

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE LIFE, AIMS AND
ARTISTRY OF HUGO WOLF: SUPPLEMENTARY TO
A FULL RECITAL OF HIS SONGS

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FORWARD

This professional paper is a supplementary document which, along with a related recital, satisfies the requirement of a Recital-in-Lieu-of-a-Thesis.

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CHAPTER I

BIOGRAPHY: OVERVIEW OF THE CULTURAL, EDUCATIONAL AND MUSICAL MILIEU IMPINGENT UPON WOLF'S PERSONAL AND MUSICAL PRODUCTIVITY

Childhood

Europe in the 1860's was characterized by a climate of growing liberalism, of slowly emerging democratic forms and the beginning of colonial independence from European control. The Germanic people were a notable exception to this general European spirit. Prussia advanced against the spirit of the times to unify the German states into a second Reich by the force of arms (6). Hugo Wolf was born at this time. In the sense of linguistics and cultural heritage, he was born a German.

The correlations between cultural blocks and political boundaries remained quite low. And so it was that Wolf was born, the favorite son of eight children, in Windischgraz, a small village of Germanic culture in a largely Slavic countryside under the political control of the Austrian Empire. Yet it is insufficient to describe his cultural

background as largely Germanic because his musical heritage was Austrian.

Austria was a conglomeration of peoples included and excluded by rapidly-fluctuating imperial boundaries (2). It was Slavic and Germanic in culture, with German the most usual language. Although in music history Austria and Germany are usually grouped together, an Austrian musical quality is quite distinguishable from the German by its greater lightness and sparkle and by its more subtle, elegant craftsmanship as opposed to German solidity (5). In the early 19th century, Vienna became the focal point of the classical style and became, through the time of Wolf's birth, famous for its opera, orchestral music, scholarship and educational facilities (11). It was with this musical milieu Wolf would identify, and it was to Vienna that he would go for his ultimate musical education.

Wolf's father, Philipp, was a man of artistic inclination who found himself saddled with a comfortably lucrative business which made his ambitions for becoming an architect impractical. The family home, an attractive two-story building on a tree-lined street, the house where Hugo was born in 1860, was situated only a short walk from the family leather business (4). Over the doorway of the family home, the sign of the leather trade was hung--a sheet of metal in the shape of a pigskin. Frustrated by a lack of professional

artistic outlet, Philipp taught himself to play a variety of musical instruments. He played for friends in his home, and, quite in contrast to his usually mild demeanor, forced his children by threats and raps on the head to learn music (16).

By the age of five, Philipp had begun Hugo's music lessons at the keyboard and in the first position of the violin. The young Hugo enjoyed the discipline of music study. He possessed a remarkable music memory and an acute ear. Soon he could recognize intervals and chords when played on the piano behind his back. At the age of eight, he was taken as a special treat to the opera house in Klagenfurt to see Donizetti's opera Belisario which made such an impression upon him that he was able to play long passages from the opera from memory (4, p. 5).

Hugo's first four years in school (1865-69), spent in the town school of Windischgraz, were academically successful. He was recognized as gifted (4). But during the ensuing years, from the age of ten to fifteen, he became rebellious to authority and received failing grades repeatedly. Although somewhat withdrawn at this time, he remained on good terms with his peers despite his difficulty with teachers. His teachers considered him guilty of the greatest academic insufficiency possible in an authoritarian society--being insufficiently respectful and

repentent. He was expelled from three schools during this period, but continued to achieve well in music and literature.

In his study of keyboard, he became introduced to the abbreviated scores of various operas which he absorbed with enthusiasm. While detesting pedantry and discipline in academics, he became intimate with the available scores of Bellini, Rossini, Donizetti, Gounod, Haydn, Mozart and Schubert. But Beethoven was his idol. He would attack with clenched fists any of his fellow students who taunted him about his fanatical zeal for Beethoven, demanding greater respect for his idol (16). As is frequently the case with those who reject authority, Hugo was more inclined to reject those authorities who limited his freedom of action (or tried to teach him Latin) and did accept authorities such as the musical gods who seemed somehow remote and not likely to interfere.

By the age of fourteen he had already composed a piano sonata, a set of variations for piano and a group of songs. Although the selections reflected his exposure to Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven and Schubert, the quality of the work was negligible (16).

At the age of fifteen, after his third expulsion from school, his father used a final argument with him to coax him back into school and away from the insecure life of a musician. Hugo would be drafted into the army unless he

were attending school. This plot failed, and Philipp reluctantly agreed to allow Hugo to follow a career in music.

Financially, this was to present a problem--considerably more of a problem than Philipp was to recognize for many years. Until Hugo was seven, the financial circumstances of the Wolf family had been quite comfortable. The leather business was lucrative. But in 1867, a fire destroyed the family home and business (16). From that time on, Philipp had a hard life while rebuilding the business. There was seldom enough money to assist his favored, artistic son in his musical pursuits.

Adolescence

Philipp, finally consenting to assist Hugo in the pursuit of the insecure life of composer, sent him to Vienna to live with an aunt while attending the Vienna Conservatory. Vienna, then one of the great musical capitals of the world, offered many concerts with famous performers and associations with competent musicians and students. Hugo eagerly entered composition classes with Fuchs, in which Gustav Mahler was a fellow student.

Hugo was soon disappointed. He was required, despite his knowledge of the subject, to repeat elementary harmony. In the evenings, the exasperated Hugo would sit for hours at his aunt's piano striking one chord after another. When he

occasionally discovered a novel way of resolving a discord, would proclaim loudly to his cousin, "Anna, Anna, another resolution!" (16, p. 20).

He became an avid opera and concert goer, often attending three or four performances a week (17), taking his favorite place in the gallery, whenever possible with a score. Meyerbeer's Hugenots was his favorite opera at this time, followed closely by Wagner's Tannhäuser and Lohengrin, respectively. In addition, he reportedly became deeply immersed in an extended appreciation of the classics, namely, Bach and Beethoven, and in Schubert and Schumann as masters of the Lied (12).

At the time of Hugo's arrival in Vienna, however, the primary topic of musical controversy was the new music of Richard Wagner. Wagner's impact upon musical circles was immense, and his work was everywhere extolled or derided, with no one remaining indifferent. Walker (16), the primary English language biographical authority on Wolf, describes it as follows:

In the eyes of the young men of that day, Wagner represented modernity, freedom and progress; to conservative parents and pedants, he was the great iconoclast and seducer of youth To be young at that time was to be a Wagnerian, with all the earnestness and intolerances, the follies and exaltations that the term implied (16, p. 23).

Confirming the implication that the Wagner cult was a psychological as well as musical phenomenon, Wolf became a

Wagnerian before hearing Wagner's music. He met Wagner at the stage door after a rehearsal of Tannhäuser--a rehearsal which he had not heard. But after hearing the music in performance a few days later, Hugo became more decidedly and excitedly Wagnerian and was determined that Wagner should hear some of his music (17).

Hugo managed to coerce Wagner's hotel maid to let him into the rooms where he waited for the master. When Wagner arrived, he was polite but showed little interest in Hugo. He advised him to return for an evaluation after he had grown a little older. Hugo explained that he composed using the classics as his models, to which Wagner with an iconoclastic smile replied, "Well yes, that's right, one cannot be original all at once" (16, p. 29).

This was an attitude with which the rebellious Hugo could identify. He even for a time went so far as to become a Wagnerian vegetarian but he did not become a Wagnerian anti-semitic.

By the age of seventeen, after two years at the conservatory, the pedantry and systematic method of instructions had become unbearable to Hugo. He confronted the director of the conservatory with the news that he was leaving because he was forgetting more than he was learning. The director, enraged by the great sin of impudence, expelled him instead (16). By this time, however (1877), he had

composed a group of songs which included An (Lenau), an expressive song very much in Schumann's manner, and the endearing little Morgentau, the earliest of his compositions that the mature Wolf still thought good for publication. The gentle melodic flow is reminiscent of Schubert. However, Wolf, in this tiny song captured an innocence, naturalness and freshness to be associated with his best output later in life (13).

No longer living with his aunt because of family quarrels, Hugo henceforth had great difficulty making his way. Through his growing vivacity and charm he became acquainted with a number of Vienna's notable citizens. Joseph Breuer, the famous physician whose collaboration with Freud became psychoanalytic history (15), offered to let Hugo give piano lessons to his children. Breuer became a very dear friend and benefactor to Hugo, and even took him as a guest on the family's summer vacation.

During this congenial summer, he wrote the majority of the thirty songs he produced that year, 1878. These he set to the poetic works of Lenau, Ruckert and Hebbel, including Die Spinnerin (Rückert) and Das Vöglein (Hebbel) which have the "lightness of touch, beauty of workmanship and fresh delicate humor which we recognize as Wolfian" (16, p. 63).

Acutely sensitive to city noise, Hugo changed apartments as often as every two weeks. Once he shared an

apartment with Gustav Mahler, who also found the noise disturbing. It is probable that Mahler became familiar with Breuer through his friend Wolf, and years later would, when in mild psycho-sexual difficulty seek help from another of Breuer's protégés, Freud, to be immortalized as one of the first recorded cases of short-term psychoanalytic therapy (19). Meanwhile, Mahler and Wolf remained good friends and mutually inspiring young composers. For instance, Mahler once wrote a movement of a string quartet in the middle of the night in a park while Wolf and his friend, Kruzyzamorosky slept on a bench (16).

Alma Mahler, an occasionally reliable source of information (and the probable source of Mahler's later psycho-sexual difficulty) related that those three young men once sang the trio between Gunther, Brunhilde and Hagen so loudly at their apartment that the landlady put them out of the house (7).

In 1879, when nineteen years of age, Wolf decided to show Brahms some of his compositions for an appraisal. It is interesting that in those times in Vienna, the Wagnerians thoroughly detested Brahms' music, yet the young Wolf was not yet caught up in the controversy. He boldly went to Brahms' apartment with a bundle of manuscripts and Brahms received him cordially enough, but commented, "You must first learn something and then we shall see if you have

talent" (16). He recommended a composition teacher whose fees, pedanticism and altogether "lehrer" attitude proved too much for Wolf's impetuosity. He decided that Brahms, too, was an appropriate member of the slow-witted pedant camp and later as critic on the Salonblatt, criticized Brahms unmercifully.

Adulthood

Unable to earn enough money for his own support, Hugo frequently had to write his father for help. A letter from Philipp, a loving but exasperated father, is typical. The date was December, 1880, when Hugo was twenty.

What with my many worries and great shortage of money, your miseries were the only thing lacking. But in heaven's name what is going to happen? No lessons so far, and in March people get ready to go to the country Yesterday I traveled at three o'clock in the night to Schwarzenbach in 20 degrees of frost and an icy wind, so that I could send you ten florins today. I cleared about six florins and suffered 1,000 florins from the cold. Whether I can send you ten florins on January 5, I don't know; I have enormous bills to pay When I hold review of my children it appears that Modesta is badly married, Gilbert is as poor a leather worker as Max is a worthless tradesman, and finally you, withdrawn from the fourth class in order to seek out the most uncertain of all means of existence. That's a nice Christmas present for me (16, p. 93).

Primarily as a young man, Wolf relied on generous friends for support. Fortunately, his personality was sufficiently winning so that he could accomplish this. His portraits show him to have had a delicate, boyish face, and artistically long blond hair. He was slender, only five

feet one inches tall, reportedly neat in dress, quick in laughter and winning with everyone, especially children.

Wolf flourished in dependent relationships and accepting environments, living with people who supported him emotionally as well as financially. He created in an environment of social rewards and was quite unsuited to independent, isolated, unrewarded action. As Crankshaw phrased it:

Wolf's was not the type of genius to flourish in any environment He needed a background of living culture. He needed friendship with those to whom poetry and music meant at least a little of what they meant to him. Above all, he needed understanding and encouragement. He was not equipped for a personal battle with society. His belief in his powers needed support from those who shared it (3, p. 273).

Those who served this function in addition to Breuer were Adalbert von Goldschmidt, the Langs, Preyss', Köcherts, Heinrich Werner and others. In addition, these people assisted him in obtaining what few official positions he held, in getting music published and in providing performances. He spent pleasant, quiet and productive summers in the homes of Breuer, Preyers, Werner and it was in Werner's home in Perchtoldsdorf that most of his Mörike Leider were composed (16).

Mellers says of Wolf,

Like Wagner, he was an egotist ready to sacrifice anyone to the best of his genius and . . . despite his petty irascibilities and pomposities . . . was

personally so fascinating that people vied with one another to be sacrificed (9, p. 101).

Wolf spent the summer of 1880 at the Preyss summer home in Maierling. These were happy times. Maierling was one half hour by rail from Vienna and four hours walk from Perchtoldsdorf where his first great outpouring of song was to take place eight years later. This summer he wrote a string quartet of outstanding quality for a youth of twenty (10). Later in Vienna, he wrote his first Mörike song and the beautiful delicate Sterne mit den Goldnen Füßchen with a transparent accompaniment.

In 1882 Goldschmidt was able to get Wolf a job as chorus master in Stadttheatre in Salzburg, a position in which Wolf lasted only three months. He lacked experience in conducting and the musicians of the orchestra on one occasion refused to play under him. The preparations of what he regarded as trivial operettas made him impatient and hostile. After an argument with the director, he resigned (16). He spent the summer in Maierling where he composed the Mausfallensprüchlein, a little song with words by Mörike to be sung while walking three times around a mouse trap. In December, inspired by poems of Eichendorff and Reinick, he composed some light cheerful songs including two cradle songs and Wohin mit der Freud.

The year 1883 included an interview with Liszt who listened sympathetically to Wolf's work and suggested he

would like to hear a larger work. In June, Wolf set the famous Zur Ruh, zur Ruh (16), an important composition because it is the first one to reflect Wagnerian techniques and principles in the smaller form of the Lied and the first one to hint at Wolf's ultimate style and the developments he would make in German Lied. According to Newman (10), Zur Ruh, zur Ruh ranks among his best songs.

Many of Wolf's old friendships now were ruined due to his impetuous behavior. Those excluded were the Altmanns, Breuer, Gabillon, Schönaich, and Flesch. At the Breuer home, he spoke disrespectfully of a woman before the children. Frau Breuer reprimanded him and he walked out never to return. When he had no place to live, a wealthy merchant, Fritz Flesch, offered an entire story of his house for Wolf's exclusive use plus all the food, wine and champagne he would wish. Wolf abruptly left when one day Flesch passed him a pear on a toothpick. Another friend, Schönaich, appeared to Wolf by a single comment to offer an insult and was never spoken to again (16).

Wolf's moodiness increased. He became depressed because he felt Wagner's music was so great that he could never equal it. Wagner had died in 1883 and Wolf wrote, "What remains for me to do? He has left me no room, like a mighty tree that chokes with its shade the sprouting young growths under its widely spreading branches" (16, p. 146).

In 1884, through the influence of the Köckert family, Hugo was offered a job as critic for the Wiener Salonblatt, a society paper of Viennese fashionables. Wolf, never known to be timid about expressing his opinions, made harsh attacks on Brahms, on the musical world for its neglect of Liszt and Berlioz and gave his praise of Wagner. The Salonblatt was passed from person to person with relish and distaste throughout Vienna. He kept this job for three years. Except for his scathing attacks and sarcasm about Brahms which were mostly unjustified, his criticisms of old and new works seem to show sound musical judgements and intuition about their worth in history.

In 1885 he finished Penthesilea, an orchestral tone poem based on Henrich von Kleist's poetic drama of the same name, one of the few larger works Wolf ever completed. He showed the score to Richter, the conductor of the Vienna Philharmonic orchestra for a trial reading. Richter considered it an important work. A year later the trial reading of Penthesilea materialized but Richter simply beat time, the orchestra members gave little care to the reading, discord resounded in the hall.

Afterwards there was resounding laughter on the part of the orchestra and then Richter turned to the players and said: "Gentlemen! I should not have let the piece be played to the end, but I wanted to see for myself the man who dares to write in such a way about Meister Brahms" (16, p. 182).

Wolf had made too many enemies as critic of the Salonblatt. This can be remembered as his most bitter experience.

So far, at the age of twenty-seven, Wolf had had no public performance of his works, no publication and no financial or personal reward. He resigned from the Salonblatt to do more composing.

Then in 1887, Wolf's friend Eckstein (who had assisted Bruckner in the publication of his choral works) obtained a publisher for twelve songs by guaranteeing the cost of publication. Unfortunately, Wolf's beloved father Philipp died just a few months before the announcement of publication, which made the success a little less sweet. His greatest pleasure would have been to share success with his father who had stood by him in all the unrewarding years.

This publication of his works inspired Wolf to a productive creative impulse that has seldom been equaled in musical history, but is reminiscent of Schubert's spontaneous creativity and of Schumann's outpouring of song in 1840. During the winter of 1888 Wolf went alone to Werner's summer home in Perchtoldsdorf where, despite the cold, he found solitude and peace and creativity. For the past two years he had been reading and rereading Mörike's poems. In 207 days he wrote 170 songs (10, p. 2065). Sometimes he wrote two or three songs a day--twenty songs in March alone. First, he completed the fifty-three songs set to words by

Mörike. In a letter to Strasser, his brother-in-law, Wolf wrote: "I am working incessantly with a thousand horsepower from dawn till late at night. What I now write, dear friend, I write for posterity too. They are masterpieces" (16, p. 203). On March 20th, he wrote to Long: "I retract the opinion that the 'Erstes Liebeslied eines Mädchens' is my best thing, for what I wrote this morning, 'Fussreise,' is a million times better. When you have heard this song, you can have only one wish--to die" (16, p. 203).

Wolf raced through thirteen settings of poems by Eichendorff. Soon he had composed ninety-two songs, none of which he felt was a failure (16). By March 12, 1889, he had completed fifty more songs, set to Goethe's poems. The Mörike and Eichendorff volumes were already in preparation for publishing. Two famous singers, Rosa Papier and Ferdinand Jäger performed some of his songs publicly with outstanding audience response.

Wolf wrote the successful Elfenlied for soprano solo, women's chorus and orchestra in 1889 and arranged some songs for orchestra. He translated ten religious and thirty-four secular poems of Spanish poems by Paul Heyse and Emanuel Geibel forming the Spanisches Liederbuch. Late in the year, a group of friends and supporters formed an organization to assist Wolf financially. Thus, his traveling expenses were paid and future arrangements with publishers were easier.

Engelbert Humperdinck, composer of Hänsel und Gretel, was a reader on the staff of Schott publishers and persuaded this influential institution to publish Wolf's work. They took over the Mörike and Eichendorff volumes in 1891 and also published the Goethe volume, Spanishes Liederbuch and six Keller songs which were written for mezzo-soprano.

In 1891 Wolf slowly wrote his only commissioned work-- incidental music to Ibsen's The Feast at Solhaug. In December he completed fifteen songs from Heyse's Italienisches Liederbuch, translations of Italian poems. These songs, Wolf felt, were his most original and artistic. These had a new direction in that they were more miniaturized, serene, limpid, delicate and restrained (16).

After this long, intense spurt of creativity, Wolf fell into a period of inactivity and depression. Early in life Wolf had written "When I am no longer able to compose, then nobody need bother about me any longer . . . then everything will be over for me" (1, p. 10). Now he could find no inspiration. Friends continued to make his music known, particularly the performers Jäger, Mayer and Zerny. Audiences responded enthusiastically, often insisting for many songs to be repeated.

Yet his adherents remained small for all their enthusiasm. The fame he sought was not forthcoming. In this connection Mayse advises,

The reason his music made so little headway during his lifetime was that few people had acquaintance with it. Few German singers cared to sing his songs because of their difficulty and the average performer did not see sufficient opportunities for applause in them (8, pp. 19-20).

Also, Wolf refused to have his songs transposed or to be printed separately so that a baritone would buy a volume only to be able to perform a few of the songs. The others would be for other voices.

Subsequently, in 1892, Wolf elaborated the wild and successful Mörike song Der Feuerreiter into a massive arrangement for chorus and orchestra and wrote Italienische Serenade for small orchestra which was arranged from the string quartet of 1887.

Yet his childhood exposure to partial scores of various operas had yielded a continuing operatic enthusiasm. A driving desire of his professional life was to write a successful opera and he hoped for the sort of wide acclaim, fame and fortune which his friend Humperdink had had. But regardless of tireless searching he could not find a suitable libretto. His subtle literary taste and his constant desire to wed great words to great music made this a considerable problem. In the case of his songs, he always located the words to be set, usually fine poetry, immersed himself obsessively in his choice, rereading each poem to himself and to others in order to stimulate an appropriate

emotional tone. He would become quite euphoric over a new poetic discovery and usually, without planning, rise early in the morning with the music conceived in its entirety.

He made no sketches: his brooding upon a poem would at the right time result in a quasi-cataleptic state in which the poem, generated, as it were, its own music, full-born in an hour or two, complete in form and in virtually every point of detail (10, p. 2065).

His original manuscripts, unlike those of most composers, showed few corrections. The finding of a suitable operatic libretto, one that would inspire him to this degree of composing intensity, took until 1895.

He had been interested for years in Pedro Alarcon's novel, The Three Cornered Hat, as a subject for an opera. An acquaintance, Rose Mayreder, decided in 1888 to turn it into a libretto. She submitted it to Wolf who rejected it with harsh criticism. Nothing more was said until it was casually mentioned one day seven years later and Wolf decided to reread it. On this occasion his reaction was different, and it may be suspected that the long years of vain searching tempered his judgment. This time he wished for it to be good and therefore he found it so.

He finished the opera in a rapid fourteen weeks, titling it Der Corregidor. One of the songs of the Spanisches Liederbuch, In dem Schatten meiner Locken, was used in the opera, sung by Frasquita in the first act to

lull the Corregidor, the Magistrate, into the belief that her husband was asleep.

The work, however, was not dramatically sound. Despite some brilliant and sensitive music, the failings of the libretto were too great to allow a successful opera. Dramatically it was segmented and sequential, without plot development. The opera had but one performance during Wolf's lifetime, and even with Bruno Walter's rearrangement of the action, it has not been able to establish itself in the repertory (10).

In the following year, when Wolf was thirty-six, he settled again in Werner's summer home in Perchtoldsdorf. There, in little more than a month, he composed the twenty-four songs of the second part of the Italienisches Liederbuch. Although more than four years had passed since the last of the first part of the Italian song book had been composed, these new songs continued all "the delicacy and refinement" of the earlier volume (16, p. 372). He had recovered from the failure of Der Corregidor and continued in his previous idiom as though there had not been such a separation of years between the two volumes of the Italienisches Liederbuch.

But in the following year, 1897, at the age of thirty-seven, the end of his life suddenly drew near. He began to exhibit marked symptoms of general paresis, although the general symptoms of central nervous system organisisity had

been present for years.. He had just finished writing three songs to poems of Michelangelo and the beginning of a new opera when the effects became so evident as to prevent his continuance of a productive life. He became frequently violent, delusional and hallucinatory. Institutionalized for several years, he lost the power of speech and sight and ultimately became paralyzed before his death in 1903.

In the last tragic years of confinement, Wolf's friends, Melanie Köchert, Haberlandt and Heinrich Werner, remained faithful and devoted, visiting him often even when there could be no more communication because of his torturous paralytic condition. Through the tireless activities of his friends, his recognition increased throughout the German speaking countries.

With an irony not unusual in the history of artistry, death brought fame and honors. Der Corregidor, a bad opera, was produced in various cities, while the opera to a good libretto he had begun to work on lay forever unfinished because he had died of a disease common bread mold would have cured. "Famous singers no longer hesitated to include his songs on their programs, streets were named after him, and he was buried beside Beethoven and Schubert" (16, pp. 446-47).

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CHAPTER II

POETS AND WORKS OF HUGO WOLF

Poets Chosen by Wolf

The early nineteenth century witnessed an extreme concentration of the romantic spirit--first in German literature and then in music. Poets and philosophers sought a union of all the arts. Lyric poetry stressed its kinship to melody, paintings had literary significance and music acquired poetic and philosophical meaning (8).

Hugo Wolf was truly an exponent of the romantic era, above all in his love of fine literature and in his desire to make poetry the inspiration of music. Even as a boy he was devoted to literature, at which time he gained a wide range of literary exposure to English, French and German works. Goethe, Keller, Eichendorff, Kleist, Mörike, Lenau and Heine were his favorite poets (10). And as an adult, his music was inspired by these poetic masters. He could never set insignificant words to music.

His process of composition included a detailed examination of the poem he intended to set. He would emotionally saturate himself in it, ". . . living its life for the moment to the exclusion of every other influence" (6, p. 200). This orientation enabled him to accomplish a

fusion of poetry and music into that mutually expressive Gestalt which is referred to as a Wolfian song. The poets, then, whose work Wolf so inextricably fused with his own are of particular importance for the understanding of his compositions.

Eduard Mörike (1804-1875), a plump, cheerful clergyman was also a sensitive, meditative poet. His verses have been described as "sincere, melodious, subjective, and warm-hearted" (2, p. 162). He was a "lover of nature and simple joys" and the last representative of the Swabian School of poets (2, p. 162). He was the author of the distinguished novelle, Mozart's Journey from Vienna to Prague (1856) (1) which has been translated into English.

The title page of the Mörike volume reads: "Poems by Eduard Mörike, for voice and piano, set to music by Hugo Wolf" (9, p. 236). Wolf refused to have biographical material or photographs of himself on published volumes, saying, "The songs can stand by themselves" (9, p. 279).

The Mörike volume was followed by two volumes in which Wolf set Eichendorff poems. Joseph von Eichendorff (1788-1857) is regarded as one of the most distinguished lyric poets in German literature (2, p. 137). His melodious poems deal almost exclusively with beauties of nature. Many of his poems have become real folk-songs because of his ability to express tender emotions with guileless simplicity.

Rather than choosing Eichendorff's most romantic poems as he had done in the case of Mörike, Wolf chose poems largely of a realistic or humorous character.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832) was a long-lived universal genius who once said that his aim was to make his life a concrete example of the full potentialities of man (1, p. 840). There is considerable evidence to support the contention that he accomplished his aim. In addition to being regarded as Germany's greatest poet, Goethe was a painter; a lawyer; a statesman (ten years Weimar Chief of State); high administrative official (director of State Theatres and of scientific institutions); a scientist interested in botany, geology (an iron-bearing mineral even bears his name) (4), anatomy, psychology (theory of colors); a musician; an actor and a theatre director (3). He also was the official historiographer in the allied campaign against revolutionary France. Goethe was fluent in French, English, Italian, Latin, Greek and Hebrew, and translated works by Voltaire, Byron, and others. He completed 133 volumes of literary works. Napoleon once said after meeting Goethe, "Voila un'homme!" (1, p. 840).

The literary works of Goethe include love lyrics, ballads, philosophical poems, novels, epics, tragedies, philosophical dramas, satires, short stories, pastorals and

operettas. His earliest lyric poems date from 1770 and have been used as texts for folk melodies.

Wolf used material from Goethe's Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre (1796), which was destined to become the prototype for the German novel of character development, and the West-östlicher Divan (1819), a collection of Goethe's finest poetry which strikes a new note in German poetry, introducing Eastern elements derived from Goethe's reading of the Persian poet Hafiz (7). The rest of the Goethe volume consists of a selection of twenty-one songs and ballads from various periods and the Prometheus-Ganymed-Grenzen der Menschheit group (9, p. 246).

Wolf's next great inspiration came from the Spanisches Liederbuch of Emanuel Geibel and Paul Heyse which contained translations of a representative selection of sixteenth and seventeenth century Spanish poetry. About half of these poems are of unknown origin, but the rest are by renowned Spanish poets including Cervantes, Camoens, and Lope de Vega.

Geibel and Heyse separated the religious from the secular poems in their anthology and Wolf followed the same pattern. There are ten religious songs and thirty-four secular ones.

Emanuel von Geibel (1815-84), a popular writer of patriotic ballads and sweet, sentimental poems has been described as a stylist rather than a deep and original

thinker (2). Although he was the head of the Munich school of poets, his poems are exemplary of a decline in German literature around 1870.

Paul Johann Ludwig Heyse (1830-1914) was the more important poet of the two collaborators. Heyse was also a member of the Munich school of poets who circulated around Geibel. A German realistic writer, Heyse's reputation rests on 120 novelles, fifty plays, six novels, as well as many fine translations. For his fine, elegant polished and psychologically probing writings, Heyse received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1910, becoming the first German ever to be honored by this coveted award (1).

Heyse was also the translator of the Italienisches Liederbuch (5). These poems are anonymous, Heyse having used Italian rispetti and velote, ritornelle, popular ballads, songs in folk-style, and Corsican songs and death laments. Wolf's songs are taken from the rispetti or velote (the Venetian equivalent to the rispetti) with only one exception, Benedeit die sel'ge Mutter (9). See the next chapter for a description of the rispetti.

In 1890, Wolf set six poems, the Alte Weisen, by Gottfried Keller. Keller (1819-1890) was a Swiss novelist whose vital, realistic and purposeful fiction gives him a high place among nineteenth century authors (1). He was beloved among his countrymen not only because of his Heimat tales,

his warm and kindly poems and his gentle humor, but because he was considered the best representative of Swiss democracy, tolerance, liberalism and moderation (2).

The remaining poets, Byron, Michelangelo, Ibsen, Kerner, Heine, Reinick and Shakespeare, each have their important place in literary history, but exhibited less total influence on the musical output of Hugo Wolf.

Works

Wolf's songs are grouped according to the poets and were published in that grouping during his lifetime. A list of those volumes follows in chronological order (9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17).

Sechs Lieder für Eine Frauenstimme (published in 1888)

1. Morgentau (1877)
2. Die Spinnerin (1878)
3. Das Vöglein (1878)
4. Mausfallensprüchlein (1882)
5. Wiegenlied im Sommer (1882)
6. Wiegenlied im Winter (1882)

Sechs Gedichte von Scheffel, Mörike, Goethe und Kerner (published in 1888)

1. Zur Ruh, zur Ruh! (1883)
2. Der König bei der Krönung (1886)
3. Biterolf (1886)
4. Wächterlied auf der Wartburg (1887)
5. Wanderers Nachtlied (1887)
6. Beherzigung (1887)

Gedichte von Eduard Mörike (published in 1889)

1. Der Tambour (1888)
2. Der Knabe und das Immlein (1888)
3. Jägerlied (1888)
4. Ein Stündlein wohl vor Tag (1888)

5. Der Jäger (1888)
6. Nimmersatte Liebe (1888)
7. Auftrag (1888)
8. Zur Warnung (1888)
9. Lied vom Winde (1888)
10. Bei einer Trauung (1888)
11. Zitronenfalter im April (1888)
12. Elfenlied (1888)
13. Der Gärtner (1888)
14. Abschied (1888)
15. Denk' es o Seele (1888)
16. Auf einer Wanderung (1888)
17. Gebet (1888)
18. Verborgenheit (1888)
19. Lied Eines Verliebten (1888)
20. Selbstgeständnis (1888)
21. Erstes Liebeslied eines Mädchens (1888)
22. Fussreise (1888)
23. Rat einer Alten (1888)
24. Begegnung (1888)
25. Das verlassene Mägdlein (1888)
26. Storchenbotschaft (1888)
27. Frage und Antwort (1888)
28. Lebewohl (1888)
29. Heimweh (1888)
30. Seufzer (1888)
31. Auf ein altes Bild (1888)
32. An eine Aolsharfe (1888)
33. Um Mitternacht (1888)
34. Auf eine Christblume I (1888)
35. Peregrina I (1888)
36. Peregrina II (1888)
37. Agnes (1888)
38. Er ist's (1888)
39. In der Frühe (1888)
40. Im Frühling (1888)
41. Nixe Binsefuss (1888)
42. Die Geister am Mummelsee (1888)
43. An den Schlaf (1888)
44. Neue Liebe (1888)
45. Zum neuen Jahre (1888)
46. Schlafendes Jesuskind (1888)
47. Wo find' ich Trost? (1888)
48. Karwoche (1888)
49. Gesang Weylas (1888)
50. Der Feuerreiter (1888)
51. An die Geliebte (1888)
52. Auf eine Christblume II (1888)

Gedichte von Eichendorff (published in 1889)

1. Erwartung (1880)
2. Die Nacht (1880)
3. Der Soldat II (1886)
4. Der Soldat I (1887)
5. Die Zigeunerin (1887)
6. Waldmädchen (1887)
7. Nachtzauber (1887)
8. Verschwiegene Liebe (1888)
9. Der Schreckenberger (1888)
10. Der Glücksritter (1888)
11. Seemanns Abschied (1888)
12. Der Scholar (1888)
13. Der Musikant (1888)
14. Der verzweifelte Liebhaber (1888)
15. Unfall (1888)
16. Der Freund (1888)
17. Liebesglück (1888)
18. Das Ständchen (1888)
19. Heimweh (1888)
20. Lieber alles (1888)

Gedichte von Goethe (published in 1890)

1. Harfenspieler I (1888)
2. Harfenspieler II (1888)
3. Harfenspieler III (1888)
4. Philine (1888)
5. Spottlied (1888)
6. Anakreons Grab (1888)
7. Der Schäfer (1888)
8. Der Rattenfänger (1888)
9. Gleich und Gleich (1888)
10. Dank des Paria (1888)
11. Frech und Froh I (1888)
12. St. Nepomuks Vorabend (1888)
13. Gutmann und Gutweib (1888)
14. Ritter Kurts Brautfahrt (1888)
15. Der Sänger (1888)
16. Mignon ('Kennst du das Land?') (1888)
17. Mignon II (1888)
18. Mignon I (1888)
19. Frühling übers Jahr (1888)
20. Mignon III (1888)
21. Epiphanias (1888)
22. Cophrisches Lied I (1888)
23. Cophtisches Lied II (1888)
24. Beherzigung (1888)

25. Blumengruss (1888).
26. Prometheus (1889)
27. Königlich Gebet (1889)
28. Grenzen der Menschheit (1889)
29. Ganymed (1889)
30. Was in der Schenke waren heute (1889)
31. Solang man nüchtern ist (1889)
32. Ob der Koran von Ewigkeit sei? (1889)
33. Sie haben wegen der Trunkenheit (1889)
34. Trunken müssen wir alle sein (1889)
35. Phänomen (1889)
36. Erschaffen und Beleben (1889)
37. Nicht Gelegenheit macht Diebe (1889)
38. Hochbeglückt in deiner Liebe (1889)
39. Wie sollt' ich heiter bleiben (1889)
40. Als ich auf dem Euphrat schiffte (1889)
41. Dies zu deuten bin erbötig (1889)
42. Wenn ich dein gedenke (1889)
43. Komm, Liebchen, komm (1889)
44. Hätt' ich irgend wohl bedenken (1889)
45. Locken, haltet mich gefangen (1889)
46. Nimmer will ich dich verlieren (1889)
47. Frech und Froh II (1889)
48. Der neue Amadis (1889)
49. Genialisch Treiben (1889)
50. Die Bekehrte (1889)
51. Die Spröde (1889)

Spanisches Liederbuch, nach Heyse und Geibel (published in 1891)

1. Wer sein holdes Lieb verloren (1889)
2. Ich fuhr über Meer, ich zog über (1889)
3. Preciosas Sprüchlein gegen Kopfweh (1889)
4. Wenn du zu den Blumen gehst (1889)
5. Alle gingen, Herz, zur Ruh (1889)
6. Nun wandre, Marie (1889)
7. Die ihr schwebet um diese Palmen (1889)
8. Die du Gott gebarst, du Reine (1889)
9. Bedeckt mich mit Blumen (1889)
10. Seltsam ist Juanas Weise (1889)
11. Treibe nur mit Lieben Spott (1889)
12. Und schläfst du, mein Mädchen (1889)
13. In dem Schatten meiner Locken (1889)
14. Herz, verzage nicht geschwind (1889)
15. Sagt, seid Ihr es, feiner Herr (1889)
16. Klinge, klinge, mein Pandero (1889)
17. Herr, was trägt der Boden hier (1889)
18. Blindes Schauen, dunkle Leuchte (1889)
19. Bitt' ihn, o Mutter (1889)

20. Wer tat detnem Füsslein weh? (1889)
21. Auf dem grünen Balkon (1889)
22. Sie blasen zum Abmarsch (1889)
23. Führ' mich, Kind, nach Bethlehem (1889)
24. Wunden trägst du, mein Geliebter (1889)
25. Ach, wie Lang die Seele Schlummert (1889)
26. Ach, des Knaben Augen (1889)
27. Muhvoll komm' ich und beladen (1890)
28. Nun bin ich dein (1890)
29. Trau' nicht der Liebe (1890)
30. Weint nich, ihr Auglein (1890)
31. Schmerzliche Wonnen und wonnige Schmerzen (1890)
32. Ach, im Maien war's (1890)
33. Eide, so die Liebe schwar (1890)
34. Geh', Geliebter, geh' jetzt (1890)
35. Liebe mir im Busen (1890)
36. Deine Mutter, süßes Kind (1890)
37. Mögen alle bösen Zungen (1890)
38. Sagt ihm, dass er zu mir komme (1890)
39. Dereinst, dereinst, Gedanke mein (1890)
40. Tief im Herzen trag' ich Pein (1890)
41. Komm', o Tod, von Nacht umgeben (1890)
42. Ob auch finstre Blicke glitten (1890)
43. Da nur Leid und Leidenschaft (1890)
44. Wehe der, die mir verstrickte (1890)

Alte Weisen, Sechs Gedichte von Keller (published in 1891)

1. Tretet ein, hoher Krieger (1890)
2. Singt mein Schatz wie ein Fink (1890)
3. Wie glänzt der helle Mond (1890)
4. Das Köhlerweib ist trunken (1890)
5. Wandl' ich in den Morgenthau (1890)
6. Du milchfunger Knabe (1890)

Italienisches Liederbuch, nach Paul Heyse (Part I) (published in 1892)

1. Mir ward gesagt, du reisest in die Ferne (1890)
2. Ihr seid die Allerschonste (1890)
3. Gesegnet sei, durch den die Welt entstand (1890)
4. Selig ihr Blinden (1890)
5. Wer rief dich denn? (1890)
6. Der Mond hat eine schwere Klag' erhoben (1890)
7. Nun lass uns Frieden schliessen (1890)
8. Dass dochge malt all' deine Reize waren (1891)
9. Du denkst mit einem Fädchen mich zu fangen (1891)
10. Mein Liebster ist so klein (1891)
11. Und willst du deinen Liebsten sterben sehen (1891)
12. Wie lange schon war immer mein Verlangen (1891)

13. Geselle, woll'n wir uns in Kutten hüllen (1891)
14. Nein, junger Herr (1891)
15. Hoffärtig seid Ihr, schönes Kind (1891)
16. Auch kleine Dinge (1891)
17. Ihr jungen Leute (1891)
18. Ein Ständchen Euch zu bringen (1891)
19. Mein Liebster singt (1891)
20. Heb' auf dein blondes Haupt (1891)
21. Wir haben beide lange Zeit geschwiegen (1891)
22. Man sagt mir, deine Mutter woll' es nicht (1891)

Italienisches Liederbuch, nach Paul Heyse (Part II) (published in 1896)

1. Ich esse nun mein Brot nicht trocken mehr (1896)
2. Mein Liebster hat zu Tische mich geladen (1896)
3. Ich liess mir sagen (1896)
4. Schon streckt' ich aus im Bett (1896)
5. Du sagst mir, dass ich keine Fürstin sei (1896)
6. Lass sie nur gehn (1896)
7. Wie viele Zeit verlor ich (1896)
8. Und steht Ihr früh am Morgen auf (1896)
9. Wohl kenn ich Euren Stand (1896)
10. Wie soll ich fröhlich sein (1896)
11. O wär' dein Haus (1896)
12. Sterb' ich, so hüllt in Blumen (1896)
13. Gesegnet sei das Grün (1896)
14. Wenn du mich mit den Augen streifst (1896)
15. Was soll der Zorn (1896)
16. Benedeit die sel'ge Mutter (1896)
17. Schweig' einmal still (1896)
18. Nicht länger kann ich singen (1896)
19. Wenn du, mein Liebster, steigst zum Himmel auf (1896)
20. Ich hab' in Penna (1896)
21. Heut' Nacht erhob ich mich (1896)
22. Owüsstest du, wieviel ich deinetwegen (1896)
23. Verschling' der Abgrund (1896)
24. Was für ein Lied soll dir gesungen werden? (1896)

Drei Gedichte von Robert Reinick (published in 1897)

1. Gesellenlied (1888)
2. Morgenstimmung (1896)
3. Skolie (1889)

Drei Gesänge aus Ibsens 'Das Fest auf Solhaug' (published in 1897)

1. Gesang Margits (1891)
2. Gudmunds I. Gesang (1891)
3. Gudmunds II. Gesang (1891)

Vier Gedichte nach Heine, Shakespeare und Lord Byron (published in 1897)

1. Wo wird einst (1888)
2. Lied des transferierten Zettel (1889)
3. Keine gleicht von allen Schönen (1896)
4. Sonne der Schlummerlosen (1896)

Drei Gedichte von Michelangelo (published in 1898)

1. Wohl denk' ich oft (1897)
2. Alles endet, was entstehet (1897)
3. Fühlt meine Seele (1897)

In addition there are 107 manuscripts of songs which have not been published, or published posthumously, or of which we have only fragments. This makes a total of 340 songs recorded by Frank Walker, the bulk of Wolf's composition lying in a mere four-year period, 1888-90 and 1895-97 (9).

Wolf also completed several larger works, including a string quartet in D minor (1879-80); a symphonic poem, Penthesilea (1883), written for large orchestra; the Italienische Serenade (1893-94) for small orchestra, arranged later by Wolf for string quartet; an opera, Der Corregidor (1895); incidental music to Ibsen's Das Fest auf Solhaug (1890-91); and several works for chorus, including Elfenlied (1888) and Der Feuerreiter (1888-92).

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CHAPTER III

STYLISTIC ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Stylistic Analysis

Wolf was predominantly a Lieder composer. The German word Lied literally translated into English means "song." However, it has a more specific meaning in terms of music literature. Scholes defines this meaning in the following way:

This word . . . is applied to the Austrian and German products of this period (say 1780 onwards) the period of romantic verse, of the perfected piano forte, of the discarding of the figured bass, and in place of it, the careful elaboration of the harmonic and other details of the accompaniments as an essential part of the composition (17, p. 882).

Occasionally, the word is used in a broader sense, i.e., interchangeably with the phrase "art song." Wolf, however, was, in the specific sense, a Lieder composer. He was a product of Austrian-Germanic romanticism and strongly emphasized the central uniqueness of German Lied, namely, the spirit of the poem in a new relationship to the accompaniment. Crocker (2), in agreement with other authorities, holds that Schubert was the master developer of the Lied along these lines. "Schubert did not invent the Lied or

accompanied song, but he invested it with the power of the new style" (2, pp. 426-27). Einstein (5) asserts, in contrast to some other authorities, that Lieder was an exclusively romantic idiom, and that Wolf brought the form to its ultimate fruition. McKinney and Anderson (12) concur in the judgement that Wolf brought the romantic Lieder to its fullest expression.

Ernest Newman (14) pointed out that Hugo Wolf had not only an astonishing faculty for expressing in music every conceivable variety and shade of emotion, character, or scene suggested in a poem, but for reproducing the general cast of mind of a particular poet. This ability gives each of his groups of songs a different character, yet there remains an over-riding, identifiable Wolfian style.

There are several elements which distinguish Wolf's over-all style. First is the nineteenth century chromaticism which was championed by Wagner. Wolf's general manner of composition is essentially Wagnerian, yet this does not suggest a conscious or unconscious imitation. Although his harmonic processes embody the basic principles of Wagner's method, he avoided the pitfall of absorbing Wagner's peculiar sensuousness of color or adapting his almost incessant use of secondary sevenths (6).

Newman suggests that "Wolf took over from Wagner certain technical elements, not because they were specifically

Wagnerian, but because they were the blood and bone of the art of music as it had been developed by Wagner's time" (14, p. 2066). One of the technical elements was the chord vocabulary Wolf employed, including standard diatonic triads; dominant seventh chords, both diatonic and chromatic; increased use of secondary seventh chords (i.e., all seventh chords except the dominant seventh), diatonic and chromatic; and more chromatic and diminished triads (3). He often used the dominant seventh as the nucleus of chord groups which move up and down from key to key and hover for several measures without settling into a key, as in Gesegnet sei (measures 7-12).

Critics in Wolf's own time often criticized his music as dissonant (4). Wolf himself replied to this issue in the following words: "I am in a position to demonstrate how each of my boldest discords can be justified by the most severe criteria of the theory of harmony" (16, p. 4). The dissonances his critics referred to often result from chromatic chords which are used to heighten an emotional effect, as in Das verlassene Mägdlein (measures 23-26), or to change the mood or add variety, as for example, the increasing brightness in Auf einer Wanderung.

In addition, the tonality of a piece often fluctuates throughout an entire passage, with only hints of keys. This gives a "marvelous fluidity to his style" (7, p. 63). In

Verborgenheit a climax is achieved on the word "wönniglich (blissfully) by withholding the tonic chord for the previous fifteen measures.

Although the entire emphasis of the new Lied since Schubert was to take care that the right syllables should be emphasized and that the music considerations should not supercede the poetic considerations, Wolf brought special attention to the natural accent and phrasing of words which resulted in unique melodic lines. Wolf accomplished this by elaboration of an unusual structural technique.

Wolf used the traditional system of strong and weak beats in the accompaniment. However, he broke away from the traditional methods by setting the vocal phrases in various lengths and in different patterns of accents. Although poets were still conscious of regularities in line lengths, there was a tendency for a proper reading to be given by ignoring such arbitrary impositions and by reading for the complete meaning with pauses dictated by the logic of the thoughts being expressed. Wolf captured this development in such songs as Fussreise and In dem Schatten. He accented words by stressing them against the traditional metric flow of the instrumental part which gave an impression which Friedel (7, p. 69) describes as suggestive of syncopation ". . . but something far more pervasive and flexible." This

was quite in contrast to the traditional German style of heavy, regular accentuations.

Wolf was endlessly inventive in developing new ways to musically express poetic meanings. He did not always use the technique described in the preceding paragraph. His inventiveness did, however, usually center around the contrast and ensemble between the piano part and the vocal line. With Wolf, the piano became not an accompanying instrument, but an integral instrument. He instrumentally accented words and phrases, giving them psychological impact in a wide range of emotions, through melodic and rhythmic twists (Tretet ein, hoher Krieger) and harmonic richness (Anakreons Grab) (8).

Occasionally the vocal line stands alone as a pervading melody, as in Die Spinnerin, Morgentau or even Er Ist's, but most often the two parts interweave into an inseparable whole, the piano commenting upon the poem in its whole and in its parts. The use of long instrumental interludes, Auf einer Wanderung; postludes, Wie lange schon war immer mein Verlange; and introductions, Begegnung, elevate the accompaniment to a high place in the poetic, dramatic and artistic presentation of the song. The representation of the mood or drama of the poem is not complete until the last note from the piano (1).

Accompaniments frequently include the use of one small rhythmic pattern throughout the entire song. Wolf is able to accomplish this with ingenuity and cleverness, as in Du denkst mit eine Fädchen mich zu fangen, Der Mond hat eine schwere Klag erhoben and Der Gärtner.

There is a greater freedom of form in these songs than in older German songs. For example, there are songs written in a strophic manner, with the piano "accompanying" in almost a traditional style, but when this exists, each verse contains suitable variations to reflect changing moods, as in Der Rattenfänger or new poetic images, as in Um Mitternacht.

Mostly, Wolf's songs are through-composed, with contrasting sections (Zur ruh, zur ruh), with the accompaniment built on one musical figure (Auch kleine Dinge), or perhaps symphonic in nature (Auf einer Wanderung). The Italian songs show more regular treatment because of the nature of the rispetti, short Italian poems. Here the old formal balance which included repetition of lines is broken up. Only in Du denkst does he make one small repetition--Ich bin verliebt! Doch eben nicht in dich--which is set twice.

Newman has said:

I venture to think that the supreme master of form in music is not Beethoven or Wagner but Hugo Wolf. Nowhere but in Wolf do I find, in work after work, the perfect adaptation of means to an end, not a note too few, not a note too many, the idiom and the mode of treatment always varying with the emotional subject,

the music always working itself out from the first bar to the last as if under the control of a logical faculty that was never in the least doubt as to its aim and never swerved from the straight pursuit of it. To some people this praise may seem excessive; I can only say that this is my own conviction after some fifteen years' study of Wolf. But Wolf's marvellous achievements were all on the small scale of the song: a composer who could realize the same formal perfection in the symphony or the opera would be the greatest master of musical form that the world has ever seen (15, pp. 197-98).

Thus we have seen the over-riding elements of Wolfian Lied are chromaticism; fluctuating tonality; integration of accompaniment with vocal line; faithful and inventive declamation of words, particularly in the use of non-metric vocal lines; and in freedom of form.

The differences between the groups of songs stems mainly from the quality of the poems used. The Mörike volume includes a wide range of subjects, moods and emotions. Wolf wrote very lyrical musical settings to express these quiet, seemingly passive poems which reflect the homey, nature-loving, warm-hearted Mörike.

In the Eichendorff volume Wolf turned away from the romantic, lyrical poems to the realistic, humorous one, and the songs have a "refreshing zest and vitality" (14, p. 97). The composer wrote in a gay mood, but with less greatness and inspiration than in the Mörike volume. There is one acknowledged masterpiece in this volume, Das Ständchen (18, p. 238), which is, incidentally, a reversion to lyricism.

Goethe, that giant among German literary figures, inspired Wolf's most literary and intellectual attributes. In previous poetic choices, Wolf rarely selected a poem that he felt had been adequately set by some predecessor. But now, he chose poems which had superlative lyrical settings by Schubert, Schumann and Beethoven. No doubt he was keenly aware of the competition and of the way the world would evaluate his creations. He approached these poems more intellectually than his predecessors. For example, in the Wilhelm Meister songs he portrays the pathetic Mignon and half-crazed Harper with psychological insight and deep drama (18). His songs were often strong and tough--such as the portrayal of drunken revelry and despair in the Schenkenbuch songs. These songs are graphically realistic and successful in spite of Stevens' feelings that "the setting of the West-östlicher Divan (which includes the Schenkenbuch songs) are unattractively turgid and rhetorical." The Prometheus-Ganymed-Grenzen der Menschheit group are considered his grandest, most inspired songs (16). It is only in the few poems of simple sentiment that Wolf wrote in the singable, lyrical manner of the Mörike volume. Examples of these are St. Nepomuks Vorabend, Gleich und Gleich and Frühling übers Jahr.

The six Keller songs are not considered among his most important work, yet they are rhythmically strong and melodically sweeping, offering a more realistic approach to the subject matter.

Wolf never visited the southern lands, but always felt a fascination for Spanish subjects. This is reflected in the Spanisches Liederbuch, where he tries to capture his idea of southern life with accompaniments which imitate the strumming guitars and dance-like movements. This is found mostly in the secular poems where the emphasis seems to have switched from verbal subtlety to "rhythmic vitality and passionate expression" (19, p. 340). The ten religious songs, which rank among his best composition, include more intense dissonance and rhythmic monotony to portray anguish and torment. One exception is Nun Wandre where the monotony of a continual movement of thirds in the piano creates a mood of quiet sadness.

But Wolf's greatest triumph came with the two parts of the Italian Song Book. Here there was no revered poet, as most of Heyse translations were of anonymous poets. And he did not try to capture any national feeling as he had in the Spanish Songs, but gave his own Germanic feeling full reign. Mostly, the style of these is influenced by the rigid form of the rispetti.

The rispetto is a short poem usually consisting of six to eight lines, each of which is ten or eleven syllables and is end-stopped; that is, the line contains a complete thought and ends with a pause. In addition to their formal construction, the rispetti are further distinguished by their content. Walker (10) says the rispetto may be described as a sort of intellectual exercise for lovers in verse that is mocking, gallant or passionate. Ernest Newman (10) called attention to the way the Italian songs are divided between the sexes, most of the serious love songs going to the men, while the women are exhibited in moods of scorn or mockery, resentment or humorous tolerance of their lovers defects; or if the women are deeply in love, they are nearly always unhappy, in contrast with the numerous songs of contented love given to the men. Hardly ever does Wolf (reflecting the rispetti) allow the women to soar to the height or compass the depths of forthright passion, as he does the men (10).

The songs of the Italian Song Book are refined, delicate, limpid, varied in mood and sensitive. They are invariably short, but always capture in those few measures a uniqueness that makes them important. Many critics consider these songs Wolf's greatest artistic achievement (19, 9, 10, 13, 16).

Interpretation

Because Wolf, more than anyone before him, musically interpreted the meanings of poems, a capable singer of Wolfian Lied must be a literary as well as a musical interpreter. Wolf wrote in antithesis to the techniques of the golden age of opera in which verbal meanings were subjugated to sound. A singer preparing Wolf songs would do well to follow Wolf's own technique of reading and rereading the poetic works in order to obtain a complete intellectual understanding of an emotive appreciation of them.

It is important for a singer to recognize the method which Wolf used to express these meanings and emotions musically. While a variety of structural techniques were employed, these occurred within the larger framework of a unique relationship between the vocal line and the piano part. A singer must become familiar with the rhythmic and melodic counterpoint which exists between piano and vocal parts. His preparation should include cognizance of the use of harmony and tonality to express changing moods and thoughts. For the best results, a special relationship with the accompanist is required.

A singer must develop his interpretation in ensemble with the pianist, more than in other art songs. This requires careful emotional and verbal communication between the singer and his accompanist. In fact, the singer in the

appropriate frame of mind would not think of the pianist as as accompanist, but as an equal participant in a musical whole. In the words of Kagen:

An adequate performance of a song by Hugo Wolf always demands a pianist uncommonly sensitive to the poem and of Wolf's reaction to it. Often the piano part demands a technique of great brilliancy; sometimes almost all of the entire burden of musical illustration and interpretation of the text is left to the pianist (11, pp. 242-43).

Finally, it is important to recognize that the participating pianist and vocalist presenting Wolfian Lieder are not merely entrusted with achieving an optimum interpretation, a correct interpretation which Wolf would approve. For regardless of the fact that Wolf became furious with singers who violated his musical notations, there remains room for development of new poetic and musical interpretations without such violations. Stressing this point, as well as some of the other points previously made, the contemporary soprano Schwarzkopf, whose husband is the founder of the Hugo Wolf Society, recently made the following comments:

Wolf's texts are the guide for interpreting his songs, but this is only the starting point. It is up to the singer's insight and experience to assimilate Wolf's musical genius and discover the manner in which he has translated the texts and heightened their meaning psychologically by way of music. Once this is achieved and once the technical hurdles are overcome, the singer is prepared for a performance of Wolf. Its success will be further assured if the singer is able to move quickly and completely from one mood to another. Wolf's heightened psychological climate is present in his "happy" songs just as it is

in his "unhappy" songs. It is essential that the singer allow himself to shift gears, as it were, and penetrate whatever atmosphere is demanded and convey this atmosphere so completely that an audience will automatically be transported from one song to another--from one mood to another without ever being aware of how this came about (9, p. 28).

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CHAPTER IV

WOLF'S PLACE IN HISTORY AS RECORDED BY LEADING WRITERS

As described in previous chapters, Wolf's primary uniqueness of style was the elevation of the poetic meanings, which he accomplished by having a unique relationship between the piano part and the voice part. Moore made the statement that Wolf was "more discriminating in his choice of poet than any other composer before him" (6, p. ix). Stevens said, "He disapproved of Brahms' predominantly musical approach to words, and his sometimes insensitive declamation" (12, p. 254). The statements are hardly questionable. Wolf's detractors felt that his emphasis upon the poem detracted from his music. Wolf's advocates felt that this elevation of the poetic element produced a superior artistic whole. The point of praise and criticism were the same.

Moore's interpretation of the facts was "the greatness of some of his settings cannot be questioned" (6, p. ix). Steven's interpretation was that Wolf treated the vocal line as "part of an ensemble" (12, p. 254). These are in agreement, as is Gerts' statement, "His settings are so invariably

right, the settings using the most complex harmonic and rhythmic materials for his purpose of setting forth poetic values" (4, p. 7). Newman writes,

The great merit of his achievement consists . . . of his infusion of the poetic and the musical ideas, the organic life he gives to the particular form he has instinctively chosen for this or that song, the vast variety of these forms, and the Shakespearian range of his imaginative sympathy with the soul of man and with nature (7, p. 2065).

More in keeping with the criticisms of Wolf's own time is the opinion of Siegmeister who believes that Wolf "at times went to the opposite extreme (from Brahms) of sacrificing purity of musical contour to an ironclad reverence for the poetic meter (11, p. 27). The consensus of contemporary judgement, however, is best summed up by Grout's succinct statement, "The fusion of voice and instrument is achieved without sacrificing either to the other" (5, p. 569).

A corroborating opinion is that of Ferguson who places Wolf in terms of rank order with other composers. He states,

The song, in its more usual form with piano accompaniment, was also greatly developed during the later nineteenth century . . . but none of these (Brahms, Franz, Liszt, Rubenstein, Wagner, Cornelius or Mendelssohn) was so obsessed with the spirit of song as was Hugo Wolf, whose gift was of the highest order and who has left probably the most original and significant settings of words to music which have been done since Schubert (3, p. 465).

There is a suggestion, however, by Wolf's adherents that too much emphasis has been placed upon the issue of Wolf's elevation of poetic meanings. When speaking of the synthesis of words and music, one is apt to understate Wolf's musical inventiveness. In Grove's Dictionary we find:

It may be that too much has been made of Wolf's literary turn of mind, his faithfulness to his poets and his generally scrupulous treatment of their words. This was one important aspect of his work, of course, and one on which he laid the greatest stress, but the finest declamation, the most sensitive literary feeling, would have availed him nothing if he had not been able to produce a flood of inspired musical invention to match the many-sidedness of his poets (15, p. 339).

Wolf's musical inventiveness was commented upon by Patterson in the following way,

Wolf was a master of theme making. This possibly arises from the fact he was an ardent admirer of Wagner The development of such themes delighted him. I, speaking for myself, find his best songs are those that are built upon some little germ of an idea (8, p. 8).

Additionally, it has been pointed out that Wolf did not always compose in an untraditional manner. Newman praises Wolf's more traditional music in the following words:

Nor is he by any means restricted to the type of song with which his name is sometimes too exclusively connected--that of a piano part complete in itself, as an instrumental piece, with the voice phrasing the poem freely above and within it. On the contrary, many of his songs are virtually strophic in form, with a piano "accompaniment" more or less of the traditional kind. His achievements in this line are so remarkable that they take their place by the finest works of his predecessors in the same

genre But his best lieder are the songs for voice and piano: (the ones where) the piano part is an organic constituent of the whole (7, p. 2066).

The quality of Wolf's compositions is often characterized in terms of psychological subtleties. As opposed to Wagnerian grandiosities, Wolf focused on delicate subtleties, often ". . . some little germ of an idea." He was the musical couterpart to Henry James, dealing with small events with deep psychological finesse. He avoided bombastic treatments and often depicted delicate mood changes. Ulrich and Pisk have said, "The declamatory song, in which a mood is psychologically developed or contrary moods are brought into focus, was brought to its culmination by Hugo Wolf, the last of the great Germanic song composers" (13, p. 427). It is this air of subtlety and delicacy which produces descriptions as Stevens' who said, "in the more restrained of his mature songs the texture is as intimate and delicate as that of chamber music" (12, p. 254). The exploration of antithetical motions, the restraint, etc., are all implicit in James. Wolf in music, James in literature, and Freud in science were products of intrapsychically-oriented romanticism coming to its close.

This quality in Wolf has had an effect in his following. The appeal is less universal than the appeal of a broader, more dramatically powerful works such as

those of Wagner. Literarily, an analagous contrast can be made between the devotees of James and Dostoevsky. Patterson on this point has said, "It has been one of the keenest disappointments of my life that the music of Hugo Wolf has not won (appropriate) popularity" (8, p. 8). Yet the size of an artist's following is not an index of his worth. It is the existence of an artist's following through history that constitutes the only immutable criterion.

On this subject, Walker predicts Wolf's music will stand the test of time. He characterizes the Italian songs as being

. . . as fresh today as on the day when they came into existence and no amount of repetition can impair their charm. It is impossible to imagine that they can ever fade or lose their significance while civilized humanity endures (14, p. 302).

Wolf's estimation of his own abilities is well recorded. Saerchinger said,

. . . the two whom the world regards as the supreme masters of song--Schubert and Wolf--had perhaps the most tragic existences in the history of the art (of song writing). Wolf perceived the value of his own genius, and recognized, too, the shameful obtuseness of a world which denied him recognition (9, p. 29).

He is mentioned now in terms of genius, greatness and artistic immortality. These judgements of musical authorities are seldom effusive, but puietly confident. Bauer says that Wolf' songs "stamp him a genius" (1, p. 56).

Einstein wrote that Wolf "seemed to challenge comparison with Schubert" (2, p. 360), while Scholes wrote, "He has been hailed as one of the greatest song writers of the world--second only to Schubert, if to him" (10, p. 1023). Walker, Wolf's primary English language biographer, wrote that Wolf's achievements have earned him "a modest place among the immortals" (14, p. 447).

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APPENDIX

A RECITAL OF SONGS OF HUGO WOLFF

The following songs were performed in recital. The program was constructed in such a way as to be representative of Hugo Wolf's musical output and stylistic development.

Early Songs

Morgentau: Morning Dew (June, 1877)

Written when Wolf was only seventeen years old, this song was set to words of an anonymous poet. It was one of the few early songs that the mature Wolf felt worthy of publication. The song reflects Schubert's idiom in its chordal progressions and piano style.

Morning breezes have banished the night;
meadows rejoice in the splendor of spring;
half in dream a bird sings in sweet melody.

A timid rosebud raises her head and,
hearing the bird's sweet song,
opens her petals and weeps a secret tear.

Zur Ruh, zur Ruh! To Rest, to Rest! (June, 1883)

Frank Walker, Wolf's leading English language biographer, calls Zur Ruh "a milestone in Wolf's own progress toward mastery and in the history of song." It

exhibits the first indication of the eventual style of the mature Wolf, particularly the Wagnerian harmonic elements of chromaticism.

Rest you, weary limbs;
rest, you tired eyelids.
I am alone, the earth has vanished.
The night must come if I am to see the light.

Guide me, you Inner Powers,
to where the light shines in the darkest night,
away from the place of earthly pain.
Through night and dream,
bring me to the mother's heart.

Mörike Lieder

Auf einer Wanderung: On a Journey (March, 1888)

Wolf's elevation of the instrumental accompaniment to a place of greater importance in Lied is developed here with two contrasting themes in the piano, symphonic in nature. The prelude, interludes and postlude build the mood of the song and comment of the poem's specific parts. With the voice part interweaving with the instrumental part in meticulously Wolfian declamation, a timeless moment in a fantasy world has been captured.

I came into a friendly village
where the streets glow red in the setting-sun.
Out of the open window,
across a show of flowers,
I hear a voice singing like floating golden bells
or a choir of nightingales,
so that the flowers and air tremble
and even the roses glow redder.

Long I stood, wondering, filled with emotion.
How I came here, I do not know.

But, looking backwards as I left the town,
 the village lay in a golden haze,
 the sky fluctuated with a purple glow,
 the brook rushed on.
 I was drunk--lost in ecstasy.

O Muse!

You have touched my heart with a breath of love.

Begegnung: A Meeting (March, 1888)

This is one of the most thematically compact of all the Mörike songs. The gently sighing accompaniment, which never reaches above a forte, captures the idea that love is like the wind and tenderly presents the double-meaning of the two kinds of storm.

What a storm raged last night until morning.
 How the uninvited broom has swept clean
 the street and chimneys.

There comes a maiden down the street
 timidly glancing around
 her cheeks glowing like a wind-blown rose.

A handsome lad goes up to her.
 They gaze at each other joyously
 and embarrassedly.

He seems to be asking how she has found time
 to braid her hair
 since the storm disarranged it last night.

The boy dreams of the kisses they exchanged last night,
 and while standing entranced,
 she rustles around the corner out of sight.

Verborgenheit: Seclusion (March, 1888)

Although Wolf himself expressed dissatisfaction with this song in later years, Verborgenheit remains one of his

most popular songs. It is easy for performers to oversentimentalize (a condition Wolf abhorred), but if sung with restraint, the song maintains sensitivity and even nobility.

Tempt me not, o world, with joys that perish.
Leave me alone to know my own joy
and to suffer my own pain.

I am consumed with some unknown grief,
yet somehow sunlight shines through my sadness,
drawing me upward until there is wonder in my heart.

Tempt me not, o world, with joys that perish.
Leave me alone to know my own joy and pain.

Fussreise: A Morning Walk: (March, 1888)

Here Wolf portrays "ein Spaziergang," a walk, the favorite German pasttime--not a heavy-booted walk, but a light-footed, idealized one. This is accomplished musically in a straightforward fashion with a repeated, lilting rhythmical figure in the accompaniment over which the vocal line moves in a non-metered manner, achieving a sort of rhythmic counterpoint. This is one of the finest examples of Wolf's mastery of declamation.

In the morning, with a fresh-cut traveler's staff,
I walk through the woods, up and down the hills.
In the first morning sun, the golden grape
feels spirits of joy
and a bird stirs and sings.

So my old, dear heart feels God-given spring-fever.
It seems that you, old Adam, are not so bad
as the stern teachers say.

You can still love and sing!

Ah, how I wish all my life were such, a morning walk!

Um Mitternacht: At Midnight (April, 1888)

This is one of Wolf's rare strophic songs. The quietly moving chromatic harmonies are used to mold the mood and point up the ideas.

Night comes to the eastern shore
and dreamily leans against the mountain side.
Her eyes see the golden balances of time
hang in equipoise.

In the silence, the streams sing to their Mother,
the Night, of the day,
the day that is gone.

The Night pays no heed to their age-old lullaby.
She is tired of it.
The dark blue of the sky,
the equal yoke of the fleeting hours
are far sweeter.

Yet the streams sing on.
They sing in sleep, in dream,
of the day,
the day that is gone.

Er Ist's: Spring is Here! (May, 1888)

This brilliant piece heralds the coming of spring with fever and energy, particularly in the piano part. Wolf seems to wish, in the long postlude, to continue this brief triumphant moment even after the end of the poem. At the end of the vocal line, Wolf arbitrarily repeated words of the poem, an unusual procedure. Contrary to other composers, he usually set a poem exactly as written, acknowledging the poet's artistic judgement.

Spring is here like a fluttering blue ribbon.
 Sweet fragrances float on the land.
 Already, violets dream of coming out of earth.
 Listen. A harp plays in soft tones.
 Spring, yes it is you.
 You are here!

Goethe Lieder

Trunken müssen wir alle sein: Let us all get drunk.
 (January, 1889)

The riotous vocal part and the whirlwind piano part create a robust song portraying drunken revelry. Denis Stevens feels that these settings are turgid and rhetorical --but perhaps he is responding to their graphic realism. Here the dramatic effect takes precedent over the musical interest in a successful Bacchanale. These next three songs are all from the Schenkenbuch, a collection of poems written in praise of wine.

Let us all get drunk!
 Youth is drunkenness without wine,
 while the old must drink to feel young again.
 The grape is the great dispeller of troubles.

Do not ask more questions.
 Wine is forbidden.
 So if you are going to get drunk,
 drink only the best wine.
 Why go to hell for drinking cheap wine?

Sie haben wegen der Trunkenheit: They accuse me of drunkenness (January, 1889)

This song is considerably more subtle than the previous one, requiring superior ensemble between pianist and singer. Eric Sams describes how the music sways quietly in the beginning in the following way:

The crotchet-quaver movement slides and sways quietly, with uncertain harmonies and slurred vocal line, until the voice explains the real trouble--"Liebestrunkenheit." From this point on, rhythm, harmony and melody alike become more coherent and compelling. In the last page the original falling swaying themes are set to work again as the emphatic bass of the piano part, as if to illustrate the point that the two kinds of drunkenness are similar in their effects if not indeed in their causes.

They accuse me of drunkenness.
They chatter about it endlessly.
It is true.
Usually, I lie in a stupor all night
harried by my drunkenness.

Love is my drunkenness.
Day and night it quakes my heart,
swells it, until there is no room for soberness.

Drunk with love, poetry and wine,
I am tormented and overjoyed
by this divine drunkenness.

Was in der Schenke waren heute: What a scene in the tavern!
(January, 1889)

Wolf has repeated another raucous song of drunken boisterousness. The tumultuous scene at the end and the poet's obvious delight in wine and revelry are wildly proclaimed with an insistent whirlwind movement in the piano.

At the tavern a tumultuous scene lasted till morning.
Girls, crowds, insults, haggling, flutes, drums!
It was disorderly, but I loved it.

They criticize me for not learning.
But I wisely remain distantly removed
from the squabbling of pedants.

Spanisches Liederbuch

Nun wandre, Maria: Journey on, Maria (November, 1889)

The voice part of Nun wandre, Maria lies mostly in the small range of a fourth. This tender, chant-like melody is accompanied by monotonous, steadily moving thirds over a plodding bass. All of this is set modally, beginning in the dorian mode, moving to the frigian, then a bright F major at Getrost! (Be confident!), ending in C dorian. The result is a great sadness, anxiety and tenderness.

Joseph sings:

Journey on, Maria, soon it will be morning,
the village is near.
Come, my beloved, my jewel,
soon we will be in Bethlehem.

Now rest yourself, slumber on,
the morning is near.
I see your strength disappear,
you can hardly endure your pains.

Be confident!
Surely, we will find shelter there.

If only your time were come, Maria!
Journey on,
the morning comes.
The village is near.

In dem Schatten meiner Locken: In the shadow of my tresses
(November, 1889)

A delightful, melodic line enables the singer to capture the affectionate mischievousness of the poem. The accompaniment supports with a softly dancing rhythm which continues throughout the song. The changing tonalities

lend increasing brightness. This is one of the most popular of Wolf's songs.

In the shadow of my tresses
my lover sleeps.
Shall I wake him up?
Oh, no.

I carefully comb my hair each morning,
but in vain.
The wind blows it about.
Beneath my wind-blown tresses,
sleeps my beloved.
Shall I wake him up?
Oh, no.

He tells me I make his heart languish
and that he lives only to touch my sun-brown cheek.
He calls me his little snake,
yet he sleeps by my side.
Shall I wake him up?
Oh, no.

Italienisches Liederbuch

Du denkst mit einem Fädchen mich zu fangen: You think you
can catch me with a little thread (December, 1891)

The small rhythmic pattern of the opening bars seems to catch the flippancy of the girl who sings. The piano theme becomes more assertive as the rejection of her suitor becomes decisive.

You think you can catch me with a little thread--
That you only have to look at me and I will fall in
love.
I've caught others who are even more sure of them-
selves.
But you are right.
I am in love.
But not with you!

Selig ihr Blinden: Blessed are the blind (October, 1890)

A continual pedal-point, chromaticism and long eight-measure phrases make a musical setting of dignity and intensity.

Blessed are the blind
 who cannot see the charms of women.
 Blessed are the deaf
 who cannot hear the complaints of lovers.
 Blessed are the dumb
 who cannot speak of their heart's anguish.
 Blessed are the dead
 who can no longer suffer the pain of love.

Ich hab' in Penna einen Liebsten wohnen: I have a lover in Penna (April, 1896)

This is the final piece of the Italian Song-book, one of musical exuberance. Particularly brilliant is the pianistic postlude which points up the fact that the singer does not really care for any of her lovers.

I have a lover in Penna,
 another in Maremma.
 One in Ancona,
 the fourth in Viterbo.
 Another lives in Casentino,
 the next with me in my own town.
 Still another in Magione.
 Four in La Fratta.
 Ten in Castiglione.

Wie lange schon war immer mein Verlangen: For a long time it has been my wish (December, 1891)

The accompaniment reflects the violinist--who is, incidentally, not a very good one--with a falling motive

that is broadened in the postlude where the violin finishes with a "langsamer Triller," a long trill.

For a long time it has been my wish
to meet a musician.
Now, the good God sends one to me!
Here he comes,
with meek manner, bowing his head,
and playing the violin.

Alte Weisen

Tretet ein, hoher Krieger: Enter, tall warrior (May, 1890)

The Alte Weisen is a group of six songs for mezzo-soprano, set to poems by Gottfried Keller. This song, with a march-like accompaniment, gives the vocal emphasis mainly on the third beat of each measure rather than the first, causing an angular sort of feeling in the flow of the music. For an effective reading, the performers must not give either a heavy march or a flippant lilt, but something graceful in the middle.

Enter, tall warrior, you have given your heart to me.
Put aside your crimson mantle and golden spurs.
Yoke your charger to the plough and greet my father.
Give me your rich saddle cloth as a carpet.
The gold and gems from your sword will adorn me.
It's blade can be a share for the plough.
The Marshall must now learn to labour.
Recommend your soul to Christ our Lord,
For your body is sold and cannot be redeemed.

Das Köhlerweib ist trunken: The collier's wife is drunk
(June, 1890)

The music begins with the shrieking song of the collier's wife. Keller's poem shows pity for this drunken

woman, but the music rushes ahead, not allowing time for pity, but only mockery. The spectacular postlude in Sam's words "conveys unforgettably the vivid impression of mirthless and terrible laughter."

The collier's wife is drunk and sings in the woods.
Hear how her voice shrieks through the forest.

She was one a beauty
courted by rich and poor.
She walked as proudly as a queen,
but to choose a husband was too much trouble.

Then she discovered red wine
How everything perishes!

The collier's wife is drunk and shrieks her song in
the woods.

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