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Author(s): Janet Maguire

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Puccini's Version of the Duet and Final Scene of *Turandot*

JANET MAGUIRE

ALTHOUGH it has been said that Puccini did not finish *Turandot* because he could not, I have always been convinced that he had the music for the duet and final scene clearly in mind and that he would have had his *Turandot* Finale ready for the publisher by the end of the year, 1924, had he survived his throat operation. The key to the completion of the opera lies in a relatively few pages of musical ideas sketched out in brief, schematic form. A thorough study of these sketches has revealed almost the entire Finale.

These few pages of sketches contain the essence of Puccini's ideas in shorthand. They were his guidelines. Puccini surely knew how he would have developed these skeletal ideas—they are kernels of musical discourse left in a state of suspension, their story implicit in their nature. My lengthy study of the sketches has resulted in a new version of the *Turandot* duet and final scene based exclusively on Puccini's sketches and the original text with references to earlier passages in the opera.¹

Giacomo Puccini died of a heart attack after an excruciatingly painful operation for throat cancer in Brussels, Belgium, on November 29, 1924. His friend Carlo Clausetti, one of the directors of the G. Ricordi publishing firm of Milan, was by his side when he died. Puccini left thirty-six sketches on the hospital bedside table which Clausetti carefully carried back with him to Milan: these were the only notes Puccini left to indicate what he wanted for the

¹ This article uses a limited number of examples from the sketches and from my completion of the finale because of copyright restrictions. All examples appear, many for the first time in print, by kind permission of G. Ricordi & Co., s.p.a. *Turandot* © G. Ricordi & Co., s.p.a., 1926.

completion of his last opera, *Turandot*, aside from some annotations on one libretto, since lost, and a few brief letters. The opera was completed up until the death of Liù and the exit of the chorus; the thirty-six sketches concern the end of the opera, the love duet and the final triumphant scene with chorus. Little more than a month before he died, Puccini had played the music he intended for this finale on the piano for some friends, including Toscanini, who was to conduct the first performance. But he had not had time to write it out fully, expecting to return after his operation to finish it.

The publishers and Toscanini discussed whether to leave the opera as it was, unfinished, or to appoint another composer to complete the work from the thirty-six sketches. In July of the following year, 1925, Toscanini chose Franco Alfano, a composer who had recently had success with his own opera *La Leggenda di Sakuntala*, to finish Puccini's work. Alfano was extremely busy at the time, working on a French version of his opera for Nice, revising his *Resurrection* for Chicago, and writing a string quartet besides his regular work as director of the Turin Conservatory. He did not relish taking on the task of rewriting Puccini, but Ricordi, who was also his publisher, insisted in such unequivocal terms that he could not refuse. It was clearly emphasized that his work should be based entirely on Puccini's sketches.

Guido Zuccoli, who had done the piano-vocal score for *Turandot*, meticulously wrote out the sketches legibly. Puccini's highly personalized, nearly illegible writing included cancellations, half ideas, a few cryptic indications such as "etc" or "via via su su" (on, on, up, up), and an occasional indication of key or instrumentation; many of these ideas were in the germinal state.

Under pressure from Toscanini, who wanted to perform the opera in November of that year to commemorate the death of the maestro, Alfano, afflicted with an eye infection, launched upon his *Turandot* Finale. The opening measures were fairly clear and easy to follow, but doubt arose following the moment when Prince Calaf kisses Turandot; Alfano resorted to his own style until another bit of music from the sketches became clear and he could return to Puccini's music for another few measures. He did not use all of the thirty-six sketches, probably thinking that Puccini himself was in doubt about them. Some were hastily and sketchily scribbled; others were quite clear but nevertheless were also ignored. Alfano

had a chance to look at Puccini's orchestration of the completed parts of the opera only twenty days before he had to hand in his own completed Finale; he could not in that short period incorporate Puccini's orchestral thinking into his own work.

When Toscanini saw Alfano's work, he despairingly attempted to bring it closer to Puccini. Toscanini had heard Puccini play his finale on the piano and was aware of the glaring differences in style and conception. Toscanini restored some of the original Puccini music from the sketches and cut down Alfano's version severely, much against Alfano's wishes. This is the version which is now performed. In 1982, Alfano's first version was performed in a concert version in London, and it was staged in 1983 at the New York City Opera. Many people felt it to be more suitable because it was longer and more homogeneous, largely in Alfano's own style. Since then the two versions often have been combined.

Toscanini, however, when he conducted the world premiere at La Scala Opera on April 25, 1926, put down his baton after the death of Liù and the exit of the chorus following, turned to the public, and said, "Here is where the opera ends, because at this point the Maestro died," and left the hall.² After the third performance he wanted to have nothing more to do with *Turandot*.

The major events of the duet and the opening of the final scene were written out by Puccini in a strong, decisive hand, on two, three, four, or five staves. The initial fifty-eight measures are complete, with vocal lines and most of the harmonies fully written out. The tenor solo, "O mio fiore," with chorus, is clear and complete over twenty-four measures. Turandot's aria, "Del primo pianto," is indicated in six decisive measures, and there are two hastily scribbled sketches intended to indicate the core of the aria. The tenor's "Il mio mistero?" is clear and complete in six measures with vocal line continuing for five more bars over the indication "etc." Turandot's answer, "So il tuo nome," is very clearly written out over eight full and expressive measures. The duet theme is written out over eight bars and repeated in four. This is followed by four measures of the "name" theme ("Il nome mio nessun saprà") from Calaf's third-act aria, "Nessun dorma," without the vocal line. A return of the English horn and bassoon motif from the begin-

² Eugenio Gara, "Carteggi Pucciniani," quoted by Leonardo Pinzauti in *Giacomo Puccini* (ERI, 1975), p.170.

ning of the third act is written out fully in twelve measures and follows an eight-measure development of previous music. The end of the duet scene is indicated. The fanfare which occurs during the scene change is very clearly written for trumpets, and the opening of the final scene is shown in six measures which bear several indications of instrumentation. All this adds up to 150 measures of music in Puccini's hand.

In the Alfano realization currently in use, only the first fifty-eight measures and a few later sketches are used, orchestrated in a style quite unlike that of Puccini and disregarding some of the libretto, and some of this Puccini music is used inappropriately. The rest of the opera was completed by Alfano in a highly personal manner with only a glance or two at Puccini's sketches. A more Puccinesque solution is clearly possible and highly desirable.

Let us look at the sketches in sequence. We see first that, when the crowd has left the stage after Liù's death, the three chords announcing Calaf's reprimand, "Principessa di morte! Principessa di gelo!" are (contrary to the Alfano orchestration) left open in the middle register, creating an effect of hollowness, expressive of the emptiness after Liù's sacrifice and the sting of Calaf's bitter sorrow and anger. (Ex. 1.) The sketches that follow, up to the moment when Calaf kisses Turandot, are written out on three or four staves, with vocal line and words. This is followed almost faithfully in Alfano's second version, and poses few problems other than certain harmonies that are crossed out and rewritten so that they are difficult to read. The music accelerates and intensifies as the two sing, "La mia bocca fremente premerò su di te!" "Non profanarmi!" and "Ah! Sentirti viva!" (but Puccini has indicated *sempre p* for most of this section in contrast to Alfano's *ff*).³ Puccini's hasty notation uses cryptic or shorthand indications to show the pattern of harmonic movement. The vocal lines are always indicated, so there can be little doubt as to what is intended for these measures. There are also several indications for interpretation and instrumentation.

Puccini's handwriting is difficult to read (Ricordi, his publisher, had a man appointed to interpret it), and his way of leaving out key signatures and indicating accidentals on only one note in a measure is often disconcerting. Nevertheless, by working over these sketches and referring to previous passages in the opera, it is

³ See published edition, Act 3, p. 357, m. 3, to 358, m. All references to the published score are to the G. Ricordi & Co. edition of 1929 (Milan), reprinted in 1978.

Ex. 1.



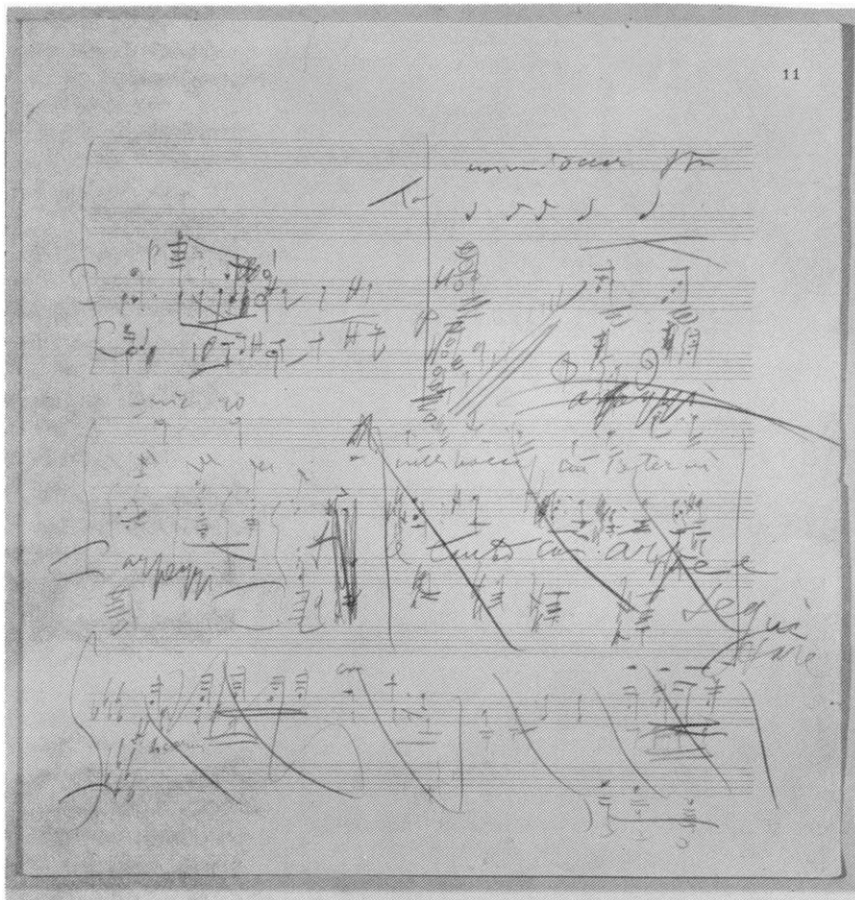
quite possible to decipher the harmonies, their inversions, and the instrumentation required. Some sections are similar to earlier passages and would have been treated in the same way with, perhaps, the addition of an octave above or below, or a slightly different instrumental setting. For example, Turandot's "Mai nessun m'avrà" refers back to the setting in the second act.⁴ The conclusion of the initial section, on the words, "Il bacio tuo mi dà l'Eternità!" uses the same theme that is used in the second act for the words "Gli enigmi sono tre, uno è la vita."⁵

⁴ P. 358, m. 6, and p. 237, m. 6.

⁵ P. 359, m. 7, to 360 m. 1, and p. 240, mm. 1-3.

After these initial fifty-eight measures there are two words scribbled above the last two measures: "in ricorso." Puccini had also written the word, "segno," but canceled it out, preferring the more imposing "in ricorso." By this, he meant that the music should continue as it had in the second act, where it was sung by the chorus on the words "Al Principe straniero offri la prova ardita."⁶ A sketch on a preceding page shows that Puccini had written out this music and then crossed it out because the libretto was revised and the key no longer suited the music added for the new words of the libretto. Nevertheless, Puccini clearly intended to use the theme as before. (Ex. 2.) This music intended to accom-

Ex. 2.



⁶ P. 240, m. 4.

pany the momentous kiss had earlier appeared with chorus singing “Al Principe straniero,” in Turandot’s “Mai nessun m’avrà” from her second-act aria, and in the initial part of the third-act duet. This theme is taken from Minnie’s “Anche tu lo vorrai, Joe?” at the ending of *La Fanciulla del West*.⁷ It is not easy to find parallels between the situations of Minnie and of Turandot, beyond the fact that both are sung by a woman pleading—for her lover or for herself—and both result in the victory of love and the union of the couples. Paradoxically, the music—here used to accompany a kiss of such great moment that the destiny of China is overturned and Princess Turandot, hitherto described as a block of ice, turns into a palpitating “morning flower”—is extremely appropriate. It is a moment that needs the Puccinian flair that this music provides.

The music then dissolves quickly into a diminuendo leading gracefully into Turandot’s reaction of total disbelieving shock: “Che fai di me? . . . Che fai di me? . . . Quel brivido! . . . Perduta! Lasciami! No!” This is the incoherent babbling of someone who has just received the shock of her life and is left almost speechless in the grip of her first love. In this instant, a metamorphosis has taken place. Turandot could not have recuperated sufficient breath to shout resistance after such a violent transformation; instead she remains motionless, breathless, in turmoil, trembling, dumbfounded in the thrill. Turandot and Calaf are also still profoundly stirred by the suicide of Liù, who died for love to enable them to marry: “Prima di questa aurora io chiudo stanca gli occhi perché egli vinca ancora. . . .”⁸

The stage directions found in the libretto following Calaf’s “Il bacio tuo mi dà l’Eternità” are as follows: “E in così dire, forte della coscienza del suo diritto e della sua passione, rovescia nelle sue braccia Turandot e freneticamente la bacia / Turandot—sotto tanto impeto—non ha più resistenza, non ha più volontà. Il contatto incredibile l’ha trasformata. Con accento di supplica quasi infantile mormora: ‘Che fai di me?’”⁹

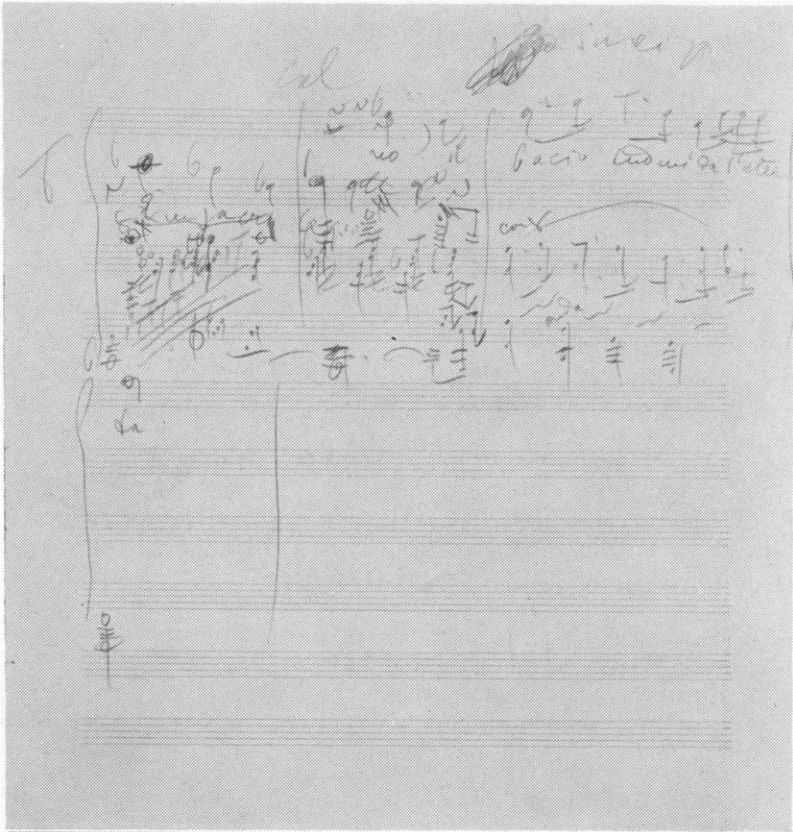
⁷ See piano-vocal score (G. Ricordi & Co. [Milan: 1911], repr. 1980), Act 3, p. 322, m. 1 (rehearsal number 141).

⁸ See published score, p. 341. mm. 5-8.

⁹ “Saying this, strong in the awareness of his rights and his passion, he takes Turandot in his arms, overturning her, and kisses her passionately. Turandot—against such ardor—has no more resistance, no more voice, no more strength of will. This extraordinary contact transforms her. In an almost childlike tone of supplication, she murmurs, ‘What are you doing to me?’”

A subdued musical passage is required to accompany and describe this confusion and to allow her to murmur her monosyllabic reaction; for this first moment of love, Puccini's direction is "con accento di supplica quasi infantile"—"in an almost childlike tone of supplication." A static moment—one of the composer's musical earmarks—is what he certainly had in mind here. Among the random sketches, there is one such small passage, written in bold handwriting and therefore obviously intended for use. It is a tiny three-measure segment marked "lento" and consisting of repeated augmented triads in triplets, one note in the bass at the beginning of each measure, with a tortured melody above. This melody, used as a vocal line, yields the required "accento di supplica quasi infantile," and the augmented triads, repeated in slow tempo, create her state of mind and her helplessness. (Exx. 3, 3a.)

Ex. 3.



Ex. 3a.

Principe **in ricorso**
 il ba - cio tuo mi da' l'è - ter - ni - tà

Soprani, Tenori

Bassi

con 8va

onda

from sketch

continuation by Puccini from Act II,

Sop., Ten. 49 **a tempo ma molto sost.**

Bassi

poco rit.

scene 2, transposed into F

ff

mf

rit. - - - rit. - - - a tempo rall.

Lento

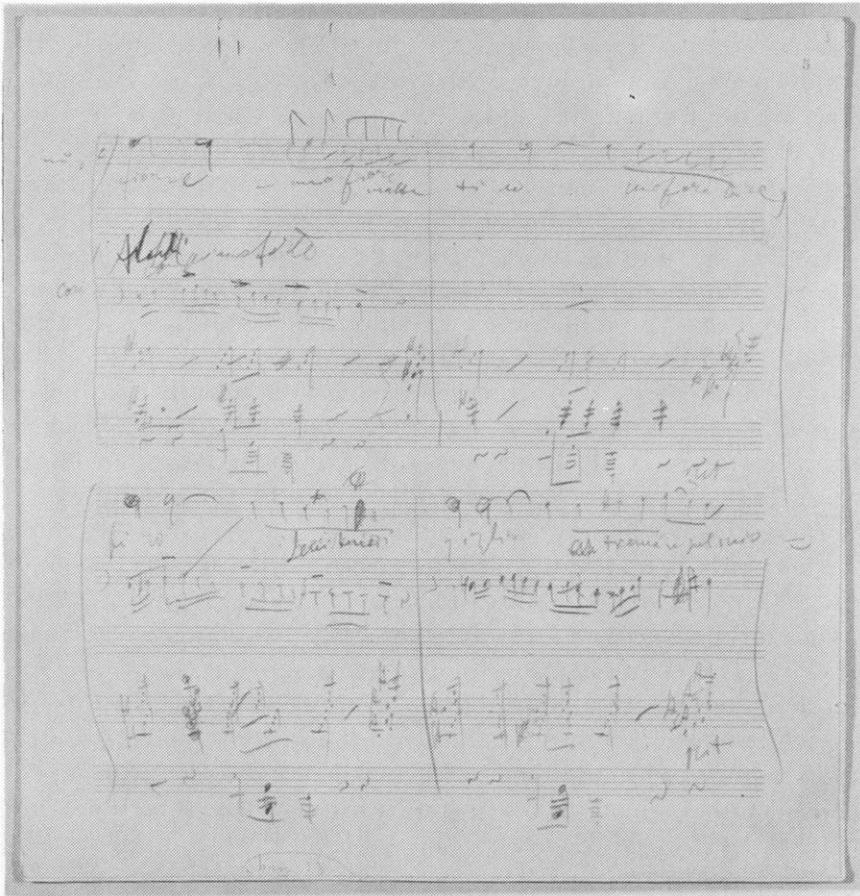
beginning of sketch for
"Che fai di me?"

The three-measure sketch must naturally become four, six, or eight measures—Puccini was a strict formalist—and the addition of one measure makes it possible to take this sketch on to the next, leading into the aria, "O mio fiore."¹⁰ Puccini has written a page of notes for the transition leading to this aria with two choices, one in mezzo-forte and one in pianissimo. He has drawn a line from the latter choice followed by his sign for an arrow pointing to the word "qui" indicating two measures of a rising motif and then the words "qui mio fiore". This is a simple transitional passage evolving from D-flat minor to the A minor of the aria and carrying another strained little melody which easily attaches itself onto the previous one sung by Turandot and then leads into the gentle tenor aria while at the same time resolving the extreme emotion of the former passage.

This tenor aria is quite complete in the sketches: vocal line, words, chorus, harmonies, flute and piano accompaniment, and repeated figures are all indicated clearly, with only a few measures

¹⁰ See published score, pp. 361–363.

Ex. 4.



crossed out and written over so that they are not easy to read. (Ex. 4.) When Turandot enters with “Come vincesti?” only the rhythm is shown, with the indication “coro con orchestra” and the haunting little melody marked “dolente” and “espressivo” from the torture scene of Liù. This melody, as it rises above Turandot’s profound and defenseless dismay and Calaf’s gentle “Piangi?” endows Turandot with the humane qualities that characterized Liù. The reference to Liù is a reference to the power love now exerts over Turandot and to the torment that accompanies love.

The children now enter with their characteristic chorus accompanied by saxophone and tenors. Puccini has written, “scendere

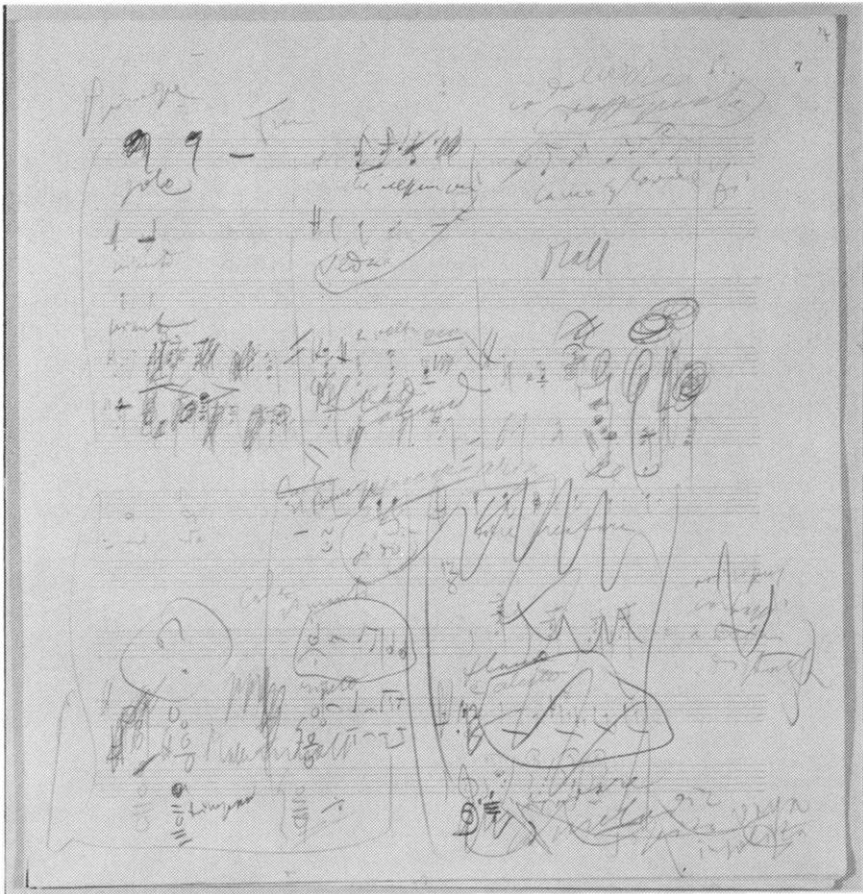
con conto ragazzi e Turandot”—“the children and Turandot descend on the beat”—as if both children and Turandot have a common thought; while Turandot sings “Turandot tramonta,” the children sing “L’alba, luce e vita, tutto é puro, tutto é santo, che dolcezza nel tuo pianto,” and the prince joins them with “É l’alba, e amor nasce col sole.”¹¹ Turandot feels she is being destroyed; her glory as a princess is waning like the cold moon and the nighttime. Throughout the opera the children have announced her appearances as if attributing innocence to her. Now they announce her purification through tears and a new life about to open up with the coming dawn. These measures are all clearly and fully written out.

On the next sketch Turandot sings, “La mia gloria é finita”—indicated “con dolcezza rassegnata,” “with a resigned softness”—with a *rallentando*, a timpani roll, *pianissimo*, a *fermata*, and the words, “cade il manto,” followed by a sustained chord rising half a tone on the last eighth note of the measure and marked “inizio.” (These measures are all clearly and fully written out and have been used by Alfano.) Above is written “Il Principe” and “staccare aria,” then a double bar and the beginning of an arietta on the words, “O mia dolce creatura,” which is crossed out. (Ex. 5.) The segment, this time not crossed out, continues on another sketch with a running triplet figure above which Puccini has written an ingenuous vocal line on the words, “fragile e stanca, quasi non osa più la mia carezza,” words meant to continue, “di sfiorar la tua bianca, divina purità.” Although this sketch was not crossed out, the words are not in the final libretto approved by Puccini; he apparently had changed his mind and discarded the idea. Why it was found among the sketches for the Finale is a mystery, unless he perhaps was considering it for another use, at some later moment in the Finale.

At this moment, Calaf’s words are “No, Principessa, no. La tua gloria risplende nell’incanto del primo bacio, del primo pianto!” These words are the only indication we have for the continuation intended here. They do not suit the little melody of the arietta, and they are too few to furnish a full aria, which would be out of place. What is needed here is a brief tenor solo serving to reaffirm the intensity of Calaf’s love and to soften Turandot’s consternation, bringing the couple gradually closer together and leading into her

¹¹ As on p. 363 of the published score.

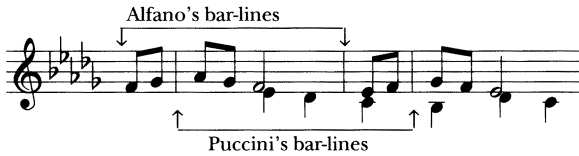
Ex. 5.



aria "Del primo pianto." The eight-measure sketch for the duet music accomplishes this aim and accommodates itself to the words admirably. It provides the lyricism and passion needed for Calaf, and it introduces a theme that will reach its climax at the end of the duet scene. Dramatically, it is appropriate to bring in this theme after Turandot loses her cloak, symbol of her unreachableness and virginity, to show her new state of mind.

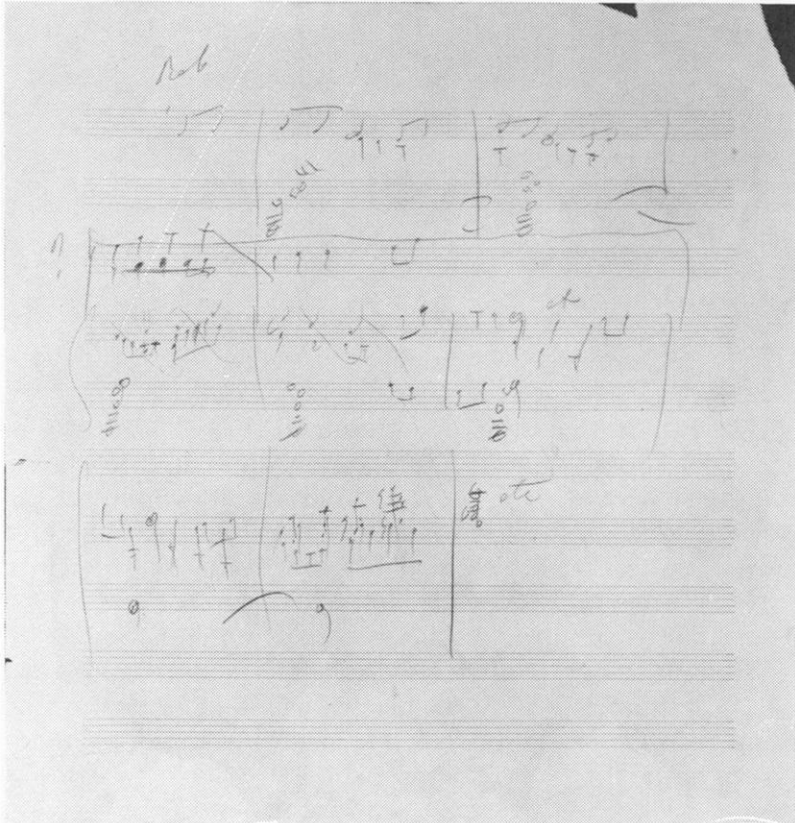
The duet theme is written in Puccini's manuscript with the strong beat, the first beat of the measure, falling on the third note, and not, as Alfano has transcribed it,¹² with the strong beat on the first note of the theme:

¹² Alfano's version is on p. 365, mm. 2–4, of the published score.



That a vocal line is not indicated in either of the love duet sketches would lead one to think that Puccini wanted the voices to remain fairly immobile—as he often does at times of great emotion—letting the orchestra carry the passion of the moment. I have given Calaf repeated notes initially and then have him break into a strong melodic line. This is in the key of D-flat and leads gracefully into the C-sharp with which Turandot's aria opens following Calaf's solo. (Exx. 6, 6a.)

Ex. 6.



Ex. 6a.

con dolcezza rassegnata
rallentando **cade il manto** **rallentando molto**

Turandot

La mia glo-ria è fi - ni - ta!

See sketch, Ex. 5

Principe

No! Principessa, No! La tua glo-ria risplende nell'

Principe

Sketch Ex. 6

in-canto del primo bacio, del pri - mo pian - to! etc.

Puccini wrote six decisive measures for Turandot's aria "Del primo pianto," with vocal line, words, and harmonies complete over two measures and a repeat sign following.¹³ These are the only measures indicated for the aria. The rest of the aria must be pieced together from the brief ideas Puccini jotted down on several isolated pages. There are two among these that would seem fairly clearly intended for use in the aria. One is a two-measure sketch resembling in character and register the middle section, "Principessa Lou-Ling," of Turandot's first aria, "In Questa Reggia."¹⁴ The two-measure segment is marked "Andante" and consists of a simple fourth followed by a scalewise upper third, repeated, occurring again in triplets, with a slight rise.

In Turandot's first aria, her statement "In questa Reggia or son mill'anni e mille un grido disperato risonò / E quel grido traverso stirpe e stirpe qui nell'anima mia si rifugiò" serves as the recitative introducing the aria.¹⁵ For the second aria, I have extended the material of Puccini's sketch for "Del primo pianto" over seventeen measures, serving as recitative, and then introduced the motif from the two-measure sketch which resembles the core of Turandot's first aria on the words "C'era negli occhi tuoi la luce degli eroi" (Ex. 7). To this material bass and treble have been added as in the first aria. A climax is reached upon the words "Vinta più che dal'alta prova, da questo foco terribile e soave, da questa febbre che mi vien da te!" for which another sketch is used. This second sketch seems to have been written in a hesitating hand, but its strong intention is clear nevertheless (Ex. 7a). It ends with the "name" theme, "Il nome mio nessun saprà" from Calaf's aria "Nessun dorma."¹⁶ The sketch provides a suitable climax for the aria and the way it diminishes into the "name" theme leading into Calaf's "Sei mia!" is perfectly smooth.

For the ending of the aria, "più grande vittoria non voler, non umiliarmi più," I have referred to Calaf's aria "Non piangere, Liù"¹⁷ in the accompaniment, feeling that the compassion of his "chiede colui che non sorride più" is similar to Turandot's predicament here. Also, the motion of the music resembles the sketch used for

¹³ See published score, p. 366, mm. 4–9. Alfano has transposed these measures to the key of E-flat minor, lowering the register.

¹⁴ P. 232, mm. 1–3.

¹⁵ P. 231.

¹⁶ P. 292, m. 5.

¹⁷ Pp. 118–123.

Ex. 7.

Turandot

pp **Andante lento**

C'e- ra negli oc- chi tuoi

movendo appenci

pp etc.

Ex. 7a.

Turandot

p

vin - ta più che dall' al - ta pro - va

p *crescendo*

9 10 13

Turandot

Allargando

da ques - to fo - co ter - ri - bi - le e so - a - ve

11 10 12

f *sfz*

the last words of Turandot's aria "Parti, straniero, parti col tuo mister." The sketch was originally written on words that would be deleted, "ma il tuo mistero m'è ignoto ancora," but its use at this particular moment is suggested both by the reference to "mistero," which incites Calaf's reaction, "Il mio mistero?" and by its harmonic suitability to what follows.¹⁸

Had Puccini written out this aria, he surely would have found greater expression for it, but even this rudimentary use of his sketches brings out the significance of the aria, showing Turandot's "sgelamento," or melting, and the newly aroused love and tenderness she feels toward Calaf. For the vocal lines, I have carefully observed Puccini's five-note pattern, his groupings of five notes for each phrase of Turandot's vocal lines. The last words of the aria lie on the lower half of the staff, as if in a quiet confessional, to emphasize the softening of her character and the state of helplessness in which his victory has put her.

Calaf now answers Turandot with "Il mio mistero?" for which vocal line, words, and harmonies are written out over three measures, with only the melody repeated a step higher on each phrase over another five, then one more full measure, and with only the last two measures being unclear. Puccini drew a picture of Timur's head and beard after the measures he had written for "Figlio di Timur," showing that he was apparently deep in thought over them, but he crossed them out. He may have considered using a previous theme from Timur's music, or perhaps the prince's initial comment, "Padre, mio padre, ti ritrovo,"¹⁹ or he may have decided to leave the exclamation unaccompanied. But since the words remain in the final libretto as he approved it, they must be pronounced in one form or another. The best solution we have to work with is the music he had written and then crossed out. If we simply use these measures as he wrote them, we still obtain the necessary dramatic reversal and power behind the revelation of Calaf's name, a revelation that redeems Turandot's status and glory.

Turandot is startled by the revelation and cries, triumphantly, "So il tuo nome! Arbitra sono del tuo destino!" as Calaf retorts, "Che m'importa la vita! E pur bella la morte!" It is a moment of high tension, and Puccini has written out an intensely significant

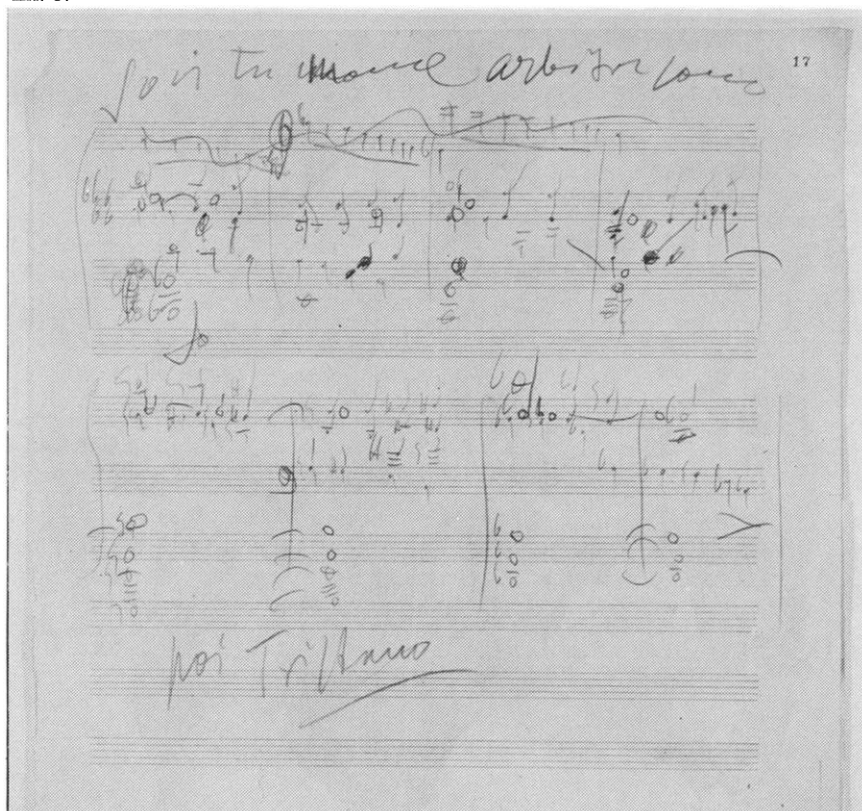
¹⁸ P. 372, m. 8, to p. 373, m. 8.

¹⁹ P. 13; the theme is in the accompaniment.

passage for it in which only the vocal lines are missing. By following the top lines for the voices, however, we have the strong declamatory statement required.

Below this sketch Puccini wrote "Poi Tristano." As Teodoro Celli has pointed out, Puccini has already used a theme from Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*, the big E-flat minor theme at the end of the first act, taken from the sailor's chant at the opening of the first act of Wagner's opera: "Frisch weht der Wind der Heimat zu; mein irisch Kind, wo weilest du?" in the Hypophrygian mode. The theme, which can be extended at will, lends itself to the crescendo and increase in intensity required now as Turandot slowly realizes that her position has changed and she is no longer humiliated, singing, "Non più il grido del popolo, lo scherno! Non più umiliata e prona la mia fronte ricinta di corona!" It easily follows the previous music, with only one measure of transition. (Exx. 8, 8a.)

Ex. 8.



Ex. 8a.

Turandot [Puccini sketch Ex. 8]

So il tuo no - me! Ar - bi - tra sono or - mai del
 Calaf che m'im

Turandot
 tuo de - sti - no!

Calaf
 por - ta la vi - ta! È pur bel - la la mor - te!

Turandot [score end Act I] *rit.* 46 Timur Turandot: Non più il gri - do

p tremolo stretto

"Tristan" theme end Act I, p. 123. The theme is in the accompaniment.

Another small two-measure sketch in D-flat now serves the purpose of creating space between Turandot's outcry "La mia gloria risplende!" and Calaf's answer to her cry. It is marked "Preparare a2 spezzato" and ends with the words, "via, via, su, su," that is, carry on the motif in rising motion. The "a2" is meant to refer to the duet, and "spezzato" means "broken up." Thus, it is intended to present the love duet theme, which in turn is to be interrupted and then resumed again. The sketch creates a buildup: the rising motif and repeated chords in the low bass in a fast tempo naturally end in a high point of dramatic intensity. This occurs as the prince sings "La mia gloria è il tuo amplesso, la mia vita è il tuo bacio!" as the love duet unfolds from the rising motif, both in D-flat. The duet music is interrupted twice: once as Turandot exclaims "Odi, squillan le trombe" and offstage trumpets are heard, and a second time as she sings "Il popolo s'addensa nella Reggia" and the chorus is heard offstage. I have chosen to use the trumpet fanfare from the second-act entrance of the ceremonial scene for the first interruption because the ceremony is again being prepared here;²⁰ for the second interruption, the entrance of the crowd, I have chosen the hummed chorus lying underneath the children's first entrance from Act 1, "Là sui monti dell'est," transposed (p. 58 of score).

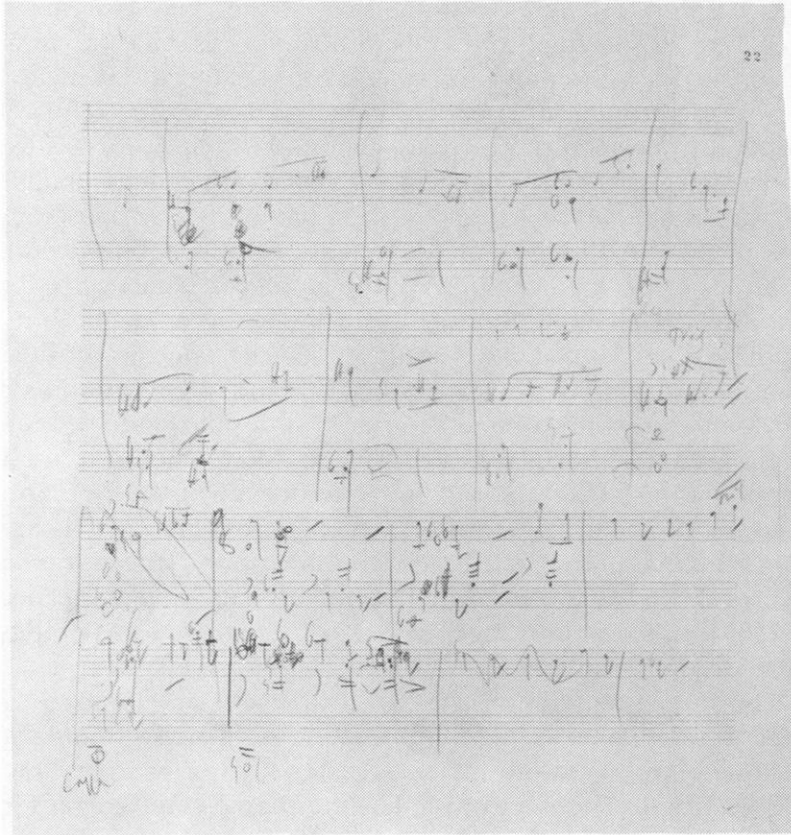
The duet theme continues until it reaches a climax on the words "Il tuo (nome) sarà l'ultimo mio grido d'amore!" and "So il tuo nome!" and the two principals reach a high C together. One of the sketches for the duet music has the theme resolve again into the "name" theme from Calaf's aria, "Nessun dorma". This concludes the duet with a grand flourish.

This theme now dwindles into a tormented statement for which there are two sketches, one in 2/4 time (Ex. 9) followed by the subsequent music and one in 6/4 meter. The words are better suited to the 6/4 meter, as Turandot now sings "Tengo nella mia mano la tua vita, Calaf! Davanti al popolo con me!" but the 2/4 sketch serves to indicate the choral music needed to follow her statement. (Exx. 9a and b.)

This tormented music, as Turandot menacingly and pompously tells Calaf that his life is now in her hands, uses all twelve tones in two-measure sequences. Puccini's feelings about atonal music and

²⁰ See orchestral score (G. Ricordi & Co. [Milan: 1958; repr. 1977]): Act 2, p. 211, rehearsal number 26.

Ex. 9.



his defense of the triad and of melody are well known: he felt atonal music to be anti-music, false to music itself. His use of twelve-tone music here is his way of saying that what Turandot is saying is false. Turandot actually has the power to have Calaf executed, but she will not do so because she has fallen in love with him. Both her threatening words and the music are false; the music gives the lie to her words. Puccini would have heard about the new serial technique developed two years earlier by Arnold Schoenberg and may have discussed it with him when they met in Florence. This rudimentary use of the idea in a negative context is his comment on the subject.

Ex. 9a.

Largamente a tempo affrett. a tempo
rall.

Turandot
So il tuo no - me

Calaf
gri - do d'a - mo - re

ending of sketch Ex. 6 *fff* score Act III end of Prince's aria "Nessun Dorma" transposed

Principe **affrett. rit. a tempo**

Prince's aria Act III

Turandot
ten-go nel-la mia

Principe

dim. *sf*

leading into Ex. 9b

Ex. 9b.

Turandot

mia ma - no la tua vi - ta! Ca - la!

in 6/4 sketch
 these chords are:

Turandot Da - vanti al popolo con me!

tris

Andante mosso
misterioso

p

rit.

 cassa cassa

A soprano with whom I worked on Turandot's vocal lines commented that Turandot's lines here resemble Norma's words in the last act of the Bellini *Norma*: "in mia man alfin tu sei!"²¹ This lies in the lower register of the voice and is one of the most poignant moments in operatic literature. It is fitting to have Turandot sing her menacing words in the lower register as well, to underline the simmering emotion behind them.

The continuation from the 2/4 sketch contains a trumpet call repeated three times and leads into the 9/8 theme, "misterioso," from the beginning of the act,²² played by the bassoon and English horn as the chorus sings "Nessun dorma" and "Pena di morte." Here, as earlier, the chorus is singing offstage; the words are highly poetic, appearing in a dreamlike way, out of the highly emotional texture of the duet ending, "O, Divina! Nella luce mattutina, che dolcezza si sprigiona dai giardini della Cina!" (The libretto indicates that Calaf sings these words, but this is an error.)

The chorus trails off into a pianissimo as Turandot and Calaf are seen moving slowly upstage together to meet the incoming crowds and face the final ceremony. The nocturnal motif mutates, through a suspension on G-sharp, into a theme from the early second act sung by Ping, Pang, and Pong on the words "Ho foreste presso Tsiang," "Ho un giardino presso Kiù," and "potrei tornar laggiu presso il mio laghetto blu!"²³ This concludes with a segment marked "per finire" and "cupa" that serves as a cadence and ends with D-minor staccato chords marked "fine serenata." (Exx. 10, 10a.)

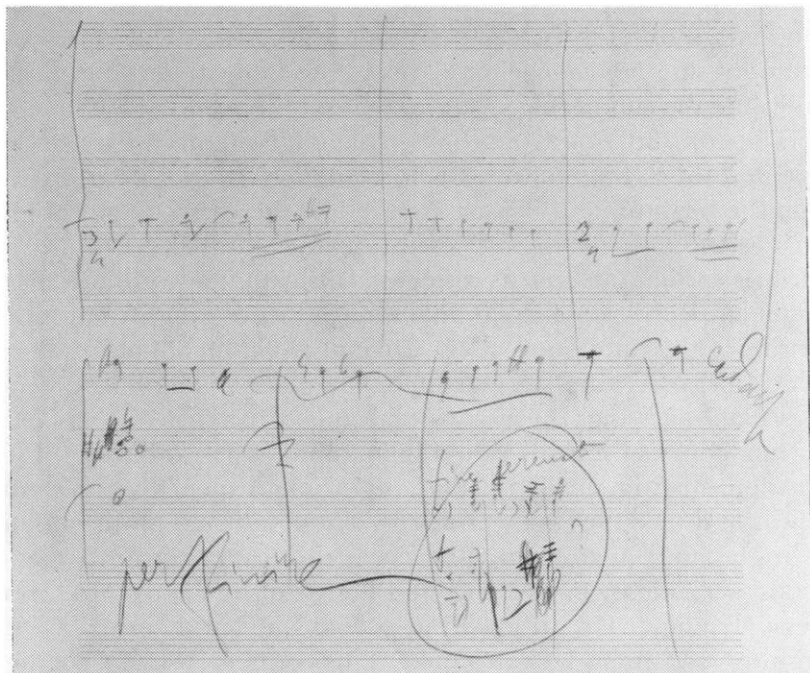
Inspired by Puccini's previous reference to *Tristan und Isolde*, I looked for references in this duet to the second act duet of *Tristan*. Both deal with dawn accompanied by portending death and the supreme power of love. Several elements in Puccini's jottings for the duet ending could, with a stretch of the imagination, be interpreted as referring to the *Tristan* duet, and it would be possible to work up an ending to this scene that suggests this: in the sketch marked "per finire" we find an accelerated rising figuration on the last beat of two of the measures, suspensions and syncopations, a descending scalewise measure, an implied repeated

²¹ See piano-vocal score (G. Ricordi & Co. [Milan: 1900]), Act 2, Scene 10, p. 174, mm. 4–5. The soprano Sandra Hahn, tenor Kristian Johannsen, and pianist Anna Barutti were of great help to me in realizing my new finale.

²² P. 285.

²³ P. 169, m. 1, to p. 171, m. 5.

Ex. 10.



motif, the keys of D minor and A (equivalent to D minor and B in *Tristan*), and a “forte” marking in the last three measures. The gradually increasing intensity and expression of invincible eternal love that characterize the *Tristan* music could be adapted to the *Turandot* love duet by using a syncopated chordal rhythm in the violas, horns, cellos, a triplet figuration in the violins for the required impetus, and a sustained chord over three octaves in the woodwinds, all in the manner of *Tristan*. Puccini must have had the parallels in mind during the composition of this duet but, in the case of *Turandot*, dawn is accompanied by the victory of love over death. In *Tristan* love flourishes only in endless night and continues after death; in *Turandot* love is synonymous with dawn, light, and springtime. Puccini also uses a closed form for the love

duet music rather than the through-composed Wagnerian model which can be extended at will. Wagner's thoughts or events are inextricably interrelated: a theme will arise from the context of another, a pause will occur over the timpani, or there is a silence and then the same music resumes. With Puccini, a pause is a hiatus between one occurrence or idea and another; a musical thought occurs, ends, and cedes the stage to another, which may contradict the previous one, complement it, or change the subject entirely.

Ex. 10a.

from score, opening of Act III, and sketch

Coro

spri-gio - na dai giar-di - ni del - la

etc.

Coro

Pong Ci - na!

Pang Ho fo - re - ste, pres - so tsiang che più bel - le

Ho un giardi - no

sketch and score Act II



Pong
non ce nè, che non han- no om- bra per

Pang
pres- so kin', che la - scia - i per ve- nir

Ping
e po- trei tor- nar lag

Pong
me Ho fo

Pang
qui e che non ri - ve

These different musical philosophies support contrasting ideas: that death will unite the lovers forever or that love is a force that can vanquish death. Wagner interrelates love and death as he

interrelates musical themes. Puccini separates love and death in clearly defined compartments, musical and idealistic. The notion of love enduring, of love stronger than death, is thus supported in two very different ways.

Puccini concludes his duet, not with tremendously sensual, straining music like that of Wagner's *Tristan* duet, "Höchste Liebeslust!" but with a two-measure repeated motive—not even a theme but a reduced and fragmentary bridge, a hint of a theme, a frill sewn into the musical texture for a bas-relief effect. This theme fragment is characteristic of the three masked figures, those inscrutable characters who are nearly always present, commenting upon events in a manner similar to the ancient Greek chorus, seemingly divorced from the action but always in the center of it. These contradictory figures bring Liù to torture and yet dream of their peaceful country homes and the end of blood and terror; they even declare that *Turandot* doesn't exist. Now, at the end of the extreme passions of the love duet, after the sharp contrasts and heated moments, Puccini concludes with a half-motif derived from those surrealistic Carnavalesque figures, the three ministers who will be preparing either the wedding or the funeral: "Io preparo le nozze," "ed io le ossequie."²⁴ The paradox, the ambiguity, the mystification, and the question marks with which Puccini ends the scene are a decisive repudiation of Wagner and the ideals of the nineteenth century and a highly advanced move into twentieth-century sensibility.

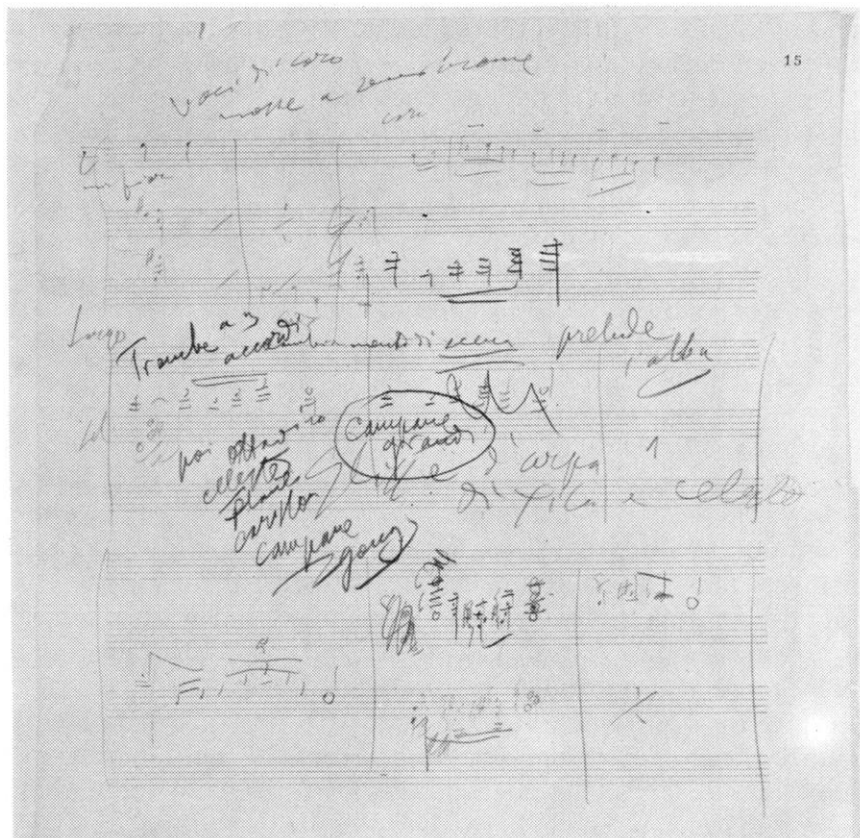
Wagner's lovers lose their identity in love and become one another in the endless night, in the death which dawn brings. Puccini's lovers enforce their identities through the love that dawn brings: "So il tuo nome, arbitra sono del tuo destino"; "Il tuo nome sarà l'ultimo mio grido d'amore." *Turandot*'s identity as a proud princess has been restored to her through his identity; Calaf's identity and his throne have been restored to him through her love, which he has won not only through the overwhelming power of his love but also through the revelation of his name.

Puccini now concludes the duet with five quixotic staccato chords in D minor marked "fine serenata," punctuating and imparting finality to the duet yet suggesting suspense and irresolution. Will she have him beheaded, or will she marry him?

²⁴ P. 149, m. 8, to p. 150, m. 4.

The change of scene is written out in a six-measure trumpet fanfare with a G-minor sustained tremolo above ending with chimes in the bass clef. Another sketch gives several indications for the final scene: the same trumpet fanfare now in the upper register, a tremolo in the middle register, and a two-measure segment in the high register for woodwinds with violins in tremolo. This is the only actual music, however. The other indications are “Largo,” and a list of instruments: “poi ottavino, celeste, flauto, carillon, campane, gong”; “glisse d’arpa di xilo e celeste”; “campane grande”; and “trombe a 3 accordi.” To this Puccini added the words “prelude l’alba” to indicate the music he wanted to use after the scene change (Ex. 11).²⁵

Ex. 11.



²⁵ At the top of this sketch, there is a small three-bar notation for the aria, “O mio fiore”; the two sketches appear on the same sheet for reasons of space and convenience.

The instruments listed and the glissandi indicated refer to the second-act change of scene in which the same type of massive ceremonial scene we have at the end of the opera is also being prepared.²⁶ (The difference is that here the carillon is added.) I read the sketch to mean that the trumpet fanfare constitutes the change of scene; the fanfare is repeated in the upper woodwinds with the addition of the glissandi from the second act; then (the word "poi" is important here) the same idea continues as the curtain opens with the listed instruments added, including the carillon, which changes the character of the music from that of the second act. The context is different, because this scene takes place at dawn, and dawn signifies a great rebirth for Puccini; its light brings with it love and life itself.

For the completion of the last scene we have only the libretto, the words "prelude l'alba," and an indication, which is crossed out, to work into the key of E-flat. According to the libretto, the crowd now sings "Diecimila anni al nostro Imperatore!" Puccini would have used the same theme from the second act to hail the emperor,²⁷ although this scene is shorter since everyone is already present and there is no need to describe the entrances of the various groups of functionaries and the spreading of incense. "Prelude l'Alba" is most probably intended to accompany the three ministers as they spread a golden cloak on the floor for Turandot to walk on as she climbs the staircase; it indicates the children's theme in E-flat, this being the theme used for the "alba" on an earlier occasion. As there are no words here in the libretto, the orchestra is meant to carry the theme alone.

At this point in the libretto we find the indication: "D'un tratto é il silenzio. E in quel silenzio la Principessa esclama"; Turandot therefore is meant to make her momentous statement unaccompanied. She declares that she knows the stranger's name and that his name is love, a declaration marked "mormora quasi in un sospiro dolcissimo." I have used the interval of an ascending fourth with the intention of referring to Liù, who sang a similar ascending fourth when she told Turandot that love was the force that gave her so much strength. Puccini certainly would have brought in another reference to Liù, as it was Liù who first showed the princess what love is and the power it has over death.

²⁶ See orchestral score, Act 2, pp. 222–22b.

²⁷ P. 217, mm. 6–7.

Calaf cries “Amore!” in exultation, on a high B-flat, and the couple embrace. The chorus now finishes the opera, as the couple are locked in embrace, with the words “Sole, Vita, Eternità! Luce del mondo è Amore, E amor! Il tuo nome, O Principessa, è Luce, è Primavera . . . Principessa, Gloria, Amor!” There are no indications in Puccini’s sketches for this chorus. He did not notate this choral conclusion, ostensibly because he intended to use themes from previous sections of the opera and he had these themes clearly in mind.

Some believe that a solution may be hidden in two other pages of sketches that were not among the thirty-six found near Puccini’s deathbed; but these pages consist only of a transition, the initial theme of *Manon Lescaut*, and the music from Edmondo’s aria accompanied by chorus. Puccini wrote in the margin “movenze moderne,” which might suggest that he intended to reuse the theme from *Manon* for *Turandot* by changing the harmonies. He had already referred to the character of Des Grieux in the character of Calaf, in the heroism and indestructible love that are traits of each, and in certain aspects of their vocal lines. But in working the *Manon* theme over in various “moderne” ways, one is left with the nearly impossible task of preserving the joyous character of the theme while yet changing it so that it is not distinctly recognizable as the lead theme of *Manon Lescaut*. I believe that Puccini discarded this idea as being impracticable.

Rather than attempt to revive this theme for the choral ending of *Turandot*, I have used the music for “So il tuo nome,” which has appeared only once briefly in the opera and has the noble and triumphant character required as the people, suddenly liberated from centuries of terror and bloodshed, extol light, life, eternity, spring, and love in a scene of great joy and triumph. But this theme has an eight-measure closed form and the scene requires a terminal motif. The theme that first presents the prince, “Padre, mio padre! . . . O padre, si, ti ritrovo!” (when his identity as the son of Timur is revealed) admirably follows the “I know your name” theme, as if in answer to it. The prince’s theme recurs during the third act as Turandot sings “Sei pallido, straniero”;²⁸ the prince denies that Liù and Timur know him, and Liù asserts that she knows his name but will keep it a secret. It also occurs in a

²⁸ See 326–328, m. 4.

truncated version in the second act as Turandot sings “Non gettar tua figlia nelle braccia dello straniero,” again referring to the prince.²⁹ The theme identifies Calaf in each of these instances. It is his distinguishing mark, it associates him with Timur and Liù, and it defines his virtue, heroism, nobility, and victory by its broad open lines, its momentum or “slancio,” and the sense of great finality with which it concludes. The use of the prince’s distinguishing theme as the liberating agent for the people of China, its strength underlining the overpowering love that has transformed Turandot and ended the reign of blood and terror, yields an effective conclusion to the opera.

Ex. 12.

Coro sketch Ex. 8

So - le! vi - ta! È - ter - ni - tà!

Lu - ce del mon - do è A - mo - re, è A -

²⁹ P. 266, m. 2, to 267, m. 4.

Coro score Act I

Soprani mor! Il tuo no-me, O Princi-

Tenori

Bassi

Guardie

Largo sost.

4

ffz

The two identity themes, “So il tuo nome” and “Padre, son io,” together consolidate Puccini’s idea of love revealed through identity. They are the only themes in the opera possessing the qualities capable of giving the opera the joyous and imposing finality it needs in order to conclude on the transcendental note demanded by the text (Ex. 12).³⁰ The message of *Turandot*, that love transcends death (love arises between Turandot and Calaf as a consequence of the love and death of Liù, love abolishes the death edict, love is born in the light of dawn, love is realized through the revelation of one’s identity, that is, through self-knowledge) has been obscured by Alfano’s finale which, although it contains many

³⁰ I cannot reproduce my own version for copyright reasons so I have merely indicated the words as sung by the chorus. In the last three measures in my version, taken from the first act, I have transposed the music to D-flat and omitted Puccini’s choral parts.

of Puccini's musical themes, disregards his orchestration and the continuity of his thought, and undermines the concept of this tremendous finale.

To conclude the opera, Puccini would have used a choral crescendo leading to a thunderous coda similar to that of the ending of the second act, with full orchestra and percussion, including carillon, large bells, chimes, and gong, with, of course, timpani, bass drum, cymbals, and xylophone.

According to Teodoro Celli, there were other pages left by Puccini with indications, both musical and verbal, in the margins of the libretto, but these pages are lost. No doubt they were indications for the pieces of Turandot's aria and the final chorus missing from the thirty-six pages of manuscript we have available. Notwithstanding this loss, it is clear from the sketches available to us that Puccini wrote down almost all the music for the final duet and conclusion of the opera, either in entirety or in abbreviated form, and that he had the entire finale ready in his mind. If we have patience and an inviolable belief in the genius of the composer, the ending of *Turandot* can be understood and realized. Renè Leibowitz described Puccini as one of the most "radical" composers of our century and added that *Turandot* points the way to opera of the future. If this is indeed true, it is imperative for us today to understand the work as Puccini conceived it.

Appendix 1. Original libretto for the finale of *Turandot* by Giuseppe Adami and Renato Simoni used, along with the sketches, as the basis for the musical reconstruction.

Il Principe ignoto

Principessa di morte!
 Principessa di gelo!
 Dal tuo tragico cielo
 scendi giù sulla terra!
 Ah! Solleva quel velo;
 guarda, guarda, o crudele,
 quel purissimo sangue
 che fu sparso per te!
 (*E si precipita verso di lei, strappandole il velo.*)

Turandot

(*con fermezza ieratica*)
 Che mai osi, straniero!
 Cosa umana non sono . . .
 Son la figlia del cielo
 libera e pura! . . . Tu
 stringi il mio freddo velo,
 ma l'anima è lassù!

Il Principe ignoto

(*che è rimasto per un momento affascinato, indietreggia. Ma si domina. E con ardente audacia esclama:*)
 La tua anima è in alto,
 ma il tuo corpo è vicino!
 Con le mani brucianti
 sfiorerò i lembi d'oro
 del tuo manto stellato!
 La mia bocca fremente
 premerò su di te!
 (*E si precipita verso Turandot tendendo le braccia.*)

Turandot

(*arretrando sconvolta, spaurita, disperatamente minacciosa:*)
 Non profanarmi!

Il Principe ignoto

(*perdutamente*)
 Ah! . . . Sentirti viva;

Turandot

Indietro! . . . Indietro . . .

Il Principe ignoto

Il gelo tuo è menzogna!

Turandot

No! . . . Mai nessun m'avrà!
 Dell'Ava mia lo strazio
 non si rinnoverà!
 Non mi toccar, straniero! . . . E un sacrilegio!

Il Principe ignoto

No! il bacio tuo mi dà l'Eternità!
(E in così dire, forte della coscienza del suo diritto e della sua passione, rovescia nelle sue braccia Turandot, e freneticamente la bacia. Turandot—sotto tanto impeto—non ha più resistenze, non ha più voce, non ha più volontà. Il contatto incredibile l'ha trasfigurata. con accento di supplica quasi infantile mormora:)

Turandot

Che fai di me? . . . Che fai di me? . . .
 Qual brivido! . . . Perduta! . . .
 Lasciami! . . . No! . . .

Il Principe ignoto

Mio fiore,
 mio fiore mattutino . . . Ti respiro . . .
 I seni tuoi di giglio
 tremano sul mio petto . . . Già ti sento
 mancare di dolcezza . . . tutta bianca
 nel tuo manto d'argento . . .

Turandot

(con gli occhi velati di lagrime)
 Come vincesti?

Il Principe ignoto

(con tenerezza estatica)
 Piangi?

Turandot

(rabbrivido)
 E l'alba! E l'alba!
(e quasi senza voce)
 Turandot tramonta! . . .

Il Principe ignoto

(con enorme passione)
 E l'alba! E l'alba! . . . E amor nasce col sole!
(Ed ecco nel silenzio dei giardini dove le ultime ombre già accennano a dileguare, delle voci sommesse sorgono lievi e si diffondono quasi irreali.)

Le Voci

L'alba! . . . L'alba! . . .
 Luce! Vita!
 Tutto è puro!
 Tutto è santo!

Principessa,
che dolcezza
nel tuo pianto! . . .
.....

Turandot

Ah! che nessun mi veda! . . .
(*e con rassegnata dolcezza*)
La mia gloria è finita!

Il Principe ignoto

(*con impetuoso trasporto*)
No, Principessa! No . . .
La tua gloria risplende nell'incanto
del primo bacio,
del primo pianto! . . .

Turandot

(*esaltata, travolta*)
Del primo pianto . . . sì . . .
Stranier, quando sei giunto,
con angoscia ho sentito
il brivido fatale
di questo male
supremo!
Quanti ho visto sbiancare,
quanti ho visto morire
per me! . . .
E li ho spregiati,
ma ho temuto te! . . .
C'era negli occhi tuoi
la luce degli eroi,
la suprema certezza,
e per quella t'ho odiato,
e per quella t'ho amato,
tormentata e divisa
tra due terrori uguali:
vincerti od esser vinta . . .
E vinta son! . . . Son vinta,
più che dall'alta prova,
da questo foco
terribile e soave,
da questa febbre che mi vien da te!

Il Principe ignoto

Sei mia! . . .

Turandot

Questo chiedevi . . .

ora lo sai! Più grande
vittoria non voler!
Non umiliarmi più! . . .
Di tanta gloria altero,
parti, straniero,
parti col tuo mistero!

*Il Principe ignoto**(con caldissimo impeto)*

Il mio mistero? . . . Non ne ho più! . . . Sei mia!
Tu che tremi se ti sfioro,
tu che sbianchi se ti bacio,
puoi prendermi se vuoi!
Il mio nome e la vita insieme ti dono:
Io son Calaf, il figlio di Timur!

*Turandot**(alla rivelazione improvvisa e inattesa, come se d'un tratto la sua anima fiera e orgogliosa si ridestasse ferocemente)*

So il tuo nome! . . . Il tuo nome . . . Arbitra sono
ormai del tuo destino! . . .

*Calaf**(trasognato, in esaltazione ebbra)*

Che m'importa la vita!
E pur bella la morte!

*Turandot**(con crescente febbrile impeto)*

Non più il grido del popolo! . . . Lo scherno! . . .
Non più umiliata e prona
la mia fronte ricinta di corona! . . .
So il tuo nome! . . .
La mia gloria risplende!

Calaf

La mia gloria è il tuo amplesso!
La mia vita il tuo bacio! . . .

Turandot

Odi? Squillan le trombe . . . E l'alba! E l'alba!
E l'ora della prova!

Calaf

Non la temo!
Dolce! morir così . . .

Turandot

Nel cielo è luce!
Tramontaron le stelle! E la vittoria! . . .
Il popolo s'addensa nella Reggia.
E so il tuo nome! . . . So il tuo nome! . . .

Calaf

Il tuo

sarà l'ultimo mio grido d'amore!

Turandot

(ergendosi tutta, regalmente dominatrice)

Tengo nella mia mano la tua vita!

Calaf! . . . Davanti al popolo, con me! . . .

(Si avvia verso il fondo. Squillano più alte le trombe. Il cielo ora è tutto soffuso di luce.

Voci sempre più vicine si diffondono.)

Calaf

O Divina!

Nella luce

mattutina

che dolcezza

si sprigiona

dai giardini

della Cina! . . .

La scena si dissolve.

Quadro secondo

L'esterno del palazzo imperiale, tutto bianco di marmi traforati, sui quali i riflessi rosei dell'aurora s'accendono come fiori. Sopra un'alta scalea, al centro della scena, l'Imperatore circondato dalla corte, dai dignitari, dai sapienti, dai soldati. Ai due lati del piazzale, in vasto semicerchio, l'enorme folla che acclama:

La Folla

Diecimila anni al nostro Imperatore!

(I tre Ministri stendono a terra un manto d'oro, mentre Turandot ascende la scala.

D'un tratto è il silenzio. E in quel silenzio la Principessa esclama:)

Turandot

O Padre Augusto . . . Ora conosco il nome

dello straniero . . .

(e fissando Calaf che è ai piedi della scalea, finalmente vinta, mormora quasi in un sospiro dolcissimo:)

Il suo nome . . . è Amore!

Calaf

(con un grido folle)

Amore! . . .

(E sale d'impeto la scala, e i due amanti si trovano avvinti in un abbraccio, perdutamente, mentre la folla tende le braccia, getta fiori, acclama gioiosamente:)

La Folla

O sole!

Vita!

Eternità!

Luce del mondo è Amore . . .

E Amor!

Il tuo nome, o Principessa, è Luce . . .

E Primavera . . .

Principessa!

Gloria!

Amor!