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Benjamin Britten

Lachrymae: Reflections on a Song of Dowland for viola and piano-reflections or variations?

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FOREWORD

The oeuvre of the great English composer Benjamin Britten belongs to one of the most significant pages of the history of 20th-century music. In Europe, performers and the general public alike continue to exhibit a steady interest in the composer decades after his death. Even now, the heritage of the master has great repertoire potential given that the number of his written works is on par with composers such as S. Prokofiev, F. Poulenc, D. Shostakovich, etc. The significance of this figure for researchers including D. Mitchell, C. Palmer, F. Rupprecht, A. Whittall, F. Reed, L. Walker, N. Abels and others, who continue to turn to various areas of his work, is not exhausted.

Britten nature as a composer was determined by two main constants: poetry and music. Indeed, his art is inextricably linked with the word. Although he is better known as an opera composer, the fact that one of the most important components of his opus are his instrumental works is not at all accidental. This genre was for Britten one of the most intimate; its appeal to him throughout his life reflects the process of crystallization of the composer's artistic and musical thinking. The chamber, which has instrumental music in comparison with opera, was extremely attractive to Britten as it provided an opportunity to speak with the listener on especially important, often intimate, topics.

One of the main themes of Britten's work is a protest against violence and war - the assertion of the value of a fragile, unprotected human world. After returning from America to England with Puritan-Victorian views, Britten was often the victim of attacks by the English yellow press and was forced to live in a small village. He fiercely defended his personal life from outside invasion, but his creative ideas seethed and overflowed, demanding a way out. At the end of 1945, Britten protested and, ultimately fled, the internal politics at Sadler's Wells Theatre. By 1947, he, along with singers Joan Cross, Anne Wood, and Peter Pears, joined designer Piper and producer Crozier to establish the English Opera Group. The goal of this new company was to present the other, mostly British, small scale operas, and to premiere the operas of Britten. However, the costs of touring could not be recovered despite heavy subsidies, leading to the group’s decision to base the company in England. This was the prime reason for the inauguration of the Aldeburgh Festival in 1948.

Britten attracted many contemporary musicians and composers to the festival. One of the invited guests was the famous Scottish viola player, William Primrose, for whom Britten wrote a special piece of "*Lachrymae. Reflection on a Song of Dowland*". Though the work’s

premiere was a success, Primrose changed his mind about it in the years that followed. He said that “drama and fantasy” was not enough in this piece; that Britten was completely unable to express his wishes on paper; and that all this time, Primrose had felt forced to listen to, and perform, Lachrymae.

Primrose was one of the first musicians who realized that it was impossible to play music without an understanding of its content and meaning. As the music of the 20th century evolved and became freer, the interpretation of works by musicians became increasingly significant. A performer’s failure to understand the meaning of a musical piece could completely ruin the composer’s intention. As such, unseasoned viola players who have decided to add the Lachrymae to their repertoire must have a clear understanding of several important questions. Where is the melody? Where is the accompaniment? What harmonies and for what purpose does the composer use this musical material? What did the composer want to do, and why? And, the main question that puzzles even mature violists: Why does Lachrymae have the subtitle, "*Reflection on a Song of Dowland*”? Why did Britten use the term “reflections” rather than "*variations*" or any other word? These questions are t**he basis for this research.**

The heyday of Britten’s close study began in the 1980s, and with each passing decade, this process becomes more important. We can confidently assert that some of the works on Britten done by Soviet researchers were either hopelessly outdated or inaccurate to begin with given that they hid information about the composer's personal life. In the period since Britten's death, English musicologists have written no less than five hundred works covering various fields of creativity. First, the biography and opera house of Britten (from the point of view of the genre in the context of the 20th century, with attention on mutual influences and parallels). Second, a review of the manifestation of the psychophysiological component found in the works. Recently, there have been works with a problem perspective, examining various aspects of the composer’s musical language, oriental influences in his work, instrumental and vocal heritage, etc. However, there are still very few detailed articles about the piece “*Lachrymae*". It is this aspect that dictates **the relevance of this research.**

The object of the research - "Lachrymae. Reflections on a Song of Dowland" by Benjamin Britten.

The subject of the research - The misunderstanding of the piece’s title by performers and the resulting inaccurate interpretation of the composer’s intention.

The main purpose of the research is to analyze the titles of the work for the first time. As a result, to come closer to a more complete understanding of the whole piece and to reveal the composer's intention.

The purpose of the research involves the following tasks:

- a brief analysis of the creative life of Britten until the Aldeburgh Festival of 1948, and the role of the viola in it;
- a brief analysis of the life and work of the 16th-century English composer, John Dowland;
- an observation of the evolution and the emergence of new arrangements for Dowland's song, "Lachrymae";
- a brief analysis of "Lachrymae" by Britten and "Nocturnal"; and,
- a Performing Analysis of Britten's "Lachrymae".

Research materials include:

- the only edition of "Lachrymae" of "Boosey and Hawks" edited by William Primrose;
- the songs of Dowland "If my complaints", "Flow, my tears" in modern notation; and,
- the edition of Dowland's "Lachrymae. Seven Tears", London, 1597(?).

The scientific novelty of the research is determined not only by the material selected, but by its perspective:

- study of John Dowland's personality and creative endowments;
- study of the emergence and evolution of Dowland's Lachrymae;
- acquaintance with other arrangements of Dowland's Lachrymae;
- a detailed analysis of Britten's Lachrymae including its structural, stylistic, harmonic, and textural features; and,
- a revealing of trends in the title of the work.

Practical value. The materials and results of this research can serve as a source of information for performing practice. They can be used in high school courses on the history of foreign music and chamber music. Additionally, they form the basis for further research.

The structure of the work consists of the Foreword, three chapters, Conclusion, Bibliography and Appendix. The first chapter provides a brief overview of Britten's creative path from his beginnings until 1948 with a close view of the role of the viola in his life. The second chapter is devoted to the 16th-century composer John Dowland and his most famous work, "Lachrymae". The third chapter contains a detailed analysis of Britten's "Lachrymae. Reflections on a Song of Dowland". The analyses found in the second and third chapters are supported by musical examples. The work contains an extensive amount of musical material, which has been included in the Appendix, due to the low fame of "Lachrymae" by Britten and Dowland.

CHAPTER 1.

1.1 Benjamin Britten - life, creativity, and the role of the viola in his life.

Britten was born the fourth child in the family of a dental surgeon, Robert Viktor, and his wife, Edith Britten. His mother gave all her four children names that started with the letter B - Barbara, Bobby, Beth, and Ben. She explained her choice by the desire to create a brilliant Quartet in the future - "*Four B"*. The first three letters for Bach, Beethoven and Brahms, and the fourth *B*, for Britten.

His father did not own musical instruments, but promoted home music in the family. He did not attend a church and he did not allow a radio or gramophone in the home. Therefore, Benjamin Britten was one of the last composers brought up on only live music. Robert Viktor was very strict, despotic and did not hide his political views.

Benjamin's mother, Edith, was a non-professional singer who played the piano and was a secretary of at the local musical society. She was born into a not so ordinary family: her father was illegitimate and her mother was an alcoholic. Music was the principal means by which Edith Britten tried to support the social standing of the family. She often organized musical evenings and invited the local community.

In 1919, she gave the first lessons to young Benjamin in piano and notation. Her ambition from the very beginning was to turn her youngest son into a musical genius: one of the rarest cases in which there really is a relationship of conditionality and destiny. Beth Britten pointed out in her book, "My Brother Benjamin", that even during the pregnancy his mother had the constant need for music. Was it simply the desire of the woman or the need of the unborn child?[1] "Thanks to the music, our relationship was so huge," the son noted in his diary after Edith's death. And looking at old photos: "Mom appears as absolute beauty, such a girl I could lose my heart forever".[2] Britten created his first compositions at 5 years old. When he was seven, he started piano lessons with Ethel Astle, and, when he was ten years old in 1923, he began to play the viola with Audrey Alston. At that moment, he was already the author of his first piano compositions and songs.[3]

[1] Britten, Elizabeth: 1986, p. 30
[2] Abels Norbert: 2017, p.20
[3] Mitchell *Donald: 2004,* p.55

In October 1924, Britten attended the "Triennial Festival" in Norwich. For the first time, he heard Frank Bridge's orchestral suite, "The Sea", and was fascinated by it. Bridge was a violist and conductor, as well as a staunch pacifist. The performance viewed by Britten was the first the suite under the direction of the author. Britten considered it incredibly strong. Soon thereafter, it was Britten's viola teacher, Mrs. Alston, with whom he lived, who introduced young Britten to Frank Bridge.[4]

Frank Bridge (26 February 1879 - 10 January 1941) was an English composer, violist and conductor. He was born in Brighton and, between 1899 and 1933, he studied at the Royal College of Music in London. He was a participant of several string quartets with Josef Ioahim and Jessie Grimson. In particular, he played in the English string quartet with Marjorie Hayward. Bridge immediately recognized the young Britten's great potential as a composer, and agreed to give the boy music lessons. Britten remembered that Bridge was a strong pacifist and the First World War deeply concerned him. He wrote several elegiac and pastoral works to seek some spiritual comfort during and immediately after the war. These included: "Crying for strings", "Summer for Orchestra", and "Prayer for Choir and Orchestra".

For the next two years, Bridge taught Britten music theory and polyphony. Later, Britten recalled that Bridge was very demanding and strict. The lessons were very long and Britten believed that he could not remember anything, but the young man needed precisely this style of teaching.[5] Bridge taught him to express on paper all his plans with maximum precision and, after a long time, even supported and patronized his student. Britten thought his teacher incredibly strong. Unfortunately, Bridge is almost forgotten today as a composer despite his passion for modern music and a close relationship to the romantic time of the last century. His rhapsody, *Enter Spring*, which was performed in the fall of 1927, was criticized, but it sparked an interest in Britten. Many years later, Britten still continued to defend the music of Bridge and paid tribute to him in "Variations on the Theme of Frank Bridge" (1937), based on the theme of the second "Three Idylls of Bridge for String Quartet" (1906). However, Bridge was not a widely active composition teacher, and his teaching style was unconventional — he seemed to focus on aesthetic issues, idiomatic writing and clarity, rather than on comprehensive technical training. Under Bridge's guidance, Britten wrote the *String Quartet in F*, completed in April 1928, and the *Quatre Chansons Françaises*, a song-cycle for high

[4] Abels, Norbert: 2017, p.29
[5] Holst, Imogen: 1968, p.24

voice and orchestra. Britten spoke highly of his training, stating in 1963 that he still felt that he had not "approached the technical standards" that Bridge had established. When Britten travelled to the United States with Peter Pierce in 1939, Bridge handed his viola of master Giussani to Britten and wished him a 'bon voyage and bon retour'[6]. Paul Kildea wrote that Bridge died in 1941, never seeing Britten again[7].

Authors differ on the extent of Bridge's influence on his pupil's technique. Humphrey Carpenter and Michael Oliver judge that Britten's abilities as an orchestrator were essentially self-taught, while Donald Mitchell believes that Bridge had an important influence on Britten.

Thus, in summation, we can conclude that Britten could play the viola. He first learned to play it with Audrey Alston, and then continued his musical education with Frank Bridge, a well-known violist, conductor and composer. In fact, he not only played the viola, but also had at his disposal his own instrument, presented to him by Bridge. Later in our research, we will find that the playing of the viola did not pass without consequence for Britten: in his Lachrymae, he made rich use of the performing abilities of the viola and applied various playing techniques.

From 1928, when Britten studied in Gresham's School, in Holt, Norfolk, piano lessons began with Harold Samuel. In 1930, he won a composition scholarship at the Royal College of Music (RCM) in London. Britten was at the RCM from 1930 to 1933, studying composition with John Ireland and piano with Arthur Benjamin[8]. He won the Sullivan Prize for composition, the Cobbett Prize for chamber music, and was twice winner of the Ernest Farrar Prize for composition. He continued to study privately with Bridge.

The first of Britten's works to attract widespread attention were composed while at the RCM:

- In 1930:
  - *Quartettino,*
  - *A Wealden Trio,*
  - *A Hymn to the Virgin,*
  - *Elegy,*

[6] translated from french: *"good trip and welcome back"*
[7] Kildea, Paul: 2013, p.149.
[8] Puffett, Derrick: 1994, pp. 395–396

- *Two Portraits,*
- *The Sycamore Tree.*

- In 1931 :
  - *Christ's Nativity,*
  - *Twelve Variations,*
  - *String Quartet in D,*
  - *Plymouth Town*
- In 1932:
  - *Phantasy in F-minor*
  - *Three Two-part songs*
  - *Double concerto*
  - *Sinfonietta Op. 1*
  - *Phantasy Op.2*
- In 1933:
  - *A Boy was born, Op.3,*
  - *Two Part-Songs,*
  - *Alla Quartetto Serioso*

"Britten also used his ties in London to attend concerts and become better acquainted with the music of Stravinsky, Shostakovich and, most particularly, Mahler. He intended postgraduate study in Vienna with Alban Berg, Arnold Schoenberg's student, but was eventually dissuaded by his parents."[9] He is quite interested in the music of his contemporaries, and for the first time, he comes across William Walton. Walton sometimes joins Britten's life path, bringing a little jealousy of the unmistakable talent of his "junior partner". Britten is very impressed by Walton. Abel wrote in his book that Britten said about Walton: "***In my opinion, no music of this generation can be compared to works such a Walton's Viola concerto"***[10]. But in another source, Britten's diary, we find that he wrote after first meeting with Walton: "to lunch with William Walton at Sloane Square. He is charming, but I feel always the school relationship with him – he is so obviously the head prefect of English music, whereas I'm the promising new boy."[11] They remained on friendly terms for the rest of Britten's life. Walton admired

[9] Abels, Norbert: 2017, p. 43
[10] Abels, Norbert: 2017, p. 43
[11] Kennedy, Michael: 1993, p. 96

many of Britten's works, and considered him a genius. While Britten did not admire all of Walton's works, he was grateful for Walton's support at difficult times in his life.

In 1934 Britten's father died after a long illness. He and his mother traveled extensively in Europe and in Vienna he met **Erwin Stein** - musician and consultant to the largest music publisher in Vienna, *Universal Edition*. Stein was an ardent fan of Arnold Schoenberg's music. He immediately became friends with the young and talented Britten. Perhaps it was Stein who introduced Britten to Ralph Hawkes, head of the *Boosey and Hawkes* publishing house, who offered Britten an exclusive contract to publish all his future works.[12] He and his business partner Leslie Boosey were encouraging and supportive of Britten ever since.[13] **It should be noted here that *Lachrymae,* which is the object of our research, is published only in a single publishing house - *Boosey and Hawkes,* edited by William Primrose.**

In 1934 Britten wrote:

- *Simple Symphony*, Op.4
- *Te Deum* in C,
- *Jubilate Deo* in E-flat
- *Holiday Diary*, Op.5

In February 1935, the leading head of English documentary film, Scotsman John Grierson, turned to the RCM. He was looking for a gifted young composing, nesting, musician and music connoisseur, and found him in Britten, who had great interest in continuing his advancement. Together with the Brazilian documentary filmmaker, Alberto Cavalcanti, also a luminary in the field of sound engineering, Britten subsequently becomes part of the music department of the General Post Office (GPO).

In the 30s a new circle of acquaintances and connections is established. Britten meets Wystan Hugh Auden, Imogen Holst and many others. Later, Imogen Holst wrote that work in the cinema disciplined Britten, made him work in any conditions, and taught him to write music even when he did not want to. Britten had only a small orchestra of 6-7 people, and often had to be in a few bars to create the right atmosphere.[14] Some film critics say that it was with the

[12] Kovnatskaya, Ludmila: 1974, p.46
[13] Mitchell, Donald: *2004,* p.83
[14] Holst, Imogen: 1968, p. 35

arrival of Britten to the cinema that a new era of music began - professional cinema music.[15] During this period Britten worked with poet Auden. The results were an opera, four films, three theatrical plays, and, with Christopher Isherwood as third in the group, music for broadcasting, choral works and a considerable number of song setting with four- and orchestral accompaniment. These include the cycles *Our Hunting Fathers*, *On This Island*, *Cabaret Songs*, *Ballad of Heroes*, and, at the beginning of the 40s, *Hymn of St. Cecilia*. "Britten had learned so much from Auden, who was a considerable influence on him. Auden encouraged Britten to widen his aesthetic, intellectual and political horizons, and also to come to terms with his homosexuality. Britten, puritanical and conventional by nature, had been sexually repressed."[16]

In this period, Britten wrote about 40 pieces for cinema and radio. In addition to those already listed previously, here are some of the others:

- In 1935
  - *Two Insect Pieces*
  - *Suite*, Op.6
  - *Friday afternoon*, Op.7
  - Films, including *The King Stamp* and *Coal Face*
- In 1936
  - *Russian Funeral*
  - *Soirees Musicales*, Op.9
  - Two Ballads

In 1937, Britten's mother, Edith, died. This sad event had a great influence on the composer as he was always gently attached to his mother. Still, to some extent his mother's passing freed him: he finally began to engage in emotional relationships with his peers and younger people. He met a Peter Pears. Britten created *The thousands gleaming fires for tenor and strings*, *Pacifist March* and *Variation on a Theme of Bridge*. In 1938 he wrote and performed a *Piano Concerto*.

On 29 April 1939, he and Peter Pears moved to America. The relocation was forced as their relationship was heavily criticized by British society's Puritanical views. Britten had been

[15] Kovnatskaya, Ludmila: 1974, p.44
[16] Matthews, David: p.34

facing increasing hostility from the English press, including belittling reviews of his music as under-rehearsed and inadequately performed. Additionally, the position of the pacifists was greatly complicated in hostile Europe. On the same day, the eve of his 50th birthday, Hitler announced: *If England wants war, it should have it and it will become a destructive war, as no fantasy can imagine.*[17] Some days later British mobilization is ordered. Britten carried a **precious gift with him - Frank Bridge's viola. A true Giussani,** sent by his old master along with him saying: "*that some of us may join you on your adventure*". First they visited Canada, then they went to New York. In America, Britten and Pears consummated their relationship and remained partners until the end of their lives.

Travel in America accelerated the process of maturing Britten's personality. It was in America, foreign land, that he felt as if he had been torn out by the roots from his native home. Depressed and alienated, he comes to understand the important role of the national factor in his creative destiny. Britten realizes his mission as a British artist, tries to comprehend it theoretically in the article "England and the Folk-Art Problem " and, most importantly, addresses it in his works. Imogen Holst, working as an assistant to Britten, wrote that his depression so taxed his mental strength that he was unable to work. However, a review of the catalog of his writings, in particular those done in America, one discovers he worked intensely despite his condition. His work was a success in North America, with performances in Toronto, New York, Boston, Chicago and San Francisco, under conductors including John Barbirolli and Sergey Koussevitzky[18]. These are some of the works written in America:

- In 1939:
  - *Young Apollo*
  - Violin Concerto, Op.15
  - *Les Illuminations*, Op.18
  - Theatre: *Johnson over Jordan*
  - Radio: *The Sword in the Stone*
- In 1940:
  - *Sinfonia da Requiem*, Op.20
  - *Diversions*, Op.21
  - *Seven Sonnets of Michelangelo*, Op.22

[17] Hitler, Adolf. quelled by *Chronik, Bibliothek des 20 Jahrhunderts*, Gütersloch/München 1995, p.68
[18] Robinson, Suzanne: 1997, pp. 321–351

- *Introduction and Rondo alla Burlesca,* Op.23. no.1

- In 1941:
  - *Paul Bunyan,* Op.17
  - String Quartet No.1 in D, Op.25
  - *An American Overture*
  - *Scottish Ballad,* Op.26

In 1942, when the Second World War began, Britten and Pears sought advice from the British Embassy, and were advised to remain in the United States as ambassadors of art. However, inspired by the poetry of George Crabbe, Britten decided to return to England. During the return voyage, Britten finished Hymn to St. Cecilia, Op.27, and Ceremony of Carols. "The latter was his last large-scale collaboration with Auden. Britten had grown distant from him, and Auden became one of the composer's so-called "corpses" – former intimates from whom he completely cut off contact once they had outlived their usefulness to him or offended him in some way. Britten was, as he acknowledged, notorious for dumping friends and colleagues who either offended him or ceased to be of use – his "corpses". Among other corpses were his librettists, Montagu Slater and Eric Crozier."[19]

"After the death of his mother in 1937, Britten used the money bequeathed to him to buy an Old Mill in Snape and began work on the *Peter Grimes* opera. Peter Pierce joined the Sadler's Wells Opera Company. Disagreements and disputes within Sadler's Wells threatened its continued existence. Joan Cross announced her intention to re-open Sadler's Wells theatre with *Peter Grimes* by Benjamin Britten, with herself and Pears in the leading roles. British newspapers have been publishing homophobic writings about Britten, calling his music a cacophony. However, the premiere of *Peter Grimes*, performed at Sadler's Wells Theatre on 7 June 1945, conducted by Reginald Goodall, was the first of Britten's operas to be a critical and popular success. The earnings from the opera even surpassed those of *Madame Butterfly* and *Bohemia*, which were performed in the same season. It was named the best British opera for the first time since Purcell. Unfortunately, the rift within the company was irreparable. Cross, Britten and Pears severed their ties with Sadler's Wells in December 1945 and founded the English Opera Group."[20]

[19] Kildea, Paul: p.202
[20] Gilbert, Susie: pp.98-107

1.2 Alderburgh Festival

The new company's - English Opera Group - goal was to première Britten's operas, and to present other, mostly British, small-scale operas.[21] The company's first project was to première "Britten's chamber opera Albert Herring and give further performances of his opera *The Rape of Lucretia* during a tour of British and continental European venues. It also commissioned and premièred a new piece by Lennox Berkeley, a setting of the Stabat Mater. Despite heavy subsidies, however, the costs of touring could not be recouped, which made Britten and the group's other directors decide that it should be based at a home venue. This was the prime reason for the inauguration of the Aldeburgh Festival in 1948."[22] The idea of a new festival belonged to Peter Pears. They were on tour with *"Albert Herring"* and *"The Rape of Lucretia"* in Switzerland, when Pears said: "Why not make our own Festival? A modest Festival with a few concerts given by friends? Why not have an Aldeburgh Festival?"[23] And so from 5 until 13 June 1948, the Aldeburgh Jubilee Hall met the First Aldeburgh Festival, a few doors away from Britten's house on Crabble Street. The main stage was the fifteenth-century *Church of Saint Peter and Saint Paul*. The English Opera Group performed the "*Albert Herring*", and Britten wrote the new cantata, *"The Saint Nicolaus"*. The first 6 years of the festival were organized by Britten, Pears, Crozier, and later they were joined by Imogen Holst. Holst was invited to the Aldeburgh Festival because Pears believed she could help Britten and the festival. Shortly after 1952, Britten invited her to work with him. Holst agreed and moved to lodging in Aldeburgh. Everything was granted to the Festival - a working club, a Baptists chapel, a Church, A Jubilee Hall, private houses, halls for exhibitions of paintings.

Every year in preparation for the Festival, Britten wrote a new work. This was not only a music festival - there were lectures, art exhibitions, and theatrical performances by the English Opera Group. Britten attracted many other composers to the festival - Francis Poulenk, William Walton, Zoltan Kodaly, Witold Lutoslawski. He also attracted artists, John Piper and George Erich; and writers and poets, including Edith Sitwell and William Plomer. Here we

[21] Rosenthal, Harold: p. 52
[22] Rosenthal, Harold: p. 52
[23] Carpenter, Humphry: 1992

can find very young talents, events of musical life are celebrated, and there are even "home performances": for example, Holst recalls that once Britten played "Fantasia on the one note" of Henry Purcell, and Yehudi Menuhin, sitting on the same stage in the orchestra, played with the second violinist, the Bach's Brandenburg Concerto. The Festival was known for the variety of musical styles played and for the number of composers - by 1982, 75 composers were represented at the event.

In 1950, Britten invited the famous Scottish viola player, William Primrose, to perform at the Aldeburgh festival. Here we must stop and learn more about Primrose's person.

William Primrose (23 August 1904 - 1 May 1982) was a Scottish violist and teacher. He was an outstanding viola performer of the 20th century. He first studied the violin in Glasgow, with his first performance, Mendelssohn's violin concerto, taking place in 1916, when he was 12 years old. In 1919, Primrose's family moved to London, and he studied violin in Guildhall School of Music on scholarship. Primrose graduated from the school in 1924 with highest honors and a gold medal. However, from this moment forward, the violin did not interest him. In 1925, Primrose went to Belgium and was taught by Eugene Ysaye. Ysaye gave Primrose the advice to begin playing the viola when he heard how the student played the Amati's viola. In 1930, he joined the group of young Warwick Evans, John Pennington and Thomas Petre - London String Quartet - as a violist. They toured all throughout North and South America, but in 1935, under the pressure of the Great Depression, they were disbanded. After the London String Quartet Primrose performed in Berlin, Milan, and England. Beginning in 1937, Primrose was a violist in the NBC symphony orchestra, but he was never a principal violist. In 1939, NBC orchestra suggested that Primrose form his own quartet, which he named the Primrose Quartet. He continued to play with the NBC orchestra until 1941 when it was rumored that Toscanini would leave the Symphony. Primrose also made many recordings with Jascha Heifetz and Gregory Piatigorsky. They played together until 1964, when the health of Primrose became worse, and he made a decision to teach.

In 1944, he was the soloist in the first studio recording of Berlioz's "Harold in Italy". In the same year he commissioned a viola concerto from Bela Bartok, but it was incomplete at Bartok's death in 1945. Primrose had to wait 4 years, when Tibor Serly finished it. On 2 December 1949, there was a world premiere of this concerto and Primrose was a soloist.

Primrose wrote a letter to Britten on 24 October 1949, a few days after their first meeting, stating:

> *"I hasten to thank you most warmly for two very gracious experiences. First of all for your concert of a few hours ago which I found a very rewarding experience. It was all so beautifully accomplished [...] Secondly, for your heartwarming compliment the other evening at the Hawkes' when you said I was 'needed' at Aldeburgh. Believe me I would regard it as a privilege, without a viola piece from you, but with it my cup would indeed overflow*!"[24]

Britten's answer was: *"If you will come, I will write a piece for you"*. And Primrose replied: *"In that case, I'll be there".* Britten started work on this piece in April of 1950, completed it in May, and it was premiered by Primrose and himself on 20 June 1950 at the Aldeburgh Festival. The piece was in the program of "Chamber music featuring viola" which also included a performance of Mozart's E-flat Trio (KV 498) and Arthur Benjamin's Viola Sonata[25].

Below are newspaper reviews of the premiere of Lachrymae[26]:

Frank Howes (?) The Times 22.06.1950:

> "*Lachrymae or Reflection on a Song of Dowland, for viola and piano, is not an easy piece to assimilate at first hearing without a score, partly because the listener has to wait till the last few bars for an overt reference to Dowland's "If my complaints could passions move", which constitutes the main theme, easily missed on reference to it first furtive appearance in the piano beneath atmospheric muted tremolo reference to it from the viola. At the extract from same composer's "Flow, O my tears" is heard during the ten continuous variations, but the versatility of Britten's invention again enables him to make a very little thematic material go a very long way, while the introspective, undemonstrative character of the music will no doubt make a deeper impression at each successive performance*".

"Diapason" Hank Spruytenburg, East Anglian Daily Times (21 June 1950):

> *"The work, as far as could be judged at first hearing, contains some very fine material, and with it passionate outbursts alternating with moments of deep quietude seems*

[24] Primrose, William: 1978, p.185
[25] Mitchell, *Donald: 2004,* p. 550-551
[26] Mitchell, Donald: 2004, p.590

evocative of that passionate melancholy so strongly overlying most of the artistic expression of the Elizabethan period. Mr. Primrose's masterly technique, coupled with Mr. Britten's absorption of the art of ensemble playing, gave a most persuasive reading of this jewel"

Desmond Shawe-Taylor, New Statesman and Nation, 1 July 1950:

A short, but very striking, new work by Britten was introduced during a chamber concert at which William Primrose was the principal performer. This was Lachrymae, for viola and piano, describing as "Reflections on a Song of John Dowland". The opening of the song ("If my complaints") is adumbrated with whispering recitatives for the muted viola and strange blurred passages for both instruments which a peinter might liken to scumbling (the softening or reduction of the effect of otherwise brilliant colours); in the later variation, after some bare but muscular writing in soft octaves, a wonderful slow crescendo is built up, flowering at last into a quiet statement of Dowland's own ending. The whole piece, though not at first hard to grasp, is held together by same "tension" of which Sir Kenneth Clark had spoken in describing Moor's forms: the listener is led irresistibly forward, and the end brongs release and emotional fulfilment. It may be that Lachrymae heralds a new direction of Britten's pure and brilliant talent, one of the sources of which was suggested to us, on the next day, by the fine woodwing "Divertimento" (1938) of his teacher, Frank Bridge. Here, the clarity of form and texture, even the decorative loops and festoons, reminded us constantly of passages from "The Rape of Lucretia" and "Albert Herring"

It should be noted that Primrose was to return to the Aldeburgh Festival. In 1951, Primrose with Manoug Parikian (violin) and English Opera Group orchestra played Mozart's *Sinfonia concertante* in E-flat (conducted by Britten). In 1952, he performed *Lachrymae* with Noel Mewton-Wood (piano), and Priaulx Rainer's Sonata, Bach's Sixth Brandenburg Concerto (conducted by Britten), and Holst's *Lyric Movement* for viola and strings (conducted by Imogen Holst). [27]

[27] Mitchell, Donald: 2004, p.551

CHAPTER 2

John Dowland and his Lachrymae

John Dowland (January 2, 1563 - February 20, 1626) - the greatest English lute player and composer of the Golden Age. Almost nothing is known about his childhood and adolescence. In 1580, he was in the service of the British ambassador in Paris and was baptized by a Catholic. In 1588 in Oxford, Dowland received an academic degree of Bachelor of Music. It is known that in 1594, Dowland went to Rome, where he wanted to find the famous lutenist Luca Marenzio. On the way to Rome, Dowland visited German cities, and upon arrival in Rome, he inadvertently turned out in conspiracy against Queen Elizabeth. Dowland immediately abandoned the idea of communicating with Luca Marenzio and went on his return journey.[28] Probably in 1596, Dowland was again in England. In 1597, Dowland's first collection of works, "The First book of songs", was published, where the author is described as having a bachelor of music from two universities. He worked in the service of Moritz, Landgrave of Hesse, and from 1598 to 1606 Dowland served as a lute player at the court of King Christian IV of Denmark. In 1612, he was a lute player at the court of King Jakob. From 1621 people began to refer to the lutenist as "Dr. Dowland" but it is unclear where he obtained the degree of Doctor. In general, his works have a melancholic character. For example, "Semper Dowland, semper doliens", where Dowland skillfully uses the consonance of the words *Dowland* and lat. *doliens.*[29]

"The music of John Dowland circulated widely in keyboard adaptations during his lifetime, as it was suitable for performance on harpsichord, virginals or clavichord. Many arrangements and intabulations were made by his contemporaries in England and mainland Europe, including Schildt, Byrd, Peter Philips, Scheidt, Scheidemann, Sweelinck, Ferdinando Richardson and many anonymous arrangements from tablatures in various cities (Lüneburgh, Stockholm, Turin, Copenhagen, Krakow, Florence).

He was, even in his own lifetime, singled out by his contemporaries for the range of his musical achievements and praised for his 'learning'. His compositions were much more widely transmitted in both British and continental manuscripts than those of any colleagues of his

[28] Poulton, Diana: 1982, p. 28.
[29] Douglas Alton Smith: 2002, p.275

generation. His restless travels throughout Europe"[30] brought foreign musicians into direct contact with his playing and repertoire as well as broadening his experience of styles and dance music. The pieces selected here are best seen as 'reflections' on Dowland's music. They range from literal and sometimes naive transfers to elaborate sets of variations and highly complex transcriptions from both British and continental sources dating from the first half of the seventeenth century. Several of the numbers listed amongst his lute works are probably his arrangements of pre-existing dances acquired from elsewhere, and it is probable that the keyboard versions may have been derived from other sources. For example, Christopher Hogwood wrote, that, transmitted via copyist, the setting of the "*Lachrymae Pavan*" by Schildt, or the version of Sweelinck from the imprecise manuscript relate of Bartfa, in the words of Alan Curtis, "much like a beautifully preserved painting by a minor artist compared to a mediocre copy of a great master's lost painting".[31]

However, many of these attempts to translate music for lute into keyboard music give us the opportunity to at least approximately recognize the harmonic components of Dowland's original song. Since we do not have enough competency to transcribe a tab for the lute into an understandable system of music notation, we will use the transcription of Dowland's song for piano.

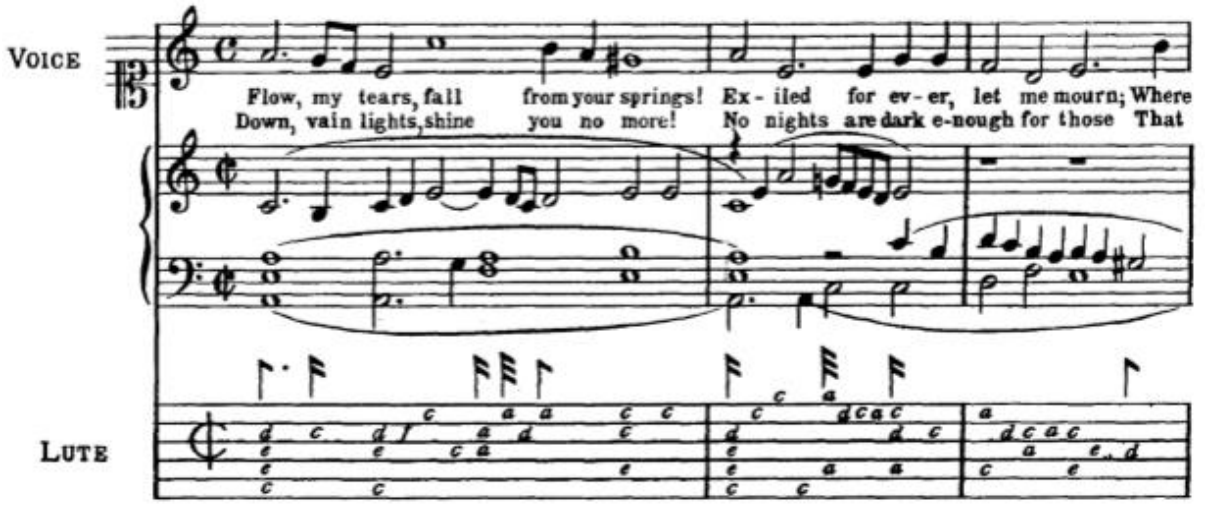
Lachrymae - the most famous work by Dowland. It was written in three versions - the first edition was created for the lute, the second was like the song "Flow, my tears", and the third treatment was created for the consort. "The "*Lachrymae*" survives in the many numbers of adaptations, both for keyboard and consort. Its earliest form seems to have been as a lute solo: manuscript versions are found from the 1590s, and the piece was printed from wood blocks in William Barley's New Booke of Tabliture (1596). The song setting, "Flow, my tears", is first found in Dowland's "Second Booke of Songes or Ayres" in 1600, with a metrically irregular text which seems to have been devised to fit the pre-existing melody. It heads the sequence of related pavans and other dances as "Lachrymae Antique" for consort which Dowland published in 1604 as "Lachrymae" or "Seven Teares Figured in Seven Passionate Pavans","[32] (1 - Lachrimae antiquae, 2 - Lachrimae antiquae novae, 3 - Lachrimae gementes,

[30] Christopher Hogwood "John Dowland. Keyboard music. http://www.editionhh.co.uk/hh74pref.htm
[31] Christopher Hogwood "*John Dowland. Keyboard music.* http://www.editionhh.co.uk/hh74pref.htm
[32] Christopher Hogwood "John Dowland. Keyboard music. http://www.editionhh.co.uk/hh74pref.htm

4 - Lachrimae tristes, 5 - Lachrimae ge - Lachrimae amantis, 7 - Lachrimae verae. Each of these pavans begins with a variable form of the main motive (head-motive).

The music form of this piece is based on a dance, in this case *the pavana*. The first motive - from an A till an E - the tear motive started the song. In 17th-century Elizabethan music, it was the common sigh of sorrow. (Ex.1)

Example 1:



The earliest and "the most English" version for lute was in G-minor. This gave rise to great numbers of continental rearrangements in that key. Other versions of Lachrymae are in A-minor for six-course lutes, later D-minor for consort versions, and much of the vocal setting was very often was reduced to two-part framework. These vocal settings appear to have been the basis of many other continental arrangements. Dowland's consort version was especially attractive to keyboard arrangers because it is particularly rich in internally related thematic-part writing. For example, Christopher Hogwood wrote that the line of descent from Dowland can be detected in some versions of composers of North German organ school[33].

[33] Beckmann Klaus: 2005

"The Ander von Düben Tablature"[34] contained pieces of several composers of the North German organ school: Melchior Schildt (born in 1592 or 1593, Hanover - 18 May 1667), Paul Siefert[35] (23 May 1586 - 6 May 1666), Heinrich Scheidemann[36] (ca. 1595 - 1663). All pieces were written as arrangements on the melody of Dowland. Pieter Dirksen wrote: *"The Düben Tabulature contains two pieces by North German pupils of Sweelincks in which the master's lead in reshaping an original English pavan in a more strictly polyphonic keyboard style is followed. Paul Siefert based his Pavan in d (no.1) on a pavan by John Dowland."* It is a remarkably fine Sweelinckian emulation in elegant, pure four-part writing. The original lute pavan is rather poorly preserved in its unique source, the Scheie lute manuscript, under the title "La mia Barbara. Johan Daulande Bacheler". Even though it has also been preserved in an arrangement for five-part ensemble under Dowland's name in Thomas Simpson's Opusculum neuwer Pavanen (Frankfurt, 1610), its authenticity has been questioned. In referencing "La mia Barbara" and two other Dowland unica from the Scheie manuscript, Diana Poulton writes: "here we have a paucity of musical thought spread out to an inordinate length"[37]. However, while this might be true of the latter two pieces, things lie differently with regards to the pavan, especially in the light of the flawlessly preserved keyboard version. In Siefert's transcription, the beautiful structure of the pavane is more readily apparent, enabling a restoration of the lute pavan. What is more, there was apparently a strong tradition of making keyboard arrangements of Dowland pieces in the Sweelinck school - Sweelinck, Schildt and Scheidemann arranged the Lachrymae pavan, while Scheidt elaborated upon Dowland's King of Denmark's Galliard. Thus Siefert's Dowland arrangement fits into a well-defined Sweelinckian genre.

The Düben Tablature also contains a fragment of Melchior Schildt's Lachrymae arrangement (no.13), which has been preserved in complete form in Voigtländer. There is no reason to assume, as Alan Curtis does, that Sweelinck's setting was the source of inspiration of Schildt's, and that differences in degree of passagework and 'abundance of figuration' are to be attributed to the differing qualities of preservation. Schildt's goals are clearly different from those of his teacher. Instead of the latter's 'pure', subdued keyboard version, the pupil views Dowland's pavans as a model capable of providing the backbone for a profusion of

[34] John Irving: 2000
[35] Bianconi, Lorenzo: 1987.
[36] Dirksen, Pieter, Chapter 14
[37] Poulton, Diana and Lam, Basil, 1998.

idiomatic and varied keyboard figuration. Schildt's aim is much the same as that of the English keyboard setting, but it pushed still further. The spacious lines and harmonies of the Dowland pavan function as an effective foil to Schildt's expansive and imaginative decorations. As a consequence of this approach he introduces figuration already in the primary strains, thus having no choice but to increase figurational activity still further in the repeats. However, just as in Siefert's pavan, four-part texture remains at the heart of Schildt's setting, even though the more expansive figuration demands a flexible observance of this rule. Schildt made his arrangement with a goal fundamentally different from Sweelink's, which obviously is related to its much later origin. In contrast to the Sweelinck version, Schildt's pavan presupposes the audiences familiarity with the original, which is only to be expected considering the enormous popularity Dowland's pavan achieved not least in Germany in the 1620s and 1630s. What he writes, then, it relates not to Sweelinck's Pavana lachrymae setting itself but rather to the variation of his Pavana Philippi."[38]

In summary, it should be noted that Dowland's *Lachrymae* was very popular in continental Europe in the 1620s and 1630s. This was facilitated by his frequent travels throughout Europe, including Italy, Germany, and his work in Denmark. Many composers, for example, participants of the North German Organ School with Sweelinck and his students, often worked on Dowland's *Lachrymae* and even had clear rules on the arrangement of this work.

Christopher Hogwood wrote that there are some similarity between the virtuoso keyboard decorations added by Schildt and Scheidemann and settings by the Dutch composer and lutenist Joachim van den Hove (1567? - 1620).

In general, after more than ninety settings of the pavan and closely related works of Dowland, it seems that it was actually used not as a sacred essence, but as a starting point for compositional and performative development. The various Lachrymae arrangements presented here, grouped by tonality, show a wide range of technique, without a fictional reprise, to fiery and masterfully decorated versions, with full repetitions in the North German manner.

In the 20th century, American composer and conductor Victoria Bond wrote "Old New Borrowed Blues. Variations on *Flow, my tears*". In 2006, the British electronic music group *Banco de Gaia* produced the vocoded version called "Flow, my dreams, the Android Wept".

[38] Dirksen, Pieter: Chapter 14

Anthony Boden said of the song "*Lachrymae*", it is "probably the most widely known English song of the 17th century". In 1948, Benjamin Britten created his "Lachrymae. Reflections." Britten always advised all young students to process folk songs - he believed that this work is the best way to help comprehend the fusion of words and music. Britten himself masterfully worked on folk songs in which he studied simplicity, naturalness and expressiveness of English speech in music. From 1942 to 1958, Britten processed 36 English songs and created 5 books of "Folksong Arrangements". It was during this same period that *Lachrymae* was created.

CHAPTER 3

The Lachrymae of Benjamin Britten

3.1 Lachrymae and Nocturnal

Britten's choice of role models is by no means limited to romance and modernity. In fact, his close relationship to the distant past is evident in his works on songs by John Dowland because Britten very much revered him.

In 1969, Britten said he always felt himself to be like a youngest contemporary of John Dowland. Thus he described his conservative-integrative stylistic attitude as well as his desire for interpretation. The latter was shown not only in Britten's talent and his success in song accompaniment (for Peter Pears), but also in the compositions on found tonal music. The breadth of Britten's compositional interpretations in instrumental work includes not only the updating reflections on the melancholy in Dowland's lyrics, but also the play with the tension that results from the confrontation or combination of different folk melodies. [39]

Britten wrote two pieces based on the songs of John Dowland: "*Lachrymae. Reflection on a Song of John Dowland*" (opus 48. 1950, for viola and piano, with treatments for viola and string orchestra in 1976) and "*Nocturnal after John Dowland*" (for Guitar op.70., planned in 1953, finished in 1963). While the British 'pastoral school' from Parry to Vaughan Williams, was primarily inspired by other Tudor-era composers, Britten took on the originality and virtuoso treatment of Henry Purcell and the melancholy of John Dowland as a model for opus 48 and opus 70. This is typical of many of Britten's works, including those written for the Alderburgh Festival and those written for certain interpreters, namely, viola player, William Primrose, and guitarist, Julian Bream. These two works do not share decades, but they are very similar. Nevertheless, the manuscript of Nocturnal refers to the time of origin, for example through some parallels to the Cello Suites.

Both works reverse, so to speak, the traditional variation principle by starting with their own reflection (this word "reflection" also returns in the subtitles): the original songs of Dowland appear only at the end. For "*Lachrymae*" the original song of Dowland is "*If my complaints could passion move*", for "*Nocturnal*", it is "*Come, heavy sleep*". Both of these songs came from "*Firste Booke of Songes or Ayres*", London, 1597. Stoffel explains that the original

[39] Stoffels, Bernhard: 2012, p.28

songs are not results, but destinations, and so, at the end of the works, the whole context is much clearer than in some variations of earlier eras.

Philip Rupprecht writes in his "*Britten's musical language*[40]" that this quasi-improvisational character of "Reflections", which are like a nocturnal search, makes the Dowland songs consciously appear as a fulfillment, a goal. He made parallels between "Lachrymae" and the Violin Concerto of Alban Berg, who quoted a choral of Bach "Es ist genug" in the second movement and made a bridge from new music to the audience: "Direct quotation [...] emerges in Lachrymae (as in the Berg Concerto) by a concluding epiphany".[41]

It is precisely the stylistic difference between the variations and the lyrics that makes the atmospheric and musical tension inherent in both works peculiarly resolved in the end. Perhaps, it is precisely the difference between Renaissance and modern tonal language that precludes a traditional beginning with the theme: the break that would be felt with the onset of modern variations would be quite strong.

The transition from Britten-Dowland Reflections to the original song is a revealing break between the historical model and Britten. In both pieces, the original theme appears without any pause - such an element would have seriously disturbed the desired inverse teleological connection between the current variations and the original theme. This freedom with tonalities and chromaticism, strong ornamental decorations, give the works the character of improvisational preludes and the resulting feeling that one is listening to an improvisation. The first variations in both works resemble 16th-century improvisational ricercars.

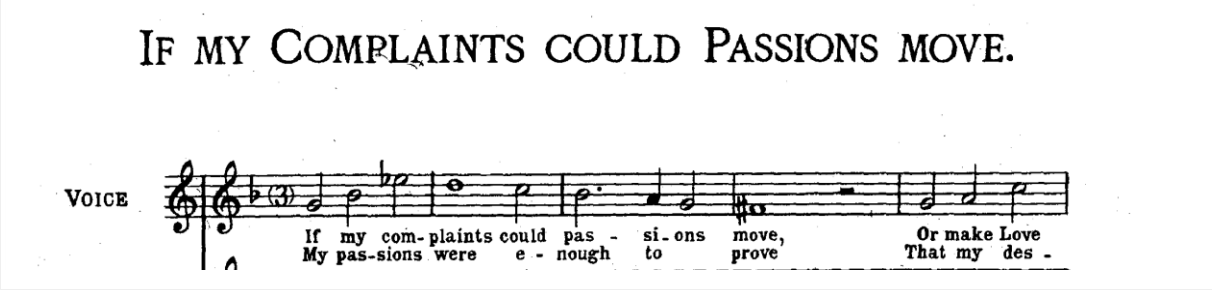
It is possible to assume that Britten took as a basis one of the pavans of Dowland; but with a closer look, it turns out that this is completely wrong. The seven pavans, "Seven Tears", have nothing in common with Britten's Lachrymae, except for the similarity in their names - a word that denotes a tearful mood.

However, Britten's Lachrymae has a subtitle - Reflection of a Song of Dowland. So, is there still a connection between the creation of Britten and the creations of Dowland? There is no doubt, of course. In addition to 7 songs, Dowland's *Lachrymae* still has several numbers, both instrumental and vocal, previously published in two books by Dowland and known as "Songs

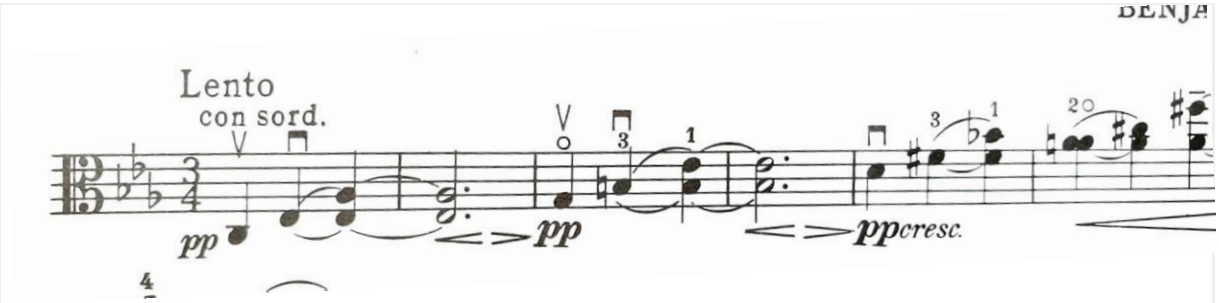
[40] Rupprecht, Philip:2001, p. 21
[41] Rupprecht, Philip: 2001, p. 19

or Ayres". One of these numbers is *Captain Digorie Piper his Galliard*, an instrumental arrangement of a Dowland song that tells of an English pirate who raided Dutch ships. It is called "If my Complaints" (Ex.2) and it was this tune that was taken by Britten for his Lachrymae (Ex.3):

Example 2:



Example 3:



Another reference to Dowland's songs is the melody from the second edition of *Lachrymae* - "*Flow, my tears*", which Britten used later to keep the melody fresh for the audience. Using the second variant of *Lachrymae*, and not the well-known first variant for the lute, as well as transposing the melody does not help us in better understanding Britten's chosen name for his piece (Reflection of a Song of Dowland). However, it is this melody that gave the name to the whole work of "*Lachrymae*", meaning "Tears", and so we have as many as three references to Dowland's creative work - the name, the theme and the quotations within the musical material.

3.2 Structure of Lachrymae

To begin with, it should be noted that the name "Lachrymae" is very suitable for the performance of this composition on the viola - the timbre capabilities of this instrument are perfectly suited for a melancholic mood. Suffice it to recall Harold in Italy by Berlioz, where the composer chose viola as the solo instrument to most fully portray the cold and indifferent Childe Harold. In his "Memoirs", Berlioz wrote:

> *"My intention was to write a series of orchestral scenes, in which the solo viola would be involved as a more or less active participant while retaining its own character. By placing it among the poetic memories formed from my wanderings in the Abruzzi, I wanted to make the viola a kind of melancholy dreamer in the manner of Byron's Childe-Harold."* [42]

Lachrymae, with its subtitle "*Reflections on a Song of Dowland",* consists of 10 Variations with the original theme on the end. It contains an Introduction and Coda. Originally written as a piece for viola and piano, in 1976, Britten created the additions for viola and chamber orchestra.

As we think further about the piece's title, we must ask: What did Britten mean when he called his work, "Reflections"? Why was he more satisfied with this word than with "Variations", or any other term. For example, Bach's chorale by the name "Von Himmel hoch" - Veränderungen: the word is not variations, but "change".

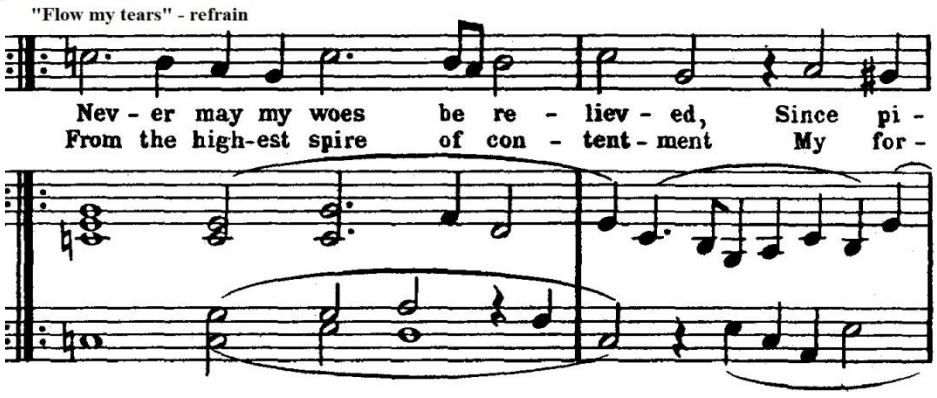
To understand this question, we should analyze the composition and identify the methods and techniques used by Britten. Firstly, let us consider the structure of the work using, for convenience, the table offered by Lachrymae researcher, David Sills[43]. In his table, Sills denoted parts of Lachrymae as Variations.

[42] Tovey, Donald: 1981, p. 171
[43] Sills, David:1997, p.20

Section	Tempo marking	Measures (in bars)	Start of section
Introduction	Lento	8	1
Thema		20	9
Variation 1	Allegretto molto comodo	35	No.1
Variation 2	Animato	15	No.2
Variation 3	Tranquillo	24	No.3
Variation 4	Allegro con moto	54	No.4
Variation 5	Largamente	18	No.5
Variation 6	Appassionato	41	No.6
Variation 7	Alla valse moderato	32	No.7
Variation 8	Allegro marcia	24	No.8
Variation 9	Lento	8	No.9
Variations 10	L'istesso tempo	15	No.10
Thema		18	No.10 + 16 bars
Coda		16	No.10 +34 bars

Already in the first performance of the melody, Britten did not fully use Dowland's melody. It seems reasonable - the original melody is too long to use as a theme for variations. If we sketch the structure of Dowland's song, we get {: a1 a2:} - {: b1 b2:} - {: c1 c2:} (Ex.4)

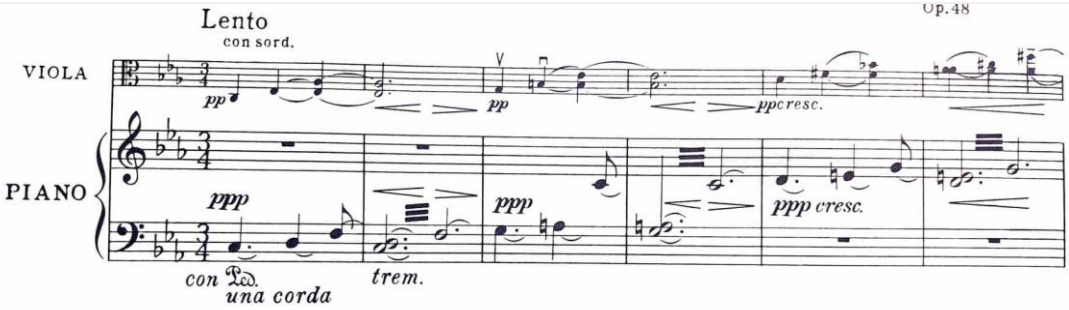
Example 4: (modern notation)



Britten used only {: a1 a2:}, and holds the rest of the melodies to keep their sound fresh for listeners.[44]

The introduction of *Lachrymae* begins at both the viola and the piano - the viola con sordino and piano begin from the same note - C. There are two motives - the viola and the piano are opposed to each other: (Ex.5)

Example 5:

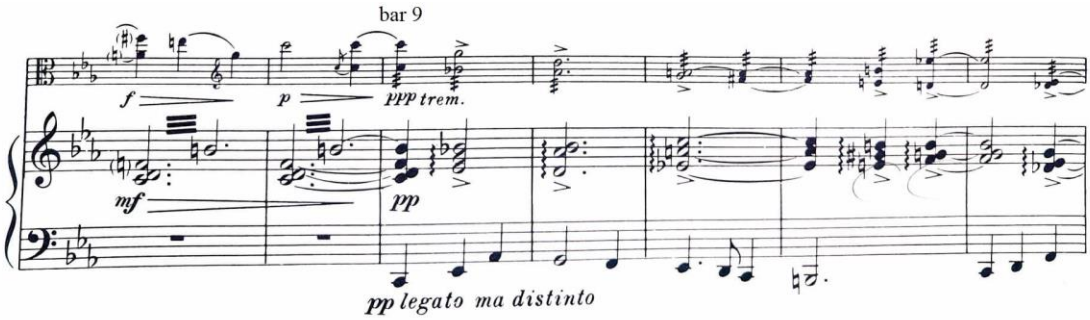


44 Stoffels, Bernhard: 2012, p.31

The following two bars strengthen the original motive. It will be repeated only 4 times, and each subsequent time sounds a fifth higher than the previous one. Britten wrote that the fifth allowed him to make a beautiful, cunning move — in each subsequent two bars, the viola begins with an open string. Such a pattern on the viola was possible only in C-minor, which set the tone for the whole piece. The second note in the first bar clearly indicates to us the approval of C-minor, the E-flat is the third in a minor triad, but instead of a quint in a tonic chord, we have a sext - an A. The fifth carrying out of the main two bars - is a kind of joke of Britten's. He seemed to want to continue the ascent of the motive with a non-existent string, E, in the viola.

In the ninth bar, the theme appears for the first time - it passes into the bass at the piano and is very difficult to notice. Here the motive has expanded - now the melody "breathes" four bars each. Each carrying out of the main theme is accompanied by pandiatonics - a free combination of diatonic chords (in this case, tonic and dominant) outside the rules of strict classical writing. The viola at this time supports the theme with agitated tremolytic double-stops, which contain open strings (Ex. 6, bar 9).

Example 6:

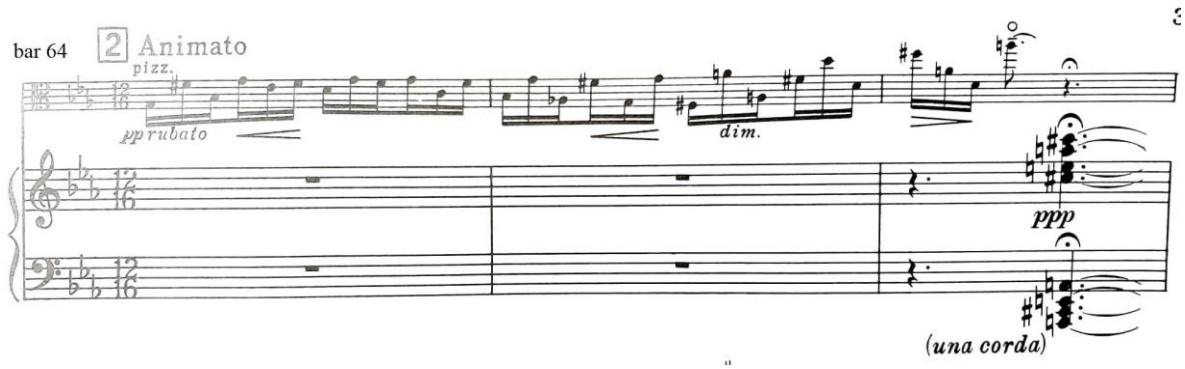


The first variation can be divided into two parts: rubato and quick parts. Rubato begins with a rhythmically modified theme, and the piano repeats the last three notes after the viola, supporting it with tonic harmonies. The quick part holds the theme with the elastic eighth notes of staccato, and resembles a question-answer based on the main theme.

Viola begins with a second variation on the main theme in the running sixteenth pizzicato (Ex. 7, bar 64 in piece, No.2). At first it seems to us that this is in C-minor, but the appearance of the sounds of F-sharp and A in the bass at the piano clearly lead us to understand that there is no longer a C-minor. The second phrase of the viola ends with a D-sharp that is en-

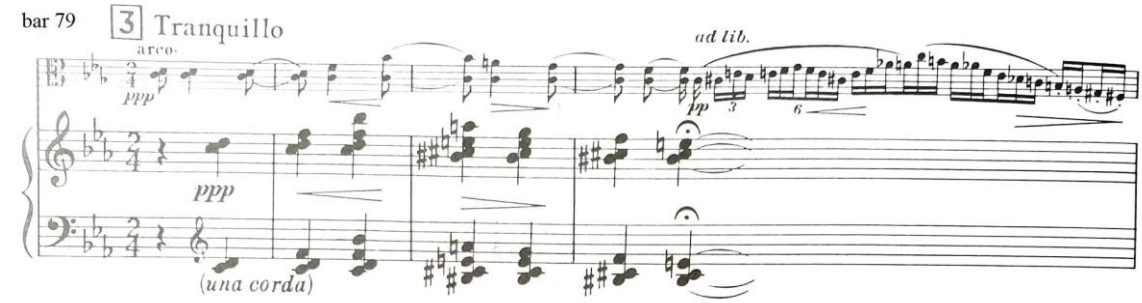
harmonically equal to E-flat - the third step of the C-minor. The piano supports each ending of the viola phrase, resting on its last note. By the end of the second variation, the viola returns to c-moll, and the piano leaves a haze of incompleteness with its chord from Picardy third.

Example 7:



The third variation consists of 6 phrases, each of which ends with a small cadence of the viola. The melodic load here is borne by the piano - the first 7 notes of the theme sound slowly, in quarters, and the viola follows a partner with double-stops. Gradually, the melody expands and brings us to the cadence of the alto on the note C (Ex.8, bar 79 or No.3 in the piece).

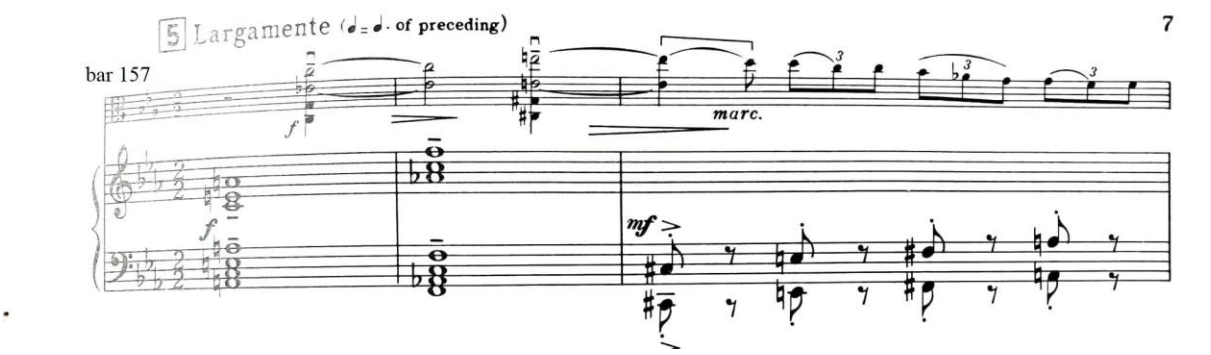
Example 8:



The fourth variation begins in E-flat minor - this is a third key higher from the main C-minor. For the first time, the viola here sounds very clear, without a mute, and it holds the theme as in Introduction, but it is given in extension and without the support of the piano. Accompanied by descending quarters, and at the 31st bar both instruments change places - now rhythmic quarters pass through the viola, and the piano has the motive that was in the piano part of the Introduction, but with longer notes. The end of the fourth variation - three bars of downscales passage bring the listener to five variations.

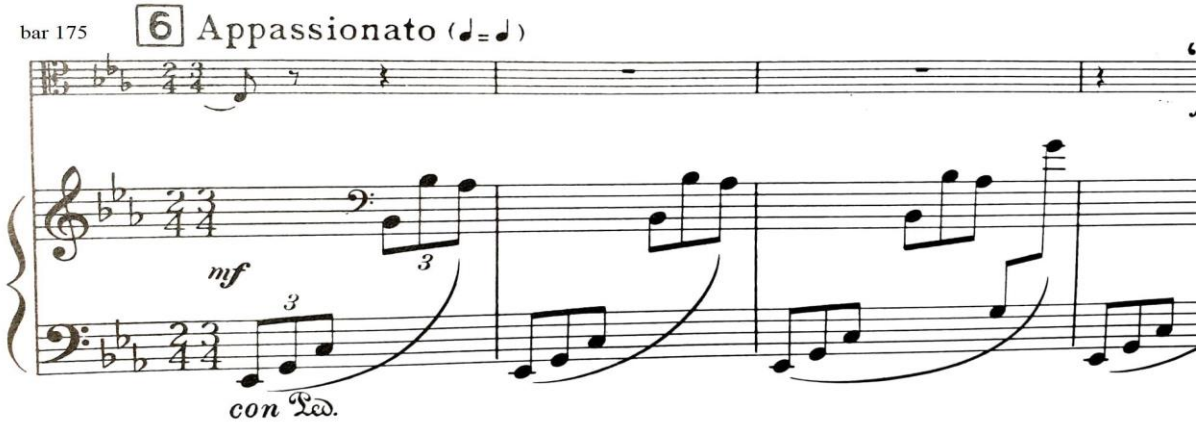
Variation five begins with the tonic triad of A-minor. A-minor is a key, which is located a third below C-minor. Such a triad in the viola — two tones around the C-minor, higher and lower by a third, is contrasted to a similar triad in the piano in F-major. These two triads lead the melody back into C-minor, the viola chords have the sounds of C-minor triad in the upper notes, which form the theme. Then the descending passage is followed by triplets, which completes the theme, and rolls down to the C note. The next two phrases are similar to the first. The theme is created by the top notes of the first three viola chords in each phrase, followed by the downward triplet passage. The final notes in the piano part anticipate the tonality of the sixth variation - E-flat major, while the viola still continues its fifth variation, despite the fact that the sixth variation has already begun in the accompaniment (Ex. 9, No. 5 or bar 157 in the piece).

Example 9:



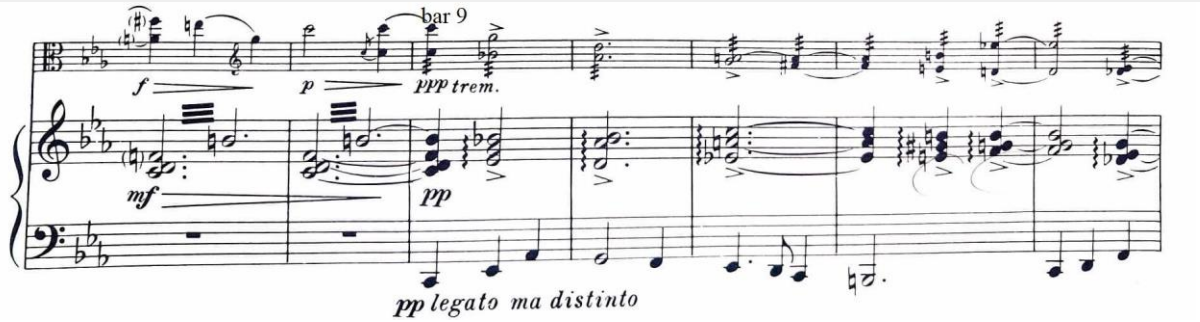
The sixth variation begins with a complex accompaniment of the piano 2/4 +3/4. The arpeggiated accompaniment drawing is built on the initial theme: (Ex. 10, No.6 or bar 175)

Example 10:



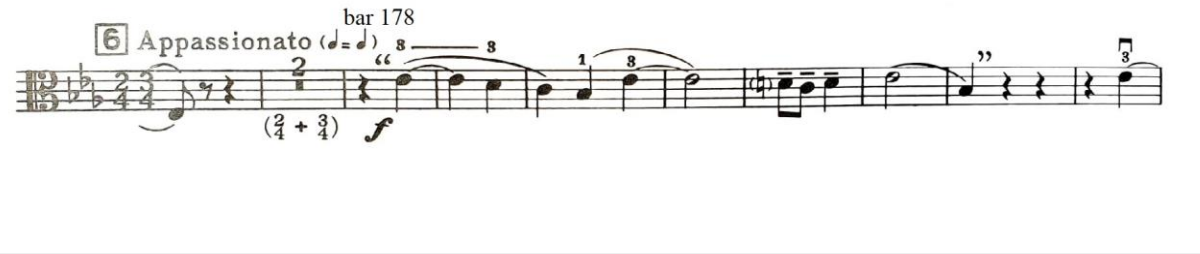
For comparison, the theme from Introduction: (Ex. 11, bar 9 - Theme "*If my complaints*" in left hand of piano)

Example 11:



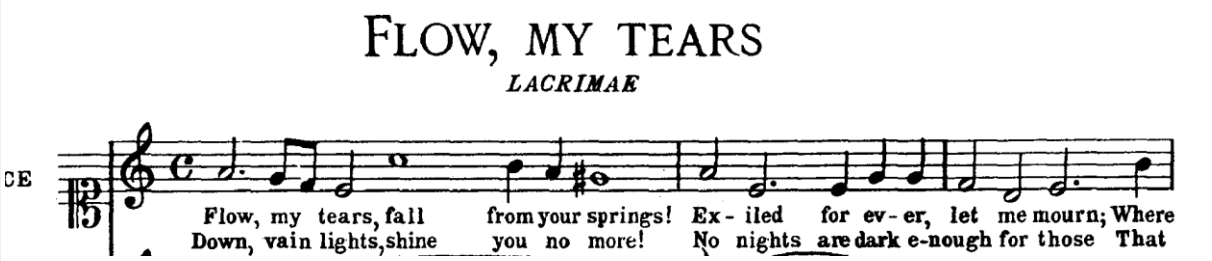
And the viola, who entered in the fourth bar, performs a variation on the second edition of "Lachrymae" - "Flow, my tears" - for the first time a theme appears here that gives the name to the entire work (Ex. 12, bar 178 or 4 bar after No.6).

Example 12: Entry viola in 6 variations



For comparison Ex. 13: the “Flow, my tears”:

Example 13:



Britten took the original melody from the refrain of “Flow, my tears”, which appears in E-flat major. Constantly, a *D* goes against the D-flat major chords in the piano part. Britten repeats the melody once again an octave higher and leaves the viola on the note *H*, like a question.

The seventh variation imitates a waltz. As in the fourth variation, the piano plays only when the viola sustains long notes. It turns out the roll call. This variation is also conventionally divided into two parts. The second part contains smaller notes, as the waltz tempo is gradually broken. The variation ends on a note, *E-flat*, as if reminding us of the instability of the viola in the previous variation.

The eighth variation has a note of *Allegro marcia*, but the dotted rhythm disrupts our usual perception of the march. There are only six small phrases. Viola plays here with the sound of “*quasi ponticello*” - like a ponticello. The bow should move along the string quickly enough so that the bow hair does not have time to hook onto the string properly. Each of the phrases begins with agitated triplet of the piano; this is a fragment from the initial viola theme from Introduction. The fourth performance of the phrase begins with the triplets of the piano, which are a modified initial piano motive from Introduction. Subsequent accompaniment chords go down to the main key. The viola stays in before the C-minor.

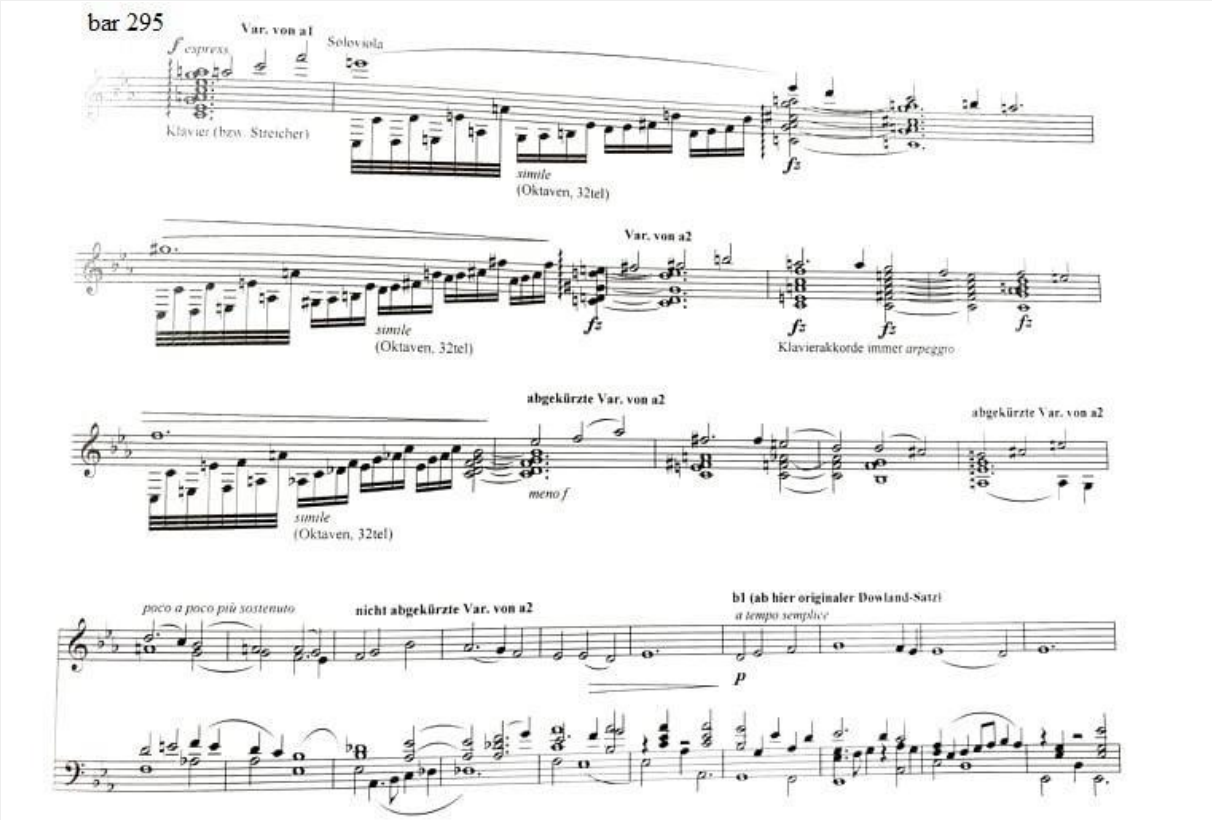
The ninth variation begins immediately from the main theme, but as an inversion - from the note *C* to the note of the *F* (like a reflection in a mirror). Then the same motif appears once again lower on the triton and ends on the note *H*. Pass to the note *G*, which will then serve as a bridge to E-flat major. Britten does not give clear instructions on the viola part - here are

two versions of the performance. So, for example, the first option is double discordant stops. And the second option has a remark *flautando*, and contains light flageolets, in opposition to the previous eight variations with its *quasi ponticello*. Each viola passage is a twice-inverted theme motive, and each new present of this passage is complicated by all new dissonances. Each phrase is recommended to play without vibrato, so as not to violate the unity of harmony. For example, Britten not only used many flageolets here, but also open strings, especially in the last bar against the background of a frozen dominant chord in the piano part.

The tenth variation begins with slow chords of the piano; the upper sounds of the chords form the initial motive of the main theme. Then the focus of attention shifts to the viola's part, which supports the piano with fast notes that become louder, taller and more intense all the way to Coda. The viola's passages are built on fragments and repetitions of the theme. Britten places every next note of the passage higher and higher and makes extensive use of the chromatic possibilities. All this happens on the *C* note in bass. The piano accompaniment finally turns from chords into a rapidly rising movement, while the highest notes appear in the viola, up to the third octave. Even here, the note *C* is the center. And finally, there is a theme that Britten kept reserved for a very long time. Here are two and three versions of Dowland's song, even the instrumentation remains very modest, as in the lute tabulation. If before that, the whole work was sustained in C-minor, except for variations four and six, then Dowland's songs appear here in E-flat major, as if reflected after a C-minor's storm. It is possible to say that Britten looked in the mirror - so skillfully did he weave his work and his music, that Dowland's music was perfectly reflected in it.[45] (Ex.14, bar 295 or 16 bars after No.10)

[45] Stoffels Bernhard*:* 2012, p..33

Example 14 (transpose):



As we summarize the prior analysis, we find several important points:

- **Placing the theme at the end of a piece is a rare but applicable practice for composers. Britten created another work with the same idea - *Nocturnal after John Dowland,* op.70, where he also put the theme at the end of the work and called it "*Reflections*".**
- **Britten's choice of *Lachrymae* was meaningful, since the melancholic timbre of the viola is perfectly suited for a "tearful mood".**
- **Britten could play both instruments - viola and piano. He subtly and skillfully used all the expressive qualities of both instruments, which gave him many opportunities to enrich the piece with various techniques. The Introduction is built in such a way that each subsequent phrase begins from open string.**

- **Britten combined not only tempos, but also genres and characters. Some variations are named by designations of tempo - Allegro con comodo, Lento. Others variations, genres (the seventh variation is a waltz; the eighth, a march). Still others variations are characters: Appassionato, Tranquillo.**
- **In harmony and chromaticism, Britten felt himself very free. The variations' tonalities plan does not contain any related tonalities or tonalities of Subdominant and Dominant, which is usually a characteristic of variations. Britten chose the tonalities lying at a distance of minor third from the main C-minor - this is E-flat major and A-minor.**
- **Piano and viola play by turns - when one instrument has shorter notes, the other has longer ones at the very same moment. There are practically no points where both instruments play together, a technique which presumably contributes to a very mysterious character.**
- **Britten used and varied only fragments of Dowland's songs. For variance of these fragments, he used a wide palette - opportunities of viola sound (con and senza sordino), playing methods (sul ponticello, flageolets, pizzicato), and differences in texture (chords, double-stops, triplets, tremolo etc.)**
- **The piano part is also rich in variation methods - chords, slurred notes, triplets, roll call with viola. The piano plays the main theme several times, while the viola acts only as a support.**
- **The theme is not always held in its original form. Britten hid it in the viola passages or in piano chords, thereby enriching the ways in which the melody varies.**
- **Britten used here not one, but two Dowland songs - "If my complaints" and "Flow, my tears".**

CONCLUSION

As we study Britten, we become aware of his originality and of how difficult it is to analyze his work. In his highly individual style, Britten uses a dense fusion of various elements, styles, genres, and composition techniques. His national melody gives his work a special uniqueness, one which he actively used in his works. Through the present research, we studied in detail the structure of Lachrymae. We can assume that this composition is most likely a variation because we have a theme and separate, various parts indicated by numbers, tempo changes and harmonic stops on the tonic. It would be correct to call them free variations, since the composer did not limit his creative thinking in any way.

In his composition, Britten used two Dowland melodies, "If my complaints" and "Flow, my tears", which gave him a wider field of activity. However, Britten's harmonic and chromatic freedom, the extensive use of the viola's expressive facilities(using of sordine, timbre), the use of diverse techniques (pizzicato, flageolets, chords), the main theme at the very end, the use of unusual sizes (2/4+3/4), as well as the synthesis of not only different tempos (Lento, Largamente, Allegro con comodo), but also the presence of different genres (march, waltz), and characters (appassionato, tranquillo) together give us a completely new work. As referenced by Frank Howes "Times" article, what if there was not the theme of Dowland at the very end of the piece? Then, without a score, perceiving music only by ear, it would be very difficult to understand that all these numbers are variations on a particular theme. All the same, the term "variations" is already very specific and carries with it centuries of history, while the word "reflections" allows the composer more freedom. Britten felt himself so free, changing the initial melody, that each variation is no longer a variation as such, but an independent work with features of variation on the Dowland theme.

So, why the "*reflections*"?

These are some of the definitions we have of the word "*reflection*":

> *Reflection in physics*[46] *is the change in direction of a waveform at an interface between two different media so that the wavefront returns into the medium from which it originated.*

[46] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reflection_(physics)

In acoustics, reflection of sound causes echoes. And echo in audio signal processing and acoustics is a reflection of sound that arrives at the listener with a delay after the direct sound.

Reflection in philosophy - the universal property of matter, which manifests itself in the ability of material forms to reproduce the certainty of other material forms in the form of a change in one's own certainty in the process of interaction with them.

The word "reflection" has several lexical definitions. At first, the word was interpreted by us as a separated unit, as a physical process [german - Reflexion], or as a philosophical concept [Widerspiegelung]. More precisely, Britten took the theme of Dowland as a base and created "reflections" on it in the amount of 10 units. However, the subtitle on the title page clearly states: "ReflectionS on a Song of Dowland". The word "reflections" has a second meaning in English, namely "meditations" or "thinking" [Reflexionen oder Nachdenken]. If the *Lachrymae* piece was interpreted as "meditation" or "thinking" on a theme, then Britten might not have given Dowland's theme at the end. Rather he would have created his own independent work, which *Lachrymae* is, in essence, until Dowland's theme finally appears in Coda.

What exactly Britten had in mind when he called his work "Reflections", we will never know. Britten avoided all the restrictions that may be imposed by the rules of classical writing. In this work, he felt free. He used the Dowland's melody as building material for his own composition. The intonations of Dowland's songs in Britten's Lachrymae are, if not a complete reflection, then a semblance of echo or even a glow. It is fair to say that the word "reflections" in the title of the piece conveys the composer's idea much more fully than any other.

Phillip Rupprecht formulated his vision like this: *Lachrymae* is a mysterious change, with the help of which the predecessor appears as an imitation of a descendant. He also spoke out against the term "reflection", arguing that the theme of Dowland in the very story of works is not a tribute, but the goal of the whole work. He made parallels to Lachrymae with Alban Berg's violin concerto and believed that a complete repetition of the theme of Dowland was an unethical use of the composer's material. [47]

[47] Stoffels, Bernhard : 2012, p.29

However, the location of Dowland's theme makes the work look like a mirror image: if in typical variations the theme comes first, then in the Reflections, Britten rightly placed it at the end, as if attaching a mirror. Additionally, the stylistic writing, tonal tension and atmospheric distinction between the Dowland and Britten pieces make it impossible to ethically or unethically use the former's theme. The stylistic and harmonic gap between the composers is very substantial. Freedom in chromaticism, strong melodic lines, give the piece an improvisational character. Also, the first variations in *Lachrymae* remind us of free improvisation ricercars of the 16th century.

Researchers of Britten's work distinguish several techniques for varying the melody: the use of fragments or motives of a theme, the development of fragments of a theme, rather than the development of a theme directly, duplicated or parallel variations, and a combination of variation with composition techniques like fugue and ground (variations on basso ostinato). We can trace several types of Britten's variation technique. For instance, Britten uses fragments of the first Dowland theme for the development of musical material. Britten did not interfere with the technique of variation with other techniques of composition, although in the tenth variation, he offers an unusual solution.

Lachrymae is a deeply complicated work. Without focused analysis and an understanding of the original sources, it is impossible to perform this work according to the composer's plan. Britten said: "*Artists are artists because they have some kind of hypersensitivity; ... big artists have a not so pleasant habit of understanding many things much earlier than their contemporaries.* " Britten himself belongs among such artists. He anticipated a cultural movement as he witnessed the growth of fascism in Europe from his pacifist point of view. The profound impact of the loss of his parents was compounded by the alienation he experienced within Puritanical British society as he came to terms with himself as an artist and with his homosexuality. Ultimately, his flight to America along with his life partner, Pears, led to an incredibly prolific period. It was during this time that he turned to the works of modern poets and writers.

The success of his *"Lachrymae"* is obvious primarily because at the beginning of the 20th century, there were not many works for viola soloists. In February 1976, shortly before his death, Britten made an arrangement of "*Lachrymae*" for viola and string orchestra, which suggests that the piece was loved by viola performers. This version is interesting, useful and instructive for those exploring the composition. A student with this example can study or-

chestration and instrumental accompaniment. Although the string group in the orchestra must be fairly advanced, the string of string players is not difficult to perform as most harmonies are written by divisi. Bass instruments can withstand low C. Stoffels wrote that Britten changed the motive 'C-'G-C to 'D-'G-C,[48] because the contrabasses lowest note is 'E and they must retune. The balance between the solo viola and the orchestra is a very important point here - the melancholic atmosphere presents some difficulties. This problem is solved by the absence of the first violins in the string group.[49]

Britten's masterful knowledge and understanding of the viola's expressive capacity make this piece attractive to performers. *Lachrymae* is popular among students at higher musical educational institutions. Such talented viola performers as Yuri Bashmet, Kim Kashkashyan, Rainer Moog, Lawrence Power often include *Lachrymae* in their concert repertoires, thus continuing to glorify the work of the great English composer.

[48] Stoffels, Bernhard: 2012, p.32
[49] Cleman, Tom: 1980, pp. 132-133

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Affidavit

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APPENDIX