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REINHOLD GLIERE’S CONCERTO FOR HARP AND ORCHESTRA IN E-FLAT MAJOR OP.74: AN ANALYSIS AND PERFORMANCE GUIDE

By
Phuttaraksa Kamnirdratana

A DOCTORAL ESSAY

Submitted to the Faculty of the University of Miami in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts

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UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

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No. of pages in text. (97)

The purpose of this study is to thoroughly analyze the harp concerto by Reinhold Gliere and to create a performance guide. The present essay contains the biographies of the composer, a brief history of the concerto, and also a brief discussion of the history of sonata form that will help the reader understand the musical form of this concerto. The main portion of this study consists of detailed analyses and a performance guide to the concerto. Theoretical, technical, and stylistic issues are addressed in depth.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am thankful to Professor Deborah Fleisher and my committee members for helping me through my degree. I would like to acknowledge my parents, Rampa and Vasin Kamnirdratana for always being supportive of me and my music journey in every possible way.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Development of the Harp

“With the first performance of Hector Berlioz’ *Symphonie Fantastique* in 1830, the harp emerged from its accustomed place in salon society and orchestra pits of opera houses to become a phenomenon of French musical culture.”¹ In reality, it was a technological advancement that modified the harp and made it possible to play in every tonality. Before the modern incarnation of the harp, the instrument had undergone numerous changes in size, shape, and structure throughout its long history. The harp has had several different names with respect to its various designs: hook harp, single-action pedal harp, double-action pedal harp, and chromatic harp. For centuries, harp makers strived to improve the instrument so that it could be used for both solo and orchestral repertoire.

Before the late eighteenth century, the harp could only be played in a limited number of keys. To expand the number of available keys, a single-action pedal harp was invented. Because of this new instrument, harpists could play pieces in several keys without retuning the harp strings. This harp had seven pedals (2 notches per pedal) with a fork mechanism. The pedals controlled the hooks to raise certain pitches by a half step. Two significant early harp concertos, George Frideric Handel’s

Concerto in B-flat Major Op.4, No.6 (1736), and Mozart’s Concerto in C Major for Flute and Harp (1778) were composed for this version of the harp. Compared to previous designs, this new single-action pedal harp now could be played in eight major and five minor keys.

In the early 1800’s, Sebastian Erard, a famous piano maker, tried to double the action of the single-action pedal harp without doubling the number of pedals. He invented the double-action pedal harp that would become the prototype of the present-day concert harp. Instead of having one disc and two notches per pedal, this double-action pedal harp has two discs and three notches per pedal. The great success of this new instrument and its new chromatic capability led to the expansion of harp repertoire.

After Erard’s harp was widely adopted, composers began to include the harp in their orchestral writing. Hector Berlioz was one of the first composers who embraced the harp, and began scoring for it in his large orchestral works. More than 4,000 Erard double-action pedal harps were sold by the late 1830’s. The popularity of this double-action pedal harp also encouraged many composers of the later generations, such as Wagner, Liszt, Verdi, Strauss, Tchaikovsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, Ravel, Debussy and Stravinsky to frequently use the harp in their orchestral compositions. Consequently, more solo works and concertos were written for the harp. Reinhold Gliere’s Concerto for Harp and Orchestra in E-flat Major, Op.74 (1938) is one of the earliest harp concertos written for double-action pedal harp by a

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2 Roslyn Rensch, Harps and Harpists (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), 150.
non-harpist composer, and a significant contribution to this genre. This work is one of
the most beautiful concertos for the instrument.

**Reinhold Gliere**

Reinhold Moritzevich Gliere (1875-1956) was a prominent composer of the Soviet Union. Gliere composed in the Russian Romantic tradition. He composed in various genres including symphonies, ballets, opera, symphonic poems, concertos, chamber music, songs, and piano pieces. He was educated in the compositional styles of Rimsky-Korsakov, Borodin, and Tchaikovsky.

Gliere wrote his only harp concerto in 1938 in collaboration with Russian harpist Ksenia Erdely, the first in the country to perform solo concerti. “Ksenia Erdeli’s talent was widely recognized by composers, such as Kyui, Grechaninov, Ippoliyov-Ivanov and Gliere, who all composed works especially for her”.³ She was principal harpist of the Bolshoi Theatre Orchestra, where Gliere had his ballets performed, for thirty years. With Erdeli’s assistance, Gliere successfully managed to write a very idiomatic harp solo part for his first concerto. Her counsel was so helpful that he offered to give her credit as co-composer but Ksenia Erdeli refused the honor. Her name appeared as the editor, as she preferred, when the work was published in Russia. Even though Reinhold Gliere wrote this piece in 1938, the work is described by Bauman as “a heavy dose of Viennese Classicism crossed with Mozartean grace

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and touch of Russian romantic nationalism.”

Gliere’s harp concerto demonstrates that the harp is truly a solo instrument. Because of its lyrical expressive melodic lines and its technical difficulties, the concerto is one of the more prominent pieces in harp repertoire, and demands the attention and evaluation of harpists.

**Justification of the Study**

Scholarly research can be found on other harp concertos by various composers, such as Claude Debussy’s *Danses Sacree et Profane* and George Frideric Handel’s *Harp Concerto in B-flat Major.* However, there is no scholarly research or performance guides on Reinhold Gliere’s *Concerto for Harp and Orchestra in E-flat Major, Op. 74.* There has been research that focuses on the composer’s horn concerto, such as Michael Shawn Misner’s dissertation. Due to the abundant number of performances and stature of Gliere’s harp concerto, the work deserves more scholarly attention.

The concerto is programmed regularly in concerts by prominent professional orchestras, as well as undergraduate and graduate recitals. The concerto has been recently featured as a required final-round work for several prominent international

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competitions including the USA International Harp Competition 2010, Ksenia Erdely International Competition 2012 in St. Petersburg, Russia, and the Moscow International Harp Competition 2012. This proves that the piece is taught, learned and performed constantly.

**Organization of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to provide an introduction and performance guide of the Gliere concerto for harpists. The research presents historical background of the concerto. Theoretical analyses are limited to form and harmony. Performance issues are also discussed.

Chapter 1 provides a brief overview of the harp, including the development of the instrument, the place of Gliere’s concerto in harp literature, a review of literature about the composer, literature related to harp performance, and the methodology of this study. Chapter 2 focuses on Gliere’s biography, his compositions, and a comparison of his works with his contemporaries. Chapter 3 discusses the history of Gliere’s harp concerto and compares the harp concerto to his other works. Chapters 4, 5, and 6 provide performance perspectives of each movement of the concerto.

**Performance Guide**

A discussion on fingering, pedaling, and technical issues will be provided, along with discussions on phrasing and dynamics. Comparisons on the issues of multiple editions will be provided. The editions that will be studied are Editions de Musique de L’URSS, 1940 Moscow, Lyra Music Company Edition, edited by Assunta Dell’Aquila, and Salvi Publication 1977.
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Biography

Michael Shawn Misner’s dissertation, *A Historical and Analytical discussion of Reinhold Gliere’s Concerto for Horn and Orchestra, Op.91*, is a detailed source of Gliere’s biography and family history. Although the main compositional focus is the horn concerto, the biographical information is relevant to this discussion. Much of the biographical information stems from interviews with Gliere’s family members.

Gliere composed his horn concerto for French hornist Valeriy Polekh, who wrote an autobiography that discusses the composer. The autobiography gives insight to Gliere’s personality:

The way of life of Gliere is just as beautiful, simple, and unpretentious as his outer appearance. Look at the portrait of Gliere. The first thing it brings to your attention is his handsome appearance, which you combine with modest dress, the way he holds himself, an emphasis on accuracy, and hints of a sort of elegance. No carelessness and nothing superfluous jumps out at you. Lively, hazel, expressive eyes are framed by thick eyebrows. The gaze is cordial and benevolent. The lips are ready to form a kind smile, and just on the verge of expressing gentle words.\(^7\)

Polekh also describes Gliere as an unassuming man of extreme spirituality with limitless musical knowledge. He mentions how Gliere was open to musicians’s opinions and listened attentively to their explanations.

Gliere’s horn concerto was premiered on May 10, 1951 in the Great Hall of the Leningrad Philharmonic, under the baton of Gliere himself. Gliere’s harp concerto was performed on the same program, with soloist Olga Erdehi (niece of Ksenia Erdehi, the editor). Polekh discusses both of these performances in his article. He also includes comments by Ksenia Erdehi about her niece Olga:

\(^7\) Valeriy Polekh, "Your Valeriy Polekh: Part VI," *The Horn Call* 40, no. 3 (2010), 96
Her musical talent, fortunately, combines with a capacity for work, goal orientation, and persistence in attaining what is intended. Her full sound, virtuoso technique, good taste, and artistic charm on stage place her in the first rank of Soviet performers. Olga is very professional, and her musicality is exceptional. The music of her harp captures even the farthest reaches of man's music.\(^8\)

Since Olga Erdeli was the harpist who performed the harp concerto under Gliere’s conducting and was also highly recommended by the prestigious harpist Ksenia Erdeli. This autobiography by Polekh serves as a good fundamental source for further study.

**Compositions**

Gliere wrote over five hundred works. However, only one hundred of these works were given opus numbers.\(^9\) His compositions include orchestral works, concertos, vocal works, chamber music, operas, and ballets. According to the author Galina Grigor’yeva, the most important and unifying element of Gliere’s work is expressive melody.\(^10\) This element is readily found in the *Concerto for Harp and Orchestra in E-flat Major, Op. 74* which was the first concerto Gliere wrote. The harp is quite an unusual choice for a solo instrument, and Gliere chose to use an orchestra similar to chamber proportions.

**Research on Concertos**

Charles O'Connell's, *The Victor Book of the Symphony*, provides research on orchestral music by many different composers, including Gliere’s *The Ferghana Fete*:

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\(^8\) Polekh, 97

\(^9\) Misner, 46.

Overture for Symphony Orchestra, Op. 75 (1946). The piece was written in 1940, two years after his harp concerto, implying that this overture and the harp concerto are from the same period. This book serves as a great source of reference for Gliere’s compositional style. An additional research source on concertos is Donald Francis Tovey’s book, *Essay in Musical Analysis: Volume III; Concertos*, which provides analysis of different types of concertos by various composers. For example, one of the works included in this book is Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart’s *Concerto for Flute and Harp, K.299*, one of the earliest harp concertos written by a major composer.

Even though Gliere wrote his concerto in 1938, it was written in the style of the Russian Romantic tradition. Anthony Burton’s book *A Performer’s guide to Music of the Romantic Period* is a useful reference guide for interpretation and performer’s analysis.

**Sound Recordings**

There are a handful of recordings of Gliere’s concerto. One of them is a recording by Olga Erdeli, who performed the premiere of the piece with Gliere conducting. Even though the recording is not from the premiere performance, nor is Gliere conducting, the soloist must have had extensive knowledge of the concerto. It certainly serves as a comprehensive source for interpretation.

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12 Donald Francis Tovey, *Essay in Musical Analysis: Volume III; Concertos* (London: Oxford University Press, 1936).

Chapter 2

GLIERE’S BIOGRAPHY AND COMPOSITIONS

Biography

Reinhold Ernst Glier (January 11, 1875- June 23, 1956) was born in Kiev, Ukraine to a family of musical instrument makers. Glier’s great grandfather, Johann Gottlieb Glier (1777-1840), was a brass instrument maker in Markneukirchen. He had three sons, all of whom followed the family tradition of instrument making. Glier’s grandfather, Carl Friedrich, the youngest of three, was a horn maker. Glier’s father, Ernst Moritz Glier, was the third child in the family of six children. He learned horn making from his father and at 20 years old traveled to Warsaw to work in the instrument making company of his uncle, Friedrich Wilhelm. After Ernst Moritz Glier became a horn-making master, he went to Kiev and worked in the company of Vincent Kortschak. In 1868, Ernst Moritz Glier married Kortschak’s daughter, Thekla Kortschak. Vincent Kortschak gave the couple two houses in Kiev along with the instrument factory as a wedding gift.

Ernst and Thekla had four children. Reinhold Glier was the third child. Since his father, Ernst, played several instruments, Reinhold Glier was exposed to music at an early age.\textsuperscript{14} According to Stanley Krebs, “Glier’s parents were not enthusiastic about their children’s following musical careers. They knew well the shortcomings of a musical vocation for a Jew in the Ukraine. The Senior Gliere wanted his son to be a doctor or

engineer, but class and race restrictions militated against him there, too.”\textsuperscript{15} However, Misner claims that Reinhold Glier was not of Belgian or Jewish descent, according to the christening certificate.\textsuperscript{16} Glier attended the Kiev Gymnassium at the age of ten. When his father passed away in 1896, the oldest son Moritz took over the factory but he was not interested in the instrument factory. Thelka intervened to save the factory and gave it to her youngest son, Karl Joseph Glier.

Reinhold Glier entered the Moscow Conservatory in 1894 when he was nineteen. He began as a violin student, studing under Jan Hrimaly, but soon changed to composition. He spent six years at the conservatoire studying harmony with Anton Arenskii and George Konyus (Conius); counterpoint, fugue and form with Sergei Taneev; and composition with Mikhail Ippolitov-Ivanov.\textsuperscript{17} Glier graduated in 1900 receiving the conservatory’s highest award, the gold medal.

Reinhold Glier married Maria Renkwist in Kiev in 1904. The couple had twin daughters in 1905, a son in 1907 and another set of twins, (a boy and a girl) in 1913. In 1905, not long after the massacre in front of the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg, Glier signed a manifesto along with other twenty-eight prominent Moscow musicians, including Racmaninov, Chaliapin, Taneyev, and Grechaninov, to protest the governmental cruelty and condemnation of art during that year’s uprising.\textsuperscript{18} As a result


\textsuperscript{16} Misner, 12.

\textsuperscript{17} Halbe, 2.

\textsuperscript{18} Misner, 15.
of the opposition from the government, Glier left Russia for two years to study conducting with Oscar Fried in Berlin where he completed and premiered his second symphony before returning to Moscow in 1907. Glier began his brief conducting career in Moscow; he was described as “not flamboyant in the respected manner of the time, but placid and thorough.”

Glier went back to Kiev in 1913 to join the faculty of the Kiev Music school, the school that he went to in his childhood. By the time Glier returned, it had been upgraded by the Imperial Russian Music Society to a full conservatory. Glier was named director of the conservatory in 1914. Misner described the difficulties Glier faced during that time:

The following years were great turmoil in Russia. Civil war broke out and Kiev, caught in wars between the White Guards of the old regime and the Red Army of the revolutionaries, suffered greatly. Caught in the middle, Gliere thought he would never again be able to compose. He was now stranded in war-gripped Kiev, which was changing hands in rapid succession. Being the director of the local Conservatory, all Gliere did was look for firewood, maintain the instruments, put tuition back on track, and made sure his students had something to eat. “It’s easier to write a dozen symphonies,” he said, “than run a conservatory in the time of war.”

Glier’s siblings also had to face the difficulties of the World War I when Moritz, along with his younger brother, Karl, were arrested and imprisoned in 1914. Reinhold Glier avoided this arrest when he changed his nationality to Russian thereby was Russified to Reinhold Moritzjevich Gliere.

Gliere accepted the position of professor of composition at the Moscow Conservatory in 1920. He replaced his former composition teacher, Mikhail Ippolitov-

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19 Misner, 16.
20 Ibid., 17.
21 Ibid., 8.
Ivanov, who was retiring. During his time teaching at the Moscow Conservatory, Gliere was very productive, not only composing but also working with such organizations as the musical department of the Moscow Division of People’s Education and the ethnographic department of Proletkul’t. In 1923, Gliere was invited to Azerbaijan to assist on the Soviet development of the country. While he was there, he wrote an opera, *Shakh/Senem*, which used native Arzerbaijan folklore and folk music. Gliere’s most prolific period was during the 1920s and 1930s. He was most intrigued by the stage and screen during throughout this period. He composed three operas, three ballets, film scores, incidental music for plays, symphonic poems, overtures, and occasional pieces for orchestra and military band.

Gliere received numerous honors from various state governments in the 1930’s. He was named Artist of the Nation several times in 1934. According to Misner, “he received this honor in the Azerbaijan SSR in 1934, the Russian SFSR in 1936, the Uzbekistan SSR in 1937, and in the USSR in 1938. His other honors included the Red Banner of Work in 1937, along with the Medal of Honor in 1938. He also received three orders of Lenin Medals in 1945, 1950, and 1955. These medals were routinely given as birthday honors. In 1940, the degree of Doctor of Sciences was conferred on him for his research.” Gliere was elected chairman of the management committee of the Moscow Union of Composers in 1937. Two years later in 1939, he was named the chairman of the

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22 Misner, 18.

23 Halbe, 8.

24 Misner, 18.
organizing committee of the Union of Soviet Composers. “From 1938-1948, he presided over the organizational bureau of the nationwide USC.”

Gliere’s teaching at the Moscow Conservatory was disrupted at the start of World War II, he left the Conservatory in 1941 and never returned. However, he continued his career conducting, touring, and composing. During the period from 1938 through 1951 “Gliere wrote four concertos which have had a considerable impact on Soviet music.”

Sergei Prokofiev, Gliere’s former student, described Gliere as a person with a “charming personality, who fitted in well.” The difficult political situation drove Prokofiev out of Russia to the United States of America. Gliere stayed, however, accepting a professorship at the Moscow Conservatory in 1920, where he continued accumulating honors and serving in high administrative positions until his death in 1956. For others – Shostakovich, Prokofiev, too, after his return – the Stalin years were tough; for Gliere, they were not. Hardworking, charming, universally respected, he simply “fitted in”. According to the hornist Polekh, who worked closely with Gliere, the composer was a modest, reserved, and refined person.

Although Gliere continued producing music to the end of his life, his output in the final eight years of his life was relatively small due to his declining health. He spent most

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25 Krebs, 74.
26 Ibid., 75.
28 Ibid.
29 Misner, 37.
of his time from 1948 to 1956 in Ivanowo at the recreation village of the Moscow Union of Moscow Composers. “It was there he frequently visited with his two students, Myaskovsky and Prokofiev before they died in 1950 and 1953 respectively.”30 Gliere died in Moscow on June 23, 1956 and was buried in the Moscow Nowodewitsch Cemetery.

**Compositions**

The political situation during Gliere’s time played an important role in Soviet musical life. In *Music under the Soviets*, Andrey Olkhovsky categorized Soviet composers during that time into three categories. The first group, “the creative opposition”, includes composers who are “formalists” or “those who are unable in their creative work to answer the democratic requirements of the masses of the Soviet people.”31 The second group, “the traditionalists”, including Gliere, consists mainly of representatives of an older generation—such as Gnesin, Krein, Shteinberg, Goedicke, Vasilenko, Ippolitov-Ivanov, Glazunov and Shaporin. Their compositional styles combine the stylistic features of the Five (Mily Balakirev, César Cui, Modest Mussorgsky, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov and Alexander Borodin) with those of the Moscow school. Most of these composers were former students of Rimsky-Korsakov, Lyadov, Tchaikovsky and Teneyev.32 The last group, “orthodox composers”, is composers who grew up and were trained under the conditions of Soviet reality.33

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30 Misner, 20.


32 Olkhovsky, 225.

33 Ibid., 229.
According to Olkhovsky, Gliere was the most typical representative of the
“traditionalists” composers. Olkhovsky’s describes Gliere’s compositional style as:

possessing considerable mastery within the limits of the classical-romantic tradition but
lacking the necessary originality for creative individuality, Gliere found it easier to
follow the Party line in aesthetics than did some other composers of the senior
generation. More than that of other composers, his music appeals, if not to “socialist realism,” at least to “traditional realism,” for all of his compositions remain within the
circle of the well-tested in form and theme. Although the work of this group of
composers is of no importance for the future of music, it has certainly left its mark
upon Soviet music because it officially represents the limits of the creative horizon
beyond which it is dangerous to roam.  

Although Gliere’s musical life spanned from late Romanticism to Modernism, his music
has more in common with the former. “Gliere was a heart-and soul romantic who lived
past the middle of the 20th century.” While contemporaries like Arnold Schoenberg and
Maurice Ravel explored new styles, Gliere wrote lush, colorful, late-romantic music
almost to the end of his life.

Gliere wrote numerous works in the first decade of the twentieth century. His
Symphony No. 1 was first performed in England in 1906, not long after he graduated
from the Moscow Conservatory. His second symphony premiered in 1908. This
symphony is influenced by German Romanticism as a result of his travel to Germany
following his graduation. His tone poem The Sirens, completed in 1909, represents his
experimentation with impressionism. Two years later, in 1911, Gliere completed one of

34 Ibid.

35 Hansen, Gliere: “Symphonies; Zaporozhy Cossaks; ed Poppy& Bronze
Horseman Suites; Horn Concerto; Gyul’sara; Concert Waltz; Shakh-Senem; Ballad;
Slavonic Overture; Heroic March; Holiday at Ferghana”. American record guide,
his most important works, his third and final symphony, *Ila Mourometz*. This work demonstrates finally crystallized compositional style.

The third symphony was premiered in Moscow in 1912 and received the highly coveted Glinka Prize. It is based on the legend of Ila Murometz, who was a twelfth-century warrior and the subject of ancient Russian epic. David Ewen describes the piece as “rich in orchestral effects, vivid in its harmonizations, filled with exotic colors and atmospheres, dynamic with dramatic surges and sweeps, this symphony never fails to have powerful impact on audiences.” This symphony displays Gliere’s compositional style that combines romanticism with nationalism.

Gliere’s early compositions exemplify the colorful Russian cosmopolitan style, not only filled with the accents of Russian folk music but also treated with the orchestral sophistication he had learned from his teachers. There was little variation in his style throughout his long life, especially considering the transition of Tsarist Russia to the Communist USSR. While keeping himself out of the political limelight, Gliere managed to prosper under the new regime, for which his brand of colorful nationalism, romantic aspiration and classical form was the preferred idiom.  

Throughout World War I, while he was the director at the Kiev Conservatory, Gliere was not productive as a composer. His composition productivity increased after his appointment to the Moscow Conservatory in the 1920’s, when he composed three ballets:

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Komediaty (1922), Cleopatra (1925), and The Red Poppy (1926-1927). The final work is one of the most well known works by the composer.

After the war and the Revolution in Russia, he became fired with the ambition of making his music glorify the ideals and aims of the Soviet regime. Thus, in 1926-27, he wrote the first ballet employing a social theme. That ballet was The Red Poppy, which achieved an overwhelming success in the Soviet Union after its premiere at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow on June 14, 1927.  

The Red Poppy is an example of Gliere’s vivid composition style with its colorful orchestral score. The ballet takes place in China, although “it is a model of Soviet Socialist Realism, with a traditional harmonic idiom, clean poster-paint colors tinged with Eastern exoticism, and a suitable touch of sentimentality in the tunes; the ‘Scene and Dance with Gold fingers’ will particularly appeal to devotee of epic Hollywood film scores.”  According to Olkhovsky, this ballet was built entirely along standard romantic lines but with crudely contrasted “proletarian” and “bourgeois” characters. The former are represented by the lyrical street song “The Little Apple,” while fragments of the “International” depict a Soviet captain; the “bourgeois” characters are represented by the “Charleston” and various waltz themes. The emphasis is not on individual relationships but on mass scenes, as is fitting in a “proletarian” ballet.

Musically, the ballet “is a Rimsky Korsakov-Glazunov combination of glittering orchestral colour and the Russian notion of oriental tunes.” This ballet is also “hailed as the foundation of Soviet opera.”

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38 Ewen, 60.
39 Misner, 17.
40 Olkhovsky, 180.
41 Krebs, 73.
42 Krebs, 74.
Gliere wrote four concertos during the later period of his life from 1938-1951. As one of the most revered composers of the Soviet Union, he did not suffer the same oppression as other composers such as Shostakovich and Prokofiev. Gliere’s concertos had a noticeable influence on Soviet music. In addition, his concertos featured instruments that had not been previously heard in Soviet concertos. The first concerto Gliere composed was the *Concerto for Harp and Orchestra*, Op. 74 (1938) (which is discussed in the next chapter), followed by the *Concerto for Coloratura Soprano*, Op. 82 (1942-1943). In 1947, he wrote *Concerto for Cello*, Op. 87, and *Concerto for Horn*, Op. 91 (1951).

Gliere’s second concerto, *Concerto for Coloratura Soprano*, Op. 82, is a two-movement concerto with a pure vocalise soprano part without text. The composer treated the voice as he would an instrument. The work is dedicated to Deborah Yakovlevna Pantofel’-Nechetskia, a young coloratura soprano, who won the first prize in the All-Union Performing Artists’Competition in Moscow in 1939.\(^{43}\) According to Halbe, Gliere might have been aware of vocalize compositions by Gabriel Faure, Maurice Ravel, Sergei Rachmaninov, and Nikolai Medtner. These composers wrote pieces for voice with piano accompaniment, capitalizing on the vocalize as a popular genre in the early twentieth century.\(^{44}\) Gliere’s *Concerto for Coloratura Soprano* “is the most widely known and performed, and has become a summarizing reference on how to write a Soviet concerto.”\(^{45}\) The concerto also won a Stalin Prize in 1946.

\(^{43}\) Halbe, 35.

\(^{44}\) Ibid., 36.

\(^{45}\) Misner, 30-31.
The *Concerto for Cello*, Op 87 (1946) was commissioned by Mstislav Rostropovich. The concerto “is not only the first Soviet cello concerto, but the first Russian cello concerto.”\(^{46}\) The length of this concerto is forty-seven minutes. Gliere uses folk music, rich harmonic and orchestral color in this piece.

The horn concerto had its premiere in 1951 by Valery Polekh, conducted by Gliere himself. Polekh was the principal horn of the Bolshoi Theater Orchestra. Gliere and Polekh met at the Bolshoi Theater during the rehearsal of Gliere’s ballet *The Bronze Horseman*. Polekh brought up the idea of having a concerto written for the French horn to Gliere. According to Polekh, Gliere asked Polekh various questions concerning his range and technical capabilities before he wrote the concerto.\(^{47}\) After the premiere of the concerto, Gliere made an inscription for Polekh on the score.

While Gliere’s contemporaries during the post-war years wrote music in an avant-garde style, Gliere maintained his traditional approach to composition. According to Krebs, of all Gliere’s four concertos “the work for French horn and orchestra is the least significant musically.”\(^{48}\) However, because of the expressive melodies in the concerto that are similar to violin writing, this piece is “one of the most demanding ever written for the instrument.”\(^{49}\) According to Polekh, “Gliere had the idea of treating the horn as a

\(^{46}\) Krebs, 75.


\(^{48}\) Krebs, 75.

\(^{49}\) Misner, 35.
virtuoso instrument, almost like the violin; the model is Tchaikovsky’s violin concerto.”

The horn concerto was Gliere’s last completed work for a solo instrument.

Gliere’s use of orchestral color is characteristic of his compositional style. Though his harmonic conceptions are not innovative, as he followed strictly the teaching of his predecessors in the Romantic fashion and did not explore newer trends. His concerto style proved to be a model for the Soviet concerto.

Gliere won the Stalin Award (the highest prize a composer can receive in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) three times. The first time was in 1946 for the Concerto for Coloratura, the second time in 1948 for the fourth String Quartet, and the third time in 1950 for his ballet *The Bronze Horseman.*

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50 Misner, 36.
CHAPTER 3

HISTORY OF CONCERTO FOR HARP AND ORCHESTRA IN E FLAT MAJOR

OP. 74

According to Halbe, during the period that Reinhold Gliere wrote his concertos (1935 to 1956), other Soviet composers such as Dmitri Shostakovich, Dmitri Kabalevskii, and Aram Khachaturian also turned to concerto compositions.\(^5^1\) Gliere’s concertos resemble their nineteenth-century predecessors more than his Soviet contemporaries.

Reinhold Gliere composed all his concertos during a period when the Stalinist regime exerted tight control of artistic expression. Since the conservative style of Gliere and other like him found favor then, and since Gliere’s style did not change appreciably throughout his long career, the effect of external control on his concerto is disputable. On the other hand, the influence of nineteenth-century Russian musical tradition is unmistakable in these concertos.\(^5^2\)

Gliere based his compositional style for his concertos on “the Russian style of the Westerners,” also seen in concertos of Anton Rubinstein and Pyotr Tchaikovsky. In his harp concerto, Gliere uses traditionally based forms with flexibility within those forms, which is common among his nineteenth-century predecessors.\(^5^3\) Sergie Taneev, with whom Gliere studied at the Moscow Conservatory, used the Classical approach form, three-movement format and distinct solo and tutti textures. Another influence on Gliere’s symphonic style was Glazunov’s colorful instrumental writing. Gliere’s colorful orchestration and harmonic idiom resemble the Russian Nationalist style of the Five. In his concertos, “Gliere’s facility in orchestration also results in more interesting orchestral

\(^{51}\) Halbe, 11.

\(^{52}\) Halbe, 68.

\(^{53}\) Ibid.
accompaniment than in most Soviet concertos of the same period.”54 The technique that he uses presents the orchestra and soloist in a variety of different textures instead of simple, chordal orchestral accompaniment. This difference in texture sets his concertos apart from those of Khachaturian, Kabalevskii and Miaskovskii.55

Gliere’s harp concerto is texturally simpler than his other concertos. It is also the only concerto by Gliere that remains in a major mode for the entire work. According to Halbe, “the rhythmic energy, lyrical melodies, and purely diatonic harmony of this work reflect a unique Soviet concerto style: the “children’s” or “youth” concerto” for their energetic vitality and youthful optimism (i.e., major mode).56 The use of folk melody, broad lyricism and gay cheerfulness are characteristics found in Gliere’s concerto compositions.

What is known about Gliere’s compositional process comes from an unfinished violin concerto. When he died in 1956, Gliere left an unfinished manuscript of the first movement of a violin concerto. He had completed a piano score of the exposition and most of the development section indicating solo and tutti entrances. It is likely that Gliere’s concerto compositional process, judging from this manuscript, was to first create a thematic outline in a piano score. He then arranged the solo and orchestral entrances before orchestrating the piano score. Lastly, he refined the material, constructed thematic transitions, and added countermelodies.57

54 Halbe, 71.

55 Ibid., 72.

56 Ibid.

57 Ibid., 70.
Reinhold Gliere was 63 when he decided to write his first concerto for harp in 1938. Gliere was well known as a composer having received the People’s Artist of the USSR award in that same year. Gliere’s use of the harp as a solo instrument was unusual because no Russian composer had written a harp concerto before. The harp concerto was written as a result of a friendship that started during rehearsals for the premiere of Gliere’s ballet Krasnii mak (1927). Katerina Erdeli, professor of harp at the Moscow Conservatory and harpist in the ballet’s pit orchestra, was impressed with Gliere’s harp writing and discussed the idea of a concerto with him. It was not until eleven years later, in the summer of 1938, that Gliere began work on the Concerto for Harp and Orchestra, completing the first movement while on vacation in Kislovodsk in the Crimea. After returning to Moscow, he worked closely with Erdeli on the second and third movements. It was on November 23, 1938 that the concerto premiered with Erdeli as soloist and Leonid Steinberg conducting the State Philharmonic Orchestra in the Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatory.”

There is some misunderstanding surrounding the official premiere of the harp concerto. Some sources note that the harp concerto was premiered on the same concert as the horn concerto on May 10, 1951.

Before the harp concerto, Gliere composed extensive harp parts in his symphonies and orchestral works. His harp parts in his compositions are very idiomatic. For example, his Heroic March, Op.71 (1934-1936), demonstrates that Gliere had a good knowledge of the instrument. The techniques used in the work include block chords, arpeggios that rotate between both hands, and glissandos. There are some passages in the Heroic March

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58 Halbe, 22.

59 Misner, 50.
(Example 3.1) that are similar to passages in the harp concerto (Example 3.2). However, the level of the technical challenge in the harp part of *Heroic March* cannot compare with his harp concerto.


Example 3.2. Reinhold Gliere, *Concerto for Harp and Orchestra in E-flat Major*, Op.74, mvt. 2, mm. 78-79
Like Mendelssohn seeking advice from his violin soloist, Ferdinand David, Gliere realized that he needed the guidance of prominent harpist Ksenia Erdeli. Since Gliere thought of Erdeli very highly and offered to give her credit as a co-composer, this means the influence that Erdeli had on this piece is significant. It is worthwhile to study Erdeli’s style of composition and playing.

**Ksenia Erdeli**

Ksenia Erdeli (1878-1971) was born into family of Russian nobility, in Elizavetgrad (Kirovograd). Her father, Aleksandr, was a lawyer that supported her interests in the arts. Local lovers of literature, music, and theater often gathered at their home in Ukraine. Ksenia Erdeli’s mother sent her away to attend Smolny Institute, a boarding private school for the Dvorian (noble) Women, when she turned eleven years old. “The level of instruction and the quality of teaching at Smolny were the highest in the country. It is no surprise that the best achievements of Russian women of the nineteenth century in sciences, arts, and politics were made by Smolny alumna.”\(^{60}\) At this school, Erdeli studied piano, solfege and theory, and secular and religious choral singing. Evening performances were given by students at the school several times a year along with performances on occasion by great artists: Liszt; Schumann and his wife, Clara Wieck; Josef Hofmann; and singers Mazini and Basttistini. There Erdeli heard the harp for the first time and was struck by its loveliness and distinctive sound. This influential performance was given by Adolfovna Kiune. A concert was scheduled in order to review and renew harp instruction at the institute, and students were examined to find those best

\(^{60}\) Poberezhnaya, 8.
suited for the instrument. Two students were chosen, Erdeli and Glafira Alymova, who later became a harpist and was awarded the order of St Catherine. “There was only one harp at Smolny, which had been donated by Ekatherina the Great in the eighteenth century. Later, when Walter-Kune began to teach at Smolny, an Erard harp was ordered from Paris.”

The Smolny Institute played an important role in exposing Erdeli to music. While at the Smolny Institute, at an outing to a performance of Swan Lake, Erdeli heard the great harpist Alfred Zabel and was thrilled by his original cadenza. Some of the evening recitals at Smolny were organized by Rimsky-Korsakov which Erdeli enjoyed the most. The participants included chapel students, orchestra members, directors, soloists, instrumentalist, and accompanists.

As graduation approached Erdeli realized that music had such a fundamental place in her life that no other profession seemed possible. The problem was to choose the path, piano, solo singing, harp, or choral directing? She found choral directing the most immediately rewarding, and she had been permanent regent at Smolny for three years and directed combined choirs of 150 students, she was torn between this discipline and harp. Much to the delight of her teacher, she chose harp.

Erdeli’s career began when her only harp teacher Ekaterina Adolfovna Walter-Kuine and her husband opened their home to the young graduate. They mothered and directed her musical education for two years. By that time, Walter-Kuine was employed at the Italian Opera, the most popular company in St. Petersburg. She took Erdeli as an assistant so Erdeli could substitute for her in rehearsals. This opportunity allowed Erdeli to meet great performing artists, singers and conductors. Erdeli took the audition with the

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61 Poberezhnaya, 10.

Bolshoi Theater orchestra playing a Hasselmans Ballade and a Zabel arrangement of the entr’acte from Donizetti’s Lucia. Govea describes the audition in her book: “Ksenia was ordered to transpose the chords from Mazepa for sight reading, plus the harp part from Tannhauser, which luckily, she had studied with Walter-Kuine and knew by heart.” Erdeli was accepted as a probationer and played alongside the legendary Eichenwald, who had studied with Carl Constantine Grimm (a pupil of Elias Parish Alvars, is known as the founder of the "Berlin School" of harp playing). One year later, Erdeli became first harpist, and Eichenwald’s daughter, Nedda, took Erdeli’s place at second harp. “To assure her success, Erdeli memorized her parts before going over them with the concertmaster outside of the lengthy rehearsals that Ippolit Karlovich Altani demanded.”

Throughout her career with the Bolshoi orchestra, Erdeli was asked to play for the symphony orchestra of the Russian Musical Society, the Philharmonic Society, and groups associated with the performances of the great artists of the time such as Sergei Rachmaninov. Erdeli married N.N. Engelhardt and moved to St. Petersburg. Erdeli had to part from Bolshoi Theatre in 1907 but kept her performance activity. She took over Walter-Kuine’s harp class at the Smolny Institute in 1911. Erdeli continued to improve her technique and began a serious attempt at expanding repertoire.

Shortly after Erdeli began working at the Smolny Institute, World War I began in 1914. The October Revolution took place in 1917. In 1918, Erdeli accepted the teaching position at the Moscow Conservatory. She was delighted to return to Moscow to teach at the conservatory and resume her former work with the Bolshoi Ballet. Living conditions

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63 Govea, 87.
were difficult following World War I and the October Revolution. Erdeli noted about Bolshoi:

The musicians sat in the cold, unheated theatre in fur coats and overshoes, only at the last minute before playing removing then and only that additional clothing which would restrict their playing. The artists would leave their warm coats in the wings, come onstage in skimpy costumes and tutus, perform blue with cold, and be welcomed in their return to the wings by colleagues who wrapped them immediately in the clothing they had dropped upon entrance. Now the shows were free, and audiences who had never dreamed of entering the hall sat in fur hats and coats, the military with cartridge belts crossed over chests, and the odor of cheap tobacco often waiting over the pit. Protocol was no longer a consideration. The musicals could mingle with the great artists and the leaders of government, who were flatteringly aware of them and their worth. Productions were more inventive and experimental.  

Ksenia Erdeli and Maria Korchinska were the two harp teachers at the conservatory. The teaching situation was not ideal due to the scarcity of harps and pedagogical literature. Erdeli was tempted to return to teach at Petrograd Conservatory in Saint Petersburg but changed her mind when the talented Vera Dulova enrolled at the conservatory at the age of ten.

In 1932, Aleksandr Borisovich Goldenweiser opened the Central Children’s Music School. He invited Erdeli to join the institution as harp instructor in 1937. The next year, Erdeli resigned from the Bolshoi Theater Orchestra in order to completely devote herself to the Moscow Conservatory and Central Children’s Music School.

At the onset of the Soviet Union’s entrance into World War II (August 1941), the government published a decree to evacuate the oldest artists, writers, actors, and musicians. Erdeli was among a large group of about 200 people. This group included prominent representatives of the culture such as Prokofiev and Goldenweiser. In spring 1942, the group was split and Erdeli was sent to Erevan, the capital of Armenia. Erdeli

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64 Govea, 89.
continued to work in the Erevan Theater of Opera and Ballet. She kept her pedagogical interests alive teaching in the high school there. The war evacuation ended in September 1943 and Ksenia returned to Moscow.

Erdeli’s role in increasing the popularity of the harp in Russia is discussed in Pobrezhnaya’s paper: “the role of harp in Russia before Erdeli was limited to orchestral and chamber settings; Erdeli’s performances transformed the social perception and function of this instrument.” Many Russian Soviet composers dedicated their works to Ksenia Erdeli and the scope of harp compositions was significantly broadened. According to Erdeli, Rachmaninov could have also written music for harp solo if the harp in Russia had been considered a concert instrument during his lifetime.

Remembering Sergei Rachmaninov, I deeply regret that harp at that time was, essentially, an orchestral instrument, and it did not present any interest as a solo instrument. It’s coming out as a concert instrument, appropriate for the contemporary music, happened much later. That is why I did not dare asking Sergei Vasilyevich to write a concert piece for the harp.

The composers who worked with Erdeli and wrote harp concertos include Nikolay Parfenov (1893-1942), composed in 1935; Reinhold Gliere in 1938, Vladimir Tzubin (1877-1849) composed in 1940; and Anatoly Kos-Anatolsky (1909-1985) composed in 1954. Erdeli accompanied leading singers of the Mariinsky theatre, Maria Dolina (1868-1919) and Anna Zherebtzova-Andreyeva (1868-1944). Working as an accompanist, Erdeli discovered her favorite combination: the sounds of harp and voice. This

65 Poberezhnaya, 13.

66 Ibid., 14.
combination became an essential role in Erdeli’s understanding of harp sound and harp pedagogy. “Erdeli goal was to create ‘singing on the instrument’”. 67

Erdeli’s most important musical influences came from playing in orchestras and working with conductors and singers in opera. One of the singers that Erdeli recalled was Chaliapin. “Chaliapin demanded that the orchestra become one with him and follow the rhythm of his breathing. None of the precise analytical methods seemed to work with his interpretations; his rhythm had to be followed intuitively and yet there was a profound artistic justification to everything that he was doing”. 68 Chaliapin’s singing played a substantial role in Erdeli’s own understanding of the art of phrasing:

Erdeli’s experience in working with Chaliapin was one of the most important factors in her musical development. All of her pupils were taught this kind of artistic phrasing, phrasing which is impossible to explain verbally but which exists on the level of spiritual interaction between a teacher, a student, and a composer’s idea. This comprised the credo of Erdeli’s class. All of her students were the musicians who were capable of a multiple interpretations of the same musical work, varying from one performance to another, and in every presentation there was a unique, well-developed idea. 69

Erdeli believed that any good teacher not only teaches musical skill but also must to be able to transfer life experiences, including stories about music and the great musicians. This helps students create a picture of what musical art is and art’s value.

Erdeli was among musicians such as Anton Rubinstein (1829-1984), Carl Davidov (1838-1889), Aleksei Slepushkin (1870-1918), Constantin Igumnov (1813-1948), and other Russian musicians during the time who used method of story telling while teaching.

67 Ibid., 15.

68 Poberezhnaya, 18.

69 Ibid., 19.
Erdeli paid close attention to the composer’s intentions. “She insisted that all tempi and dynamic markings be followed thoroughly.” Erdeli also believed that strong analytical preparation must occur before the technical aspects of performance. She preferred to start with an analysis of the work with her student, then provide a verbal description of the meaning and the significance of the work, outline its deep structures and characters, explain the details of notations and dynamics, and place special emphasis on phrasing and climaxes before she allowed her student to work on his or her own. Erdeli encouraged her students to develop their own approaches to the performance rather than asking them to imitate someone else’s performance. Originality was extremely important to Erdeli.

Specifically, Erdeli’s requirements for sound production are:

a. plucking the string must be done with the movement of a whole finger and not by its phalanx;
b. sound is necessarily produced by the side part of the finger’s pillow; it is necessary to pluck with wide inward motion of the thumb (as a preparation, thumbs move outward making a circle);
c. the placing of the pluck on the string depends on the desired register and timbre;
d. the fingers should be placed on the strings well before plucking, with fingernails pointing toward the soundboard.”

One of the most interesting techniques that Erdeli uses concerns the performance of the melody. She suggests playing the melody with the thumb only, “She thought that

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70 Ibid., 23.

71 Poberezhnaya, 25.
the thumb, moving in a direction opposite to the other fingers, could carry the melodic line the best.”

**Ksenia Erdeli’s Compositions**

Erdeli wrote several of compositions that she considered her ‘teaching aids’. She composed etudes, preludes and pieces to match her student’s needs. In addition, she composed small-scale forms of works and a number of monumental compositions, including *Fantasia “Ukraine”* and *Variation on Russian Folk Songs*. “Erdeli uses rich chromatic harmony, a reflection of her inclination toward Romanticism. The dense texture is achieved by arpeggiation with parallel notes and chromatic chord connections.” This arpeggiation can be seen in Erdeli’s *Ukraine*, written in 1952 (Example 3.4), and a similar passage in Gliere harp concerto (1938) as shown in Example 3.3.


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72 Ibid., 27.

73 Poberezhnaya, 33.

These musical examples suggest Erdeli’s influence on Gliere. In addition to the textural similarities, Gliere was inspired by Erdeli’s use of folk melody. Rich, full, rolled chords with a long, lyrical melody can be seen in the opening of Gliere’s concerto and the opening of Erdeli’s *Ukraine*.

Erdeli and Gliere also have similar styles of composition. As discussed earlier, Gliere composed his music in the style of the Romantic period, lacking the experimentation of his contemporaries. Erdeli does as well, “we might have criticized Erdeli’s compositional technique as using an outdated language and lacking revolutionary musical ideas.”

Erdeli’s contributions to harp playing in Russia were significant:

Erdeli changed the status of the harp, bringing it to the level of a concert instrument rather than an instrument of the salon. She was the first harpist in Russia to make harp music available for a wide audience. Erdeli was the founder of many harp ensembles in Russia and she was the first harpist in the world who organized a professional harp

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74 Poberezhnaya, 46.
quartet. Erdeli was the first harpist to introduce the Western harp repertoire to the Russian audience.\textsuperscript{75}

Ksenia Erdeli is remembered as the leading figure in the world of Russian music of her time. An International Harp Competition, “Crystal Key” is held under her name in St. Petersburg, Russia.

**The Concerto for Harp and Orchestra in E-flat Major Op.74**

Gliere’s Harp Concerto is in three movements. The first movement is in sonata form with a lyrical melody. The second movement, a theme and variations, presents simple melodic lines in the theme with elaborations of different harp techniques in six variations. The theme and variations format is found only in the harp concerto and not in Gliere’s other concerti. The cheerful finale presents Russian folk-coloring. Written in 1938, the concerto does not represent the work of the same period:

There is in fact little in its idiom to tell the listener in which century it was composed, and virtually nothing that couldn't have been written 50 years before its actual date. Stylistically it is redolent both of Viennese classical style, with a tincture of Russian romantic nationalism -- an 'archaic' mixture we are most familiar with in works like Tchaikovsky's Mozartina Suite and Roccoco Variations. Evidently Gliere felt this was an appropriate style for the harp.”\textsuperscript{76}

The concerto displays the harp’s idiomatic texture, relying heavily on traditional arpeggios, arpeggiated block chords and glissandos writing. The beautiful melodies

\textsuperscript{75} Poberezhnaya, 21

throughout the harp concerto combine with interesting orchestral color to make the concerto one of the essential pieces for harp and orchestra.\footnote{Ibid.}

Gliere is aware of the capability of the solo instrument and the balance between orchestra and the harp. Unlike the grand scale orchestra Gliere uses in his other symphonic works, the orchestra in the harp concerto is in chamber proportions. The brass is limited to four horns in order to not dominate the sound of the solo instrument. Other than the balance issue, Gliere’s orchestration and his use of instrumental color is fascinating. Gliere occasionally pairs the soloist with solo instruments from the orchestra.

According to Halbe, the concertos represent Gliere’s most significant accomplishment during the last twenty years of his life.\footnote{Halbe, 9.} Gliere was the first Soviet composer to write concertos for harp or horn, and the only major composer to write a concerto for voice and orchestra. These concertos, composed late in his life, display Gliere’s clear, concise style in its fullest development.
CHAPTER 4

GLIERE’S HARP CONCERTO, MVT. I: ANALYSIS AND PERFORMANCE

GUIDE

Musical Analysis

Although Gliere composed the first movement of his harp concerto in a standard sonata form, he did not begin the movement with a traditional tutti opening; instead, he preceded the first subject (played by the soloist) with a brief orchestral figure. This opening, according to Halbe, is different from Gliere's other concertos in that it highlights the role of the soloist. The orchestra part is subdued, which prepares the audience for the soloist’s grand entrance. Gliere uses the vigorous block-chord gesture of the harp throughout the opening to immediately seize the attention of the audience and engage them with strong determination as shown below in Example 4.1.


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79 Halbe, 25.
The first theme is a period, which contains two five-bar phrases (mm. 2-11), and a phrase group (mm. 12-23) as seen in Example 4.2.

The movement’s initial key of Eb is clear. The prolonged tonic chord throughout the first six bars provides a harmonic frame for the solo passage, and firmly establishes the home key. The period reaches a half cadence in measure 11. The next part of the first theme begins in measure 12. Gliere retains the block-chord gesture, but changes melodic and rhythmic patterns. This second component is marked by a change of harmonic rhythm that gradually increases as the music approaches the climax. The melodic line gains intensity through wider intervallic leaps and high notes. Momentum towards the end starts in measure 20 (Example 4.3), and is created by fast harmonic rhythm, circle of fifth harmony, and a descending sequence of block chords. In the harp part, the top voice moves back and forth between intervals of the sixth and seventh signifying the end of the first theme.

The first theme ends with a half cadence. The beginning of the transition is clearly marked with striking textural change and increased rhythmic activity. The section suddenly gains energy with a lively interplay between the orchestra and the soloist. The harp glissando at measure 31 signals the end of the solo section. A perfect cadence in the tonic key is finally heard for the first time in the following bar, where the orchestral reaffirmation of the first theme arrives simultaneously (Example 4.4).

Example 4.4. Reinhold Gliere, Concerto for Harp and Orchestra in E-flat Major, Op.74, mvt. 1, mm. 28-33.

A short cadenza-like passage follows in measure 48. During these ten measures, the soloist plays a sequence of brilliant arpeggios. The music then begins a prolonged dominant passage in B minor. In measure 56 (Example 4.5), a passing chord leads
chromatically to a half cadence on an A dominant seventh chord in the following bar, surprising the listener. The sustained bass note played by the cello in the same measure proceeds chromatically to arrive at the dominant of D in measure 58, when the cadence leads to D major and the next section is established.


![Example 4.5](image)

The second theme begins in measure 59 (Example 4.6). The solo harp accompanies the clarinet with the same rhythmic figuration heard in the opening of the movement. The clarinetist plays the melody for seven measures, which is then partially repeated by the harpist an octave higher.


![Example 4.6](image)
Gliere then takes the listener by surprise. Instead of concluding the exposition with a closing passage, he follows the second theme with a transitional passage that is clearly based on the previous transition in mm. 23-30, intensely propelling the music to the next section. The development starts in measure 87 with its opening material derived from the first subject. The tonal area in this development section shifts several times, through E-flat minor, B-flat minor, F minor, G minor, and finally to A minor. After measure 103, the keys change more frequently, creating tension. After the bold chord gesture from the opening is restated in A minor in measure 107, the triplet arpeggios start to drive the music to the next theme. The new developmental theme is in C major in measure 117. This theme has an obvious thematic reference from the second subject.

A cadenza starts in C flat minor. Materials from the exposition are used liberally. Gliere includes fragments from the first and the second subordinate themes as well as the first subject. The position of this cadenza is quite special; this treatment was first used by Mendelssohn in his Violin Concerto in E minor. Michael T. Roeder remarks:

Mendelssohn modified the placement of the cadenza in the first movement by moving it from its traditional location near the end of the movement to the end of the development section. By doing so Mendelssohn gave the cadenza the important function of preparing for the recapitulation, with which the cadenza overlaps. This passage is one of the most magical in the work, but surprisingly the unusual placement of the cadenza was seldom imitated by subsequent composers. 80

The placement of the cadenza and the way Gliere launches this movement imply that Gliere follows Mendelssohn’s successful model and Romantic concerto tradition. “The orchestra begins the piece by playing only the accompaniment, a practice Romantic

composers found very effective." While both concertos are introduced by the accompanying tutti, the two composers treated the soloist’s entrances very differently. Mendelssohn’s violinist joins the orchestra with a sweet, lyrical theme, but Glière’s harpist demands the audience’s full attention by entering with a series of forceful chords.

The only difference is that, in this harp concerto, the cadenza gradually merges with the restatement of the second theme in the tonic key. Due to the absence of the first theme, according to Hepokoski and Darcy’s *Elements of Sonata Theory*, this post-development area cannot be regarded as a “recapitulation.” For them, the use of this term is not correct because the return of the first theme is a crucial requirement for the “recapitulation.” The two scholars instead used the term “tonal resolution” to describe the post-development material that emerges as the second theme in the tonic key. However, Halbe looks at this organization as “recapitulation”, in which “all themes reappear, but in reverse order.” Therefore, this matter will be thoroughly discussed here.

There are three thematic rotations in the traditional sonata form: exposition, development and recapitulation. However in this harp concerto, there are only two. The first one occurs in the exposition. The early portions of the second thematic rotations (the first subject and transition) start in the development, and its latter part (the second subject onward) follows and takes on “recapitulatory” functions. Therefore, the first- and second-theme-based development is something that structurally stands for the first theme and

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81 Roeder, 231.


83 Halbe, 24.
transition. The tonal resolution section follows at measure 151 as a continuation of the previous thematic events. Here, the whole second subject is restated in the tonic key and produces the first cadence in the tonic key, eventually heard in measure 172.

A transitional passage at measure 172 (Example 4.7) enters with a sudden tempo change, marked *piu mosso*. It is the restatement of a passage from near the end of the exposition (mm. 81-86) as shown in Example 4.8, but here Gliere modifies and expands it to prepare for the dramatic coda. This latter transition is extended with subdominant and dominant function to lead to the end of sonata space with cadence at measure 187.

Example 4.7-Continued

In his analysis, Halbe suggests that the coda starts in measure 195\(^{84}\). His explanation is problematic. According to Hepokoski and Darcy's *Elements of Sonata Theory*, “... the coda begins once the recapitulation has reached the point at which the exposition's closing materials, normally including a final cadence, have been revisited in

\(^{84}\) Halbe, 25
From this perspective, the coda rather begins at measure 187 after the second thematic rotation, including the transitional passage, is completely restated.

**Differences in Editions**

Since the purpose of this essay is to provide a performer’s guide for the harpist, the examination of differences between various editions focuses mainly on the harp part, and not the orchestra part. Three editions are compared in this essay: Editions de Musique de L’URSS, 1940 Moscow, Lyra Music Company Edition, edited by Assunta Dell’Aquila, and Salvi Publication 1977.

Each of these editions has identical dynamic markings. The placement of the music itself is also identical. None of these editions provide fingerings. The most significant distinction is the pedaling. While the Lyra Music Company edition provides pedal marks with English note names, the other two editions use Northern European note names. The Lyra Music edition was edited by Assunta Dell’Aquila. This edition is the most unique since the editor of this edition provides different pedal suggestions.

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85 James Hepokoski; Warren Darcy, 281.


Performance Guide

Most of the harp techniques used in Gliere’s harp concerto are the same as Erdeli frequently used in her compositions. For example, wide-range rolled chords with a long, lyrical melody, shown in Example 4.9, can be seen in the opening bars of Erdeli’s work Ukraine.

As stated in the previous chapter, Erdeli was quite interested in the melodic line. In this opening statement of the harp, the melodic line is intentionally composed so that it is played exclusively with the right-hand thumb. This technique is highly effective, and it was a favorite of Erdeli’s, perhaps using it more than any other harpist.89

Example 4.9. Ksenia Erdeli, Ukraine, mm. 1-3.

In Erdeli’s long career of teaching, her philosophy of sound production was that “sound is necessarily produced by the side part of the finger’s pillow; it is necessary to

89 Poberezhnaya, 27.
pluck with wide inward motion of the thumb (as a preparation, thumbs move outward making a circle).” Erdeli also indicated her preferred thumb position: “In the old school—in Zabel and others—the thumb is positioned almost vertically, parallel to the string. In such a position, the thumb can play only with its last phalanx.” Erdeli shared the views of Slepushkin on the necessity of holding the thumb at an exact angle of sixty degrees.

The first twenty-two measures are filled with a series of block chords leaping up and down over four octaves of the instrument, primarily in eight-note chords. Finger placement is very important for this passage in order to produce a rich and even tone while still precisely pronouncing the singing melodic line.

Positional technique is especially important in Russian performance practice. Notes should be expressed in groups according to phrasing and melodic shape, rather than one by one. This method was widely used in the Russian violin school of Leopold Auer and in the piano school of Konstantin Igumnov. Erdeli also strongly emphasized this method of playing. With this technique on the harp, the position of the hands is more stable. The opening passage should also be practiced with block chords in both hands without arpeggiating them to make sure that all eight fingers are placed on strings at the

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90 Poberezhnaya, 25.

91 Albert Zabel (1834-1910), the founder of the Russian School of harp playing

92 Poberezhnaya, 26.

93 Alexander Slepushkin, a Russian harpist

94 Poberezhnaya, 26.
same time. The harpist should play assertively with a forceful sound and strong determination.

The second passage starts at measure 24. This passage is challenging due to the sixteenth-note intervals of fifths and sixths repeated at a fast tempo (Example 4.10). The fingering should be considered carefully to create a clean sound without buzzing when constantly repeating the strings. For example, in measure 24, the editor groups the first two sixteenth-notes with the left hand, the next two with the right hand, the next two again with the left hand, then the next nine notes alternating between the right and left hands.

The fingering is not provided in this passage but from the slur written in each group, a harpist could place all four fingers on the strings at once and play with 2-4 then 1-3 in the left hand for the first group. The same placing and fingering 2-4 and 1-3 can also be applied for the next right hand group.

The performer must exercise caution, since using these fingerings in fast tempo could produce a buzzing sound on the second beat of the measure. Since the right hand places four fingers on the strings on that second beat, which happens right after the left hand pluck the strings and the E string is still vibrating, the moment the right hand places all four fingers to play the downbeat, the E string will be buzzing. In order to avoid the buzz, the harpist could either delay the placing of the third finger on the right hand or come up with alternative fingerings for the passage. One alternating fingering is to play the first beat as written with the left hand, and on the next beat, play all four top voices with the right hand fingering 4-3-2-1 in order. Then, keep the left hand on the same position as the first beat then play the first two bottom voices with finger 2 and 1 before moving up to play the next two bottom voices (as shown in Example 4.11). By dividing these intervals between two hands, there will be no placing on vibrating strings and therefor reduce potential for buzzing.

The harpist can also practice this passage along with other exercises that present similar ideas, such as Carlos Salzedo’s Conditioning Exercises numbers III and V. Salzedo’s exercise number V should also be practiced “arpeggioed with strong accent on the thumb and second finger (observing strictly all placing in order to develop strength in those two fingers).” This exercise repeats the fingering pattern of 2-4 and 1-3 in two different intervals (fifth and sixth), which are the same intervals used in measures 24 and 26 in the solo harp part of the concerto, as shown in Example 4.12. The same exercise is beneficial for the left hand in measure 66 and for both hands at measure 148. At measure 66, the right hand part contains a primarily eighth-note melody in octaves, while the left hand accompanies in triplets alternating between intervals of fifths and sixths.


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While the two against three rhythm in the right and left hands presents quite a challenge, the left hand needs to create a clear, steady and smoothly connected triplet line. The same configuration can be found in Erdeli’s composition *Prelude No.3* (Example 4.14), published in 1948. The piece begins with a triplet accompaniment in the left hand and an eighth-note melody in the right hand before hands switch roles. The prelude presents the same rhythmic and fingering pattern throughout. One can practice this prelude as an exercise for the passage at measure 66 (Example 4.13).


Starting at measure 91, the right and left hands play triplet melodic lines in contrary motion with challenging interval changes in each hand. Measure 108 presents the same musical idea, this time twice as long as in the previous passage. The phrase begins with the harp part marked *piano* in the middle register of the instrument. The orchestral accompaniment becomes denser as the right hand and left hand climb into the upper register, and thins as the harp part moves back down into the middle register. The timbre of the harp in the upper register will cut through the sound of the orchestra even when playing at a *piano* dynamic.

The only place in the harp part marked *fortissimo*-- the loudest dynamic mark in this first movement-- is at measure 117 (Example 4.15). It is common practice for harpists to play these chords arpeggiated even when it is not marked in the score.
Example 4.15. Reinhold Gliere, *Concerto for Harp and Orchestra in E-flat Major*, Op.74, mvt. 1, mm. 115-120.

The cadenza of this concerto is idiomatic for the instrument and heavily influenced by Erdeli. Included in this cadenza is a number of harp techniques often employed by Erdeli in her other compositions, such as fast lyrical arpeggios, thick broken chords, and glissandi (Example 4.16, 4.17).

Example 4.17. Ksenia Erdeli, *Ukraine*, mm. 4-7
The composer uses opposite-facing note stems to mark the melodic line in the harp part starting at measure 187 (Example 4.18). It is important to bring out this melodic line with the right thumb, as it is in unison with the flute part for the first three measures (mm. 187-189). This melodic line continues in unison with the first violin for two measures (mm. 190-191). There is a crescendo and an allargando marked one measure before the end. The harpist takes fully control of this allargando, because while the harp part contains sixteenth-notes and thirty-second-notes, the orchestral accompaniment moves in quarter notes.

Interestingly, the first movement of the concerto has a thick texture created by dense chords and arpeggios. The melody is always arranged so that it is played by the right-hand thumb. The only exception is in the cadenza where the melody is played by the lowest voice on the fourth finger of the left hand and all the ornaments on top, so the right hand thumb can relax.

Gliere was aware of the balance between the harp and the orchestra. The only other place that the melody is written in such a way is at measure 48. At this point, the only accompaniment to the harp is a sustained note in the strings clearly quiet enough to allow the harp melody to be heard.

**Pedaling**

As editor, Ksenia Erdeli’s surely brought potential pedaling issues to Gliere’s attention during the concerto’s composition. Halbe cites Gliere’s harmonic language as evidence of Erdeli’s influence, commenting that “Harmony throughout the concerto is
remarkably tame for Gliere, due largely to the modulatory limitations of the harp. Frequent modulations would require rapid, sometimes awkward pedal changes for the harp. In the opening passage of the concerto, the pedal markings in the Lyra Music Company edition suggest that the D-flat is changed in the beginning of measure 7. In other editions, the D-flat is not changed until one measure later on the first beat, at the same time that the D-flat is played. Both pedal marks, although different, work. The pedal change of the Lyra Music Company edition creates a greater resonance, since the harmony of mm. 7-8 is centered around A-flat major. Having four pedals (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat, and D-flat) engaged in the flat position creates a greater and fuller resonance (There is a detailed discussion on resonation of the harp in the next chapter).

The Lyra Music edition suggests to muffle at measure 23 and 25, which is not suggested in other editions. After the glissando at measure 31, the harp is in the key of E-flat Major (three pedals in the flat position). Editions de Musique de L’URSS, and Salvi Publication have the “muta in D-dur” at measure 35 which means change (as in change of tuning) to D Major. This marking means that all three pedals should be brought down to the natural position and the F, and the C pedal should be brought down to the sharp position. The editor does not suggest the A-sharp until the harp starts playing again at measure 48. In the Lyra Music Company edition, the only suggested pedal mark in this section is “F-sharp, C-sharp and A-sharp” at measure 35. The editor never suggests B, and E-natural. The performer who performs this edition should consider writing down these pedal marks.

There are different pedal marks in the section from mm. 55-58 in different editions.

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96 Halbe, 30.
editions. In the author’s opinion, the Lyra Music Company edition works best in this section. The editor suggests to move A-natural in the beginning of measure 56, then move B-sharp and G-sharp at the same time at the beginning of measure 57, so that the harpist can keep the feet on those two pedals—facilitating their simultaneous change at the beginning of the next measure. These pedals are changed at the downbeat of each measure, since every initial downbeat of these measures is a quarter rest. The only disadvantage of this pedal mark is that moving the A pedal after measure 55 (where the A-sharp is played) could cause pedal buzzing. However, since there is one full beat of rest at the beginning of each measure, the muffle could be used, which would also help create clean sound for a chord change. By following the suggestions in the other editions, the harpist must move the right foot off from G to A, and then back to G pedal. These motions are more difficult to accomplish cleanly, harder to execute rhythmically, and have no benefit.

In measure 68, the C pedal is changed from C-sharp to C-natural and back to C-sharp within one beat. This passage can cause a break in the right hand melodic line if not done carefully. The alternative pedal change cannot be done here since using enharmonic notes (D-flat to replace C-sharp, and C to replace B-sharp) would require more pedal changes and would still break the melodic line. In measure 72, the Salvi Publication edition contains a mistake, as the D-sharp pedal mark is one measure too early. Both Salvi Publication and Editions de Musique de l’URSS suggest G-sharp pedal at measure 80 when there should not be one.

Few pedal changes are required within the cadenza section’s virtuosic arpeggios. At measure 143, two editions suggest changing six pedals while the Lyra Music edition
suggests changing the A-flat pedal two measures earlier in measure 141, thus
necessitating changing five pedals in measure 143. There should be an F-natural pedal at
the beginning of measure 141 that is missing in the Lyra Music Company edition.
Overall, the pedal markings in the Lyra Music Edition seem comfortable for performers.
They are also carefully designed with the consideration for the overall harmony and
resonance of the instrument.
CHAPTER 5
GLIERE’S HARP CONCERTO, MVT. II: ANALYSIS AND PERFORMANCE GUIDE

Musical Analysis

The second movement of the concerto is a theme and variations. Gliere used an “unusually innovative” form in this movement, considering that it is the only appearance of this scheme in Gliere’s four concertos. Several harp techniques are used in different variations. The theme is influenced by Russian folk music, one of the characteristics featured in Erdeli’s composition as well.

Folk melodies have their own requirements in respect to phrasing, intonation, and embellishments. Unlike Stravinsky, Erdeli does not cut the melodic line into short segments. Instead, she sets each melody as a leading voice and gives unequal beat subdivisions in the arpeggiated accompaniment. Ascending and descending arpeggios create the illusion of breathing, caused by slight agogic deviations from the regular tempo. As a result, it becomes possible to perform the melody with ultimate freedom of rhythm and flexibility of phrasing, qualities that are indigenous to the folk performing styles of the protyazhnaya pesnya. A quasi-folk melody is used in the same way in the second movement of Gliere’s Concerto.

The theme is initiated by a short, subtle introductory gesture that spans four bars. The simple melodic line played by the cello is doubled in the bass, an obvious contrast with the end of the first movement. The harp solo introduces the theme without orchestra accompaniment in measure five. The right hand single melodic line is filled in with chords off the beat in the left hand (Example 5.1).

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97 Halbe, 24.
98 Poberezhnaya, 37.

The theme is written in C-flat major instead of its enharmonic key, B major. The reason for this unexpected key is that in C-flat major all seven pedals on the harp are in the open position. On the double action pedal harp, there are two discs aligned along each string. These discs are controlled by foot-pedals. Placing a pedal in the upper notch of the pedal slot puts all corresponding strings in the flat position. The strings are untouched by the disc and open. Placing a pedal in the middle notch (natural position) rotates the upper discs to put pressure on the strings and raise the pitch by a half-step. By moving a pedal down to the bottom notch (sharp position), the lower discs rotate against the same strings, raising the pitch by another half-step. For example, when all the pedals are on the top notches, middle notches, and the bottom notches, the harp is in C-flat major, C major, and C-sharp major, in order. By playing the theme in C-flat major instead of B major, the
strings are untouched by the disc. With no pressure from the disc, all strings can vibrate freely and produce a brighter sound.

The theme is in a rounded binary form, without repeat. The A section is structured in an antecedent-consequent period. In this format, the antecedent ends on a weak half cadence. The consequent repeats the early portion of the previous phrase, but the latter part is intensified in order to produce a concluding perfect authentic cadence.

The B section (measure 13) introduces new material and a new rhythmic figure. In measure 16, the music starts to modulate back to C-flat major, and ends on a half cadence in the tonic key, which prepares for the return of the main idea. Due to this, what happens in mm. 13 to 20 should be considered as the same section. The first phrase (mm. 13 to 16) does not have closure within itself and has no sense of structural independence. The next phrase includes a perfect authentic cadence to complete the section. Because these two phrases are considered one larger unit, the form of this theme is binary, not small ternary (Example 5.2).

The first variation is an embellishment of the theme. Form, meter, key, and harmony remained unchanged. The melody is in the sixteenth-note arpeggios in the right hand of the harp part. These arpeggios are not the melody from the theme, rather they are constructed from the theme’s harmonic structure. Gliere uses the change of direction (descending and ascending) in arpeggios to link this variation with the theme. The left hand has an accompanimental role with single sixteenth-note broken chords in contrary motion with the right hand. The strings accompany the harp in this variation with sustained notes.

A beautiful cello solo at measure 29 presents the counter melody along with the solo harp. At this point, Gliere changes the pattern of the arpeggios in the harp to match the exact melody in the theme with embellishment. These four measures comprise the only section within in this variation where the melody from the theme fully returns.

Variation II is played by full orchestra without solo harp. The theme begins with clarinet followed by the flute. The melody begins the same as the theme but in reverse. The original theme starts with G-flat moving a minor third down to E-flat, C-flat moving a minor third down to A-flat, F-flat moving a minor third down to D-flat, and G-flat moving a minor third down to E-flat. In this second variation, the G-flat is moving a major
sixth up to E-flat, C-flat moving a major sixth up to A-flat, F-flat moving a major sixth up to D-flat, and G-flat moving up a major sixth up to E-flat. This results in the same pitch but with different intervallic movements. The same treatment continues at the end of measure 40, but this time, the melody is taken by lower strings. Woodwinds take over the melody again in the same approach at measure 45, but it moves back to strings at the end of measure 48. The change of instruments playing the melody and timbres signal the change of phrases. Variation II ends in the key of C-flat major.

The key changes to B minor at the beginning of Variation III, but the chord progression otherwise remains the same. As in the theme, the first phrase chord progression is I-IV-V-I. In this variation, the chord progression is i-iv-V-i. The harp plays light scales and arpeggios. Woodwinds play the melody at measure 61. The melody fades away when the harp starts at measure 65. In this last phrase of the variation, the harp repeats the same configuration of the first phrase. The harp part in this variation consists of a single melodic line, creating a character of conversation between the left and the right hands. The first voice begins in measure 53 (Example 5.3), followed by the second voice in the next measure. In measure 55, the second voice joins with the first voice, creating a canonic pattern in thirds. The dialogues continue until measure 67 (Example 5.4), when the two voices meet and play the melody at the same time in octaves to end the variation.

Variation IV is in the key of G major. The solo harp in this variation plays an accompanimental role with rapid sixty-fourth-note arpeggios. The melody in the first and second phrase is divided into two measures in strings, followed by two measures from winds.

Example 5.3. Reinhold Gliere, *Concerto for Harp and Orchestra in E-flat Major*, Op.74, mvt. 2, mm. 52-56.
Example 5.4. Reinhold Gliere, *Concerto for Harp and Orchestra in E-flat Major*, Op.74, mvt. 2, mm. 67-68.

Strings lead the melody of the third phrase, with a counter-melody played by woodwinds. The strings continue playing the melody in the last phrase and end the variation. The tempo marked eighth note equals 120 with constant sixty-fourth-note arpeggios in the harp part, is the fastest of all the variations.

Variation V is in the key of E minor, the relative minor of the previous variation (Example 5.5). The meter stays in 6/8 throughout, and the melody is once again played by solo harp. The common rhythmic values are sixteenth notes with the melody on every
other note. The rhythm of the melody is accented by winds playing a short-long, short-long pattern. The accent is on the pickup to beats one and two as well beats one and two directly. This gives the meter a feeling of ambiguity. Compared with the original theme, the melody in this variation is slightly changed and shifted rhythmically. The melody is now perceived as grouped in patterns of three (Example 5.6 shows grouping with slurs).

Example 5.5. Reinhold Gliere, *Concerto for Harp and Orchestra in E-flat Major*, Op.74, mvt. 2, mm. 84-88.

In this variation, the melody in the solo harp right hand thumb is doubled by high strings, while the counter melody on the left hand is doubled by low strings.
Example 5.6. Reinhold Gliere, *Concerto for Harp and Orchestra in E-flat Major*, Op. 74, mvt. 2, mm. 84-88. (with slurs indicating the grouping)

Variation VI is in E major, the parallel major of the previous variation. The melodies of the first and second phrases alternate in tutti. Viola starts out the phrase with the counter melody in the cello line, the melody is then moves into the cello followed by the second then first violins. The solo harp plays the accompanimental figure in the first two phrases. Not until the third measure does the harp come in with the accompaniment figure arpeggios in D#7 chord creating a short interruption at the end of the first phrase. The harp takes over the melody in the third phrase at measure 109 by playing a block chord melody in the right hand, and accompanimental arpeggios in the left hand. After the half cadence at measure 112, the harp continues playing the melody in the last phrase in the tonic key. The melody in the harp now presents a duet character between the two voices (Example 5.7).

Despite the changes in tonality and minor rhythmic changes, all the variations in this movement follow the structure of the theme. All except the sixth variation (the last before the coda) is sixteen measures in length. The closing passage in this measure is extended for two measures. Thick repeated plagal cadences played with both hands in solo harp with muted horns and viola support the line in the middle range leading to the dominant-seventh chord in measure 117. This creates intensity before the satisfying tonic chords played by the solo harp at the end of the variation.

The tonic key of C-flat major returns at the coda. The thematic material and introductory string material return. The French horns play a melody (played earlier in the theme by the solo harp), while the solo harp accompanies this material with light glissandi in the first two measures, followed by arpeggios and chords in the last two measures in the high register. The melody in the next phrase is traded between clarinets and oboe before
moving to the flute at the end of the phrase. Gliere signals the beginning and ending of his phrases by passing on the melody to instruments in different registers. The accompanimental figure in the harp remains the same in this second phrase. The melody in the next phrase is in the violins. The texture gets denser as the four horns play chordal harmony. The extension of the theme occurs at measure 134 (Example 5.8). The harp plays a cadenza-like gesture that serves as a harmonic interruption. This is a similar transitional gesture that Gliere uses in the first movement (measure 48: Example 5.9). In this section, the sustained note is held by strings and horns.

Example 5.9. Reinhold Gliere, *Concerto for Harp and Orchestra in E-flat Major*, Op.74, mvt. 1, mm. 48-54.

The closing passage of the theme occurs in the solo harp. The harp plays the melody in thick chords two measures before 145 (Example 5.10) along with string tremolos and winds. The solo harp continues to play the melody in fast arpeggios with lower strings sustaining long notes in the codetta section. The material of this section’s melody is derived from the last phrase of the theme. The upper strings and winds highlight the melody, which is in the solo harp arpeggios. The harp ends the movement with a big glissando to the C-flat major chord quietly.

Performance Guide

The harp solo introduces the lyrical theme of the second movement without orchestral accompaniment. The theme in C-flat major instead of B major benefits the harpist by producing a better singing quality sound. The right hand plays a single note melody while the left hand plays chords for accompaniment. The chords are written in a three-note block chord pattern spanning an interval as large as a tenth. The composer did not specifically indicate that the chords be rolled. Although the interval of the tenth is not an easy stretch for fingers 1 and 4, it is definitely possible. Should the harpist choose to roll the left hand chords, the speed of roll should be carefully taken into consideration. While playing the third phrase starting at measure 13, the line of the melody is voiced in a way that it is always played by only one finger: the right hand thumb. It is important to
keep the singing melodic line with one finger while voicing all the harmony and keep them moving in the right direction.

Variation I, the melody is written to be played with the right hand thumb in the line of descending arpeggios but when the melody is not in the thumb, it is clearly written out as shown in measure 23 (Example 5.11).


The third measure of the first phrase of the theme begins the distinct rhythmic activity that initiates the climax in the next measure. Instead descending arpeggios with the melody in the thumb, the melody is in the right hand, not limited to the thumb.

The soloist should set the tempo of variation III since the harp part plays the smallest rhythmic figure (thirty-second notes). There is an error in the solo harp part in the Salvi Publication 1977 and Lyra Music Company editions (correct in the conducting score). At the beginning of this variation, the first four notes of the harp part should be
written in thirty-second notes, not the sixteenth notes. The correct version of the harp part is shown in Example 5.12. Another mistake in the Salvi edition is to mark variation III in the harp part as variation II.


The notation of the descending scale in the first passage indicates that the editor intends for the right hand to play this descending scale alone. The editor does not want the harpist to rotate it between both hands, even though this is more convenient. However, the left hand is written to play three-note arpeggios in the middle of the passage before the right hand takes over the previous pattern of the scale. By doing so, a smooth, even melodic line is created. Even though the fingering is not provided in the harp part throughout the concerto, the way the music is written provides a clear guideline. For example, this passage could start with right hand finger 2 then all of the downbeats in measure 53 would fall on finger 4. The composer uses treble clef in both staves on the grand staff, instead of writing this single melodic line on one staff, to indicate the turn of right hand and left hand (Examples 5.13, 5.14). While the Editions de Musique de l’URSS and the Salvi Publication edition suggest playing this passage with the same
fingering pattern as the beginning of the variation, Lyra Music Company Edition (Example 5.14) suggests to divide this line in between two hands.


![Example 5.13](image)


![Example 5.14](image)

There is no suggested fingering in the Edition de Music l’URSS. However, the Salvi publication edition and Lyra Music Company edition give one of a few fingering suggestions at measure 63. The first two notes of these five-finger descending scales should be played with the sliding thumb. Lyra Music Company edition also provides fingering suggestion at measure 63.

Variation IV pedal marks in the Anglo Soviet edition and Edition de Music l’URSS are identical and seems to be the most accurate. The performer should be careful
at measure 79, where the editor marks to change pedals to C-sharp and B-flat at the same time. These two pedals are both on the left foot side of the harp. The alternative pedal change would be to move the B-flat pedal on the third beat of the measure as suggested in Lyra Music Company edition.

The Salvi Publication edition is, for the most part, identical to the two previous editions. The only error is that there are no A-natural or C-natural pedal markings at the beginning of the variation. There is one major error in the Lyra Music Company edition in the beginning of measure 71. There should not be a G-sharp pedal mark because the G in that measure is G-natural. There are several pedal changes and chord changes in this variation. Even though there is no indication for muffling on the music, muffles in the left hand can be used to create clean harmony.

In the fourth variation, the sixty-fourth-note arpeggios in the harp part should be played evenly, lining up the first note of each group with the melody in the strings. In the third phrase of the variation, the rhythm in mm. 78-80 presents a technical challenge. From the beginning of the variation the sixty-fourth-notes in the groups of eight are used (Example 5.15). Starting at measure 78, groups of seven, five, and eight arpeggios are used in the same measure (Example 5.16).


The performer must have a good sense of subdivision to create a steady accompaniment line to the orchestra. To practice these measures, one can practice counting subdivisions along with a metronome. For the last phrase of the variation, the group of eighth-note arpeggios from the first two phrases return, with a slight change. The first note of each group is omitted and replaced with sixty-fourth-note rests while the strings play the downbeat. Ensemble cohesion is very important at this point and all the notes should be synchronized.

Variation V presents the technique that seems to be inspired by Erdeli and might be the most difficult variation of the movement. Each part, right hand and left hand, has its own technical challenge. The harp plays an important role both rhythmically and
melodically in this variation. Constant sixteenth notes, written only in the solo harp, make it the harpist’s responsibility to control the tempo in this variation. Several interval changes have been used here. Again, strong placing of fingers on the strings is very important for this variation. A harpist could practice the right hand in this variation by playing every sixteenth note, only the outer note (omit the top note of every upbeat).

There is an interval change in mm. 87-88 (Example 5.17); the placing pattern changes to octave, octave, 4th then octave, octave, 5th then octave, octave 7th. The rest of the placing pattern in the first phrase stays in octave, octave, 6th pattern. Besides practicing the outer notes alone, one can practice playing sixteenth notes on the downbeat and only the top note of the upbeat to make sure that the fingers get use to different spaces in different intervals.

One of the challenges in this passage is that the right hand and left hand are doing two completely different things at the same time. While there is a general pattern of intervals in the right hand, the left hand is freely composed of different intervals. The challenge is not only in the hands, however. In mm. 95-96, the harpist needs to change eleven pedals (Example 5.18). The harpist should consider rewriting the music to suit personal preference. There are many accidentals used in the score that include double sharps. The pedal suggestions printed in the score might not be in the format or configuration that is preferable to the performer to read. Rewriting the music to the preferred format will ease practice and make it more efficient.


In measure 90, there is an error in the pedal mark in the Lyra Music Company edition. The F-flat should be corrected to F-natural. There is no *ritardando* written at the end of variation V, however, in the recording performed by Olga Erdeli (the niece of Ksenia Erdeli), a prominent ritardando can be heard in the last measure of this variation.

In variation VI, the solo harp starts as an accompaniment before taking over the melody in measure 109. The intensity is built early on at the half cadence in measure 112
and continues as the fullness of the big chords leads to the satisfying conclusion that ends the last variation. All these chords should be played with a forceful sound. In many performances, the *ritardando* is done earlier than written, most often at the beginning of measure 117.

In the coda, the transition between glissando and arpeggios from mm. 124-125 should be smooth. The fast arpeggios in measure 136 can be practiced as block chords to make sure that the fingers are comfortable with the placement and that a clean, even sound is produced when played as written. In measure 144, the melody should be brought out on beats one, three, four, and six. Since the arpeggios alternate between the right and the left hands, the performer should make sure that these arpeggios sound as one line. The Lyra Music Company edition suggests different fingerings than the other editions in measure 144. The other editions suggest playing the first four notes of the fourth beat with the right hand, changing to the left hand for the next five notes, then switching back to the right hand. The Lyra Music Company edition suggests playing the first three notes with the right hand, changing to the left hand for the next seven notes then switching back to avoid reaching the right hand fourth finger in the low register. In these arpeggios from mm. 144-148, the right hand has to reach an octave with fingers one and two frequently. In Erdeli’s *20 Etudes for Harp*, etude no. 16 (Example 5.19) presents sixteenth-note melody in the right hand with the same leap in intervals. This exercise can be used to practice this passage.
CHAPTER 6

GLIERE’S HARP CONCERTO, MVT. III: ANALYSIS AND PERFORMANCE GUIDE

Musical Analysis

The lively finale restores the tonic key and represents the heightened spirit of the movement. Like the first movement, it is in sonata form. The form of this movement is introduced in a conversation-like manner between harp and orchestra in E-flat major. The structure of the whole first theme can be viewed as: harp A1, orchestra A2, harp B, and orchestra B (Periods A and B use the same rhythmic motif).

The finale starts with a short introductory gesture on dominant pedal tones that prepare for the dramatic arrival of the first subject. The harp makes an entrance at measure 19 without orchestral accompaniment (Example 6.1). The first subject consists of two periods.

The harp states the antecedent phrase (A1) from mm. 19-26, ending with a half cadence. The melody is in the right hand with syncopated rhythm chords in the left hand. The flute and clarinet play the consequent phrase (A2) starting at measure 27, with syncopated notes in the strings in a similar pattern. The consequent repeats the previous phrase, but modifies the latter portion to generate a perfect cadence in G minor. The next period begins as a harp solo passage in measure 35, with Gliere using the same rhythmic figure. The first phrase ends with a perfect cadence in the tonic key. The same idea is repeated by the strings in measure 43, with the winds playing the syncopated notes. Gliere uses different instrumental color to make the repetitions of these ideas interesting.
The end of the first theme is immediately followed by the transition. The harp plays accompanimental arpeggios during these sixteen measures. The transition continues while the harp switches to the more important role of brilliant arpeggios that mark the beginning of a short cadenza. Halbe describes this transitional passage (mm. 51-66) as the
“second theme,” stating that the transition section does not start until measure 67. However, the whole section from mm. 51-82 clearly has a transitional function. The section is marked by the increase of rhythmic and harmonic activities. As the section progresses, the material becomes more unstable, propelling the music into a new section. Moreover, the cadenza itself is not a transition. It is rather the culmination of this transitional process that occurs on a prolonged dominant harmony.

The orchestral reaffirmation of the first subject appears at measure 83 in the original key. Another transitional passage begins at measure 99. The second theme (measure 115) introduces new thematic and rhythmic materials. Unlike the first theme, it is more flowing and expressive in character. This section also consists of two periods. The second phrase in mm. 139-147 is modified and intensified. The C diminished seventh chord from mm. 143-146 leads to the F major in the next bar. The crucial harmonic role of the second subject is to produce a satisfactory cadence that fully establishes the second key. Unexpectedly, in measure 147 (Example 6.2), the second theme leads to a cadence in F major instead of C-flat major. This is a deviation from traditional sonata practice. The treatment gives the impression that the exposition does not end yet because the confirmation of the new key is still not achieved. Therefore, the sudden appearance of the development in measure 148 truly puts the listener in a state of perplexity.

The development exhibits a journey of multiple key areas. Materials from the first theme and the transition in the exposition are thoroughly developed here. Developmental themes occur on a series of pedal tones that sustain throughout. This section gains intensity and reaches its climax in measure 176. Here, the music enters a heightened intensity.

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99 Halbe, 34.
dominant zone. Thematic ideas from the first subject are recalled and played by various groups of instruments. These ideas occur on a prolonged E dominant seventh chord. The reactivation of the dominant of the tonic is very abrupt and is not prepared by any gradual modulation. The harmony suddenly changes to the B-flat dominant seventh chord in measure 189 to prepare for the dramatic arrival of the first theme in the tonic in measure 200.


The recapitulation arrives in measure 195. The end of the development is suddenly followed by the restatement of the introductory gesture on dominant pedal tones that led to the main idea of the first subject in measure 200. Gliere makes a slight textural change: the theme in the harp part occurs on a series of block chords and is accompanied by the orchestra. The first phrase of the second period is in the same key as the exposition while the second one modulates and ends on a perfect cadence in F minor. The transition here (mm. 216-223) is reduced in length and based on new materials.

The second theme starts in measure 224, and there are many changes as well. In the recapitulation, it is in A-flat major, the subdominant key. In addition, Gliere uses different instrumentation. The melody in the first violin part is doubled by the flute while
the harp accompanies with brilliant descending and ascending arpeggios. Unlike the exposition, the recapitulatory second theme produces a satisfactory sense of tonal resolution. The cadence in measure 246 is a very crucial structural point. A perfect cadence fully reestablishes the tonic key and simultaneously marks the end of the recapitulation and the arrival of a coda. Gliere approaches this cadence with a descending passage on prolonged dominant harmony. It is also interesting to note that he gradually reduces the proportion of rhythm from sixteenth notes to triplets (Example 6.5). By combining these elements, this crucial cadence is achieved in a very dramatic manner.

The beginning of the coda in measure 246 is marked by abrupt changes in tempo and texture. It is filled with new thematic material, closing the concerto with a fresh musical idea. The harp solo part plays virtuosic arpeggios above a lively orchestral accompaniment. In measure 275, the tempo, *presto*, becomes even faster, and the music now gains a greater degree of driving energy toward the grand ending of the movement. The last movement is then concluded forcefully with the triple-bold-chord gesture, which is similar to the gesture used in the opening of the first movement as seen in Example 6.6.


![Example 6.6](image)

**Performance guide**

The third movement presents the least technical challenge of all three. The character of this finale movement is energetic and playful. As in the first movement, the theme of this movement is introduced first by solo harp. The harp melody in the right hand with upbeat chords in the left hand in measure 19 should be played with a full, and confident sound exuding a lively character. The grace note in the right hand melody is important. The Salvi publication and Lyra Music Company editions offer substitutions for
the right hand part in measure 19: page 47 of Salvi publication edition titled “Editor’s note part III”, and page 47 of Lyra Music Company edition titled “Variations of specified bars III.” Instead of playing a single melody in the right hand, the melody can be played as four-note chords in the right hand. However in most recordings, the performers choose to play the single note melody. It is important to note the accents in the right hand thirty-second notes from mm. 40-42 (Example 6.7). The accents are notated on every downbeat. In this case, the note that is emphasized is the first thirty-second note of each group similar to violin I in mm. 48-50. In the substitution version (Example 6.8), the accent is not notated in the score, and the editor uses offbeat grace notes instead of on the beat thirty-second notes. It is more likely that the emphasized notes will be the right hand last notes of each measure.


The accompaniment passage in the harp at measure 51 presents descending and ascending arpeggios trading between right hand and left hand. Each hand plays four-finger passages. In mm. 61-62 (Example 6.9), the left hand is required to play two consecutive four-finger passages. The sliding of the fourth finger in the left hand should be practiced carefully to make sure that these two passages are connected smoothly.


Starting at measure 67, a variety of sixteenth-note arpeggios in quintuplets, sextuplets and septuplets are used here giving a sense of improvisation spontaneity. The enharmonic D-sharp is used instead of E-flat to give better space in the right hand arpeggios. In measure 75, the solo harp plays thirty-second-note arpeggios for 8 measures. This passage requires replacing fingers on the same strings. The harpist should pay close attention to the sound quality of the notes that are replaced. For example, the first group of arpeggios in the right hand and the second group of arpeggios in the left hand has the D in common. Placing the left hand on the string too soon will create an unpleasant sound. The glissando following the cadenza-like passage at measure 81 should
be emphasized, since it serves as the dominant leading to the orchestral theme in the tonic key.

The harp introduces the material of the brief transitional section at measure 99. Even though written piano, the descending scale should be heard very clearly. The expressive melody in the solo harp in the second subject at measure 115 does not present a technical challenge. However, the singing melody is very important. The harp plays the accompaniment to the melody in the orchestra at measure 131. This section presents a greater technical challenge in the harp part. The arpeggios alternate between the right and left hands playing groups of three-finger arpeggios. As seen in Example 6.10, one of the challenging passages in the left hand is an arpeggio played by fingers 1-2-4 (the link between mm. 131-132) on E-flat, C-flat, C-flat, C-flat, E-flat. Fingers 2 and 4 span one octave and could produce unevenness when playing this passage quickly. The substitution of B-natural can be used here on finger 2 to reduce the distance from finger 2 to 4 from an octave to a seventh. The only downside of this substitution is that the B pedal has to be changed to B-natural then back to B-flat. However, there is enough time to achieve this pedal change.

The other substitution can be seen in the Salvi Publications and the Lyra Music Company editions, page 47 in both editions. The editor suggests using right hand finger 1-2-3-4 to play the third note group of the measure (E-flat, C-flat, G-flat, E-flat), then proceed to play the next five notes with the left hand, and finally the next four notes with the right hand. Then return to the three-finger pattern.

The rhythm in this section is improvisatory: the sixteenth notes in each measure vary in groups of 10, 11, and 12. It is important to have the downbeats align with the melody in the orchestra. The most important point is when this section reaches closure at measure 147. At this point, the repetition of the F should be clear.

The development section follows at measure 148 with the interplay between the downbeat melody in the bassoon and the same melody on the upbeat in the harp. The harmonics are used in the left hand of the harp while the right hand plays the same melody an octave higher. The performer should be aware of the sound quality in harmonics and balance between both hands. The harp then moves to an accompanimental role, playing arpeggios before returning to play the upbeat melody again in mm. 160-163. The pedal notes in mm. 176-188 is the same rhythm as the pedal notes played earlier in the cello. These pedal notes in the harp part are marked *forte*. Starting at measure 182, the tutti plays the melody. The harp pedal notes should be played with a forceful sound and this phrase should be very rhythmic.
At measure 200, the harp plays the theme in block chords at a *fortissimo* dynamic, with the strongest gesture used in the solo part. Unlike the solo harp in the first subject of the exposition, the harp only plays the downbeat melody in this section while the orchestra plays the upbeat accompaniment. The *poco pesante* marked at measure 200 indicates that this theme should be taken slightly slower and played with more weight.

The harp serves as an accompaniment to the orchestra in the second theme at measure 224. This series of arpeggios has been featured before in the exposition. In mm. 232-237, the harp still plays the accompanimental role but the pattern of the arpeggios changes. The melody on the first beat of each measure should be brought out in the thumb of the right hand. Starting at measure 238, the harp and the first violin play the melody in unison.

At measure 270, in order to have this chord in the harp part, the pedals must be set in this order: D-sharp, C, B-flat, E-flat, F, G-sharp, A-flat. The enharmonic (D-sharp/E-flat and G-sharp/A-flat) used in this harp part shows the composer’s intrinsic understanding of the instrument. The F7sus 4 chord is followed by the perfect authentic cadence in the next measure. To move from measure 270 to the chord in the next measure, the harpist only needs to change 2 pedals (D and G) at the same time.

The brilliant coda features big glissandos and fast arpeggios. At measure 275, the ascending scale passage leads to the high E-flat at the climax (measure 284). The key of E-flat major is secured at the very end in the last two measures producing a satisfying conclusion with a plagal cadence.
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Available Recordings


