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**Edvard Hagerup Grieg's *Piano Concerto in A minor*, Op. 16 in the context of
developmental trends in the 19th and 20th century music**

In relation to Grieg's poetics a connection with Frédéric Chopin is often emphasized ("*Chopin of the North*") as well as with *Piano Concerto in A minor*, Op. 54 of Robert Schumann ("*Norwegian sister of the German Schumann's one*"). We can bring the piano concertos of Chopin and Schumann to one significant common denominator – piano concertos of Johann Nepomuk Hummel (1778-1837), born in Bratislava.

**Johann Nepomuk Hummel as a founder of the lyrical-romantic and virtuoso-brilliant
piano concerto tradition**

In 1786, Hummel as a child prodigy became Mozart's student in Vienna and spent two years in his house. On Mozart's advice, in 1788-1793 he made a concert journey together with his father, which launched his star career of a "touring virtuoso". For his generation as well as for "early romanticists" Schubert, Chopin, Schumann, Mendelssohn, Liszt, who knew and appreciated his work, Hummel was together with Beethoven the most significant bridge to the music of the 19th century.

With his *Piano Concerto No. 3 in C minor*, Op. 37 (1802) Beethoven became the leader of so-called "symphonic" line in the field of the piano concerto. Beethoven intensified the rivalry between a soloist, orchestra and various instrumental sections. A soloist is integrated to the whole processual development of the work without domination of his virtuoso part.

As well as for Beethoven, Mozart's piano concertos were the base also for Hummel, who, however, developed other aspects of his poetics. Phenomenally pianistically gifted Hummel wrote his concertos – like other famous "touring virtuosos" as, for example, Paganini – for a special audience, and his intention was not to write a dramatic and passionate music, but

chiefly such music that would be capable of a “noble entertainment”. Hummel’s *Piano Concerto in A minor*, Op. 85 became very popular shortly after its origin (1816). Clara Schumann, Chopin, Liszt and many other piano virtuosos of the 19th century débuted with this Concerto and in the course of next decades it became a prototype of the line of virtuoso-brilliant and lyrical-romantic piano concertos. Intendants of European orchestras required it as a “touchstone” from artists who wanted to entrench themselves as concert pianists.¹ For the next generation of composers this Hummel’s Concerto together with his *Piano Concerto in B minor*, Op. 89 (1819) became the significant compositional-technical models.

Hummel’s art of ornamentation, variation and a remarkable inventiveness in the technically demanding passages, where he utilized impulses of *bel canto* technique dominating in opera at the turn of the 18th and 19th century, presents the strongest side of his invention.

In vocal music, *bel canto* principle was used mainly in *Da capo* arias, when the soloist enriched a melodic line by many improvised ornaments in the third, repeated section. In the 18th century, this manner became established by performing of repeated forms also in instrumental music. Hummel, who was Mozart’s pupil in the art of piano interpretation, developed his impulses. What was an improvised manner during Mozart’s days, Hummel put into the texture of his works as a fixed part of the score, and so he raised the performance manners to the level of compositional-technical innovation. Hummel, who had an extraordinary pianistic invention, synthesized techniques of variation and ornamentation, developed in the art of *bel canto* with typical piano figures and patterns in virtuoso passages. In the virtuoso-brilliant sections he then often used especially demanding series of ornamental figurations on the basis of scales and broken chords; difficult double-stops in thirds and sixths etc. These passages often include also “foreign”, e. g. non-harmonic and non-scale tones, which makes interesting sound effects, and Chopin, Liszt and the next generations of composers built on it.

In cantabile sections Hummel used a specific ornamentation of melody with many grace notes, turns and various figurations, that make transitions between chord tones of the melody.

¹ KROLL, Mark: *Johann Nepomuk Hummel. A Musician’s Life and World*. Lanham, Maryland : The Scarecrow Press, 2007, p. 298.

Hummel's influence on Chopin, Schumann and Liszt

Among the generation of Hummel's direct followers Chopin honoured him the most. At the times of Chopin's youth, Hummel's works were often presented in Warsaw. As a soloist of one of Hummel's piano concertos Chopin presented himself just as a 13-year old in 1823.² From testimonies of his contemporaries we also know for certain that he was "*particularly fond on Hummel and his style*."³ According to Frederick Niecks

"[...] Liszt writes that Hummel was one of the composers Chopin played again and again with the greatest pleasure; and from Mikuli we learn that of Hummel's compositions his master liked best the Fantasia, the Septet, and the Concertos."⁴

How Chopin thought highly of Hummel is also evident from the letter he wrote in 1842, five years after Hummel's death, to Mme. Belleville-Oury:

"What I should like, however, would be ... to be present at one of your elegant assemblies where you interpret so marvellously the Masters we all recognize, all the great composers like Mozart, Beethoven and Hummel. Hummel's Adagio, which I heard you play [...] some years ago, still rings in my ears [...]."⁵

Chopin and Hummel met in person during Hummel's 1828 tour to Warsaw; from this time we date their mutual friendship. Chopin was also present at Hummel's concerts in Warsaw, spring 1829.⁶ And certainly, it is not a coincidence that both Chopin's piano concertos, representing the peak of the early period of his work, arose immediately after this visit: *Concerto in F minor*, Op. 21 (1829) and *Concerto in E minor*, Op. 11 (1830).⁷ These works show several liaisons with Hummel's Op. 85 and Op. 89, for example, as for the ornamentation, virtuoso passages and use of varied finesses of piano technique. There are several analogies in the concept of musical form in the first movements of the concertos: although their course formally responds to the schema of the sonata form, the exposition is not based on the dramatic confrontation of two contrast themes; the issue is that "thematic" sections alternate with "virtuoso-brilliant" episodes, what is typical for virtuoso-brilliant concertos. Unlike Beethoven, Chopin didn't try to equalize soloist with the orchestra as well

² GOLDBERG, Halina: *Music in Chopin's Warsaw*. New York: Oxford University Press 2008, p. 262.

³ KROLL, Ref. 1, p. 311.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ GOLDBERG, Ref. 2, p. 277.

⁷ KROLL, Ref. 1, p. 16.

as Hummel, although Hummel used the capability of the orchestra much better than Chopin.⁸ Recently is being again and again pointed out, that many stylistic innovations discovered by Hummel in the piano part of his most important piano concertos Op. 85 and 89 are still and often incorrectly attributed to Chopin.

Chopin was carefully familiarized with Hummel's piano school⁹ and found Hummel to be the most „erudite“ in the field of principles of fingering systematics,¹⁰ which Chopin himself was exercising and developing on. Chopin considered Hummel's work together with J. S. Bach's work to be a “key to pianoforte-playing”¹¹ and his compositions – both instructive and concert – were an inseparable part of the repertoire he wanted his students to play.¹²

Hummel significantly influenced also Robert Schumann, although Schumann's relationship to him was among the generation of „early romanticists“ the most complicated one. As it follows from Schumann's correspondence with his close relatives, mainly with his mother, in 1830, during his studies in Leipzig with Friedrich Wieck, 20-year old Schumann decided to leave to Weimar and continue in his studies with Hummel, whose *Piano Sonata in F sharp minor*, Op. 81 and *Piano Concerto in A minor*, Op. 85 belonged to the most important part of his piano repertoire. Schumann carefully concerned himself with Hummel's piano school, which he obtained shortly after its first edition in 1829.¹³ Subsequently he devoted the whole weeks to the practising of etudes and exercises, and Hummel's piano school had a crucial importance for his pianistic knowledge.¹⁴

⁸ For more to this subject see ŠTEFKOVÁ, Markéta: Chopins Vorbild. Die Klavierkonzerte von Johann Nepomuk Hummel als Modell für Frédéric Chopin. In: ŠTEFKOVÁ, Markéta (ed.): *Auf den Spuren von Johann Nepomuk Hummel. Bericht zum Kongress aus Anlass des 230. Geburtstages von J. N. Hummel am 30. – 31. Mai 2008 in Bratislava*. Bratislava : Divis – Slovakia 2009, p. 103-131.

⁹ HUMMEL, Johann Nepomuk: *Ausführliche theoretisch-praktische Anweisung zum Piano-Forte-Spiel, vom ersten Elementar-Unterrichte an bis zur vollkommensten Ausbildung*. Wien : Tobias Haslinger, 1828.

¹⁰ MILŠTEJN, Jakov Izakovič: *Štúdie o Chopinovi*, translation Cyril Dianovský. Bratislava : Hudobné centrum 2004, p. 76-77.

¹¹ BULA, Karol: Über die Bedeutung Johann Nepomuk Hummels kompositorisch-technischen Errungenschaften für die Gestaltung des Klavierstils von F. Chopin. In: JUNG, Hans Rudolf: *Bericht der wissenschaftlichen Konferenz aus Anlass des 200. Geburtstages Johann Nepomuk Hummels am 18. November 1978 in Weimar*. Weimar : Druckhaus Weimar 1978, p. 40.

¹² MILŠTEJN, Ref. 10, s. 90-91.

¹³ HUMMEL, Ref. 9.

¹⁴ WENDT, Matthias: Schumann und Hummel. In: GERHARD, Anselm – LÜTTEKEN, Laurenz (ed.): *Zwischen Klassik und Klassizismus. Johann Nepomuk Hummel in Wien und Weimar. Kolloquium im Goethe-Museum Düsseldorf 2000*. Kassel : Bärenreiter, 2003, p. 125.

After Hummel didn't reply to Schumann's very polite and long letter from August 1831, where he asked him for a chance to study with him in Weimar,¹⁵ Schumann wrote another letter and he also enclosed scores of his Op. 1 – *Variations on the name "Abegg"* and Op. 2 – *Papillons*. Hummel answered on 24 March 1832:

Wertheater Herr,

Gerne hätte ich Ihre werthe Zuschrift schon längst beantwortet, allein ich hatte seit langer Zeit her einen solchen Wulst von Geschäften aller Art auf mir, daß es mir durchaus unmöglich war. Ich habe Ihre zwei letzteingesandten Werke mit Aufmerksamkeit durchgesehen und mich dabei Ihres regen Treibens sehr erfreut; alles, was ich darüber zu bemerken hätte, wäre höchstens ein zuweilen schnell aufeinander folgender Harmoniewechsel, wodurch dem Zuhörer an der Faßlichkeit etwas entzogen wird; auch scheinen Sie sich öfters der Originalität etwas zu sehr hinzugeben, ich meine dem etwas bizarren; ich wünschte nicht, dass Sie sich dieses aus Angewohnheit zum Styl machten, weil es der Schönheit, Klarheit und Einheit einer wohlgeordneten Komposition nachtheilig seyn würde. Die Musik ist ein Gegenstand, geeignet, mehr auf das Gefühl als auf den Verstand zu wirken. – Fahren Sie so fleißig und ruhig fort, und ich zweifle nicht, daß Sie Ihren Zweck vollkommen erreichen werden. –

Leben Sie wohl und seyn Sie meiner Hochachtung versichert.

Ihr ergebener
J. N. R^{ter} Hummel,
großh. Sächs. Hofkapellmeister¹⁶

That was, of course, polite, but decisive rejection of Schumann's request, what hurt him so much, that he started to deceive his relatives as well as himself (!) – as it follows from his diary – that he regularly corresponds with Hummel, and he has an excellent view on his work.¹⁷

In the meantime, Schumann became a respected musician and publicist and in 1834 published in *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* a review of Hummel's *Piano etudes*, Op. 125 from 1833, where he expressed serious doubts about Hummel and so he gave a fateful impulse to the reappraisal of the view on the significance of his work.

Hummel, whose life fates led from Vienna to Stuttgart and Weimar, where he became a close friend of Goethe and as one of the most famous composers, piano virtuosos and piano teachers spent here last years of his life (1819-1837), had in the first half of the 19th century a firm place in the canon of the most significant artistic personalities in Europe. In his book *Vom Musikalisch-Schönen* from 1854, Eduard Hanslick names Mozart's symphony and

¹⁵ Ibid, p. 132-133.

¹⁶ Ibid, p. 136. For English translation, see KROLL, Ref. 1, p. 286.

¹⁷ Ibid, p. 136-137.

Shakespeare's tragedy on one hand, and Uhland's poem and Hummel's rondo on the other hand, as examples of the prototype authors. In 1857, Hummel's biographer Bussenius sees an important parallel in fact that Hummel was born in Bratislava, today's capital of Slovakia, which was a part of Hungary then, as well as Raiding, a near birthplace of Franz Liszt (today's part of Austrian Burgenland) and both artists spent last years of their lives in a blaze of glory in Weimar:

Hummel war in mancher Hinsicht der erste *Liszt*. Beide sind Ungarn, beide erreichten zu ihrer Zeit die höchste Fertigkeit im Pianofortespiel, und machten das Pianoforte zum Modeinstrumente; beide wurden endlich Kapellmeister in Weimar.¹⁸

In fact, Hummel should have also been Liszt's piano teacher: when his father and his first piano teacher Adam Liszt learnt that Franz's talent is beyond his abilities and he decided to allow his son to get a better teaching, Hummel was candidate number one as one of the most well-known and influential, but as well as one of the most expensive piano teachers, too. A long handed down myth in Lisztian literature that Hummel refused Liszt just because of his too high demands on the fee, have been refuted in the latest studies (Hummel's letter addressed to Adam Liszt from 1821). More important reason was that the teaching couldn't have been in Vienna, but in Weimar.¹⁹ Adam Liszt commended the studies of young Franz to Carl Czerny in 1822, with whom Liszt studied for fourteen months gratis; however Hummel's compositions still belonged to the most important pillars of his repertoire. Liszt made his concert debut in Vienna as an 11-year old on 22 December 1822 with Hummel's *Piano concerto in A minor*, Op. 85; later on 13 April 1823 performed his *Piano concerto in B minor*, Op. 89. Mainly in the first decades of his piano virtuoso career, part of the programmes of his concerts were besides Hummel's piano concertos especially his *Fantasia*, Op. 18 and *Septet*, Op. 74, which Liszt transcribed for piano solo and piano four-hands probably in 1840s.²⁰ Liszt honoured Hummel like Chopin; in his Chopin's portrait from 1852 Liszt writes:

Unter den Klavierkomponisten gehörte Hummel zu denen, mit deren Werken er sich am liebsten beschäftigte.²¹

¹⁸ Quoted from: GERHARD, Anselm – LÜTTEKEN, Laurenz: Vorwort. In: GERHARD – LÜTTEKEN (ed.), Ref. 14, p. IX.

¹⁹ KROLL, Ref. 1, s. 304 and WINKLER, Gerhard: Johann Nepomuk Hummel und Franz Liszt. Musikgeschichtliche Überlegungen zu einer vielfältigen Beziehung. In: ŠTEFKOVÁ, Markéta (ed.): *Auf den Spuren von Johann Nepomuk Hummel. Bericht zum Kongress aus Anlass des 230. Geburtstages von J. N. Hummel am 30. – 31. Mai 2008 in Bratislava*. Bratislava : Divis – Slovakia 2009, s. 145.

²⁰ For further reading about links between Hummel and Liszt see WINKLER, Ref. 19, p. 143-150.

²¹ GERHARD-LÜTTEKEN, Ref. 14, p. IX.

To express doubts about such a respected composer as Hummel was, was a very daring step from a young, beginning artist as Schumann was at that time.²² It's interesting that in Schumann's *Gesammelte Schriften über Musik und Musiker* (Leipzig 1854. Reprint: Leipzig und Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel 1985, Bd. 3, p. 151) is published just a shortened version of probably the longest review he ever devoted to one piece of music. Full version of the review was published in 2003 by Matthias Wendt.²³

For the first time Schumann here expresses his opinions through "David's allies" (*Davidsbündler*), introverted Eusebius, extroverted Florestan, and Meister Raro, who mediates and forms definite opinions between the two mentioned above. Schumann's review of Hummel's piano etudes so stands at the origin of the myth of Hummel as a "classicistic" (*klassizistisch*) composer and gave an important impulse to the beginning of the reflection of Hummel's position as problematic. When Schumann said critically to the Hummel's address several times during next years in his reviews for the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, belonged to the respected authorities already. Comparing Hummel to Mozart, from which Hummel comes out as an epigone, became such a "cliché" in these reviews.²⁴

According to Mark Kroll:

[...] the words that Schumann used most frequently to describe Hummel were those that he would have considered the *non plus ultra* of criticism about new music - "old-fashioned" and "boring". This is painfully evident when we read Schumann's review of Hummel's *Etudes*, op. 125. [...], constructed in the form of an argument between Schumann's alter egos Eusebius the pedantic cleric, Florestan the fiery virtuoso (i.e., Schumann?), and Master Raro the exceptional master (probably Wieck). Schumann begins his assault at the outset with the accusation that the work belongs to the "ancient style", that of Mozart. He continues with what amounts to a comprehensive history of the piano étude, a genre about which Schumann had mostly negative feelings since he usually considered them to be unimaginative and mechanical. This might reflect Schumann's ambivalent attitudes to technical virtuosity, although he does have some kind words about a few étude composers (e.g., Cramer and Moscheles). Hummel, however, is not to be included in this elite group. Schumann feels that Hummel's Etudes are lifeless and have come "years too late".²⁵

While young Schumann treasured Hummel, adult Schumann viewed Hummel generally as a "stylistic dinosaur" that represented an old-fashioned school that had become extinct. In spite of that, Hummel had an important influence on the pianistic side of his piano opuses²⁶

²² WENDT, Ref. 14, p. 141.

²³ Ibid, 138-141.

²⁴ See ibid, p. 129 and KROLL, Ref. 1, p. 287.

²⁵ KROLL, Ref. 1, p. 276.

²⁶ Ibid, 278-279.

and authors of the latest researches point out Hummel's distinct compositional influence on him – mainly in his *Toccata*, Op. 7, the most virtuoso piece in his work and one of the most demanding works in the piano literature of the 19th century at all.²⁷ From 1831, i.e. from the times when Schumann applied for the studies with Hummel, comes his unfinished *Piano Concerto in F major*, Op. 8. Claudia MacDonald, author of the dissertation *Robert Schumann's F-major Piano Concerto from his First Sketchbook. A history of its Composition and Study of its Musical Background* (University of Chicago, 1986) revealed chiefly the influence of Hummel's *Piano Concerto in A minor*, Op. 85 in this work among the influences of piano concertos of Ries and Herz; specifically the fact, that an alternation of thematic sections with proportionally oversized solo passages, quite unusual for that time, served Schumann as a model for the musical form.²⁸ As I'll also point out later, Schumann applies this model also in his *Piano Concert in A minor*, Op. 54.

Loss of popularity of Hummel's music in the second half of the 19th century was undoubtedly also the consequence of piano development in the 19th century: mechanics of modern, like romantic instruments, is a result of improvement of the instruments with a so-called English mechanics, which became more popular than the Viennese-style pianos. Hummel preferred the Viennese-style pianos, because their characteristic sound attributes suited the "aesthetics of brilliant style". The result was full of sparkling brilliancy in fast passages, vigor, clarity and grace. English pianos have rather longer, sharper and more full-blooded tone, however, their keys put up bigger resistance. That's why Chopin, Schumann and Liszt, who composed for modern instruments, eased up from high technical demands on the soloist. Their concertos are therefore easier to play and unlike Hummel's Concertos, they became a stable part of the concert repertoire. Only in the last decades Hummel's music's been coming up its "rediscoveries".

Grieg and Hummel

I don't know to what extent Grieg was directly familiarized with Hummel's music; but according to the information from Mark Kroll (author of the most significant monograph of Hummel, currently working on the monograph of Ignaz Moscheles, 1794-1870 and on that

²⁷ See WENDT, Ref. 14, p. 144-155 and KROLL, Ref. 1, p. 288-289.

²⁸ WENDT, Ref. 14, p. 142.

occasion examining also the archive sources of the Conservatoire in Leipzig) during his visit in Bratislava in May 2011, Grieg definitely met Hummel's music here during his studies in 1858-1862 as Moscheles was teaching him piano playing and piano composition. According to Eduard Hanslick, Moscheles belonged to the last great representatives of classical piano virtuosity as well as to the important figures of the new epoch. Moscheles was an important inheritor of the tradition of the Viennese piano school, represented by Czerny and Hummel, as well as an anticipation of the new type of the pianistic virtuosity, represented by Liszt.²⁹ Like Hummel, Moscheles studied with Antonio Salieri and they both maintained significant contacts with Beethoven. Joachim Reisaus devoted to Grieg's studies with his last piano teacher Ignaz Moscheles a whole chapter in his book *Grieg und das Leipziger Konservatorium*, where he states that Moscheles had a good relationship with Grieg and played an important part in his personal and artistic development.³⁰

It's very probable that Grieg was studying Hummel's works during his studies with Moscheles, because in that time Hummel's music was still very popular. According to Kroll, Hummel was

[...] one of the most popular composers of his era. His music appeared more frequently on the programs of the greatest performers of the time than that of almost every other composer [...] Major piano teachers like Czerny, Elsner, Moscheles and Chopin favored Hummel for their students, and volumes of his compositions could be found on the music desks of pianos in almost every European household.³¹

Reisaus, unfortunately, doesn't bring the complete list of the repertoire, which Grieg studied with Moscheles, however he points out that Moscheles was a supporter of a "classical direction" and preferred works of great composers of the past, mainly representatives of Viennese classicism – where Hummel belongs, too.³²

Moscheles thought highly of Hummel. One of the indications is a letter, which he wrote Hummel in 1823, where J. R. Schultz, a musician and/or publisher living in England, decided to turn to Hummel with a request for arrangements of Mozart's music and to his request enclosed also "*some words of encouragement and advice [...] of Hummel's good friend and colleague Ignaz Moscheles*":

²⁹ For further reading, see WINKLER, Ref. 19, p. 146-149.

³⁰ REISAUS, Joachim: *Grieg und das Leipziger Konservatorium*. Norderstedt : Books on Demand GmbH 2002, p. 143-153.

³¹ KROLL, Ref. 1, p. 333.

³² REISAUS, Ref. 30, p. 147.

Mein alter, lieber Freund

London d. 15. April 1823

Der Umgang, den ich mehrere Jahre lang in Ihrer Gesellschaft genoss, machte mich Ihrer Person so schätzbar als wie Ihr colosales Talent mir bewundernswerth war. [...] Ja mein lieber Hummel ich begegne auf meinen Reisen vielen Neuen u. vielen Interessanten, - aber mein Sinn sucht mit Sehnsucht das Ältere u. gediegenere, wenn auch nur (sic!) der Erinnerung. Alle Ihre Meister Producte: Concerte in A u. H moll Trio in C, Quintett in Es moll, Sonate in Fis moll, haben mir seelige Stunden verschafft, aber dem Schöpfer derselben wieder einmahl zu begegnen ist mein innigster Wunsch. Herr Schulzes Projekt: eine Auswahl der Mozart'schen Concerte mit Bereicherung der Hauptstimme, Verstärkung, Schluss-Passage, heraus zu geben, scheint mir von besonderem Interesse. Wenn Sie dieses Unternehmen beginnen, kann der gute Erfolg nicht ermangeln. [...] Lassen Sie mir doch wissen, welchen neuen Schöpfungen von Ihnen die Kunstwelt entgegen sehen kann. Ihre 4 händige Sonate ist allen Klavier Spielern (sic!) zur täglichen Nahrung geworden. Es vergeht keine musikalische Zusammenkunft von Klavierspielern wo sie nicht vorgetragen wird. Ich habe sie mit Cramer und Kalkbrenner, die Ihrer mit wahrer Achtung oft gedenken, gespielt.³³

Firstly, Hummel hesitated to arrange the works of his immortal teacher. But after all, Moscheles convinced him inter alia *“to add ornamentation and new cadenzas to the originals and to change some harmonies with the view of catering to the tastes of the current market.”* Kroll suggests that these arrangements have incalculable value for us, because *“we therefore learn from these arrangements how the music of Mozart and other eighteenth-century composers was being performed in the 1820s.”*³⁴ Like in his own Concertos, Hummel used the stylistic impulses inspired by *bel canto* also in the arrangements of seven of Mozart's piano concertos for piano as well as for piano, flute, violin and violoncello. Among Mozart's piano concertos arranged by Hummel we find also *Piano Concerto in D minor KV 466*, which represents the origin of the line of “lyrical-romantic” concertos. Ornamentation in Hummel's arrangement of the second movement of this Concerto clearly anticipates poetics of the slow movements of his own concertos, which Chopin followed directly:

Ex. 1: Mozart: KV 466 / II. *Romanca*. Repetition of A-section, Hummel's arrangement for piano solo

³³ Quoted from KROLL, Ref. 1, p. 403-404. English translation ibid, p. 21-22.

³⁴ KROLL, Ref. 1, p. 21-22.

This page of musical notation consists of seven systems, each with a treble and bass staff. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats). The notation includes various musical elements such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The first system shows a complex melodic line in the treble and a supporting bass line. The second system introduces a piano dynamic marking (*p*). The third system features a more intricate melodic passage with triplets. The fourth system includes a *Tutti.* marking, indicating a change in texture or volume. The fifth system continues the melodic development. The sixth system features a *Solo.* marking, highlighting a specific melodic line. The seventh system concludes the page with a final melodic phrase and a sustained bass line.



Another Mozart's Concerto, which Hummel arranged, is *Piano Concerto in D major KV 537 "Coronation"*, which we can consider to be the founding act in the line of the virtuoso-brilliant type of the piano concertos. According to Charles Rosen Mozart prefigures here a poetics of "early or proto-romantic style of Hummel and Weber."³⁵ This Concerto was written in 1788, i.e. during Hummel's stay in Mozart's house; and Hummel even intensifies the virtuoso-brilliant elements in this arrangement.

³⁵ ROSEN, Charles: *Der klassische Stil. Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven*, 5. Auflage 2006. Kassel : Bärenreiter, p. 293.

It's remarkable, that Grieg, for whom Mozart was one of his favorite composers, also arranged his music in 1876/77 – concretely four of Mozart's piano sonatas for two pianos. Patrick Dinslage writes what is special about Grieg's adaptations:

[...] He has not reworked them in the traditional [...] manner. Grieg's unusual achievement lies in the fact that he has retained Mozart's text unchanged, adding an entirely new part which can be performed together with the original. When both parts are played, they interweave and become something entirely new. [...] What, then, is the artistic motivation behind such a project? Two different musical styles meet in dialogue, ending up in a symbiosis of colour and texture. Mozart's music expands in time and space. Grieg's additional piano part is a romantic's respectful embrace, a romantic commentary: Mozart in romantic guise.³⁶

Grieg characterized intention of this project as an attempt

“[...] to introduce to Mozart's piano sonatas a sound and colour which directs itself to our modern ear“ [...] and he wrote elsewhere that he had attempted “a modernization to show my admiration for an old master.”³⁷

Whether Grieg knew some of Hummel's arrangements of Mozart's music, is interrogative. Considering the fact, that Grieg's favorite teacher Moscheles played an important role in the persuasion of Hummel to accept Schultz's order, it's probable, that Grieg was at least familiarized with the idea of this project, or with its intention to “modernize” Mozart's music and to update it for the listeners of another time. Besides that, Hummel's arrangements not only of Mozart's piano concertos, but also of the symphonies and opera overtures of Mozart, Beethoven and other composers, brought him a great commercial success and contributed to the further increase of his popularity;³⁸ that's why it isn't out of question that Grieg could've acquainted with these arrangements also without Moscheles's endeavor.

Relationships between Grieg's *Piano Concerto in A minor*, Op. 16 and the piano concertos of Hummel, Schumann and Chopin

On the basis of its links to Hummel, Schumann, Chopin and Liszt, Grieg's Concerto belongs to the line of lyrical-romantic and virtuoso concertos. That's already evident on the basis of comparison of the way how is built the beginning of solo exposition of Hummel's *Piano*

³⁶ DINSPLAGE, Patrick: *Mozart in Romantic Guise*, Troidhaugen : International Grieg Society 2007, p. 1. Available at: <http://www.griegsociety.org/filer/1134.pdf>.

³⁷ Ibid, p. 2.

³⁸ See KROLL, Ref. 1, p. 333.

Concert in A minor, Op. 85, Chopin's *Piano Concerto in E minor*, Op. 11, and Schumann's and Grieg's piano concertos:

- 1) virtuoso entry, based on the broken chords enriched by leading chord tones (in Hummel's and Chopin's concertos there is still an initial orchestral exposition)
- 2) primary theme (alternatively two themes) closed with cadence
- 3) virtuoso episode (alternatively two episodes)
- 4) secondary theme

Ex. 2: Hummel: Op. 85 / I.

Virtuoso Entry

SOLO. *p* *crese.* *f* *p* *f* *p*

Primary Theme

fp *espressivo*

First Virtuoso Episode

p *fz* *p* *fz* *p* *fz* *p* *fz* *cre*

The musical score consists of seven systems of staves, each with a treble and bass clef. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and ornaments, along with specific performance instructions.

- System 1:** Features a melodic line in the treble with fingerings (2, 1, 2, 1, 2, 1, 2) and a bass line with a 'scen' marking and a 'do' note. A large slur covers the final two measures.
- System 2:** Continues the melodic development with fingerings (1, 2, 1, 1, 2, 1, 2, 1, 2, 3, 5). A box labeled 'Second Primary Theme' is placed below the first measure.
- System 3:** Includes a 'p cantabile' marking and a 'p' dynamic. The treble has a '5' fingering and a '12' measure marking. The bass has a 'p' dynamic.
- System 4:** Features a 'cresc.' marking and a 'p' dynamic. The treble has a '3' fingering and a '10' measure marking. The bass has a 'p' dynamic.
- System 5:** Includes a 'p' dynamic and a 'cresc.' marking. The treble has a '5' fingering and a '1' measure marking. The bass has a 'p' dynamic.
- System 6:** Features a 'p' dynamic and a 'cresc.' marking. The treble has a '5' fingering and a '1' measure marking. The bass has a 'p' dynamic.
- System 7:** Includes a 'p' dynamic and a 'cresc.' marking. The treble has a '5' fingering and a '1' measure marking. The bass has a 'p' dynamic.

Second Virtuoso Episode

Musical score for the Second Virtuoso Episode. The score is written for piano and voice. It consists of five systems of music. The piano part features complex fingerings (1-5) and dynamics including *p*, *cresc.*, *mf*, *pp*, and *f*. The vocal part includes lyrics: "scen - do". The score is marked with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

Secondary Theme

Musical score for the Secondary Theme. The score is written for piano and voice. It consists of two systems of music. The piano part features dynamics including *p*, *pp*, *p dolce*, and *più f*. The vocal part includes lyrics: "ri - tar - dan - do assai". The score is marked with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

Ex. 3: Chopin: Op. 11 / I.

Virtuoso Entry

SOLO.
ff

8

8

Primary Theme

p *espressivo*
Vic. *f* *arco*

legatissimo
fz
Cl.

First system of musical notation, featuring a treble and bass staff with complex rhythmic patterns and a *stretto* marking.

Second system of musical notation, featuring a treble and bass staff with complex rhythmic patterns and a *risoluto* marking.

Third system of musical notation, featuring a treble and bass staff with complex rhythmic patterns and a *con forza* marking. The section is titled **First Virtuoso Episode** and includes a *tranquillo* marking.

Fourth system of musical notation, featuring a treble and bass staff with complex rhythmic patterns and a *sempre p e legato* marking.

Ex. 4: Schumann: Op. 54 / I.

Virtuoso Entry

Piano I
(Solo)

f sf

sf sf

Allegro affettuoso $\text{♩} = 84$

Piano II
(Orchester)

f

The 'Virtuoso Entry' section features a solo for Piano I with intricate, fast-moving passages in both hands, characterized by frequent use of sforzando (sf) and forte (f) dynamics. Piano II provides a simple accompaniment, marked forte (f), consisting of a single note in the right hand and a half-note in the left hand.

Primary Theme

sf

fp *espr.* *sf*

p espr. *sf*

The 'Primary Theme' section begins with a series of chords in the right hand of Piano I, marked sf. This is followed by a more complex passage in the right hand, marked fp and espr. (espressivo), and then a section marked sf. The left hand of Piano I plays a series of chords, marked p and espr. The right hand of Piano II plays a series of chords, marked p and sf. The left hand of Piano II plays a series of chords, marked p and sf. The section concludes with a final chord in the right hand of Piano I, marked sf.

First Virtuoso Episode

The musical score is written for piano and features a complex melodic line in the right hand. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The score is divided into three measures. The first measure contains a complex melodic line with a 4th and 5th fingering indicated. The second measure contains a complex melodic line with a 1st fingering indicated. The third measure contains a complex melodic line with a 4th fingering indicated. The left hand provides a simple harmonic accompaniment. The dynamic marking *p* (piano) is present in the first measure.

Ex. 5: Grieg: Op. 16 / I.

Virtuoso Entry

Solo *ff* *poco rit.* *a tempo* *stringendo*

Primary Theme

tempo *fz* *p* *Tutti*

mp *cresc.* *f*

A Solo

p *mp*

cantabile

mf *fz*

dim. *poco ritard.*

a tempo *cresc.*

p

First Virtuoso Episode

p animato e molto leggiero

In connection with Grieg's Concerto David Monrad Johansen noticed Grieg's taste for the free placing of the theme blocks, which he revealed also in his other works as, for example, in the second movement of the *Piano Sonata in E minor*, and put this approach in connection with the reflection of Norwegian Landscape:

The principle of form, the chief features of which are precisely surprise, alternation, rapidly changing pictures which yet are held together and comprehended in one general aspect, shows the extreme closeness with which Grieg's art is bound to the scenes and spirit of his homeland, to the mountains and fjords of the Westland.³⁹

This approach to the sonata form finds Gregory Martin also in other Grieg's works from the period of his stay in Copenhagen, where the influence of Grieg's "mentor" – Hans Christian Andersen, is reflected.

I'd like to propose that during those crucial formative years in Copenhagen, surrounded by his Nordic brethren of which Andersen was so obviously a focal point, Grieg may have found in the montage-like manner of the Danish master's writings – a literary parallel to the author's passion for collage creation – a decidedly Nordic formal construct, a model for his emerging musical voice and [...] of the landscape he loved so much [...]. Andersen was amazingly clever at cutting and pasting [...]. We find literary montages everywhere in his novels, plays, poems and fairy tales. This manner of sudden movement from one perspective, narrative, or authorial voice into another without transition is exactly the kind of musical construction we have observed in the music most marked by Grieg as having been composed in a way reflective of his Norwegian identity.⁴⁰

However, the technique of the "side-by-side placement of the 'theme blocks'"⁴¹ in Grieg's Concerto with the typical alternation of the thematic and virtuoso sections, fits also simply with the model of the "virtuoso-brilliant" concerto.

I will now point out the mutual affinities between Hummel's, Chopin's and Grieg's concertos through some examples:

³⁹ MARTIN, Gregory: Grieg's Untold Triumph: *The Piano Concerto, Gustav Mahler, and a New Approach to the Sonata Aesthetic*. Trondheim : International Grieg Society, p. 10. Available at: <http://www.griegsociety.org/filer/1474.pdf>.

⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 12.

⁴¹ Ibid.

Similar pianistic figurations:

Ex. 6: Hummel: Op. 85 / I.

The image displays a musical score for a piano piece, identified as Hummel's Op. 85 / I. The score is written for a grand piano, with a treble and bass staff on the left and a right-hand staff on the right. The music features complex, rapid figurations in the right hand, characterized by dense, flowing patterns of eighth and sixteenth notes. The left hand provides a steady, rhythmic accompaniment. The score is divided into three measures by vertical bar lines. The first measure contains the lyrics "cre -", the second "scen -", and the third "do -". The notation includes various musical symbols such as clefs, key signatures, and dynamic markings. The overall style is characteristic of the Classical or Romantic era, emphasizing technical virtuosity and expressive figuration.

Ex. 7: Grieg Op. 16 / III.

The musical score is for Ex. 7: Grieg Op. 16 / III. It is written for piano and consists of three systems. The first system shows a piano introduction with a treble and bass staff. The second system is the main piece, starting with a treble staff and a bass staff. The third system is a short section with a treble staff and a bass staff. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

System 1: Treble staff: f_3 *sempre più f*. Bass staff: f_3 .

System 2: Treble staff: 22 5 22 . Bass staff: 5 22 *rit.*

System 3: Treble staff: F . Bass staff: F ff .

Use of *bel canto* technique:

Ex. 8: Hummel: Op. 85 / I., first presentation of the secondary theme in the orchestral

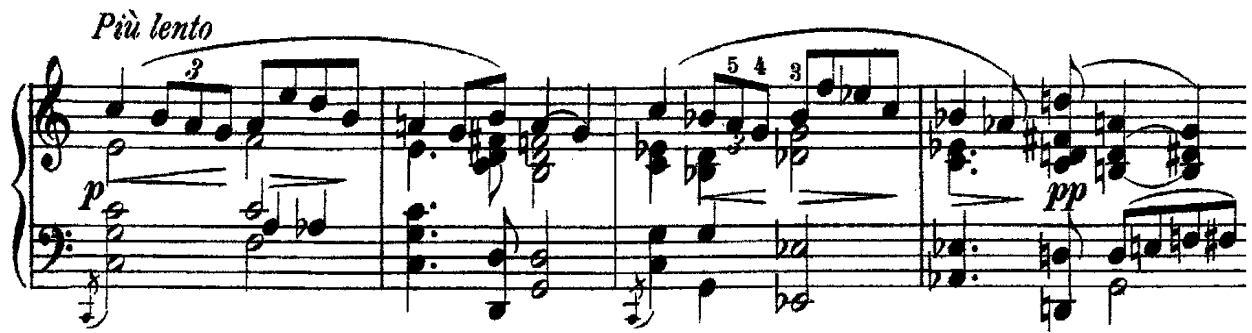
Exposition

The image displays two staves of musical notation. The top staff is marked 'Fl.' (Flute) and contains a melodic line with various ornaments and slurs. The bottom staff is a piano accompaniment with chords and moving lines. The music is in a key with one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, slurs, and ornaments.

Ex. 9: Hummel: Op. 85 / I., second presentation of the secondary theme in the second Exposition – *bel canto* variation

The musical score is presented in three systems. The first system (top) shows the right hand with a melodic line marked *p dolce* and the left hand with a supporting bass line marked *pp*. The second system (middle) continues the melody, marked *piu f* and *p*. The third system (bottom) shows the final measures of the excerpt, with the right hand playing a series of chords and the left hand providing a steady bass line. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings.

Ex. 10: Grieg: Op. 16 / I., first presentation of the secondary theme



Ex. 11: Grieg: Op. 16 / I., *bel canto* variation of the secondary theme

Second versions present characteristic features of use of *bel canto* technique in the lyric sections: in both examples we can see the combination of accompanying broken chords in the left hand with cantilena “embellished” by many ornaments in the right hand. Compared with Hummel schematic Alberti basses,⁴² the accompagnato in Grieg’s Concerto is framed by a much grander scale. Here we might see the influence of Chopin, called also as a “composer of the left hand”: widely conceived broken chords include also the non-chord and non-scale tones, or latent counterpoints. At the phrase’s climax points, we find by Grieg as well as by Chopin, the strengthening of the melodic line with octaves and chords.

⁴² The lack of invention with the treatment of left hand is one of animadversions against Hummel’s music; but it has to be said that pianos of Hummel’s days were in the register of left hand less voiced and during the play with orchestra just little hearable.

Unlike the *bel canto* variation, texture of the first presentation of the secondary theme in Grieg's Concerto is very well-known from his *Lyric pieces*: a melody with a bass line and a simple chord accompaniment, where musical invention clearly dominates the pianistic. Considering the stylistic divergence of Grieg's writing in *bel canto* variations and virtuoso episodes in his Piano Concerto an interesting question emerges, which relates to the specific circumstances of the origin of Grieg's Concerto. Monica Jangaard writes about it:

In the summer of 1868, [Grieg] ... joined the Danish composer Emil Horneman and the Norwegian pianist and composer Edmund Neupert and settled in at Søllerød, north of Copenhagen. [...] Here he completed most of his piano concerto, thanks in large part to a fruitful dialogue with Neupert, to whom he dedicated the work, which later brought his international breakthrough.⁴³

In the contribution *Forgotten Romantic: The Life and Works of Edmund Neupert (1842-1888)*, presented at the international musicological conference *Grieg and Denmark* in Søllerød on 12 August 2011, American musicologists Andrew Adams and Bradley Martin explain the personality and work of this highly respected virtuoso pianist in the Europe and in the United States, who also composed virtuoso piano etudes, in particular. Based on the fact, that “*scholars have long recognized that Neupert influenced the Concerto, but the nature and extent of his influence have not been explored*”, Adams and Bradley make comparative analysis of Neupert's etudes together with some of the passages from Grieg's Concerto and they reach the conclusion that “the ‘fruitful dialogue’ between Neupert and Grieg shaped the Concerto in the clearly discernable ways and that not all of the melodies are completely ‘Grieg’s own.’⁴⁴

Results presented by Adams and Bradley are just partial as a close accessibility of the information about the personality, concert career, correspondence and collected works of Neupert's compositions and recordings of his works etc. is a task for the future – but the authors point out that several concrete projects are being prepared at the occasion of the 170th anniversary of Edmund Neupert's birth in 2012.⁴⁵

⁴³ JANGAARD, Monica: *The piano concerto in A minor, op. 16*. Trolldhaugen : International Grieg Society 2004, p. 1. Available at: <http://www.griegsociety.org/utskrift.asp?id=4758&kat=1022&sp=2>.

⁴⁴ ADAMS, Andrew and BRADLEY, Martin: *Forgotten Romantic: The Life and Works of Edmund Neupert (1842-1888)*. Trolldhaugen : International Grieg Society 2011, p. 4. Available at: <http://www.griegsociety.org/filer/1633.pdf>.

⁴⁵ Ibid, p. 25-26.

At the moment, we don't know how exactly the extent of Neupert's artistic part on Grieg's Concerto was, yet. Based on the comparative analysis of the material available Adams and Bradley note:

It is apparent upon studying Grieg's works written prior to the Concerto (either for piano solo or with piano accompaniment) that they do not use the full range of the instrument in a truly virtuosic way as is commonly found in Neupert's études. Therefore, when considered in purely pianistic terms, it can be argued that much of the overtly technical writing in the *Concerto* is more reminiscent of Neupert's idiosyncratic use of the keyboard than of Grieg's.⁴⁶

Affinity between Neupert's etudes and Grieg's Concerto Adams and Bradley illustrate by the next example,

Ex. 12: Neupert: *Étude in A minor*, Op. 17, No. 7



to which they note:

The similarity of this figuration to a passage in the cadenza of the first movement is striking:

⁴⁶ Ibid, p. 5.

Ex. 13: Grieg: Op. 16 / I.

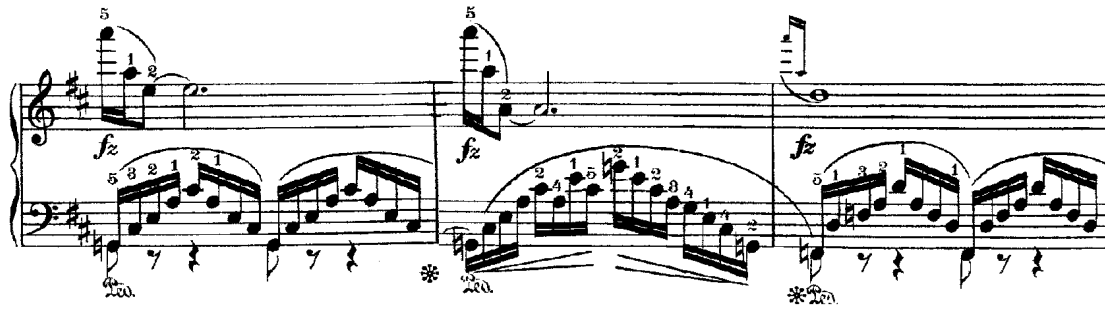
The combination of melodic octaves with accompanying thirty-second notes in the right hand is without precedent in Grieg's works prior to the *Concerto*. And the rapid, wide-ranging arpeggios in the left hand, exploited in several of Neupert's études [...] are also not found in any of Grieg's previous pieces.⁴⁷

But use of these elements we can also find in Hummel's *Etudes*, Op. 125:

Ex. 14: Hummel: Op. 125 / 17

⁴⁷ Ibid, p. 5.

Ex. 15: Hummel: Op. 125 / 6



In the context of the brilliant-virtuoso style of Neupert's compositions it's probable at the most, that Neupert knew the works of the pioneers of this style, from which Johann Nepomuk Hummel was one of.

Although the question to what extent directly and to what extent through the generation of the "early romanticist" Hummel inspired Grieg and Neupert has to stay open, I would like to document the connection to the line marked by Hummel through the following examples:

Similarities between Hummel's and Grieg's *Concerto in A minor* at the crucial tectonic points – closure / transition passages:

Ex. 16: Hummel: Op. 85 / I., the end of the exposition

Ex. 17: Grieg Op. 16 / I., the end of the development

Similarities at the climaxes of the first movements:

the effect of imitation of the drum roll – this element plays an important role in the first movement of Hummel's *Piano Concerto in B minor*, Op. 89.

Ex. 18: Hummel Op. 89 / I., the peak of the final gradation

Ex. 19: Grieg Op. 16 / I., the climax of the cadence

Direct analogy we can find in the trill passage quite at the end of the cadence before the tutti entry – coda:

Ex. 20: Grieg Op. 16 / I.

- compare with Ex. 18

There are also further affinities between Finale of Hummel's *B minor*, Chopin's *E minor* and Grieg's Concerto. In all cases we have to do with a lively dance with the explicit folk song allusions. It's not possible to speak about some specific dance in Hummel's Concerto – the theme of the Finale is as if it would anticipate "Smetanian" *polka*. On the other hand, Chopin was inspired by the specific features of the Polish folk dance *krakowiak* and Grieg by the Norwegian folk dance *halling*.

Now, let me compare the beginning of the Finale of Hummel's Op. 89 and Grieg's Concerto: both movements begin very similarly and the "start" of the work has four identical phases:

1. run-up of the move from the short rhythmic impulses in the orchestra
2. cadence of the soloist, that "overflies" through the whole keyboard
3. entry of the characteristic dance *accompagnato* in quavers
4. exposition of the main theme

Ex. 21: Hummel Op. 89 / III.

The musical score for Hummel Op. 89 / III is presented in three systems. The first system, labeled 'Run-up of the move', shows the orchestral introduction with parts for Corni, Viol., and Ob. in 2/4 time, marked with dynamics *f* and *pp*. The second system, labeled 'Cadence SOLO', features a solo piano part with a 'cresc.' marking and a 'f' dynamic. The third system, labeled 'Entry of dance accompagnato', shows the piano accompaniment with a 'f' dynamic and a 'p' dynamic. The fourth system, labeled 'Main theme', shows the piano accompaniment with a 'f' dynamic and a 'p' dynamic. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Ex. 22: Grieg Op. 16 / III.

The image displays a musical score for Grieg's Op. 16 / III. It consists of four systems of music. The first system features a piano part labeled 'Tutti' and 'pp' with a 'Run-up of the move' annotation, and a solo part labeled 'Solo' and 'ff' with a 'Cadence' annotation. The second system includes a piano part with a 'Poco animato' tempo marking and a 'Main theme' annotation, and a solo part with an 'Entry of dance accompagnato' annotation. The third system shows a piano part with 'cresc.' and 'f' markings, and a solo part with 'p' and 'cresc.' markings. The fourth system shows a piano part with 'p' and 'ff' markings. The score is written in 2/4 time and includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

It's obvious, that in case of Hummel and Chopin it's a graceful, "salon" stylization of a folk dance; while Grieg doesn't try to restrain the earthiness, roughness and a rustic character of *halling* that Hella Brock describes as follows:

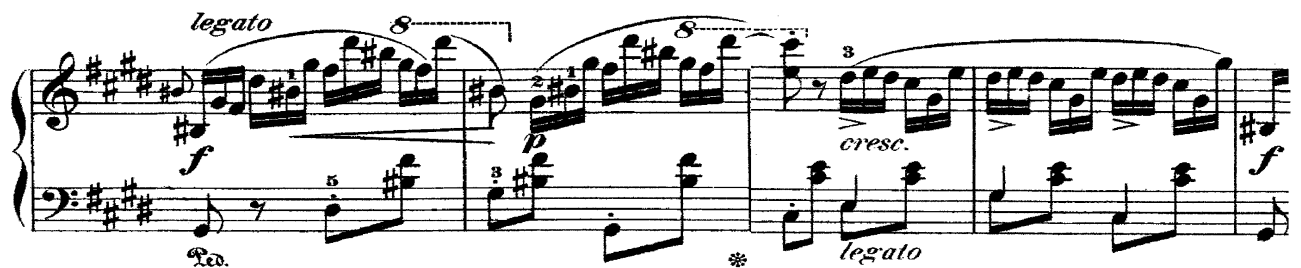
Halling, ein männlicher Einzeltanz im zweiteiligen Takt (meist 2/4), bei dem der Tänzer seine Behendigkeit und Kraft beweisen soll, vor allem beim meist abschließenden Sprung.⁴⁸

Thanks to the rhythmic boldness intensified by the dissonant clusters, Grieg's music defies the line of the "lyrical-romantic" concertos and anticipates "Allegro Barbaro" poetics of Bartók and other composers of the 20th century, who viewed the piano rather as a percussion instrument.

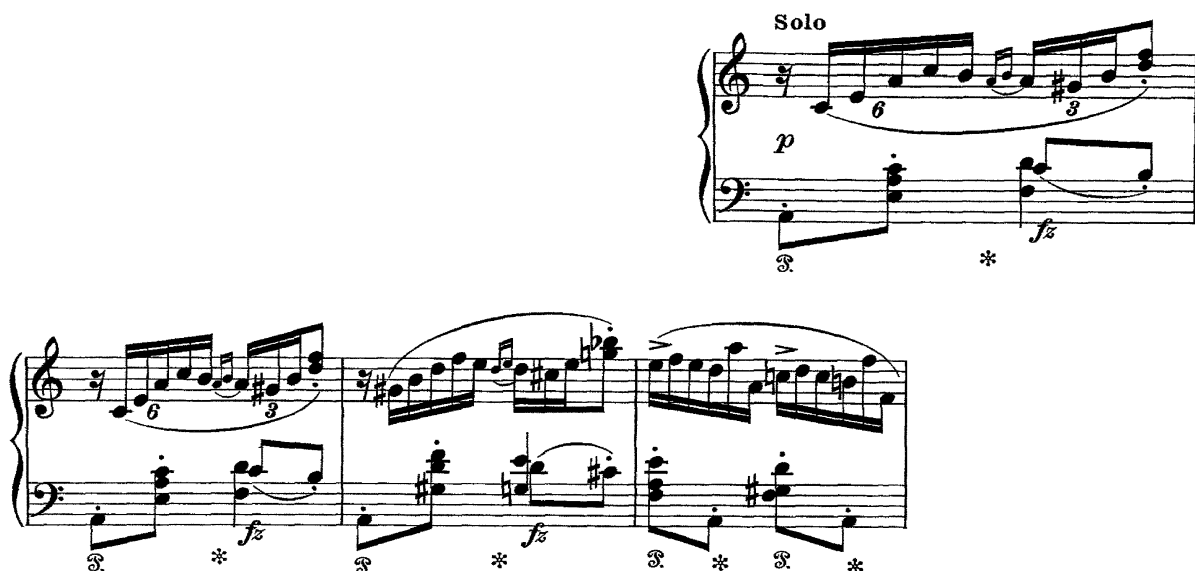
⁴⁸ BROCK, Hella: *Edvard Grieg. Eine Biographie. Überarbeitete Auflage*. Schott : Atlantis 1998, p. 25.

Like in Hummel's or Chopin's Finale, we find also by Grieg a mode of alternation of the theme blocks and virtuoso-brilliant passages. In these passages we can see further similarities:

Ex. 23: Chopin Op. 11 / III, first virtuoso episode, or "second primary theme"



Ex. 24: Grieg Op. 16 / III, first virtuoso episode, or "second primary theme"



Technique of motivic and thematic transformation

What connects Grieg's Concerto to that of Schumann the most is probably the technique of the motivic and thematic transformation, which was firstly used by Hummel in his *Fantasia in E flat major*, Op. 18 for piano solo in 1805.⁴⁹ On the basis of various transformations of one motif or theme, its placement to the various types of textures etc., composer gets diverse

⁴⁹ See EDLER, Arnfried: Charakterstück, Variation, Etüde und Fantasie im Klavierwerk Hummels. In GERHARD – LÜTTEKEN (ed.), Ref. 14, p. 48-52.

characters thanks to the principle of the contrasting derivation from one initial structural core, which allows him to “interconnect” the diverse parts and movements of the cyclic work. Schubert with his *Wanderer Fantasy in C major*, Op. 15 (1822) was Hummel’s follower and Franz Liszt led this technique to perfection in his *Sonata in B minor* (1853), which is often considered to be a prototype of a “double-function form”, i.e. unity of a large, one-part composition to the one whole on the basis of the sonata form and the sonata cycle.

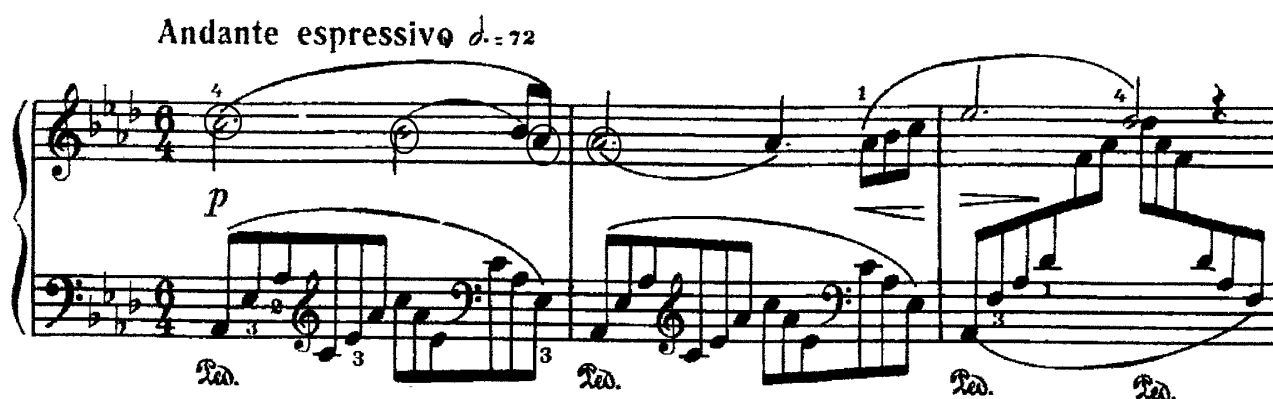
Similar effort of the thematic and structural join can be seen also in Schumann’s and Grieg’s piano concertos. “Factor of unity” in both cases is various transformations of the initial “motto” and the theme.

The motto and the main theme of Schumann’s Concerto grow out of cryptogram of his wife Clara (Chiara) – the succession of tones *c – b (= h in German musical terminology) – a – a*.

Ex. 25: Schumann Op. 54 / I., motto and the main theme

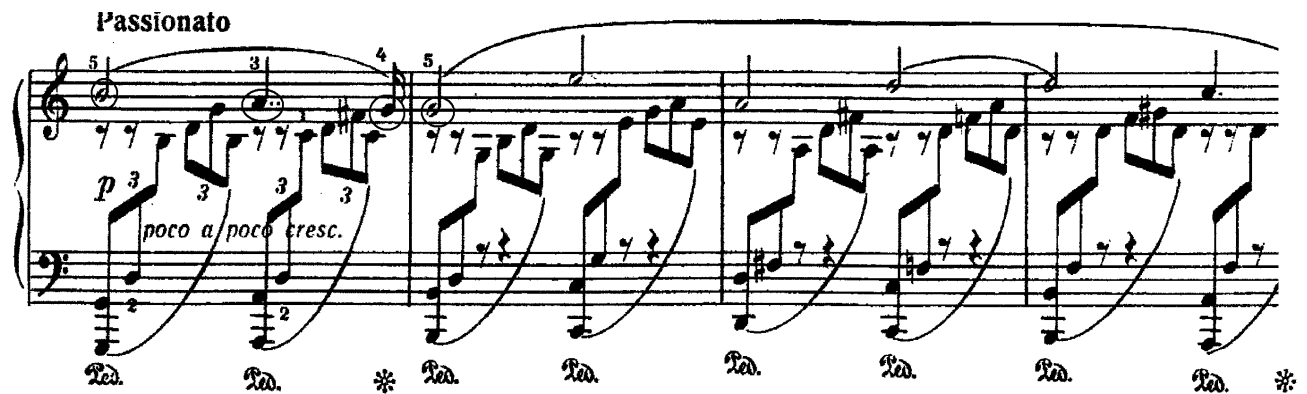


Ex. 26: Schumann Op. 54 / I., lyrical transformation of the motto, secondary theme in A flat major:



caused by its setting into the widely conceived broken chords in slow tempo

Ex. 27: Schumann Op. 54 / I., passionate transformation of the motto, gradation before the recapitulation:



caused by the accompagnato in an agitated triplet motion and dotted rhythm in the melodic line

Ex. 28: Schumann Op. 54 / III, final transformation of the main theme, last movement:



caused by the major transformation, triple – dance evoking metre, emphasizing of lively riotousness by syncopic chords and grace notes in the melody.

Similar motivic-thematic connections can be found also in Grieg's Concerto, where the famous "Grieg-motif" is the base: descending melodic sequence from the root note through the leading tone to the fifth.

Ex. 29: Grieg Op. 16 / I.

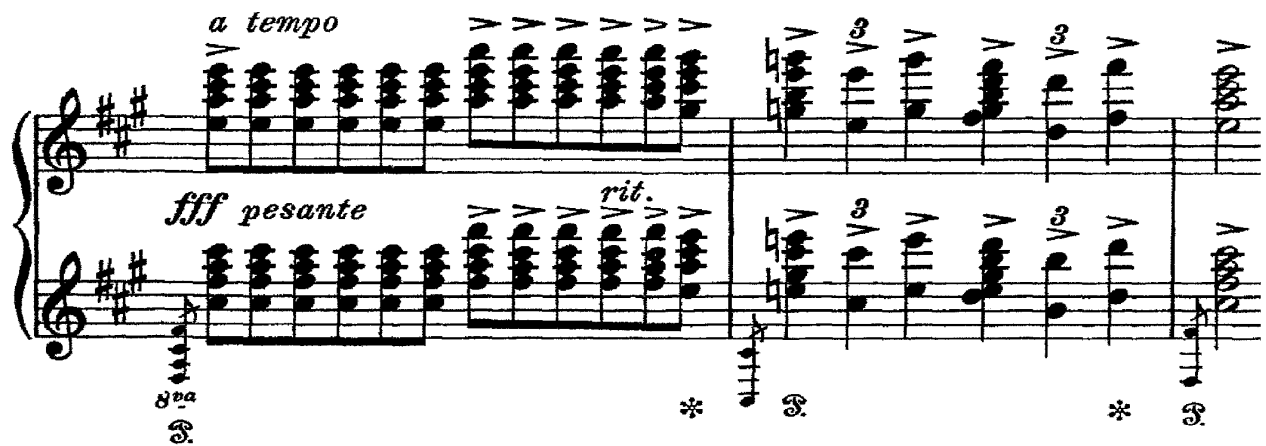
Allegro molto moderato

This motif appears in various transformations in all movements of the Concerto. In the Finale, his transformation becomes the base for the middle section in *F major* that with its lyrical and pastoral character sharply contrasts with the first and the third sections with the wild rhythms of *halling*.

Ex. 30: Grieg Op. 16 / III.

In the hymnic final transformation of this lyrical motif in *A major*, which at the end of the Concerto appears in the rhythmic augmentation and in the majestic chordal version, after *g sharp* surprisingly “Mixolydian” *g* appears:

Ex. 31: Grieg Op. 16 / III.



This piece went down in history thanks to Franz Liszt, whom Grieg introduced his work in 1870 and Liszt played it immediately at sight for a company of few musicians and his admirers. Grieg wrote to his parents about Liszt's reaction:

Er hielt plötzlich an, verließ das Klavier und schritt mit großartigen Theaterschritten und gehobenem Arm durch die große Klosterhalle, indem er das Thema förmlich brüllte. Bei dem erwähnten g streckte er wie ein Imperator gebietend seinen Arm aus und rief: "g, g, g, nicht gis! Famos! [...]"⁵⁰

Finally Liszt returned the score to Grieg with words:

"Fahren Sie so fort, ich sage Ihnen, Sie haben das Zeug dazu, und – lassen Sie sich nicht abschrecken."⁵¹

Grieg's motif

With these considerations, we moved to the problem of rendering of the artistic idiom of "Norwegian" or "Scandinavian" music, which Grieg is considered to be a creator of. From tonal-harmonic point of view this idiom is counted as a result of the individual synthesis of modal elements and melodic turns, which occur in Norwegian folk music together with means of a developed postromantic harmony.

If we look at "Grieg's motif" from a position of major-minor tonal harmony, we can say that the succession of octave-seventh-fifth (*a – g sharp – e*) is a standard part of the harmonic

⁵⁰ BROCK, Ref. 48, p. 150.

⁵¹ Ibid.

minor scale. Why then this succession affects us so peculiarly? And why did Grieg in the obligatory major “clarification” (*A major*) in the end of the Concerto slide down from *g sharp* to a “Mixolydian” seventh *g* and why did this succession impress Liszt so much?

Although *a – g sharp – e* succession is a standard part of harmonic minor scale, in descending melodic successions a natural seventh (*a – g – f – e*) should be used, in order to prevent an “exotic” *hiatus* (*g sharp – f*, augmented second, which exceeds a diatonic system based on a consistent alternation of the whole-tone and the half-tone steps). Melodic successions, where the leading tone is “left” without a resolution to the root tone, are not common in the traditional tonal melodies as there is not satisfied the melodic and harmonic tension, embodied by the principle of leading tone and its resolution to the root tone on which the tonal system is based.

There lies an effect of Grieg’s “motto”: melodic descent from the leading tone to the fifth doesn’t satisfy us, the tension concentrated in the leading tone is not resolved and a “powerless” melodic descent to the fifth even increases it. That’s why this melodic succession evokes an expression of something unfulfilled, rough and melancholic.

For Grieg, who discovered this melodic succession in Norwegian folk music, it was evidently an important creative impulse and a specific structural mean through which he wanted to lend his music a characteristic “national” seal:

Eine Eigentümlichkeit unserer Volksmusik war mir zwar immer sehr sympathisch: die Behandlung des Leittons und ganz besonders der Schritt desselben abwärts nach der Quinte.⁵²

It’s interesting, that this phenomenon occurs in songs of Moravian-Slovak area, whose folklore belongs to the archaic spheres of musical thinking, apparently congeneric to Norway.

Another common phenomenon observed in songs of these folk cultures is an unclearness of intonation of some tones. But it’s not a “false intonation”, because these “unclear” or “false” tones are sung by folk singers always at the same high pitch. Leoš Janáček referred to the appearance of this element in Moravia, musicologist Jozef Kresánek in Slovakia and Finn

⁵² Quoted from BENESTAD, Finn: Grieg und der norwegische Volkston. Eine lebenslange Liebesgeschichte. In *Edvard Grieg. Musik-Konzepte* 127. Ed. Ulrich Tadday, p. 68.

Benestad in Norway – and he writes about it in the context of a performance of one authentic woman folk singer of the *Gjendines Lullaby*, which was also set to music by Grieg:

Gjendine singt mit teilweise schwankenden Intervallen: Der Leitton liegt oft zwischen *f* und *fis* und die Terz zwischen *h* und *b*.⁵³

On the basis of appearance of the similar phenomenon, Slovak theorist Jozef Kresánek came in his work *Slovak folk song from a musical point of view* (1951)⁵⁴ to the conclusion, that tonality of these archaic songs is grounded neither on traditional major or minor, nor on church modes, but on the older systems of tonal thinking. In many songs, two tones in interval of a perfect fourth have often a prominence as some “footholds”. For Kresánek, this struck to be a parallel to the system of Greek *tetrachords*; and also a fact, that Slovak folk songs were characterized in descending melodies he found to be something what has to do with the ideas of Greek theorists, who understood tetrachords and scales from top to down.

For Kresánek, discovery of the fourth-tonal organization became a fundament for a new organization of the folk songs⁵⁵ on the basis of units in extent of a perfect fourth with four tones inside. He noticed that tones of the tetrachord are not equal, but that the frame-tones in the interval of a perfect fourth are fixed and tones within this frame are variable. There are then two principles united in the fourth-tonal system: principle of a consonant and stable skeleton (frame) – idea that was stabilized probably also thanks to simple pipes and string instruments, and principle of a local affinity of individual degrees within, or possibly on the outer edge of this frame.

It again reminds the system of Greek tetrachords, where the theorists distinguished between Dorian, Lydian, Phrygian and enharmonic tetrachords (also with other than just second, for example, quarter-tone distances between individual tones). On the basis of his researches, Kresánek joint to them also a so-called “chromatic mezzo-tetrachord”

⁵³ Ibid, 79.

⁵⁴ KRESÁNEK, Jozef: *Slovenská ľudová pieseň zo stanoviska hudobného*. Bratislava : Národné hudobné centrum 1997 (1st edition 1951).

⁵⁵ In accord with antic theorists, Kresánek spoke firstly about the *tetrachordal* organization; but since this term evokes rather an idea of some scale-like segment, Kresánek substituted the term *tetrachordal* system by the term *fourth-tonal* in his work *Tonality*. See KRESÁNEK, Jozef: *Tonalita*, OPUS Bratislava 1982, p. 54-55.

Ex. 32:



with *hiatus* within the tetrachord. Although he assumed it occurs only in Slovak folk songs – we can find it also in Moravian and Norwegian songs and, for example, Janáček, Grieg or Slovak composer Eugen Suchoň used it and achieved original effects in their own compositions.

In archaic melodies, which exceed ambitus of fourth, combinations of fourth-tonal frames occur, too. The basic options were already described by Greek theorists:

1) “authentic” – inner frame-tones are in the interval of major second,

Ex. 33:



2) “plagal” – inner frame-tones are identical.

Ex. 34:



Because the authentic combination anticipates a major-minor tonality (a germ of subdominant and dominant), it dominates in folk songs that survived. That a folk-tune could be of older data can be supposed through the “fluctuation” of tones in the fourth-frames, through the “unclear” intonation of thirds and sevenths, quite unusually for the major-minor tonality etc.

Another important feature of the melodies with a fourth-tonal structure is that on this level of musical thinking there is no clearly stabilized tonic; tonic-like significance of the frame tones can be equal, or simply any of the frame-tones can become a temporary tonic of the tune.

European composers, who found inspiration in these layers of folk music in a period of a “crisis of tonal harmony”, came often to very original ideas in their compositions as, for example, “Grieg-motif”.

Although it’s probably not correct to explain the “fluctuation of the seventh” in the frame of European heptatonics, this phenomenon in the Moravian folk songs fascinated Janáček as well as Grieg. Following song *Muzikanti* (*Musicians*) from Janáček’s cycle *Moravská lidová poesie v písniích* (*Moravian folk poetry in songs*, 1901) is an authentic folk melody, to which Janáček wrote a piano accompaniment with a stylized play of Moravian fiddle band.

Ex. 35:

Andante

Mu - zi - kan - ti, co dě - lá - te, mu - zi - kan - ti,
 1. Mu - si - kan - ten, nim - mer schwei - get, Mu - si - kan - ten,
 2. Laßt die Gei - gen froh er - klin - gen, laßt die Gei - gen
 3. Sollt auch auf dem Zim - bal spie - len, sollt auch auf dem
 4. Spielt mir auch auf den Bass - gei - gen, spielt mir auch auf
 5. Spie - let al - le oh - ne Pau - se, spie - let al - le

co dě - lá - te, aj, má - te hus - le a ne - hrá - te, aj, má - te
 nim - mer schweiget, hei, ihr habt Gei - gen, al - so gei - get, hei, ihr habt
 froh er - klin - gen, hei, daß die Mäd - chen lus - tig sin - gen, hei, daß die
 Zim - bal spie - len, froh soll sich mei - ne Lieb - ste füh - len, froh soll sich
 den Bass - gei - gen, spielt al - len Leu - ten auf zum Rei - gen, spielt al - len
 oh - ne Pau - se, spielt auf den Weg mir bis nach Hau - se, spielt auf den

hus - le a ne - hrá - te.
 Gei - gen, al - so gei - get.
 Mäd - chen lus - tig sin - gen.
 mei - ne Lieb - ste füh - len.
 Leu - ten auf zum Rei - gen.
 Weg mir bis nach Hau - se.

There we can see the “fluctuation” of the seventh *g sharp* / *g* in song running in A minor. Entry of *g*¹ in the third measure is the most important caesura in the melody and a source of “modulation” to C major – or, strictly speaking, to the space of a fourth-tonal frame *g*¹ – *c*²; with return of *g sharp*¹ the song goes back to the space of A minor. While descent to the “lowered seventh” was often cause of similar tonal deflections in the Moravian folk songs, Janáček found it to be the most original feature of them and called it “*Moravian modulation*”.⁵⁶

Similar melodic-harmonic turns lend Janáček’s music peculiarity and a special atmosphere as, for example, in the following example, where we can see an analogy with the secondary theme in Grieg’s Concerto:

⁵⁶ JANÁČEK, Leoš: *O lidové písni a lidové hudbě. Dokumenty a studie*. Ed. Jiří Vysloužil. Praha : Státní nakladatelství krásné literatury a umění Praha 1955, p. 322.

Ex. 36: Janáček: *Dobrou noc!* (*Good night!*), Nr. 7 from the cycle “*On an Overgrown Path*” (1908)

The image displays a musical score for a piano piece. At the top right, there is an inset titled "Melodic Pattern 'in C major'" showing a short melodic line in treble and bass clefs, marked "dolce". Below it, another inset titled "Melodic Pattern 'in c minor'" shows a similar line, marked "espress.". The main score consists of two systems of piano staves. The first system includes markings for "tre corde", "P", "accel.", "espress.", and several "*P" dynamic markings. The second system includes "rit.", "f a tempo", "sfz", "ten.", and more "*P" markings. Fingering numbers (1-5) are placed above various notes throughout the score.

The piece is settled in C major. Its melody is based mainly on the fourth-tonal elements and harmonically oscillates between C major, G major, C minor, E flat major etc. Ex. 36 presents measures 27-37. There is a melodic model quasi in C major presented in m. 27-30; its minor variation in m. 31-34, continuation of the melody in m. 35-37. Within the “minor variation” of the motif, ascending melodic line reaches the “lowered” seventh *b flat*¹ instead of the root tone, what brings a “retuning” from the initial oscillation between C major / G major to the area of E flat major / B flat major. Similar oscillations can be seen by Grieg:

Ex. 37: Grieg Op. 16 / I., secondary theme

Melodic Pattern "in C major"

Melodic Pattern "in c minor"

"Mixolydian Seventh"

The base of the melody is “Grieg-motif”, but now in the obligatory major parallel C major. Like by Janáček, the melodic model in first two measures is presented in C major; in the following two measures its quasi a minor variation. The play with the “lowered” seventh brings a peculiar modulation to A flat major.

I could present another paper about the remarkable melodic, harmonic and expressional nuances, to which Grieg comes out through the miscellaneous transformations of “Grieg-motif” in other parts of the Concerto. Now I will just focus on the surprising closure of the Concerto, which impressed Franz Liszt so spontaneously:

Ex. 38: Grieg Op. 16 / III, final transformation of “Grieg-motif”:

a tempo

fff pesante

rit.

The “Mixolydian” seventh *g* enters at the climax of the gradation, when we expect the coming of the triumphal conclusion. “Lowered” seventh in the majestic chord climax is an astounding surprise in the conventional final “major clarification” (A minor – A major). But in the unique context of Grieg’s Concerto this melodic turn brings a peculiar solution of the contradiction

included in the opening motto by leaving the leading-tone. Like Liszt, this final melodic turn will grave in mind of each listener certainly immediately after its first hearing.

Conclusion

In his study “*Jene norwegische Schwester des deutschen Schumannschen*“? Edvard Griegs *Klavierkonzert* Michael Custodis focuses on various aspects of the myths about the relation (or rather dependence) of Grieg’s Concerto on that of Schumann as well as on explanation of why Grieg never used many impulses of the public discussion to this topic:

Auf lange Sicht behielt Grieg mit seinem taktischen Schweigen Recht: Zwar wird ihm in Kritiken bisweilen noch immer die Nähe seines Stücks zu Schumann als Epigonentum ausgelegt und seine kompositorische Leistung zur Kopistentat geschmälert. Dessen ungeachtet hat sich sein Klavierkonzert aber im internationalen Repertoire etabliert und wird vom Publikum geliebt [...].⁵⁷

Grieg was probably aware of the originality of his Concerto which belongs not only to the masterpieces of his output, but of the world music literature, too. To understand this work just as a result of the dependence on the model of piano concertos of Schumann or Chopin, or just as a result of Grieg’s effort in making of the “national identity”, would mean to reduce its artistic message, which is in its complexity comprehensible only as a unique use of several developmental tendencies forming European musical culture in the time of its origin.

⁵⁷ CUSTODIS, Michael: “*Jene norwegische Schwester des deutschen Schumannschen*“? Edvard Griegs *Klavierkonzert*. Trolldhaugen : International Grieg Society 2011, p. 18. Available at: <http://www.griegsociety.org/filer/1447.pdf>