Editing Puccini's Operas

The Case of "Manon Lescaut"*

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The present study surveys the changing editorial and publishing practices of G. Ricordi & C. in Milan as applied to Giacomo Puccini's third opera and first popular success, *Manon Lescaut* (1893).[1] In his letters the composer called it a "youthful" work with "some defects" and referred to his repeated efforts to "stabilize" the score.[2] Therefore, as will be demonstrated, this oft-revised music provides typical examples of the editorial difficulties surrounding the twelve Puccini operas published by the Ricordi firm.[3] Given the obvious limitations of this study, further research dedicated to the other operas is needed to construct a more exhaustive argument.[4] However, some of the basic problems of editing these operas are examined in detail here.

Puccini's special rapport with his publisher created a unique editorial process. The composer's filial relationship with Giulio Ricordi since early adulthood influenced all sectors of his personal and professional life.[5] Giulio Ricordi arranged for Puccini's commissions and subsidies, bargained for libretto rights on his behalf, and went to great lengths to present his operas under the most favorable circumstances – in the most receptive city and theatre, with the best possible singers and conductors, and timed advantageously in the season respective to other operas. Furthermore, Giulio Ricordi served as a constant literary, dramatic and musical critic and, frequently, also as mediator between musician and librettists. Finally, this father figure entered Puccini's personal sphere, attempting to temper some of the

* This study is dedicated to Prof. Frank D'Accone of the University of California at Los Angeles with admiration and affection. Thanks are extended to Prof. Philip Gossett of the University of Chicago for his criticism of this study. Great thanks are extended to Signora Luciana Pestalozza and Signor Carlo Clausetti of G. Ricordi & C. in Milan for the repeated privilege of studying the autographs, annotated scores and librettos in the Archivio Storico. Although the present company name, "G. Ricordi & C.," did not come into use until around 1896, it is used throughout this study to indicate the Ricordi music publishing firm.

[1] A detailed examination of the origins of this opera will be given in S. SCHERR, *Puccini's "Manon Lescaut": Compositional Process, Stylistic Revisions, and Editorial Problems*, Ph. D. dissertation in progress, University of Chicago.

[2] E. GARA, ed., *Carteggi Pucciniani* (Milan 1958), no. 537 (13 January 1908), p. 363; no. 781 (December 1920), p. 498; and no. 813 (14 August 1921), p. 513–14.

[3] Puccini turned to the rival Milanese publishing house of Sonzogno for *La Rondine*, his only opera not handled by G. Ricordi & C.

[4] The literature devoted to editing Puccini's music is sparse. Some essential essays are: A. GROOS and R. PARKER, *Puccini at Work: A Note on the Autograph Score*, in: *Giacomo Puccini: "La Bohème"* = Cambridge Opera Handbooks (Cambridge 1986), p. 102–14; R. PARKER, *Analysis: Act I in Perspective*, in: M. CARNER, ed., *Tosca* = Cambridge Opera Handbooks (Cambridge 1985), p. 120; and J. SMITH, *Tribulations of a Score*, in: *Puccini: "Madama Butterfly"*, ed. N. John = English National Opera/The Royal Opera Guide 26 (London and New York 1984), p. 15–24.

[5] Giulio Ricordi (1840–1912) entered the G. Ricordi & C. music publishing firm in 1863 and took over its management in 1888 at the death of his father Tito. His first contact with Puccini was in 1884 when G. Ricordi & C. bought all rights to publish, perform and translate Puccini's first opera (*Le Villi*) in an expanded two-act version. Moreover, the editors commissioned a second opera by Puccini based on a libretto by Ferdinando Fontana to be given at La Scala. Thus began the G. Ricordi & C. subsidies which sustained Puccini during his early productive years as a composer.

excesses in lifestyle which he felt drained the composer's creative drive. Hence Puccini became part of the G. Ricordi & C. "family" and his letters and presence at the editorial office in Milan were frequent up until Giulio Ricordi's death.

Puccini's box office successes prompted an enormous number of editions. Despite the composer's close relationship with his publisher and his repeated attempts to control the performance and printing of his music, the editorial process often slipped out of his hands. Comparisons between diverse printings of the same opera frequently reveal different readings of the same music, suggesting that multiple versions may exist for each opera, as has already been demonstrated for *La Bohème*, *Tosca*, *Madama Butterfly*, and *Turandot*. The question of these many versions has not yet been sufficiently addressed. The printing practices of G. Ricordi & C. in the early years of Puccini's editions (1884–1943) sometimes obscured the presence of even substantial revisions. Hence the task of identifying the versions is an essential first step toward a critical edition.

The Puccini letters now in print provide occasional clues to projected or completed revisions. However, the principal tools for tracing the evolution of each opera are the extant musical sources, which may be divided into three possible groups: autographs, printed scores, and annotated printed scores. All three of these groups are deceptively simple – sporadic, surviving evidence of an intense interchange between composer and editor where many conversations and understandings were left undocumented. We attempt here to alert the reader to the pitfalls already encountered in dealing with these three groups of sources.

1. *The Autographs*

G. Ricordi & C. preserved the first complete version of each opera in the form of the autograph complete orchestral score. It served not only as the composer's final draft, presented to the Copisteria for the purpose of preparing vocal, instrumental and choral parts, but sometimes (as we assume is the case of *Manon Lescaut*) also as the conductor's score for the opera's premiere. Incomplete versions prior to the autograph orchestral score may exist in various formats.

First, Puccini occasionally wove previously-composed music into new musical textures. Therefore, fragments of earlier works, such as his ill-fated second opera *Edgar*, may be identified in later contexts.

Single autograph folios have been located by Hopkinson[6] and others in various libraries and private collections. In the letters there is mention of Puccini giving away autograph sheets of some of his music. It is not always known whether these single sheets represent the original sheets of composition, copies from a separate original, or possibly earlier (or later) variants.

In Groos and Parker's study of *La Bohème*, another compositional stage prior to the autograph complete orchestral score is identified – that of "a 'continuity draft', written on the minimum number of staves, usually containing no more than the essential musical lines, the harmony, and an approximate indication of the

[6] C. HOPKINSON, *Bibliography of the Works of Giacomo Puccini (1854–1924)* (New York 1968).

accompanimental texture."[7] No continuity drafts have been located for *Manon Lescaut*. However, the next step, a "skeleton score", may be identified as the original layer of composition in the autograph complete orchestral score. This fundamental sketch is in very dark brown ink and includes the vocal lines, instrumental melodies (especially the first violin), stage directions, and barlines. It is not clear whether it was originally composed on the full orchestral paper or, possibly, composed on another sheet (a missing "continuity draft") and copied onto this score.

Groos and Parker also point out that in the week of *La Bohème*'s premiere in Turin, a piano/vocal reduction of Musetta's aria "Quando men vo" was published as a musical supplement to Ricordi's house journal, the *Gazzetta musicale di Milano*, in a version preceding the definitive one – thus highlighting another potential source of early, incomplete versions.[8]

The autograph complete orchestral scores may therefore be supplemented by separate, incomplete versions. Additionally, the complete score itself may show several versions – some crossed out, pasted over, sewn shut, or implied by the addition or deletion of a folio from a known grouping of bifolios.

The autograph score of *Manon Lescaut* is a collection of several groups of folios sewn together in four volumes, indeed with several crossed-out "first attempt" pages containing early versions respective to the completed score. The collocation of its diverse components may be analyzed using not only obvious criteria such as paper dimension, preprinted staves, amount of wear shown on the paper edges, and the folio's physical position at the moment the score was bound, but also the presence or lack of the G. Ricordi & C. name preprinted on the inside edge,[9] and the cut-versus-ripped appearance of the paper edges.[10] These indications often fall into regular patterns and can signal an insertion or deletion to an original grouping. Other criteria include dates and titles (beginnings and ends of sections with act numbers and instructions of what is to follow), pagination (especially if multi-layered), the ink colors and differing scripts of Puccini (suggesting later sittings) and of the copyists whose peripheral marks can show subsequent versions of the music, particularly cuts and insertions.[11] The separate folios mentioned above may then be compared to the paper type, collocation and script of the autograph.

Although the autograph complete orchestral score of *Manon Lescaut* was presented to the Copisteria, it continued to be revised. Since it served as conductor's

[7] GROOS/PARKER, *La Bohème*, p. 102.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 104. Prof. Francesco Degrada has kindly pointed out that another, rather different source of documentary evidence which should be taken into account is G. Ricordi & C.'s Archivio Legale, situated in via Berchet 2, Milan.

[9] The most common groupings are two nested bifolios with the G. Ricordi & C. name printed vertically on the inside edges of p. 1, 3, 6, and 8.

[10] The pattern for the G. Ricordi & C. nested bifolios is: cut on the bottom and ripped at the top and outer edges. Entire nested bifolios or single sheets may be inserted upside down, but such occurrences continue to affirm the presence or lack of groupings.

[11] Using the autograph complete orchestral score of *Manon Lescaut*, the copyists prepared the first Italian piano/vocal score, the choral parts (separate for men and women), and instrumental parts. It also eventually served for the preparation of the first printed conductor's scores. Therefore marks indicating page breaks appear at the upper and lower edges, while stave number indications are seen in the outside margins. The copyists' marks usually appear in colored pencil (green and purple are the most frequent) whereas regular black lead pencil and red pen or pencil are reserved for Puccini and Toscanini, respectively.

score for the opera's premiere, some of these annotations represent changes which arose during the first rehearsals. These early revisions may be identified by comparing the autograph with scores printed for the first rehearsals (choral, instrumental or piano/vocal where extant). Once the first orchestral (conductor's) score of *Manon Lescaut* was printed, the autograph was set aside and received no further modifications.

G. Ricordi & C. protected the autograph complete orchestral scores and the annotated printed scores by removing them to the countryside during the World War II bombardments of Milan. All other sources extant at the offices in Milan prior to the war (rental scores, instrumental and choral parts, piano/vocal editions, printing plates, etc.) were destroyed along with the publishing headquarters in 1943. While some traces of subsequent editions have been preserved in the Archivio Storico, most of the missing evidence for revised versions must be reconstructed using older editions in various libraries, for the most part piano/vocal reductions.[12]

2. *The Printed Scores*

Hopkinson's landmark bibliography presents an initial listing of the printed scores, divided into versions.[13] Hopkinson was deceived by dissimilar versions of *Manon Lescaut* with similar covers and number of pages. While his bibliography lists six versions, eight versions of this opera have been found, as shown in Table 1 (p. 66f.).

Why did G. Ricordi & C. print so many editions of the same opera? Each of these publications served a specific purpose. Overall they create an image of G. Ricordi & C. both as a promoter of lyric opera with an investment in its performance rights and rental library, as well as an enthusiastic publisher of music for home entertainment and teaching purposes, for which Giulio Ricordi was particularly known.

According to Hopkinson, the first printed version of the operas (excepting *Le Villi*) was the Italian piano/vocal edition prepared for the first rehearsals shortly before the premiere and available to the public at the time of the first performance. G. Ricordi & C. also printed choral parts and parts for the more numerous instruments (particularly the strings), although not always before the premiere. In the case of *Manon Lescaut*, preparations for engraved instrumental parts were not begun until two days after the premiere (which confirmed the opera's success), when the strings were assigned a plate number. Parts for the other instruments were eventually printed in the months and years to come.[14]

[12] The information gathered here is limited to editions of *Manon Lescaut* examined personally by the author, which include 84 copies of the complete opera in various genres, 181 copies of separately-printed excerpts or re-arrangements, and 35 librettos.

[13] HOPKINSON, *Bibliography*.

[14] The dates of known plate number assignments for *Manon Lescaut* performing parts (premiered on February 1, 1893) are as follows: Italian piano/vocal: August 17, 1892; women's and men's choruses with Italian text: September 10, 1892; violin I/violin II/viola/violoncello and contrabbasso: February 3, 1893; (conductor's) orchestral score and winds: March 20, 1893; German piano/vocal: May 12, 1893 (first performance with German text: Hamburg, November 7, 1893); women's and men's choruses with German text: September 5, 1893; Italian/English piano/vocal: April 14, 1894 (first performance with English text: London, May 14, 1894); French piano/vocal: August 29, 1905 (first performance with French text: Nice, March 19, 1906).

TABLE 1

Known Editions of Complete Scores of Puccini's *Manon Lescaut*

N. B. The date indicates when the plate number was assigned or the earliest known blind stamp (b.s.). The symbol § indicates that this copy has not yet been located. The symbol * indicates that this copy has been given an approximate date. If a printing follows the previous one within two years, it is grouped together as one printing with the exception of the early Italian piano/vocal scores.

Printing	Text	Date	Number of Pages	Plate Number
GROUP I				
1st piano/vocal	Italian	17 Aug 1892	277	95567
GROUP II				
2nd piano/vocal	Italian	b.s.=Apr 1893	275	95567
1st piano solo	Italian	6 Mar 1893	146	96361
conductor's score (Library of Congress)	Italian	received on 20 Mar 1893	725	96389
1st piano/vocal	German	12 May 1893	270	R&C 96463
GROUP III				
pagination on bottom:				
3rd piano/vocal	Italian	b.s.=Nov 1893	262	95567
pagination on top:		per Hopkinson:		
4th piano/vocal	Italian	b.s.=June 1895	262	95567
1st piano/vocal	Rus./Ital.	1893–1894	247	20093–20098
2nd piano/vocal	Rus./Ital.	1969	235	5063
1st piano/vocal	Eng./Ital.	14 Apr 1894	304	97321
2nd piano/vocal	Eng./Ital.	(1911)	304	97321
3rd piano/vocal	Eng./Ital.	b.s.=Oct 1919	304	97321
4th piano/vocal	Eng./Ital.	1979	304	97321
2nd piano solo	Italian	b.s.=June 1896	145	96361
3rd piano solo	Italian	b.s.=1908	145	96361
4th piano solo	text=Italian publisher = German	b.s.=May 1914	145	96361
5th piano solo	Italian	b.s.=Jan 1925	145	96361
modified conductor's scores (Archivio Storico Ricordi)	Italian	reprinted c.Nov 1893	725 numbering modified internally	96389
GROUP IV				
5th piano/vocal	Italian	b.s.=June 1904	264	95567
1st piano/vocal	French	29 Aug 1905	266	110900
2nd piano/vocal §	French	(1911)	266	110900

Printing	Text	Date	Number of Pages	Plate Number
(GROUP IV)				
2nd piano/vocal	German	(*1914–1923*)	259	R&C 96463
3rd piano/vocal	German	(*1929–1930*)	259	R&C 96463
GROUP V				
6th piano/vocal	Italian	b.s.=Jan 1909	258	95567
7th piano/vocal	Italian	b.s.=Jan 1919	258	95567
1st orchestral score for the public	Italian	3 June 1914	464	115300
GROUP VI				
8th piano/vocal	Italian	b.s.=Mar 1923	264	95567
2nd orchestral score for the public	Italian	(*1925–1927*)	486	115300
3rd piano/vocal	French	(*1928–1943*)	266	110900
GROUP VII				
9th piano/vocal	Italian	b.s.=Feb 1927	263	95567
10th piano/vocal	Italian	b.s.=1943	263	95567
11th piano/vocal	Italian	(*1945*)	263	95567
6th piano solo §	Italian	b.s.=1943	145	96361
4th piano/vocal	German	12 Oct 1955	263	129143
5th piano/vocal	German	1972	263	129143
3rd orchestral score for the public	Italian	12 May 1958	483	P.R. 113
GROUP VIII				
12th piano/vocal (Mario Parenti, ed.)	Italian	1960	263	95567
13th piano/vocal	Italian	1965	263	95567
14th piano/vocal	Italian	1968	263	95567
15th piano/vocal	Italian	1978	263	95567
4th piano/vocal §	French	(1967)	265	110900
5th piano/vocal	Eng./Ital.	1980	304	97321
4th orchestral score for the public	Italian	1980	483	P.R. 113

The second group of publications represented the version as amended during the initial rehearsals and deposited soon afterwards in the copyright libraries. This usually appeared in three formats: orchestral (conductor's score), piano/vocal, and pianoforte solo, the latter two available for sale to the public. The pianoforte solo edition, an enormously popular genre in the years before recordings, was intended purely for home entertainment. Therefore it was reprinted but not updated,[15] as opposed to the orchestral and piano/vocal scores.

Unlike all the other music sold to the public up until 1915, the Italian piano/vocal editions doubled as rental scores, differing from those sold to the public only in the plain grey cover with rental label and the simplified or eliminated introductory pages.[16] The continual updating of these many rental scores was expedited by frequent reprintings. For *Manon Lescaut*, changes first appeared in print in the Italian piano/vocal versions and then gradually filtered out to the other editions.

The first printed orchestral score served both for copyright deposit and as rental score (identified here as "conductor's score").[17] In the case of *Manon Lescaut*, they were engraved by hand rather than with musical punches (as in the later orchestral editions). The original conductor's score of March 1893 was immediately sent for copyright deposit. Then, in the year following the premiere, *Manon Lescaut* underwent some substantial revisions, particularly to the end of Act I, which prompted a re-edition of the conductor's score at the end of 1893. Pages containing extensive revision showed a rosette at the top of the page; however, not all changes were accompanied by a rosette. After this reprinting, all subsequent revisions to the conductor's scores, even if substantial, appeared as amendments to this late 1893 version. Corrections were written directly into the score, added pages were glued in or inserted loosely, and deleted pages were either cancelled out or sewn shut. This was the score which, in the case of *Manon Lescaut*, appears to have remained in rental until sometime after 1915 when it was eventually replaced by a photographic enlargement of the first orchestral score sold to the public (plate number 115300).[18]

The original conductor's score and Italian piano/vocal score of *Manon Lescaut*, both extracted directly from the autograph complete orchestral score, show differences in music, libretto and stage directions. These differences were carried forward to the successive editions, thus creating two distinct groups: editions based on the conductor's score (successive orchestral scores, instrumental parts, excerpts in full orchestral format, and instrumental reductions, medleys and fantasies) and editions based on the Italian piano/vocal reduction (subsequent piano/vocal scores in various languages, choral parts, aria excerpts and medleys with pianoforte

[15] The same may be said for the separately-printed librettos which served only as guidelines for the attending public and therefore were rarely revised. Nonetheless, these librettos do provide interesting comparisons with early versions of the operas, particularly regarding Puccini's modifications to the original text.

[16] An Italian piano/vocal rental score conforming to Group IV (1904) of *Manon Lescaut* is preserved in the Archivio Storico, another rare example of a surviving performance part. This score is discussed below in relationship to the annotated printed scores.

[17] Hopkinson calls this the "folio score." The corresponding *Manon Lescaut* scores measure 40.75 cm. × 28.75 cm.

[18] The Metropolitan Opera library has preserved an enlarged edition of the 192? engraved orchestral score of *Manon Lescaut* (pl. no. 115300).

accompaniment). G. Ricordi & C. attempted to remedy this discrepancy between the two fundamental versions in the post-1958 period when re-editions began to appear.

G. Ricordi & C. did not publish large-sized orchestral scores for sale to the public in order not to endanger its performance rights. However, the popularity of Puccini's operas eventually created a market for study of the orchestral scores. Therefore, beginning in 1915 with *Manon Lescaut*, G. Ricordi & C. published orchestral scores of the nine most popular operas in miniature (small quarto format: 23.5 cm. × 17.5 cm.), a dimension difficult to use in performance.[19] Eventually, enlargements of these study scores replaced the "conductor's scores" in the rental library. Then, in the years prior to 1958, accompanying the preparations for Puccini's 100th birthday and the 150th birthday of G. Ricordi & C., a new series of medium quarto orchestral editions was projected and partially completed (the Partiture Ricordi: 27 cm. × 20 cm.).[20] Enlargements of this series fill the rental library today. Thus, for most of the operas, complete orchestral hardcover editions were printed for sale to the public (and for rental in enlarged editions): a small quarto format with dark green cover (1915–1927) and a medium quarto format with turquoise cover (1953–1958). This is the situation as reported by Hopkinson. However, at the Conservatory libraries in Parma and Naples, there are orchestral editions of *Manon Lescaut* in the small dark green format with a version substantially different from either of the above-mentioned orchestral editions. Therefore, as in the case of the Italian piano/vocal scores, the orchestral scores sold to the public and rented to theatres were occasionally re-edited and republished, not always with obvious indications of such change.

Two harp parts of *Manon Lescaut* examined as part of this study contain intermediate versions respective to the Italian piano/vocal scores.[21] The page and stave divisions of the earlier manuscript harp part are reflected exactly in its later engraved counterpart, suggesting that the manuscript was actually a rental copy on which the printed edition was later based. From this we may guess that the less numerous instrumental parts (such as that for solo harp) were left in unprinted manuscripts until several years after the premiere (in this case at least eleven years) when either wear or expanded rental obligations made an engraved part more practical. The known dates of plate number assignments support this hypothesis. (Cf. footnote 14.) Furthermore, the hand-copied harp part preserved by the Metropolitan Opera library suggests that at least prior to 1958, some opera theatres

[19] The plate numbers were assigned as follows: *Manon Lescaut* 115300 (1915); *La Bohème* 115561 (1920); *Tosca* 119160 (1924); *Madama Butterfly* 118378 (1923); *La Fanciulla del West* 119711 (1925); *Il Tabarro* 120480 (1927); *Suor Angelica* 120481 (1927); *Gianni Schicchi* 120482 (1927); *Turandot* 120030 (1926).

[20] The plate numbers were assigned as follows: *Manon Lescaut* P.R.113 (1958); *La Bohème* P.R.110 (1953); *Tosca* P.R.111 (1954); *Madama Butterfly* P.R.112 (1955); *La Fanciulla del West* P.R.116 (not published); *Il Tabarro* P.R.118 (1956); *Suor Angelica* P.R.115 (1958); *Gianni Schicchi* P.R.114 (1957); *Turandot* P.R.117 (1958).

[21] A hand-copied harp part of *Manon Lescaut* exists in the Conservatory library in Venice, no. Cass 395/2 (14164), representing an intermediate version between the Group III and IV Italian piano/vocal scores. An engraved and printed harp part has been found in the Parma Conservatory library, no. AI-1-8/22457, with an intermediate version between Groups IV and V. A third harp part, again hand-copied but now on American-made preprinted music paper, appears to have been based on the Group VI conductor's score preserved in the Metropolitan Opera library along with this harp part.

made their own copies of the less-numerous orchestral parts, based on the rented conductor's score.

A picture emerges of the performing scores and parts in a state of continual modification, occasionally punctuated by their non-simultaneous reprintings.[22] In the case of *Manon Lescaut*, the conductor's scores were reprinted only once, the published orchestral scores were revised at least twice, possibly more often, the instrumental parts were both revised by hand and occasionally reprinted, and the Italian piano/vocal score was updated regularly.

With the premiere of this third opera on February 1, 1893 in Turin, Puccini attained enormous public acclaim. The first performances abroad in Italian as well as in foreign languages immediately carried the composer's fame to such faraway places as Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro and St. Petersburg. This popularity at home and abroad created a market for piano/vocal reductions in Italian and other languages, both for study and home entertainment. All the piano/vocal versions in foreign languages (German, French, Russian/Italian[23] and English/Italian) reflect the most current Italian piano/vocal score at the time of their respective printings. The German and French versions were usually updated along with the Italian counterpart, whereas the Russian/Italian and English/Italian editions stagnated in their Group III versions (November 1893) until reprintings as late as 1969 and 1979, respectively. The English/Italian version has since been updated (1980).

Once the "definitive" version was established after the premiere, G. Ricordi & C. published its most popular operas in a multitude of genres directed towards the amateur public: orchestral and piano/vocal excerpts, reductions for solo instruments or popular groupings (such as mandolin and pianoforte or four-hand pianoforte), arrangements for small orchestra or band, and medleys/fantasies for various instruments. These separately-printed pieces provide evidence of differing versions of sections of the opera which we assume conformed to the then-current performance practice – traditions which were not necessarily documented by any complete scores. For example, we sometimes find variants of a single aria (such as Manon's "L'ora, o Tirsi"), or a cut reflected in the exclusion of a principal melody from the medleys/fantasies.[24] Therefore the dates of publication of the separately-printed pieces add chronological clues to possible versions and/or performance practices.

All of the above genres (orchestral, instrumental and choral parts, piano/vocal in various languages, pianoforte solo, and separately-printed pieces) were occasionally reprinted. Simple reprints were most often stimulated by a performance run which brought the principal melodies into the hearts of the opera-going public. The

[22] Puccini mentions this practice in his letters to G. Ricordi & C. Cf. GARA, *Carteggi*, no. 537, p. 363; no. 813, p. 513; and no. 846, p. 532; S. PUCCINI, ed., *Giacomo Puccini: Lettere a Riccardo Schnabl* (Milan 1981), no. 114, p. 202; and G. PINTORNO, ed., *Puccini: 276 Lettere Inedite* (Milan: 1974), no. 266, p. 212.

[23] The Russian/Italian editions are the only scores included in this study which were not printed by G. Ricordi & C.

[24] Such is the case with Manon's Act IV aria "Sola, perduta, abbandonata" which was cut from the version of Group V (1909–1925). The aria was consequently excluded from all located medleys/fantasies (at least through 1955) and only appeared in print as an aria excerpt in 1947 (pl. no. 126075). The other principal melodies were printed separately in April 1893 and thereafter.

consequent private and public performances by amateur and semi-amateur individuals and groups promoted sales of additional scores. Typically, groups of aria excerpts, such as those from *Manon Lescaut* published in English (June 1894) and French (November 1905), were prompted by their respective foreign premieres (May 1894 and March 1906). Thus G. Ricordi & C.'s roles as promoter of professional performances and publisher fulfilling amateur needs went hand in hand.

3. *The Printing Process*

The search for versions is complicated by the new printing process used for Puccini's operas – photolithography – which differed dramatically from that of earlier nineteenth-century Italian operas. In 1871 Giulio Ricordi brought a team of printing experts and lithographic equipment from Germany to Milan to set up the "officine grafiche."[25] Direct impression, the earlier printing method, pressed an inked metal plate (on which the music had been engraved either by hand or with musical punches) onto the finished sheet of paper, leaving a plate impression around the borders. In contrast, photolithography begins by either printing from an engraved metal plate onto transparent paper or by taking a photograph of already printed music, thus creating a transparent image (either on transparent paper or on a photo negative) which is transferred by light onto a thin zinc plate. This plate is subsequently treated chemically, mounted on a cylinder, rolled with water, inked, and used to print the finished product. This process leaves no border impression.

In the photolithographic process, additions could be made in special ink directly onto the transparent image, which would then be used to create a new zinc plate. When part of the original score needed to be replaced, a small section of the transparent image could be physically cut out and replaced by a "patch." The edges of the patch could be erased and the whole image transferred again by light to a zinc plate. Large amounts of new music required a new transparent image altogether for the pages involved. After numerous reprintings, when G. Ricordi & C. decided to create new transparencies for an entire volume, the original metal plates were corrected. This process allows for the possibility of intermediate changes (made to the transparencies) being erased if their presence is overlooked in a return to the master plates.[26]

In the complete scores of *Manon Lescaut*, border impressions (i.e., evidence of direct impression printing) are found on the first editions only of the Italian piano/vocal scores (December 1893), the pianoforte solo scores (1893) – both intended for immediate copyright –, the early German piano/vocal scores (1893), the French piano/vocal scores (1905), and the printed harp part. All of these cases involve a very

[25] H. VON KARAJAN, et. al., *Music Musicians Publishing – 175 Years of Casa Ricordi, 1808–1983* (Milan 1983), p. 265. Although Giovanni Ricordi publicized his lithographic workshop in 1825, its use was limited to covers and frontispieces due to cost. Musical lithography had to wait for the introduction of the offset press and of photomechanical reproduction.

[26] Thanks to Mr. Gabriel Dotto for pointing out this possibility.

limited number of copies which would not have merited the cost and time of preparing photolithographic transparencies and zinc plates.[27] Once the market demanded more copies, the plates could be corrected, if necessary, and used to create photolithographic transparencies for subsequent runs.

All other known scores of *Manon Lescaut* (most significantly, the later Italian piano/vocal scores and all orchestral scores) lack the border impressions and, therefore, were printed using photolithography, implying an ample run. The later published orchestral score (P.R.113) was physically drawn from the first (115300), as shown by equivalent print type and page layouts, excepting points where changes were made.[28] The new plate number was simply superimposed photographically on the old plate number at the bottom of the page.

A major problem in establishing the versions is identification of a simple reprint as opposed to a re-edition where some aspect of the music or text has been altered. How may reprints be distinguished from re-editions? In a great number of cases, a later date of printing indicates a re-edition, thus making dating an essential criterion for evaluating the scores. Blind stamps – raised imprints using no ink found at the bottom of the full title page or front cover until around 1955 – give the G. Ricordi & C. sigla and a date. Unfortunately, especially in older library scores (which constitute the bulk of the complementary evidence for the printing history), the blind stamp has too often been removed due to rebinding or it is illegible. In order to abbreviate the endless task of comparing every measure of music in search of change, other factors external to the music can be helpful in identifying a later date of printing. Although plate numbers, engravers' initials, and the shape of blind stamps provide at least general dating information, only certain aspects of the complete title pages, in particular the continually updated listing of the G. Ricordi & C. subsidiaries, can actually be used as tools for assigning a specific date.[29] Care should be taken when dating the rental scores and parts since the rental labels were possibly printed in bulk and tend to be much outdated respective to the versions to which they were affixed.

4. *Annotated Printed Scores*

Once the operas' versions have been established by way of the letters, autographs, and printed editions, we are faced with two sets of problems: authenticity of the revisions, and their stylistic integrity respective to the whole opera. In other words, if indeed Puccini himself either made the revisions or authorized them to be made by someone else, should the revised version be respected in a modern edition? And if so, which version?

[27] The presence or lack of border impressions on the other editions examined here support this conclusion. Those separately-printed pieces with less than eight pages (i.e., a relatively inexpensive purchase with minimal preparation costs and maximum sales potential) show no border impressions, whereas other extracts which are either longer or directed to a very select market evidence direct impression printing.

[28] In fact reference is made in the Ricordi *libroni* to the earlier plate numbers.

[29] The dating problem is discussed in detail in S. SCHERR, *Dating Puccini's Editions* (pending publication).

Authenticity of the Revisions – How did Puccini revise his operas? William Ashbrook claimed that the composer made corrections either by writing directly upon the proof sheets (no longer extant) or by dealing with his publishers in person – ideas also supported by Groos and Parker's study.[30] Puccini's own letters refer to this practice (his letter to Carlo Clausetti at G. Ricordi & C.; Milan, August 14, 1921): "I sent you the score of *Manon*, I corrected it; when it was published, why wasn't it sent to me to look over? I believe it was when Tito [was in charge]."[31] Here reference is made to the orchestral score of *Manon Lescaut* published in 1915 during the period after Giulio Ricordi's death when his son Tito ran the company (1912–1919). Apparently the fact that the composer was not allowed to peruse the score at the time of publication was an exception to the usual procedure.

Given that these page proofs no longer exist, the schema of revisions must be compared to whatever annotated sources are available. It cannot be overemphasized that the letters and the annotated sources do not necessarily deal with all of the revisions. Rather, they are one sure source of Puccini's authorization of a change. Moreover, there is always the possibility of undocumented changes made by the composer during his lifetime.

Puccini's letters demonstrate how closely he monitored the performances of his operas, whether in person or through trusted delegates. This contact with current performances – often a source of upset for the composer – occasionally prompted a new edition. In the case of *Manon Lescaut*, the annotated printed scores represent preparations for new editions in connection with recent or immediately projected performances. These annotations (preserved in Ricordi's Archivio Storico) show three levels of extensive revision:

– 1908 performances in New York, modifications shown on a 1904 Italian piano/vocal score and a single Act II volume of a conductor's score;
– 1910 performances in Paris with Toscanini conducting the Metropolitan cast, modifications shown on a 4-volume set of conductor's scores; and
– 1922/23 30th-anniversary performances at La Scala with Toscanini conducting, modifications shown on a 1915 published orchestral score and supplemented by a second level of revision in the above-mentioned (1910) 4-volume set of conductor's scores.

The 4-volume set of conductor's scores also served to prepare the first published orchestral score of 1915.[32] Even though these are rental scores, only the Act IV volume was ever used in performance, as evidenced by the annotation on the inside front cover ("Milano 161").

[30] W. ASHBROOK, *The Operas of Puccini* (Ithaca/London 1968), p. xvi–xvii; and GROOS/PARKER, *La Bohème*, p. 104.

[31] GARA, *Carteggi*, no. 813, p. 513: "t'ho spedito la partitura di *Manon*, l'ho corretta; quando si pubblicò, perché non mi fu mandata a rivedere? Credo che fosse al tempo di Tito."

[32] For the published orchestral edition, Puccini asked Toscanini to add his corrections of "colorings" and "efficient bowings" for the strings. Toscanini had recently conducted a highly-lauded version of *Manon Lescaut* with the Metropolitan cast in Paris (June 9, 13, and 17, 1910). GARA, *Carteggi*, no. 561, 564, 566; P. ROSS and D. SCHWENDIMANN BERRA, *Sette Lettere di Puccini a Giulio Ricordi*, in: *Nuova RMI* 13 (1979), p. 851–865, no. 1; PINTORNO, *276 Lettere*, no. 165, 265, 266.

A crucial lesson to be learned from this source is that it was used twice for revision, once in 1910 and again in 1923, although not clearly indicated as such.[33] This second use is particularly curious because of the obvious possibility of confusion between the different strata of revisions. Comparison of these annotations with the 1915 published orchestral score reveals why Puccini returned to this already annotated source. In 1923 the composer wanted to reinsert back into the score certain sections of music which had been *cut* from the 1915 first published orchestral edition (annotated in 1922). Therefore in 1923, in order to show his revisions to this extracted music, he wrote directly upon the conductor's scores (already annotated in 1910) preserved by G. Ricordi & C. The page numbers of these new annotations are written on the inside front covers of the conductor's scores without any indication of their meaning or dating. Hence we note the fragmentary and deceptive nature of even the markings on the covers of the annotated sources.

A typical example of an editorial dilemma regarding authenticity is seen in the orchestral articulation at the beginning of Act II of *Manon Lescaut*. The act opens with a melancholy flute melody (cf. musical example, p. 76) supported by strings and harps. This music creates the atmosphere of Geronte's aristocratic palace where Manon is pining away for the lover she abandoned (Des Grieux). It permeates the first 98 measures, which include the completion of her toilette and the opening exchanges with her brother Lescaut. When Lescaut launches into his solo (m. 99ff.) recalling Manon's previous life with Des Grieux, the music of the aristocratic atmosphere disappears.

At m. 9 the curtain rises on Manon, seated in front of her mirror and fretful about her hair and choice of beauty marks for her face. The opening winding flute melody gradually dissipates after 19 measures, at the first vocal entrance. In response to Manon's commands, the silent hairdresser jumps up to attend to her hair, at which point (m. 26) the melody begins again. This second strophe, at the same pitch level and with equivalent harmonization, places the melody in the first violins, with the arpeggios of mm. 14/16 in the winds at mm. 39/41. A parallel, but not equal, dissipation occurs at m. 45, four measures before Manon's brother Lescaut enters. They briefly exchange greetings, leading into Manon's command to the hairdresser to bring the beauty marks. At his flurried response, the third strophe begins (m. 64), with equivalent pitch level and harmonization, but with the melody now doubled in the full wind section.

Of editorial concern in this opening section are the slurs, dots, and accents, i.e., the orchestral articulation. For clarity's sake, we shall trace only the melody's slurs, which are outlined in Table 2 (p. 77). At the left of the table, we list the eight available sources: the autograph (1892), the five printed orchestral editions (1893, 1915, 192?, 1958/1980) and the three annotated scores (1908, 1910, 1922). The

[33] Written in blue pencil on front covers: "most recent modifications/September 19, 1910," and "in place of the original" ("Per acc. ultime 19–9–10" and "per originale/org"); written in blue pencil on a sheet inserted after the last page of the Act II volume: "Original score/sent to the Studio of Maestro/Tenaglia on/June 21, 1923" ("Partitura orig. le/mandata allo/Studio al M. °/Tenaglia il/21–6–923"). Maestro Tenaglia advised the G. Ricordi & C. Copisteria.

musical example gives the articulation found in the autograph score. In this first source, similar gestures, such as mm. 1/2, 3/4/7/8, 9/10/12, and 11/13, are given equivalent articulation. Very slight changes occur between the three strophes, particularly in the accents. The slurs over the 5-note figure in mm. 9/11/13 are unintentionally short in the first strophe, a hasty omission which is completed with certainty at the analogous points in the other strophes. The 16th-note arpeggios (mm. 14, 16 etc.) are all slurred with one long arch which is clearly contained within the measure. The *only* exception (probably unintentional) is m. 16 in the first strophe, where the slur ends with the downbeat of m. 17. Thus the autograph score gives meticulous and consistent instructions (although not completely equivalent between strophes) for the articulation of this opening melody.

As shown in the table, the conductor's score introduces the first real confusion. Not only does it differ in several instances from the autograph score, but it also differs at analogous points within the same strophe and between strophes. In general, the first strophe follows the articulations of the autograph score most faithfully. However, the successive strophes stray farther and farther away from the initial statement. The articulation becomes particularly disparate in the third strophe where the lower winds doubling the flute melody differ among themselves in the same measure. Perhaps since the repeat of the melody was so obvious, its articulation was assumed to be equivalent to the opening statement, regardless of the printed score, thus eliminating the attention to detail in the subsequent strophes. However, these slips of the pen carried grave consequences for the later orchestral scores.

The 1908 annotations to the Act II volume of a conductor's score are concentrated around the addition to the Minuet (reh. no. 22 + 13 to 23 + 1). However, other changes (addition/deletion of an instrumental line, altered rhythms and dynamics) are scattered throughout the entire act. Nonetheless, the first 98 measures were left untouched.

In the 1910 annotations to a 4-volume set of conductor's scores, extensive changes were made to the articulation of the *harmonies* supporting the opening melody and in the intervals between strophes: additional accents, suspensions, dynamics and instrumental lines. Regarding the melody, in the first strophe the curious 4-note double slur of m. 9 was crossed out. Yet even though Puccini clearly reviewed the articulation of this section, the remaining double slurs and omissions/additions of the conductor's score remained intact.

The 1915 first published orchestral score (pl. no. 115300) vaguely resembles both the autograph and the conductor's score upon which it was based, plus inserts its own novelties. Some aspects of the articulation have been standardized, such as the conformity of all woodwinds doubling the melody in the third strophe. It is essential to note that these changes to the articulation of the melody are not so indicated in Puccini's 1910 annotated scores, which concentrated on changes in the accompanying instruments. Perhaps the editor or engraver attempted to standardize what was an obviously uneven mixture of articulation in the amended conductor's score. Another possibility, although less likely, is that these changes reflect the composer's

Musical Example

Puccini's *Manon Lescaut*: Act II, measures 1–19. Autograph complete orchestral score (flute)

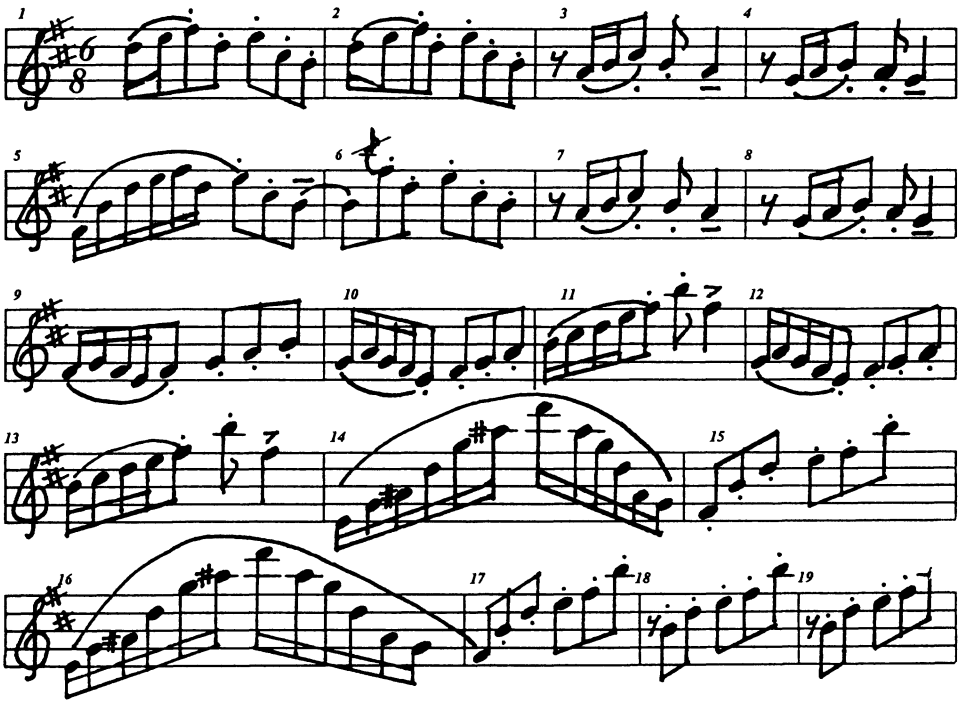

TABLE 2

Slurs in the Melody of Act II, mm. 1–98

	3-note figures mm. 1–4 & 7–8	5-note figures mm. 9–13	arpeggios mm. 14 & 16
autograph	3-note slurs end with dot	5-note slurs end with dot	slur within measure except 1st strophe, m. 16 slur ends on next downbeat
1st conductor's score (1893)	single and double slurs: 2-note and/or 3-note slurs ending with or without a dot	single and double slurs: 4-note and/or 5-note slurs ending with or without a dot	slur ends either within measure or on next downbeat
1908 annotations to conductors's score	no change	no change	no change
1910 annotations to conductor's score	no change	no change	no change
1915 first published orchestral score	all 2-note single slurs except mm. 1–4, strophe 2: 3-note slurs	all single slurs: either 4-note or 5-note	slurs end within measure, on next downbeat, or are broken into two slurs for each half of the measure
1922 annotations to 1915 orchestral score	Toscanini: some 2-note, some 3-note slurs; Puccini: cancelled Toscanini's red marks – indicated all 2-note slurs which end with dot on 3rd note*	Toscanini: all 5-note slurs; Puccini: agreed with Toscanini and cancelled printed 4-note slurs	no change
192? published orchestral score	follows 1922 annotations	follows 1922 annotations	3rd strophe: changes half-measure slurs to 1 long slur within measure
1958/1980 published orchestral score	all 2-note slurs which end with dot on 3rd note**	all 4-note slurs which end with dot on 5th note	1st and 2nd strophes: slur ends on next downbeat; 3rd strophe: 1 long slur within measure

* The only exception is m. 4 of the 2nd strophe (m. 29) where a 3-note slur was printed in the score and thus not "corrected" by Toscanini, nor reversed by Puccini.

** Except for the one measure overlooked (m. 29) where a 3-note slur inadvertently remained.

second thoughts on the matter which were added in person or to the page proofs, without leaving a documented source.

Two hands are visible in the 1922 annotations to a 1915 published orchestral score: Toscanini's red pen marks are often superseded or seconded by Puccini's black pencil marks. The result of this group of corrections was that all similar gestures were slurred (though not accented) equivalently in all strophes, except for the arpeggios.

The subsequent published orchestral score (pl. no. 115300, 192?) very faithfully reports these 1922 annotations with two minor exceptions, one involving the arpeggios. The date of this edition (between 1925 and 1927 based on the title page listings) is crucial because it tells us that Puccini was not able to see the score before his death in 1924.

The other posthumous scores (pl. no. P.R.113: 1958, 1980) are an interesting mixture of the 1915 score, the 1922/23 annotations, and a cautious editorial attempt to standardize the articulation. The 1958 editor, following Puccini's pencil marks and written "vive" throughout mm. 1–8, let all the 2-note slurs stand, and adjusted the 3-note slurs to 2-note slurs; that is, the music remained as printed in the 192? orchestral score. In the following mm. 9–13, where instead Puccini had agreed with Toscanini and had cancelled the *printed* slurs (of 4-notes), not Toscanini's slur annotations (of 5-notes), the editor misread the composer's marks. The result is the conformity to 4-note slurs in mm. 9–13 in all strophes, the *opposite* of what Puccini and Toscanini had intended in the annotated score. Meanwhile, certain irregularities, such as the arpeggio slurs in mm. 14/16, were "corrected" (or standardized) by the editor without any such indication in the annotated sources. Yet other irregularities, such as the type of accent on the last note of mm. 11/13, were left unchanged. And finally, some new articulation – a slur in the second half of m. 5, second strophe – was added to the score. Thus the 1958/1980 editions reintroduced some of the articulation from the 1915 score which Puccini and Toscanini had reversed in 1922, and in addition the editor standardized some of the "irregularities" and added a new "revision."

What do all these editions and annotations imply? They outline a multi-layered editorial process where, at various moments, composer, conductor, and/or editor made decisions concerning, at least, orchestral articulation. Further comparison of the musical sources shows that also included in this process were dynamics, harmonies, division of instruments and orchestration, librettos, stage directions, and cuts – all of them involving minor changes. A clear control of the versions and their chronological relationship with the annotated sources eliminates some of the guesswork concerning authenticity facing a modern editor. Nonetheless, any undocumented revisions appearing before 1924 which were not modified by Puccini's subsequent annotation, will continue to cast doubt on our certainty of the composer's intent.

Stylistic Integrity – Puccini wrote *Manon Lescaut* in 1890–92 and continued to revise it up until 1923, spanning a period of radical change in compositional technique. The

opera is a transitional work, containing an eclectic choice of stylistic components – several large musically and dramatically balanced forms with intervening transitions alongside some juxtaposed textural blocks, plus long-breathed vocal expansiveness contrasted with moments of intermittent vocal interjections under a wash of orchestral musical drama. Notwithstanding the particular blend of elements found in this "youthful" work, its revisions still merit a critical examination based on style.

A distinction can sometimes be made between changes which express Puccini's technical maturity and others which reveal a stylistic rethinking. Technical "improvements," such as a more appropriate tessitura given in a vocal "oppure" or a clean-up of sloppy orchestral articulation (as discussed above), clearly should be respected in a critical edition.

In *Manon Lescaut*, unfortunately the composer's revisions, even those intended simply to "stabilize" performance traditions, usually reflect stylistic change. The tendency was away from a thick, balanced orchestral texture towards a polarized and crystalline orchestral sound, away from forms and transitions towards condensed, abruptly-juxtaposed musical units, away from vocal expansiveness towards orchestral predominance pinpointed by vocal interjections. Thus we see Toscanini reinforce instruments at the outer extremes of the orchestral palette, while Puccini approves cuts at the ends of sections and at transitions, negating the overriding balance and reaching climactic moments more directly. In other words, rather than a clearcut departure from a certain style, the revisions reflect a move within a continuum of early twentieth-century pacing and structure.

Manon's Act IV aria "Sola, perduta, abbandonata" exists in five different versions, thus providing an opportunity for debate based on stylistic criteria. The original structure is:

prelude A (transition) B (transition) A′ postlude

Dramatically the aria portrays Manon's despair at facing death (prelude, A, A′, postlude), a retrospective explanation for how she arrived in the Louisiana desert in this dying condition (B), the hope she had for finding peace in her new life in America (first transition), and the hope she now has for finding peace in the grave (second transition). The entire structure is set in "minor" tonalities excepting the major triads heard at the transitions. The B section features abrupt harmonic movement while the rest of the aria rocks unwaveringly between F minor and B minor triads.

Textual revisions were introduced in Groups II and VII: substitutions of the too-often-repeated words "sola, perduta, abbandonata." These technical improvements are authentic and therefore the Group VII/VIII text may be considered the definitive one.[34]

[34] Even though this was the second posthumous score, we have Puccini's documented request to Adami to substitute new words: *Giacomo Puccini: Epistolario*, G. Adami, ed. (Milan 1928 = Oscar Mondadori 1982), no. 34, p. 49 (1 November 1923): "C'è l'aria di *Manon* al 4° atto (quella che tagliano) che ripete sempre tre o quattro parole: *sola perduta abbandonata, io la deserta donna.* Bisognerebbe mettere al posto di queste ripetizioni altre *sentite* parole. Sarà forse un solo verso. In cinque minuti lo fate. Vi prego fatemelo e ditelo a Valcarenghi. Mi ricordo che ai suoi tempi ormai lontani quelle ripetizioni mi davano una noia tremenda."

TABLE 3

Sections Cut from Act IV Aria

Group II:	second half of A section (15 mm.) first transition ending of B section (8 mm.) 2 mm. of A′ section
Group III:	all of the above plus: all but first 2 mm. of A′ section postlude (which is substituted by 9 new mm.)
Group IV:	restores aria to Group II version
Group V:	entire aria cut
Group VI:	restores aria with the following cuts: ending of A section (7 mm.) ending of B section (8 mm.) 2 mm. of A′ section
Groups VII/VIII:	all of the above plus: all but first 2 mm. of A′ section postlude

Musical revisions involve the various cuts found in the different versions, which compromise the clearly audible musical and dramatic structure. (See Table 3, above.) All the cuts involve either musical repetition or harmonic prolongation, most noticeably at ends of sections. From the viewpoint of the original composition, these cuts damage a balanced form and trim away some of the aria's vocal and orchestral expansiveness – a point not to be taken lightly in the soprano's one *tour de force* of the entire opera. However, another outlook views the aria within the context of the entire act, one which consists mainly of the same undulating despair both dramatically and musically, where a tighter, more clipped pace eliminates the sense of monotony. The one cut where this reasoning does not apply is the elimination of the first transition which functions as an overall relief from the death scene atmosphere.

Puccini complained to his editors on numerous occasions of both the current practice of cutting this aria in performance (either entirely or partially) and the incomplete version of it found in the current scores.[35] The authenticity of these cuts is therefore extremely dubious, especially since it is not clear that it was Puccini who made the cuts in the annotated scores. However, since he did specifically mention the reinsertion of the Act IV aria on the cover of his final (1922) annotation, that particular version is unquestionably authentic. It is our opinion that the version of the Act IV aria now in print is the only incomplete version approved of by Puccini,

[35] GARA, *Carteggi*, no. 781 (December 1920), p. 498: "Guarda che io desidero venga stampata come l'ho scritta a quei tempi, l'aria etc. così ha una forma. Se vogliono tagliarla, padroni, ma non con la mia complicità."

which, however, should include a supplement of the missing music with an explanation of its relationship to the overall form and the composer's own words expressing his desire to have the aria performed in its entirety.

Thus a modern editor faces a dual dilemma: once the revisions are found to be authentic (where possible), they must be reconsidered in terms of their effect on the opera as a whole, for the Puccini of 1892 was not the same composer of 1923. And the latest revision does not necessarily represent the composer's preferred version. It is the performer who must now choose a version – and a critical edition can make that decision a well-informed one.