

Songs in the Blood: The Discourse of Music in Three Canadian Novels

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the various ways in which musical discourse functions in three twentieth-century Canadian novels: *A Mixture of Frailties*, by Robertson Davies, *Tigana*, by Guy Gavriel Kay, and *The Piano Man's Daughter*, by Timothy Findley. Each work belongs to a different genre (*Künstlerroman*, Fantasy and *Bildungsroman* respectively) and provides an opportunity to discover whether musical references within a text differ according to genre. Chapter One discusses how musical discourse contributes to the complexity of the novel's narrative structure and defines the protagonist's path toward musical and personal maturity. Chapter Two explores how music serves as a textual code which provides an index to the novel's fantasy world. Chapter Three analyzes the generic inconsistencies of the text and illustrates how musical discourse provides a consistent means of translation which reflects the narrator's search for his own identity.

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INTRODUCTION

Much has been written about the relationship between literature and music, how musical works have been created from poetry, drama and fiction, and how works of literature can be inherently musical in nature. Within this lengthy history of comparing the two arts, critics have tended to be very general in their approach. In his article, "Literature and Music," Steven Paul Scher creates a systematic typology indicating how the major areas of musico-literary relations are interconnected. He divides parallels between music and literature into three categories: music and literature, literature in music, and music in literature. Scher uses the term "verbal music" to describe a subset of the last category, defining it as "any literary presentation [. . .] of existing or fictitious musical compositions" (234). Whereas Scher tends to focus on "plausible literary semblances" (235) of such music, he does not pay attention to what this thesis sets out to examine, namely, that the discourse of music within a text can also reveal contextual and structural levels of meaning crucial to critical interpretation.

In this project, musical discourse refers to the ways music is inscribed and operates in literature, such as a description of melodic line, vocal placement and inclusion of lyrics, or utilizes it in such tropes as simile and metaphor, in order to inscribe musical discourse as an integral element of a novel's structure and narrative development. My goal is to explore the various ways in which musical discourse functions in three twentieth-century Canadian novels: *A Mixture of Frailties*, by Robertson Davies, *Tigana*, by Guy Gavriel Kay, and *The Piano Man's Daughter*, by Timothy Findley. I chose these works because each belongs to a different genre, and thus they provide an opportunity to discover whether musical references within a text differ according to literary class.

Robertson Davies' *A Mixture of Frailties* and Timothy Findley's *The Piano Man's Daughter* are both realistic novels, defined as "the fictional attempt to

give the effect of realism, by representing complex characters with mixed motives who are rooted in a social class, operate in a developed social structure, interact with many other characters, and undergo plausible, everyday modes of experience" (Abrams 192). Musical discourse in a realistic novel includes titles and excerpts from music familiar to its readers, while the texts operate within a developed and recognizable social structure in which musical success reflects position and status in the community. Although the two novels share these elements, Davies' novel belongs to the traditional *Künstlerroman*, a narrative that is concerned with "the growth of a novelist or other artist from childhood into the stage of maturity that signalizes the recognition of the protagonist's artistic destiny and mastery of an artistic craft" (Abrams 193). The author takes advantage of historical and cultural references embedded in the traditional training of a singer to define Monica Gall's path to musical and personal maturity. He also draws attention to the connection between musical accomplishment and a woman's marital eligibility, while focusing on the power and control over others that music can confer upon certain characters.

In contrast, *The Piano Man's Daughter* is a *Bildungsroman*, the kind of realistic novel that represents "the development of the protagonist's mind and character, in the passage from childhood through varied experiences [. . .] into maturity, which usually involves recognition of one's identity and role in the world" (Abrams 193). Unlike Davies, Findley is not interested in the conventional progression of the *Bildungsroman*. Rather, instead of following the typical movement of this generic type toward individuation, he explores Lily Kilworth's identity in part by employing a complex chronological structure within the narrative as her son Charlie attempts to regain the intersubjective space they once shared. Musical discourse is a consistent element within these shared spaces and to a certain extent defines Lily and Charlie's relationship. Findley complicates the generic structure of the text by incorporating Gothic elements to emphasize the tension between Lily's

“otherness” and societal conformity; music often plays an important structural role in Gothic texts, and Findley uses musical discourse in *The Piano Man’s Daughter* in a similar fashion. Most importantly, the word “song” encompasses not only the musical art form, but also a means of communication and a sense of individual identity within the greater span of generational continuity.

The third novel, *Tigana*, is a Fantasy. In the late twentieth-century, the term “fantasy” designated a particular narrative structure, although its “specific location in the spectrum of the fantastic [was] a matter of constant critical speculation” (Clute and Grant 337). A general interpretation of the fantasy text is “a self-coherent narrative. When set in [. . .] an otherworld, that otherworld will be impossible, though stories set there may be possible in its terms” (Clute and Grant 338). Despite *Tigana’s* otherworldly setting, in which the characters’ actions are limited only by the author’s imagination, references to music are based on recognizable musical conventions although several instruments and all the tunes are imaginary. Music, rather than magic, functions as the textual code which provides an index to this novel’s fantasy world. As well, the absence of music in one of the two narrative paths within the novel functions structurally in determining its outcome. Thus, the discourse of music is indeed inscribed differently within each of the works discussed, and these differences can be related specifically because such discourse is responsive to the generic particularities of the individual novel.

CHAPTER ONE

Art Song: Robertson Davies' *A Mixture of Frailties*

In *A Mixture of Frailties*, Robertson Davies employs musical discourse to illustrate the growth of a young singer into vocal and personal maturity. In this *Künstlerroman*, Monica Gall's progress as a character is measured, in part, by her performance in the musical arena. It is when she masters her craft that she feels she has fulfilled her artistic destiny, namely professional success at the international level, and attained the measure of personal growth necessary for her commitment to marriage. The novel's musical discourse, be it the titles and excerpts from the music Monica sings, or descriptions of the placement and shading of her voice, forms an integral part of this novel's discourse. Thus, while it takes the form of historical and cultural intertexts that help the reader locate Monica's training as a singer in a larger cultural context, musical discourse also functions as a particular narrative and genre register without which *A Mixture of Frailties* would not be a *Künstlerroman*. Such discourse, on the one hand, highlights the role music plays in the social world at large. On the other, relying as it does on the power and control over the lives of others which music confers upon characters, it draws attention to what is certainly the novel's major theme, the connection Davies establishes between musical accomplishment and a woman's marital eligibility. What I wish to discuss here is the way musical discourse contributes directly to the complexity of the novel's narrative structure. Musical discourse, I wish to argue, defines Monica's path toward musical and personal maturity as she learns to deal with tragedy, love and self-discovery within the changing social conditions that affect her life and career.

Davies signals that music will be an important element in his novel by having the structure of *A Mixture of Frailties* framed and supported by music which is linked to death. The narrative begins with a description of Louisa Hansen Bridgetower's funeral, and ends with a concert dedicated to her

memory. Monica Gall sings at both ceremonies, as well as three other memorial services; it is important that we can track her progress as a singer through these performances. The events in the novel unfold as a direct result of Mrs. Bridgetower's instructions in her will. The controversy surrounding the music she chooses for her funeral service not only marks the beginning of musical discourse in the novel, but also announces that issues of control and power, both musical and financial, will play an important part in the narrative. The song Mrs. Bridgetower requests at her funeral is a musical setting of Maude Louise Ray's poem, "My Task." Its title and verses, included in the text, illustrate her posthumous control over the subsequent actions of the main characters in the narrative. By setting tasks for others to fulfill, Mrs. Bridgetower intends both to prove that she loves her son "more dearly ev'ry day" and at the same time give direction to a "wandering child" (4). Her son Solomon (Solly) and Monica Gall both attempt to fulfill her wishes: Solly by fathering a son and developing some stiffness of character by undergoing deprivation and hardship, and Monica by being chosen as the beneficiary of a scholarship which will allow her to train towards a professional singing career. The novel frames these attempts in two parallel narratives in which the two characters experience anxiety, frustration and hard work. The first narrative explores the power money bestows; the second, the power conferred by singing. That Monica is a fitting choice for Mrs. Bridgetower's scholarship is evidenced in how the girl processes information. Her character is shaped by music; it is always present at the back of her mind and Monica admits that music often gives her a clue to what she is thinking (173). Through Monica, Davies signals that music gives the novel its narrative impetus.

Titles and excerpts from musical works, such as "My Task," are among the most visible types of musical discourse in *A Mixture of Frailties*, and provide subtle insights about Monica's artistic and personal education throughout the narrative. As Judith Skelton Grant notes, these passing references introduce information which contributes "to incident, scene and character" (33). The

function of such intertexts depends directly on knowledge brought to the text by the reader; however, were this lacking, the reader would not necessarily feel deprived of critical information, for Davies ensures that the references fall within broad genres – e.g., folksong and Christmas song – that convey his intentions.

Song titles function as commentary about Monica's progress through the social strata, and address her conflict between loyalty towards family and Canada, on the one hand, and profession and England, on the other. When she is hired to sing at Mrs. Bridgetower's funeral, she is a clerk at Consolidated Adhesives and Abrasives (also referred to as the Glue Works) where her father is a janitor. The pieces she sings with the Heart & Hope quartet at that time reflect the social class to which she belongs at the beginning of her career. "Eden Must Have Been Like Granny's Garden" and "Ten Little Fingers and Ten Baby Toes, That Was My Mother's Rosary" indicate the type of music sung by the group. Both Humphrey Cobbler, who urges Monica to apply for Mrs. Bridgetower's scholarship, and Sir Benedict Domdaniel, who later supervises her musical training in England, confirm their hackneyed content by referring to Monica's repertoire as "tripe" and "trash." Monica does not realize that the quality of the music she has been encouraged to sing by Pastor Beamis is considered by musical connoisseurs to be low-brow. The tone of Domdaniel's response, when Monica sings "The Lost Chord" at her audition for him, makes it abundantly clear that this song is in the same low-class league as the others. This music indicates the parameters of Monica's journey to musical acceptability; she is to achieve the musical and social standing which will bring her up to a level where Domdaniel accepts her as his peer. Still, Monica presents her rendition "quite seriously and nicely" (54); the tension between the musical content and Monica's innocent performance indicates that she has the ability to rise above her material. It is therefore reasonable to assume that, having been under unfavourable personal as well as musical influences, Monica has at least as much potential for character development as for musical

accomplishment. Cobbler and Domdaniel both comment on the need for her to expand her emotional and musical horizons to find out whether she will develop with exposure to new experiences. Cobbler admits that as a young woman Monica has “positively the most promising voice” (37) he has ever heard in an untrained singer, but he also points out that they would have to work with her for some time to “increase her range, give her something to sing that would show what she could do, and generally explore the possibilities” (50). Monica may have lived for twenty years in a climate of artistic paucity but, once she begins lessons with Sir Benedict, her voice and character begin to declare themselves, clearly an example of the extent to which musical discourse is the key to plot and character development in this novel.

Domdaniel finds that “with a bit of encouragement she has roughly twice the voice she has been using, with lots more to come” (54), and is confident that in Monica’s case “a real natural talent has been overlaid by a stultifying home atmosphere and cultural malnutrition” (54).

Monica proves that their faith in her ability is not misplaced. Her movement into a more cultured musical society and thus greater sophistication as a person becomes apparent when we compare the songs she sings throughout her musical development. Davies subtly shows attention to this progress by having Monica sing a song which connects her past life with her future, and invites a comparison between the low-brow musical influences in Canada and those of England’s history of musical continuity. At Monica’s farewell party before she leaves Salterton, the Heart & Hope Quartet sings “God Be With You Till We Meet Again.” There are two settings of these lyrics: the first by Jeremiah Rankin and William Tomer, the latter being the music director at the Grace Methodist Episcopal Church in Washington, DC; and the second by the English composer Ralph Vaughan Williams. Given Monica’s later association with English folksong, it is tempting to assume that Pastor Beamis would have chosen the former version, as this choice would support the difference between the music Monica sings before she begins her education

with Domdaniel and her later repertoire under his tutelage. Vaughan Williams provided modern settings for many traditional English folksongs, and his music is representative of and identified with that genre. Although outwardly loyal to her family in Salterton, Monica feels that everything about her family and her religion runs “contrary to her great dream of life” (63); after several months in London, however, she realizes that her ties to home have weakened. Were there to be “a fight between England and Canada for the love of Monica Gall, she knew that England would win. Some of the folk songs that she had latterly been studying with Molloy were so powerfully present in her mind that she had to sing them under her breath” (128).

Cynthia Patton explains that “those who considered music an important part of [English] national culture longed for a genuinely national music” (8), and that “the rediscovery and collection of folk song was spurred on by the desire to establish England’s status as a musical nation among other musical nations” (139-40). If music can contribute to nation-building, it is hardly surprising that it can also be credited for Monica’s character maturation. Interestingly, the “glories of English music past” are the very songs which Monica is taught: songs and anthems of Purcell, eighteenth-century glees and catches, and “the whole body of sea songs and patriotic songs from the days of England’s most famous victories” (Patton 139). This music places Monica firmly within the English musical tradition, thus associating her with her new country. Originally serving as learning tools for Monica, these English pieces of music are later linked with the spontaneous expression of her emotions, and eventually form part of her professional repertoire. A gauge of her success in assimilating this music is the comparison, made by the critic Stanhope Aspinwall, between Monica’s performance in *The Golden Asse* and one of England’s greatest interpreters of English folk song. In his review of the opera, Aspinwall notes that Monica possesses “a purity of English pronunciation and delicate interpretation of poetic nuance which recalls the late Kathleen Ferrier” (297).

Folk songs not only represent Monica's growing ties to England, but also anticipate the novel's narrative unfolding by foreshadowing her romantic experiences with Giles Revelstoke, the man who provides her with general musical training, and Sir Benedict Domdaniel, who is in charge of her professional development. Of the songs Monica studies with Molloy, "William Taylor" relates how a jealous woman kills her lover when she sees him with another woman, a possible reference to Monica's later implication in Giles' death, while another, "Searching for Lambs" by Ralph Vaughan Williams, is about a maid who has wandered from home and ends up marrying her true love. In addition to the two folksongs, "Blow, Blow Thou Winter's Wind," from *As You Like It* (set to music by Thomas Arne), addresses the "benefit forgot" of man's ingratitude and unremembered friends. Giles Revelstoke is accompanying Monica when she sings this piece; the lyrics not only thematize the family and acquaintances Monica has left behind in Salterton, about whom she seldom thinks while in England, but also comment upon Giles' ingratitude towards both Monica and Sir Benedict. Later in the plot, Monica's role as the False Witness in Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* is enacted in earnest at the inquest following Giles' death, when she suppresses the information that the young man was not dead when she first found him unconscious in his flat. Bach's music is also instrumental in forcing Monica to think about her previous religious connections while, at the same time, functioning as an indicator of how Monica's loyalty towards her family is beginning to shift. When she thinks about the Thirteeners, she remembers "the crudities of its doctrine, the sweaty strenuities of Pastor Beamis, and the trashiness of its music [. . .]. Not that she condemned it in such clear terms, for to have done so would have been to condemn her family, and her own former self" (233).

Once more, song links the two narrative paths in the novel and complements plot development by the inclusion of seasonal music. Such musical discourse emphasizes one of the novel's central issues – Solly and Veronica Bridgetower's attempts to conceive and the eventual birth of their

son. Here again, Davies emphasizes the delegation of power and control through musical expression. Carols Monica sings while a student in England have direct application to the situation Solly encounters in his efforts to father a son. "The Cherry Tree Carol" describes a pregnant Mary who craves a single cherry from a laden tree. When Joseph refuses to help, the baby in her womb directs the bough to lean down to Mary so that she can pluck a cherry herself. The baby has the power to deliver cherries, or riches, to its mother, as Baby Bridgetower has the power to provide income from his grandmother's estate to his parents. This carol, together with "*Jesu Christ en pauvre*," reflects on Solly's impecunious condition at the time. At the last Bridgetower Memorial Service on St. Nicholas' Day, following the birth of Solly's son, Humphrey Cobbler cannot resist playing "For Unto Us a Child is Born" from Handel's *Messiah* (379). The significance is obvious:

For unto us a child is born
 Unto us a son is given
 And the government shall be upon his shoulder
 And his name shall be called
 Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty god,
 The Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. (*Messiah* 47-56)

The baby is indeed a "prince" of peace, as his arrival puts to rest the bitter feelings Solly has for his mother. There is no doubt that the "infant trust breaker" (369) has the government of the Bridgetower Trust laid upon his shoulders as his grandmother's estate can be settled only through him. The music and lyrics to this oratorio are too familiar to refer to here; what is less known, however, is that "For Unto Us a Child is Born" was originally entitled "*No, di voi non vo' fidarmi*," and was one of Handel's earlier Italian cantatas. The composer was notorious for reusing his melodies, and it is a mark of Davies' impressive grasp of musical history that he is able to utilize both versions of the music to comment not only upon Solly's relationship with his mother, but also the means by which he eventually comes to terms with and triumphs over her last attempt to keep him in her power. The words to the

cantata indicate that the singer will no longer be duped by false love or suffer fetters on a trusting heart, comments which clearly refer to Solly's experience with his mother's manipulative love and domineering personality. There is no indication of maternal affection in Mrs. Bridgetower's last wishes; she has tied up his inheritance in such a way that there is a good chance he will spend the rest of his life in reduced circumstances. As Veronica watches her husband weep at his mother's funeral, she thinks to herself: "He truly loved his mother, in spite of everything [. . .]. How I wish I thought that his mother had loved him" (4).

This use of musical discourse indicates that Davies has "discovered a way to introduce information so that it enriches theme and character simultaneously" (Grant 32). In discussing Davies' earlier works, Judith Skelton Grant focuses on the song used "as a touchstone for Monica Gall's musical development" (33), Paolo Tosti's "Good-Bye!" She points out what Monica learns each time she sings it, but Grant neither pursues the argument in depth nor mentions that the listeners' reactions to the song reinforce the gap between Monica's Salterton life and the artistic growth she experiences in England. Skelton Grant also neglects the relationship between the two narrative paths in the novel. While Monica learns how to interpret "Good-Bye!" as part of her musical education, Solly and Veronica, in attempting to have a son, experience the devastating effects of impotence as rendered in the lyrics (Appendix). Once these issues are resolved in the novel, this specific instance of musical discourse has served its purpose and Monica does not perform the piece again.

When Monica first sings the song at her audition for the Bridgetower Trust, the executors' reactions vary. Those who enjoy the song are meant to represent the stultified home atmosphere of Canada; those who have been trained in England laugh at it. Dean Knapp, whose clerical ideals are those of "nineteenth-century clergymen in England" (*Leaven of Malice* 60), is embarrassed by Monica's selection of songs, while Humphrey Cobbler, Fellow of the Royal College of Organists (*Tempest Tost* 171), says her music is terrible,

but supposes that Pastor Beamis “thinks it’s a classic [. . .] in the musical hell he and the Heart and Hope Quartet inhabit” (50). In contrast, Miss Puss, whose father was “a very successful wholesale grocer” in Salterton (*Leaven of Malice* 58), is deeply moved, and reminds the others that this song “was the favourite ballad of Queen Victoria” (49). Sir Benedict listens to Monica singing “Good-Bye!” during her audition with him in Toronto, and is astonished to see that her repertoire includes such an out-of-date piece. Monica offers a rendition, crafted with her aunt’s help, which overflows with emotion and strives to create a feeling of sadness, while using carefully-constructed effects as a substitute for real emotion. Later in the novel, however, when she hears the song performed by her new coach Murtagh Molloy, Monica responds in a manner that reflects how her musical sensibility has matured. Molloy approaches the song “without a hint of exaggeration or histrionics [. . .] the whole song was sung with a poignancy of regret which was the most powerful emotion that Monica had ever heard expressed in music” (111-12). It is Molloy who points out the difference between his rendition and Monica’s. “You were dipping your bucket into a shallow well and I was dipping mine into a deep one” (112), he tells her, and explains that “the muhd’s everything.” Sergius Kagen supports Molloy’s opinion, advising that “a performer must learn to reflect feeling. He cannot do so until he feels very deeply at some point or another during his study of a song or role. Then he has to discipline this feeling so that he can reproduce it at will without being emotionally thrown off balance” (113-14).

While Molloy illustrates how the song should be performed, Giles Revelstoke analyzes the lyrics, telling Monica that it is about “the death of love, and the fore-knowledge of death; it is an intimation of mortality” (154). To Giles, impotence is a desperate human experience, one also experienced by Solly and Veronica. In the year following Mrs. Bridgetower’s death, they conceived a son who died at birth, strangled by its umbilical cord. They continued to try to have another baby, but Solly “grew frightened and

suddenly could make love no longer. [. . .] The deceptions and mockeries of Solly's body distressed them both" (272-73). Veronica is convinced that the "Dead Hand of Mrs. Bridgetower had frozen the very fountain of their passion" (273). Solly's relationship with his mother has deep roots which relate to the present circumstances; several years earlier, while in love with another young woman of whom his mother disapproved, Solly wished he has the courage to ask the woman to go out with him. Even then, his feelings are given further expression through association with music: his "impotence and his fear of his mother saddened him, and he poured some more rye into his glass, and put a melancholy piece of Mozart on his gramophone" (*Tempest Tost* 44). The words in the second verse of "Good-Bye!" appear to indicate that Mrs. Bridgetower is predicting that Solly and Veronica will never have a son, and the Bridgetower family is therefore doomed to extinction: "All the tomorrows shall be as today / The cord is frayed, the cruse is dry / The link must break and the lamp must die" (152). Davies thus conveys the hopelessness of unfulfilled love and the fore-knowledge of death by granting the narrative a structure that mirrors that of the lyrics. During this period of unhappiness and frustration, Veronica feels that Louisa Hansen Bridgetower's spirit walks abroad, "working out its ends and asserting its mastery through a love which was hate, a hatred which was love" (273).

Whereas Giles focuses on the issue of impotence, "Good-Bye!" also has relevance for the wanderer severing ties with home and past while also addressing homesickness and the return home after exile. A fundamental aspect of Monica's own human condition, this is exactly what she is faced with when she leaves Salterton to begin her studies in England. Mary Warnock explains that

the course of history cannot be reversed, nor time move backwards, [which] may itself contribute to the sense of loss often so powerfully associated with the images of memory both in literature and in life. [. . .] Anything that is *over*, even though we may be thankful that it is, carries with it the possibility of yearning. (76-77)

As with the folksongs discussed earlier, the song that later becomes associated with Monica, "Water Parted," from Arne's *Artaxerxes*, reflects this tension. Giles has prepared an accompaniment for Monica, set in a key which makes "the best use of what he called her 'chalumeau register,' as well as the brilliance of her upper voice" (305). This song is important as it draws together the currents running through Monica's life and sums up her "condition of being" (311): her character, her emotions, and her relationship with her mother. To Monica, the song represents the denied and thwarted yearning in her mother, as well as a longing for "all the vast, inexplicable, irrational treasury from which her life drew whatever meaning and worth it possessed" (311). Although Monica is experiencing dramatic musical and emotional growth in another country, she is never able to forget her roots in Canada, even though those roots represent bad musical influences and an unsupportive home environment. Cobbler advises Monica to put her past in perspective; although Salterton has been the centre of her early cultural exposure, "the Rome and Athens of [her] early life, [it is] also in many important ways a remote, God-forsaken dump" (301). Monica discovers that her initial feeling of isolation in England does not improve by attempts to emphasize her nationality; only as she corrects the unfavourable early influences on her speech, style, dress and musicality does she begin to feel a sense of belonging, all the while realizing that having grown beyond the boundaries of the Gall family and Salterton she will never fit in at home again. However, music provides Monica with an alternative type of belonging; as she matures artistically and emotionally, it creates a stability for her which replaces that of childhood home and family.

As Monica gradually begins to resolve the tension between her feelings of alienation in England and those of her old life and associations, music provides "a language of sympathetic intercourse" (Spencer cited in Westerbeck 37) through which she is able to communicate her happiness. Monica sings folksongs under her breath on the subway: "the first time, since coming to

England, that she had sung simply because she was happy [. . . in] the new world which she had decided to make her own" (129). Later, after she and Giles resume their physical relationship, Monica sings a few snatches recollected from *The Discoverie of Witchcraft*: "It was not ideal as an outpouring of the joy of love [. . .] and she did not sing it in the hope of catching Giles' ear. It was a simple burst of delight" (224). Thus, musical discourse illustrates that Monica's professional development and personal maturity have progressed to the point where the two become fused. The audience at the memorial service for Mrs. Gall share some of Monica's emotions; in her skillfully-prepared program the sombre beauty of her voice leads the listeners "out of the memorial atmosphere which had been created, and left them ready for [. . .] the final group of songs" (304) which represent spiritual renewal.

The action of performing the songs themselves, as well as the discourse of music as represented by their lyrics and titles, also enhances the structural cohesiveness of *A Mixture of Frailties*. Such performance enables Monica to express her feelings and apply the discipline she acquires during her studies to work through periods of emotional distress. As mentioned earlier, singers should first experience emotions before they can use them to give depth and feeling to a song's interpretation. Where Kagen notes that a singer must learn to discipline the feeling projected in song, Cynthia Westerbeck posits that music can discipline the feelings themselves (Westerbeck 160). Monica's professional appearances underscore the tension between discipline and emotion and allow her to work through emotional states like those she experiences when singing at the memorials for her mother and Giles. Monica refuses to perform at the funeral service for her mother, saying that she does not think that she can "control her voice well enough to sing upon such an occasion" (285), but inwardly she admits she is ashamed of her family and its religious associations. This shame indicates certain important aspects about Monica's character, not least of all her ambivalence toward her family. Monica has an ambition to move up in the world, expressed through daydreams and

conversations with her aunt; although she outwardly professes loyalty to her parents, she is sensitive to their shortcomings. Monica refuses to look at her family realistically, first making excuses for her father's failure to progress at work, and then pretending that her mother's sharpness about Monica's new life arises from hurt feelings rather than "from ignorance, jealousy and meanness" (265). Either she ascribes qualities to her parents which they do not possess, or overlooks them entirely in order that she appears to belong to a more socially-acceptable world. In London and Wales, Monica weaves "a legend" about her family: facts about the Galls "presented themselves, somehow, in a rather different guise" (94). Monica does not "suppress the Glue Works or the Thirteeners; she simply [does] not feel a necessity to mention them" (191).

It is only as Monica grows further away from her family in speech and outlook that she discovers that there is a great deal of her mother in her. Such feelings are complemented "by the realization that some of the mental judgments she passed on the people around her were unquestionably her mother's, and couched in her mother's roughest idiom" (163). It is not until Mrs. Gall is dying that Monica comes to terms with her background, and realizes that she and her mother share certain attributes: "her imagination, and her ups and downs of feeling, were Ma's. Well, she must not let them dominate her life, as they had dominated the life of Mrs. Gall" (298). Instead, Monica utilizes her depression and "spiritless mediocrity," as a base for musical artistry, perhaps one of the most important ways in which musical discourse and character development come together in the novel. When Monica understands the strength her mother possessed, she vows that "what was best in her mother should live on, and find expression, in her" (303). At the Bridgetower Memorial Concert, Monica includes several songs dedicated to her mother's memory which embody spiritual resurrection and renewal, singing "of the spirit which might have been her mother's if circumstances had been otherwise" (303).

The self-discipline she displays on the occasions of her mother's funeral and the Bridgetower Memorial Concert carries over into Monica's personal life, an indication that her growth in emotional control parallels the growth in authority she is gaining over her instrument. Monica uses music to confront difficult situations. When she is first offered the Bridgetower fellowship she has to decide between her family and her future career away from home; it is while playing the piano that she ponders her course of action. When Giles dies, Monica is terrified that she will lose her self control; yet she is "astonished at her own capacity to suffer inwardly, to give way to excesses of grief and panic, and at the same time to present a stoical front to the world" (352). Before the Commemorative Concert in Giles' memory, Monica is nervous and tense, "puffed up with grief," as Molloy puts it (357), but after some vocal exercises she is able to put her feelings aside and give a professional performance. At the end of the novel, when she is faced with losing her Trust funding, Monica again uses music to combat her lack of control over the circumstances, this time by practising daily with Cobbler. Once again, musical discourse reveals issues of control which appear throughout the novel and frame the narrative.

The discipline used to channel emotion into artistic expression also contributes to a musician's sense of self-responsibility. Miriam Hart argues that "the rigorous self-discipline and long, solitary hours necessary to become a fine musician [. . .] allow a woman to develop a sense of her own responsibilities and possibilities, as an individual and as a member of society" (155). In this *Künstlerroman*, Monica's "stumbling, gradual learning becomes the progression" of the novel itself (Hart 147). Such self-discipline is necessary, particularly when parents fail to provide "proper direction or guidance for their daughters" (Hart 147). Mr. and Mrs. Gall were pleased that Monica "had a chance to study music abroad, but in the depths of their hearts it was a matter of indifference to them" (46). Monica then must take sole responsibility for decisions which will affect her future. Though she sees her

parents' indifference, she tries to convince herself that they do care: "Ma and Pa were wonderful, of course. They had given her everything, except music" (67). Once the reader realizes that music is the most important thing in Monica's life, such an understatement reveals how greatly she regrets this parental omission. Instead, Aunt Ellen has been the one to supply the piano and the lessons and, although the music they share is outdated and sentimental, their mutual love for the art is the keystone of their relationship.

It is, in part, because of Monica's relationship with her aunt that her musical roots are grounded firmly in the past. Nurtured by dead singers and old-fashioned music, she has little experience in contemporary musical training and thought. One of the favourite books she and Aunt Ellen share is an old edition of *The Victor Book of the Opera*. Most of the singers in it are dead and, even though Monica and her aunt listen to the Saturday afternoon radio broadcasts of the Metropolitan Opera in New York, "in the theatre of their minds it was these dead ones of the past who appeared [. . .] they heard of new singers, and new costumes and settings, but these never had the reality of the pictures in the book" (65). After Monica begins her musical education, she moves through another past, that of the vocal canon, which serves to train her voice and ground her in a new culture. As discussed earlier, this movement through the "correct" musical heritage must take place before she can progress to contemporary compositions. Such movement parallels the progress Monica makes from her working-class roots and trashy repertoire, through to a level at which Domdaniel treats her as his peer. That she eventually appears in a modern opera emphasizes how far Monica has moved away from her musical roots.

Aunt Ellen's influence upon Monica has another link to the past in that it is part of an earlier female tradition. Miriam Hart notes that a woman's music collection represents "a shared women's culture – music not only passed down through generations of women in her family, but copied from and procured by female friends" (44). Aunt Ellen is Monica's first mentor; she has

taught her niece how to play the piano and is responsible for encouraging her taste in vocal music. Monica gives the older woman full credit: "if it hadn't been for you there just wouldn't have been any music for me" (71). Her aunt's influence is so strong that it takes three other men (Sir Benedict, Giles Revelstoke and Murtagh Molloy) to override it and turn Monica's musical tastes into more appropriate channels. Monica's three male mentors seem unable to separate the individual from the art; they strive to improve Monica's voice while desiring her physical body, with varying degrees of emotional commitment. Thomas Tausky notes that a mentor-student relationship "seems very frequently to involve two components: the voluntary acceptance of discipline and a romantic-sexual bond with the mentor" (6-7). Giles and Monica become lovers, although Giles never tells her that he loves her, while Murtagh Molloy attempts to seduce Monica at the Vic-Wells Ball and says that he could love her (conveniently forgetting for the moment that he already has a wife). It is Sir Benedict who eventually admits that he loves Monica and asks her to marry him. It is interesting to note that although tension exists between characters with power and those without in both narrative paths in the novel, Davies allocates power in each narrative path along gender lines. Such an allocation indicates that financial independence enables a woman to exert power and control in all spheres of life; Mrs. Bridgetower was a "lifelong, shrewd investor" (19) who had amassed a considerable fortune. In an artistic environment, however, a woman can only reach a position of power through natural ability and hard work. In the first, non-musical narrative, Mrs. Bridgetower is in financial control, while Solly must earn the right to benefit from her estate. In the second, musical narrative, men are in artistic control, while Monica aspires to reach their level of professional success. The other female mentor in Monica's life, Amy Neilson, is recommended by Domdaniel to provide Monica with knowledge in "general cultivation" which will improve her standing in society. Whereas in this novel female instruction is only useful for music-making in the home and being groomed as a desirable

marriage prospect, it is the male mentors who prepare her for professional life in what is primarily a man's world.

Many critics of literature have noted the connection between musical accomplishment and marital eligibility; in this novel, the two are linked by success or failure in the professional musical arena, a relationship which in turn supports the argument that musical accomplishment is directly related to issues of control and power. Monica is shown to be eligible for marriage through her gradual acquisition of professional success, while the merits of her potential suitors are judged based on the power and control they demonstrate through their own musical performance. She does not receive an actual proposal of marriage until she has reached the musical level at which Sir Benedict is pleased to call her a "fellow-artist." As the parameters of Monica's journey to musical acceptability are set out, to achieve the musical and social standing which will bring her up to a level where Domdaniel accepts her as his peer, it is also revealing that this is the path he travelled himself. Giles and his friends refer to him as "Brumagem Benny," a nickname which reveals his working-class roots, and Domdaniel eventually admits to Monica that he's "not really out of the top drawer" (213).

The relative merits of the two men most eligible for marriage are indicated through their musical performances. As Monica's background links her musical tastes to an earlier era, so too does Giles' predilection for choosing poems by little-known and long-dead poets. Monica's friend John Ripon comments that "critic-baiting is very good fun, and they're easy game. But Giles does it in a rather old-fashioned style, all the same. He's a man of the 'twenties. A Satanic genius, as I said. [. . .] And the way he plays the role isn't the modern way" (237-38). Giles, although a gifted composer, lacks the discipline normally gained from the study of music. One of his friends remarks that it is "slow work, becoming known as a composer. [. . . Giles] spends so much time on other things" (200). Murtagh Molloy comments that the young composer is an amateur unable to properly concentrate on the job in hand.

“Genius – yes: discipline – not an idea of it” (358), he tells Monica. There is also an undercurrent of disharmony running through Giles’ life which is expressed through music. When providing piano accompaniment at his mother’s house in Wales he begins to experiment: “his arpeggios whined, they groaned, they shivered piteously. It was cruel caricature of the deep feeling of the words and the simple beauty of the air, and [. . . he closed with] a series of sour chromatic progressions” (189-90). The disharmony Giles creates at the piano is repeated when he insists on conducting a performance of his opera, *The Golden Asse*. Although the singers want to support their composer, “they could not rest confidently upon his conducting” (325); his direction causes tension on the stage, and the music seems to take on a life of its own: “a section of the orchestra would be at cross-purposes with the rest; or a vigorous entry would come a beat too soon, or too late; or sounds which no system of musical logic could account for would assert themselves” (326). Ironically, Giles chooses to base his opera on a story about Lucius Apuleius, who wants to be transformed into an owl, a symbol of wisdom, but who instead is given the wrong potion and turns into an ass. Like Giles, Lucius has little control over events which influence his life; unlike Giles, he is eventually delivered from his “unhappy metamorphosis” (316) but only after achieving a certain wisdom. Monica, in contrast, acquires control and power even though, as a student, she must abide by decisions made for her by teachers and mentors.

Sir Benedict Domdaniel, on the other hand, is always completely in control of his music. Monica realizes why his reputation is so great when she sings in the *St. Matthew Passion*: “he took upon himself the task of making this undistinguished choir give a performance of the *Passion* which was worthy of a great university. [. . .] Without being in the least a showy or self-absorbed conductor he was an imperious, irresistible and masterful one” (236-37). The differences in control between the two men become apparent during the performances of *The Golden Asse* in Venice. Whereas Giles creates chaos in the pit, Sir Benedict blends “the ensemble of voices and orchestra with immense

skill, so that the singers rested upon his conducting as gently and as confidently as gods in a Renaissance picture, resting upon a cloud" (320).

While the two men's differing levels of musical authority become evident through performance, Monica's level of musical accomplishment and control is measured through the memorial concerts at which she sings. At Mrs. Bridgetower's funeral, she is an unknown artist singing a piece chosen for her, an untrained singer who in her spare time daydreams about changing her name and becoming internationally famous. At this point in her career, Monica sings a tawdry repertoire with sincerity and some skill, an indication that at this point in the narrative there is a separation between self and music. At the time of the Bridgetower Memorial Concert after her mother's death, Monica, already enjoying a reputation and confident about the size of her voice and singing before a large audience, arranges her own program. At the Commemorative Concert for Giles she is paid a good fee, sponsored by a publishing house that hopes to profit from the sales of Giles' music, and sings music written specifically for her. For the last Bridgetower Memorial Concert Monica is positioned by the organ, suggesting that she has reached a position where she and Cobbler share control of the music. She sings well and happily, with "all her perplexities" (379) banished, an indication that Monica is at one with her music and has fulfilled her artistic destiny.

Within the *Künstlerroman*, therefore, musical discourse functions as a register that both identifies and supports the structure of this particular genre. In this novel, it confers power and control upon characters in terms of how they exercise personal will in choosing the music they perform and express professional competence which, in turn, acts as a barometer of social acceptability. Monica Gall's level of musical accomplishment is measured through references to titles and excerpts from musical works within a narrative framework which begins and ends with musical discourse. At the same time, this musical discourse links the novel's two narrative paths and reflects the maturation of Monica's musical sensibility. It also produces specific rules of

engagement that influence the reader's response to the text; Davies ensures that references are broad enough to convey his intention, although the reader who recognizes the musical cues is able to derive a more comprehensive reading of the text than one without such specific knowledge. As her voice begins to declare itself, so too does Monica's character, an indication of the extent to which musical discourse provides a key to plot and narrative development in the novel. The discipline necessary for professional success can be applied to other areas of Monica's life as well; the acquisition of this attribute indicates a parallel move towards marital eligibility, while the merits of her suitors are based upon their musical proficiency. The use of lyrics supports structural cohesiveness, indicating how cultural identity can be realized through folksong, an issue which reflects the tension between a yearning for home and past and opportunities for musical and emotional growth. Music provides a channel for Monica to communicate her feelings. When she at last admits that she has inherited some of her mother's attributes, she utilizes them as a base for musical artistry, another important link between musical discourse and character development. The discourse of music thus has a major influence on the complexity of the novel's narrative structure, as it defines Monica's journey towards artistic and emotional maturity.

CHAPTER TWO

Cradle Song: Guy Gavriel Kay's *Tigana*

In *Tigana*, Guy Gavriel Kay uses musical discourse in a different fashion than Davies does in *A Mixture of Frailties*. Within this work of fantasy structural elements are governed by narrative conventions other than those represented in a *Künstlerroman*, and music, therefore plays a different role. Critics have noted that fantasy and mimesis are “fundamental operations of the narrative imagination” (Attebery, *Strategies* 3). Whereas the *Künstlerroman* genre is more dependent upon the kind of mimesis whereby the characters are limited to actions which “must conform to our sensory experience of the real world” (Attebery, *Strategies* 3), in fantasy, the characters’ actions are limited only by the author’s imagination. Works of fantasy, however, must contain some elements of mimesis to provide a point of reference without which they would not be understood; Attebery points out that the writer submits to this restriction because the freedom of unlimited imagination is offset by his or her desire to produce for the reader “a more or less orderly and comprehensive narrative” (*Strategies* 9).

The setting for *Tigana* is an alternate world in which the mimetic point of reference is “a highly developed pre-technological civilization” (Webb 17), while magic serves as the novel’s fantastic element. Attebery notes that “the impossibility in fantasy is generally codified” (*Reconstruction* 87), and that magic often serves as a textual code which “allows the author to send messages about narrative sequence, about character, and about the ontological status of narrative statements” (*Reconstruction* 88). Thus the magical elements in the narrative both identify *Tigana* as belonging to the sub-genre of “high fantasy” (Kondratiev 50) and serve to codify the impossibility in this type of work. Despite the strong magical elements in *Tigana*, however, I would like to argue that music rather than magic is the more prevalent textual code which provides an index to this novel’s fantasy world. The musical discourse in the

novel brings together the mimetic and the fantastic elements necessary in a work of fantasy: for music in an alternate world to be comprehensible, it must be based on recognizable musical conventions; it is the instruments and tunes that are purely imaginary.

Musical discourse in *Tigana* is represented not only by song lyrics and the vocal lines of a funeral lament, but also by imagery infused with music. These prevalent narrative elements impose order upon the text. At the same time, because the development of personal and political identity is a central theme in *Tigana*, these elements serve both to transmit important cultural information and to trigger “event memory” essential to the concept of self. Although fantastic tales often lack depth of characterization (Attebery, *Strategies* 54), in this novel musical discourse functions as narrative rhetoric which provides insight to the characters. What I would like to discuss in this chapter is the manner in which the discourse of music enhances the fantasy narrative, while at the same time contributing to characterization and contextual interpretation as the protagonists plot the overthrow of two foreign tyrants in their quest to achieve political autonomy and reclaim their cultural heritage.

There are several striking similarities between *Tigana* and *A Mixture of Frailties*: both are framed by music in relation to death, and also feature music as an instrument that facilitates eventual rebirth and renewal. Davies and Kay construct their narratives in two parallel paths in which one set of main characters is involved with music while the other set is not. But whereas in *A Mixture of Frailties* the musical and non-musical worlds overlap, in *Tigana*, although each subplot has as its focus one character’s resolve to kill a foreign tyrant, the two narratives do not merge until the Tyrant’s death has been achieved at the end of the novel. Musical discourse, however, functions structurally in determining whether or not the narratives conclude in victory or defeat, harmony or disharmony.

A sign indicating that music will form an integral part of the novel is the way in which musical imagery is woven into the Prologue. In discussing the dominant features of modern fantasy, Attebery notes that one of the genre's characteristic features is the comic structure of the narrative, which "begins with a problem and ends with a resolution" (*Strategies* 15). In this novel, both the problem, the initial conflict upon which the plot is based, and its resolution are dependent on musical discourse. In fact, the eventual resolution is clearly foreshadowed in the Prologue. The narrative begins on the night before a battle in which the Prince of Tigana, Valentin, is defeated by the Ygrathan sorcerer Brandin. The men in both armies are singing; even though they are separated by a river, the "harmonizing voices" of the opposing armies suggest that the two forces will somehow be united, thus pointing to the potential for political harmony. A night bird sings in the background as the sculptor Saevar discusses with Valentin how the arts of Tigana, books, music, and sculpture, will survive the certain defeat of the Tiganese army. The two men reassure each other that their province will be remembered; although Brandin may destroy them, the Prince avers that "he cannot take away our name, or the memory of what we have been" (5). Kay thus indicates that the issues addressed in the novel – political autonomy, cultural identity and memory – are all encompassed within the framework of musical discourse.

Music thus heralds the onset of war. This association between music and death is one of the most prominent ways in which musical discourse functions in Kay's novel. The narrative begins with the announcement of Sandre d'Astibar's death and, as with Monica Gall in *A Mixture of Frailties*, singing at a funeral has professional implications for one of the musicians; when the young tenor Devin discovers that Alessan, the newest member of his musical troupe, is the leader of a group of rebels who plan to restore Tigana, he leaves the troupe and joins their cause.

Battle in this alternate world is often glorified by songs of war and victory, another example of the fantastic containing mimetic elements from the

“real” world. Such musical discourse in this instance enhances the narrative by underscoring the action and commenting upon the novel’s political situation. While approaching Castle Borso, Devin reflects that his only previous knowledge of the region has been gained through songs, many of which are “wild with battle and blood and villages set afire” (303). One of the oldest ballads is about Gan Burdash and his legendary band of outlaws, who are eventually defeated by the united forces of Certando and Quileia. The words to the song call attention to Devin’s actions as he later foils an assassination attempt upon Marius, the new king of Quileia. Devin asks Marius and his soldiers to sing loudly enough to mask his movements as the young man circles back to intercept the assassin. The young singer’s action mirrors the lyrics; by protecting Marius, he ensures that the mountain passes remain free so that Quileia can resume trade with the provinces in the Palm, an essential gambit for Alessan’s political stratagem. The lyrics also call attention to the Prince’s plans for political unity.

This unity is finally realized after the final battle between the troops of Brandin and Alberico, a second sorcerer Tyrant from Earbadior. The Barbadian troops are retreating before Brandin’s superior strength when Alberico’s sorcery is augmented by three wizards unknown to him. The soldiers feel this increase in power and they begin to sing “the old battle-song of the Empire’s legions, conquering in far lands centuries ago” (650). Alberico’s advantage is short-lived, however; the three wizards withdraw their power without warning and the Barbadian army is annihilated. Brandin, too, is slain, and the men from the Palm and Ygrath are left standing beside each other, an embodiment of the harmonizing voices Saevar heard many years earlier which provides the resolution necessary to the comic structure within this fantasy. Alessan, who is allied with the three wizards and who in part has orchestrated the battle between Brandin and Alberico, lifts his hand and “the notes of a horn ring out over the valley and the hills, clear and high and beautiful, sounding an end to battle” (664) and heralding the restoration of political harmony.

Music associated with death often focuses on spiritual renewal and resurrection. In this context, it is important that one of the strongest musical presences in *Tigana* is the "Lament for Adaon." Comprising part of the formal funeral rites, it is sung on several occasions and marks significant events in the narrative, while it also indicates where humans stand in relation to the gods in this alternate world. The Lament relates the story of how each year the god Adaon is hunted by his priestesses and killed "to be put into his place which [is] the earth. To become the soil, which would be nurtured in turn by the rain [. . .] to be reborn and so loved anew, more and more with each passing year" (39). This music also marks the passing of a phase in Devin's life; as a member of Menico's troupe he makes his last appearance as a professional musician in a performance of the Lament before he joins Alessan in his quest.

Interestingly, neither of the two occasions in the text when the Lament is performed commemorates a death; the first is for Sandre d'Astibar, who has staged his own demise, and the second is for Catriana, who is saved from suicide. Because neither character dies, the Lament cannot represent resurrection of the spirit, but rather accomplishes another type of renewal and rebirth in these two cases. Sandre is able to join Alessan's plan to liberate the entire country, while Catriana's act of sacrifice enables her to vanquish her bitter feelings about her father and to open her heart to Alessan's love.

Attebury notes that fantastic tales "generally emphasize story over verbal texture and depth of characterization" (*Reconstruction* 86). However, the association of musical discourse with the men and women in Kay's novel allows readers to gain considerable insight into the characters. This musical rhetoric provides a way of interpreting the "textual fragments scattered through a narrative" (Attebury, *Strategies* 69) that comprise a fictional character. Along a similar line of reasoning, Harai Golomb has indicated that characters can choose a context from the "universal potentialities" which exist in music in order to signify something specific to themselves. Thus, the music acquires "new and unique content through its interaction with a person"

(Golomb 179). Music is integral to Alessan, and functions both as “a means of nonverbal emotional communication” (Golomb 180), as well as a refuge. When the Prince is accused of taking the young tenor Devin into their group only because of his vocal ability, he responds with insight: “It isn’t just the music, whatever you may think of my own weaknesses” (93). One of these “weaknesses” is his desire to retreat into music and put aside the responsibility he has undertaken to free his homeland. Devin soon realizes that Alessan uses music as an escape:

Tenderly, with feeling, he finished the tune. Devin looked at him as he played and wondered if he was the only man here who understood what music meant to the Prince. He thought about what Alessan had been through in this past day alone, about what it was he was riding towards [. . .]. He saw the Prince set his pipes aside with a motion of regret. Laying down his release, taking up the burdens again. All the burdens that seemed to be his legacy, the price of his blood. (444)

Once it has been established that music shapes character, seemingly innocuous statements become charged with meaning. When Marius asks the Prince what support he needs in his efforts to overthrow Brandin and Alberico, Alessan looks “for all the world as if he was discussing nothing of greater moment than, perhaps, the sequence of songs for an evening’s performance” (384). On the surface, this indicates that neither is important; however, given Alessan’s love and need for music revealed in the text, the seriousness with which he would choose such music implies that the topic under discussion is also important, tipping the balance of power in the Palm so that the two tyrants destroy one another.

The Prince’s dependence on music reveals a sensitivity of character which augments the link between emotion and music in the narrative. Cynthia Westerbeck notes that this association can represent “a dangerous balance between a character’s ability to remain capable of sympathetic feeling while not becoming vulnerable to feelings that the character cannot endure” (14). Although Alessan deeply regrets binding an unwilling wizard to his service,

he manages to cope with the pain this causes him through music which recognizes Erlein's suffering:

Alessan's eyes were closed as he played [. . .]. And into the sounds he made he seemed to pour as from a votive temple bowl, both the yearning that drove him, and the decency and care that Devin knew lay at the root of him [. . .]. Every song that Alessan was playing, every single tune, achingly high and sweet, heartbreakingly clear, one after another, was a song from Senzio. A song for Erlein di Senzio, cloaked in bitterness and the shadows of night by the riverbank alone. (296)

Whereas Alessan plays his pipes both as a way of retreating from the world as well as a means of nonverbal communication, Catriana's character is revealed through description of her vocal range rather than through the specific music she performs. Unlike Alessan, for whom music provides textual clues which make him a realistic character, Catriana is role-bound in that her primary significance is to advance the story. Her character is defined by "descriptions of [her] movement and transformation" (Attebery, *Strategies* 72), often through the use of musical discourse. Thus, as music is the prevalent semiotic code in this work of fantasy, its presence enables the reader to examine the relationship between the more complex characters and those who are merely elements in the construction of the story (Attebery, *Strategies* 73).

Catriana is introduced through her behaviour towards Devin at rehearsal; defensive about her musical ability, she overreacts to the young man's subtle sexual overtones in a duet they are practicing: "do you think you can get your mind away from your groin for long enough to do a decent harmony? This is *not* a difficult song!" (21-22), she snaps. Catriana later explains to Devin that she has to concentrate when she sings. "This morning you were doing the 'Song of Love' without even thinking about it, amusing the others, trying to charm me [. . .]. You were making me nervous and I snap at people when I'm nervous" (30). This is a difficult admission for Catriana, but her defensiveness about performing reflects the difficulty she has in forming relationships; they are all "difficult songs" for her. Only after the Prince

reveals his love for her does her attitude change. This transformation, which marks Catriana's last active participation in the plot, is accompanied by an internal form of music; she feels as if a new-born bird is singing in her heart (614). Musical discourse thus frames Catriana's presence in the novel, from the troupe's rehearsal to her awakening love for Alessan expressed by birdsong, after which she plays little part in the narrative.

Catriana is also linked with height in musical terms which, in turn, connects to other actions she undertakes; she is always willing to scale the heights both vocally and literally to achieve her goals. At the audition for Sandre d'Astibar's funeral, Menico asks Catriana about the pitch for the song, wondering if "she can go high enough" (35). Devin later remembers her voice "yearning upwards to where the pipes of Tregaea called" (47), yearning for love, for acceptance and, perhaps unconsciously, for Alessan himself. Catriana's two most dramatic actions in the narrative are both carried out high above the ground; she fakes suicide by jumping off a high bridge into the river below, and later leaps from a high palace window after killing a Barbadian emissary. Such association with one level of performance, both vocal and physical, necessarily limits Catriana's character; somewhat one-dimensional, she changes little during the course of the narrative. In comparison, Monica Gall has the potential for substantial character development which is illustrated by her vocal flexibility: "the *tessitura* of the lyric passages was unusually high [while . . .] the recitatives lay in a lower register" (*Mixture of Frailties* 249).

For those characters who do not sing, choice of instrument often provides insight to their character or to their function within the narrative. The discourse of fantasy "encourages borrowings from folk literatures" (Attebery, *Strategies* 109) in which common elements such as harpists and harps reflect a rich history of metaphoric associations. Gwenth Evans notes that the figure of the bard in modern fantasy is often accompanied by a harp, which is "significant in the revelation or growth of character, and [. . .] often embodies

an idea of the power of music" (Evans 199-200). In *Tigana*, Kay reverses the traditional stereotype of the harper; rather than a portrayal of "honored poet, musician, and historian of his people" (Evans 199), Erlein di Senzio is sullen, politically short-sighted and selfish. He does not want to be involved in Alessan's quest, and on several occasions nearly betrays the group. However, when Alessan releases him from the magical binding between them and restores his free will, he chooses to remain with the Prince and work toward freeing the Palm from the Tyrants' rule. Such a choice reveals that his character has developed qualities of loyalty and selflessness which, as Evans suggests, can be attributed to association with a harp.

The harp may also appear as "the vehicle of redemptive sacrifice," (Evans 200). Kay plays with the motif of a harp functioning as the source of the harpist's power. When Isolla of Ygrath arrives to sing for Brandin, she is accompanied by a poet who is carrying what appears to be a harp case. The harp is silent in the hands of a poet who does not possess the vital element of music; whereas music represented by the harp should be the means through which life-giving power is channeled, it becomes, instead, an instrument of death. The harp case contains a camouflaged cross-bow with which they plan to assassinate Brandin. The poet and the singer pay the ultimate price for their treason, as they are killed by their intended victim.

The harp is also used in several instances, figuratively and literally, to illustrate positive and discordant emotions. As Devin and Alessan cross into the province that was once Tigana, the first time the young singer has returned to his birthplace since leaving as a child, he is filled with hope and anticipation, and feels something "pluck at the strings of his heart as if it were a harp. As if *he were*" (454). In contrast, discordant emotion is indicated by music which is out-of-tune. When Pasithea tells Alessan that she has summoned him to her deathbed only to receive a mother's curse, Erlein calls her a "vain, foolish woman." His outburst is accompanied by "a discordant jangling of harpstrings" (475). Later, as tensions grow before the final battle, Alberico's

feeling of unease is also described as jarring “within him like a jangling, dissonant chord” (584).

As an instrument can be used to establish undercurrents of harmony and disharmony in the novel, so too can the musical or non-musical attributes of a character. Miriam Hart has noted that characters who do not have any involvement with music are limited in other areas of their personalities (147). The reader can thus focus on the characters’ involvement with, or reaction to, music to determine whether or not they are sympathetic to Alessan’s cause. As noted earlier, Alienor of Castle Borso is associated with music in Devin’s mind before the young singer meets her. Alienor is confirmed as a sympathetic character when her history with Alessan is explained and her support for his campaign unfolds. The merchant Rovigo and his family are introduced as musically inclined or appreciative listeners, and it is later shown to what extent he and his daughter Alais actively aid Alessan’s campaign. Even Sandre d’Astibar, who joins Alessan after his plot to kill Alberico fails, has a “passable baritone voice” (280).

Unsympathetic characters in *Tigana* do not like music, or speak disparagingly of it. The tyrant Alberico has a “heavy, unchanging voice” (84), and speaks in a “flat tone” (84). Art and the makers of music are of no importance to him; the one driving focus of his life is to succeed as Emperor of Barbador. As tensions grow before the final battle between him and Brandin, Alberico’s lack of control, like that of Giles Revelstoke, is expressed in terms of conducting an orchestra: “he was supposed to feel as if *he* were calling the measure of the dance. [. . .] Refusing, as the days slipped past, to dance to what might be someone else’s tune, however seductively the hidden pipes might play” (584-85). Of course, the “hidden pipes” are those of Alessan, as he lays plans to undermine Alberico’s hold on power and bring the two Tyrants to a position where they will destroy each other. The family of Sandre d’Astibar is divided; although his second son Tomasso has “an ear for music and an eye for dance” (37), his eldest son Gianni has no appreciation for the

musical art: "I need two glasses of wine very badly. Sitting still for that kind of music all morning is cursed thirsty work" (51), he grumbles during the funeral rites for his father. Even Alessan's mother is portrayed as unsympathetic to her son's cause. Although at one time the prospect of listening to music would have brought her pleasure, now she has nothing but contempt for her son's actions:

'Musicians [. . .]. How splendid. Have you come to play a jingle for me now? To show me how skillful you are in such an important thing? To ease a mother's soul before I die? [. . .] I have no more time to linger while my craven child gambols about the Palm playing ditties at rustic weddings.' (474-75)

These examples clearly indicate that absence of appreciation for music is an accurate indicator of character. It is also interesting to note that, by the end of the novel, all the characters who do not appreciate music have died or been killed.

There are two characters, however, who at first appear to be unsympathetic because of their appearance or actions, but who are revealed to be more complex because of how they relate to music. When Menico's troupe auditions for the performance at Sandre's funeral rites, the Duke's son Tomasso is introduced as a

delicately scented, extravagantly dressed scion of the Sandreni, a man [. . .] who made it manifest, in his limp posture and the artificially exaggerated shadows that ringed his eyes, why Alberico the Tyrant didn't appear to be much worried about the descendants of Sandre d'Astibar. (36)

The reader's first assessment of Tomasso is that he is ineffectual and powerless; yet, because of his self-proclaimed artistic attributes and because he is moved to tears by the performance, if appreciation of music is to be a consistent gauge of character, his emotional reaction must belie this initial impression. Indeed, Tomasso is eventually revealed as having been instrumental in helping Sandre stage his mock death and in planning to overthrow Alberico. The second character, Brandin, who is responsible for obliterating the province of Tigana

and who therefore should be a totally unsympathetic character, actively supports the artistic community and shares with Alessan a love of music and a vision for a united country. When news of Sandre's "death" is first known, Alessan bets that Brandin will send condolences in verse, "incapable of letting slip a chance like this to remind Alberico [. . .] that though the two of them have divided our peninsula the share of art and learning is quite tilted west" (10). Brandin himself freely admits how highly he regards music; after Isolla's failed assassination attempt, he tells her regretfully, "You can have no idea [. . .] how happy I was that you had come to make music for me again" (223).

If, however, despite his vengeful actions against Tigana, Brandin can be construed as a "good" or sympathetic character based on his love of music, there must be another element which influences his fate: that element is the absence of music. Both Margaret Doody and Andrea Weatherhead note how music imposes order upon the text. Doody states that when music is a major image in the narrative, if emotional concord is expressed through the characters' love of music, then a lack of musical references contribute to "inner disharmony" of other characters (361); Weatherhead argues that music contains "the elements of order necessary for society" (248). In *Tigana*, as noted above, one set of main characters is intrinsically involved with music while the other set is not. Alessan, Baerd, Devin and Catriana are all working towards a state of resolution, either political, by re-establishing Tigana and re-uniting the Palm, or personal, in that the main characters by and large work through relationship conflicts, pair off, and reach states of emotional harmony. However, Brandin's relationship with Dianora, who has become an influential member of his harem, is not resolvable given her failure to carry out her original plan to kill the man responsible for destroying her province and her family. Although Dianora has grown to love him, despite Brandin's plans to abdicate the Ygrathan throne, marry her and integrate himself and his soldiers into the Palm, such a dissonant situation cannot be harmonized: Brandin is killed and Dianora commits suicide. The only references to music in the

Brandin and Dianora chapters of *Tigana* have destructive effects. Isolla's violent end triggers an association between music and death in the fragile mind of Brandin's fool Rhun. "Music! Stevan! Music! Stevan! [. . .] Music,' Rhun said one last time [. . .] weeping as though his heart was broken" (223-224). In pairing the two words repeatedly, Rhun clearly identifies the tension between the two facets of Brandin's personality, the sensitive patron of the arts and the tyrant avenging the defeat and death of his beloved son. The two words also represent the losses which drive the narrative: "Music" represents the cultural, political, and personal loss of the Tiganese, while "Stevan" represents the personal loss suffered by Brandin.

In her discussion on "escape" literature, Kathryn Hume notes that a story's effectiveness often "lies in its refusal to resolve the ambiguities," (77) and at first it appears that there is no reason for the richness of musical discourse in only one of the narratives. Although the presence of music in Alessan's narrative strongly supports the resolution of the problem posed at the beginning of the story, the absence of musical discourse in the Brandin chapters serves also to highlight similarities between the two men. There is an intriguing moral dimension in Alessan's quest; as a hero figure, what does he accomplish that Brandin would not? Both have an affinity for art and music, both want to right a political wrong and unite the country under one ruler, and both have access to magical power. The main difference between the two men, however, lies in their application of that power, a difference that directly associates the presence of music with responsible use of power. Alessan voluntarily releases Erlein from the magical binding which links them; Rhun is only freed from the crushing weight of Brandin's presence in his mind when the sorcerer draws on his last reserves of power on the battlefield and unwittingly restores the fool's free will. Clearly, the horror of Brandin's retribution against Tigana is too great to be balanced by a love of music and art. As Baerd tells Devin:

He gathered his magic, the sorcerous power that he had, and he laid down a spell upon the land such as had never even been conceived before. And with that spell he . . . tore its name away. He stripped that name utterly from the minds of every man and woman who had not been born in that province. [. . .] He made it as if we had never been. Our deeds, our history, our very name. [. . .] Brandin made it come to pass that no one living could hear and then remember the name of that land [. . .] or even of that high, golden place of towers [. . .]. He killed a generation, and then *he stripped away our name.* (97)

Rhun represents the province of Tigana; as he regains his identity as Prince Valentin, the curse lifts from the land, and the province's name once again enters the consciousness of the Palm.

As Alessan's love for music is a greater force within him than his misuse of power, his choice of disguise at the beginning of the novel, as a traveling musician, seems inevitable. Such a disguise gives the prince a legitimate means of travelling extensively and enables him to contact sympathetic supporters to gain information. Music is also an ideal vehicle for planting the seeds of rebellion, for "once music ends, no trace of it is left" (Westerbeck 3). The Prince of Tigana is an exile, and his struggle to reconcile a love for music with his desire to reinstate his province reveals the tension between artist and society. Much can be learned about the position of musicians in the "pre-technological civilization" of the Palm through the use of musical discourse in the narrative. As musicians are able to transcend social barriers, and perform for both ordinary citizens such as peasants, farmers, and merchants and for the nobility, success allows a relaxing of those same barriers. Thus Catriana is permitted to pay her respects to Sandre's body during the funeral rites and to eavesdrop on the Duke's sons: "No lord or newly wealthy merchant was about to deny her right to do so. Not after her singing [that] morning" (45). Devin utilizes his fame for similar ends; able to find out all he wants to know about Sandre d'Astibar at a local inn, Devin's questions "seemed entirely natural, coming from the tenor who had just sung the Duke's funeral lament" (72).

As well as these obvious advantages of belonging to a travelling group, such as access to information, there is a social component related to the disguise chosen by Alessan which sheds light on the status of musicians in the society of the Palm. A professional hierarchy exists that determines which troupes perform in less hospitable areas, the rules of conduct on the road, as well as the benefits attached to shared fellowship. Musicians, particularly travelling musicians, are low on the social scale, partly because they must travel continually. Devin tells Rovigo that his wife would not be pleased "if you press your daughters upon a traveling musician" (23); and Eghano the drummer comments on the transitory nature of their livelihood when he reassures Devin before they perform the funeral rites: "It's just a performance [. . .] we do what we always do. We make music. We move on" (42). Alessan's mother is too proud to condone the methods her son uses to reinstate the province their family once ruled; Pasithea's revulsion at his disguise is an indication of her rigid adherence to the established social order, and plainly expresses her feelings about the place of musicians within that order.

Alessan's familiarity with the business of travelling musical groups allows him to protect himself, Devin and Erlein from suspicion when they visit his mother. One reason that Devin has never visited his birthplace is that Menico's success has meant that he has not had to perform in Lower Corte, the new identity given by Brandin to Tigana. His company is not "desperate for engagements [. . .] itinerant performers of the Palm knew that Lower Corte meant bad luck and worse wages" (451). As they reach the Sanctuary, Alessan reminds Devin and Erlein that they are a newly-formed company travelling early in the year because "everyone knows new-formed companies have to get moving sooner than the established ones or they are likely to starve" (463). Masquerading as a traveling musician has other benefits as well; music is always welcome as payment for shelter and food on the road, and can be used as a bargaining tool if the musicians happen to fall into hostile hands. Devin stalls for time when they are trapped by Ducas's band of renegades: "he had

heard stories – wishful thinking perhaps – of outlaw bands sparing musicians in exchange for a night of song” (425).

The Prince has no qualms about disguising his true identity as he works toward his goal to oust the tyrants; in posing as a musician he links himself to the traditional role of transmitter of memories. The loss of memory is a major theme in *Tigana*, and musical discourse is used effectively within the narrative to foreground the importance of personal, cultural and political identity. Musicians are the keepers of history in cultures with an oral tradition, defined by Ross as “reported statements from the past that derive from previous generations” (171), but they will not be able to pass on their stories and songs to the next generation if those children do not realize that their homeland no longer exists. Brandin ensures that an awareness of Tigana’s history, culture, and heritage will vanish by first using his sorcery to strip Tigana’s name from the collective memory of the Palm, and then vowing to outlive the current generation of people born in the province. It is ironic that Brandin is destroyed, in the end, by a lapse of memory; forgetting that by calling up all his power to overcome Alberico, he releases his fool from his binding.

Evans notes that within works of fantasy music and poetry are often “the means by which the society preserves and interprets its history and institutions” (201). Pasithea, Alessan’s mother, calls attention to this role when she stresses the importance of retaining such history; she bitterly resents the erasure of Tigana’s name and its creation legends from the collective memory of the Palm. When Erlein comments that other provinces still have stories about their connection with the gods, she argues that that is exactly her point:

Can you not see it? I *do* remember those stories. Anyone with an education or a library, any fool who has ever heard a troubadour’s sentimental wailing can remember them. [. . .] Not us, though. Don’t you *see*? Not Tigana anymore. Who will sing of Micaela under the stars by the sea when we are gone? Who will be here to sing, when one more generation has lived and died away in the world? (478)

As Pasithea articulates the concern she feels about the loss of the cultural history preserved by musicians, musicians themselves face a crisis of personal identity when they lose access to the very history they are charged with preserving. Freeman argues that it is the function of the human condition to try to make sense of one's life and create a rationale for existence in order to "live on" (10). Once this "rationale" of life is no more, there seems to be little point in continuing to exist. After Isolla's failed assassination attempt, Brandin asks the singer why she wants to kill him; her response is that she has nothing to lose: "I am dying . . . the physicians have given me less than a season before the growth inside reaches my brain. Already there are songs I can no longer remember. Songs that have been mine for forty years" (220). Her memory is her livelihood, and so important to her that she courts certain death rather than experience the gradual loss of such a vital part of her being.

Devin, too, feels very strongly about the importance of memory, revealing a fundamental aspect of his own human condition. It is "the touchstone of his soul [. . .] for if something could be remembered it was not wholly lost. Not dead and gone forever" (98). But what has not been experienced cannot be remembered; Pasithea, who has memories of Tigana, is bitter and angry over her province's annihilation, but Devin is unaware of his heritage and thus denied access to memories of his past. When he learns what happened to his birthplace, he experiences for the first time the emotions Brandin intended as a continuing vengeance against the people of that province. Tigana's fate smashes into "the vulnerable centre of how Devin saw and dealt with the world, and it cut him like a fresh and killing wound" (98).

It is because of Brandin's spell that people born in Tigana must find an alternate means of identifying each another; musical discourse, in the form of a wordless tune, serves such a purpose. At the same time, this tune links the issues of cultural identity and memory, one of the most important ways in which musical discourse is used to enhance the structural cohesiveness of the narrative. Schulkind, in his article on music, emotion and autobiographical

memory, indicates that music is often used to “transmit important cultural information” (948), and Ross notes further that lyrics of songs are usually remembered “because the melody serves as a mnemonic device” (173). In Devin’s case, the melody alone triggers memories of childhood and, when he eventually learns the lyrics, they prove to be a link to his parents and heritage. As well, the cradle song, taught to Devin by his father, is the vehicle by which the boy’s musical ability is first revealed and the instigating factor for renouncing his professional career.

One of Devin’s first memories is of his father, Garin, humming the tune to help the boy fall asleep one night. When he awakes the next morning Devin is able to sing the tune with perfect pitch, the first indication of his musical inclination. This melody forms the base for an emotional bond with his father, and indirectly links him to his dead mother: Garin kisses the boy, and his face takes on “the complex expression that Devin would later learn to associate with his father’s memories of his wife” (32). When Devin idly picks out the tune as the musical troupe is awaiting their turn to audition for Sandre’s funeral, Alessan picks up the melody on his Tregean pipes. Devin notices a slight discord and unseemliness which he cannot explain; the tension that occurs when a tune from one province is played on an instrument from another gives a clue that Alessan may not be all he seems. The two men finish the piece together, “pipes and syrenya, and humming tenor voice” (34), an early indication that their paths lie together in the events that follow.

Although the Prince offers to help Devin find the words to the tune, the young man tells him that it is “just an old song, a memento of my father” (34). Alessan remarks that such things are important, thus alerting the reader that music will play a role in transmitting information significant to the narrative. The true significance of the Prince’s words, however, is lost on Devin. This tune, which has deliberately been passed to him without words is, in fact, the key to his heritage. Although Devin is unaware of his real birthplace, the melody identifies him as one who has been born in Tigana, thus functioning as

an identification element to others born in that province. The rhetoric of fantasy emphasizes “intangible connections [which] reflect emotional or metaphoric associations, rather than demonstrable causative ties” (Attebery, *Strategies* 109). The tune, like the ring Catriana wears, is an “intangible connection,” allowing people born in Tigana to recognize one another. As the cradle song identifies Devin to Alessan, it later also identifies Alessan to Rinaldo of Senzio: “The only sound for the last few moments after they tethered the horses and began to walk had been Alessan’s pipes softly playing. Playing [. . .] a certain nursery melody from Avalor” (443).

As “Good-Bye!” has relevance for the wanderer and exile in *A Mixture of Frailties*, so too does the cradle song in *Tigana*. It describes the longing for a child to travel into the world, while never being able to forget his home. It is a song to which all exiles can relate, but the last words, “A dream of my home in Avalor” (101), bring to Devin a deep sense of loss as he mourns his home and his mother:

those two griefs fused to each other in Devin and became welded in the forge of his heart with what memory meant to him and the loss of memory: and out of that blazing something took shape in Devin that was to change the running of his life line from that night. (101-02)

Critics have discussed the important relationship between memory and identity. For Mary Warnock, “event memory,” or conscious memory, is essential to the concept of personal identity; in fact, the two are inextricably linked (54). She argues that a person’s future is a matter of choice, “but a choice that cannot be made except in the light of the past [. . .]. One’s present cannot be severed from one’s past, neither can one’s ‘concept of self’ be separated from the awareness of what a person was in the past: the person and ‘his’ past are one and the same” (63). Robinson and Taylor note that “self identity is a narrative construction based on life events” (126). When Devin is suddenly presented with a previously unremembered life event, he must

change his definition of self in light of that new information, and it becomes imperative for him to help to re-establish the knowledge of his past.

The cradle song is thus responsible for ending Devin's professional career and changing the direction of his life's path, for, once Devin joins Alessan, he is swept up in events which prevent him from continuing to sing with Menico's troupe. The cradle tune eventually becomes emblematic not only of Devin's identity, but of Alessan's cause itself, and is associated with sacrifice and renewal. When Devin dreams of the god Adaon dying at the hands of his priestesses, he hears no sound, but for the "Tregean shepherd pipes playing the tune of his own childhood fever, high and far away" (40), an association foreshadowing Brandin's death which is necessary for the eventual regeneration of Tigana. When the armies of Ygrath and Barbador face each other in Senzio, Devin realizes that they may die trying to free Tigana, but the reason Alessan and his supporters have come to the battlefield is because of "a dream, a prayer, a tune his father had taught him as a child" (639).

As one final indication of how musical discourse is an important structural element in the novel, music is woven into the conclusion as a symbol of renewed hope for the future. In the Epilogue, Devin makes plans to put together the touring company again with Menico, and start "chasing down the words and music of all the songs" (670) which have been lost, recreating the musical culture of Tigana. Tunes from the approaching Quileian caravan drift up "bright and gay," mirroring this mood of optimism. The description of the music playing "beside" and "ahead" of the caravan symbolizes the role music has played thus far in the process of re-claiming the lost province, and indicates that it will also be an important part of the future.

Thus, it can be seen that it is possible for musical discourse to play as valid a role within a work of fantasy as within a *Künstlerroman*, despite the otherworldly setting and magical presence which are common elements in fantastic literature. In *Tigana*, musical discourse spans both the fantastic and the mimetic, and is crucial to our understanding of the text; its mimetic

structure establishes the familiarity and recognition necessary for the fantastical settings of the imaginary music, while it also functions as an archive of cultural memory. Although magic often provides the means by which the reader can interpret a fantasy narrative, in Kay's novel music serves as an alternate textual code to magic, which not only enhances the interpretation of character, but also contributes to contextual interpretation by serving as a structural element within the narrative. As in *A Mixture of Frailties*, song lyrics and vocal lines are the prevalent musical elements which serve to transmit information pertaining to personal and political identity. It is not surprising, then, that a wordless cradle song enhances the structural cohesiveness of the narrative by linking the issues of cultural identity and memory. There is a strong association between music and death in this work of fantasy; songs about war and battle occur within the text, while Devin's performance at a funeral has professional and personal implications for the young man which tie in to Alessan's quest to reclaim his homeland. One of the strongest musical presences is a funeral lament which marks turning points in the narrative and represents a spiritual renewal for two of the characters. Although works of fantasy are not generally remarkable for their depth of characterization, Kay utilizes musical discourse to provide a means of gaining insight into the characters and separating the complex characters from those who merely advance the plot; Alessan's sensitivity is revealed through his approach to music, while Catriana's limited vocal range illustrates a similar lack of depth in her characterization. In a narrative in which music plays such a prominent role, the absence of music references is similarly important. Both Davies and Kay divide their narratives into two paths in which one set of main characters is involved with music while the other set is not; in *Tigana*, however, the presence or absence of musical discourse determines whether or not each path concludes in victory or defeat and is thus associated, in the quest to achieve political autonomy, with the responsible use of magical power. Far from being

yet another aesthetic element in these novels, music is integral to their construction and meaning.

CHAPTER THREE

Lily's Song: Timothy Findley's *The Piano Man's Daughter*

Timothy Findley's *The Piano Man's Daughter* is a realistic novel like *A Mixture of Frailties*, and the types of musical discourse which appear in these two texts are similar in that they both include titles and lyrics of popular songs, while several of the main characters are professional musicians. Both texts also operate within a developed and recognizable social structure in which musical success reflects position and status in the community. However, because the narrative shifts to the *Bildungsroman* aspects of the genre in Findley's novel, music plays a different, yet still integral, role in the text. Within the social structure of *The Piano Man's Daughter* there is tension between two types of generational continuity, both of which are represented by musical discourse. On the one hand, the Wyatt brothers establish a piano manufacturing company which leads to financial and social success. On the other, the Kilworths are genetically predisposed to a neurological disorder, manifestations of which are associated with musical instruments and song. Lily Kilworth and her son Charlie inherit legacies from both families; poised between the representative worlds of society and nature, they act as catalysts for the conflict between the two. Findley complicates the generic structure of the text by revising the conventional narrative patterns of the *Bildungsroman*; rather than following the protagonist's movement toward individuation, the author examines the intersubjective spaces Charlie shares with his mother. Music is a strong presence in these shared spaces, providing a consistent background for their relationship. The structure of the text becomes more intricate as Findley incorporates elements of the Gothic, but references to musical discourse are nonetheless utilized in a fashion consistent with that genre. Further, musical discourse moves not only between narrative genres,

but also between art forms, from song lyrics and poetry to paintings and photography, thus blending the linguistic and visual. This hybridity raises methodological problems, as Findley uses the word "song," to describe objects as different as photographs and mementos, and primal experiences of life and death. Such complexity requires a constant process of translation within the text, which is facilitated by musical discourse. I would like to argue that these uses of musical discourse reflect the manner in which the narrator searches for a similar cohesiveness to bind together the disparate elements of his life, in his attempt to reclaim his mother's past and discover his own identity.

A family that manufactures pianos plays a prominent role in *The Piano Man's Daughter*, and the instrument itself is represented not only as a product, but also as an artifact which reflects position in the community. In the early years of the twentieth-century, there was a competitive market for pianos; Mary Burgan explains this phenomenon, noting that a piano was "an emblem of social status [. . .]. Its presence or absence in the home could be a sign of social climbing [or] security of status" (42). The Wyatt brothers, who at first represent an English piano manufacturing firm, realize the potential for profit in this business and begin to make their own instruments: "There were millions to be made in the surge to put *a piano in every parlour* – as the Wyatt slogan proclaimed" (127).

Despite this trend, not every family owned one of these instruments: Lily's grandparents, Eliza and James Kilworth, do not agree about owning a piano; Eliza argues that it confers social prestige: it is "*a sign and signal of civilization. And a gift of gentility to all the generations to come*" (26). In contrast, her husband James believes it to be a pagan instrument; he is "afraid of its destructive powers – its ability to seduce the otherwise industrious child into a world of dreamy inactivity" (27). Traditionally, "the wife or daughter of the household usually presided over the piano" (Burgan 42), but because of James' refusal to allow a piano in the house, their daughter Edith (Ede) has never learned to play this instrument, although she has musical training and belongs

to a choir. When she at last touches the keys of a piano, “a stronger sensation than sound reached out along the wires to touch her. Enter her. Connect” (28), foreshadowing both her sexual union with Tom Wyatt and a future in which she is connected to the production of such instruments.

James’ and Eliza’s disagreement about owning a piano is one of the first indications in the novel that musical discourse will represent conflict between the worlds of civilization and nature. Lisa Salem-Wiseman argues that the tension between these two worlds arises from the opposition of order (civilization) and chaos (nature), and that their grand-daughter Lily acts as “the agent of reconciliation of rational and non-rational worlds” (434). The Wyatt Piano Company, headed by Tom’s eldest brother Frederick, represents the societal restraints of financial success, or the rational world, while the natural world represents the non-rational. Although she indicates that this agency is accomplished through the manifestations of Lily’s illness – seizures, the setting of fires, and “an intense connection with the animal and insect worlds” (433) – Salem-Wiseman neither mentions that these manifestations are often accompanied by musical discourse, nor that civilization and nature are themselves articulated through different uses of musical discourse.

Lily’s first seizure occurs after she creates a type of music on a wire screen mounted between the wash-house and kitchen at Munsterfield, the Kilworth family home. She has escaped from the vigilant eyes of her family, realizing that solitude is a successful way of ridding “the world of others” (114). The new places she discovers are connected with nature: animals, chickens and swallows, even the draft on the wire screen gives off “a humming sound that was not unlike the sound inside a beehive” (114). When the child plucks at the screen, the corridor begins “to thrum with song” (114). Some years later, Lily disrupts a dinner party: “*Lamb of God. Lamb of God.* [. . .] She thought she was singing a hymn, but all that Agnes heard was the dreaded chittering, announcing Miss Lily’s seizure” (218).

Lily's name strongly associates her with nature, and musical discourse emphasizes this link. She is conceived and born in the field close to Munsterfield and, significantly, both events are accompanied by music. The night of her conception is a "perfect night for a concert of music, the sound of it spilling into the street [. . .]. Here, [the moon] had said, is where Lily Kilworth's song begins" (59-60). Her parents lie together in the field, watching that moon and singing together. Similarly, the air is full of birdsong on the morning of her birth (58). Lily grows up with a fascination and empathy for the natural world, and has a particular passion for ants. When she introduces her son to these creatures, she explains: "'We are not alone here, Charlie [. . .]. It's their world, too'" (393). Lily is also referred to in comparison to animals, reinforcing a connection with the natural world which emphasizes her alienation from the constraints of society: when Ede tells Frederick about the girl's illness, she feels as if she is making Lily out to be a "dangerous beast [. . .] brought in out of the wild" (187). Charlie also notes the similarity between his mother and a wild animal: he describes her eyes as nervous and long-lidded, "preoccupied with survival – animal eyes" (7).

While musical discourse supports the manifestations of Lily's illness and stresses her association with the natural world, it also functions as an indicator of issues pertaining to civilization and society. Frederick Wyatt and two of his brothers, Franklin and Harry, are involved in the business of manufacturing pianos. Frederick boasts that "all the Wyatt brothers have music in their veins" (91), but it is a music which is in conflict with the natural world, reflecting upon societal values such as class structure, marital relationships and the power which accrues with wealth. Only Lizzie, his youngest brother, is not involved in the piano business. Although pianos are his "natural allies," he is more closely associated with Lily's world of nature. Lizzie sings "like an angel" (106), and his connection to the natural world is confirmed when he becomes a forbidden topic of discussion at Frederick's dinner table: "Lizzie [. . .] feathers, butterfly wings, ants [. . .]. *Taboo*" (264).

The remaining Wyatt brother, Tom, represents the world of society and business while demonstrating the Williamson pianos, but when he walks home with Ede the songs he sings to her, and their lovemaking in the field surrounded by the music of wolves howling, indicate that he has left societal constraints behind him. Lily's mother Ede is at first also associated with the world of nature; it is inevitable that Lily, the result of their one night of lovemaking, will thus be allied to nature and music. However, once Ede marries Frederick, she begins to move toward her husband's milieu. Although he admires Ede for her forthrightness and independence, Frederick schools these qualities out of her in his quest for social acceptance; it is ironic that Ede regards his marriage proposal as a "door to freedom" (104). Although she certainly escapes the restrictions of an unwed mother living with her parents, Ede does not realize the extent to which Frederick expects her to conform to the rigid mores of society. He wants his wife to work with him to attain "acceptability," striving to reach "the centre of a coterie whose cachet was the glamour of their wealth. [. . .] And, of course, from Frederick's point of view – because he was lodged at the heart of a cultural industry, namely the manufacture of pianos – it did him no harm as a businessman to be one of this circle" (210-11). He makes it very clear that this is his goal; in the process of achieving social acceptance, he leaves music behind. Ede is eventually able to remark that Frederick has no link to the art whatsoever: "My husband is a businessman [. . .]. His employees make the pianos" (432), she says dismissively.

Wealth on its own is not enough; as Frederick struggles to achieve "the accomplishment of place" (185), he exerts the same power and control over his household as he wields in the business world. Ede finds, to her amazement, that she carries out his demands even when she disagrees with him. She objects passionately to Lily being relegated to the attic during social functions, but when she at first refuses to allow it, Frederick insists. Lily recognizes his tone of voice: "It was the law. She knew that her mam would acquiesce" (240).

The governess Browning also recognizes Frederick's authority in the household. If she protests any of his decisions about the children "beyond her first formal statement, Frederick would let her go" (243).

Wealth and power, which open the doors to social acceptability, are clearly associated with pianos in this novel. This relationship draws attention to the gender dynamics operating in the text, as it is men, not women, who hold positions of authority directly related to the piano business. Frederick heads the Wyatt Piano Company, while his brothers Franklin and Harry are also involved in the firm. Tom Wyatt is, of course, the Piano Man of the novel's title, and his grandson Charlie has inherited his musical gift. It is no coincidence that when the boy first discovers that he possesses perfect pitch, it is on a Wyatt piano. When women show proficiency on the piano, it is because they possess the same type of financial power usually held by men. In the same way that Mrs. Bridgetower's financial status enables her to exert control over her son and Monica Gall, monetary independence gives several women in Findley's novel similar power. Eliza Kilworth handles the family's finances after James has died, and sets up a trust fund to provide for Lily and Charlie; when Lizzie asks Eliza to play for him, he remarks that she has "the fingers of an angel" (289). Ede becomes responsible for the Wyatt inheritance after Frederick's death and she spends her evenings singing old songs and playing "the last of the family's Wyatt pianos" (471). Ada Harris, in contrast, is proficient on the instrument, but plays without feeling, "just as if someone had inserted a penny and thrown her into gear. Her arms reached out towards the keyboard and her hands moved up and down [. . .] with no sense of tempo and no sense of volume" (398). Ada has little control over her life after her son Neddy is killed, and ends her days in an asylum.

Frederick's narrow-minded adherence to societal strictures that grant him absolute authority over his stepdaughter does not allow him to tolerate "otherness" in members of his family. Afraid of what he perceives "to be madness in others" (380), Frederick isolates his father, whose mind borders on

senility, in the family house and has Lizzie care for him. Because Frederick feels that Lily's seizures will jeopardize his social aspirations, he confines her to the attic during social events and in later years threatens her with commitment. Salem-Wiseman notes that this is "Findley's most self-conscious deployment of the conventions of the Gothic novel [. . . exploring] the realm of the unnatural, the 'attic' of the reasoning, civilized mind" (435). Findley clearly states the connection when he comments on Charlie's impression of Lily's journal entries: "These Gothic visitations might have been written by Mary Shelley or Horace Walpole. [. . .] *only his knocking drove my tormentor away*" (409-10). Lily's portrayal as a "'madwoman in the attic'" emphasizes the tension between her natural "otherness" and the societal conformity represented by Frederick.

These elements of another genre contribute to the generic inconsistency of the novel in general, and the deconstruction of the Gothic genre in particular. That the "madwoman" becomes the main figure (Salem-Wiseman 436) is yet another means of ensuring that music, in its relation to Lily and nature, is also foregrounded. Findley strengthens this association by bringing another peripheral figure into the narrative. In so doing, he reverses the Gothic convention of "otherness" that is "historically articulated as non-rational femininity [. . . which establishes] a connection between the imagery of domestic entrapment and enclosure so prevalent in this genre and the social realities of women" (Salem Wiseman 436). John Fagan, Lily's great-great uncle, suffered from "the falling sickness," and was described as "mad" (119). He spent his adult life in the attic of his parents' house in Dublin, "hidden – but not in hiding" (120) – in the same way that Lily spent her childhood at Munsterfield. Uncle John Fagan believed that God "wrote on the walls" (120) and he illustrated these words with flames and natura' objects: "*leaves and bees and singing birds*" (121). Eliza's grandmother, John's mother, forces the girl to memorize one of the passages: "*every man that shall hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery and dulcimer – and all kinds of music, shall fall down and*

worship the golden image" (121). This text, containing references to musical instruments, provides reinforcement that, like Lily, John is allied to nature and chaos through both madness and music. A further connection between John Fagan and Lily is that Ede, perhaps subconsciously, provides Lily with drawing paper and pencils in the girl's first incarceration in the Selby Street attic. Although Lily does not hear biblical instruments or the words of God, the music of a piano and banjo floats up through the floorboards, and she hears voices in the fire. The "golden image" Lily worships is the flaming of paper she sets alight to ward off a seizure, the "madness" which is her heritage.

Given such obvious connections to Gothic literature, it is worthwhile to look at how musical discourse functions in that genre in relation to *The Piano Man's Daughter*. Frits Noske notes that music often plays an important structural role in Gothic texts, and argues that its principal function is to establish an acquaintance between the hero and heroine. Although there is no central romantic pair of characters in Findley's novel, the initial contact between the man and woman in several important relationships is characterized by the presence of music. The Gothic hero and heroine are typically musically active, but the heroine does not usually play either the piano or harpsichord, in part because they require a certain virtuosity and are not suitable for expressing "melancholy feelings" (Noske 167). Lily is not very proficient on this instrument; Lizzie tells her that she is "a dreadful piano player – the whole world's worst" (289). The men in Lily's life, however, are all musically gifted, and their various skills are displayed when they first meet her. On the morning when Lily is introduced to Lizzie Wyatt for the first time, he waltzes along the piano assembly line with her singing, "The Band Played On." Lily encounters Karl Hess, a flautist, in Kensington Gardens when they are watching a band rehearse. Lily's friend Eleanor believes that Karl's music pulled at Lily's "other self" (477), precipitating Lily's sexual encounter with the young man. Lily meets Neddy Harris, whom she later plans to marry, at the Duke of York Theatre where he plays the violin accompaniment for the

moving pictures. Two other romantic meetings are accompanied by music: Charlie meets his future wife Alexandra when he is warming up on the piano, and Ede meets Tom Wyatt when he asks her to stand by the demonstration piano: “the song I sing must be sung to a pretty girl” (31), he tells the audience.

It is interesting to note that one other important relationship in the narrative, that of Ede and Frederick, is established without any musical presence. The absence of musical discourse is a further indication that Frederick, although he admits to having “music in his veins” (91), is categorized as an unsympathetic character. As Noske points out, music can also become “an ethical category dividing virtuous people from the villains” (168). I discussed this argument at some length in the previous chapter; in respect to Findley’s novel, however, the production of musical instruments, rather than music, is not strong enough to attribute virtue to a character.

Although the presence of musical discourse within the Gothic narrative proves to be an effective structural device, Noske notes that the “opposition of sound and silence” (172) is equally valuable. Charlie pairs the two as he lists the important facets of his own human condition: “I was not just *any* child. I had also been given silence and music [. . .] and a sense of being wanted and cared for by someone whose whole concern for me could be defined in a single word: *wonder*” (443). In a novel that contains so many references to musical discourse, the absence of music or verbal communication is a means of drawing attention to the text, and emphasizes the tension of a particular situation within the narrative. When Tom asks Ede to stay after the piano demonstration, she does not reply: “I said nothing. Not a word. [. . .] Why?” (33) she wonders later. The child that results from Ede’s acquiescence is also acknowledged without a word: after Tom’s funeral, Eliza and Ede visit St. Michael’s Cathedral to light a candle in his memory. Before they leave, Eliza tells Ede to light one last candle: “Nothing more than that was said. Ede’s child had been proclaimed in silence” (56). Frederick’s frequent silences confirm his isolation within the business and societal mores for which he

strives; Ede believes that he does not know how to connect because he is afraid of losing control. When she tells him about Lily's condition, Frederick says nothing: "There was then such a silence in the room, Ede could hear the candles burning" (188). This reference subtly emphasizes both Lily's madness – she, of course, hears voices in the flames – but also indicates that Ede's life is still focused upon her daughter. She exists in a state of "*constant vigilance, watching for the next sign – waiting for the next cry*" (140).

No words are spoken at several turning points in the narrative, particularly in relation to Charlie's parentage. Although this topic is a source of much speculation between Charlie, Lily, Ede and Eliza, Findley provides genuine clues to the boy's father through situations where the characters are not speaking. The book itself begins with reference to the silence that anticipates Charlie's discovery of his parentage: "In the summer of 1910, on a still June morning, he took me up the river to the town. Not a sound. No people. [. . .] We drifted there almost an hour and neither of us spoke" (vi). This quotation is repeated, along with verses from a poem by Elizabeth Barrett Browning, when Charlie at last is told his father's name. The text supplies another clue to Charlie's identity during his dinner with Eleanor Ormond. As she is about to tell him about Lily's liaison with Karl Hess, the "distant orchestra gave up all pretence of having an audience and was quiet" (366).

Findley revises the normal conventions of the *Bildungsroman* not only by including elements of the Gothic, but also by employing a complex chronological structure within the narrative. Anne Geddes Bailey notes that although Charlie "seems to be the typical bastard hero of realist fiction" (65), the narrative structure precludes a "conventional movement toward individuation" (66). As he pieces together the story of his mother's life, his own evolves not "*out of his mother's life but in concert with it*" (Bailey 65). Findley, in fact, plays with time in the same way Lily does: "When laying out the pictures of her life and mine, Lily had the fingers of a card sharp. I have

watched her shuffle time away as if it had no place in her personal chronology" (317), Charlie remarks.

While confining spaces in the Gothic text, such as the attics in which Lily and John Fagan are relegated and the minds of those afflicted with "madness," are linked to patriarchal oppression, Bailey argues that the shared, "intersubjective spaces are consistently associated with the mother" (70). It is Charlie's attempt to regain this shared space he and his mother once inhabited which alters the orderly sequence of narrative events. Such intersubjective spaces are located away from Frederick's sphere of control and as such have strong associations with musical discourse. The field at Munsterfield, as Bailey indicates, is a "metaphoric space which illustrates Findley's tendency to align mothers with nature" (71). Lily's conception and birth in the field is accompanied by various kinds of singing – human voices, wolves howling and the "songs of its creatures" (19) – and music is often present when Lily re-visits this setting. On the day that Lily introduces Lizzie to the snow-covered anthills, "a wheel of shouting birds flew into the sun" (233), even though it is wintertime. Years later, the field becomes a special place for Charlie and Lily, "our haven and our sanctuary" (392) Charlie later writes. Birdsong provides a musical serenade while his mother reads to him: "the cicadas sang and the grasshoppers ground out their tunes" (392-93), he remembers. Other shared places are also rich in musical discourse, and its presence to a certain extent defines both Lily and Charlie. One such place is the dance floor of the King Edward Hotel. Lily loved to dance and Charlie would often be her partner. He remembers the "jagged rhythms" of the ragtime music and, years later waiting to meet Eleanor Ormond, being in that hotel "was to be in Lily's company" (356). Another "intersubjective space" is the boarding house where Lily and Charlie take part in "*days of riot and song*" (418) with Ada and Neddy Harris. Lily gives dramatic readings of "story poems," and Neddy plays his violin while the others sing. Charlie remarks that the four of them had

“become a family” (417) and these afternoons invariably ended with everybody “sighing happily – in one another’s company” (420).

Bailey argues that the field, as the primary shared space, is a place where Lily connects with her mother and child “*through communion with the ants and other insects, birds, animals, and plants that inhabit the field*” (74). The “songs” sung by natural creatures make it possible for Lily and Charlie to “transcend the constraints of their lives and commune with a much wider, human and non-human community that [. . .] includes the whole natural world” (Bailey 74). I would like to posit that musical discourse not only enables communion, as Bailey suggests but, more importantly, allows communication between individuals as well as between the generations of both humans and animals. Findley, in fact, uses the word “song” to define this sense of continuation; he refers to this “primary shared space” as “a singing field” (471), thus stressing a connection to the ongoing cycle of life.

Before his voice breaks, Charlie Kilworth possesses a “relatively rare” contralto voice and he often sings solo parts in the school choir. The boy always closes his eyes when he sings, creating a private place where he can be alone with the music and where he can “sing to Lily” (462). As she is in an asylum for many of the years he is in school, the only way Charlie can communicate with his mother is to create a “shared space” in which they can be together. After he has grown up, Charlie finds that his musical gift enables him to communicate with pianos in the same way that his mother communicates with the natural world. Because “pianos have always been an intimate part of [his] life” (8), Charlie is able to

recognize a piano in distress from a mile away. Every piano has its own voice – unique in its sound as the voice of a human being. And when that voice begins to waiver – when it strays, the way human voices do under stress – my job is to restore its resonance – tighten its enunciation – clarify its tone. I have an unerring ear for these voices. That is my gift. In the music business, we call it *perfect pitch*. (8-9)

Whereas Charlie's ability to hear pianos in distress is a socially-acceptable skill confirming his position in the narrative as a catalyst between Frederick's world of society and Lily's association with nature, Lily and John Fagan's belief that they are speaking to imaginary beings are indications of madness. John Fagan "spoke to God. God spoke to him. Not in voices, but in writing" (119). Uncle John then illustrated God's words with pictures of flames. To Lily, however, the flames themselves are able to speak: "Fire had never spoken to her before in such a direct way. Not with a human voice. The language had always been in flames, augmented by the wind-words high in the chimney. [. . .] Matches. Paper. Communicating" (199). Fire operates as an entrance and exit to the otherworld Lily's mind sometimes inhabits and the girl senses that fire is communicating with her: "Sometimes there was so much roaring it was more like song than speech. Music. Singing. Song. But not words" (199). Lily is convinced that the voices she hears come from people within the flames, although she cannot understand them:

It may be they speak a language I haven't got. Or had one time, and have forgotten. Sometimes I think it may not be words at all, but only sound – like singing. Songs. Someone singing the tunes of songs way off in something like a cave. [. . .] Animal noises, sometimes. Not like a roaring – but the way that animals cry in the night – or whisper [. . .]. That's what I mean – their songs. Their songs, Charlie. Sung from a long way off (270).

This concept of "song" and "singing" describes not only a means of communication, but also a sense of generational continuity and individual identity. Lily believes strongly in "continuance – in what she called *the songs in the blood*" (9), and this underlying belief runs through the narrative. She explains it to Charlie using the natural world as an example:

Listen [. . .]. The whole world is singing . . . And it was. Frogs and crickets. Nightjars. Owls. Sing, said Lily, whispering. Sing. Pass it on. [. . .] That song – those songs are just the same as what I was telling you about the ants. This is me, they say. This is you. This is us. All songs pass from one to another – the songs of ten thousand years of nesting together – of being one – of being us. [. . .] Pass it

on! Lily whispered to all the singers. [. . .] We whispered it together – knowing it must not be shouted because a shouting would destroy the song and its harmony (483-84).

Generational continuity encompasses the primal experiences of birth, death, and life itself and there are strong indications in the novel that music and heredity are connected. After Tom's death, his "final song" (59), Ede feels that a part of him has been passed down to Lily: "his child – his blood – his love of music – all his songs inside her [. . .] to be joined with Ede, in order to sing their child into life" (42). Ede also believes that her unborn child is singing: "Not singing songs a person knew, of course. Nothing Ede could recognize. But songs for certain. Music – with a tune to it. Evocative. A song about self. A song about place. [. . .] A hovering song. Of recognition" (17). These references to song and singing indicate her recognition that the Wyatt and Kilworth heredities are combined in Lily. Like the songs sung by the frogs and crickets, Lily's prenatal music indicates the child's sense of her place within the world.

As musical discourse initially reveals identity through generational continuity, it then provides further clarification of identity through a complicated network of relationships between various art forms, thus melding the generic inconsistencies within the text into a structurally complex, yet cohesive, narrative. References to music fuse the disparate elements of the text on two levels; not only do they tie together the narrative using components from the *Bildungsroman* and Gothic genres, but musical discourse then acts as a bridge between this hybrid narrative and other art forms included in the physical text. Song lyrics, photography and poetry function within the narrative as intertextual tools that augment Lily's story. The musical and literary arts are linked together early in the novel; when Lizzie sings "Beautiful Isle of Somewhere" at Tom's funeral all the words were "as clearly sung as written words were visible" (50). Song lyrics also provide opportunities to discern the interpretive function of musical discourse within a cultural context.

"Careless Love," and "Shine On Harvest Moon" are examples of songs popular during the appropriate time frames covered in the novel. The War Rally at the Massey Music Hall represents similar concerts held during the war years, and Findley utilizes this setting to again emphasize Lily's conflict with societal expectations. Although music is present, it is not an intersubjective space which fosters communion between Lily and Charlie because of the repressive presence of Frederick and his family. Lily is very uncomfortable at this event and sits apart from both the Wyatts and the Kilworths. She has chosen "aisle seats, from which [she] could escape at a moment's notice" (415). The songs performed illustrate how battle in the real world is glorified by songs of war, a mimetic device used to similar effect by Guy Gavriel Kay in *Tigana*: "We will sing *God Save the King* and *Land of Hope and Glory* and, when the singing is done, we will give our voices over to *The Burial of the Dead*" (414). Even within this traditional musical event, Findley comments on the status of a successful professional musician: Dame Emma Albani, a renowned Canadian-born soprano who was then in her seventies, agrees to appear "only because she [is] not required to sing" (412). This is another example of how financial power can be attained through musical achievement. Although Monica Gall's fees increase with her artistic accomplishments, Dame Emma has attained such renown that she receives a fee even though she does not perform.

Musical lyrics are included in the narrative in another fashion as well, as accompaniment to five of the photographs which illustrate the Part headings. These photographs are relevant to the subsequent narrative, as are the lyrics, which are then repeated in the text. Photographs are also referred to as "songs," a metaphor which adds another layer of interpretation to the word. As Findley refers to Lily's life as a "song" within the "songs in the blood" which indicate generational continuity, personal mementos such as photographs, artwork and personal notebooks become "songs" which aid her recognition of self and identity within the "song" of life. These mementos allow Lily to remember her past. Charlie describes them as having

little, if anything, to do with music. They were artifacts, mementos, notebooks. [. . .] These were Lily's *familiars* – her totems, her reassurances that what her mind could not retain of her life could be collected in a suitcase. They were, as she had written, her songs. Each of them had its own voice. (10-11)

Such artifacts include photographs which Lily uses to reaffirm her identity, but Charlie observes that while looking at them Lily seems “not to recognize herself. [. . .] *Me*, she would say on these occasions. *Me* – but tentatively – almost with a question mark” (333). The photographs also provide shifting clues about the identity of Charlie's father:

I find myself endlessly searching the figures of the young men in Lily's pictures. I have looked at them through magnifying glasses in every kind of light. I would tear out their faces and set them under a microscope if I thought it would reveal some element that would confirm my parentage. (344-45)

In one instance, the photograph of a young man in the garden triggers a connection in Lily's mind between Charlie's father and musical discourse: “‘Singing,’ she said at last. ‘Singing. And stages’” (337). Lily then sings the words to the Mock Turtle's song in *Alice in Wonderland* to Charlie, “a touchstone for [his] father's possible identity” (338).

Lily's “songs,” metaphorically linked as they are to issues of identity, also connect to music in its true sense, particularly in connection with Lizzie. One of Lily's most treasured belongings is the picture she drew of Lizzie dancing at the Wyatt Piano Factory: Charlie notes that she “often broke her reveries – those mystifying, over-extended silences into which she fell from time to time – with a fragment of song. [. . .] Seated [. . .] in whatever twilight she was in, she would waltz with Lizzie until it got dark” (135). Lizzie seems fated to exist in the visual medium, as if to make up for his early death in the narrative: When Ede remembers him singing at Tom's funeral, she thinks of him as having “a face that someone might have painted. [. . .] Lizzie was like a boy written in a book – an illustrated boy” (106).

Lily's personal notebooks are included with her other mementos and Charlie associates music with a memory of his mother writing in those books. He remembers that the warm air teemed "with peeper song and distant music [. . .]. One night [. . .] a violin began to sing in the dark beyond the casement. It sang and sang – and I thought, in my bed, I will never hear such songs again" (410-11). These notebooks provide Charlie with previously unknown details of his mother's life; like his chronological reconstruction of her past, they are "dislocated paragraphs, sentences – chapters, even – in which [Lily] made attempts at articulating her response to being alive" (191). Bailey notes the intertextuality of using personal diaries within a narrative exploring identity: she argues that Charlie "reads the texts of Lily's lives and from those readings re-creates her life in his own memory and narrative. Lily is not only Charlie's mother, she is also his text, a text that he both reads and writes" (77).

It is interesting to consider that although each of Lily's "songs" has its own voice, and by extension its own identity, Lily often seems to be struggling with her own. As her father is at first referred to only as "The Piano Man," she is called "The Piano Man's daughter" on two occasions: when Ede thinks that Frederick has come to claim the child, and when Ede is married: her "lovely moment in the chapel would not be shared by her daughter. The Piano Man's daughter. Frederick had forbidden it" (160). Frederick's presence, representing as he does society and power, negates Lily's individuality and reinforces her connection to the male-dominated Wyatt family.

Lily severs ties to a life she cannot fully cope with by escaping from people altogether, or by mentally withdrawing into worlds which exist in her mind. Occasionally, Lily becomes "lost" instead of having a seizure; this unsettling experience is also accompanied by music. On the *S.S. Franconia* en route to Southampton, she wanders away from her friends; when discovered, she seems "oblivious to everything except some inner music to which she swayed" (331). One of the most prolonged periods in which Lily plays "a game with her identity" (350), is when she pretends to be the poet Elizabeth

Barrett Browning. Lily's aunt Caroline tells Charlie that his mother "absolutely believed Elizabeth Barrett Browning was in possession of her being" (350) and that she stayed up all one night copying every word of *Sonnets from the Portugese*. One of these poems, "A Musical Instrument," is copied into the text in two places: an excerpt appears before the title page, and four of the seven verses are quoted in reference to a letter Charlie receives from Lily's friend Eleanor Ormond. Its presence ties together the major issues addressed in the novel: identity, the conflict between nature and culture, and generational continuity. At the same time, its inclusion, together with photographs and song lyrics, add another literary art form to the complex narrative structure of the novel.

During one of Lily's episodes when she has temporarily lost her own identity, she believes that Karl Hess is the god Pan: "*the wild one in her [. . .] wanted to believe it*" (477), Eleanor writes. She tells Charlie that Lily lived "*in another version of the world [. . .] the world she was born in – a corner of a field, and a river winding by, with reeds in it. [. . .] Karl belonged there too, in his way*" (477). As Lily is associated with the natural world which is to a certain extent violent and disruptive, so too is that of the god Pan, as he breaks up the golden lilies and tears out the reed, destroying nature to create music. But when the god begins to play his pipe, the "sweet music" revives the lilies, and the dragon-fly returns "to dream on the river." Although Karl's identity is blurred in Lily's mind, it comes into focus for Charlie when Eleanor reveals that Karl is his father. The young man finds comfort in knowing that although he did not consciously know his father, he must have recognized the pull of Lily's "songs in the blood"; on the one occasion Charlie meets Karl, he "had to be dragged from [his father's] embrace. As Lily once had been" (482). Lily is the embodiment of Ede's and Tom's life songs; Charlie represents the songs of Lily and Karl.

Although the types of musical discourse which appear in *The Piano Man's Daughter* are in many ways similar to those in *A Mixture of Frailties*, the

generic shift from *Künstlerroman* to *Bildungsroman*, together with the elements of Gothic and the complex use of chronology, allow music to play a different role within the narrative framework. Lily Kilworth's life unfolds with the rise and fall of the Wyatt Piano Company, an indication that although her madness is measured against the societal and business mores of the time, she is inescapably bound to the Wyatt business despite her attempts to disassociate herself from the family. At the time of Lily's conception, the Wyatt brothers are not yet making their own pianos; when Lily becomes "fully possessed of her disturbing beauty" (6), the factory is at the height of its success: "the largest piano manufacturing company in the British Empire" (8). By the time that Lily takes up residency in an asylum (471), like her fragile mental state the Wyatt Piano Factory has "faltered and failed" (470). Four years later, at her death, the pianos – once "the universal adornments of living rooms and parlours" (9) – are discarded and forgotten.

Musical discourse enters the narrative in two ways: externally in its association with the manufacture of pianos, and internally with issues of identity and continuation. Findley utilizes the discourse of music to indicate gender dynamics operating within the narrative: the words "song" and "blood" are linked to establish a focus on women's issues such as birth and maternity, while the manufacture of musical instruments is tied in to male-dominated issues of power and control. Lily's life is acknowledged as a "song," a metaphor which is reflected in the narrative structure. The novel begins with a prelude in which Lily, just before her death, wonders about Charlie's unknown father; it ends with a coda describing how Charlie, having at last learned whose son he is, passes on Lily's heritage to his own daughter. Music represents the conflict between the worlds of civilization and nature, emphasizing the tension between Lily's "otherness" and societal conformity. While Lily stands between the opposing worlds of civilization and nature, Charlie bridges the two types of generational continuity. Music runs in his veins as it did in those of his grandfather Tom and great uncles, while through

the female line (Eliza, Ede and Lily), he possesses the (unrealized) potential for the Fagan madness.

The Piano Man's Daughter contains a complicated network of relationships between art forms, to which music provides an intellectual tool for translation. As the presence of music proves to be a means of communication between individuals and generations, it also provides a rich background to the shared spaces between Lily and her son Charlie. Finally, the inclusion of a poem by Elizabeth Barrett Browning melds together the main issues addressed in the novel, identity and continuation, within which Charlie Kilworth explores his mother's life in his search for his father, while dealing with the hereditary ramifications of her madness.

CONCLUSION

It is evident that authors can use the discourse of music, as it appears in a narrative text, not only in ways which span genres, but also in applications that work within the restrictions of a particular literary type. In the three texts studied, *A Mixture of Frailties*, *Tigana* and *The Piano Man's Daughter*, musical discourse appears in a number of similar forms: song titles and lyrics appear in the text, there are references to vocal line and placement, and several of the characters in each novel are professional musicians. The authors address the place of music and musicians within society, and explore the effect of music on an audience. As well, musical references give structure to the novels by framing the narratives.

Within each specific genre, however, musical discourse adapts to its appropriate parameters. In the *Künstlerroman*, the protagonist's level of musical accomplishment defines her journey towards artistic and emotional maturity. As Monica Gall's voice begins to declare itself, so too does her character, an indication of the extent to which musical discourse provides a key to plot and narrative development. The discipline she must acquire in order to reach her musical goal applies to other areas of her life, and indicates a parallel move towards marital eligibility, while the merits of her suitors are based upon their musical proficiency. The discourse of music links the two narrative paths in this novel; one song reflects Monica's musical development, through interpretation and performance, while at the same time its lyrics mirror a devastating period in Solly's and Veronica's lives. Issues of power and control link the two narratives in another fashion: musical achievement bestows a certain degree of authority over others in the musical narrative in the same way that financial achievement does in the non-musical narrative.

Findley's novel, *The Piano Man's Daughter*, belongs to another type of realistic literature, the *Bildungsroman*. Like Davies' *Künstlerroman*, it takes place in the twentieth-century world and the characters operate in a plausible social

structure. Findley, however, revises the conventional narrative patterns of this genre, including elements of the Gothic as well as focusing on the shared space of the narrator and his mother. Both departures from the generic norm are supported by musical discourse; music is an effective structural device in Gothic texts, and it is present in settings which represent the intersubjective spaces shared by Lily and Charlie Kilworth. The musical presence remains constant not only as the text shifts from genre to genre, but also from art form to art form within the narrative, blurring the distinction between linguistic and visual entities. Musical discourse provides a consistent means of translation within the text despite this complexity and, in fact, reflects the manner in which the narrator searches through the elements of his life in his attempt to discover his father.

In *Tigana*, with its otherworldly setting and magical presence, musical discourse again provides a means by which the reader can interpret the narrative. In this Fantasy, music rather than magic serves as the prevalent textual code that provides an index to Kay's imaginary world. As in *A Mixture of Frailties*, there are two narrative paths in *Tigana*; although magic is present in both, one set of main characters is involved with music while the other is not. It is the presence or absence of musical discourse which determines victory or defeat, and is ultimately associated with the responsible use of magical power. Musical description is an important element in the novel's imagery, contributing to a narrative rhetoric that enhances the reader's interpretation of characters and action. The loss of memory is a major theme in *Tigana*; musicians play a traditional role as keepers of history, and music plays a vital role in retaining personal and cultural identity.

Indeed, issues of identity, illustrated through the discourse of music, provide one of the most evident ways in which these three texts are related. In *A Mixture of Frailties*, one type of musical study at first draws Monica Gall away from her family and home in Canada and begins to help her to forge ties to a new career in England. Another type of music reconciles her past with her

future and allows her to come to terms with her background; while rehearsing and choosing music for her mother's memorial concert Monica comes to understand that she has inherited many of Mrs. Gall's qualities, which she then uses as a base for musical artistry. In *Tigana*, musical discourse enhances the structural cohesiveness of the narrative and reflects the importance of personal and cultural identity. The wordless cradle song which Devin's father taught to him proves to be a link to the young man's parents and heritage, while at the same time it serves as a means of identification for others born in that province. Alessan, the exiled Prince of Tigana, chooses a musician's disguise not only because music is an integral part of his being, but also because he needs an alternate identity which will allow him to at times lay down the burden of his heritage. In posing as a musician he also takes on the traditional role of a keeper of history; in this guise he is able to give Devin information about his background and thus redefine the young man's identity. In *The Piano Man's Daughter*, Findley uses the word "song" not only to convey a sense of an individual's identity within the world, but also to describe the continuity of life itself. "Songs in the blood" is the phrase Lily Kilworth uses to describe the progression of generations down the ages, but it also provides affirmation of an individual's place within the world. Further references to songs and singing indicate a connection between music and heredity. Personal mementos help Lily to reaffirm her identity and are also referred to as "songs," while her son Charlie uses them as keys to help him discover the identity of his father. Personal identity is confirmed in another manner as well – by an association with the business of music. Because of the songs in Charlie's blood, it is inevitable that his future will be connected to the music business, but even though music runs in Frederick's veins, as he becomes financially successful in the business of manufacturing musical instruments, he loses touch with his heredity and becomes identified only as a businessman.

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APPENDIX

Good-Bye!

George John Whyte-Melville (cited in *A Mixture of Frailties* 151-52)

*Falling leaf, and fading tree,
 Lines of white in a sullen sea,
 Shadows rising on you and me;
 The swallows are making them ready to fly
 Wheeling out on a windy sky –
 Good-bye, Summer,
 Good-bye.*

*Hush, a voice from the far away!
 'Listen and learn', it seems to say,
 'All the tomorrows shall be as today.
 The cord is frayed, the cruse is dry
 The link must break and the lamp must die.
 Good-bye to Hope,
 Good-bye.'*

*What are we waiting for?
 Oh, my heart!
 Kiss me straight on the brows!
 And part – again – my heart!
 What are we waiting for, you and I?
 A pleading look, a stifled cry –
 Good-bye forever,
 Good-bye!*