



A Tale of the Score

Ralph Erkelenz

A certain uniquely Hollywoodian aura of reverence so quickly engulfs any mention of Miklós Rózsa's score for the film classic *Ben-Hur*, it seems altogether natural to assume that every nuance of the score might by now have undergone the closest scrutiny and critical assessment. Except for the shower of superlatives (and otherwise watery adjectives) that one might expect to rain down on any Academy Award winning score, it is somewhat surprising to discover, then, that Rózsa's worthy effort has in fact received little critical attention in print.* Now, twenty-nine years after the film's release, there still exists no straightforward cue-by-cue explication of the way in which Rózsa's highly praised music actually fits the film. More importantly, we still lack a simple elucidation of the basic musical materials and methods he employed in meeting its complex challenges, both musical and dramaturgical.

* Though brief references appear throughout the Rózsa literature, only one full-length article is entirely devoted to the subject: Mark Koldys' "Miklós Rózsa and 'Ben-Hur'" in *Pro Musica Sana*, 3, No. 3 (Fall 1974), 3-20.

This is how Steven D. Wescott opens his article entitled, 'Miklós Rózsa's *Ben-Hur*: The Musical-Dramatic Function of the Hollywood Leitmotiv', published in *Film Music 1* (ed. Clifford McCarty, Garland Publishing, Inc., NY 1989, pp. 183-207). While he quite convincingly sets out to rectify the lack of 'a simple elucidation of the basic musical materials' in his text, he nevertheless deplores that the 'prospect [of giving a straightforward cue-by-cue explication] looms beyond the reasonable scope of this brief article' (p. 183).

Another fifteen years have passed since Wescott's remark, and forty-five years since the score was first heard in a movie theater. I believe the time has come to at least give it a try and provide this cue-by-cue explication.

Here it is.

Part One

A small 35 mm microfilm reel, 93 mm in diameter, entitled, 'Music for Motion Pictures — Music 3449'. It contains 'items 777 — 784', thus numbered by the United States Library of Congress. Hidden behind this inconspicuous description are copies of hundreds of pages of printed or hand-written music for movies such as *HOTEL PARADISO* (L. Rosenthal), *JULIET OF THE SPIRITS*, *THE LEOPARD* and *WAR AND PEACE* (N. Rota), and three scores by Miklós Rózsa: *ASPHALT JUNGLE*, *BECAUSE OF HIM*, and *BEN-HUR*. This reel obviously offers the film music buff more material than can reasonably be perused within even a few months. The score for *BEN-HUR* alone consists of 517 (not 516, as the Library of Congress has it) pages of neatly written notes, meticulous references to the recording time and the script, as well as reel numbers, titles, dates, deletions, additions, and additional remarks; and even if you limit yourself to this one monumental score, the task is truly Herculean.

The Library of Congress has labeled the material as follows:

MUSIC 3449 ITEM 784 —M 1527.R7B45 Rózsa, Miklós, 1907— Ben-hur ; background musical score of motion picture photoplay / [n.p., Loew's] c1959. 1 condensed score. (516 p. [sic]) ; 33 cm. For orchestra. © Loew's Inc. EU 599428 10/26/59

This neatly copied condensed score represents the music (for archival and other purposes) as filled in by the orchestrator. This makes it a very different document from the original composer sketches such as Frank DeWald analyzed for *EL CID* and *LUST FOR LIFE* (cf. *Pro Musica Sana*, nos. 50–51 and 57.) It consists of neatly hand-written music in two to six staves containing a sort of shorthand indications as to which instruments are to play which notes.¹ However, it is still up to the orchestrator to decide which actual melody line is played by which instrument, as the condensed score often only has, say, four-note chords whose notes must be distributed among 'first violins, 2 flutes, 2 oboes' (as is

¹ As explained by Miklós Rózsa in his interview with Derek Elley 'The Film Composer', (in *Films and Filming*, May/June 1977; reprinted in *PMS* 27, p. 8): 'I give a sketch... I very much dislike the word "sketch", because it signifies something unfinished... I give a short score laid out on anything from two to six staves which tells you exactly what all the departments of the orchestra do, all the harmonies, everything. My orchestrator just saves me the enormous and time-consuming job of laying out the music in full score [...]. I would challenge anyone to hear the difference if my short score for a particular scene was given out to five orchestrators... It must sound the same, because they cannot add anything: everything is indicated—a flute is a flute, and if I want a flute and an oboe, I write so.' Rózsa's faithful orchestrator on *BEN-HUR* was the Hungarian composer Eugene Zador.

the case in the first measure of the Overture; cf. ex. 1). There are numerous timings that indicate what moment in the film a specific point in the score coincides with. Very often those timings are doubled by short descriptions (underlined) of what actually happens at that moment; e.g. in Anno Domini: ‘50 Fortress of Antonia’ or ‘54 Temple’. Each piece in this condensed score is given a registration number and a title; the composer’s name and the title of the movie are mentioned; then there is a date as well as that part of the reel in which the piece in question appears. Interestingly enough, there is practically no piece that has any key notation (unlike some of Mark Koldys’s examples in his 1974 article, “Miklós Rózsa and BEN-HUR,” published in *Pro Musica Sana* no. 11).

It took weeks of careful listening and reading to make an inventory of the pieces reproduced on the microfilm and to compare them to existing recordings such as the Rhino double album, the Rózsa Society cassette recordings of the Syracuse acetates, and the Aldebaran 3-CD pirated edition of the original music tracks. Furthermore, some of the “soundtrack” albums issued from 1959 proved to be very valuable sources when it came to verifying certain details. Besides, I am grateful to John Fitzpatrick and Frank DeWald for their valuable comments and suggestions.

The material on hand is so copious that several ways of structuring and presenting it to the reader would be feasible:

- a page-per-page description of the microfilm material, disregarding the actual sequence of the appearance in the movie;
- a chronological description of the material as it is heard in the movie, disregarding the many pages not heard (and in some cases presumably never even recorded);
- a chronological description of the material in order of the recording dates (or, at least, the dates of transcription);
- a thematic grouping of interesting subjects such as deletions (marked and not marked), transitions, alternative versions, unrecorded/unused material, instrumentation, etc.

The way that appears most sensible to me is to follow the chronology of the movie (as this is what most readers are familiar with and also how the CD tracks have been arranged) and to include additional points of interest as we go along. Therefore, this first part of my analysis will start at the beginning of the movie as well as at the beginning of the microfilm score.

Each piece starts with a short description of the microfilm pages in the following order: no. = [my own chronological] number of the title in question — page = the first page of the piece [again, my own count: the pages are not numbered in the copy] — Title = the original wording of the title — Reg.no. = the registration number allotted to each title, which usually appears in a frame in the top left corner of the first page of each cue, then in smaller ciphers and without the frame in the top left corner of each of the following pages — Reel/part = the reference to the original film reels — Date = the date that

1724-81.

REEL: 1
PART: A

("BEN-HUR")



LARGAMENTE

Handwritten musical score for "The Rite of Spring" by Igor Stravinsky. The score is written on multiple staves, including staves for woodwinds (VNS., Fls., Clar., Tpts.), strings (Vlns., Vcl., Trb., Tuba), and percussion (Gong, Timp.). The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings (mf, ff, marc.). The score is divided into measures by vertical bar lines, and some measures are numbered (1, 2, 3). The score is written in a handwritten style, with some corrections and annotations visible.

Handwritten musical score for "The Sound of Silence" by Simon & Garfunkel. The score is written on five staves. The first staff is the vocal melody, the second is the vocal harmony, the third is the piano accompaniment, the fourth is the guitar accompaniment, and the fifth is the bass line. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The title "The Sound of Silence" is written at the top. The score is divided into measures, with some measures containing handwritten numbers in boxes (4, 5, 6, 7, 8). The score ends with a double bar line and the word "Gong" written below the piano staff.

M1527
R71345

appears next to the title (this must be the day that those pages were written rather than recorded as they always predate the recording dates indicated in the Rhino booklet); all dates are 1959 — no.pp. = the number of pages used for this title — Dur. = duration of the title as indicated in writing (not to be confused with the actual duration of the recording) — Mm. = number of measures (usually each measure has been numbered).

The references to the recordings read as follows: when talking about the CDs I will indicate the number of the CD in Roman numerals, followed by the track number (e.g. Rhino II 12 for 'Hatred'); referring to the MRSSS tapes I doubt whether everybody has this recording in the same format, so I have just numbered the tracks from the beginning.

1 Overture

no.	page	Title	Reg.no.	Reel/ part	Date	no. pp.	Dur.	Mm.
1	1	Overture	1724-81	1-A	07-22	18	5:20	182

8 Rhino I 1 • MRSSS 1 • Aldebaran I 1

These 18 pages of the condensed score were written on Wednesday 22 July 1959 and recorded nearly two weeks later, on Tuesday 4 August (the sixth of only eleven known days of recording, if you take the recording dates indicated in the Rhino booklet).

Although no cuts seem to have made in this piece, the difference between the planned and the actual duration is much bigger than in any other recording. Whereas the score indicates a length of 5 minutes and 20 seconds, the Rhino CD has 6:32, the Aldebaran 6:27 (which might result from the rather amateurish fade-in and -out effects in that pirated edition), and my MRSSS cassette recording takes 6:12 (which could be caused by differences in tape speed on the long way from the original to my copy of a copy). Also, there are only six timings:

- 0:00 beginning (measure 1)
- 1:00 for no musical reason (measure 39)
- 1:30 beginning of the Love Theme (m. 59)
- 2:40 four measures before the beginning of The Mother's Love (m. 99)
- 3:40 beginning of Friendship (m. 129)
- 5:20 end

All this, I believe, is easily explained: the Overture did not have to be synchronized with the action on screen; therefore greater liberty with the tempi could be taken. As this condensed score does not contain any metronome markings but rather relies on terms like *largamente*, *poco più mosso*, etc. there was enough space left for interpretation, and Rózsa

used it to make his Overture more than a minute longer than planned, although the reason behind this can only be guessed at.

'[The] PRELUDE places the listener immediately in the atmosphere of the period of "Ben-Hur",' Rózsa wrote in his liner notes to the original MGM S1E1 disc recording. As the Overture starts with the same motif, 'Anno Domini', the same could be said about this piece. In fact, Mark Koldys points this out in his analysis, adding that the perfect fifth is the harmonic basis for this music. Interestingly enough, though, in Anno Domini (no. 2 in the score) Rózsa uses nothing but perfect fifths for the opening chords of the movie — the first chord consists of eight notes, but only two different ones: C and G, which are a fifth apart. In the Overture, however, the harmonization is not as straightforward and thus appears richer in texture: there are ten notes to the first chord, eight of which again only consist of A and E (= perfect fifth), but there are two additional D notes, which fill this otherwise 'open' chord with a fourth (A – D). This added fourth is continued in the following chords up to the beginning of the second section (m. 9, pizzicato strings). The same is true for the last few measures of the Overture, except that this time the perfect fifth consists of E-flat and B-flat, with A-flat as the added fourth.

2 Anno Domini

no.	page	Title	Reg.no.	Reel/ part	Date	no. pp.	Dur.	Mm.
2	19	Anno Domini	1724-1	1-1	08-11	4	1:26	47

8 Rhino I 2 • MRSSS 2 and 92 • Aldebaran I 2

This, of course, is the majestic opening of the motion picture proper, starting with a fortissimo statement of the Anno Domini theme consisting of nothing but perfect fifths (as already mentioned) and thereby giving maximum impact to the subject matter of this movie: the full orchestration ('tutti strings, woodwind, trumpets, gong, trombones, low woodwinds, violoncelli, [double] basses, tubas') represents Roman power, the open fifths suggest 'Antiquity' (as has been said by Dr. Rózsa himself and by Christopher Palmer²), and the use of the lowered 7th scale degree which becomes apparent in the second chord that you hear establishes from the very beginning the dominant musical 'mood' (cf. ex. 2).

There are a total of 17 timings, most of which do not refer to any discernable point in the movie but rather mark the temporal progress of the music. The 'Judea' theme makes its entrance at 0:19 in the score, where we read 'Map of Judea'; and 'Fortress of Antonia' appears at 0:50. - 0:54 says, 'Temple', but the familiar chant-like choral line is missing. There is only a sustained open fifth (E-flat — B-flat) whose length is not prescribed but rather left open to the demands of the film (Rózsa puts a fermata above the chord). This coincides with the second MRSSS tape version (92); however, the other

Example 2

MIKLOS ROZSA

The image shows a handwritten musical score for Miklos Rozsa's 'The Music in Quo Vadis'. The score is written on ten staves, organized into three systems. The first system contains staves 1-3, the second system contains staves 4-6, and the third system contains staves 7-9. The music is written in a key with one flat (B-flat) and a 2/4 time signature. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like 'ff' (fortissimo) and 'f' (forte). There are also handwritten annotations in parentheses, including '(Tutti Sings w/ Tpts)', '(HMS-VLE)', '(JWS-VLE)', and '(Clos. 244)'. Time markers are present: ':00' at the beginning, ':06' after staff 3, ':14' after staff 6, and ':19' after staff 9. The staves are numbered 1 through 10. The score is written in ink on a piece of paper that appears to be a photocopy of a handwritten manuscript.

² Miklós Rózsa, *The Music in Quo Vadis* (Film Music, 11, no. 2, Nov-Dec 1951) 'As the music for *Quo Vadis* was intended for dramatic use and as entertainment for the lay public, one had to avoid the pitfall of producing only musicological oddities instead of music with a universal, emotional appeal. For the modern ear, instrumental music in unison has very little emotional or aesthetic appeal; therefore I had to find a way for an archaic sounding harmonization with gives warmth, color, and emotional values to these melodies. A parallelism with open fifths and fourths came in most handy and also a modal harmonization suggested by the different (Lygian, Phrygian, Dorian, Mixolydian, etc.) modes of the melodies in question.' • Christopher Palmer, *Music in the Hollywood Biblical Spectacular* (no year, p. 5) '[...] parallel chords of superimposed fourths and fifths. Now these are precisely the means whereby an atmosphere of antiquity may be conjured up for Western ears.'

MRSSS recording, the Rhino version and the Aldebaran edition all have the vocal part (do they sing 'Holy?'). The end of this cue is faded out (or rather drowned in the noise of the people on screen) in the movie, but not in the existing recordings, where we can still hear the celli and the bassoons play their statement of 'Judea'. Contrary to the written score, however, all the recordings are a measure short at the very end, where Rózsa had originally wanted another appearance of the 'Anno Domini' motif as a conclusion to this melody (cf. ex. 3). It may have been clear at the time of the recording that the last measures would be drowned by the crowd noise anyway so they didn't bother playing them.

Frank DeWald points out that the gong in the soundtrack recording is hit on m. 5 rather than m. 6. The 'Lion' LP corrects this mistake (?), whereas the gong is not audible on MGM S1E1.

Example 3

3 Star of Bethlehem

no.	page	Title	Reg.no.	Reel/ part	Date	no. pp.	Dur.	Mm.
3	23	Star of Bethlehem	1724-96	1-2	08-11	5	1:27	53

8 Rhino I 3 (alternate choral track: II 45) • MRSSS 3 • Aldebaran I 3

Along with 'Adoration of the Magi', this piece was recorded twice; the first time two days after the score was completed (Thursday 13 August 1959), and a second time the Tuesday after that (18 August). Interestingly enough, only three recordings seem to have

been made on that particular Tuesday, namely 'Star of Bethlehem', 'Adoration of the Magi' and the choral version of 'Star' which appears on the Rhino CD. The latter piece does not appear at all in the written score, and the two others lack any hints at a vocal part. Nor can the vocals be traced back to any existing instrumental part; there is no simple doubling of any orchestral lines. I suppose that the first takes were the ones without voices, and that, for whatever reason, somebody (Rózsa?) changed his or her mind over the weekend and opted for the inclusion of human voices, which were recorded on 18 August. Unfortunately, none of the existing soundtrack recordings contain the choir-less versions (but there is one re-recording of 'Adoration' without choir on the 'Lion' LP), so it cannot be ascertained whether the orchestral parts were also re-recorded on that day or whether the singers were just added to the existing orchestral tracks.

Apart from the missing voices, the Rhino is the most complete recording. MRSSS only lacks the final measure because of a direct transition to 'Adoration', whereas the Aldebaran CD has the final edited film version with bars 32 and 33 cut out (at 0:50) and another cut between measures 46 and 50 (at 1:12) plus the fade-out on the last chord so dreadfully habitual in this recording.

4 Adoration of the Magi

no.	page	Title	Reg.no.	Reel/ part	Date	no. pp.	Dur.	Mm.
4	28	Adoration of the Magi	1724-97	1-3	08-11	4	1:59	46

8 Rhino I 4 • MRSSS 4 • Aldebaran I 3

As the Aldebaran track follows the edited movie sequence, the first two and a half measures have been left out to produce a not-so-convincing fade-in on the fifth note of the melody. Consequently this CD has only one track for the two pieces called, 'Star of Bethlehem / Nativity'. Again, the Rhino version has it all, and the MRS tape is an interesting combination of the Rhino and the Aldebaran recordings inasmuch as there is the crossfade from 'Star' to 'Adoration' but much more elegantly done than in the film; here the last chord of 'Star' coincides with the first one of 'Adoration' so that not even the first triangle beat is lost. In fact, this may very well be the way Rózsa wanted it to be in the final mixdown, before the music editor had to cope with the fact that the final cut was missing a few seconds and therefore could not accommodate the complete 'Adoration' music sequence. The 1977 Decca recording with the National Philharmonic Orchestra seems to have aimed at restoring the original composition; here, too, the transition is most satisfactory and exactly as written.

This crossfade from 'Star' to 'Adoration' is the first of many overlapping pieces in the score. Obviously some very long musical sequences were easier to record in separate bits and were then assembled in the editing process. The written score indicates quite a number of such instances. However, in this case there is no indication of an 'Overlap' at the end of 'Star', where it only says, 'Diss. to Manger'. It therefore is not quite clear whether an overlap was intended at the time of writing the score or not. On the other hand, the last chord of 'Star' and the first one of 'Adoration' are identical, so that a crossfade may have been planned after all or at least provided for.

Most of us know the story of how Rózsa was asked by William Wyler to use 'Adeste Fideles' instead of his own composition in order 'to make the public aware that this was the first Christmas' and how he threatened to resign if Wyler had his way because the eighteenth-century tune would have been 'completely at variance with the specialized pseudo-archaic style [Rózsa] was trying to evolve for the picture'³. I find it very interesting, however, that, despite all the trouble Rózsa went to, the result is one of the most (if not the most) conventional pieces of the whole score in terms of mode and harmony, and thus not really a very archaic-sounding one. Although there is no signature to indicate the key of F major at the beginning of the staves, there is no doubt that F major is exactly what this piece has been written in, and all the harmonies fit into the context of this key. Mark Koldys has the key signature. John Fitzpatrick suggests Rózsa provided a traditional carol-like sound by way of compromise.

As in the preceding piece, cuts were made for the actual recording. The written score has an 'echo' after every 'lowing' phrase (Mark Koldys mentions this 'two-note phrase of D flat - C, to connote the sounds of the animals at the manger'⁴), four times played by the clarinet and once by the violas, followed by a second 'lowing' (cf. ex. 4). By leaving these 'echoes' out (as is the case in all the existing recordings) the regular 4/4 beat is reduced to 2/4 measures in those five places (Rhino \tilde{Z} 0:16, 0:27, 0:39, 0:50, and 1:22; or measures 7, 12, 17, 22, and 35). Interestingly, the first MGM "soundtrack" LP adds five notes at the very beginning of the piece so that the clarinet echoes the complete oboe phrase from the first measure, rather than only the second half, as noted in the score and heard in the film. It is also noteworthy that the 'Lion' LP has the only choir-less version of 'Adoration'. Otherwise it follows the written score, albeit in a bit of a rush.

There is a mistake in the score of this cue: at measure 28 (1:04 on the Rhino CD) the third beat is written and played as a minor chord when it should have been a major (as it is in the piano and choral versions and all other recordings). Frank DeWald, who pointed this out to me, wonders whether it was never noticed or noticed but deemed unworthy of a costly retake.

³ Miklós Rózsa, *Double Life*. Midas Books, Tunbridge Wells 1982. p.177

⁴ Koldys (1974) p. 6

Example 4



5 Fanfare to Prelude

no.	page	Title	Reg.no.	Reel/ part	Date	no. pp.	Dur.	Mm.
5	32	Fanfare to Prelude	1724-IX	2-A	08-11	1	0:12	9

8 Rhino I 6 (0:00 up to 0:12) • MRSSS 5 • Aldebaran I 4 (0:13 up to 0:26) and III 1

When I first heard the MRSSS original tapes I was surprised to find that this fanfare did not actually form part of the Prelude, but turned out to be a piece of its own. This is, in fact, the first of many examples of a planned 'overlap', as the score says. With a lot of musical numbers it must have been too difficult to record longer sequences in one go; therefore Rózsa composed 'seams', which consisted of fermata chords held for some seconds, which allowed the music editor to attach the next piece. It goes without saying that the beginning of the latter had to fit the musical context in a way that the audience would not realize the cut.

'Fanfare to Prelude' ends on a B-flat major chord; and of course the 'Prelude' proper starts with the same chord. Interestingly enough, the Rhino recording only offers the overlapping version, whereas Aldebaran has both. Taking into consideration that the Rhino CDs elsewhere have some of these 'overlap' endings without the next piece directly attached, one wonders whether there were actually two different recordings: one with the 'Fanfare' and the 'Prelude' as separate pieces, and one single-take version.

The score, however, distinctly finishes this 'Fanfare' in bar 9 with the superimposed remark, '12 Diss. to "A Tale of the Christ" '.

6 Prelude

no.	page	Title	Reg.no.	Reel/ part	Date	no. pp.	Dur.	Mm.
8	35	Prelude	1724-1 A	2-1	08-06	10	1:53	92

8 Rhino I 6 (from 0:12 onwards) • MRSSS 6 • Aldebaran I 4 (0:26 up to 2:19) and III 2

The second page of the 'Prelude' shows two bars (nos. 12 and 13) that have been crossed out and were not recorded. They are the exact replica of the two bars before them, i.e. the introduction of the Ben-Hur Theme, when the chimes set in, before the statement of the theme proper in bars 14ff. This is obviously an example of the many 'stretchers' that were composed into the score in order to allow for minor problems concerning the final length of scenes. This score sports quite a number of such 'stretchers', which really seem to have been composed to be left out if needs be.

However, the 1977 Decca recording again succeeds in reconstructing the original composition: the two extra bars are there; plus the 'Fanfare'. However, the Love Theme has been extended and the ending has been changed to achieve a more satisfactory conclusion for the CD listener; this is the familiar concert version of the 'Prelude'.

The rest of the 'Prelude' is familiar stuff, with the Love Theme starting at 1:10 and the reappearance of the Ben-Hur Theme at 1:39 and 'Anno Domini' at 1:49, whose last B-flat open fifth chord decrescendos to a pp E-flat open fifth chord, where the annotation reads, '1:53 Diss. to picture overlap'. This time Rhino gives us the original without the crossfade to the 'Marcia Romana' heard in the film. Aldebaran has this ending, too, but also the continuous final movie version.

7 Marcia Romana

no.	page	Title	Reg.no.	Reel/ part	Date	no. pp.	Dur.	Mm.
9	45	Marcia Romana	1724-94	2-2	08-10	6	1:48	91

8 Rhino I 7 • MRSSS 7 • Aldebaran I 4 (from 2:19 onwards) and III 3

As the first two Aldebaran CDs present the music as it is heard in the final movie (overlaps, cuts, warts and all), track I 4 has the awkward cut between 0:59 and 1:17, when the Judea theme appears, but then it contains the final bars of the music that become in-audible in the film when the 'dialogue starts' (1:41 to 1:48). However, the 'documentary' third Aldebaran CD has the complete piece (as do the Rhino and the MRSSS recordings), minus the inevitable fade-in.

Whereas the score has the basso ostinato continuing until the very end of the cue, it drops out on the soundtrack recording at 1:16 (where it says, 'Nazareth' in measure 66), to be replaced by a simple two-note motif in the basses. It might have been a last-minute decision made on the recording stage.

8 Spirit and Sword

no.	page	Title	Reg.no.	Reel/ part	Date	no. pp.	Dur.	Mm.
10	51	Spirit and Sword (v. 1+2)	1724-95	2-3	08-11	3	0:54	27

8 MRSSS 8

An extended version of the Christ Theme (twelve bars, or thirty-nine seconds), as opposed to the final version of 'Spirit and Sword' (q.v.) is heard before the Roman march sets in again. The second version mentioned in the heading consists of the same piece with a cut between 0:20 and 0:39. The Rhino CD does not have this recording; on the other hand, the second version just mentioned comes very close to the final version as it has the same timing. The only difference is that in versions one and two the Christ Theme is first heard in the lower parts of the orchestra and only gradually makes its way up to the higher octaves, whereas the final version starts fairly high.

9 Spirit and Sword (final version)

no.	page	Title	Reg.no.	Reel/ part	Date	no. pp.	Dur.	Mm.
11	54	Spirit and Sword final version)	1724-99	2-3	10-02	2	0:39	28

8 Rhino I 8 • Aldebaran I 5 (up to 0:48)

This time some 'stretching' has been done that does not appear in the score: bars 21 to 24 are repeated in the recording (0:40 to 0:44 on the Rhino CD), thereby adding a few seconds to the written score. Messala must have taken a trifle longer than expected to arrive at his headquarters...

10 His Father's Business (Version A)

11 His Father's Business (Version B)

8 (no recordings available)

no.	page	Title	Reg.no.	Reel/ part	Date	no. pp.	Dur.	Mm.
7	34	His Father's Business (version B)	1724-36 B	2-1	05-27	1	0:38	13

Strange that this cue should appear between the 'Fanfare' and the 'Prelude' in the written score (maybe some material was taken out and never replaced in its proper place? But how about the reel count then?); yet here it is, in two different versions. Its title would suggest that this music was meant to accompany the dialogue between Joseph and his customer ('I must be about my father's business'), to be ultimately replaced by 'Spirit and Sword'. The first eight bars of the two versions are identical: they contain a fugato statement of the Christ Theme counter-melody, starting in the celli, taken up by the violas and finally played by the violins. Version A (at 0:19) then brings in the organ in a pianissimo statement of the Christ Theme complete with its countermelody, but in version B — and this is interesting because it is not the only instance of parallel versions of the Christ Theme in the score — it does not appear in the familiar form of the parallel major triads, but rather in a form only fleetingly used in the 'Finale' (Rhino II 44, 2:07 — 2:11) *Ž* cf. ex. 5. This is the first of several examples that are evidence to the fact that at the time of composing Rózsa still did not seem to be sure which of the two versions of the Christ Theme he was going to use in the finished movie.

12 Salute for Messala

no.	page	Title	Reg.no.	Reel/ part	Date	no. pp.	Dur.	Mm.
124	475	Salute for Messala	1724-11	—	02-10	1	0:16	16

8 Aldebaran I 5 (0:48 — 0:57)

Conspicuously missing from both the Rhino⁵ and the MRSSS editions, this short fanfare is only recorded on the Aldebaran disc, marred by the fade on the first and last notes. The score tells us that originally this piece was intended to be twice as long, with a simpler version of nearly the same tune (first in unison, then in open 5th harmonization). What we hear in the film is the second half, starting in bar 8 (0:08), which is more richly orchestrated and therefore sounds more impressive.

'Salute for Messala' is the first example of the very early compositions made in Rome in the winter of 1958/59. They appear as a set at the end of the microfilmed document rather than in chronological order (for more information, see no. 23, 'Gratus' Entry to Jerusalem').

⁵ cf. Paul Packer's comment on the missing fanfare and J.Fitzpatrick's reply in PMS 55 (pp. 11-13).

Handwritten musical score for "The Rose Tree". The score is written on a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The tempo is marked "mod. spr." (moderato spiritoso). The instrumentation includes Organ & DB, Folk CL, Phx. (Phonograph), TBS. Organ, and B.S. + Tuba. The score is written on a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The vocal parts are marked with (Vas.) and the instrumental parts with (Kc.). The score is handwritten and includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Measures 1-13 are shown, with a repeat sign at measure 13. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The tempo is marked "mod. spr." (moderato spiritoso). The instrumentation includes Organ & DB, Folk CL, Phx. (Phonograph), TBS. Organ, and B.S. + Tuba.

no.	page	Title	Reg.no.	Reel/ part	Date	no. pp.	Dur.	Mm.
13	57	Friendship	1724-18	3-4	05-18	5	3:27	65

If the Rhino recording is the one used in the movie, the Decca re-recording is again more faithful to the original in two places that were crossed out in the score (bars 9, first half, and 20). See if you can spot them on the Decca CD (track 3, at 0:33–0:34 and at

1:17–1:20). Also, the Decca version makes the ostinato bass rhythm at the onset of the ‘Friendship’ theme shine through much more clearly than the Rhino. On the other hand Rózsa chose a distinctly slower tempo in 1977 and also decided to leave out the throwing of the second spear.

Unfortunately the score has no indication why Messala’s brooding theme appears during the first nine seconds; maybe his abrupt reaction to Sextus (‘with another idea’) was originally intended to be underscored by this music to tell the audience what kind of idea he has in mind. In my opinion the decision to cut Messala’s theme at this point was very sensible because this way the audience can still believe that Judah’s and Messala’s friendship will be able to bridge the gap between them.

Although the score does not indicate a seamless transition to the next piece, the Rhino recording smoothly goes from ‘Friendship’ into ‘Friendship (continued)’ without any audible trace of putting two pieces together (at 3:26–3:27). The MRSSS version ends at this point as written in the score. The music we hear in the movie is preserved on the Aldebaran track with Messala’s theme left out at the start, two cuts (the first one at 0:56 on the CD, i.e. 1:07 in the score, leaving out four bars or fourteen seconds; then a minor cut in the bar right before the second spear hits, leaving out the last note of that bar), and the same transition to ‘Friendship (continued)’ as in the Rhino version.

14 Friendship (continued)

no.	page	Title	Reg.no.	Reel/ part	Date	no. pp.	Dur.	Mm.
14	62	Friendship (continued)	1724-74	3-5	07-01	2	0:46	18

8 Rhino I 9 (from 3:26) • MRSSS 96 • Aldebaran I 6 (from 3:00)

Only the acetate-derived MRSSS tapes have the two distinct pieces suggested by the written score, and they are not even placed one after the other: ‘Friendship (continued)’ appears much later in that compilation; at least in the cassette recording the MRSSS once issued. Even if the smooth transition was not intended at the outset, the fact remains that ‘Friendship (continued)’ begins on exactly the same chord as the one that ends ‘Friendship’, thus making the inaudible transition possible.

15 The House of Hur

no.	page	Title	Reg.no.	Reel/ part	Date	no. pp.	Dur.	Mm.
15	64	The House of Hur	1724-22	4-1	05-18	4	1:37	40

8 Rhino I 10 • MRSSS 10 • Aldebaran I 7

This cue is missing bars 36 and 37 on the Rhino CD as well as on the MRS tape. The final movie version, however, has some more cuts, faithfully reproduced on the Aldebaran, but this time nearly inaudible. The first one occurs at 0:15, bar 5, one beat before the 'House of Hur' theme begins. Leaving out five bars, or roughly twenty-five seconds, the editor lets us hear the second phrase of the familiar oboe melody, but then makes another cut (at 0:23), leaving out bars 14 and 15. Due to the repetitiveness of the melody it is possible to make cuts and yet produce a more or less satisfying result, as the 'jumps' appear where both the deleted passage and the passage 'jumped to' begin on the same note or chord. These cuts explain the timing discrepancy between the Rhino and the MRSSS (1:41) and the Aldebaran (1:23).

16 Conflict

no.	page	Title	Reg.no.	Reel/ part	Date	no. pp.	Dur.	Mm.
16	68	Conflict	1724-19	5-1	05-14	3	1:37	32

8 Rhino I 11 • MRSSS 12 • Aldebaran I 8

Some more deletions occur in the written score of this piece, and the crossed-out bars consequently do not appear in any of the recordings. Again, they mainly contain repetitive material that can easily be left out (cf. ex. 6). But listen to the film version: this time the music editor has actually added, or rather copied and pasted, some material! In the Aldebaran version this happens at 1:15 (repeating two notes of the viola melody) and at 1:37 (thus giving us three instead of the intended two bass triplets at the very end of the piece). This second 'cut' is rather audible in my VHS version in the form of a 'volume pumping'.

17 Esther

no.	page	Title	Reg.no.	Reel/ part	Date	no. pp.	Dur.	Mm.
17	71	Esther	1724-20	5-2	05-15	6	2:31	66

8 Rhino I 12 • MRSSS 13 • Aldebaran I 9 (up to 2:27)

Quite a few bars have been omitted in all the recordings, but only two of them are marked as 'optional bars' (55 and 56). Actually, bars 26 through 33 (or nineteen seconds) are missing, but I cannot hear any cut. If you listen to the Rhino track you will notice the

oboe between 0:47 and 1:09, at which point the violins take over again. Originally a slightly altered repetition of this oboe passage had been intended to sound before the return to the main theme. But even though, according to the score, nineteen seconds were deleted before the actual recording, the overall duration of the recordings (with their slight differences) more or less corresponds to the time indication of the written material (2:31). This could mean that Rózsa wanted this music to be played more slowly than originally intended and that he therefore decided not to record this passage.

Another slight cut in the movie (and, consequently, on the Aldebaran track) occurs when bar 47 is (audibly!) left out. Compare 1:44 – 1:47 on the Rhino (which is the bar left out) with 1:44 on the Aldebaran, or listen to the movie (just before Judah says, 'Do you love this man?').

Example 6

The image shows a handwritten musical score for Example 6, consisting of two systems of staves. The notation is in 4/4 time and includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The score is heavily annotated with handwritten notes and numbers.

System 1 (Top):

- Staff 1: Annotations include "ENTER TRS" and "HNO-TRBS PAVED".
- Staff 2: Annotations include "MC. PLO" and "f".
- Staff 3: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 4: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 5: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 6: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 7: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 8: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 9: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 10: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 11: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 12: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 13: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 14: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 15: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 16: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 17: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 18: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 19: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 20: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 21: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 22: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 23: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 24: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 25: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 26: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 27: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 28: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 29: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 30: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 31: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 32: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 33: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 34: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 35: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 36: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 37: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 38: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 39: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 40: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 41: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 42: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 43: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 44: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 45: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 46: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 47: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 48: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 49: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 50: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 51: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 52: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 53: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 54: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 55: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 56: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 57: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 58: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 59: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 60: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 61: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 62: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 63: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 64: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 65: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 66: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 67: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 68: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 69: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 70: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 71: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 72: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 73: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 74: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 75: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 76: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 77: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 78: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 79: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 80: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 81: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 82: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 83: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 84: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 85: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 86: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 87: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 88: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 89: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 90: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 91: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 92: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 93: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 94: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 95: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 96: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 97: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 98: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 99: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 100: Annotations include "f" and "f10".

System 2 (Bottom):

- Staff 101: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 102: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 103: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 104: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 105: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 106: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 107: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 108: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 109: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 110: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 111: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 112: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 113: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 114: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 115: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 116: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 117: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 118: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 119: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 120: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 121: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 122: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 123: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 124: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 125: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 126: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 127: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 128: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 129: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 130: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 131: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 132: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 133: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 134: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 135: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 136: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 137: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 138: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 139: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 140: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 141: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 142: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 143: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 144: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 145: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 146: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 147: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 148: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 149: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 150: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 151: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 152: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 153: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 154: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 155: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 156: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 157: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 158: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 159: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 160: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 161: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 162: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 163: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 164: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 165: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 166: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 167: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 168: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 169: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 170: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 171: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 172: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 173: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 174: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 175: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 176: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 177: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 178: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 179: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 180: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 181: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 182: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 183: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 184: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 185: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 186: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 187: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 188: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 189: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 190: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 191: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 192: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 193: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 194: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 195: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 196: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 197: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 198: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 199: Annotations include "f" and "f10".
- Staff 200: Annotations include "f" and "f10".

A large 'X' is drawn over the right side of the score, crossing out the final measures of both systems. The score is numbered 1 through 7 in the bottom right corner.

It has often been remarked that Judah's last words in this scene ('... and a safe return to Antioch') have a dubbed-in sound and that you cannot actually see Charlton Heston saying this line because his face is out of frame. Obviously these words were added after shooting this take. In fact, originally this scene did not end here. The description of the next cue will explain this.

18 The Unknown Future

no.	page	Title	Reg.no.	Reel/ part	Date	no. pp.	Dur.	Mm.
18	77	The Unknown Future	1724-21	6-1	05-18	2	0:41	20

8 Rhino I 13 • MRSSS 11 • Aldebaran III 5

Never heard in the film, this little cue (with a duration of forty-one seconds only) is well preserved on the Rhino CD and also features (in much lesser, i.e., acetate quality) in the two other sources. I have placed it here because of its position on the Rhino. The so-called 'original film script' of BEN-HUR ('vault copy'), which I found at eBay and which is dated 11-11-59, does not shed any further light on this missing scene; in fact, it does not really shed any light on anything we didn't know yet, as it does not seem to be more than a typed copy of the final film version. Unfortunately the score itself does not have many comments as to the content of this scene, either; especially not at the onset of Messala's theme at 0:18. But eleven seconds later it says, 'Kisses her' – the moment when a slightly altered version of 'Friendship' can be heard. At 0:37 the score has, 'Simonides speaks'.

Luckily, however, the abovementioned 'vault copy' of the screenplay is not the only text source available. The more voluminous 'BEN-HUR screenplay by Karl S. Tunberg', which I chanced upon in early 2004, preserves a much earlier stage of the script. Among other things, it solves the mystery of the ending of the preceding scene: it had been intended to show Judah's toast to Esther (cf. the film still on the back cover of the Rhino booklet). This is clearly indicated on p. 36 of the Tunberg screenplay, dated 6-11-58:

TWO SHOT - ESTHER AND BEN HUR	86
He regards her intently as he awaits her answer. At last it comes.	
ESTHER (quietly) I will learn to love him.	
BEN HUR You have my permission to marry.	
He rises.	

WIDER ANGLE

87

Amrah enters carrying a tray with wine on it. Ben Hur takes a goblet and gives it to Esther. Simonides comes forward with Miriam and Tirzah. All take wine. Ben Hur raises his goblet to Esther.

BEN HUR (smiling)
To your happiness... to your love.

All drink. Ben Hur watches Esther, who meets his gaze.

CLOSE SHOT - MIRIAM

87X1

She looks from Ben Hur to Esther. She is aware of their attraction for each other.

DISSOLVE:

This version also explains 'The Unknown Future'. We find this scene, however, after Judah's and Esther's goodbye and after their kiss, so this cue originally belonged after the 'Love Theme'. Here is what would have happened after the kiss had taken place:

Simonides appears. He sees from the expression on Esther's face that she is disturbed.

BEN HUR (shows ring): Your daughter wears the slave ring no longer.

SIMONIDES: Thank you, Judah. Esther sees the world with the eyes of the young, but she is marrying a good man and she will learn to love him.

ESTHER (a whisper): Goodnight, master.

BEN HUR: You have no master now, remember.

ESTHER (pauses, smiles): Goodnight, Judah. (she kisses her father)
Goodnight, father. (she goes)

Simonides looks after her fondly, then turns back to Ben Hur. His face becomes grave.

SIMONIDES: Judah, I'm greatly concerned for you and your family. Messala is no longer your friend. The new governor is a tyrant and a butcher. Come with us to Antioch.

BEN HUR: I value your counsel, Simonides.

SIMONIDES: Then follow it.

BEN HUR (after a pause): I don't know what the future will bring. But this is the house of my fathers. This is where I belong.

There is silence.

SIMONIDES (presently): Then God be with you, Judah.

BEN HUR: Goodnight, old friend.

Simonides goes. Ben Hur stands there, looking over the city. Then he looks at the ring.

DISSOLVE TO Joppa Gate

(Tunberg script, page 39, 6-11-58 —retyped for reasons of layout)

Even if this version of the scene does not exactly follow the order of events marked in the score, we can at least catch a rare glimpse at what Rózsa's music had been intended to accompany. At least the title of this cue is easily recognizable in Judah's line, 'I don't know what the future will bring'. One can also imagine Messala's theme to underline Simonides' warnings. Maybe the old steward was to have said this before Esther's leave in yet another version of this scene—probably the one Rózsa knew and wrote this music for.

19 Love Theme

no.	page	Title	Reg.no.	Reel/ part	Date	no. pp.	Dur.	Mm.
132	512	Love Theme	1724-6	—	02-09	2	—	36

8 (no recordings available)

The first version of the 'Love Theme' was written as early as 9 February 1959. It is arranged only for alto flute and harp (the same way as the beginning of the new version). There are no timings or references to the action, so this might well have been Rózsa's first idea of this piece, written at a time when there was as yet no finished film material available. It appears nearly at the end of the microfilm (for more information, see no. 23 'Gratus' Entry to Jerusalem').

20 Love Theme (new)

no.	page	Title	Reg.no.	Reel/ part	Date	no. pp.	Dur.	Mm.
19	79	Love Theme (new)	1724-88	6-2	07-28	4	2:07	47

8 Rhino I 14 • MRSSS 14 • Aldebaran I 9 (from 2:27 up to 4:25)

The bootleg starts on the third note of the melody, whereas in the movie you can hear the alto flute play the first two notes very distinctly.

Again, minor cuts were made by the music editor to fit the music to the action. The microfilm score indicates 'Dialogue starts' some 35 seconds into the piece, but in the finished film Judah talks a full ten seconds earlier than that. The two cuts both concern 'echo bars', i.e., the typical Rózsa trademark of repeating a motif contrapuntally.

The first cut leaves out bars 13 and 14 (i.e., 0:31 — 0:37) on the Rhino. If you listen very carefully to the Aldebaran recording (which is the movie version), you may notice that the editor cut on "4" in bar 12 and resumed on "4" in bar 14 (2:56). This is the moment when Esther says, 'I was saying goodbye to this city', but it is virtually inaudible in the movie.

Later on Esther says, 'It was a house where I was always happy.' At this point (Aldebaran Ž 3:18) the second cut appears, again hardly audible under the dialogue, but very distinct on the pirated disc, where the blunder of deleting bar 23 becomes obvious when you hear an unmotivated low F in the basses that moves to a G, the note one would have expected to hear (the dominant rather than the subdominant). If you cannot hear it, try to record the Rhino track and leave out 0:59 — 1:01.

The last bar is marked 'overlap', and that is precisely what happens in the movie (and, faithfully, on the Aldebaran) but not at the end of Rhino's track 14. Both the Rhino and the Syracuse acetate versions are intact without any cuts or overlaps. We will find this 'overlap' technique very often in BEN-HUR, where long musical sequences were divided into manageable sections with these 'overlap' links provided by the composer, to be recorded separately and blended together in the editing process later on.

21 Ring for Freedom

no.	page	Title	Reg.no.	Reel/ part	Date	no. pp.	Dur.	Mm.
20	83	Ring for Freedom	1724-23	6-3	05-19	4	2:37	60

8 Rhino I 15 • MRSSS 15 • Aldebaran I 9 (from 4:25)

Example 7

LOEW'S INCORPORATED
1724-23

Handwritten musical score for Example 7, showing two systems of music. The first system contains measures 29, 30, 31, and 32. The second system contains measures 33, 34, 35, and 36. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings (mf, f). Time stamps are handwritten in circles: 1:11, 1:16, 1:21, 1:26, and 1:28 1/2. A tempo change is indicated at the bottom of the second system as 1:33 1/4. The score is marked with 'VLM1', 'VLE', and 'VLC' in the first system, and 'VLC' in the second system. There are also some handwritten annotations like 'dispr.' and 'mf'.

Apart from the inevitable cuts by the music editor that seem to have been made to fit the length of the filmed scene (bars 11, 53, and 54 were recorded but later cut out; cf. *Aldebaran* 4:49 and 6:37), there is one instance of a bar that was composed but that does not feature in any of the recordings, without any audible skip. I refer to bar 31 (at 1:17 on the Rhino CD), which is contained in the score but not in the recording (cf. ex. 7). It must originally have been intended to be modeled on bar 29 (which is more or less identical to 31) but must have been deleted before recording, so that bars 30 and 32 showed an identical structure to bars 34 and 35. However, the written material suggests no intentional deletion (cf. the run-on bass line in bars 30 and 31).

While during the first two minutes or so of the Rhino recording the timing exactly corresponds to the indications given in the score, there is a marked slowing down to be heard in the recording, which may account for the need to cut bars 53 and 54 (which corresponds to 2:14 – 2:20 on the Rhino CD, i.e., a full six seconds) in order to finish on time.

Interestingly, the violin soloist on the soundtrack misreads (?) the rhythm of the little turn in the melody, which in the score is written as a dotted half note followed by four sixteenths, but the MGM concertmaster plays it like a half note followed by four eighths. And he does it not once but three times (mm. 4, 6 and 10). Again, it could have been a last-minute change, or simply not noticed, or deemed unworthy of a costly retake.

Original (score)

As played on the soundtrack

The image displays two musical staves for the piece 'Salute for Gratus'. The top staff, labeled 'Original (score)', shows a melody starting with a dotted half note followed by four sixteenth notes. The bottom staff, labeled 'As played on the soundtrack', shows the same melody but with a different rhythmic interpretation for the first group of notes, which are played as a half note followed by four eighths. This discrepancy is noted in the text as a misreading by the violin soloist.

22 Salute for Gratus

no.	page	Title	Reg.no.	Reel/ part	Date	no. pp.	Dur.	Mm.
125	476	Salute for Gratus	1724-10	—	02-10	1	0:12	6

8 Rhino I 16 (from 0:20) • Aldebaran I 10 (0:19 up to 0:31)

The impressive drum strokes you hear (and see!) in the film have not been written down, nor has the short trumpet fanfare at the end of it. The microfilm score only has the full-blast brass bit that starts at 0:20 on the Rhino. Why the latter should call this track an 'extended version', is a mystery to me: all the notes on paper are in the film, too, and it also lasts the twelve seconds it is supposed to. I didn't count the drumbeats, however.

23 Gratus' Entry to Jerusalem

no.	page	Title	Reg.no.	Reel/ part	Date	no. pp.	Dur.	Mm.
130	493	Gratus' Entry to Jerusalem	1724-4	—	02-06	10	—	92

8 Rhino I 17 • MRSSS 16 • Aldebaran I 10 (from 0:31 through 2:25) and III 7 • Sony I 11

This is another of the very early tracks composed for BEN-HUR. In his memoirs Miklós Rózsa relates how he went to Rome shortly before Christmas 1958: "I suggested that I write the marches there and record them there with a large wind band" [Double Life, p. 176]. Which is exactly what he did. This is confirmed in the Producer's Notes of the

Rhino booklet [pp. 26-27], where we also find a remark on the somewhat poorer recording quality of the pieces done in Rome (three tracks as opposed to seven). The music was put to paper in its final form on 6 February 1959 and must have been recorded not long after that date, although the exact date does not seem to be available. Rózsa himself notes that “early in 1959 everyone went back to Hollywood” [Double Life, p. 177].

Not only can the recording date(s) of these ‘early pieces’ (which include the preceding one) not be determined, but the written music also lacks some other features that exist in all the other pieces. The score bears no indication of the reel or its part, but only the mention of a scene number (in this case, ‘scene 93’). Also, there are no timings. This might show that Rózsa wrote this music at a time when he did not yet have access to the filmed material and thus could not work with his stop-watch. Which could also account for the fact that this piece is markedly longer in the written score than in the recording, let alone the film. On the other hand, there are comments like ‘band seen’ in bar 14, ‘C.U. [close-up] band’ in 22, ‘Tirza [sic] speaks’ in 44 and ‘dialogue ends’ in 74, which seem to support the assumption that the composer must at least have had some distinct information about this scene.

The Tunberg screenplay shows that more dialogue between Ben-Hur and his sister had indeed been intended while they were watching the soldiers marching along, e.g.,

TIRZAH (after a moment): There must be thousands of soldiers! It must have been difficult for Esther and Simonides to get through the streets.

BEN HUR: They left in good time – by the Damascus gate.

(Tunberg script, page 42, 6-28-58)

Many cuts were made before the music was recorded. Two different recorded versions exist: one (with a duration of 1:56) was preserved on the Syracuse acetates and is heard in the MRSSS version and on the third Aldebaran disc. The other version (of virtually equal length) is contained on the Rhino CD and on the first Aldebaran and is the one featured in the film. Both takes do not seem to have been cut after recording.

The first version is much more faithful to the sheet music. After leaving out bars 2 and 3 the musicians faithfully play every note up to bar 45, skipping the next forty-one (!) bars and resuming with bar 87, playing the last measures up to bar 92. This means that about half the music was deleted, and that the scene had probably been intended to last twice as long (there are no changes of tempo throughout this piece). The deleted passage does not contain any new material; it rather consists of many repetitions and variations of the main motifs and rhythms. The final version (i.e., the one heard in the film) has many more small cuts (bars 18-19, 22-23, 27-30, 46-47, 50-69, 72-73, 81-92 were deleted) as the music (and the Roman army) marches along; it conveys a more condensed impression,

musically speaking. The rhythmical repetitions of the high E in the trumpets coincide very well with the appearance of Gratus under Judah's and his sister's eyes. Of the ninety-two bars, forty-six have been deleted in all, thus reducing this piece to exactly one half of its original length. Of course we know that the last few bars of the recording have been edited out in the soundtrack to make way for the noise of the confusion in the street after the tile has fallen.

The only recording that comes very close to the original composition can be found on the Sony two-disc reissue of the old MGM 'soundtrack' records vols. 1 and 2 (CD 1, track 11, as played by the Frankenland State Orchestra under 'Erich Kloss'). Apart from the addition of string instruments and the deletion of the last four chords (which are in themselves nothing but a repetition of the preceding four chords that terminate the Kloss recording) this is Rózsa's original version.

24 Arrest

no.	page	Title	Reg.no.	Reel/ part	Date	no. pp.	Dur.	Mm.
21	87	Arrest	1724-55	7-1A	06-08	4	1:17	38

8 Rhino I 18 ('The Arrest') • MRSSS 17

Allegro strepitoso — noisy allegro — is what the beginning of this piece has been head-lined. It was not used in the final cut, but there are some interesting hints in the written score as to where it was intended to be used. At 0:04 there is a series of four even brass strokes (*molto pesante* — very heavy) and the comment above this bar reads, 'Pound spears'. This matches the scene of the Roman soldiers pounding their spears against Ben-Hur's house from the outside. 0:19 says, "Judah, what is it?" and this obviously starts the dialogue between Judah, Tirzah and their mother. The music changes to a menacing low brass theme. There is another dialogue excerpt at 0:26 containing Tirzah's words "I was just watching". The *pesante* brass pounding (with a swift chromatic trumpet motif on top) is renewed at 0:38, when it says, 'Servants lift bars' (cf. ex. 8). The next bit of dialogue reads, "We saw it" (1:00) — said by one of the soldiers arresting Judah. Drusus' line, "Take him" appears at 1:09, where the accented chord is heard, and the piece ends abruptly as we hear a soldier call, "Attention!" (1:17).

I have tried out playing this recording simultaneously with the DVD, and the music is more or less perfectly matched to the picture as indicated in the written score. At the beginning I find it works very well, but as soon as the dialogue between Judah and the soldiers starts you begin to understand why this piece was deleted: it's too *strepitoso* — just a bit too noisy. And the abrupt appearance of Messala that would have been marked by an

Example 8

[19] "JUDAH, WHAT IS IT?"

W.W. TPTS.
f VNS. div. (16)
mf + s. dr. p (sempre)
Vc. Ban. Tuba
C. br. B. + 8 va. bassa

[26] "I WAS JUST WATCHING" **[29]**

Tpta. p (19)
(s.o.)
sempre cresc.
mf + 8va (Bns. off)

[38] SERVANTS LIFT BARS

(VNS.)
Tpta. p (22)
Tpta. p (23)
Tpta. p (24)
PESANTE (col F. Dr. + Timp.)
Tuba
low str. W.W.

[46]

f Vnc. 2 Tpt. 2 Cl. 2
Vnc. 1 Tpt. 1 Cl. 1
sempre col Perc.

abrupt stop of the music is still very effectively underlined by the fact that all the noise stops at that precise moment.

Just for the record: four bars altogether (1–3 and 8) have been marked as deleted (with thick crossed lines, neatly drawn with a ruler) and are consequently not heard in the recording.

25 Revenge

no.	page	Title	Reg.no.	Reel/ part	Date	no. pp.	Dur.	Mm.
22	91	Revenge	1724-24	7-2	05-20	2	1:19	23

8 Rhino I 20 • MRSSS 19 • Aldebaran III 9 (up to 1:17)

One recording that certainly does not induce anyone to buy the pirated 3-CD edition: it has very poor sound. The Rhino CD has it crystal clear, as usual, whereas the MRS tape contains a high level of hiss. Interestingly, the three recordings all differ slightly in length but not in musical content, which must be a sign of tampering with tape speeds. The microfilm score indicates a duration of 1:19.

This cue is not heard in the finished movie. It was originally intended to be heard after Judah's arrest. The script excerpts clearly refer to Messala: 0:17 has 'Starts to walk'; then 'Stops' at 0:45 and finally 'Grabs tile' at 1:00. Although the music is much shorter than its ultimate replacement, 'Reminiscences' (cf. no. 26), it is too long to fit the final cut if you synchronize it with 'Starts to walk': in that case Messala 'stops' and 'grabs tile' too early, and the music would continue well into the next scene (in the prison). The original footage must have been longer.

It is interesting to note, however, that the original Tunberg screenplay does not contain this scene with Messala on the rooftop:

CLOSE SHOT — MESSALA

He is alone now in the courtyard. He is thoughtful for a moment.
Then he goes.

DISSOLVE

(Tunberg script, page 47, 6-30-58)

In an interview Rózsa once described how during the shooting William Wyler asked him if he was able to express musically what was going on in Messala's mind, and after the composer's affirmative answer this scene was added to the script. After that episode the studio forbade Rózsa ever to visit the set again, as this might have blown the budget.

26 Reminiscences

no.	page	Title	Reg.no.	Reel/ part	Date	no. pp.	Dur.	Mm.
23	93	Reminiscences	1724-84	7-2	07-27	2	1:44	23

8 Rhino I 19 • MRSSS 18 • Aldebaran I 11

This is the piece that ultimately replaced its predecessor in the score, 'Revenge' (cf. no. 25). It was transcribed on 27 July 1959, two months after the latter. Interestingly enough, both pieces were recorded on the same day (5 August), if the Rhino booklet has it right. That could mean that at least on the day of the recording it was not yet decided which filmed material was to be used or not.

On the Aldebaran pressing the cuts that were made for the final release (so even this one proved to be too long) are relatively easy to detect. They shorten the music by nearly half a minute. Both the Rhino and the MRSSS tracks contain the full original recording.

* * * * *

In the following installment we will take a look at the music which Rózsa composed for the prison scenes but which were not used in the final print of the film. Again the Tunberg screenplay will help us to get a better understanding of cues entitled 'Behind Grills' and 'Silent Farewell' — music that was probably never actually recorded. There will be a detailed description of the alternative versions of the music for Judah's meeting with Jesus ('The Prince of Peace'), accounting for the anti-climactic ending of part one of 'The Prince of Peace'. You will also learn why Rhino calls its track no. 33 'The Galley (Rowing of the Galley Slaves) Parts 1-4'. But I'm afraid the most mysterious piece contained in the microfilm score must wait a little longer...

Copyright © 2005, 2006 The Miklos Rozsa Society.

Reproduced from *Pro Musica Sana*, series 2, vol. 5, no. 1 (Spring 2005) [PMS 61]. Not to be reproduced without permission