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[Chapter 2] Liszt's National Compositions in the Year of the Franco-Prussian War

The six-month Franco-Prussian war of July 1870–January 1871 had an immense impact on European political history, redrawing maps, upsetting a longstanding balance of power, creating the German Empire, causing the fall of the French one, further weakening the new Austro-Hungarian Empire (formed in 1867), and setting the stage for World War I.¹ When searching for equivalent large-scale shifts in compositional practices, the effects of the war are debatable. No major canonic works have marked this war either, notwithstanding a *pièce d'occasion* such as Wagner's *Keisermarsch*, or more symbolic expressions of patriotism, such as Brahms' *Triumphlied* Op. 55 (1870–71) or Saint-Saëns' *Les soldats de Gédéon* Op. 46 (1876). Yet we do not need to find the 1870 equivalent of a 'Leningrad Symphony' to explore musical material that reflects manifold responses to the war or the political tension associated with it. One of the most telling signs of such responses is the enthusiastic, negative, or more equivocal representation of national identity – particularly, but not only, the nations directly involved in this conflict. In that respect, the wartime works of Franz Liszt offer a particularly rich and challenging case for the critique of musical nationalism.

Liszt's manifold affiliations with Hungary, the Austrian Empire (and from 1867 Austro-Hungary), France, North Germany (especially Weimar) and Rome have been extensively explored in biographical studies, including recent ones (Gooley 2004; Loya 2011: 86–117 and 2016; and Cormac 2013). When looking at a list of his wartime compositions (Appendix 1), the 'Hungarian' works clearly predominate, although – as I will try to show in this chapter – such mono-national adjectives disguise more complex modes of representation within each work. Even more curious, given Liszt's political stance in the war, is the absence of any

reference to France. From his letters, we know he admired the Second French Empire under Napoleon III (whom he met), which was threatened in different ways by a resurgent Prussia. He was also personally close to his widowed son-in-law, Emile Ollivier, the French Prime Minister who led the country into the disastrous campaign against Prussia in July (Walker 1997: 215, 223–25),² and was devastated when news of the decisive Prussian victory in the Battle of Sedan reached him in early September 1870 (La Mara 1902: 263–64). Liszt received this news in Hungary, during a visit he had planned well before the war (Gut 1989: 179). The timing of the visit proved fortunate (Liszt reached Hungary on 30 July), as it allowed him to wait out the conflict on neutral territory, engage in Hungarian patriotism that professed allegiance to neither warring side, yet enjoy the comfort of the overall pro-French Hungarian public opinion (La Mara 1902: 260–62). Liszt consequently prolonged his visit until April 1871, delaying his return to Weimar if only to avoid the unpalatable prospect of finding himself in the midst of ‘full-scale celebrations of German nationalism’ [*Germanisme*]³, as he put it. And yet in no way did this mean he supported ‘the French people’ against ‘the German’. It was not a matter of nationalism, ethnicity or even culture, but high politics.

Since the 1840s, Liszt had attached himself to Germany rather than to France, and his ‘New German School’ legacy was tied up with Weimar, where he had resided between 1848 and 1861. Although he had left for Rome, from 1864 onwards he tentatively renewed his connections with Weimar and other German towns. In August 1867, at the behest of the Grand Duke Carl Alexander (La Mara 1909: 135–36), he conducted his oratorio *St. Elisabeth*, celebrating the Franciscan saint associated with the Wartburg and revered by Catholics in both Hungary and Germany. Liszt did this despite the fact that, by July 1867, Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach became part of the North German Confederation led by Prussia, ready to join a German coalition against France in the event of war. The celebration may have signified to

many a resurgent pan-German nationalism (Walker 1997: 152–54), but a work such as *St. Elisabeth*, and the sight of Liszt conducting it as a cassocked Abbé, only emphasised the ecumenical and transnational aspects of the Wartburg. With this performance, Liszt renewed an old contract with his German audience: he would gladly participate in local patriotism as an honorary German, as long as his other identities were respected.⁴ He felt comfortable enough to resettle in Weimar in December 1869, with a view of spending a few months there each year, despite the political situation.⁵ In late May 1870 – less than two months before the war – he celebrated his full return to German cultural life by leading the *Allgemeiner Deutscher Musikverein*'s (ADMV) Beethoven's Centenary in Weimar, for which he wrote an occasional piece, *Zur Säcularfeier Beethovens* (Second Beethoven Cantata).⁶ It was just as well Liszt left Weimar a month later, on 8 July (Gut 1989: 519). It would have been difficult for him to either make or avoid a patriotic gesture of loyalty when France declared war on 19 July, even if (we can assume) Carl Alexander would have found some way of protecting him from embarrassment.

Three years before the war Liszt had also made his greatest mark as a national Hungarian composer, when his *Ungarische Krönungsmesse* was performed during the coronation of Franz Joseph as King of Hungary on June 8th 1867 (two months, in fact, before the aforementioned event in the Wartburg). In this work, as well as the 'Gran' Mass before it (1857), Liszt declared his loyalty to the church and the Emperor, as well as his musical modernism (Quinn 2014: 184–219). As a kind of monarchist patriot, Liszt was repulsed by the 'hot fever of exclusionary patriotism' [*fièvre chaude de patriotisme exclusive*] that led to the 1849 uprising and its bitter aftermath.⁷ His letters show that he equated demands for a purer, less Germanic national style with the same exclusionary, destructive politics.⁸ By contrast, he appreciated those who accepted his patriotic cosmopolitanism. For example, in

response to ‘Liszt in Ungarn’ by Julius Lang, he warmly thanked the author for his ‘brilliant article’ and added:

Two main points [you make] especially move me and work in my favour: the factual emphasis [you put] on my *Hungarian* identity [*ungarischen Sinns*],⁹ consistently confirmed through [musical] works over the course of [many] years; and the fair-minded appreciation [*verständige Auffassung*] of my artistic and personal ties with *Weimar*, which I have no intention of severing.¹⁰

Liszt wrote this letter on 15 October 1870, while Paris lay in siege. Neither Hungarian patriotism, nor quasi-patriotic mourning for the fallen French Empire threatened his belonging to Weimar and what he saw as compatible loyalties. Even in the fateful month of September 1870 after the Battle of Sedan, he worked on the *Fantasie und Fuge über das Thema B-A-C-H* – a work associated with Weimar and Thuringia – alongside the most iconic national Hungarian music, the *Rackóczi March* (ibid.: 263).

These and other wartime works show an interesting tension between a need to belong and an instinct for partial detachment. There is no fast-and-ready analytical method for making such interpretations, of course. The relationship between musical material and representation of nationality is extremely complex, in any case,¹¹ but it is made more complex when signifiers of nationality are combined, mixed or blurred in meaningful ways, or when a familiar idiomatic material is somehow distorted or abstracted to the point of losing or partially losing its normative representational function. A few genres and works are particularly revealing in that respect: Hungarian marches, two occasional cantatas and one acknowledged *Meisterwerk* that celebrates a famous Thuringian composer.

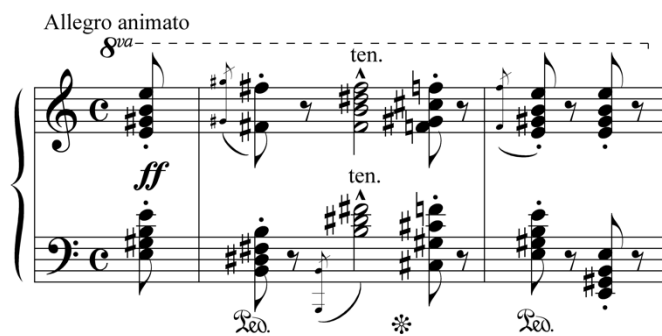
A STORM OF HUNGARIAN MARCHES

Whilst in Hungary, Liszt revised, corrected, and composed mostly celebratory pieces with Hungarian associations (Appendix 1). They occupied a wider public sphere, heralding his triumphant entry into official duties in Hungary. At that time Liszt still basked in the afterglow of his historical moment as the composer of the ‘Hungarian Coronation Mass’. Since its performance in 1867, he has published individual movements of the mass transcribed to piano solo or piano and violin, and the mass itself continued to be performed on many occasions in Hungary (Merrick: 127–37). Now, in August 1870, he would continue to remind the Hungarian public of his historic role in the coronation with a new piano composition: ‘*Ungarischer Marsch zur Krönungsfeier in Ofen-Pest am 8. Jun 1867*’ [Hungarian March for the Coronation Celebration in Buda-Pest on 8th June, 1867’, S. 523]. It is an exactly contemporary with Wagner’s *Kaisermarsch* but, unlike the latter, a fictitious commemoration: Liszt asked his Hungarian compatriots to *imagine* that something like this music had taken place on coronation day.

The work begins with a stately ceremonial fanfare (Ex. 2.1a) that is suddenly transformed at b. 15 into a quick march with a militaristic character. The allusion to the *Rákóczi* cannot be accidental (Ex. 2.1b and c). It is as if a coronation scene suddenly shifts to more demotic street scenes of celebrations, parades and dancing. A middle trio theme assumes a much more reflective and even spiritual character, comparable (also in the same D-flat major key) to the lyrical section of ‘*Die heiligen drei Könige*’ (*Marsch*) [March of the three Holy Kings] from the *Christus* oratorio (cf. b. 140ff in that work). The quasi-devotional topos may allude to Liszt’s Coronation Mass, the unity of state and church, or even – if we follow an intertextual comparison with *Die heiligen drei Könige* – as a mystical promise of great things to come.¹² Like March of the Kings, the lyrical theme of the Coronation March is brought into the home key towards the end transformed into a grandioso character (‘*fff pomposo*’ in the Coronation

March, b. 131ff). In fact, throughout the piece Liszt creates subtle motivic and harmonic connections between the fanfare, military/demotic and spiritual themes of the piece, bringing this synthesis to a high point in reprise (bb. 100–161). On a symbolic level, the compositional process itself reflects Liszt's politics by intensifying the symbolic unity of Hungary, its church and its (Habsburg) King.

On an aesthetic level it is possible to perceive a unity between cosmopolitan modernism and national tradition. To give but one example, Liszt makes a conscious effort to translate modern chromatic language to *verbunkos* modality: note the odd spelling of what would normally be a C-sharp major chord in b.1 (Ex. 2.1a). This reconfiguration is perceptual as well as symbolic, however. The F<natural>, rather of E<sharp>, is an unstable dissonant note that should resolve to E, and it does when this chord assumes a quasi-predominant function, especially where the section concludes in something like a half cadence (Ex. 2.2a). The very same modal thinking, in the same key, recurs in the contemporaneous *Ungarischer Geschwindsmarsch*, S. 233 (Ex. 2.2b).



Example 2.1a. The Opening of the *Hungarian Coronation March* (1870).



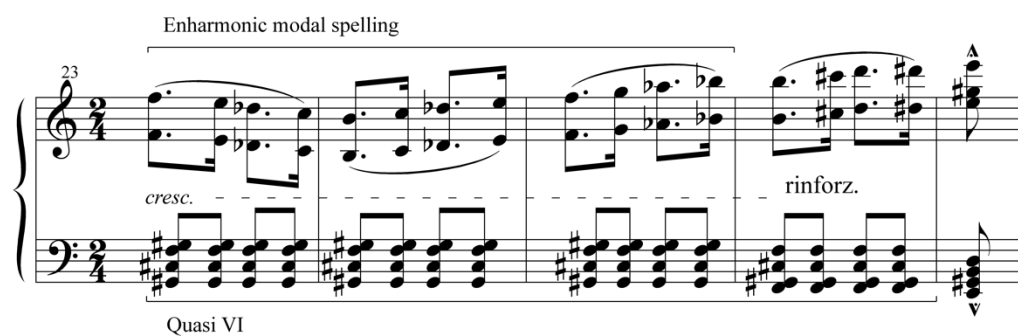
Example 2.1b. *Hungarian Coronation March*, main march theme, bb. 15–19.



Example 2.1c. The *Rákóczi-Marsch* theme.



Example 2.2a. *Hungarian Coronation March*, before the main theme, bb. 8–9.



Example 2.2b. *Ungarische Geschwindmarsch*, bb. 23–27.

Both marches seem to descend from the *Rákóczi* in their key, repetitive motives and rhythms, percussiveness and general aggression (the 1870 marches move at quicker pace, in fact, connoting a cavalry charge).¹³ The harmonic syncretism of these marches is far in advance of anything found in Liszt's old or new setting of the *Rákóczi*, however. There is a genuine transcultural give and take in the way the way chromaticism is translated into *verbunkos* modality, on the hand, and the deeper structural effects of the *verbunkos* tradition on Liszt's compositional thinking on the other, most notably in the way the initial theme and tonic are abruptly regained in the Coronation March, after a subdominant drift that leads from A minor to A-flat major (compare this to the fast finales of Rhapsodies Nos. 6 and 14). Likewise, modal shifts between major and minor related to the *verbunkos* tradition receive a radical reinterpretation in the *Ungarischer Geschwindsmarsch*.¹⁴ If Liszt was accused of 'Germanising' Hungarian music, his opponents clearly did not appreciate or care about the extent to which 'difficult' New German Music had been 'Magyarised' and popularised in these works. Both marches were arranged as *bone fide* military music by Strobl, after all (the score has not survived: see Appendix 1). Liszt must have enjoyed inserting an emphatic, non-functional half-diminished chord at the end of one section of the *Ungarischer Geschwindsmarsch*: unlike the Tristan chord it might be parodying, this one interrupts a static prolongation of a B-flat major chord quite rudely (imagine its military-band sound), creating an erratic mode switch that leads, equally unexpectedly, to an unassuming diatonic resolution ($\text{vii}^{\circ 7} - \text{V}^7 \rightarrow \text{I}$) in A. It seems to me that this little joke is not so much at the expense of Teutonic *Weltschmerz* as at the parochial anxiety of Germanisation (Ex. 2.3).

Disruptive, tonally dislocated half-diminished chord

8va

62

(p)

rinforz. tremolo

Ced.

B \flat major prolonged ----- In A major: vii $^{\circ}5$ V 7 I

Example 2.3. *Ungarische Geschwindmarsch*, bb. 62–67.

Liszt's main aim in such works was to create national monuments that reinforce his own position, hence the centrality of the orchestral versions.¹⁵ The 'symphonisation' of the iconic *Rákóczi-Marsch* is a very special case in this general trend. Already in 1840 Ferenc Erkel (a contemporary of Liszt and founder of a national school of Hungarian Opera) published a version of the march that commemorates Liszt's heady playing of it – a souvenir from the historic concerts of 1839–40. Now Liszt created his own monument, but this self-celebration of patriotic attachment came with an important condition. He made a special point of *not* satisfying the taste for a straightforward rendition of this overfamiliar march all his adult life, and that was not about to change.¹⁶ The 'symphonic' version meant an augmentation both in instrumental forces and form, particularly through the addition of new connecting developmental passages, and the creation of dramatic arches towards symphonic climaxes. National art music needed to absorb the Austro-German tradition, and in the process politically domesticate the once fiercely anti-Habsburg symbolism of the *Rákóczi*. Another foundational Hungarian march from 1839 was the much less familiar solo piano recomposition of the middle movement of Schubert's piano duet, *Divertissement à l'hongroise*. Liszt already orchestrated his solo piano version for a Viennese performance in

1859–60, as the last of four *Franz Schuberts Märsche*. By revising and eventually publishing his orchestral version (S. 363/4) in 1870–71, he was satisfying a nationalist impulse to publically reclaim such national music from a Viennese composer. But it is interesting that even in the context of his full return to Hungarian public life he kept the orchestration as part of a set of four *Schubert* marches. Liszt was always aware of the Viennese-Hungarian duality of this piece and used it diplomatically to represent himself in Vienna, and in some ways endorse a Viennese attachment to Hungary. Three years after the founding of the dual monarchy, this piece was very much of its time (Loya 2016: esp. 449–62).

A COSMOPOLITAN MAGYARISATION OF GERMAN NATIONALISM

We have seen how Liszt avoided in the Spring of 1871 the kind of triumphalist *fêtes de Germanisme* he could do without, despite willingly celebrating German nationality before.¹⁷ His Second Beethoven Cantata in a Hungarian translation, performed on 16th December 1870, could be seen as a tacit riposte to any chauvinistic reading of this work. Looking at the German original only, Ryan Minor suggested the work was already quite cosmopolitan, noting also the lack of specific mention of Germans or Germany, despite originally participating ‘primarily in a German public sphere’ (Minor 2006: 157–58). There is an open question, however, about the frequent mention of the Rhine and allusion to the Cologne Cathedral that leave very little to the nationalist imagination. By design or accident, Kornél Ábrányi’s translation omits several mentions of the symbolic German river, particularly in the first 300 bars of the sung Cantata. Sometimes even the different order of words in two languages makes a difference, as when the verse ending with *glänzen silbern die Fluthen / des Rhein’s* (silvery gleams the flow / of the *Rhine*, with emphasis on the last word), suitably cadences into a pictorial depiction of the flowing river – but in Hungarian the word ‘Rhine’ itself is de-emphasised as it is placed away from the cadence itself (Ex. 2.4). There are more

instances of such changes of emphasis as well as omissions. Whether this dilution of Germanness is deliberate or merely the unintended result of a translation convenience deserves further investigation, especially in the context of December 1870. I shall leave this question open, as well as the consideration of the extent this work countered chauvinist trends in Hungary too, by celebrating Beethoven as well as, tacitly, the New German School. It is worth mentioning, in that respect, that the Hungarian performance was overwhelmingly well received (Légány: 83–85 and notes on p. 240).

48 choir: *f*, crescendo

Soprano & Alto (choir)

(Rhein's) die Flu - then des Rhein's.
(éj) vig ár - ján az éj.

Tenor & Bass

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Lower strings

Orch.: *mf*, crescendo (winds and timpani omitted)

(cadence resolves harmonically in b. 59)

Example 2.4: *Zur Säcularfeier Beethovens* (Second Beethoven Cantata), bb. 48–52. The German text cadences on ‘Rhein’s’; The Hungarian phrase *víg árján az éj* (‘on its merry flow the night [shines]’) cadences on the word ‘éj’ (night). The word ‘Rajna’ (Rhine) appears in bb. 40 and 42, in *piano* dynamics, before the start of the *crescendo* in b. 44ff towards the above climax.

Another occasional piece we should consider in this context is the *Gaudeamus igitur* – *Humoreske*, S. 71, written for the centenary celebrations of Academic Concerts in Jena. (Completed in November 1869, and performed on 13 January 1870, it lies outside Liszt’s ‘short’ wartime year from July 1870 to May 1871. Nevertheless, its manner of negotiating patriotic German celebrations during the Franco-Prussian political crisis of the late 1860s deserves attention here.) Like the Beethoven Cantata, this *Gaudeamus* thoroughly reconceives a work from the 1840s tours of Germany. The old *Gaudeamus igitur*, S. 240 (1842–43), was a solo piano piece popular in university towns in Germany. As Kenneth Hamilton has shown, its loose theme and variation form, with a final Hungarian variation functioning as a rhetorical punchline, relates to the concert practice of stylistic improvisations on a theme requested by the audience. Brilliant variations, followed by a mock-fugal passage (a nod to German academicism, perhaps), and an intensification in the manner of a Hungarian Rhapsody finally lead to a ‘swaggering’ *A l’Ongarese – Tempo di Marcia* calculated to ‘bring the house down’ (Hamilton 2008: 51–53). The Hungarian finale seems to be a somewhat theatrical musical portrait of Liszt himself, and possibly a gesture of liberal solidarity, just as the rest of the *Gaudeamus* celebrates students’ life.¹⁸ At the same time it is a cosmopolitan gesture that – to borrow Amanda Anderson’s (2001) useful concept – ‘cultivated detachment’ from German patriotism.

In the 1869 *Gaudeamus* for choir and orchestra (or piano), and its solo piano version, Liszt kept a few variation ideas including the ‘Ungarisch’ section at the end. But the old segmented design was replaced with a more fluid, developmental form and technique, with direct consequences for the representation of national identity. Through subtle motivic connections and incremental addition of *verbunkos* material (most clearly from b. 195, Ex. 2.5a), the borders between the fugal passages (implicitly signifying German learnedness) and the

Hungarian section (b. 226ff, Ex. 2.5b) are further dissolved, allowing one identity to morph into another.

Example 2.5a. *Gaudeamus igitur*, *Humoresque* (1869): Increasing ‘Magyarisation’ of the fugue, bb. 195–203.

Example 2.5b. Emergence of the ‘Ungarisch’ section (b. 226ff) in *Gaudeamus igitur*.

The *verbunkos* idiom is also reserved for the most unexpected and haunting moment in his recomposition. The first theme having just established itself in plain form for the first time in bb. 39ff takes a sudden lyrical turn; even more suddenly, it dissolves into a cadenza that

transports us to a hushed, slow-moving paeon in Latin to St. Cecilia (bb. 76–114). It is a truly ecstatic, mystical moment, a ‘shimmering island’ of spiritually, sharply disconnected from the noise and drive of the rest of the work as Nicholas Dufetel (2013: 8) contends.¹⁹ Aside from the sonar quality created by the thin instrumentation and use of half of the choir, the devotional, ecstatic affect is created by prolonged exchanges between chromatically related major chords a minor third apart – very similar to the progressions in the ‘spiritual’ trio section of the Hungarian Coronation March, in fact.²⁰ The first chord is derived from a *verbunkos*-minor mode on C (C-D-E<flat>-F<sharp>-G-A<flat>-B<natural>), and its B-major chord counterpart can also be enharmonically related to that mode (Ex. 2.6).

The musical score is presented in three systems. The first system (bb. 70-74) shows a treble staff with a melodic line and a bass staff with a sustained chord. The second system (bb. 75-76) features a 'quasi cadenza' with a melodic line and a bass staff with a sustained chord. The third system (bb. 76-80) is marked 'Tempo rubato e un poco ritenuto' and 'dolcissimo', featuring a melodic line and a bass staff with a sustained chord. The score includes various musical notations such as accidentals, dynamics (ppp, p), and performance instructions (riten. molto, quasi cadenza, dim., smorz.).

Example 2.6. *Gaudeamus igitur*, piano version. ‘Hungarian-Gypsy’ *cadenza* (bb. 73–75) leading to the *St. Cecilia* section. The squares draw attention to how the prosaic ‘Hungarian’ harmony merges into the first chord of the ‘unearthly’ music that follows.

This foray into the fantastic is triggered by a gradual modal transformation of the lyrical theme, and in the solo piano version the cadenza explicitly intones the mode in its naked scalar form. We have already seen such abstractions in the Coronation March. The *dolcissimo* St. Cecilia section of the *Gaudeamus* is surprising in another way, however, as it arrives soon after the beginning, right after the first plain utterance of the theme and before the proper variations get going. In terms of proportions and generic musical form, this character contrast comes too early. To be sure Liszt is motivated by art first and foremost: the aesthetic of the Romantic fragment, the disrupted form, the sudden spiritual depths, all counter the potential banality of such a piece, which concerned him as an artist (see his letter in La Mara 1902: 227). But the extreme formal insertion draws even more attention to his Catholic persona, within which a discreet Hungarian identity lies submerged, synthesised with the style and aesthetics of the ‘New German School’ – a more radical form of detachment than anything Liszt could have conceived of back in 1843. This moment, as well as the stylistic merger leading to the *Ungarisch*, both assert, subtly but firmly, his cosmopolitan identity vis-à-vis the Jena crowd.

Of course, the above conclusion remains speculative in the absence of any words from Liszt to confirm it, and remains tethered to what we know more generally about Liszt’s cosmopolitan attitude and wariness of Prussian expansionism (certainly by the late 1860s). Nevertheless, Liszt’s manipulation and abstraction of normative modes of representation calls for critical interpretation even if it means a looser attachment to positive, primary-source evidence. This latter issue comes to the fore in the final wartime piece we will examine, which (unlike all the others) is a staple of the organ and piano repertoires to this day: the *Fantasie und Fuge über das Thema B–A–C–H*.

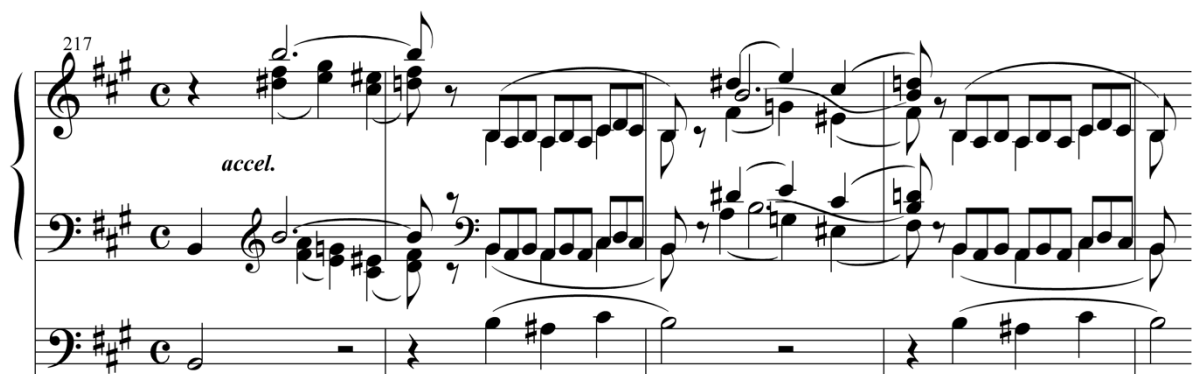
To begin, we can go back (as Liszt himself did during his revision and recomposition) to the 1855 version of the work, which already renegotiates the canonisation of Bach as a pan-

German composer (Loya 2011: 194 and 301n10). Here the *verbunkos* minor is brought to the fore as a perceptible ‘Hungarian-Gypsy scale’, and in a symbolic gesture it is combined with the bass that encodes Bach’s name (Ex. 2.7). The material is clear enough, and suggests Liszt literally stamping his own identity on Bach’s and harmonising a Hungarian identity with a Thuringian one (recall *St. Elisabeth*), and in this way also removing an evocation of Bach from an idealized notion of German purity. In this case, and many others like it, familiarity with idiomatic material is absolutely necessary, since it is not the title that confirms the meaning of the musical style, but rather the musical material that reconfigures the meaning of the work’s title (see also *ibid.*, 195–224).

Example 2.7. The beginning of *Präludium und Fuge über das Thema B-A-C-H* (organ, 1855), bb. 215–18.

It is nice to have some more primary source evidence to a speculative interpretation based on familiarity with idiomatic material. In this case, already in the 1930s, Gárdonyi noted that Liszt’s students Göllerich and Stradal perceived plenty of Hungarian character in this work, and that Liszt firmly believed Bach (like *St. Elisabeth*!) to be of Hungarian extraction (Gárdonyi 1936: 105–106). Moreover, we know he worked on the fugal section of this work alongside the piano versions of the *Rákóczi-Marsch*, first in September after the Sedan catastrophe, and then in February 1871, shortly after the French final capitulation. These facts

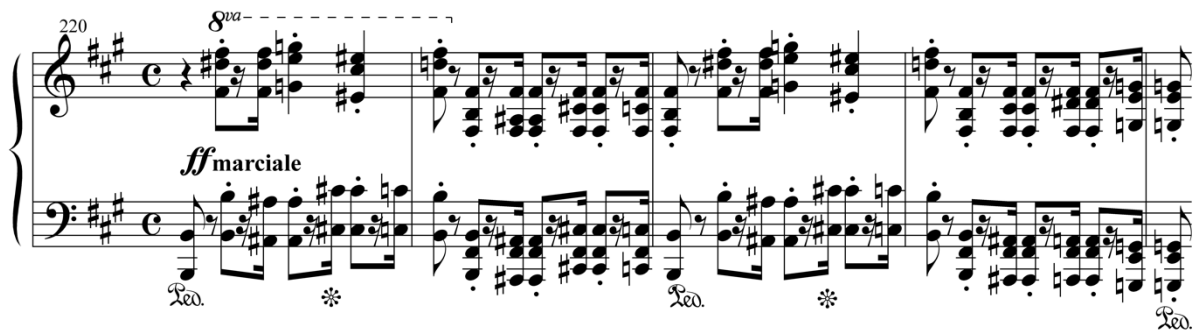
could all be coincidental, but the interpolated *verbunkos* material and specific, militaristic elements of the *Rákóczi* in the solo piano version of *B-A-C-H* are highly suggestive. One example will suffice: it is a *ff marciale* passage noted since Gárdonyi (ibid.) for its ‘Hungarian character’. Like other places in the fugue, ‘Hungaricisms’ typically occur in the episodic rather than subject sections, which allows Liszt to revert more freely to a homophonic texture more commensurate with *verbunkos* material. In the organ version, the *poco a poco accelerando* section towards the end of the work signals a Hungarian identity with a repeated cadential progression that emphasises the raised fourth, followed by exotic-sounding trills (Ex. 2.8a). In the 1855 piano version, this association was heightened by creating a more a *Geschwindmarsch* character, with emphatic equal beats and an aggressive, percussive piano sound that is quite different from the organ articulation (Ex. 2.8b). In the 1870 version, a *verbunkos* militaristic character is further enhanced by the dotted rhythm, transforming this passage into something that could have come from any Hungarian rhapsody or march. The B-A-C-H motif in the bass once again adds a symbolic unity of Hungarian and German identities, creating an even more pungent modal harmony than in the previous version (Ex. 2.8c). This passage is a strangely defiant, evoking the sound of war while rejecting the wasteful *patriotismes exclusives* that led to it.



Example 2.8a. *Präludium und Fuge über das Thema B-A-C-H* (organ, 1855), bb. 217–20.



Example 2.8b. *Präludium und Fuge über das Thema B-A-C-H* (piano, 1856), bb. 215–18



Example 2.8c. *Fantasie und Fuge über das Thema B-A-C-H* (piano, 1870–71), bb. 220–23.

ETHICAL QUESTIONS

Shortly after Liszt finally returned to Weimar on 3rd May, he met the Grand Duke and Duchess who received him as cordially as ever but informed him that someone had ‘denounced [him] as guilty of anti-German sentiment’ [*anti-Germanisme*]. In such worldly and sympathetic company, Liszt had little trouble explaining that grief for the fate of France had nothing to do with hating Germans, and there the matter rested (La Mara 1902: 298). The same letter describes a cordial meeting with his former pupil Bronsart,²¹ during which Liszt congratulated the latter on his fair conduct as a soldier in the Prussian army during the war (ibid.: 299). Liszt’s discreet sympathy for France during this conflict remained a tolerated, open secret in Weimar,²² and for his part, he did everything he could to keep the *ADMV*

outward looking, promoting after the war composers like Saint-Saëns in Germany, whilst rejected anti-Wagnerism in France.²³

My previous survey has implied the same cosmopolitan ethics underpinned representation of nationality in Liszt's wartime compositions. In this way, the present study shares some common ground with 'New cosmopolitanism' studies that have focused on the creative responses of famous individuals to demands on their divided loyalties, or more generally these individuals' cosmopolitan interpretation of national belonging.²⁴ Yet I am not convinced that Liszt's political stance, personal conduct, and musical representation of nationality perfectly align or correspond straightforwardly to a code of ethics. His support for the Second French Empire, the Habsburg monarchy and for Catholic institutions are all debatable. He was not neutral during the war despite pacifist inclinations, and his celebrity protected him to some degree from unpleasantness (recall the ease with which he shrugged off accusations of *anti-Germanisme* in Weimar, for example). My point is not to raise the moralistic bar even further, but on the contrary, to argue that it is fine to contextualise ethics in existential choices, personal convenience and even privilege. Likewise, the different and provocative ways signifiers of nationality are distorted, blurred, abstracted or combined could be understood as a legitimate, selfish insistence on a transcultural identity – as well as a broader ethical response in the context of the Franco-Prussian War. The two possibilities are not mutually exclusive.

Finally, the meeting of modern nationalism and cosmopolitan ethics raises a historical question. Was Liszt an early representative of composers who consciously resisted chauvinism during wartime? Perhaps his conduct and compositional response prefigure, for example French composers' passive (and likewise not too uncomfortable) resistance to the ban on German music during World War I (Caballero, 1999). It is true that Liszt did not use the word '*nationalisme*' in his letters. That word was defined in French dictionaries only after

the Franco-Prussian war (ibid., 595–99), and the distinction between this neologism and the more old-fashioned *patriotisme* would have been conceptually clearer to Fauré's generation. And yet it seems Liszt understood the distinction well enough and articulated his *patriotisme inclusive* in his own way, in both words and music.

APPENDIX 1

Works that Liszt had revised, corrected, and composed during his stay in Hungary, adapted from Legány (1976: 262–64) with reference to La Mara (1902) and Eckhardt and Mueller (Liszt catalogue in *Grove Music Online*).

August (Szekszárd):

New piano composition: *Ungarischer Marsch zur Krönungsfeier in Ofen-Pest am 8. Jun 1867*, S. 523 (in brief: *Hungarian Coronation March*).

Corrections: *Ungarische Krönungsmesse*, S. 11 (composed in 1867, published 1870–71)
Rákóczi-Marsch, Symphonisch bearbeitet, S. 117 (composed 1863–67)

Requiem, S. 12. It is possible he started composing then a new sacred vocal composition, *Libera me*, S. 45, later incorporated in the *Requiem* (the *Libera me* was finished by February 1871).

September:

Revision of the 1855 version: *Fantasie und Fuge über das Thema B–A–C–H*, S. 529 (organ version: S. 260b)

Transcriptions for piano duet and two pianos of the *Rákóczi-Marsch, Symphonisch bearbeitet*.

October:

Revision: [4] *Franz Schuberts Märsche* S. 363 (fourth movement: *Ungarische Marsch*)

Revision: [6] *Ungarische Rhapsodien* (orchestral versions based on Popper, finished 1874, published 1875)

That month he asks Kornél Ábrányi to fit a Hungarian translation of the German text into the score of his Second Beethoven Cantata (Prahács 1966: 143).

November-December (from 15 November Liszt is based in Pest):

New piano solo composition: *Mosonyis Grabgeleit* [‘Mosonyi’s funeral procession’], S. 194.

New piano solo composition: *Ungarischer Geschwindsmarsch (Magyar Gyors induló)*, S. 233. (This composition and the ‘Hungarian Coronation March’ are prepared for publication that month. Liszt gives the unpublished scores to Henrik (Heinrich) Strobl, who arranges both works for his military band that month.)²⁵

Orchestration of the *Hungarian Coronation March*

January-February:

Works on proofs of several of the pieces mentioned above, including four different versions of the *Rákóczi-Marsch* (orchestral, solo piano, piano four hands and two pianos) and the fourth edition of the *Ungarische Krönungsmesse*, S. 11.

By 19 February he completes *A lelkesdés dala* (‘Song of Enthusiasm) for male choir, S. 91.

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² In this connection Walker also mentions and rebuts an old theory that Liszt was a French spy (see Paillard, Haraszti and Wager 1949).

³ ‘Tomber en pleines fêtes de Germanisme ne me sourit point’. La Mara 1902: 292.

⁴ There were notable cracks in this understanding, however. Felix Draeseke, a student who in the 1850s wrote an article praising Liszt’s cosmopolitanism as a great boon to German music (Deaville, 509), excoriated Liszt in a private letter to his wife ‘as an admirer of Ultramontanism [i.e. a supporter of the Doctrine of Infallability and papal power politics] and the French and hater of the German(s)...’ (Ortuno-Stühling 2013: 233).

⁵ Tensions escalated due to a substantial increase of military force commanded by Prussia through its coalition with the other German states, and through successive provocations engineered by Bismarck in 1867, 1868 and 1869, which almost resulted in the war erupting earlier (Wawro 2003: 22–24).

⁶ Liszt led an international festival commemorating Beethoven in Bonn in 1845, for which he composed and conducted the *Festkantate zur Enthüllung des Beethoven-Denkmal*s (First Beethoven Cantata), thus asserting his

own place in German and European culture (Minor 2006: 118–44). The Second Cantata looked both to his past and future musical leadership through its manifold musical allusions (ibid., 145–59).

⁷ In a letter to Agnes Street-Klindworth from 14 July 1860 (Pocknell 2000: 437).

⁸ See his letter to Augustz from 14 January, 1860 in Csapó, 93–95, translated in Williams, 363–64. For a more detailed discussion of this letter, as well as the one cited in the previous note, see Loya 2016: 455–57.

⁹ More literally ‘my *Hungarian* frame of mind’.

¹⁰ Prahács 1966: 142–43. Original text (parallel emphasis on *ungarischen* and *Weimar* in the original):

Besonders berühren und begünstigen mich zwei Hauptpunkte: die sachliche Betonung meines, durch Werke und Jahren consequent bewährten *ungarischen* Sinn, und die verständige Auffassung meines künstlerischen und persönlichen Verhältnisses zu *Weimar*, welches aufzulösen, ich keineswegs beabsichtige.

¹¹ See for example Dahlhaus, 1989: 302–11; Beckerman, 1993.

¹² At the beginning of the lyrical section (b. 140) in *Die heiligen drei Könige* Liszt quotes part of Matthew II: 9, which describes the three kings following the Star of Bethlehem.

¹³ Evoking that image, Liszt describes in one letter from 14 November how the Coronation March had ‘trotted for a long time’ in his head before he committed it to paper (La Mara 1902: 276).

¹⁴ See more detailed interpretation in Loya 2011: 245–46; for a general discussion of transcultural modernism from ‘above’ or ‘below’ see ibid., 26–30.

¹⁵ For the same reason too, he was not interested in creating new Hungarian Rhapsodies for the piano at this stage (this will change a decade later), but only to monumentalise his older works through new orchestral versions.

¹⁶ As he explained in a letter from 16 August 1871, even in 1840 his *Rákóczi* version was always artistically more complex than the standard fare (Prahács 1966: 149–50).

¹⁷ Liszt seemed to have learned the lessons from the early 1840s, when in the aftermath of the Rhine Crisis of 1840 (prefiguring the Franco-Prussian war) his patriotic German compositions got him in trouble with the French press: see Saffle 1994: 142–45 and Gooley 2004: 164–200. In any case, celebrating Germany’s triumph in 1871 would have been tantamount to rejoicing in France’s humiliating defeat, a far more serious show of nationalist partisanship.

¹⁸ Liszt courted student idolatry, for example by scheduling another cheap concert specifically for the student body rather than the professors (Gooley 2004: 254); or when he befriended Hungarian students in Jena and invited them to one of his concerts in Weimar (Saffle 1994: 145).

¹⁹ Liszt himself wrote jokingly but proudly about the ‘truly shimmering Lisztian progressions’ of the passage to Carl Gille, who commissioned the work (Stern, 41).

²⁰ Dufetel points to other telling intertextual connections in *op. cit.*

²¹ Hans von Bronsart von Schellendorf (1830–1913) was Liszt’s pupil in the 1850s and an intendant of the Hanover Theatre at the time of their meeting in 1871. Liszt notes in the same letter that Hans’s brother, Paul Bronsart, escorted Napoleon III to Bismarck after the Battle of Sedan.

²² With a few exceptions: see note 5.

²³ In respect of the latter, see his letter from 22 November, 1871 (La Mara 1902: 316).

²⁴ Robbins 1998: 1–19; Amanda Anderson (2001); Malachuk (2007); Appiah (2007); Sarah Collins and Dana Gooley (2017).

²⁵ The scores of these transcriptions are presumed lost (Daniel Mona, Liszt Museum Budapest, in an email to me from 12 February 2015).