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Abstract

For a century and a half composers have been inspired by the classic works of composers from the Baroque and Classical periods. Composers who returned to the sounds and structures of the classics and used them as a model were called neoclassicists and created a new genre of music often identified as neoclassicism. It is commonly understood that the composer Igor Stravinsky and his contemporaries created this genre of music in the 1920s. However, Stravinsky would not have been able to promote this genre of music without the initial efforts of pioneer composers. In fact, composers were experimenting with neoclassicism even in the late 1800s and through the 1910s. Some of these composers include Edvard Grieg, Maurice Ravel, and Jean Sibelius. The neoclassicism genre spans a wider time frame than usually understood, and would not have become a genre in the 1920s without these pioneer composers.

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Jack Sheinbaum, Ph.D.

Second Advisor

Chee-Hwa Tan

Third Advisor

Kristin Taavola

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Master of Music

by

Breanna Corah

June 2016

Advisor: Dr. Jack Sheinbaum

Author: Breanna Corah
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For a century and a half composers have been inspired by the classic works of composers from the Baroque and Classical periods. Composers who returned to the sounds and structures of the classics and used them as a model were called neoclassicists and created a new genre of music often identified as neoclassicism. It is commonly understood that the composer Igor Stravinsky and his contemporaries created this genre of music in the 1920s. However, Stravinsky would not have been able to promote this genre of music without the initial efforts of pioneer composers. In fact, composers were experimenting with neoclassicism even in the late 1800s and through the 1910s. Some of these composers include Edvard Grieg, Maurice Ravel, and Jean Sibelius. The neoclassicism genre spans a wider time frame than usually understood, and would not have become a genre in the 1920s without these pioneer composers.

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Neoclassical Pioneers: Neoclassicism Before Stravinsky

For a century and a half composers have been inspired by the classic works of composers like Johann Sebastian Bach, Domenico Scarlatti, and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. These composers influenced every composer around them and every composer to come after them. Composers to come decades and centuries later would ultimately return back to the sounds that were being produced at that time. This resulted in a new genre: neoclassicism. Those who composed neoclassical music liked the forms, rhythms, harmonies, and the ornamentations that were characteristic of the Baroque and the Classical periods and often described them as sounding ‘pure.’ Composers began experimenting with neoclassicism as early as the Romantic period (with Grieg’s *Holberg Suite* op. 40) and are still experimenting with it today. This thesis will begin with a definition of neoclassicism and then discuss the Baroque and Classical periods while focusing on Scarlatti’s Sonata in d minor K. 9 (1739) and Mozart’s Fantasy in d minor K. 397 (1782). These works are representative pieces from these periods and feature stylistic characteristics of the time. Finally I will compare how different composers experimented with neoclassicism and discuss Edvard Grieg’s *Holberg Suite* op. 40 (1884), and Maurice Ravel’s *Le Tombeau de Couperin* (1918), which were both examples of neoclassical Baroque dance suites, and Jean Sibelius’s Piano Sonatina No. 1 in f-sharp minor op. 67 (1912), which is an example of ‘Modern classicism.’ The genre of neoclassicism can be seen to span a much wider time frame than usually understood, and without these pioneer

composers' experimentations, neoclassical music would not have become a true genre in the 1920s. Additionally, by understanding how the neoclassicists used the music of the past in their compositions, teachers and performers are able execute stylistically correct performances.

Neoclassicism Definition

Neoclassical music is a complicated style that can be difficult to define. In its simplest form neoclassical music can be defined as “the borrowing of conventions and devices characteristic of what is generally agreed to be ‘Classical’ style.”¹ Martha M. Hyde defines “classic” as “a past work that remains or becomes relevant and available as a model, or can be made so through various techniques of accommodation.”² The name ‘neoclassical’ in itself is misleading because composers do not just reference composers from the Classical style, but also from the Baroque style. Arnold Whittall states that “‘neo-classical’ is notably imprecise and has never been understood to refer solely to a revival of the techniques and forms of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven. Insofar as the movement had a slogan, it was ‘back to Bach.’”³ The Baroque period was especially influential. James R. Tobin states that “in the eighteenth century, the Baroque was thoroughly routed by the simpler melodic style that eventually became classicism, but even Beethoven revered the music of Handel and took on the challenge of writing

¹Martha M. Hyde, “Neoclassic and Anachronistic Impulses in Twentieth-Century Music,” *Music Theory Spectrum* 18, no. 2 (Autumn, 1996): 201.

² Ibid.

³Arnold Whittall, “Neoclassicism,” *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed., vol. 17 (New York: Grove Dictionaries Inc., 2001), 754.

fugues.”⁴ Even Classical composers were inspired and turned to the music of the Baroque. Late nineteenth and twentieth century composers were inspired and influenced by composers all the way from the Classical to the Baroque, so “one can distinguish neo-baroque style from classical style, but the neoclassical movement cannot adequately be described without reference to both.”⁵

Composers decided to revive the music of the Baroque and Classical periods as a way to reject the music “of romanticism, impressionism, post-World War I expressionism, and serialism.”⁶ Many did not like the extravagant and overtly expressive sounds of these periods, and, as a result, turned to what neoclassicists described as clear and ‘pure’ sounds of the classics. The term ‘pure’ is often a misunderstanding of neoclassicists like Stravinsky. Stravinsky believed traditional music to be free of emotion, and claimed the music to “expunge the interpreter, a music that pretended to be dry, mechanical and objective.”⁷ Joseph N. Straus states that “Neoclassical music is seen as relatively simple, static, and objective—as having revived the classical ideals of balance and proportion.”⁸ In reality, ‘pure’ can more accurately be described as balanced, controlled, with a sense of restraint, and a more careful use of dissonance. Traditional music is in no way simple and free of emotion. However, the evolution of the piano may

⁴ James R. Tobin, *Neoclassical Music in America: Voices of Clarity and Restraint* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield, 2014), 16.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 20.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁷ Stephan Walsh, “Igor Stravinsky,” *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed., vol. 24 (New York: Grove Dictionaries Inc., 2001), 541.

⁸ Joseph N. Straus, *Remaking the Past: Musical Modernism and the Influence of the Tonal Tradition* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990), 2.

have contributed to Stravinsky's misunderstanding. During the Baroque period the harpsichord was the main keyboard instrument of the time. This plucked instrument had a more articulated sound that did not project, and the lack of pedals may have attributed to what Stravinsky described as a dry sound. The pedals and sustaining quality of the pianoforte in the Romantic period was the main feature that lead to a warmer and more expressive singing sound. Pure can refer to the unpolluted and clean sounds before the pedal. These factors can explain why Stravinsky and his contemporaries misunderstood the sounds and structures of traditional music. Pedagogically speaking, it is also important to know which instrument composers created their pieces on. This helps performers use the stylistically correct touch, articulation, and use of pedal.

While composers turned to the traditional sounds and structures of the classics, the 'neo' portion of neoclassicism refers to a new take on these classics. Instead of just imitating past composers, neoclassical composers are confronted "with a specific and urgent challenge: to create a modern work of art that reconstructed the past without sacrificing its own integrity in the chronology of styles."⁹ Neoclassical is paradoxical in that composers need to reference the past, while also doing something new and modern, which is a complex and difficult task.

Even though composers were experimenting with neoclassicism as early as the late Romantic period, the term neoclassical was not a genre until the 1920s. Whittall states that "the term was first applied to Stravinsky in 1923 and has special relevance to his music from *Pulcinella* (1919–20) to *The Rake's Progress* (1947–51)."¹⁰ Stravinsky

⁹ Hyde, "Neoclassic," 206.

¹⁰ Whittall, "Neoclassicism," 754.

promoted the concept and made neoclassical a real genre. Straus states that Stravinsky's relationship to tradition music had two principal components: "First, he frequently incorporated specific forms or structures or entire pieces from the past within his own compositions. Secondly, he radically revised those earlier elements, reshaping them in his own image."¹¹ He successfully takes on the task of referencing the past, while adding a modern element in his own voice. Stravinsky also influenced his contemporaries. Tobin states that "Igor Stravinsky, in his middle period, and to a lesser extent Paul Hindemith . . . are the most prominent of those generally credited with the origins and success of that movement, beginning in Europe in the early 1920s."¹² However, Stravinsky was not the first to experiment with neoclassical styles. Grieg was one of the first to compose in the neoclassical style when he wrote his *Holberg Suite* op. 40 in 1884. Ravel and Sibelius were also contemporaries of Stravinsky, but published neoclassical works before Stravinsky's *Pulcinella*. Ravel's *Le Tombeau de Couperin* was published in 1918 and Sibelius's Piano Sonatinas Op. 67 were published in 1912. These composers were not the only ones creating neoclassical works before Stravinsky, but these composers and their pieces are good representations of neoclassicism in their respective musical era. Also, in Ravel and Sibelius's cases, these were not the only neoclassical works they created, but these works can be described as the peak of their efforts in neoclassicism.

While neoclassical composers used compositional techniques that were first employed during the Baroque and Classical periods, they used their own modern twist. Generally "essential qualities of twentieth-century neoclassical music include clarity and

¹¹ Straus, *Remaking the Past*, 6.

¹² Tobin, *Neoclassical Music*, 13.

balanced structure, as well as formal and emotional restraint.”¹³ Tobin states that “stylistically, neoclassical music is typically characterized by strongly marked and often syncopated rhythms. Neoclassical melody may be lyrical, but not rhapsodic. Instrumental textures are clear, sometimes spare, and often transparent.” Tobin also discusses neoclassicists’ use of form: “Neoclassical composers are known for their concern with formal structure and, in common with other modern traditionalists, tended to use forms developed in the eighteenth century, such as symphony, sonata, and concerto.” Also “They sometimes employed classic sonata-allegro form, with its development of clearly stated themes, strictly or with modifications—but not always.”¹⁴ Many composers also liked to recreate the Baroque dance forms and create their own version of a Baroque suite.

Tonally “a neo-classicist is more likely to employ some kind of extended tonality, modality or even atonality than to reproduce the hierarchically structured tonal system of true (Viennese) Classicism.”¹⁵ Tobin also states that “only some neoclassical works display traditional key signatures, but they typically make at least modified use of the diatonic scale, with some untraditional chords.”¹⁶

The purpose of the neoclassical style was to reject the overly expressionist sounds of the Romantic and Modern periods. Neoclassical pieces are “meant to be regarded objectively and appreciated as organized sound, rather than as a strong expression of

¹³Tobin, *Neoclassical Music*, 20.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 19.

¹⁵ Whittall, “Neoclassicism,” 753.

¹⁶ Tobin, *Neoclassical Music*, 19.

human emotion.”¹⁷ However, this does not mean that all neoclassical works are dull nor are they devoid of all emotion and expression. Composers are challenged to instead refine and control expressiveness. Tobin says “that restrained expression of feeling—even exuberance—is possible and that much neoclassical music is beautiful and even exciting.”¹⁸

Baroque influence

Neoclassical composers were inspired by the Baroque period and frequently employed the stylistic characteristics they used. Influential Baroque composers include Monteverdi, Lully, Handel, Bach, Rameau, and Alessandro and Domenico Scarlatti. French neoclassical composers specifically looked back to Baroque French composers like Lully, Carpentier, and Couperin.

Dance music was a significant genre in France in the 1600s especially because dance was used in the royal court. David Schulenberg states that “in the course of the seventeenth century, the pavane, galliard, and allemande—the chief French court dances of the late sixteenth century—gave way to the courante, sarabande, minuet, gigue, and other dances, each with its corresponding type of music.”¹⁹ Grieg and Ravel use sarabande, minuet, and the rigaudon, which is like a gigue in their neoclassical Baroque suites.

¹⁷ Tobin, *Neoclassical Music*, 20.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ David Schulenberg, *Music of the Baroque*, 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 93.

Baroque music reflected the extravagant and ornamented design of the architecture, art, and fashion of the time. This resulted in music that was very contrapuntal with many different moving lines, as well as ornamentation which added detail and decorated the music. Ornamentation became one of the most characteristic elements of the Baroque period. Schulenberg defines ornaments as “small figures, such as trills, that decorate single notes rather than whole phrases.”²⁰ He also says that the “French tradition of ornamentation is most familiar today from keyboard music, since Bach and other eighteenth-century composers outside France adopted many of the French ornament signs in their own keyboard music.”²¹

Some of the other characteristics of French Baroque music are tempos that are largely determined by the dance music itself, and rhythms that include overdotting (“equivalent to a double-dotted quarter note followed by a sixteenth”), which can actually be found in Mozart’s Fantasy in d minor K. 397 (see figure 1). The rhythms also included notes inégales (unequal notes) which “led to the lengthening of the first note in certain pairs of small note values.”²²



Figure 1: Example of overdotting,
Mozart Fantasy in d minor K. 397 m. 12

²⁰ Schulenberg, *Music of the Baroque*, 97.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 98.

²² *Ibid.*, 95-6.

Composers were also inspired by French opera and the recitative and air which is usually a song in an unmeasured rhythm. Grieg was inspired by this genre when he composed an air movement in his *Holberg Suite* op. 40.

Keyboard neoclassicists were particularly inspired by Baroque keyboard composers and the keyboard genres they used. Some of the greatest keyboard composers were J. S. Bach, Domenico Scarlatti, George Frideric Handel, and François Couperin. Keyboard music evolved as the instrument evolved. Some of the Baroque keyboard genres they used include the fantasia, ricercar, canzona, capriccio, toccata, partitas, fugue and the prelude.²³ Ravel used the prelude, fugue, and toccata genres in his *Le Tombeau de Couperin*. The toccata can be defined as “an improvisatory work for organ or stringed keyboard instrument that may include not only virtuoso figuration but also contrasting passages consisting of imitative counterpoint or sustained, frequently dissonant, chords.”²⁴ The prelude (originally called the unmeasured prelude) is similar in that it is also improvisatory in style with free rhythm and “written largely in whole notes and without barlines,” where the performer determines the note’s values.²⁵ The fugue is a complex style that has different variations but usually consists of a set number of voices or parts that “rarely cross, and the number of voices remains constant throughout the movement” and consists of a subject, exposition, tonal answer, and sometimes a countersubject.²⁶

²³Schulenberg, *Music of the Baroque*, 217.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 224.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 240-42.

Domenico Scarlatti (1685-1757) was a major contributor to Baroque keyboard music. He came from a musical family as his father, Alessandro Scarlatti, was a great opera composer. Born in Naples, Scarlatti followed in his father's footsteps and developed a career in music. While Scarlatti was a contemporary of the other great keyboardists and composers like J.S. Bach and Couperin, he is largely forgotten behind their shadows. However, in 1707 Scarlatti played in a harpsichord and organ competition with Handel where he reportedly won on the harpsichord while Handel came first on the organ.²⁷

Scarlatti is best known though for his 550 sonatas. Thirty of these sonatas, *Essercizi per gravicembalo* (Exercises for the Harpsichord), were published in 1739 in London. In this period of his life, Scarlatti was working as *maestro di cappella* to the Portuguese ambassador in Rome and as a teacher to the Princess Maria Barbara. In 1729, the Princess married the son of Felipe V, the King of Spain, and Scarlatti moved to work for his new patron.²⁸ Because Scarlatti dedicated these compositions to the Portuguese king, it probably suggests that he composed them between 1714 and 1729. After these pieces were published, musicians and the general public became very enthusiastic about Scarlatti and his compositions.

Schulenberg states that "these one-movement sonatas probably grew out of a seventeenth-century tradition of improvisatory toccata-like pieces, in which Domenico's

²⁷ Schulenberg, *Music of the Baroque*, 257.

²⁸ Carlo Grante, "Scarlatti," *HH Promotions London Ltd*, 2009, accessed April 1, 2016, <http://hhpromotions.com/project-programmes/scarlatti/>.

father, Alessandro, evidently excelled.”²⁹ Many of these sonatas employ hand crossings and other technical tricks, while others “seem to have come from visual and aural images, including the sounds of trumpets, mandolins, and guitars.”³⁰ Schulenberg also says that “these works also show ingenious harmonic progressions and motivic development, as well as striking effects idiomatic to the eighteenth-century Italian harpsichord. Almost every sonata is in binary form.”³¹

Scarlatti’s sonatas became the precursor to the Classical sonata allegro form. Scarlatti sonatas are usually in binary form, and often rounded binary form. In minor keys, the sonata can harmonically move from the minor tonic to the relative major key at the end of the A section. During the beginning of the B section the piece can move to the dominant seven, but will eventually end on the tonic. Classical sonata allegro form is more structured and contains an exposition, which typically repeats, followed by a development and recapitulation section, which also usually repeats and creates the effect of a big rounded binary form. Like Scarlatti sonatas, thematic material is presented in the beginning, usually a theme one, transition, and then a theme two. Harmonic movement is also similar in that in minor keys the composer will start in the tonic and then modulate to end in the relative major key. The development is usually unstable with modulations and developing the thematic material, but returns to tonic during the recapitulation.

Scarlatti’s compositions are still regularly played today and regarded in high esteem. It is not surprising that he and his Baroque contemporaries served as inspiration

²⁹ Schulenberg, *Music of the Baroque*, 257.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

for the neoclassicist. Sutcliffe states that “it is no accident that Scarlatti also acted as a catalyst for neo-Classicism. Other modernist attributions do not just invoke the spirit of the music; they suggest that its very materials and technique are comparable to those of the twentieth century.”³²

In 1739 Scarlatti published his sonata in d minor K. 9. While teaching the Princess Maria Barbara, Scarlatti composed many pieces for her to play, and this piece was most likely among them. The one-movement work is in his traditional binary form. Scarlatti uses the traditional ornamentation of the time, but not as heavily as his contemporaries. This work is interesting in that Scarlatti employs different characters throughout his piece. The first character appears from the very beginning (see figure 2). The minor key makes the theme sound sensitive, introspective, and almost cautious as the theme is gently ascending and then descending again moving to the c-sharp in measure four. While there are no phrase markings to imply the performer to play legato, Baroque performance practice implies that the small intervals are normally played legato or connected which adds to the character.³³ Because Scarlatti wrote his sonatas for the harpsichord, it is important for teachers and performers to know these performance practices to create a more stylistically accurate performance.

³² W. Dean Sutcliffe, *The Keyboard Sonatas of Domenico Scarlatti and Eighteenth-Century Music Style* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 53.

³³ Jeanine M. Jacobson, *Professional Piano Teaching: A Comprehensive Piano Pedagogy Textbook*, vol. 2 (Los Angeles: Alfred Music, 2015), 235.



Figure 2: Scarlatti Sonata
in d minor K. 9 mm. 1-4

Following this sensitive legato theme, appears a very crisp and articulated descending motive (see figure 3). Because these intervals are large (a sixth apart), performance practice implies that these are played detached. Another character is the fanfare motive that seems to imitate the trumpet (see figure 4). Trumpet fanfares usually consist of playing the first, third, and fifth scale degree of a key, which is what is occurring in this character. This creates a triumphant sound, like one played by trumpets after a hunt or to introduce royalty. This fanfare motive ends the A section in the relative major key: F major.



Figure 3: Scarlatti Sonata
in d minor K. 9 mm. 5-7

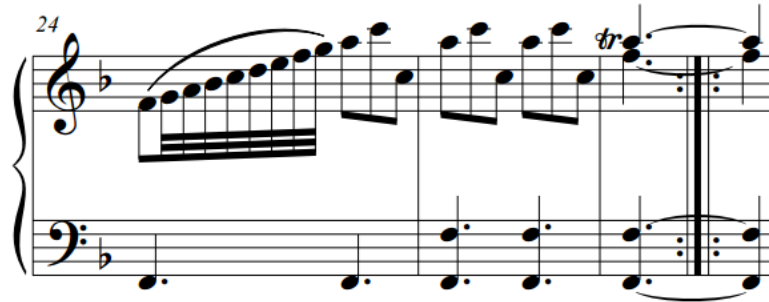


Figure 4: Scarlatti Sonata
in d minor K. 9 mm. 24-26

This sensitive legato theme appears again at the beginning of the B section, but this time is more chromatic (see figure 5). Again the gradually ascending motive sounds cautious as the theme keeps taking a couple steps forward and then a step back. Also the small intervals imply to the performer to play them connected.



Figure 5: Scarlatti Sonata in
d minor K. 9 mm. 27-33

After the sensitive theme, Scarlatti moves into the crisp, articulated motive. He uses the same material from the A section, but this time emphasizes d minor instead of F major. He ends the sonata with the trumpet fanfare in d minor.

Ultimately, the Baroque period served as inspiration for the neoclassicist. Many emulated Baroque composers like Bach, Scarlatti, and Couperin. They used the Baroque dance forms and keyboard forms in their works, as well as employed compositional techniques like counterpoint and ornamentation. The Baroque period eventually evolved into the Classical period, which served as another model for the neoclassicists.

Classical influence

Along with the Baroque period, many neoclassical composers took inspiration from the Classical period. Some of the most influential Classical composers are Joseph Haydn, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, and Ludwig van Beethoven. The rise of the pianoforte and equal temperament led to many new possibilities in the Classical period. The pianoforte allowed composers to create works with a greater dynamic range which is one of the signatures of Beethoven's music. Crescendos, decrescendos, and sforzandos can become important elements of themes and can add drama. Charles Rosen says that "the Baroque and Classical styles are sometimes contrasted as decorative and dramatic respectively."³⁴ Rhythmically, music began moving from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous. Rosen states that "the High Baroque preferred music with a homogeneous

³⁴ Charles Rosen, *The Classical Style: Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven*, expanded ed. (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997), 70.

rhythmic texture, using different kinds of rhythmic movement only under certain conditions.”³⁵ The Classical period moved away from this strict rhythm and moves toward pieces that vary in rhythmic texture. Also the Classical period moved toward more variety and contrast in terms of keys, melodies, and timbre.

While the Baroque period had complex textures (such as the contrapuntal nature of the fugue), the Classical period began to turn to a simpler, lighter, and cleaner sound where melody became the main focus. Melodies were shortened and there were clear-cut phrases and cadences. In terms of form, Scarlatti’s sonatas helped to create the standard sonata-allegro form. New forms also developed such as the fantasy, theme and variation, minuet and trio, and rondo.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart became one of the most famous composers to ever live and brought Classical music and all of its genres to its height. He was born in Salzburg in 1756 and began his musical training on the keyboard and violin from his father Leopold. Mozart is most noted for being a child prodigy, composing pieces as early as five years old and performing for royalty as a very young child. He was a musical genius and composed in every genre and style there was at the time. He had an incredible ear and creativity, and inspired those composers around him to push the boundaries. It is no surprise that the Romantic period began shortly after his death and his contemporary, Beethoven, led this transition. Mozart unfortunately lived a notoriously short life and died in 1791 in Vienna at 35 years old.

One of his pieces for the piano was the Fantasy in d minor K. 397 that he wrote in 1782. At this time in his life, Mozart was working in Vienna as a freelance composer,

³⁵ Rosen, *The Classical Style*, 60.

teacher, and performer. He was living in the home of Fridolin Weber, and began to fall in love with her daughter Constanze. Even though Mozart's father disapproved of the marriage, Mozart was in love and married her anyway in August of 1782.³⁶

Ulrich Leisinger states that the Fantasy in d minor K. 397 is “today among the favorite piano pieces of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, because it unites within a small space the musical characteristics of his mature piano and at the same time offers an insight into his extraordinary improvisatory skill.”³⁷ The piece starts off with an andante introduction that establishes the home key of d minor at the beginning and ends on the dominant A major with an arpeggio. The main theme is introduced in mm. 12-15 (see figure 6). This theme has a sad, lonely feeling. The left hand's quiet, slow, and repeated detached chords in the minor key creates a melancholy and disconnected sound, while the simple right hand melody sounds longing, with the long overdotted quarter note.



Figure 6: Mozart Fantasy in d minor K. 397 mm. 12-16

Following this theme, Mozart contrasts the soft, piano section with a forte section that is fairly chromatic (mm. 20-22). Then Mozart contrasts the slow, sad feeling of the

³⁶Cliff Eisen et al., “Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart,” *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed., vol. 17 (New York: Grove Dictionaries Inc., 2001), 286.

³⁷ Ulrich Leisinger, “Afterword,” trans. Chris Rowson (Vienna: Wiener Urtext Edition, 2003).

opening with a quicker and more urgent section (mm. 23-27). This section ends abruptly and Mozart creates a dramatic pause with a measure of rest with a fermata over it. He then comes back with the sad theme, but varied slightly (mm. 29-33). His first improvisatory run occurs next (see figure 7).



Figure 7: Mozart Fantasy
in d minor K. 397 m. 34

Following this run, Mozart returns with the chromatic, forte section, and the quick, urgent section, but slightly varied. After another improvisatory run, Mozart brings back the sad theme again. In measure 55 Mozart changes the character of his fantasy. The expression marking changes to *allegretto*, and the key changes from d minor to D major. This section has the more optimistic and light mood that is characteristic of Mozart (see figure 8). Following another improvisatory section, Mozart returns to the first theme of the *allegretto* section in mm. 87.



Figure 8: Mozart Fantasy in
d minor K. 397 mm. 54-62

Mozart never finished his Fantasy in d minor and only composed to measure 97. Leisinger states that the “last ten bars of the version commonly used today are first found in an early reprint, Volume 17 of the so-called *Oeuvres complètes* (Leipzig 1806, OC).”³⁸ Leisinger says that there was an asterisk at bar 98, but the accompanying footnote is missing. The last ten measures were completed by the pianist and pedagogue August Eberhard Müller (1767-1817).³⁹ Müller uses the first theme of the allegretto section and ends with a characteristic Mozart cadence (see figure 9).



Figure 9: Mozart Fantasy in d minor K. 397 mm. 98-107

Mozart and the other Classical composers, and the forms they used, served as inspiration to the neoclassicists. Many were fond of the drama created by using a greater dynamic range and a wider range of variety and contrast in terms of rhythm, keys, and timbre. Also the practice of placing the melody line clearly above an accompaniment inspired composers to come centuries after. Mozart’s Fantasy in d minor K. 397 employs these stylistic characteristics of the Classical period, and can serve as an example of the

³⁸ Leisinger, “Afterword.”

³⁹ Ibid.

type of piece that neoclassicists looked back on. Pedagogically speaking, it is important to understand the Baroque and Classical styles that neoclassicists turned back to in order to execute these genres with stylistic accuracy. Eventually the Classical period gave way to the Romantic period, and the beginning of neoclassicists and their experimentations.

Neoclassicism and Edvard Grieg

After the Classical period, Beethoven led the way into the Romantic period. The Romantic period turned away from the traditional sounds and moved towards emotional and expressive sounds. Rhythms became complex with changing tempos and frequent use of meters that obscured the barline. Melodies became more emotional and virtuosic with long runs, large leaps, and dynamic changes. Harmonies were still often traditional, but modulations and chromaticism were becoming increasingly popular. In terms of texture, the Romantic period continued the Classical period tradition of placing melodies at the focus, and then accompanying them fairly simply. Genres still included concertos, sonatas, and other forms the previous periods, but composers also began using program music, character pieces, and symphonic poems which correspond with the emotion and expressiveness that is characteristic of the Romantic period.

One composer from the Romantic period was Edvard Grieg. Grieg was born in 1843 in Bergen, Norway. His mother was a piano teacher and began his first musical training. He eventually went to study at a conservatory where he studied piano under Ignaz Moscheles and composition under Carl Reinecke.⁴⁰ Grieg did not enjoy his time at

⁴⁰ John Horton and Nils Grinde, "Edvard Grieg," *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed., vol. 10 (New York: Grove Dictionaries Inc., 2001), 397.

the conservatory and he really did not find his voice until he met with Rikard Nordtraak, the composer of Norway's national anthem. Around the time Grieg was born, Norway declared independence from Denmark in 1814 and had entered a period of romanticized nationalism.⁴¹ After growing up in this romanticized cultural nationalism and meeting with Nordtraak, Grieg "felt that his path was clear: it was that of a musician dedicated to Romantic nationalism."⁴² Nordtraak introduced Grieg to Norwegian folk music and traces of these idioms first began to appear in his *Humoresques*, Op. 6 (1865).⁴³ He quickly became Norway's most famous composer and was loved by the people, as he loved them.

However, Grieg did not always write in the Romantic tradition. While some composers, like Stravinsky and Ravel, wrote neoclassical music as an artistic choice, Grieg composer in the neoclassical style as a matter of circumstance. In 1884, Grieg was asked to compose a piece for the Holberg Festival. This festival was to celebrate the anniversary of Ludvig Holberg's 200th birthday, one of Norway's most famous writers. Grieg was asked to compose a cantata and use words written by Nordahl Rolfsen.⁴⁴ However, Grieg was not happy about this commission. Grieg wrote "I am bored with writing a male voice chorus for the Holberg festival. . . . I am writing poor music."⁴⁵ Grieg also said: "the Holberg cantata you will never be allowed to see. It is sleeping the

⁴¹ John Horton, *Grieg* (London: J.M. Dent and Sons LTD, 1974), 14.

⁴² Horton and Grinde, "Edvard Grieg," 397.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ David Monrad-Johansen, *Edvard Grieg*, trans. Madge Robertson (New York: Tudor Publishing Company, 1945), 252.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

eternal sleep, and a good thing too.”⁴⁶ One can actually find and listen to the cantata for male voices, but it really does not compare to Grieg’s other compositions. Grieg instead wrote the *Holberg Suite* op. 40 or more specifically “the suite *Fra Holberg Tid* (From Holberg’s Time).”⁴⁷ In this piece, Grieg composed in the style that resembled the music that Holberg (a contemporary of Bach and Handel) would have listened to. The suite “is an essay in pastiche attempted at a period when the imitation of older styles was much less common than it was to become a decade or so later.”⁴⁸ Grieg was one of the first composers who experimented with neoclassicism, and well before it became a true genre in the 1920s. Finn Benestad and Dag Schielderup-Ebbe state that “his point of departure was the stylized French dance-suite form (as used by Couperin, Rameau, and Bach in the eighteenth century), and he recreated some of the most characteristic musical forms of Holberg’s day.” They go on to say that “The basic spirit is the precision of French classicism, the musical language is Romantic, the synthesis Griegian.”⁴⁹ Grieg was able to capture the Baroque style suite, while still infusing his own voice into the work. Even though this was his only neoclassical work, he truly created a ‘neo’ – classical sound, before almost any other.

The *Holberg Suite* op. 40 is a piano work that consists of five movements based on 18th century Baroque dance forms. The first movement is a prelude, followed by a

⁴⁶ Monrad-Johansen, *Edvard Grieg*, 252.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 253.

⁴⁸ Horton, *Grieg*, 147.

⁴⁹ Finn Benestad and Dag Schielderup-Ebbe, *Edvard Grieg: The Man and the Artist*, trans. William H. Halverson and Leland B. Sateren (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988), 258.

sarabande, gavotte, air, and finally a rigaudon. Benestad and Schielderup-Ebbe say that the first movement, Prelude, “resembles a *perpetuum mobile* and fairly bubbles with genuine musical delight. The same ebullient joy in music-making also permeates the strikingly graceful ‘Gavotte/Musette’ (third movement) and the concluding ‘Rigaudon.’” They also say that “The other inner movements—‘Sarabande’ and ‘Air’—play on deeper strings; indeed, the expressive ‘Air’ is one of Grieg’s loveliest creations.”⁵⁰ The suite begins and ends with essential keyboard genres: the prelude and the rigaudon. The prelude is an optimistic and lively introduction to the suite and has a jumping rhythm that continues throughout the movement. The rigaudon echoes the liveliness of the prelude and was a French Baroque dance that has hopping steps for couples. The second movement, the sarabande is a traditional Baroque dance in triple meter. It has a more peaceful and thoughtful mood and is a nice contrast to the quicker prelude before it and the gavotte after it. The gavotte is a dance more traditionally danced in the court. It takes elements from the second movement, again optimistic, but with a more quietly aristocratic sound.

The fourth movement can be described as one of Grieg’s most sublime. An air is a song-like vocal or instrumental composition and can be a variant of the musical song form often referred to as an aria in opera. It is a calm, song-like piece that places the melody at the main focus with a chordal accompaniment in the beginning. Grieg employs Baroque-like ornamentation that he writes out (see figure 10), as well as a wide variety of dynamics that creates drama, similar to those employed by many Classical and Romantic composers.

⁵⁰ Benestad and Dag Schielderup-Ebbe, *Edvard Grieg*, 258.

Andante religioso. ♩ = 54.
cantabile

Figure 10: Grieg *Holberg Suite* op. 40 Mov. 4 mm. 1-6

The melody moves from the right hand to the left hand in measure 9 while the right hand takes over the chordal accompaniment. In measure 13 the dynamics build all the way to fortissimo, then diminuendos to pianissimo and ritards over the next three measures to end on the minor v chord, d minor (see figure 11).

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Figure 11: Grieg *Holberg Suite* op. 40 Mov. 4 mm. 13-15

The expression marking Grieg writes on his Air is *Andante religioso*. The *religioso* part implies to the performer to play as if one is in a church or reverentially. The *g* minor key creates a solemn mood that sounds like a pleading prayer. The pleading quality is made even more evident by the fact that the first 15 measures repeat.

After the repeat, Grieg moves to *B flat major*. By moving to a major key, the piece begins to sound hopeful. One could imagine the light beginning to shine through a stained glass window in a beautiful church. In this section the right hand has the melody again, and Grieg introduces a repeating back and forth soprano line that stays present through the rest of the piece. After a transitional period (mm. 29-39), Grieg returns the original idea, but places it in the left hand, creating a rounded binary form. Meanwhile the right hand is continuing the repeating back and forth soprano line and chordal accompaniment (see figure 12).

The image shows a musical score for Grieg's *Holberg Suite*, op. 40, movement 4, measures 39-43. The score is in G minor and 3/4 time. It features a piano (p) and mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic range, with markings for *poco rit.*, *a tempo*, and *cantabile*. The right hand plays a melodic line with triplets and a repeating soprano line. The left hand provides a chordal accompaniment with a repeating soprano line. The score includes repeat signs and first/second endings.

Figure 12: Grieg *Holberg Suite*
op. 40 Mov. 4 mm. 39-43

The left hand continues the original beginning melody until measure 48. From mm. 48-51 the right hand now takes the melody. What originally was left hand melody (mm. 9-12), switches to right hand, just as what was originally right melody became left hand melody at the end. Grieg also ends in a similar manner as he did in mm. 13-15, however this time he ends in the home key of g minor. This beautiful and expressive, yet clear and pure piece combines the best of both Grieg and neoclassical music.

Grieg's *Holberg Suite* op. 40 for piano was so well received that he decided to transcribe all five movements for string orchestra a few months later in 1885. When a composer himself transcribes a work for orchestra, it is essential that the pianist listens to the transcription. This allows the teacher or performer to hear instrumental and timbral choices made by the composer. This can give insight into color changes that the pianist can then apply to their own playing. Today, the string orchestra version has become even more popular than the original piano version. Henry T. Finck states:

Dr. Hanslick's comments on this composition are of interest, the more so as that Viennese critic seldom had a good word for his contemporaries: "A refined, happily conceived work, less pretentious and exotic than the compositions of this Norwegian are apt to be. The antique is cleverly reproduced in the forms, rhythms, ornamentations, yet filled with the modern spirit. Charming is the air in G minor, with its gentle, easily soothed melancholy; while the Rigaudon dance, which effectively closes the suite, is full of vivacity and humor. Georg Brandes says, in an excellent essay concerning Holberg: 'Whatever he produces he treats from the merry point of view. Seldom is there any other than a happy mood, very seldom a trait of melancholy, once only a touch of pathos.' Of this characterization of Holberg we were reminded on listening to the suite of Grieg, which likewise takes life easily and makes our enjoyment easy."⁵¹

Grieg not only successfully captures the sounds of the Baroque period, but also captures Holberg's optimistic voice, all while infusing his own style throughout.

⁵¹ Henry T. Finck, *Grieg and His Music* (New York: Benjamin Bloom, 1971), 187.

Grieg was loved in Norway and all around Europe. He was constantly being asked to perform and conduct in many different countries. When he died in 1907 in Bergen, Norway at the age of 64, his funeral drew between 30,000 and 40,000 people out of their homes to honor him. He also influenced his contemporaries and those composers to come after him. Not only those composers from Norway, but he also influenced French composers such as Claude Debussy and Maurice Ravel.⁵² More specifically he sparked an interest in other composers to compose neoclassical music. Ravel in particular was inspired by Grieg to compose neoclassical works as a way to reject the overly expressiveness of Wagner and the Impressionist period.

Neoclassicism and Maurice Ravel

The impressionist term first appeared in the mid-1870s in reference to a group of French artists who focused on light and color-fused paintings. These painters include Monet, Renoir, Degas, and Manet. The term was applied to music in the 1880s, and especially to those French composers who experimented with the notion of “color” in music, like Claude Debussy and Maurice Ravel. Nolan Gasser states that “color” is in reference to “timbre,” “which is defined largely through orchestration, but likewise through harmonic usage, texture, . . . [and] unusual usage or combinations of instruments, particularly at soft dynamic levels.”⁵³ Gasser goes on to say that “even in works for solo

⁵² Horton and Grinde, “Edvard Grieg,” 405.

⁵³ Nolan Gasser, “Period: Impressionist,” *Classical Archives*, accessed March 23, 2016, www.classicalarchives.com/period/8.html.

piano new timbres are explored via extremes of register, as well as by unique and ‘colorful’ approaches to harmony and melody.” He also say: “Indeed, it is in the realm of harmony that the Impressionist ‘sound’ is most readily indentified: via such techniques as parallel triads, whole-tone scales, blurring of tonal identity, extended or chromatic chords (9ths, 11ths, 13ths).”⁵⁴ The impressionist artists and composers wanted to break down old conventions “in order to explore new methods and techniques; in music this meant turning away from the Romantic-Germanic emphasis on traditional large-scale forms, thematic unity, and development, in favor of smaller, individual and work-specific techniques.”⁵⁵ The impressionist sound influenced composers all over Europe and America and especially the Modern period that followed.

Maurice Ravel was one of the most prominent composers of the Impressionistic period. He was born in 1875 in Ciboure, France. His father was an engineer and an amateur pianist who encouraged his son’s music interests at an early age. He began studying piano at the age of seven with Henri Ghys, and in 1887 began studying harmony with Delibes' pupil Charles-René. His first attempts at composition include variations on a chorale by Schumann and variations on a theme from Grieg's *Peer Gynt*.⁵⁶ Barbara Kelly goes on to say that in 1889 he studied piano with Emile Decombes, a professor at the Conservatoire, and in November of the same year he gained admission to Eugène Anthiôme's preparatory piano class at the Conservatoire. He won first prize in the 1891

⁵⁴ Gasser, “Period: Impressionist.”

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Barbara L. Kelly, “Joseph Maurice Ravel,” *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed., vol. 20 (New York: Grove Dictionaries Inc., 2001), 864.

piano competition and then Ravel progressed to Charles-Wilfrid Bériot's piano class and Emile Pessard's harmony class.⁵⁷ At the Paris Conservatory, he also studied composition with the famous French composer Gabriel Faure. Ravel was “one of the most original and sophisticated musicians of the early 20th century” and “his fascination with the past and with the exotic resulted in music of a distinctively French sensibility and refinement.”⁵⁸

However, Ravel was not always pushing the boundary and creating new impressionist sounds in his works. He was also interested “in traditional forms and in the French past.” This was true especially at the time of the First World War in the 1910s. Ravel felt compelled to serve his country and tried to enlist several times in the air force as a pilot, but, being almost forty years old, was refused due to health reasons and the fact that he was slightly underweight.⁵⁹ Frustrated by being constantly refused, Ravel said: “As I felt I was going mad I have taken the wisest course: I am going to volunteer.”⁶⁰ Paul Roberts explains that “in March 1915 he finally secured a post as a truck driver for an artillery regiment, and by 1916 he found himself behind the lines at the Battle of Verdun, the longest and most brutal battle in the history of warfare.”⁶¹ Also, while Ravel was volunteering, “he was also concerned about being so far from his mother. In September 1916 he became ill with dysentery and while he was recuperating in Paris his mother died suddenly in January 1917. With his emotional bedrock gone, Ravel was

⁵⁷ Kelly, “Joseph Maurice Ravel,” 864.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Paul Roberts, *Reflections: The Piano Music of Maurice Ravel* (Milwaukee: Amadeus Press, 2012), 109.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 108.

⁶¹ Ibid., 109.

desolate.” While Ravel was not harmed at the front, “the experience of the war, as it did all of those who survived it, scarred his psyche for the remainder of his life.”⁶² After witnessing the horrors of war, losing friends, and losing his mother, it is not surprising that Ravel turned to composing as a means of expressing his feelings. As Roberts puts it, “He was ill, friends had been killed, his mother had just died, and composition was his only route back to health and stability.”⁶³

Upon returning to Paris, Ravel sought to finish his composition *Le Tombeau de Couperin* M. 68, which he started in 1914 and finished in 1917. Being exhausted from his illness and the war, Ravel “was glad to accept the hospitality of his ‘*marraine de guerre*’ [wartime Godmother], Mme Fernand Dreyfus, in the country not far from Paris.”⁶⁴ It was here that Ravel finished his *Le Tombeau de Couperin* which, like Grieg’s *Holberg Suite* op. 40, is a dance suite based on Baroque forms. While it seems unusual, with all the emotions Ravel must have been feeling, to compose a neoclassical piece instead of employing the impressionist sounds, “it is one of Ravel’s most characteristic gestures that he should clothe in dance form these deepest emotions of his life, the double reaction to the war and to the loss of his mother.”⁶⁵ Even though Ravel was suffering from these horrible tragedies, *Le Tombeau* is light-hearted and happy, not somber. Jerry Dubbins explains that when he was “criticized for writing such superficial-sounding

⁶² Roberts, *Reflections*, 109.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 121.

⁶⁴ Rollo H. Myers, *Ravel: Life and Works* (London: Gerald Duckworth and CO, 1960), 52.

⁶⁵ H. H. Stuckenschmidt, *Ravel: Variations on His Life and Work*, trans. Samuel R. Rosenbaum (Philadelphia: Chilton Book Company, 1968), 173.

music for so somber a subject, Ravel replied, "The dead are sad enough in their eternal silence."⁶⁶ Instead of writing solemn music, Ravel decided the best way to honor his friends was with a happy neoclassical Baroque dance suite.

With that all being said, the title itself suggests something morbid in the word Tombeau, however the "usual translation of this word is 'tomb'; but in terms of the suite, *tombeau* should be taken to mean 'homage' – a homage to Couperin – just as it would have in the eighteenth century."⁶⁷ However, Deborah Mawer explains that "Ravel claimed (not wholly convincingly, given his close reworking of Couperin) that 'The homage is directed less in reality to the unique Couperin himself than to French music of the eighteenth century.'"⁶⁸ While Ravel was inspired by François Couperin (1668-1733), he intended to pay homage to "the whole seventeenth-and eighteenth-century French school of 'clavecinists.'"⁶⁹ However, Mawer explains that "the work certainly acquired strong funeral associations during its compositional gestation. This tomb-like aspect has typically been underplayed."⁷⁰ On the cover page of the suite, Ravel drew a funerary urn, maybe to play on the word Tombeau (see figure 13). Nevertheless, "the drawing's blend of charm and seriousness aptly reflects the qualities found in the music."⁷¹

⁶⁶ Jerry Dubins, "Ravel: Complete Piano Music," *Fanfare – The Magazine for Serious Record Collectors* 35, no. 1 (Sep 2011) accessed December 16, 2015.

⁶⁷ Roberts, *Reflections*, 112.

⁶⁸ Deborah Mawer, *The Ballets of Maurice Ravel: Creation and Interpretation* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2006), 184.

⁶⁹ Myers, *Ravel*, 172.

⁷⁰ Mawer, *The Ballets of Maurice Ravel*, 188.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 190.

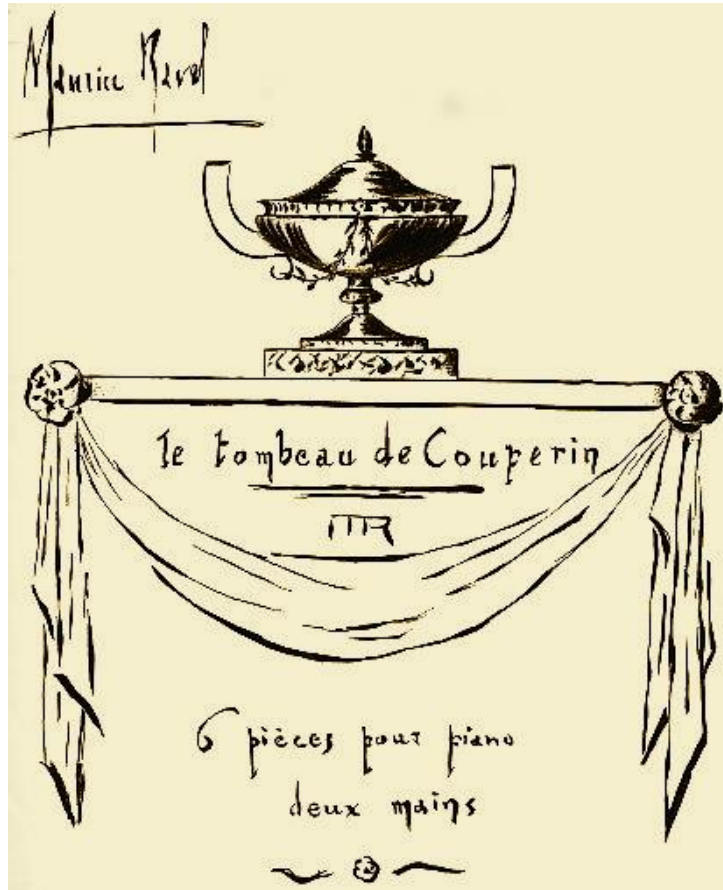


Figure 13: Ravel's cover to his *Le Tombeau de Couperin*

Not only is Ravel paying homage to Couperin and the other Baroque keyboard composers, he also dedicated each movement of the suite to a friend or friends who died in the war. Mawer states that “what is special about Ravel’s *Le Tombeau* is its dual tribute: to the distant past – both collective and individual – and, throughout the course of its composition, to the immediate past and the horrific, continuing present of the First World War.” She also says that “It becomes an intensely personal memorial to seven friends killed during the War and surely also to Ravel’s beloved mother who died in

January 1917.”⁷² When observing the word ‘neoclassical’ Ravel is not only using music to reference the term, but also his dedications. He is paying homage to the ‘classics’, Couperin and the other Baroque composers, but also bringing the ‘neo’ or new into it by dedicating each movement to a friend recently passed away.

There are also more theories as to other inspirations for this composition. Roberts states that “One is a novel that Ravel read while convalescing from his illness in 1916: one of the great novels of the French language, *Le grand Meaulnes* by Alain-Fournier.”⁷³ Apparently this novel had a great impact on Ravel while he was in service and helped keep him sane in the throes of war. The other influence was paintings by a painter who was a contemporary of Couperin. Specifically, “the *fête galante* paintings of Couperin’s exact contemporary, Jean Antoine Watteau, paintings full of young people dancing elegant minuets and making music.”⁷⁴ Art and music are very closely related and often painters and composers become inspired by each other, which is especially true of the Impressionistic period. Roberts goes on to say that if *Le Tombeau* “is a tribute to eighteenth-century music, then it is also a tribute to an eighteenth-century artistic ethos, and at the opening of the eighteenth century Couperin and Watteau were France’s two greatest living artists.”⁷⁵

The final inspiration Roberts discusses is a story that appears during Ravel’s time at war. It is about a bird that is unexpectedly heard singing during the silence that

⁷² Mawer, *The Ballets of Maurice Ravel*, 185.

⁷³ Roberts, *Reflections*, 115.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 116.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 119.

followed a battle. It is said that Ravel was so captivated by the bird's song that he vowed to write a piece. Roberts states that "we might hear Ravel's experience of the birdsong 'quietly encapsulated in the Menuet of *Le tombeau*' at the point where the minuet returns in bar 73, 'piping as a quiet descant over the last echoes of the desolate *musette*.'" ⁷⁶ I will argue this theory further when I discuss the Menuet later on.

Ravel takes all of these inspirations, his war experiences, and his tragic losses and creates a beautiful neoclassical work. The suite uses small-scale forms, with regular meter, and ornamentations like that of the Baroque period. Ravel's 'neo' contribution to the neoclassical work includes "wide pitch ranges, pentatonic and whole-tone fragments, mild to moderate dissonance, chromatic modulation, phrase extensions and reversals of expectation, dynamic contouring, and textural treatment that blurs melodic/harmonic roles." ⁷⁷ The suite begins with a prelude, followed by a fugue, forlane, rigaudon, menuet, and ends with a toccata.

The prelude is dedicated to Lieutenant Jacques Charlot who "was a fellow musician who had produced the piano reductions of *Ma Mère l'Oye*," which is a piece by Ravel. ⁷⁸ Like Grieg in his *Holberg Suite* op. 40, Ravel also begins his suite with a prelude. A prelude is usually used to introduce a piece like a dance suite. Demuth states that the "*Prélude* justifies its title both as a prelude to the suite and as a prelude in constriction—a piece built on one figure, in this case triplets of semiquavers." The prelude is in 12/16 meter and is in e minor, like 4 of the 6 movements of the suite.

⁷⁶ Roberts, *Reflections*, 111-112.

⁷⁷ Mawer, *The Ballets of Maurice Ravel*, 187.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 188.

Norman Demuth goes on to say that “what actual theme is of the brilliant order, virtuosic enough to satisfy the demands of both those with technique of the first order and those with a certain limitation in this direction.”⁷⁹

The second movement, the fugue, is dedicated to Lieutenant Jean Cruppi, “the son of an influential woman who had helped secure the premiere of *L’Heure espagnole*,” which is a one-act opera that Ravel composed the music for.⁸⁰ As discussed earlier, the fugue was a very popular genre during the Baroque period, however this was the only fugue Ravel ever composed. The movement is also in e minor, is in 4/4, and has an expression marking of *allegro moderato*. It is “constructed on a theme derived from the *Prélude*, is orthodox and rather dry, but most ingeniously wrought.”⁸¹ Demuth states that the fugue is not very interesting, has a limited range, and “both hands are in the treble clef throughout and the general atmosphere is one of calm and placidity. The part-writing is clear and lucid, but one feels that it lacks the necessary impulse; did he write it in a disinterested spirit?”⁸²

The forlane is the third movement of the suite and is dedicated to the memory of Lieutenant Gabriel Deluc who was an old friend of Ravel.⁸³ Ravel began composing this movement first, after transcribing a piece by Couperin. H. H. Stuckenschmidt states that “the *forlane* is based on the oldest of the dance forms represented in the suite. The forlana

⁷⁹ Norman Demuth, *Ravel* (Westport, Connecticut: Hyperion Press, 1947), 79.

⁸⁰ Mawer, *The Ballets of Maurice Ravel*, 188.

⁸¹ Myers, *Ravel*, 172.

⁸² Demuth, *Ravel*, 79.

⁸³ Mawer, *The Ballets of Maurice Ravel*, 188.

comes from the north of Italy, out of Friuli, where it borders on Slavic regions to the east. In form it is related to the livelier *gigue* and the *passamezzo*.⁸⁴ A forlane is like a jig, but “one must realize that the comparison with the *gigue* is only in the spirit, which is very bright and happy.”⁸⁵ This movement is also in e minor and has the expression marking *allegretto*. Rollo H. Myers states that “it is in 6/8 time throughout, in the ornamental style of the eighteenth-century harpsichord composers, the very acid modern harmonies forming a piquant contrast to the staid and rather formal character of the dance.”⁸⁶ While many have written about this movement in particular, it has received many mixed reviews. Demuth states that “it has been described as suggesting the taste of pine-apple, ‘a pleasure bordering on pain,’ as Lamb says in his *Essay on Roast Pig*.”⁸⁷

The fourth movement of the suite is the *rigaudon* which is dedicated to the twins Piere and Pascal Gaudin who were old friends of Ravel.⁸⁸ Grieg also included a *rigaudon* in his *Holberg Suite* op. 40. This movement is in C major and has a 2/4 meter. The *rigaudon* is “of ancient French and Provençal ancestry. Rameau loved it, Henry Purcell treasured it, and Johann Sebastian Bach made use of it in suites.”⁸⁹ Mawer states that “as with the ‘Forlane’, there is a possible compositional model – also proposed by Messing –

⁸⁴ Stuckenschmidt, *Ravel*, 174.

⁸⁵ Demuth, *Ravel*, 80.

⁸⁶ Myers, *Ravel*, 172.

⁸⁷ Demuth, *Ravel*, 80.

⁸⁸ Mawer, *The Ballets of Maurice Ravel*, 188.

⁸⁹ Stuckenschmidt, *Ravel*, 174.

for the 'Rigaudon' in Rameau's 'Premier tambourin' from his Troisième concert."⁹⁰ Just as Ravel may have been inspired to compose his own forlane after transcribing a Couperin piece, he may have been inspired by Rameau specifically to compose this rigaudon. Demuth states that rigaudon's "diatonic strength, thoroughly masculine and breezy, its brilliancy of chordal opening, and its sudden change to chromatic sweetness and brittleness, . . . have combined to bring it into relief against the other movements."⁹¹ Myers describes the movement as a "lively and vigorous, with a pastoral middle section over a drone bass."⁹²

The menuet is the fifth movement of the suite. This piece embodies the neoclassical spirit. Ravel creates this simple and pure theme that is reminiscent of the Baroque period with its structure and frequent ornamentation, yet adds his own new mark with his interesting harmonies and the expressive section at the end.

This movement is dedicated to Jean Dreyfus, who was the half brother of Ravel's pupil and close friend, Roland-Manuel.⁹³ Jean Dreyfus was also the son of Ravel's "wartime Godmother" who allowed him to stay at her estate when he came back from the war. The menuet is simple and thin. It is in G major, has a ¾ meter, and has the expression marking *allegro moderato*. Demuth states that the "*Menuet* takes us to a realm of such simplicity that one wonders at the paring down of the composer's natural technique. We find an echo of the *Menuet antique* and the *Sonatina* in the modal cadence,

⁹⁰ Mawer, *The Ballets of Maurice Ravel*, 187.

⁹¹ Demuth, *Ravel*, 80.

⁹² Myers, *Ravel*, 172.

⁹³ Mawer, *The Ballets of Maurice Ravel*, 188.

with the flattened leading-note.” He also says that “The ‘Musette’ (taking the place of the usual trio) . . . [has a] tune [that] is harmonized throughout in block common chords over a pedal-point.”⁹⁴ The movement begins with the motive that is used throughout the piece (see figure 14), followed by a section of 24 measures which repeat. This section includes a beautiful melody from mm. 9-24 that also begins with the motive. From mm. 25-32 the melody and harmony moves up and has a different timbre, which is exaggerated by the addition of “sourdine” or mute which is the *una corda* pedal at measure 29.



Figure 14: Ravel *Le Tombeau de Couperin* Mov. 5 m. 1

The musette begins at measure 33 and a new theme appears from mm. 33-40 (see figure 15). This new theme is pianissimo and is muted. While also beautiful, it creates the feeling that something is about to happen. The left hand is creating an almost hypnotic sound with it repeating rhythm of a quarter note, followed by a half note on d. In the next line, mm. 41-48, the theme is repeated but this time is broken up between the hands, which allows for the right hand to join in creating a hypnotic sound while it is not playing the melody.

⁹⁴ Demuth, *Ravel*, 80-81.



Figure 15: Ravel *Le Tombeau de Couperin* Mov. 5 mm. 33-40

Finally in measure 49 the mute comes off, the dynamic changes to piano, and the theme changes. It still has the descending notes at the beginning, but the ending changes slightly. The changed theme repeats again in m. 53 at a higher starting note and at a higher dynamic marking of mezzo forte. The dynamics continue to increase as the notes become higher still until the climax at measure 57 with fortissimo (see figure 16). From mm. 49-61 there is a pedal point all throughout of a g that changes octaves alternately, until mm. 57-60 when the octaves are played together. The section is dying down from mm. 62-64 until it is back to the original musette theme from mm. 65-72.

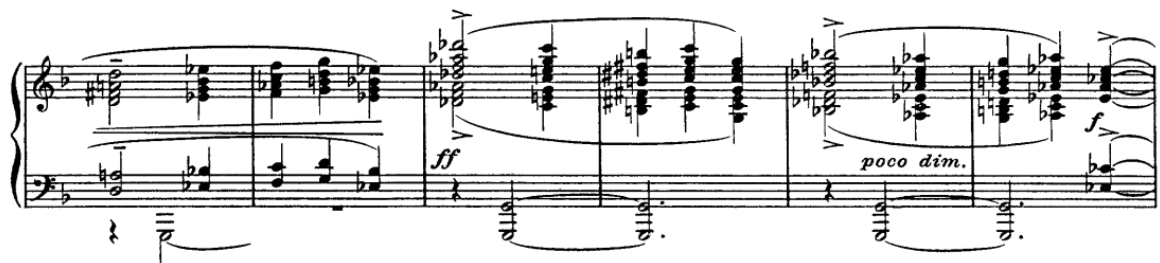


Figure 16: Ravel *Le Tombeau de Couperin* Mov. 5 mm. 55-60

From mm. 73-80 Ravel includes a sort of transition that superimposes the original theme from the introduction over the musette theme in the left hand (see figure 17). This mixture of the two themes creates this very interesting sound that transitions from the musette back to a section similar to the beginning. It is this section that Roberts

mentioned in the above discussion about a birdsong being heard after a battle during the war. The musette can be considered the battle. If we imagine Ravel driving his truck towards the battle scene, we can hear the sounds of war quietly at first and as they gradually get louder, Ravel is gradually getting closer. We hear the bombs dropping in the hypnotic left hand and the g pedal. He is in the middle of the battle at the climax in measure 57, and then we can hear him leave the battle as the musette gradually gets softer again. Once he is far away and the sounds of war are very distant, the birdsong emerges above the noise, as it sounds in mm. 73-80. Perhaps the beginning of the piece (mm. 1-32) is his time before joining the war when he started writing it. The middle (mm. 33-80) is his time in the war, and the end (mm. 81-128) is his time after the war. The birdsong changes key in measure 81 perhaps because a birdsong is never the same to Ravel again after his experience in the war.



Figure 17: Ravel *Le Tombeau de Couperin* Mov. 5 mm. 73-84

In measure 81 Ravel moves back into the original theme but this time transposes it. He keeps the same format, so after 16 measures he moves both hands up again (mm. 97 to 103). Ravel ends the piece with an expressive variation of the theme from mm. 104 to 110. The accompanying pattern in the left hand changes to a broken chord style, that gives this section a more “Ravelesque” and Impressionistic sound. He continues this arpeggio in the left hand through mm. 111-115 until he reaches the highest note in the whole piece in measure 120. From here he comes back down the keyboard with the same motive that opened the movement, until a final chord and trill end the piece.

The final movement is the toccata, which is dedicated to Captain Joseph de Marliave who was “an amateur musician married to Marguerite Long.”⁹⁵ Marguerite Long premiered *Le Tombeau* at the Salle Griveau on April 11, 1919.⁹⁶ The toccata was a popular and virtuosic genre of the Baroque period. Ravel’s toccata is also very virtuosic; so much so that Marguerite Long decided to omit it in her performances as she deemed it too difficult.⁹⁷ It is in e minor and has a 2/4 meter. Demuth states that the toccata movement is technically demanding and is of no “great thematic significance (like the opening prelude) but of brittleness thoroughly characteristic of a modern composer’s outlook on the percussive side of the piano, which, after all, has been the basis of toccatas

⁹⁵ Mawer, *The Ballets of Maurice Ravel*, 188.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 190.

⁹⁷ Benjamin Ivry, *Maurice Ravel: A Life* (New York: Welcome Rain Publishers, 2000), 90.

ever since the form was first devised.”⁹⁸ This impressive piece, which has similarities to the opening prelude, brings the suite full circle and gives a powerful ending to the suite.

Like Grieg, Ravel also transcribed his suite for orchestra shortly after it was premiered in 1919. The orchestral version was premiered on February 28, 1920 with Rhené-Baton conducting the Orchestre Pasdeloup.⁹⁹ However, Ravel only transcribed the prelude, forlane, menuet, and rigaudon movements, and placed them in this order. He switched the menuet and rigaudon movements and now ends on the movement that was originally in the middle. Like Grieg’s orchestral version of his *Holberg Suite* op. 40, Ravel’s orchestral version was much more popular than the solo piano version. Mawer states that “even Cortot, as a contemporary pianist, maintained that the orchestral version was the definitive form of the work.” She goes on to discuss the piece more by saying Ravel’s orchestral method “is to create dual soloists (mirroring his dual tribute): ‘I didn’t do anything other than this [the pursuit of perfect orchestration] with *Le Tombeau de Couperin*: this economy of means which makes two instruments alone produce such an impact.”¹⁰⁰ In the first section of the Menuet movement, Ravel places the original theme in the oboe, and when the theme moves higher, he has the flute playing. This creates an interesting dialogue between the instruments. The flute also contributes to the idea of the birdsong theme because the flute is probably the best instrument to imitate a bird singing. Mawer says that the “stately ‘Menuet’ now proceeding the ‘Rigaudon’ is led again by solo oboe, promoting Ravel’s brand of lush, soft-edged neoclassicism.” The oboe’s “main

⁹⁸ Demuth, *Ravel*, 81.

⁹⁹ Mawer, *The Ballets of Maurice Ravel*, 190.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

instrumental partner is the flute, its tone intensified in the central ‘Musette’ by bassoon. A spectral quality thrives in this lament in the dorian mode on G, with pp drone bass and ghostly harmonics.” She also states that its “Increased ‘edge’ is achieved as trumpet and muted horn appropriate the melodic repeat, while the accented tutti peak, at ff, feels like a physical body blow.”¹⁰¹ This imagery adds to the idea that the musette section is the battle scene. Again, it is important to study orchestral transcriptions of piano works done by the composer. A teacher or pianist can hear the color change between the oboe and the flute and contribute those ideas to their playing. Without studying these orchestral versions, the teacher or performer might not even know to make a color change in these sections.

Ravel also created a ballet using his orchestral version of *Le Tombeau*. Mawer states that “Ravel conceived the ballet version of *Le Tombeau* for the Ballets Suédois (1920-25), Swedish would-be rivals of the Ballet Russes, at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, under their director De Maré.”¹⁰² Just as Ravel created this dialogue between the oboes and the flute in the Menuet movement, the ballet version was choreographed for two soloists. Mawer says that “this principle projects through dance an idea central to Ravel’s orchestration: the presence of an instrumental duo as a dynamic focus for the chamber ensemble.”¹⁰³ Ravel’s ballet was actually quite successful as it achieved an impressive 167 performances, in many different countries including Sweden and Italy.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹ Mawer, *The Ballets of Maurice Ravel*, 192.

¹⁰² Ibid., 193.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 199.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 204.

Also, it is included in the 'Ballets in Active Repertory' by the George Balanchine Foundation and was actually performed recently in 2004 in New York City.¹⁰⁵

Ravel's *Le Tombeau de Couperin* was the last piece he ever wrote for solo piano. Roberts theorizes as to why when he states: "The fact that he wrote no more solo piano music after this point would have been for a number of reasons, but the absence of Debussy may have been one of them."¹⁰⁶ Debussy died in 1918, the same year *Le Tombeau* for the piano was published. Debussy and Ravel were contemporaries and were in competition with each other to become France's most famous composer. Roberts says that "after *Le tombeau* his desire, or ability, to create solo piano music seems to have evaporated."¹⁰⁷ Debussy had such an impact on Ravel during his life that it would not seem that this theory is unreasonable. Roberts continues by saying that "certainly he would have recognized that his duel with the composer whom he had called 'our incomparable Debussy, the most phenomenal genius in the history of French music,' had finally come to an end."¹⁰⁸ Perhaps Ravel ceased composing for solo piano because he was no longer in competition to become France's greatest piano composer, or perhaps he said everything he needed to in the powerful neoclassical piece of music that is *Le Tombeau de Couperin*.

¹⁰⁵ Mawer, *The Ballets of Maurice Ravel*, 207.

¹⁰⁶ Roberts, *Reflections*, 121.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 122.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

Neoclassicism and Jean Sibelius

Composers who were not involved in the Impressionistic movement following the Romantic period began creating music that eventually was called the Modern or Contemporary period. The early stages of this period took place in the late 1800s, at about the same time as the Impressionist period. Just as any change in musical periods, modernism rebelled against the sounds of the immediate past. Modernist composers wanted complete freedom from all structure that had been placed in music including melody, rhythm, harmony, tonality, and form.¹⁰⁹ The electronic industry also began to grow rapidly and composers were beginning to integrate those sounds into compositions. Ultimately, the Modern period sought to redefine ‘music.’

With the drastic changes to the type of music being produced, many composers turned back to the familiarity of the classics and to the structure and the sounds of the Baroque and Classical period. Stravinsky, as discussed earlier, was the composer who pushed for neoclassicism to become its own genre in the 1920s, just after the Modern period was gaining traction.

Another composer who also created neoclassical works was Stravinsky and Ravel’s contemporary, Jean Sibelius. Sibelius was born in 1865 in Hämeenlinna, Finland. He became interested in the piano at five years old, and his family nurtured his interests, especially his uncle who was an amateur violinist. In 1881 he started taking violin lessons at the age of 15 with “Gustaf Levander, the local military bandmaster. By the late 1880s the intense, nervous Sibelius would become a competent violinist, although one temperamentally suited more to chamber and ensemble performances than to solo

¹⁰⁹ Leon Botstein, “Modernism,” *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed., vol. 16 (New York: Grove Dictionaries Inc., 2001), 869.

appearances.”¹¹⁰ At this time he also became interested in composition, and began composing for small ensembles which were “more or less imitative of the Viennese Classical or early Romantic style (Haydn, Beethoven, Schubert), albeit in a simplified manner.”¹¹¹ In 1885 he enrolled “both in Helsinki University as a student of law – a half-hearted aspiration lasting only a year – and in Martin Wegelius's newly-founded Helsinki Music Institute as a violinist.” While his technique improved on the violin, more and more he “found himself drawn more deeply into composition.”¹¹²

Like Grieg, Sibelius was also a nationalist composer. Like Grieg’s Norway, Sibelius’s Finland underwent changes shortly before his birth and through the beginning of his life. Sweden controlled Finland for seven centuries until the early 19th century. The population was divided between the “longstanding élite culture of Swedish-speaking Finns” and the Finnish-speaking majority which “had traditionally wielded no social power, although a movement (‘Fennicization’) was under way to legitimize the language and to embrace it as the driving force of an authentic, assertive self-identity.”¹¹³ James Hepokoski states that “Sibelius grew up amid this growing language dispute, and his life and career reflect the aspirations of both sides and the tensions between them. He came

¹¹⁰ James Hepokoski, “Jean Sibelius,” *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed., vol. 23 (New York: Grove Dictionaries Inc., 2001), 319.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Ibid., 320.

¹¹³ Ibid., 319.

from a Swedish-speaking family; even later in life his letters and diaries would be written largely in that language.”¹¹⁴

Even though Sibelius came from the Swedish speaking side of Finland, he quickly came to appreciate the Finnish language and its folk music. In 1890 Sibelius “began to steep himself in Finnish-language culture, clearly taking steps to redefine himself more emphatically along those lines. Much of this must have been occasioned by his secret engagement to the pro-Finnish Aino Järnefelt the previous summer.”¹¹⁵ That same year “he reported to Aino that he was enthralled with the Kalevala, the national folk epic. . . . Above all, he was captivated by the unyielding sameness of the incantatory Kalevala poetry and reported to Aino that he was experiencing it as ‘extraordinarily modern.’” He said that “Its repetitive recastings of similar rhythms, images and general moods impressed him as ‘pure music,’ as ‘themes and variations.’”¹¹⁶ Like many nationalist composers, including Grieg, Sibelius felt inspired by the folk music of his culture and incorporated elements of it into his compositions. This repetitiveness, and what Sibelius described as “that sonorous, remarkably melancholy monotony in all Finnish melodies,” appears in much of his music.¹¹⁷ The pure sounds of the folk music most likely inspired Sibelius to turn back to the classics and to compose in the neoclassical style.

Sibelius’s stylistic development can be divided into six parts. Vesa Sirén states that “during his third, ‘neoclassical’ period (around 1902-1908) Sibelius made more use

¹¹⁴ Hepokoski, “Jean Sibelius,” 319.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 321.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

of Classical idioms, although his output was also strongly influenced by Kalevala romanticism and symbolism.” During his fourth “period of ‘Modern classicism’ (around 1908-1919) he wrote sonatinas and rondinos, while at the same time impressionist and expressionist tendencies made their way into his music.”¹¹⁸ One piece from this ‘Modern classicism’ period was his Sonatina No. 1 in F-sharp minor op. 67, which he published in 1912. Modern classicism seeks to create an alliance between the old and the new. Instead of turning to the classics as the foundation of the work and then just adding a ‘neo’ element, Modern classicism creates a balance between the new and the old aesthetic.

It is interesting that Sibelius turns to the miniature (sonatinas and rondinos) during this period of Modern classicism. In the past many pieces were fairly short and as time went on pieces became longer and longer and more extravagant. Sirén states that “few great composers have received as much criticism as Sibelius for writing miniatures - especially small-scale piano and violin pieces.” But “for Sibelius himself there was no aesthetic problem. He wrote in his diary (16th May 1910): ‘One has to combine things great and small. Symphonies and songs.’”¹¹⁹ These shorter pieces balance out his larger works, just as Modern classicism balances the old and the new. Sirén goes on to say that his miniatures “were more retrospective than other contemporary works, and his own Classicism was generally far-removed from ‘cubist’ neoclassical adaptations (Bach with ‘wrong’ bass lines, capricious and broken rhythms).” Also, Sirén states that these “sonatinas and rondinos were Sibelius's first ‘pure water’ pieces, to be distinguished from

¹¹⁸ Vesa Sirén, “Jean Sibelius: Piano compositions,” trans. Käännöstoimisto Martina, ed. Donald Adamson, accessed March 16, 2016, <http://www.sibelius.fi/english/musiikki/pianosavellyksia.htm>.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

the ‘cocktails’ served by his contemporaries. They are short and pithy but their content is important - in short, they are Classical.”¹²⁰ Eric Blom says that “the Sonatinas are undoubtedly the peak of Sibelius’s achievement as a pianoforte composer.”¹²¹ He also states that Sibelius was being “purposely simple” and says that “if *dépouillé* means ‘stripped,’ that is certainly what these three great little works are. Their bareness is not one of texture merely: it is also formal.” Also “Every statement is direct and to the point; the demarcations between exposition, working-out and recapitulation are deliberately blurred; there are in fact no conventional stages, much less conventional developments.”¹²²

The Piano Sonatina No. 1 in F-sharp minor is the first of three sonatinas in his op. 67. Robert Layton states that “the F sharp minor sonatina is the most perfect of all his piano works, but the remaining two, in E major and B flat minor respectively, are very nearly as fine.” He continues to say that “the sonatinas score on the grounds of their sheer economy of ideas, layout and form.”¹²³ He describes the first movement of the sonatina as linear in style with a sparse texture.¹²⁴ Sirén describes the opening idea as a “condensed and noble theme.”¹²⁵ The opening idea (see figure 18) is very thin, and

¹²⁰ Sirén, “Jean Sibelius.”

¹²¹ Eric Blom, “The Piano Music,” in *The Music of Sibelius*, ed. Gerald Abraham (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1947), 98.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 102.

¹²³ Robert Layton, *Sibelius*, ed. Sir Jack Westrup (London: J. M. Dent and Sons LTD, 1965), 147.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 146.

¹²⁵ Sirén, “Jean Sibelius.”

interestingly does not begin in the home key of F-sharp minor, but instead in D major. It also begins on beat three of the first measure followed by a whole note f# in the second measure which creates some rhythmical ambiguity right from the beginning. This idea repeats again in the next four measures, followed by a new idea in mm. 9-12. This new idea develops further in mm. 13-19, and builds until it climaxes in mm. 16 in a high b, and then comes back down until m. 19. Measure 19 ends on a triplet with a crescendo followed by a quarter rest. Sibelius plays with rests throughout the whole first movement. He likes to make his listener think a phrase is going one direction, but then surprises them by adding a rest and changing his established 4-bar phrases by cutting off the last bar. So instead of finishing his phrase in m. 19, he instead goes into the main theme of the movement in mm. 20-24 (see figure 19).



Figure 18: Sibelius Sonata
No. 1 op. 67 Mov. 1 mm. 1-4



Figure 19: Sibelius Sonata No.
1 op. 67 Mov. 1 mm. 20-24

Sirén describes this section (mm. 20-28) as “an exciting, chromatic theme, with cadences leading to the dominant of the main key, C sharp minor.”¹²⁶ The theme then repeats again in mm. 28-31, but this time includes a triplet motif, similar to the one in the opening idea. Even though this movement does not have a clear-cut development section, mm. 31-51 could be considered the development as the opening idea returns in m. 52. The development mostly consists of an ascending triplets idea that happens three times with slight variation each time (mm. 35-43). In mm. 44-48 the right hand and left hand are engaging in a dialogue with descending triplets in the right hand followed by ascending triplets in the left hand.

In the recapitulation section, Sibelius keeps a lot of the same material as in the exposition. He mostly keeps the same ideas and themes, but just changes the harmonies. Mm. 84-95 is the ending section which includes both hands moving in parallel motion, followed by a thin and sparse last five measures: a perfect way to end this movement.



Figure 20: Sibelius Sonata
No. 1 op. 67 Mov. 2 mm. 1-6

¹²⁶ Sirén, “Jean Sibelius.”

The middle movement, Largo, is very beautiful. Cedric Thorpe Davie states that “the slow movement is simply a very lovely tune, repeated, after a few bars of bridge, in an exquisitely-colored variation, and rounded off by an unexpected sequence of quiet chords.”¹²⁷ Sirén says “the slow movement is based on two appearances of a singing, viola-like theme; on the second occasion it is transposed one octave higher and harmonized more or less as a chorale.”¹²⁸ Sibelius introduces this main “viola-like theme” right from the beginning of the movement (see figure 20). The right hand has the theme in the middle of the keyboard, while the left hand crosses over into the low treble register. Again, Sibelius creates tonal and rhythmic ambiguity right from the beginning. He begins with a pick-up note that is tied to the down beat of the first measure. This happens again in the next phrase with the pick-up to m. 3. All the while the left hand is playing on the offbeat.

Measure 20 starts the second occasion when the theme moves up an octave. In this section Sibelius moves away from his traditional thin and sparse texture that he has developed through the first movement and the beginning of the second movement. Here the texture becomes much thicker and louder (see figure 21). He continues the same thematic ideas throughout the second half. He ends the movement with a “F sharp major chord, a Picardy modification of the main key.”¹²⁹

¹²⁷ Cedric Thorpe Davie, “Sibelius’s Piano Sonatinas,” *Tempo* no. 10 (March 1945): 10.

¹²⁸ Sirén, “Jean Sibelius.”

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*



Figure 21: Sibelius Sonatina No. 1 op. 67 Mov. 2 mm. 20-22

The final movement, *allegro moderato*, is much faster and has a different playful character than the other movements. Sirén states that “in the finale we hear a short playful motif under the orchestral/violinistic octave tremolo of the right hand. The subsidiary sequences are marked by a sparkling major-accented motif, first in G major, then at the end in F sharp major,” which is the key Sibelius ends his piece in.¹³⁰ The violinistic octave tremolo in the right hand begins the movement. After two measures the playful motif enters in the left hand (see figure 22).



Figure 22: Sibelius Sonatina No. 1 op. 67 Mov. 3 mm. 1-4

This playful motif develops until the “sparkling major-accented motif” enters in m. 11. This high registered motif is juxtaposed against a bass line run in the left hand in mm. 13-15. Thorpe Davie describes this section by saying “the left hand’s occasional dashes to the extreme bass are thrown into high relief by the fact that most of the writing

¹³⁰ Sirén, “Jean Sibelius.”

is for the upper part of the instrument.”¹³¹ This alternating between high right hand runs and low left hand runs is very interesting and enjoyable for the audience to listen to.

A new section appears in mm. 21-26. This pianissimo section is reminiscent of Baroque keyboard music as both hands are moving together in parallel motion. Mm. 27-32 is a transition section that takes us back to the opening idea again. Here the octave tremolos are an octave higher than before as is the initial recurrence of the playful motif. The “sparkling” motif follows again beginning in m. 43, however the harmonies in the right and left hand change slightly. The parallel motion section occurs again in mm. 53-58, followed by another transition, although slightly different. The octave tremolo section begins again for the last time in m. 63. However, instead of going into the “sparkling” motif again, Sibelius ends with a pattern that moves across the keyboard to end on a low f#, emphasizing the key of f#, although this time he ends with a F-sharp major chord like in the second movement (see figure 23).



Figure 23: Sibelius Sonatina
No. 1 op. 67 Mov. 3 mm. 71-75

This thesis discussed the definition of neoclassicism and gave specific examples of pieces from the Baroque and Classical periods which served as inspiration to the neoclassicist. Then a comparison was made with three different neoclassical works from

¹³¹ Thorpe Davie, “Sibelius’s Piano Sonatinas,” 9-10.

different composers and musical periods. Each composer took different ideas from the Baroque and classical periods and created works that combined these elements with their own personal voice. Even though neoclassicism became a true genre in the 1920s, this would not have been possible without the initial experimentations by these and other composers like them. Additionally, by understanding how neoclassicists like Grieg, Ravel, and Sibelius took elements and style characteristics of the Baroque and Classical periods, teachers and performers are better able to teach and perform these works and other works like them. By recognizing composers' inspirations and compositional models, students and other performers can have a deeper understanding of why and how composers created these works, and how they fit into music history.

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