

*Z gór, gdzie dźwigali:*

Chopin's Song Interpreted by the Poem of Krasiński

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According to the Polish National 2008 Edition, all the 18 known songs by Fryderyk Chopin (fragments contained in the supplement not counted) are based on lyrics by Polish poets. Among them, his last song composition, *Z gór, gdzie dźwigali* (*Bowed 'neath their Crosses*), based on a poem by Zygmunt Krasiński, seems to be the most difficult, but also the most creative vocal work of the composer from both poetic and the musical techniques.

This study aims to elucidate the relation between Chopin's composition and Polish poetics by analysing *Z gór, gdzie dźwigali* as an example. First, the style of Krasiński's poetry is characterized within the context of his biography. He was born in 1812 as a son of a General. His agony of the conflict between his father's support to the Russian Imperialism and Krasiński's Polish patriotism produced the ideas of 'early socialism,' 'redemption' and 'classical elements,' which became important components in his texts. Based on these factors, the poem *Z gór, gdzie dźwigali* is analysed in comparison with his epic *Ostatni* (*Last Man*), which contains the poem as the preface, and in comparison with Chopin's music. Moreover, this song and the peculiar relationship between Chopin and Krasiński is also illuminated in relation to Delfina Potocka, who was not only the dedicatee of this song but also a key person for both artists.

The musical analysis shows Chopin's creative method of harmony in connection with the poem's narrative elements. Chopin's frequent use of a series of major thirds seems to represent Krasiński's sublime world symbolized by heavenly ray and the promised land. Such narrative strategies may also relate to other works of the composer, namely, the four ballades.