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### The Leitmotifs in *King Roger*

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Work on the opera *King Roger* began in 1918, when the first idea for the libretto was born; it went on until 12 August 1924, when the score was finished at Dukszty. The opera, which grew out of the composer's interest in antique and oriental cultures, is as much a result of his reflections on the Dionysian myth, as his vision of the post-Wagnerian theatre. The author's immediate impressions, gained during travels in Sicily and North Africa at the beginning of 1914, were extended by reading the Greek classics and Nietzsche's philosophical writings; Szymanowski read essays by Walter Pater (in particular the latter's *Study of Dionysus* and *Denys L' Auxerrois*<sup>1</sup>) and works by Russian symbolists, mainly Vyacheslav Ivanov and Fyodor Sologub. From *Obrazy Włoch [Pictures from Italy]* by Paweł Muratow<sup>2</sup> he drew information about the Norman ruler of Sicily, Roger II, and books by Tadeusz Zieliński on the antique sources of Christianity provided him with ideas about the role of Dionysus in the development of religion.<sup>3</sup> Tadeusz Miciński's drama, *Bazyliśsa Teofanu*, also influenced the operatic project to a significant extent.<sup>4</sup> The composer's erudition on the subject of the Dionysian myth was linked to a very personal experience, to which he gave expression in his novel *Efebos*, a literary substantiation of his ideas. It should be added that the Dionysian myth was also important to Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz during his 'Ukrainian' period. Jerzy Kwiatkowski, in discussing the importance of this myth in the poet's works, drew attention to the fact that Iwaszkiewicz had travelled a si-

milar route to Szymanowski, starting with reading Walter Pater, Vyacheslav Ivanov and Tadeusz Zieliński, through Euripides's *Bacchaes*, to Miciński's *Bazylyssa Teofanu*.<sup>5</sup> Tracing these dependencies and reminiscences invariably fascinates both literary scholars and musicologists, and thus much has been written about the philosophical and literary origins of *King Roger*; more than about its music.

The first idea for the opera was conceived in June 1918, during a visit by Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz to Elisavetgrad, where the Szymanowski family was staying at that time. In the summer of that year, Iwaszkiewicz sent the first draft of the drama to the composer.<sup>6</sup> Szymanowski was then struck by the 'enormous contrasts and riches of those strangely combined worlds'.<sup>7</sup> The principle of *coincidentia oppositorum* thus established from the beginning the direction of the composer's thought, and found its expression in the text of the libretto, as well as the stage design and the music. In his stage directions the composer described in detail the stage sets for particular acts, emphasising the contrasts between places of action, times of day and night, the colouring of the interiors, and the play of lights and shadows.

The first act takes place in a Byzantine temple, with the stage set modelled on the chapel in the royal palace (Cappella Palatina) of the Norman ruler of Sicily, Roger II, there is a painting of Christ Pantocrator in the apse, and golden mosaics which contrast with the twilight; the second act is set in Roger's palace, furnished with Oriental sumptuousness, while the background to the third act is provided by the ruins of an ancient Greek theatre. Stage design composed in this way presents the heterogeneity of Sicily, which somehow constituted a harmonious whole, as described by Ferdinand Gregorovius<sup>8</sup> and Paweł Muratow<sup>9</sup>, and as it was still experienced by Szymanowski, and after him Iwaszkiewicz. This heterogeneity was intended to reflect in visual terms the conflicts of the ideas presented in the drama.

The musical vision was born at the same time as that of the drama and the stage. 'And (possibly) Byzantine-church-dark choirs!' — wrote Szymanowski in his letter to Iwaszkiewicz mentioned earlier, discussing the initial ideas for the work<sup>10</sup>. The music co-creates the separate colourings of the three acts. However, it is far from being an imitation and pastiche of the music of the

cultural communities presented in the drama. As in the case of the libretto which, while being inspired by the figure of Roger II and the Sicilian scenery, moved away from the historical accounts, so in the case of the musical layer of the first and second acts: all one can discern are references to the most general features of medieval or oriental music, and these are more in the nature of stylistic allusions than stylisation. And in the Hellenic act, the mood of the Dionysian mystery is conveyed only through the stage set, the figure of Dionysus and the presence of the chorus with its commentary, and not through musical devices.

The external contrasts of the action are levelled out by the leitmotifs, common to all the acts. On the one hand they provide the basis of the autonomous musical cohesion of the work, on the other, they create the inner action, which on occasions reveals the hidden meanings of the verbal layer. Mateusz Gliński<sup>11</sup>, in his essay on *King Roger*, identified the motifs of the three main stage characters: the two motifs of the Shepherd (the first one symbolising his divine nature, the second — his carnality, his sensuality), two motifs of Roxana and one motif for Roger. Jachimecki's essay<sup>12</sup> dating from the same year was mainly concerned with the Shepherd's motifs. The first of them had a concave contour (letter x, figure 5.1), while the second one — a convex one (letter y, figure 5.1). Roxana's motifs, which are in fact a transformation and development of the Shepherd's motifs, indicate the lack of independence of the personality of the heroine, who surrenders to the power of the divine messenger.<sup>13</sup>

Although the motifs in question are linked to the main characters of the drama, they do not function in the same way as the older 'reminding motifs'; instead, they are closer to Wagner's idea, since they play a role in the symphonic shaping of the work. Moreover, the motifs in *King Roger* undergo transformations in terms of their melic contour, rhythm, and even expressive character.

The opening introduction shows 'the interior of a church built by the Omnipotent and by the hands of the Byzantian Basileus family, the earlier rulers of the island'.<sup>14</sup> However, in this scene Szymanowski does not refer to the liturgical monophonic Byzantine music, but to the newer polyphonic Orthodox

a)

Pasterz  
Mój Bóg jest pię - kny ja - ko ja, ja,

b)

Vni I  
*pp* *p* *dolciss.* *poco* *a* *poco cresc.*

Vni II  
*pp* *p* *dolciss.* *poco* *a* *poco cresc.*

c)

Roksana

d)

Roksana  
U - śnij - cie krwa - we sny kró - la Ro - ge - ra

e)

Trbn. I, II  
*f* *sf* *pp*

Fig. 5.1. a) Act 1, bars 283–287 (Shepherd’s part); b) Act 1, bars 529–532 (parts of second and first violins), c) Act 2, bars 243–244 (Roxana’s part), d) Act 2, bars 251–252 (Roxana’s part), e) Act 1, bars 513–514 (parts of first and second trombones)

Church music, homophonic and and homorhythmic. Although the melodic lines contain some modal phrases, the tonal centres are displaced, and the archaic fifths-fourths are broken through with new harmonic thinking. Allusions to the Orthodox ritual can also be noted in the Old Church Slavonic formula: ‘Hagios, Kyrios, Theos, Sabaoth’ and in the solo chant of the Archierey, to which the chorus provides the responses. In passing, one might remark that

the authors of the libretto did not give much thought to exactly what ritual must have been observed in the royal chapel, since the historical Roger was a Roman Catholic, and not an Orthodox Christian<sup>15</sup>. On the other hand, this historical inaccuracy bears no significance in terms of its importance to the opera, which is governed by a logic of its own. And that logic demands that the opposite of the Shepherd — God of love and freedom, with his origins in the religions of the East and in the Dionysian cult — should be the doctrine of the Byzantine church, the most rigorous and the most petrified, but at the same time extremely rich in its external ceremonies<sup>16</sup>. In any case, the Byzantine tradition was at that time very strong in Sicily, which is apparent in the architecture and the interiors of the churches; one might also add that for his coronation Roger wore a beautiful Byzantine cloak, threaded through with pearls and gold, made in the capital of Sicily, but ornamented with embroidered writing in Arabic<sup>17</sup>. In his opera, Szymanowski captured exactly that variety of cultural traditions, which at the same time form a harmonious unity.

More important than stylistic accuracy in the music of the introduction to *King Roger* is its general emotional character, which corresponds to a mystical mood of a religious service. Already, the first motif of the Shepherd appears here twice, and is taken up immediately by a boys' choir (see figure 5.2a). On the other hand, the 'convex' motif accompanies the entry of the King and his court; it is initially played by flute and clarinet (figure 5.2b), and then taken up to form a dialogue of other instruments. Thus these motifs precede the appearance of the Shepherd on the stage, testifying to his yet unrevealed presence, and perhaps also to a mysterious link between the religion preached by him and the official religion of the Byzantine church, as well as to a link with Roger himself (Halbreich describes the Shepherd as 'Roger's shadow').<sup>18</sup>

The musical characterisation of the Shepherd is achieved not only through the motifs, but also by a special timbral aura, through melodic-harmonic means, and the instrumentation. The Shepherd's song (from bar 282), with its modal melodies and peaceful trochaic rhythm, contrasts with the music of the faithful gathered in the church. There is in it a softness, a sweetness, a toned-down expression, which can be described in one word: *serenitas*.

a)

Arch. W krza - ku go - re - ją - cym pło - ną - cy

b)

Fl. I *mp* *espr.*

Cl. I in si *mp*

Fig. 5.2. a) Act 1, bar 36 (the Archierey's part), b) Act 1, bars 48–50 (part of the first flute and first clarinet).

The song is accompanied by the rustling background of string instruments, multiply divided, joined by the melody of the solo violin in high register in bar 308.

The game begins to be played out between Roger and the Shepherd-Dionysius. In that first meeting of the protagonists one can discern the model of Euripides's *Bacchaes*, which, however, is done 'for a particular purpose', as Szymanowski mentions in his draft of the Sicilian drama<sup>19</sup>. What is taking place is better described as the composer's dialogue with the *Bacchaes*, rather than plagiarism. In Szymanowski's novel *Efebos*, the composer Marek Korab explains that '[...] the original tragedy is not suitable for a musical drama because of its length and the unity of place and time, which would be tiring in a musical interpretation'. And moreover, he adds, 'who in the end would play Dionysus on stage? That ephebus with sensual lips [...] who would play him? Some odious tenor with fat calves in pink tights?'<sup>20</sup>.

Roger's motif is built up slowly. Initially it is only the descending secondal

steps in the horn group, syncopated, emphasised with strong accents. This motif, as it appears in the first violins in bars 402–404, has not yet achieved its characteristic form. As the hatred of the people for the Shepherd grows, the anger of the ruler, anxious over Roxana's enchantment with the stranger, increases as well. He pronounces his verdict: 'let him die!'. Edrisi advises: 'call him to judgment', Roxana begs for mercy. The might of royal power struggles in him against the fascination exerted by the beautiful youth. And it is at that moment of hesitation (the stage directions here are: 'He falls back onto the throne, hides his face in his hand. One can feel in him a terrible inner struggle') that Roger's full motif appears, reflecting his spiritual conflict, fear, anxiety, but also his brutal force (bars 513–514). This is achieved through sharp dissonances, zig-zagging melody line, broken rhythms, the sound of the wind instruments supported by the percussion. The tritone in the motif line disappears when Roger changes his decision: 'Let the Shepherd go'. That is the key moment, in which the music takes over the main part. The stage directions say: 'A wonderful smile appears on the face of the Shepherd. For a moment he looks directly into the King's eyes, as if in a secret understanding, and then slowly, as if reluctantly, he makes his exit'.<sup>21</sup> For the first time, we hear the Shepherd's second motif in full (bars 529–532). Roger changes his judgment once again: 'You will come to judgment tonight!' When he gives the challenge and the response, the Shepherd's motif can be heard in his voice; and, in his turn, the Shepherd repeats a fragment of Roger's motif on the words: 'I will answer them «Roger»?'.

At the end of act 1 the composer superimposes two planes on each other: the music of the departing Shepherd (group of string instruments) and the voices of the chorus ('Horror! Horror!') dying away. One might describe this act as the exposition of the dramatic conflict.

The second act brings an intensification of the oppositions. The next encounter between Roger and the Shepherd again recalls the *Bacchaes*, but in a changed form. In Euripides's drama, Dionysus, imprisoned by Pentheus, frees himself by causing an earthquake and a fire in the palace and, during their second encounter, unrecognised, disguised as a shepherd, tempts the King with a vision of the mysteries: 'would you not like to spy on these fair ladies

in the wood?’ We know what the end will be — Pentheus dies, torn to pieces by the bacchaes and by his own mother. This is the scene which Szymanowski tried to immortalise in his unfinished cantata *Agave*. In *King Roger*, this second encounter takes on the character of an increasingly violent dispute, in which the might of the king clashes with the secret power of Dionysus; however, Szymanowski’s Shepherd brings about spiritual (not seismic) quakes, and the fire rages only in people’s hearts. In terms of the music, the part of the act which begins with the appearance of the Shepherd (bar 326) is a symphonic transformation of both his motifs and Roger’s motif, a constant play of varying expressions. The dominant ‘convex’ motif of the Shepherd appears *con passione* and grows to fortissimo; the development of his song from the first act intertwines with Roger’s motif (bars 430–433), which becomes increasingly more powerful and threatening (bars 498–504). Further on, the Shepherd’s music is overlaid by Roger’s motif, which drowns it out, for example bars 498–503. When Roger says, ‘I am afraid of thunder’, the situation changes; the stage slowly fills with a crowd of figures, and from the upper galleries we can hear Roxana singing, repeating the lullaby motif; Roger’s motif is broken up into secondal intervals with characteristic strong accents, but his anger grows: ‘you draw your magic power from the depths of hell...’ (bars 639–658).

The second act culminates in the dance scene. It would be difficult to draw here any analogies with the original Eastern melodies and rhythms; rather, the composer has captured the general features of the rhythms of Eastern dances, such as asymmetry, metric irregularity (e.g. the use of 7/8 metre in the initial fragment), or syncopating. The instrumentation also plays an important role: the main melodic instruments are flutes, oboes and violins, the other melodic instruments introduce a heterophony; while the percussion group is strongly highlighted. What was important for the composer was not the authentic stylisation of Eastern music, but the expression of a ritual dance, symbolising the striving of the human soul towards God. The consecutive phases of the dance represent the achievement of ever higher degrees of knowledge and union with the Absolute. That is the function of the dance, and we can distinguish seven phases in it. In the first three (instrumental

ones) the dance is in the centre of the action, in the following ones it provides a background for the exchanges taking place between the *dramatis personae*. The entry of each phase is marked by a clear rhythmic impulse, the tempo becomes increasingly lively, and the segments increasingly shorter. The motifs of Roxana (who appears in phase four), Roger (when he tries to stop her) and the Shepherd (the fifth phase: the duet of Roxana and the Shepherd) are superimposed on the melodic phrases of the dance. In the last phase the chorus joins in and — as is indicated in the stage directions — ‘everything joins together in one powerful chord.’ Before the state of highest ecstasy is achieved, Roger intervenes with the order to imprison the Shepherd. At that moment, Roger’s motif is at its most powerful, multiplied (bar 939 and the following ones), and dies down slowly when the Shepherd throws the chains at his feet. The echoes of this motif are only heard again when the Shepherd asks again, ‘Who will follow me into the distance?’ (bars 1036–1040), and the violins intone the temptation motif of the Shepherd for the last time, as he leaves with Roxana and his train of followers.

The third act brings a change in the treatment of the leitmotifs. This is only partially related to the changes in the composer’s style at the beginning of the 1920s. Abandoning the symphonic transformation of the motifs seems justified from the dramatic point of view. Roger, dressed as a pilgrim, leaves behind the royal cloak, crown and sword and wanders away in search of . . . exactly whom, Roxana or the Shepherd? The deconstruction of the motif corresponds to Roger’s psychological disintegration. The broken secondal intervals from the beginning of Roger’s motif sound like an echo in the horns *con sordino* (with the marking *pp dolcissimo*). The situation is reversed: it is the King who ‘comes to judgment’ — according to the commentary sung by the chorus. When Edrisi points to the approaching Roxana, the violins take up Roger’s motif, but inversed (bars 161–163, see figure 5.3), changed in expression.

We do not hear the motifs of the old lullaby in Roxana’s singing either. In his draft of the Sicilian drama<sup>22</sup> Szymanowski reveals that Roxana, sent by the Shepherd, ‘cunningly’ tricks Roger, telling him that they can leave together (‘Give me your hand’), because in fact she wants to take him to the



Fig. 5.3. Act 3, bars 161–163.

Shepherd. Would she symbolically be playing the part of Agave? In his turn, Roger asks violently, ‘where is he, where is the Shepherd?’, and it transpires that it was not Roxana that he was seeking in the ruins of the theatre. It is then that we hear for the first time the sensual motif of the Shepherd, foreshadowing his coming, although his appearance as Dionysus (a phantom of Dionysus?) has a purely symbolic character. Fragments of Roger’s motif are superimposed over this motif (bars 245–248). The Shepherd’s call takes the shape of an arch as a transformation of the ‘convex’ motif (see figure 5.4).



Fig. 5.4. Act 3, bars 379–381 (the Shepherd’s part).

A great musical climax ends the scene of the mysteries. When Roger is left alone with Edrisi, the Shepherd’s call can still be heard a number of times, as if from a distance. The final scene, which is a coda to this ‘dramatic symphony’, brings the musical solution. By then Roger’s motif sounds different.

We need to remember that in the first version of the drama (by Iwaszkiewicz, and also in Szymanowski’s draft of the libretto) Roger was to join the train of Dionysus’s followers. However, the composer later withdrew that ending, commenting in a letter to Iwaszkiewicz: ‘On the other hand, I changed the third act fundamentally. Don’t you think that its symbolism was too obvious and, what’s worse — too childish (as an idea). I preferred to drown everything in darkness and night, hide in it the Shepherd and his surroundings [...]’<sup>23</sup>.

In the final version, Roger does not follow Dionysus. It was the composer's intention to leave the work without a clear answer, ambivalent, with the ending 'hidden in darkness'. It has also been interpreted by scholars and directors of a number of productions in a variety of ways. Explanations in the Nietzschean vein as the victory of the Apollonian spirit (the Sun as the symbol of Apollo) over the Dionysian one<sup>24</sup> seems to move away from Szymanowski's 'favourite little idea' about 'the secret kinship between Christ and Dionysus'.<sup>25</sup> The Sun and light, as symbols of Christ, are present in liturgical ceremonies, in prayers, in plastic arts' representations of Christ (the aureole, nimbus, mandorla). Christians gave a new meaning to the symbols from antiquity.

The conflict between Christianity and the faith preached by the Shepherd, presented at the beginning of the drama, does not achieve an unambivalent solution in the libretto. This, as may be recalled, was criticised after the opera's first performance in Warsaw (19 June 1926). Adam Wieniawski, for example, expressed doubt 'whether the masses will understand and grasp the artistic beauty of the victory of paganism over Christianity, of the Hellenic cult of nature over medieval superstition and cruelty — and lastly, whether the thesis: he is god who gives most delight — will win the admiration of Polish souls, saturated with Catholicism over so many centuries.'<sup>26</sup> That was the reason why Szymanowski decided to write an article called *W obronie ideologii Króla Rogera* [*In defence of the ideology of King Roger*], but he did not carry his intention through; there is only a manuscript beginning of that text, in which the above sentences was quoted (inaccurately).<sup>27</sup>

One might say that the conflict which had been presented was resolved only for Roger himself. For him, the Dionysian mysteries became the moment of illumination, the experience of the presence of sacrum and the recognition of the secret unity of Christ and Dionysus (Dionysus as a prefiguration of Christ). Dionysian joy gave new sense to the ascetic religion which had been imprisoning Roger's nature; it brought about a resolution of his inner conflicts, a knowledge of his own identity and integration of his personality.

The music of the opera's finale might thus be interpreted as an expression of the hero's inner transformation. When he stands at the top of the am-

a) *cre - scen - do*

Vni I div.

b)

w o - fie - rze stoń - cu dam - !

Fig. 5.5. Act 3: a) bars 469–478 (part of the first violins), b) bars 488–490 (Roger’s part).

phitheatre, ‘lit by the morning sun’, there is a gradual transformation of his leading motif in the violin part (see figure 5.5a). At first one can recognise the initial interval of the minor second, but the ‘zig-zagging’ contour changes gradually to ‘concave’; the characteristic tritone appears only once, replaced by a fifth and then a sixth until it reaches the shape  $F-E-C\ sharp-A$ , i.e., transposition by a tritone in relation to the initial shape. Roger’s final vocal phrase is another transformation of the ‘concave’ shape of the motif into the ‘convex’ ( $A\ sharp-C\ sharp-F-E$ ) one (see figure 5.5b). This would mean that Roger has reached completeness, expressed by uniting the two motifs originating from the Shepherd’s motifs, although not identical to them. This recalls the ending of *Efebos* which has been described by Iwaszkiewicz — Korab and Alo Łowicki (the composer’s two alter egos) find each other and reach full understanding, ‘*Efebos* ended with such a majestic finale (in C major!)’.<sup>28</sup> But in the ending here there is also a moment of offering oneself, of self-sacrifice: ‘my transparent heart I will tear out, offer it to the Sun as sacrifice’. However, Roger’s fate does not follow that of Pentheus; his sacrifice has a symbolic dimension; the hero gains self-knowledge, but remains alone.

## Notes

- 1 Cf. Alistair Wightman, 'Karol Szymanowski a kultura angielska' ['Karol Szymanowski and the English Culture'], transl. E. Szczepańska-Malinowska, *Muzyka* 1983 No. 2, pp. 3–26.
- 2 Paweł Muratow, *Obrazy Włoch [Pictures from Italy]*, vol. 2, transl. Paweł Hertz, Warszawa 1972, pp. 75–89. 1<sup>st</sup> ed. *Obrazy Italii*, vols. 1–2, Moscow 1911–1912.
- 3 Cf. in particular the three-volume work by T. Zieliński *Iz zhizni idei. Nauchno-populiarnye stati [On the life of ideas. Popular science essays]*, St. Petersburg 1905. The copy of the third volume which belonged to Szymanowski, entitled *Sopierniki christianstwa [Competitors of christianity]* (containing the composer's markings) is held at the University Library in Warsaw. Edward Boniecki brought it to our attention in: 'W orszaku Dionizosa. Mit dionizyjski Szymanowskiego i Iwaszkiewicza' ['In the train of Dionysus. The Dionysian myth in Szymanowski and Iwaszkiewicz'], *Pamiętnik Literacki* LXXV 1989, issue. 1, pp. 139–159.
- 4 Teresa Chylińska, 'Karol Szymanowski i Tadeusz Miciński' ['Karol Szymanowski and Tadeusz Micinski'], in: *Studia o Tadeuszu Micińskim [Tadeusz Micinski Studies]*, ed. Maria Podraza-Kwiatkowska, Kraków 1979, p. 333; Iwona Nowak, 'Pokrewieństwo dwóch dzieł, czyli o tym co łączy *Króla Rogera* Karola Szymanowskiego z *Bazyliссą Teofanu* Tadeusza Micińskiego' ['A kinship between two works, or what Karol Szymanowski's *King Roger* and Tadeusz Micinski's *Bazyliссa Teofanu* have in common'], in: *Karol Szymanowski w perspektywie kultury muzycznej przeszłości i współczesności [Karol Szymanowski in the perspective of musical culture past and present]*, ed. Zbigniew Skowron, Kraków 2007, pp. 249–258; cf. also Edward Boniecki's article in this volume (p. xxx).
- 5 Cf. Jerzy Kwiatkowski, *Poezja Jarosława Iwaszkiewicza na tle dwudziestolecia międzywojennego [The poetry of Jaroslaw Iwaszkiewicz against the background of the twenty interwar years]*, Warszawa 1975, pp. 136–169.
- 6 The letter from Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz which contained the first sketch of the drama has not been preserved. The author mentions it in his *Spotkania z Szymanowskim [Encounters with Szymanowski]* (Kraków 1947, pp. 75–77): 'The idea in that sketch was simply to initiate the hero of the drama into Dionysian mysteries and to show the eternally living Dionysius against the ruins of a theatre in Syracuse or Segesta. Of course in that shape the drama had even less action than today's *Roger*. It was more of a double oratorio, half Byzantine-church, half pagan'. Cf. also K. Szymanowski, *Korespondencja [Correspondence]*, collected and edited by Teresa Chylińska, vol. 1, ed. 2, Kraków 2007, p. 617.
- 7 Letter to Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz dated 5/18 August 1918; cf.. K. Szymanowski, *Korespondencja [Correspondence]*, as above, p. 615.
- 8 *Wędrowki po Włoszech [Travels through Italy]*, vol. 2, transl. Tadeusz Zabłudowski, Warszawa 1990, pp. 271–315 (1. ed. *Wanderjahre in Italien*, vols. 1–5, 1864–1877).
- 9 'On the other hand, Cappella Palatina tells the story of the people who surrounded Roger, that extraordinary, multilingual and multitribal collection which cohered so harmoniously, creating a magnificent court which impresses with its extraordinarily high level of culture. On the walls of the chapel, Greek artists created images of Latin saints, decorated by Eastern ornamentalists. Byzantine mosaic artists worked here to transmit the legend of the Gospels, together with Arabian carvers who then sculpted

that amazing stalactite vault based on that of the mosque in Cordoba. There, above, among the wooden rosettes, are preserved traces of a painting, depicting small figures in Arabian clothes, sitting cross-legged and playing guitars and other instruments. Their silent music harmonises strangely with the loud chant of the Latin priests celebrating Mass, and with the still face of the Byzantine Christ in the apse of the altar'. P. Muratow, *Obrazy Włoch [Pictures from Italy]*, op. cit., p. 82.

- 10 K. Szymanowski, *Korespondencja [Correspondence]*, op. cit., p. 615.
- 11 Mateusz Gliński, 'Król Roger Karola Szymanowskiego' ['King Roger by Karol Szymanowski'], *Muzyka* 1927 No. 1, pp. 18–20, No. 2, pp. 60–64, No. 3, pp. 110–113.
- 12 Zdzisław Jachimecki, 'Karol Szymanowski. Rys dotychczasowej twórczości' ['Karol Szymanowski. A sketch of his creative development to date'], Kraków 1927, offprint from *Przegląd Współczesny*, pp. 57–58.
- 13 The motifs of the Shepherd and Roxana are also mentioned by Harry Halbreich, who points to the shared melic substance of the motifs of the Shepherd and *Roxana's Lullaby* ('Le Roi Roger un chef-d'oeuvre solitaire', *L'Avant-Scène Opéra* No. 43, September 1982, pp. 162–164). However, he does not give Roger's motif, and neither does Jachimecki.
- 14 K. Szymanowski, *Król Roger [King Roger] (Dzieła [Works] vol. 23, score), Uwagi sceniczne [Stage remarks]*, p. XVI.
- 15 King Roger II, who ruled during the years 1130–1154, is the subject of Hubert Houden's book *Roger II. von Sizilien*, Darmstadt 1997 (English edition *Roger II of Sicily. A Ruler between East and West*, Cambridge 2002, transl. Graham A. Loud, Diane Milburn). Cf. also K. P. Todt, *Roger II*, in: *Biographisch-Bibliographisches Kirchenlexikon*, Herzberg 1995, vol. VIII, cols. 543–547. We find out from these that Roger II was married three times, but none of his wives was named Roxana.
- 16 Ferdinand Gregorovius characterises the Byzantine images of Christ Pantocrator, and the essence of Byzantine religion, in this way: 'The Byzantine faces of Christ have something demonic about them, as do the faces of Egyptian gods, as does altogether the whole essence of Byzantinism in its perception of that which is divine and that which is ethnic. This manner of depicting the face of Christ leads us into a world of ideas which for us, today's people, is something much more remote than antiquity. It has in it something terrifyingly abstract, it constitutes some inevitable necessity, which excludes everything that is human, all imagination, all coincidence, any reflex of life. Such a face of Christ, like the head of the Medusa, exudes petrification. When I look at pictures like that, I cannot but read in that frighteningly lofty face, as in a prophetic mirror, the history of the Church: fanatical asceticism, monasticism, hatred of Jews, persecution of heretics, conflict over dogma, the Popes' omnipotence. Nothing indeed could depict more clearly in a symbolic manner both the negative and the positive power of Christian religion'. Further on, the author states that in comparing 'such a face of Christ with the Christ's heads painted by Raphael or Titian' one sees the expression of 'two opposing ways of experiencing religion.' (F. Gregorovius, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 305).
- 17 As above, p. 291.
- 18 Op. cit., p. 157.
- 19 'Some analogies with the *Bacchaes* by Eurip[ides] are made with a particular purpose and cannot be regarded as plagiarism'. K. Szymanowski, *Korespondencja*

- [*Correspondence*], vol. 1, op. cit., p. 642. Szymanowski knew that drama in Russian translation and — as was pointed out by Iwaszkiewicz (*Spotkania z Szymanowskim*, op.cit., p. 79) — was inspired by Tadeusz Zieliński's introduction (Euripid, *Vakhantki*, perevod F. F. Zelinskogo, Moscow 1895). Polish translation by Jan Kasproicz was published for the first time in Kraków in 1918. (*Eurypidesa tragedye*, vol. 3, with an introduction by Tadeusz Sinko).
- 20 K. Szymanowski, *Pisma literackie [Literary writings]*, Kraków 1989, p. 114.
  - 21 K. Szymanowski, *Król Roger [King Roger]*, score, op. cit. stage directions on p. 60.
  - 22 A sketch attached to the letter from Szymanowski to Iwaszkiewicz dated 14/27 October 1918; cf. Karol Szymanowski, *Korespondencja [Correspondence]*, vol. 1, 2nd edition, Kraków 2007, pp. 637–642.
  - 23 Letter from Szymanowski to Iwaszkiewicz dated 20 March 1921, *Korespondencja [Correspondence]*, vol. 2, Kraków 1994, p. 217.
  - 24 Cf. Paolo Emilio Carapezza, 'Król Roger między Dionizosem i Apollinem' ['King Roger between Dionysus and Apollo'], transl. Jerzy Stankiewicz, *Res Facta* 9: 1982, pp. 50–61 (orig. version 'Re Ruggiero tra Dioniso e Apollo', in: *Storia dell'arte. Studi in onore de Cesare Brandi*, Firenze 1980).
  - 25 K. Szymanowski, letter to Iwaszkiewicz dated 14/27 October 1918, cf. *Korespondencja [Correspondence]*, vol. 1, p. 642.
  - 26 Adam Wieniawski, 'Król Roger, opera Karola Szymanowskiego' ['*King Roger*, opera by Karol Szymanowski'], *Rzeczpospolita* 22 June 1926, No. 168.
  - 27 The surviving fragment was published in the collection *Pisma muzyczne [Writings on music]* by Karol Szymanowski (ed. Kornel Michałowski, Kraków 1984, pp. 493–494).
  - 28 J. Iwaszkiewicz, *Spotkania z Szymanowskim [Encounters with Szymanowski]*, op. cit., p. 96.