to the suggested 3/4 time, Tchaikovsky drew inspiration from the dramatic chordal sword-thrusts and agitated semiquaver passage-work proposed by Balakirev. Even though the work had been completed, Tchaikovsky sent Balakirev the four main musical themes of *Romeo and Juliet* in excerpt form. With thoughts of Balakirev's previous criticism of *Fatum* still resonating, Tchaikovsky was wary of the nationalist's reaction to his fantasy-overture. This may have prompted his choice to list the ideas in such an exposed format.

Tchaikovsky's decision to cite the two elements of the broad 'Love Theme' in reverse order is striking, especially when we consider the fact that the work was finished at this stage of correspondence. Can this act be then interpreted as a flicker of defiance on Tchaikovsky's part? Maybe he confused the order of these musical ideas on purpose to disorient Balakirev's perception of the work and thus avoid harsh criticism. On the other hand, the themes may have been reversed in a bid to perplex the interpreter, who would read Tchaikovsky's sketches in later years. However, it is more likely that Tchaikovsky may have actually lied in his letter to Balakirev (which accompanied the original sketches). He may not have completed the fantasy-overture at this stage, and this would

explain Tchaikovsky's listing of 'LTa' and 'LTb' in this order. Notwithstanding, his overall lack of commentary on the labelling of his musical themes, and *Romeo and Juliet*'s programme itself, suggests that his silence was intentional, as it allows the interpreter to decide upon the possible representational identity of the themes.

Balakirev's reactions to the *Romeo and Juliet* sketches were mixed. He dismissed the introductory theme for its allegiance to Haydn and remained unconvinced by the theme suggestive of the warring Montagues and Capulets. However, the 'Love Theme' was to his satisfaction. Despite receiving these comments in December 1869, Tchaikovsky did not immediately set about revising the work. Following *Romeo and Juliet*'s première in March 1870, Balakirev began a letter detailing his critique of the work, but it was never sent, despite its inclusion in scholarly discussions on the genesis of *Romeo and Juliet*. Therefore, by the summer of 1870 Tchaikovsky still had not received Balakirev's review of the fantasy-overture. In spite of this, he pursued his revision of the score.

Resultantly, my research has argued that Balakirev was not the sole motivator for Tchaikovsky's revision to *Romeo and Juliet* in either 1870 or 1880. Both revisions appear to have been stimulated by the poor concert reception of the work in Russia and Europe, respectively. Documentary evidence fails to offer any concrete reason for either Tchaikovsky's return to the work in 1880, or his intention to compose a duet on the same subject.



The proposed *Romeo and Juliet* opera bears hermeneutic significance within the overall circle of understanding Tchaikovsky's musical representation of this Shakespearean tale. Through the lens of this incomplete duet, it is possible to interpret the love music of the fantasy-overture in a new light. Both characters of 'Romeo' and 'Juliet' engage in a dialogue supported by elements from 'LTa' throughout the duet. Immediately, this dissipates the notion of the theme solely representing the figure of Juliet. Even though Romeo soliloquises to the 'LTb' idea for most of the work, Tchaikovsky empowers Juliet through this melodic theme towards the finale. This gesture reconsiders the traditional perception, associated with the original fantasy-overture, that 'LTb' is a specific representation of Romeo.

The concept of thematic representation was also pondered in relation to the 'LTa' theme through its possible allusion to 'Chizhik-Pizhik'. This imbues the nursery rhyme with hermeneutic value as an interpretative trope through which the presence of Tchaikovsky, the *persona*, is implied. Such an inference opened this interpretation up to the consideration of other underlying meanings, which may be attached to the aesthetic ideologies of realism. As a result the final hermeneutic window emerged. In employing the *Manfred* symphony here as an interpretative tool through which *Romeo and Juliet* can be reinterpreted, we arrive at the final structural trope, as defined by Kramer.

#### 4 Hermeneutic Window: *Manfred*

This fourth hermeneutic window has proposed that the primary musical narratives of both *Manfred* and *Romeo and Juliet* may be interpreted as a multi-layered discourse between the *persona*, the *anima* and death. Through their interactions within their respective programmes, conflict between the archetypes of ‘Romance’ and ‘Tragedy’, as theorised by Almén, emerge. The former of the pair explored the dichotomy between the *persona* and mortality, and the *persona* and death, while the later considered the *persona*’s struggle with the *anima*. These issues were not only contemplated in the artistic works of Lord Byron and his contemporaries, but they were also addressed, whether directly or indirectly, by Tchaikovsky and his Russian peers.

For Almén, the ‘Romance’ archetype was premised on the victory of a desired order over an undesired transgression or opposition. I have interpreted the ‘desired order’ here, as that of ‘death’, and the ‘undesired transgression or opposition’ as life/the *persona*. Throughout his life, the *persona*, or ‘common man’, spends much of his time either avoiding the inevitability of death, or philosophising about it. Eventually the acceptance of death becomes the desired order, whereby the *persona* is finally freed from his anguish. Throughout *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Manfred*, this relationship is charted through orchestration, static harmony, rhythmic patterns, tonality, the use of particular diminished intervals, and of course the specific interaction of the respective musical themes suggestive of the *persona* and death. Ultimately, the ‘Romance’ is conveyed through the celebration of death in both musical works.

The ‘Tragedy’ archetype is defined as the failure of a desired transgression, or an exercise in freedom against a restricted order. With this perspective in mind, I have interpreted the *anima* as the figure of freedom, while the *persona* takes on the role of restriction. Throughout both the fantasy-overture and the symphony the *anima* yearns for attention amid the powerful voices of the *persona* and death. In *Manfred* Tchaikovsky appears to suppress his *anima* by not allowing her to appear simultaneously to the *persona*. However, the connection between the pair is alluded to through the use of orchestration, repeated chords, and a tonal relationship (albeit unexpected), centred on the flattened supertonic and tonic (this chromatic interaction reminds us of the D flat/D major dialogue in *Romeo and Juliet*). However, the communication between the *anima* and the *persona* is more obvious in the fantasy-overture. Here, the opposing musical ideas are allowed to duet, thus emphasising their unity within the overall psyche of ‘the self’/the *persona*. They share the same tonality, and the *anima* repeatedly emerges as a steady harmonic and rhythmic support to the languid theme of the *persona*. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that Tchaikovsky’s sense of self actually seemed more assured in 1869/1870, while composing *Romeo and Juliet*, than that reflected in *Manfred* in 1885.

A similar contrast between the *anima* and the *persona* materialised in Tchaikovsky’s Reality through his relationship with the female figures of Artôt, Milyukova, and von Meck. In attempting to access these women through ‘love’, tragedy (by Tchaikovsky’s standards) ensued. The most successful pairing was undoubtedly that of von Meck and Tchaikovsky. Through their correspondence,

the *persona* of the composer was permitted access to the support of his *anima*. In his letters to her we saw Tchaikovsky waver between representations of himself, as a fragile individual grappling with the philosophical ideals of the day, and representations of himself as a confident composer.

From the comparative analysis of *Manfred* and *Romeo and Juliet* Tchaikovsky's perspective on death appears more celebratory in the symphony than in the fantasy-overture. In *Manfred* we see similarities between the musical theme suggestive of death and the *persona*'s motto. This implies that the issue of mortality is already a part of the protagonist's make-up from the very beginning of the composition. By the end of the fourth movement, death has empowered the *persona* and both figures dissolve towards their inevitable union — a union suggestive of peace and reconciliation through the quiet fading out of the orchestral voices. Death has been accepted. In *Romeo and Juliet* death also consumes the 'lonely soul', but here death sounds out his triumph in vociferous 'thumped out chords'.

This investigation has removed *Romeo and Juliet* from its static interpretative position, within the canon of nineteenth-century music, by infusing it with new interest and purpose — it has become a horizon through which Tchaikovsky's understanding of programme music is revealed. My discussion on 'self' and 'otherness' has echoed the disparity between inner truth and superficial reality that punctuated nineteenth-century Russian aesthetics. This is particularly true of my proposal that *Romeo and Juliet* may be interpreted as a representation

of Tchaikovsky's understanding of Realism (his inner truth). It is his struggle with mortality and the afterlife that permeates the programme of the fantasy-overture — a programme hidden beneath the superficial reality of its Shakespearean title, and the interpretative expectations created by such textual and citational inclusions.

From my hermeneutic engagement with the written correspondence between Tchaikovsky and Balakirev, it is hoped that future research will pursue the study of Balakirev's programmatic compositions, and his writings, as there is very little scholarship in this area. Such work would contribute further to our understanding of the composer's contribution to the Russian philosophical aesthetic of music in the late nineteenth-century.

Ultimately, this interpretative exercise has demonstrated the worth of reevaluating a well-established programmatic work, with interesting results. While I do not assert that my interpretation is by any means a definite expression of *Romeo and Juliet's* programme, I propose that such ideas are possible and deserve consideration within the hermeneutic circle of understanding. After all, Tchaikovsky never explicitly revealed his intentions regarding this work in his written correspondence. From my examination of *Romeo and Juliet* it is hoped that this thesis has contributed to the growing corpus of research on musical hermeneutics and the burgeoning movement of intellectualising Tchaikovsky's music.

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## Appendix I: Letters, Programme Notes and Articles

### A.I.1 Tchaikovsky's Letter to Anton Door requesting a performance of *Romeo and Juliet* in Vienna (1876)<sup>1</sup>

#### French text (original)

#### English translation

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Moscou le 10/22 Fevrier 1875 (1876)

Moscow 10/22 February 1875 (1876)

Cher ami!

Dear friend!

Depuis bien longtemps je me propose de V[ou]s écrire pour V[ous] remercier de l'amitié que V[ou]s n'avez jamais cessé de me témoigner et de l'attention dont V[ous] honorez mes compositions. Si j'ai tant tardé à remplir cette dette de reconnaissance, c'est que V[ou]s ne pouvez pas V[ous] imaginer combien je suis devenu paresseux pour tout ce qui n'entre pas dans le cercle de mes occupations quotidiennes. Mais, après une conversation que j'ai eu ce matin avec Jürgenson, qui m'a appris que V[ou]s avez eu encore une fois l'extrême bonté de mettre dans votre programme des morceaux à moi, je n'ai pu y tenir et je m'empresse maintenant de V[ou]s annoncer que je ne suis pas un ingrat et que je suis on ne peut plus touché des marques de votre amitié qui m'est d'autant plus chère, que j'ai toujours professé pour V[ou]s une grande et sincère

For quite a long time I have been intending to write to you in order to thank you for the friendship which you have never ceased to manifest towards me and for the attention with which you honour my compositions. If I have taken so long to fulfill this debt of gratitude, it is because you have no idea of how lazy I have become with regard to everything that does not fall within the circle of my daily occupations. But after a conversation I had this morning with Jürgenson, who informed me that you have once again been so extremely kind as to include some of my pieces in your programme, I could not leave it at that and am now hurrying to let you know that I am not an ungrateful person, and that I am most touched by the tokens of your friendship, which is all the dearer to me, since I have always felt a

<sup>1</sup> This letter is available at: <<http://www.tchaikovsky-research.net/en/letters/1876/0444.html>>.

sympathie. J'apprécie à la juste valeur le service énorme que V[ous] rendez à ma carrière de compositeur, en jouant mes morceaux et en me faisant connaître à Vienne. Merci, merci et mille fois merci, cher et bon ami!

Maintenant, laissez moi V[ous] adresser une prière. Jürgenson me dit que d'après Votre lettre, il ne serait pas impossible qu'on jouât à Vienne une de mes compositions symphoniques. Si jamais ce bonheur pourrait arriver, je voudrais qu'on commence par une de mes pièces qui puisse donner au public de Vienne une aussi bonne idée que possible. Si jamais il'y aura sérieusement question de jouer quelque chose de moi, je suis sûr que c'est à V[ous] que l'on s'adressera pour le choix de la pièce. Je V[ous] supplie, cher Door, de recommander à ceux de qui cela dépend les compositions suivantes 1) *Roméo et Juliette*, ouverture 2) *La Tempête*, fantaisie sur le drame de Shakespeare 3) troisième symphonie, composée récemment et jouée à Moscou et à Petersbourg avec succès. La première de ces oeuvres est imprimée (partition et parties séparées) chez Bote et Bock ou bien Bessel de Petersbourg. Quant au deux autres il faudra V[ous] adresser à moi ou à Jurgenson pour la partition et les parties. La Tempête est imprimée en arrangement de piano à quatre mains. Quant au[x] quatuors on pourrait commencer par le premier, car, quoique inférieur au[x] deux autres, il

great and sincere sympathy for you. I can fully appreciate the huge service which you are rendering to my career as a composer by playing my pieces and making me known in Vienna. A thousand thanks to you, dear and good friend!

Now let me address a request to you. Jürgenson tells me that, judging from your letter, it is not impossible that one of my symphonic compositions might be played in Vienna. If this good fortune were ever to happen, I should wish them to begin with a work of mine which is capable of giving the Viennese public as good an impression as possible. If the question is ever seriously raised of performing something by me, I am sure that it is to you they will turn to ask about the work to be chosen. I implore you, dear Door, to recommend to those on whom all this depends the following compositions: 1) *Romeo and Juliet*, overture; 2) *The Tempest*, fantasy on Shakespeare's play; 3) Third Symphony, composed recently and performed successfully in Moscow and Petersburg. The first of these works is available in print (score and separate parts) from Bote and Bock or from Bessel in Petersburg. As for the other two, you would have to write to me or to Jürgenson for the score and the parts. The Tempest has been published as a 4-handed piano arrangement. As for my string quartets, it might be best to start with the first, since,

contient un *andante* qui a eu beaucoup de succès en Russie et qui généralement a le don de plaire au public

Enfin je V[ou]s dis tout cela seulement parce que je crois que grâce à Votre protection il ne serait pas impossible qu'on voulut jouer quelque chose de moi. Je V[ou]s avoue que ce serait le plus beau jour de ma vie. Mais je n'ai nullement la prétention de croire que cela doit arriver. Je sais très bien qu'en fait de compositeurs comme moi, il y en a plusieurs dizaines et même centaines en Allemagne. Dans tous [tous] les cas, si jamais cela arrive, c'est à V[ou]s que je le devrai, cher ami, et soyez certain que j'apprécie dans toute son étendue le service que Votre amitié m'aura rendu

Si je ne me trompe, Jürgenson m'a dit, que Votre lettre me transmet une salutation de la part de Hans Richter. Dites-lui que cela me touche extrêmement et que j'en suis énormément flatté

Adieu, cher ami.

P. Tchaikovsky

though it is inferior to the other two, it contains an *andante* which has had a lot of success in Russia and which generally has the gift of pleasing audiences.

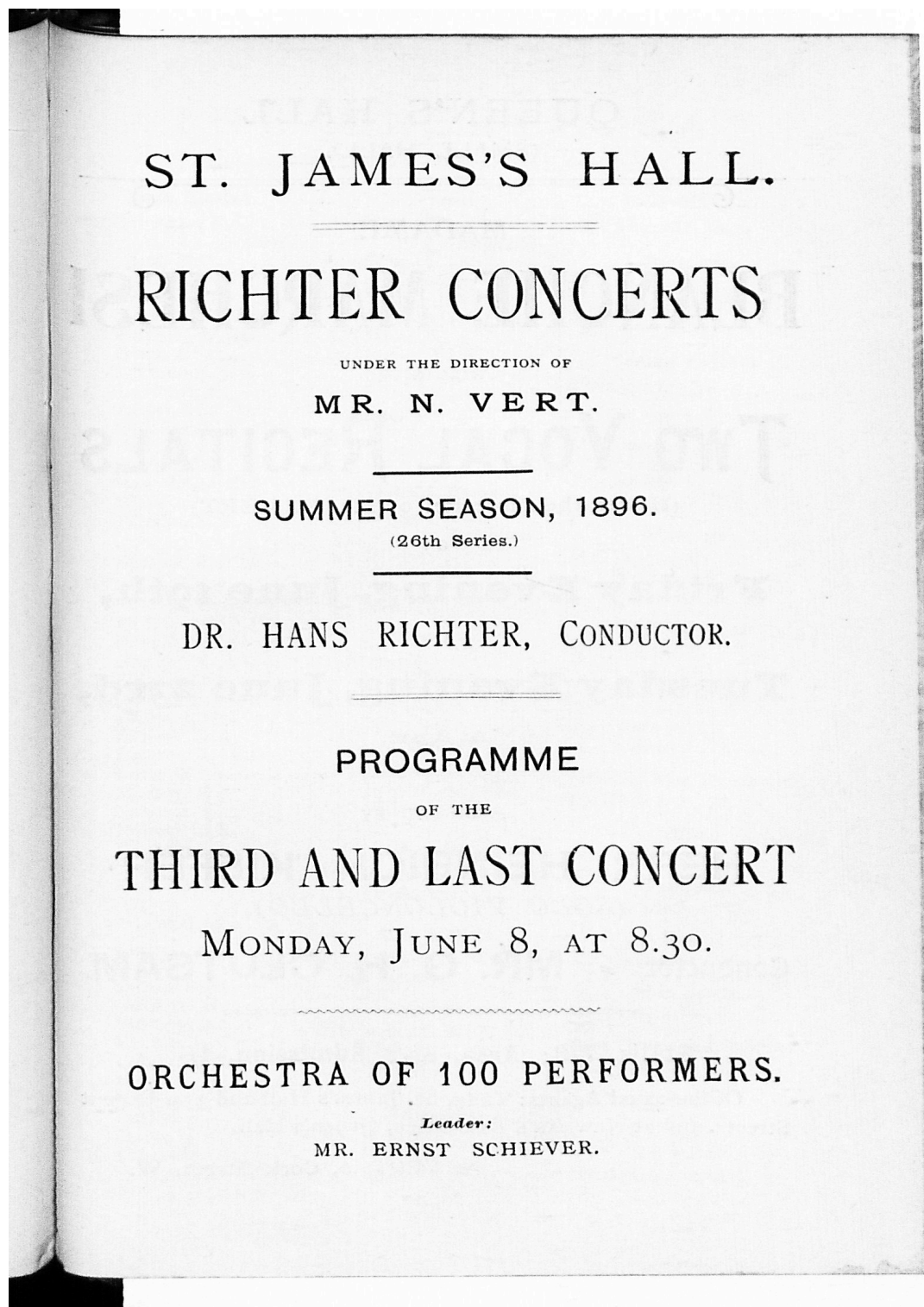
Anyway, I say all this to you solely because I think that thanks to your sponsorship it is not entirely impossible that someone may want to perform one of my [orchestral] works. I confess to you that this would be the finest day of my life. But I am by no means as arrogant as to suppose that this must happen. I know very well that in the matter of composers like me there are several dozens and even hundreds in Germany. In any case, if this ever comes to be, it is to you that I shall be obliged, dear friend, and rest assured that I can appreciate in its full scope the service which your friendship will then have rendered me

If I am not mistaken, Jürgenson told me that your letter conveys a greeting for me from Hans Richter. Tell him that I am very touched by this, and that I feel tremendously flattered

Farewell, dear friend.

P. Tchaikovsky

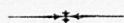
A.I.2 Programme Notes for Richter Performance of *Romeo and Juliet* (1896)<sup>2</sup>



<sup>2</sup> Charles Ainslie Barry, 'Programme of the Third and Last Concert: Monday 8 June at 8.30', in *St James's Hall Richter Concerts* (Summer 1896).



## Programme.



OVERTURE to Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" *Tschaïkowsky.*  
(First time at these Concerts.)

CHARFREITAGS-ZAUBER from "Parsifal" *Wagner.*

OVERTURE, "Otello" (Op. 93) - - *Dvořák.*  
(First time at these Concerts.)

VORSPIEL UND LIEBESTOD, from "Tristan  
und Isolde" - - - - - *Wagner.*

DER RITT DER WALKÜREN, "Die Walküre"  
*Wagner.*

SYMPHONY, in C minor, No. 5 (Op. 67) - *Beethoven.*





OVERTURE to Shakespeare's  
 "Romeo and Juliet" ... *Tschaïkowsky.*

(First time at these Concerts.)

This Overture, published by Messrs. Bote and Bock of Berlin in 1871, is a comparatively early work of the great Russian composer, but, if we take into account its symphonic proportions and poetic drift, it is certainly one which is none the less worth knowing. Mr. Manns brought it forward, for the first time in England, at the Crystal Palace in November, 1876, since which date, if recollection serves aright, it has not been heard here again.

Unlike Berlioz in his "Romeo and Juliet" Symphony, Tschaïkowsky, beyond the mere title, has furnished no clue as to the particular points of the drama which it has been his aim to translate into music. It is, therefore, left to each individual hearer to draw his own conclusions as to its poetical intent. At the same time, it may be suggested that the Introduction, with its solemn chorale-like opening and subsequent ecclesiastical progressions, might be taken to represent the music accompanying Juliet's obsequies; in the quick movement which follows it is easy to recognise the feud and combats between the two rival houses of Montagues and Capulets; the Prince's attempts to reconcile them; and finally reconciliation on the death of the lovers.



The Overture opens (*Andante non tanto, quasi moderato*) with an Introduction extending over 111 bars. Starting in F sharp minor, it modulates, towards the close, to B minor—the prevailing key of the quick movement, to which it leads. This Introduction is based for the most part on the three following themes.

First, a chorale-like subject:—

No. 1. Cl. & Fag.

First system: Treble clef, F# minor key signature, common time signature. Bass clef, F# minor key signature, common time signature. Dynamics: *p*.

Second system: Treble clef, F# minor key signature, common time signature. Bass clef, F# minor key signature, common time signature.

Secondly, immediately joining on with this:—

First system: Treble clef, F# minor key signature, common time signature. Bass clef, F# minor key signature, common time signature. Dynamics: *p* Bassi. Instruments: Vln., Vla., Hrn.

Second system: Treble clef, F# minor key signature, common time signature. Bass clef, F# minor key signature, common time signature. Dynamics: *sfz*.

Thirdly, by enharmonically changing the final note C sharp to D flat :—

No. 3. Fl. & Cl.

*pp* VI.

*cres.*

8.

Harp.

Attention is due to the close "imitation" here maintained by the Flutes and Clarinets in the presentation of a duet-like melody in octaves against a moving middle part for the Violoncellos. This will be made still more apparent on the passage being subsequently repeated in the key of C by the strings.

We have spoken of this Overture as a work of symphonic proportions. This, it should be explained, is due not only to the length and importance of the Introduction, but also to the fact that the material of this is subjected to further treatment in the body of the work, of which it forms an integral part. The Introduction closes, curiously enough, with several repetitions of the chord of the sixth on D, maintained alternately by Wind and Strings. The last of these leads directly into the quick

movement (*Allegro giusto*) in B minor, which starts thus:—

No. 4. Tutti.

*f*  
c. 8.

The extension of this theme is complemented by two accessory themes, of which much use is made in the course of the movement. First,

No. 5.

Secondly,

No. 6. Vln. Fl. & Ob.

*mf*

Bassi. c. 8.

The working-out of this material at length brings us to the second subject proper, which, after a close on the dominant seventh of A, by a sudden change of A into A flat, is introduced in the key of D flat. Its leading melody, at first assigned to the Violas and English Horn in unison, starts thus:—

No. 7. Eng. Hrn. & Viola.

This is immediately followed by an alternate theme for muted Strings, commencing:—

No. 8. Str. *c. sord.*

—and leading to a repetition of No. 7, more fully scored and more elaborately accompanied. Anon a *codetta* brings the first section to a quiet close in the key of D flat. At an earlier period of the Overture, it will be remembered, the composer enharmonically altered C sharp into D flat. By a reversed process he now alters D flat into C sharp, and thus easily merges into D minor, in which key the “working-out” section is proceeded with. Throughout modifications of the “combative” theme (No. 4) are predominant; the chorale-like subject (No. 1) is more than once heard in conjunction with No. 6; No. 5 is brought well to the fore; but no allusion is made to the second subject proper (No. 7). This, as well as its

alternative strain (No. 8), is reserved for the recapitulation section, in which both are accorded great prominence, but in reversed order. Towards its close No. 4 is reverted to, and subjected to varied treatment. With a change of pace to *Moderato assai*, an extended *Coda* based for the most part upon the following theme, against a *quasi tremolo* accompaniment for Flutes and Clarinets :—

No. 9. Harp.

*p*

Bassi.

*cres.* *dim.*

—and complemented by reminiscences of the second subject (No. 7), followed by four loud bars, brings the Overture to an abrupt termination in B major.

C. A. B.



### A.I.3 Tchaikovsky's Letter to Taneyev discussing his Fourth Symphony as Programmatic (1878)<sup>3</sup>

#### Russian text (original)

Clarens 27 марта  
8 апреля

Милый Серёжа!

С величайшим интересом и удовольствием прочёл письмо Ваше. В ответ на него мне следовало бы теперь же послать Вам обстоятельную критику Вашей партитуры, но я откладываю это на несколько дней. Я получил её недели две тому назад, как раз в то время, когда начал писать скрипичный концерт, который теперь тороплюсь окончить, чтобы к моему отъезду, который состоится на будущей неделе, он был вполне готов. Я несколько раз уже играл Вашу симфонию, но не решаюсь ещё высказать Вам решительное мнение о ней. Как только сбуду с плеч концерт, то исключительно предамся ей и тогда напишу Вам подробно моё мнение.

Напрасно Вы предполагали, что в Вашем отзыве о моей 4-ой симфонии есть что-нибудь резкое. Это просто откровенное Ваше мнение, и я Вам очень благодарен за сообщение его. Я нуждаюсь именно в мнении, а не в дифирамбе. Тем не менее

#### English translation

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Clarens 27 March  
8 April

Dear Serezha!

It was with the greatest interest and pleasure that I read your letter. In response to it I should now be sending you a comprehensive critique of your score, but I am putting this off for a few days. I received it some two weeks ago, just when I was starting to write a violin concerto, which I am now hurrying to finish, so that it is completely ready by the time of my departure, which will take place next week. I have played your symphony a number of times, but I would not venture to tell you my definitive opinion about it just yet. As soon as I get the concerto off my hands, I shall devote myself exclusively to your symphony, and then I shall write to you with my detailed opinion.

You were wrong to suppose that in your comments on my Fourth Symphony there might be anything unduly sharp. This is simply your frank opinion, and I am very grateful to you for sharing it with me. What I need is precisely an opinion, not a

<sup>3</sup> This letter is available at: <<http://www.tchaikovsky-research.net/en/letters/1878/0799.html>>.

многое в нём меня очень удивило. Я решительно не понимаю, что Вы называете балетной музыкой и почему Вы не можете с ней примириться? Подразумеваете ли Вы под балетной музыкой всякую весёлую и с плясовым ритмом мелодию? Но в таком случае Вы не должны мириться и с большинством симфоний Бетховена, в которых таковые на каждом шагу встречаются. Хотите ли Вы сказать, что трио в моём Скерцо написано в стиле Минкуса, Гербера и Пуньи? Но этого, мне кажется, оно не заслуживает. Вообще же я решительно не понимаю, каким образом в выражении балетная музыка может заключаться что-либо порицательное! Ведь балетная музыка не всегда же дурна; бывает и хорошая (укажу на «*Silvia*» Leo Delibes'a). А когда она хорошая, то не всё ли равно, танцует ли под неё Собещанская, или не танцует? Мне остаётся, следовательно, предположить, что не нравящиеся Вам балетные места симфонии не нравятся Вам не потому, что они балетные, а потому, что они плохи. Вы, может быть, совершенно правы, — но я всё-таки не постигаю, почему в симфонии не может эпизодически появиться плясовая мелодия, хотя бы и с преднамеренным оттенком площадного, грубого комизма. Я опять ссылаюсь на Бетховена, который не раз прибегал к этому эффекту. Затем я ещё прибавлю, что напрасно ломаю себе голову, чтобы понять, что Вы нашли

dithyramb. Nevertheless, in your comments there is a lot which surprised me very much. I really do not understand what you mean by ballet music and why you cannot reconcile yourself to it. By ballet music do you mean every cheerful melody with a dance rhythm? But in that case you shouldn't be able to reconcile yourself to the majority of Beethoven's symphonies, in which one continually comes across such melodies. Are you trying to say that the trio in my *Scherzo* is written in the style of Minkus, Gerber, and Pugini? This, however, I think it does not deserve. Indeed, I simply cannot understand why there should be anything at all reprehensible in the expression 'ballet music'! After all, ballet music is not always bad; there is also good ballet music (here I may cite Léo Delibes's *Sylvia*). And when it is good, what difference does it make whether Sobeshchanskaia is dancing to it or not? Consequently, I cannot but assume that the balletic passages in the symphony which you don't like displease you not because they are balletic, but because they are poor. You are perhaps quite right, but I still don't understand why a dance melody cannot appear episodically in a symphony, if only with a deliberate hue of vulgar and coarse comicality. Again, I cite the example of Beethoven, who resorted to this effect on more than one occasion. I should, moreover, like to add that I have been racking my brains to no avail trying to

балетного в средней части *andante*. Это для меня чистая загадка. Что касается Вашего замечания, что моя симфония программна, то я с этим вполне согласен. Я не вижу только, почему Вы считаете это недостатком. Я боюсь противоположного, т. е. я не хотел бы, что[б] из-под моего пера являлись симфонические произведения, ничего не выражающие и состоящие из пустой игры в аккорды, ритмы и модуляции. Симфония моя, разумеется, программна, но программа эта такова, что формулировать её словами нет никакой возможности. Это возбудило бы насмешки и показалось бы комично. Но не этим ли и должна быть симфония, т. е. самая лирическая из всех музыкальных форм? Не должна ли она выражать всё то, для чего нет слов, но что просится из души и что хочет быть высказано? Впрочем, я признаюсь Вам: я в своей наивности воображал, что мысль этой симфонии очень понятна, что в общих чертах смысл её доступен и без программы. И, пожалуйста, не думайте, что я хочу порисоваться перед Вами глубиной чувств и величием мыслей, недоступных слову. Никакой новой мысли я и не стремился высказать. В сущности, моя симфония есть подражание пятой бетховенской; т. е. я подражал не музыкальным его мыслям, но основной идее. Как Вы думаете, есть программа в 5-ой симфонии? Не только

understand what exactly struck you as balletic in the middle section of the *andante*. This is a sheer mystery for me. As to your remark that my symphony is programmatic, then I am in complete agreement. I just do not understand why you consider this to be a defect. It is the opposite that I fear — i.e. I should not wish symphonic works to flow from my pen that express nothing, and which consist of empty playing with chords, rhythms and modulations. My symphony is, of course, programmatic, but the programme is such that it is impossible to formulate in words. Such a thing would provoke ridicule and laughter. But is this not what a symphony, that is, the most lyrical of all musical forms, ought to be? Ought it not to express everything for which there are no words, but which gushes forth from the soul and cries out to be expressed? However, I must confess to you: in my naivety I imagined that the idea of the symphony was very clear, that in general outline its sense could be understood even without a programme. Please do not think that I am trying to plume myself in front of you with my depth of feelings and grandeur of thoughts that are not susceptible of verbal expression. I was not even seeking to express a new idea. In essence my symphony is an imitation of Beethoven's Fifth, that is, I was imitating not his musical thoughts, but the fundamental idea. What do you think: is there a programme in the Fifth Symphony?



есть, но тут и спору быть не может относительно того, что́ она стремится выразить. Приблизительно то же лежит в основании моей симфонии, и если Вы меня не поняли, то из этого следует только, что я не Бетховен, в чём я никогда и не сомневался. Ещё я прибавлю, что нет ни одной строчки в этой симфонии, т. е. в моей, которая бы не была мной прочувствована и не служила бы отголоском искренних движений души. Исключение составляет разве середина первой части, в которой есть натяжки, швы, подклейки, словом, деланность. Я знаю, что Вы смеётесь, читая эти строки. Ведь Вы скептик и насмешник. Вы, кажется, несмотря на свою любовь к музыке, не верите, что можно сочинять в силу внутренней потребности высказаться. Но подождите. Придёт и Ваш черёд. И Вы когда-нибудь, и, может быть скоро, начнёте писать не потому, что от Вас этого требуют другие, а потому, что Вы сами этого захотите. И только тогда на роскошную почву Вашего таланта (я выражаюсь несколько велеречиво, но верно) падут семена, из которых вырастут великолепные плоды. А покамест Ваша почва ожидает сеятеля. Впрочем, я об этом буду писать Вам в следующем письме. Чудные есть подробности в Вашей партитуре, но недостаёт...впрочем, я опять забегаю вперёд. Хочу в следующем письме говорить исключительно про Вас.

Not only is there one, but in that case there is simply no room for argument as to what it is seeking to express. Approximately the same [idea] underlies my symphony, and if you failed to understand me, then from this one can conclude only that I am no Beethoven, which I was never in any doubt about anyway. Furthermore, I'll add that there is not a note in this symphony (that is, in mine) which I did not feel deeply, and which did not serve as an echo of sincere impulses within my soul. A possible exception is the middle of the first movement, in which there are contrivances, seams, glued-together bits — in a word, artificiality. I know that you will be laughing as you read these lines. After all, you are a skeptic and a scoffer. It seems that in spite of your love for music, you do not believe that one can compose because of an inner necessity to express oneself. But wait a bit. Your turn will come too. And one day — perhaps quite soon — you will start to write not because it is something required of you by others, but because you yourself want to. And only then will there fall upon the luxurious soil of your talent (I am putting this rather bombastically, but it is true) seeds from which magnificent fruits will grow. For the time being, though, your soil is awaiting a sower. However, this is something I shall write to you about in my next letter. There are wondrous details in your score, but it is lacking in...here, though, I am jumping

Очень мне было интересно узнать мнения про «Франческу». Кюи не сам выдумал, что первая тема похожа на русскую песнь. Это я ему сказал в прошлом году. Не скажи я этого, — он бы и не заметил. Замечание, что я писал под впечатлением «Нибелунгов», очень верно. Я это сам чувствовал во время работы. Если я не ошибаюсь, это особенно заметно в интродукции. Не странно ли, что я подчинился влиянию художественного произведения, которое мне в общем весьма антипатично?

Многое переменялось во мне с тех пор, как я Вам написал, что не надеюсь больше заниматься сочинительством. Бес авторства неожиданным образом обуял меня сильнее, чем когда-либо.

Пожалуйста, Серёжа, не усматривайте в моём заступничестве за симфонию маленькое неудовольствие. Я, конечно, желал бы, чтоб всё, что я пишу, Вам нравилось, но я вполне доволен тем сочувствием, которое Вы мне всегда выражали. Вы не поверите, как меня радует, что «Онегин» Вам нравится. Я очень, очень дорожу Вашим мнением. И

ahead again. In my next letter I want to talk about you exclusively.

It was very interesting for me to find out these opinions about *Francesca*. But it wasn't Cui's own idea when he says that the first theme resembles a Russian song. I told him so myself last year. If I hadn't told him, he wouldn't have noticed. The observation that I wrote this work under the impression of *The Nibelungs* [that is, Wagner's *Ring* cycle] is very accurate. I felt this myself when I was working on it. If I am not mistaken, this is particularly noticeable in the Introduction. Isn't it strange that I succumbed to the influence of an artistic work which in general I find extremely antipathetic?

A lot has changed within me since I wrote to you that I had no hope of carrying on composing. The demon of authorship has unexpectedly seized me with a grip that is stronger than ever before.

Please, Serezha, do not see in my defense of the symphony a sign of slight displeasure on my part. Of course, I wish that everything I write might please you, but I am quite content with the sympathy which you have always expressed for me. You won't believe how glad I am that you like *Onegin*. I value your opinion very, very much. And the more frankly you

чем Вы откровеннее будете высказывать его, тем оно будет более ценно. Итак, благодарю Вас от всей души, и, пожалуйста, не бойтесь резкости. Мне нужно от Вас именно резко выраженной правды, благоприятной или

Неблагоприятной — это всё равно.

Ваш П. Чайковский

Вашим и Масловым шлю поклоны.

express it, the more valuable it is. Thus, I thank you wholeheartedly, and, please, do not be afraid of sharpness. What I need from you is precisely the truth expressed sharply — whether it is favourable or not, that doesn't matter.

Yours, P. Tchaikovsky

I send regards for your folk and for the Maslovs.

**A.I.4 Tchaikovsky's Defence of Balakirev (*Sovremennaya Letopis'*, Moscow, May 1869)<sup>4</sup>**

**'A Voice from Moscow's Musical World'**

It has happened before that a young person, full of love for the truth, vitality, and with hopes blossoming, enters a field which is considered most suited to his abilities. His gifts are acknowledged, his merits are appreciated, and he begins, as they say, to build a career; but all at once the whim of a superior destroys the position he had earned through perseverance and honest toil, and the maligned victim of this overbearing capriciousness perishes in the abyss of idleness, in the tavern, or in his sickbed.

Something similar did happen recently in the capital city of Saint Petersburg. And in what field? In the peaceful world of art, where, one might suppose, a greater or lesser degree of success must singularly depend on a greater or lesser degree of talent.

Several years ago M. A. Balakirev appeared in Petersburg to search for a position in the musical world equal to his talents. This artist very soon acquired for himself an honourable reputation as a pianist and composer. Full of the purest and most selfless love for his native art, M. A. Balakirev demonstrated himself to be a most energetic worker in the field of strictly Russian music. Citing Glinka as his great model of a truly Russian artist, M. A. Balakirev advanced through his

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<sup>4</sup> This article was first published in the journal *Contemporary Chronicle* (*Современная летопись*) on 4 May 1869. This English translation of Tchaikovsky's article was translated by Luis Sundkvist in 2009 as part of the *Tchaikovsky-Research.net* project which translated fifty-seven of Tchaikovsky's music review articles from 1868–1876. The article is available at: <<http://www.tchaikovsky-research.net/en/Works/Articles/TH258/index.html>>.

own activity as an artist the idea that the Russian people, with its rich gift for music, should also contribute its mite to the universal treasure-house of art. We will not explore in detail what this splendid musician has done for Russian art — as his merits have long since been appreciated duly by all who love music — but it would not be superfluous to refer to some of them, so that the Saint Petersburg public can be made aware that they are losing such a remarkable artist in this irreplaceable and untiringly active member of the Russian Musical Society.

Leaving to one side Balakirev's significance as an excellent composer, let us mention only the following facts:

- M. A. Balakirev gathered and published an excellent collection of Russian folk songs, with which he opened up to us the richest materials for Russian music of the future.
- He introduced the public to the great works of the recently-deceased Hector Berlioz.
- He fostered and trained several very talented Russian musicians, out of whom we might name N. A. Rimsky-Korsakov as the most outstanding.
- Finally, he gave foreigners the opportunity to find out for themselves that Russian music and Russian composers really do exist, by arranging for Glinka's *Ruslan and Lyudmila* to be staged in Prague, one of the most musical cities of Western Europe.

It was a mark of recognition of such brilliant talent and such helpful service that two years ago the enlightened Directors of the Saint Petersburg Musical Society

invited Mr Balakirev to become the concertmaster for the Society's ten yearly concerts. The directors' choice proved to be a resounding success.

The programmes for these concerts were of particular interest because of the space now and then given to Russian compositions, and the outstanding orchestral performances and highly-trained chorus drew numerous members of the public to the Musical Society's events, who enthusiastically showed their sympathy for the untiring Russian concertmaster. Only as long ago as the last concert (on 26 April) it was reported in the press that Mr Balakirev received endless stormy ovations from both the public and the musicians.

But how the public was shocked when it soon learned that the aforementioned enlightened directors have, for some reason, found the services of Mr Balakirev to be unhelpful, even harmful, and that to occupy the post of concertmaster they have invited people who are as yet unsullied with a love of our national music that seems to be anathema to our enlighteners.

We do not know how the Petersburg public will respond to such an unceremonious treatment, but it would be most regrettable if this man who has been such a credit to the highest of musical establishments were expelled from it without provoking protests on the part of Russian musicians. We would dare to assert that in the present instance our modest voice speaks for the profound concern shared by all Russian musicians as a whole, and in conclusion we should like to remark that M. A. Balakirev is not at all in the position of those insulted and injured persons whom we spoke about at the beginning of our article. For the less this artist finds encouragement in those spheres from which the decree of

ostracism came down upon him, the greater the sympathy which the public will feel for him, and the public is certainly a despot whose opinion deserves to be taken into account, because in the struggle with the forces that are hostile to a beloved artist it will always emerge victorious.

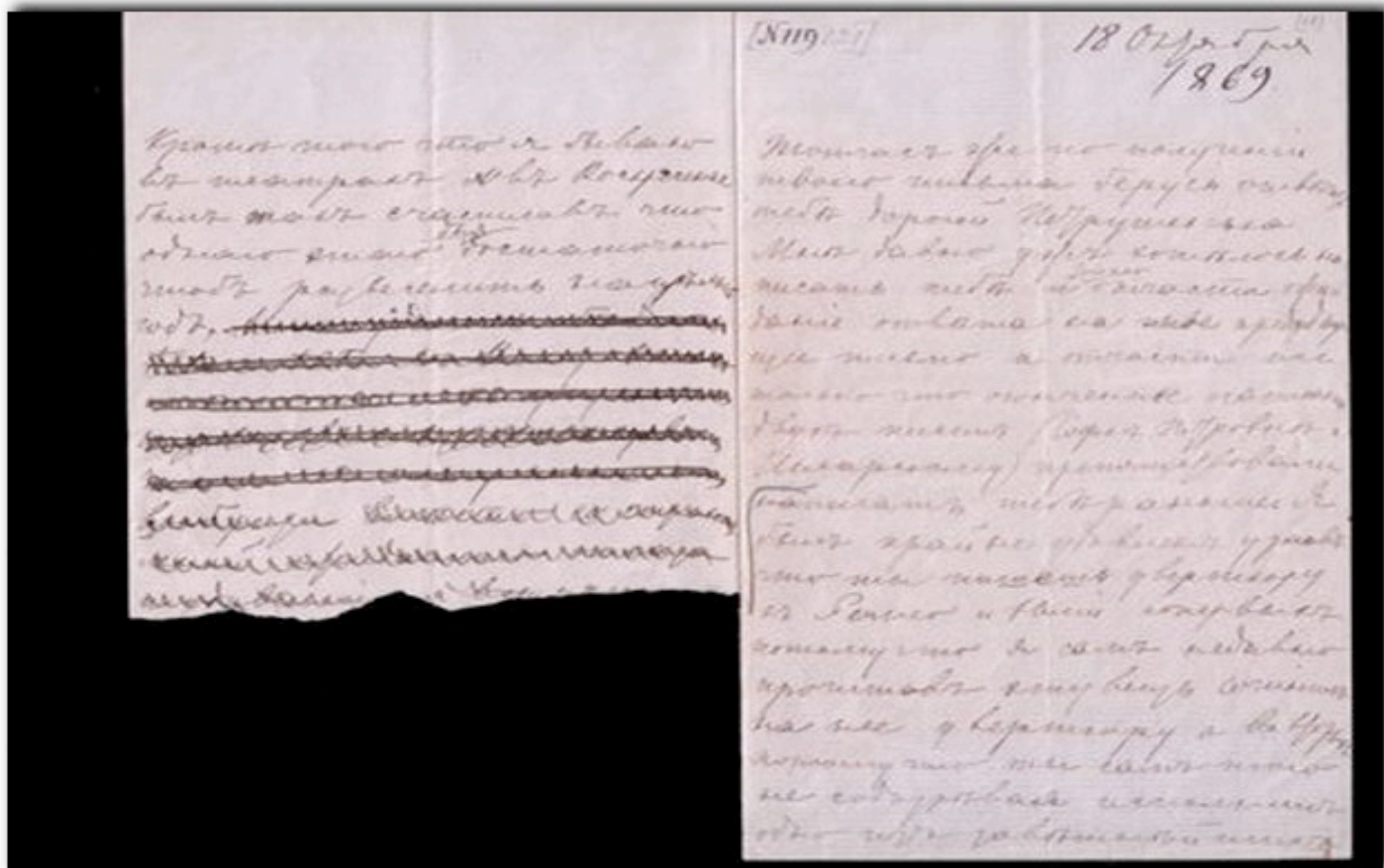
Mr Balakirev can now with equal right say what the father of Russian letters said in his time when he was told that he was going to be expelled from the Academy of Sciences:

Lomonosov can get along without the Academy said this hard-working genius, but the Academy can't do without Lomonosov!<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Mikhail Vasilyevich Lomonosov (1711–1765) was a scientist, writer and poet. He was an important figure in eighteenth-century Russia and contributed to the development of the national literary language. See Marina Ritzarev, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), p. 150.

A.I.5 Letter from Modest to Tchaikovsky, 18 (30) October 1869<sup>6</sup>



<sup>6</sup> This digital photograph was kindly provided by the Archives at the Tchaikovsky House Museum at Klin (GDMC). These are the first sheets of the letter (the two inside views). The bottom of the sheet is torn off. There is no mention of the overture on other sheets and a part of another one is also torn off. Unfortunately, the letter is not preserved completely. The letter's pressmark is ГДМЧ а4 № 504.





## A.I.6 Tchaikovsky's letter to Taneyev detailing his wish to compose an opera based on *Romeo and Juliet* (1878)<sup>7</sup>

### Russian text (original)

San-Remo, 2 (14) янв[аря] 1878 г.

(Pension Joly)

Благодарствуйте, Серёжа, и за милое письмо и за вчерашнюю телеграмму, которая доставила мне очень большое удовольствие, — и это не фраза. Я стал очень недоверчив, очень склонен сомневаться в дружбе людей, ценимых мною, и всякое доказательство противоположного радует меня до крайности. Спасибо Вам и милым Масловым. С какой завистью я думал вчера о Вашем милом кружке, и как бы мне приятно было побыть немножко хоть с Вами! Увы! до этого далеко. Раньше будущей осени не придётся мне ни видеть Вас, ни послушать, как-то Вы стали играть, ни посмотреть на Ваши партитуры. Очень, очень любопытен я знать, что Вы там натворили. Я не вполне доверяю суждению Рубинштейна. Он очень часто изменял своё мнение о той или другой вещи после ближайшего знакомства. Что касается Вас, то относительно себя самого Вы ужасный пессимист. Что, кабы Вы решились разориться и выслать мне партитуру по почте?

Очень может быть, что Вы правы, говоря, что моя опера не сценична. Но я Вам на это отвечу, что мне на несценичность плевать. Факт, что у меня нет сценической жилки,

### English translation

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San Remo, 2 (14) January 1878

(Pension Joly)

Thank you, Serezha, both for your sweet letter and for yesterday's telegram, which afforded me great pleasure — this is no empty phrase. I have become very mistrustful, very inclined to doubt the friendship of people whom I value, and every proof of the contrary makes me extremely glad. I thank you and the dear Maslovs. With what envy I thought yesterday about your dear circle, and how agreeable it would be for me if I were able to be with you for a bit! Alas! that is a long way off. I won't get to see you before next autumn, nor to hear how you are now playing nor to look through your scores. I am very, very curious to know what you have been getting up to over there. I don't fully trust Rubinstein's judgment. He has very often changed his opinion about this or that work after getting to know it better. As far as you are concerned, you are a terrible pessimist with regard to yourself. Listen, what if you were to ruin yourself and send me the score by post?

It may very well be that you are right in saying that my opera [*Evgenii Onegin*] is not effective on the stage. But to this I should like to reply that I don't give a damn about its

<sup>7</sup> This letter is available at: <<http://www.tchaikovsky-research.net/en/letters/1878/0716.html>>.

давно признан, и я теперь мало об этом сокрушаюсь. Несценично, так не ставьте и не играйте. Я написал эту оперу потому, что в один прекрасный день мне с невыразимою силою захотелось положить на музыку всё, что в «Онегине» просится на музыку. Я это и сделал, как мог. Я работал с неописанным увлечением и наслаждением, мало заботясь о том, есть ли движение, эффекты и т. д. Плевать мне на эффекты. Да и что такое эффекты! Если Вы их находите, например, в какой-нибудь «Аиде», то я Вас уверяю, что ни за какие богатства в мире я не мог бы теперь написать оперу с подобным сюжетом, ибо мне нужны люди, а не куклы; я охотно примусь за всякую оперу, где хотя и без сильных и неожиданных эффектов, но существа, подобные мне, испытывают ощущения, мною тоже испытанные и понимаемые. Ощущений египетской принцессы, фараона, какого-то бешеного нубийца я не знаю, не понимаю. Какой-то инстинкт подсказывает мне, что эти люди должны были двигаться, говорить, чувствовать, а следовательно, и выражать свои чувства совсем как-то особенно, не так, как мы. Поэтому моя музыка, пропитанная, помимо моей воли, шуманизмом, вагнеризмом, шопенизмом, глинкизмом, берлиозизмом и всякими другими новейшими измами, будет вязаться с действующими лицами «Аиды», как изящные, галантерейные речи героев Расина, говорящих друг с другом на вы, вяжутся с представлением о настоящем Оресте, настоящей Андромахе и т. д. Это будет ложь. И эта-то ложь мне противна. Впрочем, я пожинаю плоды своей недостаточной начитанности. Знай я более

ineffectiveness on the stage. The fact that I don't have a dramatic vein has long since been recognized, and it is something I don't fret much over now. If it's ineffective, well don't stage it then and don't play it. I wrote this opera because one fine day I felt an inexpressible urge to set to music everything in [Pushkin's] *Onegin* that is just asking to be turned into music. This I did as best as I could. I worked on the opera with an indescribable enthusiasm and pleasure, not worrying too much as to whether it had action, effects etc. I spit on effects. Besides, what are effects anyway?! If you can find these, for example, in some old *Aida*, then I must assure you that not for any riches in the world would I now be able to write an opera with such a plot, because I need people, not puppets. I will gladly tackle any opera [subject] in which, even if it did not have any powerful and unexpected effects, I should find beings like me, experiencing emotions which I too have experienced and can understand. The emotions of an Egyptian princess, of Pharaoh, of some frantic Nubian, I do not know or understand. Some instinct tells me that these people must have moved, spoken, felt, and, consequently, expressed their feelings in a very peculiar manner — not as we do. That is why my music, which, in spite of myself, is suffused with Schumannism, Wagnerism, Chopinism, Glinkaism, Berliozism, and all the other 'isms' of our time, would fit the characters of *Aida* about just as well as the graceful, urbane speeches of Racine's heroes, who address one another as 'Vous', correspond to one's notion of the real Orestes, the real Andromache etc. It would be false, and such falsehood is loathsome to me.

литературы всяких родов, я бы, конечно, нашёл что-нибудь подходящее для моих вкусов и в то же время сценичное. К сожалению, я не умею найти сам ничего и не встречаю людей, которые могли бы натолкнуть меня на такой сюжет, как, например, «Carmen» Bizet,—одна из прелестнейших опер нашего времени. Вы спросите, да чего же мне нужно? Извольте, скажу. Мне нужно, чтобы не было царей, цариц, народных бунтов, битв, маршей, словом, всего того, что составляет атрибут grand opéra. Я ищу интимной, но сильной драмы, основанной на конфликте положений, мною испытанных или виденных, могущих задеть меня за живое. Я непрочь также от фантастического элемента, ибо тут нечем стесняться и простору фантазии нет границ. Я, кажется, неясно выражаюсь. Ну, словом, Аида так далека от меня, я так мало трогаюсь её несчастною любовью к Радамесу, которого тоже не могу себе представить, что моя музыка не будет прочувствована, как того требует всякая хорошая музыка. Недавно я видел в Генуе «Африканку». Какая несчастная эта африканка! И рабство-то, и темницу, и смерть под ядовитым деревом, и торжество соперницы в предсмертные минуты приходится ей испытать,—и всё-таки мне её несколько не жаль. А между тем есть эффекты, есть корабль, драки, всякая штука! Ну и чорт с ними, с этими эффектами.

However, I am reaping the fruits of my own insufficiently wide reading. If I had a greater knowledge of literature of various genres, I would of course be able to find something suitable for my tastes and at the same time effective on the stage. Unfortunately, I can't find anything myself and I haven't come across people who could point me to such a subject as Bizet's *Carmen*, for instance, which is one of the most delightful operas of our times. You may be wondering what I'm looking for. Well, I'll tell you. What I need is something without any kings or queens, without any popular revolts, battles, marches — in short, without all those attributes of grand opera. I am looking for an intimate but powerful drama, based on a conflict of situations which I have experienced or witnessed myself, and which are able to touch me to the quick. I am not averse even to have some fantastic element, since there is no need to restrain oneself then, and one can give free rein to one's imagination. I suppose, though, I'm not making myself quite clear. Well, in short, *Aida* is so remote from me, I am moved so little by her unhappy love for Radames, whom I likewise cannot picture to myself, that my music would not be heartfelt, as is necessary for all good music. I recently saw [Meyerbeer's] *L'Africaine* in Genoa. How wretched this poor African Girl is! She has to endure slavery, imprisonment, death under a poisoned tree, and the triumph of her rival as she is dying — and yet I don't feel sorry for her in the least. But of course there you have plenty of effects: a ship, fighting scenes, you name it! Well, I say to hell with them, to hell with these effects!

Относительно Вашего замечания, что Татьяна не сразу влюбляется в Онегина, скажу, что Вы ошибаетесь. Именно сразу «Ты лишь вошёл,—я вдруг узнала, вся обомлела, запылала!..» Ведь она влюбляется в Онегина не потому, что он такой или другой; ей не нужно узнавать его, чтоб полюбить. Ещё до его прихода она уж влюблена в неопределённого героя своего романа. Онегину стоило показаться, чтоб она тотчас же снабдила его всеми качествами своего идеала и перенесла на живого человека любовь, которую питала к детищу своего распалённого романами воображения.

Опера «Онегин» никогда не будет пользоваться успехом, я это наперёд знаю. Никогда я не найду артистов, могущих хотя приблизительно отвечать моим требованиям. Казёнщина, рутинная наших больших сцен, бессмыслица постановки, система держать инвалидов, не давая хода молодым, всё это делает мою оперу почти невозможной на сцене. Представьте себе Орлова или Додонова в роли Ленского, или Александрову, даже Люценко в Татьяне, Фюрера или даже Мельникова в Онегине. Смешно и жалко! Гораздо охотнее я бы отдал эту оперу на сцену консерватории, и этого я даже желаю. Здесь, по крайней мере, не будет пошлой рутинной казённых театров и этих омерзительных инвалидов и инвалидок. Притом же консерватория даёт свои представления как бы частным образом, en petit comité. Это более идёт к моему скромному произведению, которого я даже не

With regard to your remark that Tat'iana [in Pushkin's novel] does not fall in love with Olegin at once, I must say that you are mistaken. For it does happen at once: "No sooner had you entered, than I knew it, I was stunned, I was all ablaze!..." You see, she falls in love with Olegin not because he has these or those qualities; she does not need to get to know him in order to fall in love. Already before his arrival she was in love with the vague hero of her novel. Olegin had only to make his appearance for her to endow him immediately with all the qualities of her ideal and transfer onto a living being the love which she had felt for the product of her imagination, inflamed as it was by novels.

The opera *Olegin* will never enjoy success — that I know in advance. I shall never find the artists who could, even just approximately, meet my requirements. The conventionalism and routine of our big theatres, their nonsensical staging practices, the system they have of keeping on invalids and not giving young [singers] a chance — all this renders my opera almost impossible on the stage. Just imagine Orlov or Dodonov in the role of Lenskii, or Aleksandrova, even Liutsenko, as Tat'iana, or Fiurer, or even Mel'nikov, as Olegin. It would be ridiculous and lamentable! I would much rather hand over this opera for the stage of the Conservatory, and in fact this is what I wish. For there at least we won't have the banal routine of the state theatres and those loathsome invalids, male and female. Moreover, the Conservatory puts on its performances as private events, as it were, *en petit comité*. That is more suitable for my

назову оперой, если оно будет печататься. Я назову его: лирические сцены, или что-нибудь вроде этого.

Да, это опера, лишённая будущности, я это знал, когда писал её, и тем не менее написал, кончу и пушу в свет, если Юргенсон согласится печатать. Я не только не буду хлопотать, чтоб её ставили в Мариинском театре, я буду по возможности противиться этому. Я написал её потому, что повиновался непобедимому внутреннему влечению. Уверяю Вас, что только под этим условием следует писать оперы. Думать об эффектах и заботиться о сценичности нужно только до некоторой степени. Иначе это будет эффектно, занятно, пожалуй, красиво и интересно, но не увлекательно, не живо. Если моё увлечение сюжетом «Онегина» свидетельствует о моей ограниченности, тупости, о моём невежестве и незнакомстве со сценическими условиями, то это очень жаль, но, по крайней мере, то, что я написал, в буквальном смысле вылилось из меня, а не выдумано, не вымучено. Довольно об «Онегине». Поговорю с Вами о новом моём труде, 4-ой симфонии, которая теперь уже должна быть в Москве.

Что-то Вы скажете об ней? Я очень дорожу Вашим мнением и немножко боюсь Вашего приговора. Зато я знаю, что Вы безусловно правдивы, и это заставляет меня особенно ценить Ваше мнение. У меня есть одна мечта, одно горячее желание, которое я не смею Вам

modest work, which I will not even call an opera if it is ever published. I shall call it lyrical scenes or something like that.

Yes, this is an opera without any prospects; I knew this when I was writing it, and still I wrote it and intend to complete it [i.e. the orchestration] and publish it if Jürgenson agrees to have it printed. Not only will I not make any efforts to get the opera staged at the Mariinskii Theatre, but I will even resist this as far as possible. I wrote it because I was obeying an irresistible inner attraction. I assure you that it is only under this condition that one should write operas. As for thinking about effects and worrying about how it will work on the stage that is only necessary to a certain degree. Otherwise, what you'll get is something effective, entertaining, perhaps even beautiful and interesting, but not fascinating, not actually alive. If my enthusiasm for the subject of *Onegin* testifies to my narrow-mindedness and obtuseness, to my ignorance and lack of familiarity with the conditions of the stage, then that is a great pity, but, at any rate, what I have written is something that in the literal sense poured out of me — it is not invented or laboured. Enough of *Onegin*. I shall talk to you about my new work, the Fourth Symphony, which by now should have arrived in Moscow

I wonder what you will say about it. I set great store by your opinion and am rather afraid of your verdict. On the other hand, I know that you are absolutely upright, and this makes me value your opinion particularly. I have one dream, one ardent desire, which I do not dare

выразить, ибо боюсь, что поступаю неделикатно. Вам нужно писать и играть для себя и некогда тратить время на... аранжировки. Есть два человека в Москве и вообще в мире, которым я бы доверился вполне относительно аранжировки в четыре руки этой симфонии. Один из них Клиндворт, а другой некто, живущий в Обуховском переулке. Охотнее, однакож, я бы обратился к последнему, если б это было не неделикатно. Пожалуйста, не стесняйтесь отказывать. Но если да, то я с радости готов буду изрядно высоко подпрыгнуть, несмотря на то, что при моей тучности оно не особенно удобно.

О себе писать Вам много нечего. Хандрю, подчас очень сильно, работаю по мере сил, гуляю среди очень роскошной, но несколько раздражающей по своей ослепительности природы, вспоминаю. Уже я теперь доехал до той станции, когда ехать осталось, вероятно, немного, а конечный пункт прелести особенной не представляет. Единственная отрада погружаться в прошлое. Стар я стал, Серёжа! Я ни о чём не мечтаю, ни к чему не стремлюсь, я доживаю жизнь. Весьма сомнительно также, чтоб я стал что-нибудь писать. Я дописываю всё, что было начато,— и только. На новое решительно нехватает пороку

Впрочем, я болен

Я отказался от делегатства на Выставке. Ну

to convey to you, as I am afraid I may be acting inconsiderately. You need to compose and play for yourself, and have no time to waste on arrangements. There are two people in Moscow, and indeed in the whole world, whom I would trust completely as far as arranging this symphony for piano duet is concerned. One of them is Klindworth, the other is someone who lives on Obukhovskii Lane. I would, though, prefer to ask the latter, provided this was not inconsiderate. Please don't feel too shy to refuse. But if you do accept, then I am ready to leap for joy, and pretty high too, even though it isn't particularly convenient in view of my stoutness.

There's no point in writing much about myself. I am depressed, at times very much so; I am working as best as I can; I take walks amidst a very luxurious Nature, which, however, is so dazzling as to be somewhat irritating; I recollect things. I have now reached that station after which there is probably not much left to go, but the end-point does not look particularly attractive. The only source of comfort is to plunge into the past. I've grown old, Serezha! I don't dream about anything, I aspire to nothing, I am living out my life. Likewise, it is very doubtful whether I shall compose anything more. I am now just finishing off what I had begun — that's all. I simply don't have it in me to produce anything new.

Anyway, I am ill.

I have turned down the offer to act as a

его, Ваш Париж. Теперь мне Царёвококшайск милее Парижа. Я ищу «свободы и покоя». Пожалуйста, поблагодарите мамашу за память обо мне. Всем Масловым искренние приветствия

Ваш П. Чайковский

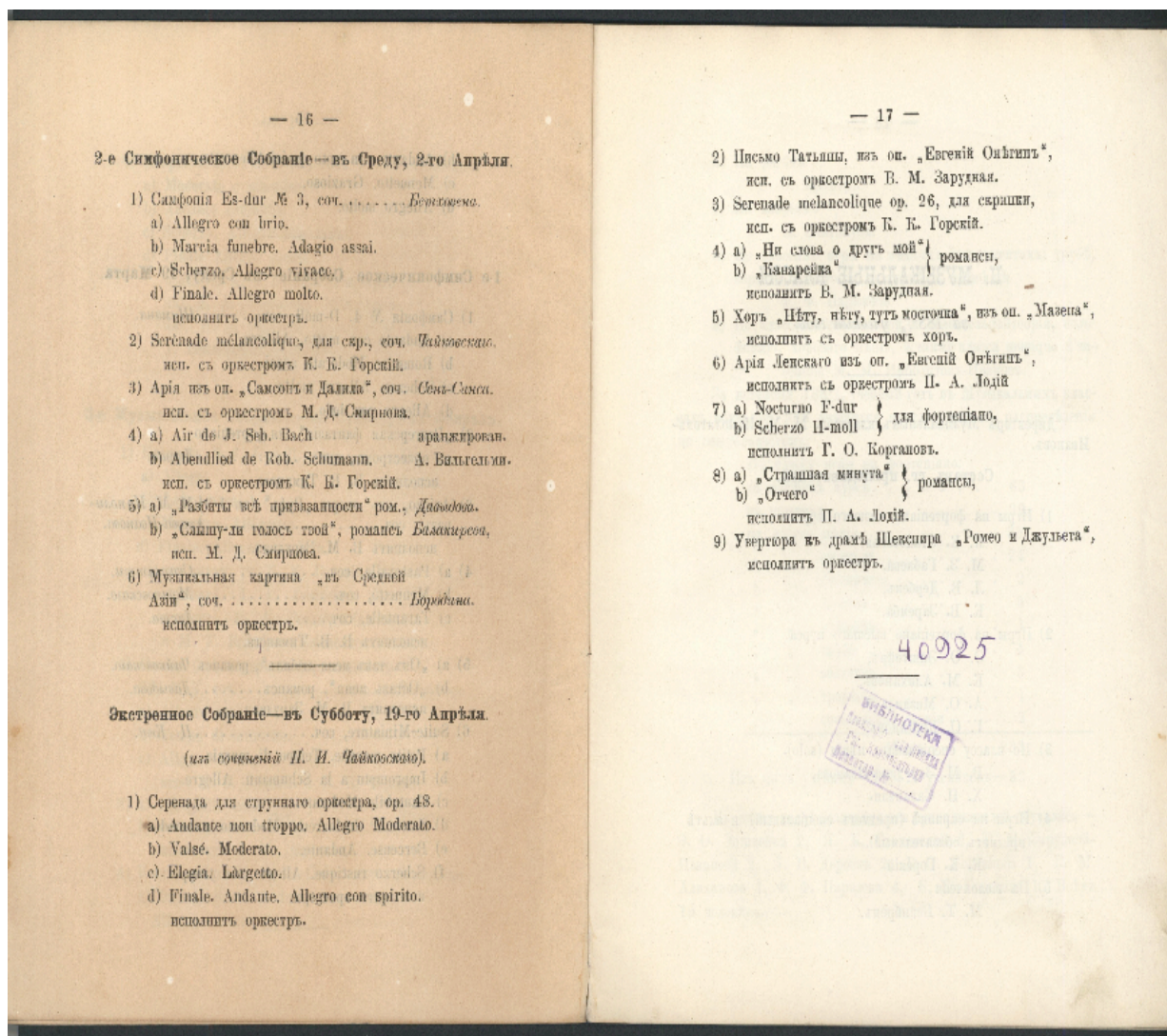
delegate at the Exposition. To the deuce with your Paris! Now Tsarevokokshaisk is dearer to me than Paris. I am looking for 'freedom and peace'. Please thank your mother [Varvara Taneeva] for remembering me. My sincere greetings to all the Maslovs.

Yours, P. Tchaikovsky



## Appendix II: Miscellaneous

### A.II.1 Programme Listing of the Première of *Romeo and Juliet* (Third Version) on 19 April 1886 by the Tiflis Branch of the RMS<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Vasily Yakovlev, *The Days and Years of P. I. Tchaikovsky: Annals of His Life and Works* (Muzgiz, Moscow-Leningrad, 1940), p. 369.

A.II.2 'Tip-Cat' melody, also known as 'Naughty Bird'  
(*Chizhik-Pizhik*)<sup>2</sup>

NAUGHTY BIRD.



Naugh-ty bird, I see it's true, Vod-ka's been too much for you;



Since to Pe-tro-grad you went, You must bear your pun-ish-ment.




<sup>2</sup> L. Edna Walter, ed., *Some Nursery Rhymes of Belgium, France and Russia* (London: A & C Black, 1917).

### A.II.3 *Romeo and Juliet*, Act III/sc. v (Capulet's Orchard)<sup>3</sup>

*Enter ROMEO and JULIET aloft.*

- JULIET:** Wilt thou be gone? it is not yet near day:  
It was the nightingale, and not the lark,  
That pierced the fearful hollow of thine ear;  
Nightly she sings on yon pomegranate-tree:  
Believe me, love, it was the nightingale.
- ROMEO:** It was the lark, the herald of the morn,  
No nightingale. Look, love, what envious streaks  
Do lace the severing clouds in yonder east.  
Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day  
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops.  
I must be gone and live, or stay and die.
- JULIET:** Yon light is not daylight, I know it, I:  
It is some meteor that the sun exhal'd,  
To be to thee this night a torch-bearer,  
And light thee on thy way to Mantua.  
Therefore stay yet; thou need'st not to be gone.
- ROMEO:** Let me be ta'en, let me be put to death;  
I am content, so thou wilt have it so.  
I'll say yon grey is not the morning's eye,  
'Tis but the pale reflex of Cynthia's brow;
- Nor that is not the lark, whose notes do beat  
The vaulty heaven so high above our heads.  
I have more care to stay than will to go:  
Come, death, and welcome! Juliet wills it so.  
How is't, my soul? let's talk; it is not day.
- JULIET:** It is, it is: hie hence, be gone, away!  
It is the lark that sings so out of tune,  
Straining harsh discords and unpleasing sharps.  
Some say the lark makes sweet division;  
This doth not so, for she divideth us.  
Some say the lark and loathed toad change eyes,  
O, now I would they had changed voices too!  
Since arm from arm that voice doth us affray,  
Hunting thee hence with hunt's-up to the day.  
O, now be gone; more light and light it grows.

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<sup>3</sup> William Shakespeare, *The Complete Works*, ed. by Peter Alexander (London: William Collins, 1994), p. 440.

**ROMEO:** More light and light; more dark and dark our woes!

[Enter Nurse]

**NURSE:** Madam!

**JULIET:** Nurse?

**NURSE:** Your lady mother is coming to your chamber:  
The day is broke; be wary, look about.

[*Exit Nurse.*]

**JULIET:** Then, window, let day in, and let life out.

**ROMEO:** Farewell, farewell! one kiss, and I'll descend.

[*He goeth down.*]

**JULIET:** Art thou gone so? love, lord, ay, husband, friend!  
I must hear from thee every day in the hour,  
For in a minute there are many days:  
O, by this count I shall be much in years  
Ere I again behold my Romeo!

**ROMEO:** Farewell!  
I will omit no opportunity  
That may convey my greetings, love, to thee.

**JULIET:** Oh think'st thou we shall ever meet again?

**ROMEO:** I doubt it not; and all these woes shall serve  
For sweet discourses in our time to come.

**JULIET:** O God, I have an ill-divining soul!  
Methinks I see thee, now thou art below,  
As one dead in the bottom of a tomb.  
Either my eyesight fails, or thou look'st pale.

**ROMEO:** And trust me, love, in my eye so do you:  
Dry sorrow drinks our blood. Adieu, adieu!

*Exit.*

#### A.II.4 Gounod's Libretto for the Orchard Scene ('Va! je t'ai pardonnée!... Nuit d'hyméné')<sup>4</sup>

##### JULIETTE

Va! Je t'ai pardonné;  
Tybalt voulait ta mort!  
S'il n'avait succombé  
Tu succombais toi-même!  
Loin de moi la douleur!  
Loin de moi les remords!  
Il te haïssait et je t'aime

Go, I forgive you;  
Tybalt wanted your death!  
If he had not succumbed,  
You would have died yourself!  
Far from me the pain!  
Far from me the remorse!  
He hated you and I love you!

##### ROMÉO

Ah! redis-le, redis-le, ce mot si doux!

Ah! Say it again, this word so sweet!!

##### JULIETTE

Je t'aime, O Roméo!  
Je t'aime, ô mon époux!

I love you, Oh, Romeo!  
I love you, oh, my husband!

##### JULIETTE, ROMÉO

Nuit d'hyménée!  
O douce nuit d'amour!  
La destinée  
M'enchaîne à toi sans retour.  
Sous tes baisers de flamme  
Le ciel rayonne en moi.  
Je t'ai donné mon âme;  
À toi, toujours à toi!

O wedding night!  
O sweet night of love!  
Destiny  
Chains me to you without return.  
Beneath your burning kisses  
Heaven radiates in me.  
I have given you my soul;  
It belongs to you, always to you.

##### JULIETTE

Roméo, qu'as-tu donc?

Romeo, what's wrong, then?

##### ROMÉO

Écoute, O, Juliette!  
L'alouette déjà nous annonce le jour!

Listen, O Juliette!  
The lark already announces to us the day!

##### JULIETTE

Non! non, ce n'est pas le jour,  
ce n'est pas l'alouette  
Dont le chant a frappé ton oreille inquiète,  
  
C'est le doux Rossignol,  
Confidant d'amour!

No, no, it's not the day (dawning)  
It isn't the lark  
Whose song struck your disquieted ear,  
  
It is the sweet nightingale,  
Confidant of love!

<sup>4</sup> This libretto is available at: <<http://www.aria-database.com/translations/romeo.txt>>.

**ROMÉO**

C'est l'alouette, hélas! messagère du jour!

Vois ces rayons jaloux  
Dont l'horizon se dore;  
De la nuit les flambeaux pâlisent  
Et l'aurore

Dans les vapeurs de l'Orient  
Se lèvent en souriant!

**JULIETTE**

Non, non, ce n'est pas le jour,  
Cette lueur funeste  
N'est que le doux reflet  
Du bel astre des nuits!  
Reste! reste!

**ROMÉO**

Ah! Vienne donc la mort! Je reste!

**JULIETTE**

Ah! tu dis vrai; c'est le jour!  
Fuis, il faut quitter ta Juliette!

**ROMÉO**

Non! non, ce n'est pas le jour!  
Ce n'est pas l'alouette!  
C'est le doux rossignol,  
Confident de l'amour.

**JULIETTE**

C'est l'alouette, hélas! messagère du jour!

Pars! Ma vie!

**ROMÉO**

Un baiser et je pars!

**JULIETTE**

Loi cruelle! Loi cruelle!

**ROMÉO**

Ah! Reste, reste encore  
En mes bras enlacés!  
Reste encore! Reste encore!  
Un jour il sera doux à notre amour fidèle,

De se resouvenir de ses tourments passés.

It's the lark, alas, messenger of the  
day!

See its jealous rays  
With which the horizon is gilded;  
The candles of the night become pale  
And the dawn

In the vapours (mists) of the east  
Arises smiling!

No, no, it is not day,  
This lethal glow  
Is nothing but the sweet reflection  
Of the beautiful moon (star of nights)  
Stay! stay!

Ah, come then, death! I am staying.

Ay, you speak truly, it is day!  
Flee, you must leave your Juliette!

No! no, it is not day!  
It's not the lark!  
It is the sweet nightingale,  
Confidant of love.

It's the lark, alas, messenger of the  
day!  
Leave! (you are) My life!

One kiss and I will leave!

Cruel decree! Cruel decree!

Ah! Stay, stay awhile  
In my arms intertwined!  
Stay awhile! Stay awhile!  
One day it will be sweet for our true  
love,  
To remember again our past  
torments.

**JULIETTE**

Il faut partir, hélas!  
 Il faut quitter ses bras  
 Où je te presse  
 Et t'arracher à cette ardente ivresse!

You must go, alas;  
 You must leave these arms  
 Where I press you  
 And wrench free from this ardent  
 ecstasy!

**JULIETTE, ROMÉO**

Il faut partir, hélas!  
 Il faut quitter ces bras  
 Où je te presse (elle me presse)  
 Et t'arracher (m'arracher)  
 à cette ardente ivresse!  
 Ah! Que le sort qui de toi me sépare

You must go, alas;  
 You must leave these arms  
 Where I press you (she presses me)  
 And wrench free  
 from this ardent ecstasy!  
 Ah, how fate which separates me  
 from you

Plus que la mort est cruel et barbare!  
 Il faut partir, hélas!  
 Il faut quitter ses bras  
 Où je te presse  
 Et t'arracher à cette ardente ivresse!

Is more cruel and barbaric than death!  
 You must go, alas;  
 You must leave these arms  
 Where I press you  
 And wrench free from this ardent  
 ecstasy!

C'en est fait de cette ardente ivresse!

It's all over with this ardent ecstasy!

**ROMÉO**

Adieu, ma Juliette, adieu!

Farewell, my Juliette, farewell!

**JULIETTE**

Adieu!

Farewell!

**ROMÉO, JULIETTE**

Toujours à toi!

Forever yours!

**JULIETTE**

Adieu, mon âme! Adieu, ma vie!  
 Anges du ciel, à vous,  
 À vous, je le confie!

Farewell, my soul! Farewell, my life!  
 Angels in heaven, to you,  
 To you I him entrust!

## A.II.5 Tchaikovsky's Libretto for the Orchard Scene<sup>5</sup>

- JULIET:** Oh my darling, isn't that the nightingale singing?
- ROMEO:** That's no nightingale.
- JULIET:** The one that sings every night in the pomegranate tree?  
He's singing, it's he, it's he!
- ROMEO:** It's no nightingale, it's not, it's not.  
No, my angel, that's the lark, heralding the morning.
- JULIET:** No, it's the nightingale.
- ROMEO:** No, no, my dearest, it's the lark singing before the dawn.
- JULIET:** No, it's the nightingale.
- ROMEO:** Yes, singing before dawn!
- JULIET:** Oh, my darling, don't be afraid.
- ROMEO:** It's he, it's he!  
See, the dawn is colouring the eastern clouds; the stars are fading; the mountaintops are golden; the joyful day has wakened!  
If I don't go now, I shall die!
- JULIET:** Don't be afraid; the light is from a meteor, not from the day.  
Stay, stay, it's not yet time to go.
- ROMEO:** If I stay and am taken, I shall die; but if it's at your command,  
I'll die happy.
- JULIET:** Oh Romeo!
- ROMEO:** Yes, and let this not really be the light of day.
- JULIET:** It's a nightingale singing.
- ROMEO:** I believe you.
- JULIET:** Oh night of bliss, enfold us!
- ROMEO:** I shall welcome death rapturously!

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<sup>5</sup> English translation by Boris Zhutnikov from the *Bridge Records* BCD 9033 CD production of the work, performed by the Moscow Radio and Television Orchestra, conducted by Peter Tiboris (1992).



**JULIET:** Oh night of bliss.

**ROMEO:** No, that's not the day. Oh night, oh blissful moment, stay. Oh night of love, enfold us, comfort us.

**JULIET:** The day, it's daybreak! Oh torment!

**ROMEO:** No, it's not the day. No, no, no! My dearest, isn't that the nightingale singing?

**JULIET:** That's no nightingale.

**ROMEO:** The one that sings every night in the pomegranate tree?

**JULIET:** It's no nightingale, it's not, it's not!

**ROMEO:** He's singing, it's he, it's he!

**JULIET:** No, my angel, that's the lark, heralding the morning.

**ROMEO:** No, it's the nightingale.

**JULIET:** No, no, my dearest, it's the lark, singing before the dawn. Yes, singing before the dawn.

**ROMEO:** No, it's the nightingale.

**JULIET:** It's he, it's he!

**ROMEO:** Oh, my darling, don't be afraid.

**NURSE:** Juliet, Juliet!

**JULIET:** That's my nanny.

**ROMEO:** Heaven help us.

**NURSE:** My child, it's morning. Hurry, hurry, it's time to part. Your mother will catch you.

**JULIET:** Wait one moment for us nanny.

**ROMEO:** Must we say goodbye?

**JULIET, ROMEO:** Oh torment, torment! Must we part? Oh night, time of love, of bliss, rapturous dreams, gentle whispers — oh night, must you pass? Linger a moment more.

**JULIET:** Oh night, stay!

**ROMEO:** Why do you no longer enfold us in your magical darkness, oh night of bliss? Stay with us, hide us in your sweet, dreaming darkness.

**JULIET:** Farewell, my tender love.

**ROMEO:** Sweet love, my life.

**JULIET:** Alas, the night is passed.

**ROMEO:** The night is passed.

**JULIET:** The day is parting us.

**ROMEO:** Day, pitiless day.

**JULIET:** Oh pitiless day!

**ROMEO:** You are parting us.

**JULIET:** You darken my love.

**ROMEO:** Where are you, darkness of night?

**JULIET:** Alas, you are.

**ROMEO:** You bring light to my love.

**JULIET:** The end of bliss!

**ROMEO:** And heavenly bliss!

**JULIET:** Farewell, my tender love.

**ROMEO:** Juliet. Juliet.

**JULIET:** The night is gone, we must part.

**ROMEO:** Farewell, sweet love, farewell.

**JULIET:** Romeo, my darling.

**ROMEO:** Farewell, farewell.

**JULIET:** Farewell, my Romeo.

**ROMEO:** Juliet.

**JULIET, ROMEO:** It's time for us to part, the night is over, farewell.

**JULIET:** Farewell, farewell, oh my Romeo.

**ROMEO:** Sweet love, farewell.

**JULIET, ROMEO:** Farewell, farewell, farewell.

### Appendix III: Autograph Manuscripts (Facsimiles)

#### A.III.1 Autograph Score of 'Theme of the Introduction' (*Romeo and Juliet*, 1869) [GTsMMK: f. 88, No. 65, fol. 1]

The image shows a facsimile of the autograph score for the 'Theme of the Introduction' from *Romeo and Juliet*, 1869. The score is written on aged paper and includes staves for various instruments. The tempo is marked 'Andante non troppo'. The score is divided into three main sections, each with its own tempo marking 'Andante non troppo'.

**Section 1:** Piccolo, 1. Flauto, 2. Flauto, Oboi, Clarinetto (A), Bassobuoi, Fagotti. The Fagotti part has a *mf* dynamic marking.

**Section 2:** Corni (2/3), Trombe (C.), Tromboni tenori, Trombone basso, Tuba, Timpani, Percussion, Fagotti, Contrabbasso.

**Section 3:** Arpa, Violini I, Violini II, Viola, Celli, Contrabbasso. The Contrabbasso part has a *p* dynamic marking.

A circular stamp is visible in the center of the page, and the number '1' is written in the top right corner.

A.III.2 Autograph Score of 'Theme of the *Allegro*' (*Romeo and Juliet*, 1869) [GTsMMK: f. 88, No. 65, fol. 8]

N 520 *Romeo e Julietta* 15  
554

*Allegro giusto*

*Allegro giusto*

*Allegro giusto*

*Allegro giusto*

20

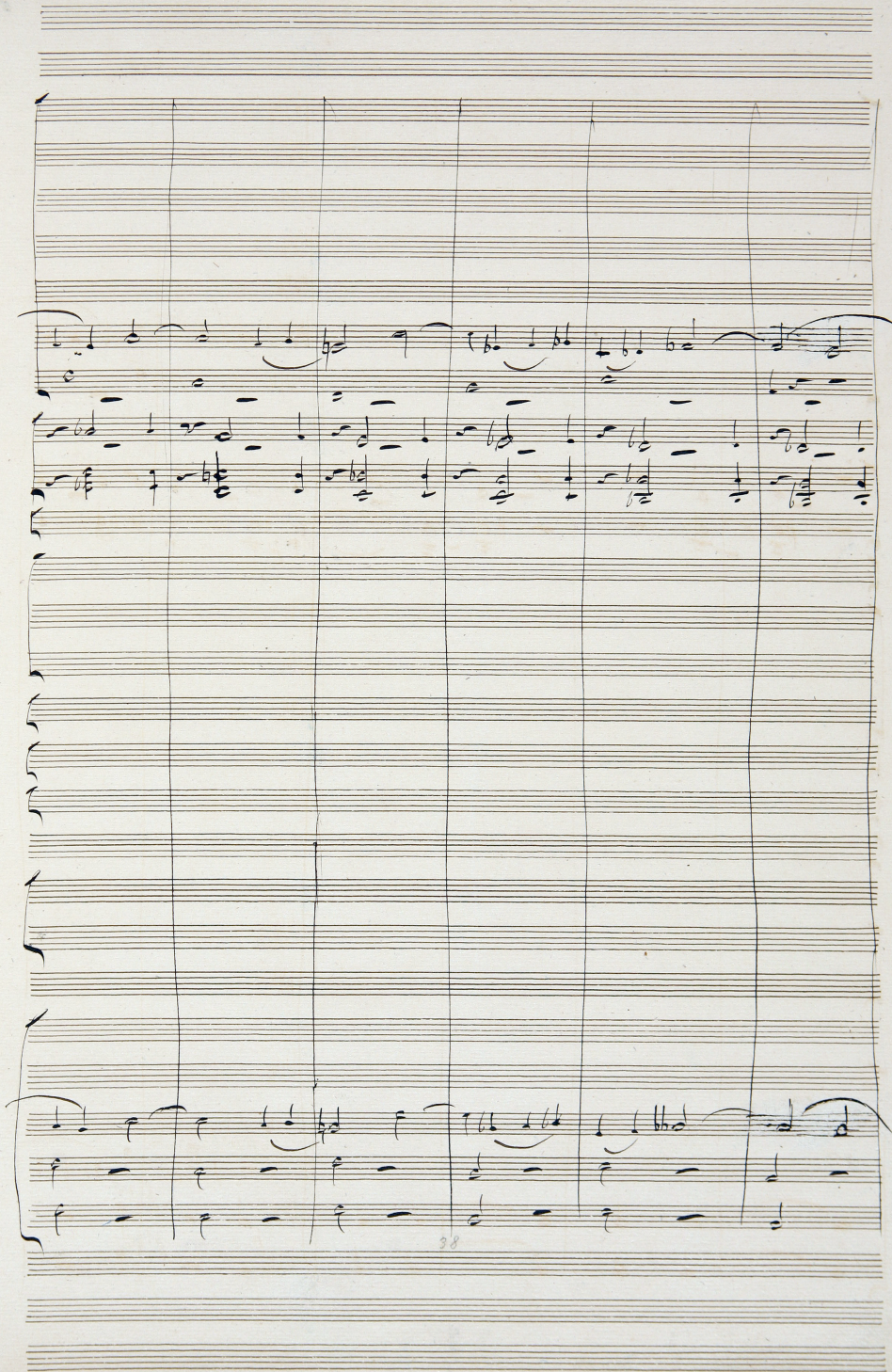
A.III.3 Autograph Score of 'Love Theme a' (*Romeo and Juliet*,  
1869) [GTsMMK: f. 88, No. 65, fol. 15 back]

The image shows a page from an autograph score, folio 15 back, numbered 80 in the top right corner. The page contains multiple staves of musical notation. The notation is handwritten and includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. A large section of the score is heavily scribbled out with dark ink. The visible notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a time signature of 2/4. The music features a melodic line with a prominent eighth-note pattern. The score concludes with the handwritten text "die Calli legen die zardinien" written below the final staff. The page is aged and shows signs of wear, including some discoloration and a small mark near the bottom center.

A.III.4 Autograph Score of 'Love Theme b' (*Romeo and Juliet*, 1869) [GTsMMK: f. 88, No. 65, fol. 14 back-15]

This image shows a page of handwritten musical notation, identified as the autograph score for 'Love Theme b' from the opera Romeo and Juliet. The page is numbered 8 in the top left corner and 28 in the top right corner. The score is written on multiple staves, with a central vertical line separating the left and right sides. The notation includes various musical symbols such as clefs, notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *mf*, *p*, and *Consorzio*. The handwriting is in black ink on aged paper.

Handwritten musical score on aged paper, featuring multiple staves with musical notation. The page is numbered 29 in the top right corner and 15 in the bottom right corner. The notation includes various notes, rests, and bar lines, with some measures containing complex rhythmic patterns.



29

15



A.III.5 Autograph Score of 'Theme of the Introduction' (*Romeo and Juliet*, 1870/1880) [GTsMMK: f. 88, No. 66]

N 515 ~~Allegretto~~  
~~Andante non tanto quasi moderato~~  
556

*Andante non tanto quasi moderato*

Picc. Fl. 1 Fl. 2 Fl. Ob. Cl. A. C. B. Trg. Corni 1 2 Trombe Tambores 2 Trombe 2 Timpani C. B. T. P. S. Arpa

Viol. I Viol. II Viola Celli Basso

*Andante non tanto quasi moderato*