

A Study about Movements which Lead Classical Period and their Contemporaries

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ABSTRACT:

This study aims to reveal the big effects of movements, which left its mark on Classical Period and its contemporaries, on the history of art and music adventure by gathering information about them. Classical music has undergone a lot of processes of many periods up to present time. These periods were Middle Age Period, Renaissance Period, Baroque Period, Classical Period, Romantic Period, Contemporary Period and present day respectively. Along with the social and artistic changes in the late Baroque Period, new pursuits were observed. These pursuits had their places in the history of music through the movements which had their names written in gold letters during the preparation stage from Baroque Period to Classical Period. These movements are Rococo, Storm and Stress, Mannheim School, Enlightenment and Vienna Classics. These did not only emerge due to aesthetical concerns in art, but also due to the need of a tendency towards a humanist style after breaking away the corrupted Baroque style. In this way, middle class started to manifest and develop itself. It was not easy to transit from a style to another in Classical Period. These transitions occurred slowly when approaches peculiar to Baroque Period started to disappear. There were a lot of conceptual changes in apprehension, value and philosophy in this transition period. The most apparent reason for this change was the economical and social effects on the society. As a result of these effects, the moody atmosphere in Baroque period left its place to a period where ornamentation, spaciousness and communication were on the foreground.

Classical Period was an Era when always applicable music was composed, the orchestra was established, the piano became important, symphonic performances occurred, form became clear and the balance was important in musical structure. This Era is known as Enlightenment Age.

In this study, Classical period and the movements in this period were researched and described in the scope of historical, social and conceptual approaches.

Keywords: *Classical Period, Movements, Enlightenment, Gluck, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven*

INTRODUCTION: CLASSICAL PERIOD

Classical period starts in the second half of 18th century, in 1750 which is accepted as the date of death of Johann Sebastian Bach till 1827 which is the date of death of Ludwig von Beethoven in the history of music. While describing the difference of Classical style from Baroque style, some resources state that works in Classical style are simpler than the works in

Baroque style. Leyla Pamir describes the concept of classical like this: “The concept of classic includes a universal perfection which can be an example in musical works, a synthesis of historical movements, identity of style and form, proportion, pureness, cleanness, clarity” (Pamir, 1989: p. 28). An elaborated style with long sentences that is based on contrapuntal writing was used in Baroque era. Following this era, a brighter, pure and clear style was used in Classical period. Homophonic writing was replaced by contrapuntal writing. Homophonic writing which is known as a technique based on harmony necessitates one of the parties to be more apparent. Contrapuntal writing was not completely abandoned in this period (Selanik, 2010: p. 148).

Each period has its own differences in terms of style. The conditions related to performance were more comprehensible in the periods before Classical Period. It is because the data obtained from the composer at this milestone of musical history was clearer and seen more explicitly. Music with light in quality but also with a dynamic and energetic structure welcomes us in Classical period which follows Baroque period. Expression in this period gained a soft and elastic property.

Emotion became a concept which was controlled meticulously especially in Classical period music. For instance, emotional control is essential while expressing the dynamics in a work and it is a significant element to describe the expressional differences, as well. The use of crescendo and decrescendo, sforzando, piano chord which is qualified to express elegance and lightness are among the best examples of dynamics in Classical period music.

Classical period music generally reflects the prevention of objective emotions, elegance and a little bit of artificiality. These properties became more apparent in instrumental music rather than opera and other dramatic forms (Öztosun, 1997: p. 22). As explained by Çelebi; “Apart from some exceptions, the most important developments happened in instrumental music in terms of style and form. The properties of the era (objectivity, form clarity and simplicity) are reflected in instrumental music rather than dramatic music” (Çelebilioglu, as cited in Öztosun, 1986: p. 23). Virtuosity developed significantly in this period. Church tradition was still protected in religious works of Haydn and Mozart in Classical period. Bass, basso continuo, vertical structure and repetitive harmonic changes were clearly seen in Baroque period music. These kind of harmonic changes were less often in Classical Period music. This added an elegant lightness to the performance of the music of the period.

The most important kind of instrumental music in Classical period is sonata. Classical sonata form consists of 3 or 4 parts. Sonata style was also used in symphonies, concertos and chamber music. The most important form in this period which was different from sinfonia of previous years was symphony (İlyasoğlu, 2001: p. 52). Since symphony was the most important form of classical period and since German composers created perfect and final form for symphony, Germany can be accepted as the motherland of Classicism (Selanik, 2010: p. 148).

Piano and violin sonatas as well as piano sonatas (duo-sonatas) became important in Classical period. A lot of concertos were composed for piano as solo concertos. Opera gained an advanced dimension with the works of Christoph Willibald Gluck (1714-1787) and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756- 1791). Symphony orchestra in 18th century was much smaller than today's and it consisted of main instruments, strings. Wind instruments were used to

strengthen the voice of strings; however, wind instruments gained a distinctive place for themselves at the end of this period.

It was observed that some movements creating classical period occurred while moving from Baroque period to classical period. These movements are Rococo, Storm and Stress, Mannheim School, Enlightenment and Vienna Classics.

Rococo

A new style known as Rococo/Pre-classic occurred after the works of Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) and George Frideric Handel (1685-1759). This appears as a term used in painting, architecture and visual arts. The musical equivalent of the movement in music is “style gallant”.

The movement *Rococo* is a movement which was valued by the noble in the reign of XV Louis (1715-74) in France. Rococo which reflected the taste of noble and aristocratic class of the period was far away from the fanciness of Baroque art, it was simple, elegant, fun, understandable, shiny and ornamented (İlyasoğlu, 2001: p. 49). As stated by Dikicigiller; “Rococo essentially reflects the taste of rich class after the start of the demolishing of palace art” (Dikicigiller, 2007: p. 3). Rococo style covered a musical apprehension where Baroque ornamentations and contrapuntal writing in the late 17th century works were not used, but simple harmony and melodies were used. It is seen that this was the first movement which rebelled against the contrapuntal structure and excessive ornamentation of Baroque period. It is possible to say that this movement was generally used in harpsichord in instrumental music, and in chamber music (Paşaoğlu, 2012: p. 9). Johann Christian Bach (1735-1782) used Rococo style in his works of chamber music. . W. A. Mozart composed his first symphonies in Rococo style (Dikicigiller, 2007: p. 3).

The meaning which described the concept of classic and public’s coming to the foreground was seen in Rococo period best. Artists of the city took the public and the village as an example and sometimes imitated, sometimes interiorized the songs, culture and synthesis of them by directly going beyond them. As a result, a balance was created in the compatibility of all aims and ideal settlement rather than a specific aesthetical concern (Pamir, 1989: p. 27). Rococo in painting is quite naïve, sincere, elegant, colorful and in a light mood. This style in music is structurally light, homophonic and ornamented meticulously. A reaction towards Rococo emerged through the end of 18th century. Therefore the objections about this style’s being deprived of depth and the use of ornaments in this style led Classical Period to start.

François Couperin (1668-1773), Jean Philippe Rameau (1683-1764) in France, Georg Philipp Telemann (1681-1767), Johann Christian Bach (1735-1782) and Georg Frideric Handel (1685-1759) in Germany, Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741), Domenico Scarlatti (1685-1757) and Giuseppe Tartini (1692-1770) in Italy were among the significant composers of the movement.

Storm and Stress

Typical musical styles of the German developed along with the classic period. Storm and Stress movement which had its name from Klinger’s novel in German literature symbolizes the deep sensitivity of 1770s. This movement accepted instinct and emotion as the basis of everything. The German aim to have an expression where each musical sentence gets dense through strong emotions, on the other hand, the French aim to support ordinary musical

sentences through a simple harmony and to take over ornamented melodies short. Therefore, sensitive style of the German opposes to French Rococo in a sense (İlyasoğlu, 2001: p. 49, 50). Unlike Rococo, this movement free from ornamentation is simple even rough.

Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809), Christoph Willibald von Gluck, Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (1714-1788), Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Johann Stamitz (1717-1757) and Christian Cannabich (1731-1798) were among the composers pioneering Storm and Stress movement.

Mannheim School

A real art lover Karl Theodor made the city of Mannheim as one of the most important cultural centers of Europe due to his deep interest in art and literature. Theodor who was also a talented musician, aimed to establish (the best and the most valuable orchestra of the period in Mannheim Palace see figure 1). Accordingly, he established Mannheim School by gathering the master singers and the most famous composers of the time in his palace. The founder of this orchestra was Bohemian violinist and composer Johann Stamitz (see fig. 2).

Mannheim School



Figure 1.

Johann Stamitz (1717-1757)



Figure 2.

The event, which brought Stamitz to Mannheim and caused him to start studies resulting in the formation of instrumental music there, was Prince Karl's delegation Stamitz to the duty of Palace's violinist and chamber music management (Mimaroglu: 2006, p. 66). Stamitz who was assigned to decide on the members of the orchestra in Mannheim died before he was 40 and left a legacy of orchestral tradition which would affect all the composers of the time and would present symphony style to the new era. Mannheim orchestra brought the strings and wood instruments together for the first time in the history. People from all over the world came to listen to this orchestra and admired its sonority and mastership in the sound dynamics. When Mozart listened this orchestra, he was fascinated the melancholic sound of the clarinet which he had heard for the first time (İlyasoğlu, 2001: p. 50). To bring the necessities of rhythm and harmony to the foreground in instrumental music and to create tones that could enthuse in an orchestral unity were among the targets of Stamitz. Along with the introduction of the concept of tone to the orchestra, the conscious to transform musical dynamics into instrumental colors is the principal features of Mannheim orchestra (Barut, 2007: p. 5-6).

Among the famous names in Mannheim Orchestra, there were a lot of composers such as two sons of Johann Stamitz, Karl Stamitz (1745-1801) and Johann Anton Stamitz (1717-1757), Franz Xaver Richter (1709-1789), Christian Cannabich (1731-1798), Ignace Holzbauer (1711-1783), Johann Schobert (ca.1735-1767), Carl Ditters von Dittersdorf (1739-1799).

Symphonic works of Mannheim Orchestra were the preparation period of Haydn and Mozart styles. The orchestra established in the pioneer of Johann Stamitz in Mannheim broadened the horizons in Europe.

Enlightenment

The most important and complicated movement of this century is *Enlightenment*. As Say stated; “Enlightenment for a person is to get rid of being dependent on religion and traditions while thinking and evaluating and to attempt enlightening his/her life with his/her own mind and experiences” (Say, 1994: p. 261). A revolt against the artificiality of the church started in that period. Naturality in religion became important. Locke and Hume in England, Montesquieu and Voltaire in France were the pioneers of this movement.

The atmosphere of Enlightenment was thought to be secular, liberal, equalitarian, practical and progressive. The most important social events of this period were American Declaration of Independence, the Ratification of Constitution and French Revolution (Dikicigiller, 2007: p. 5). Enlightenment era was an intellectual era. Philosophers in that period wrote excellent articles about worldly problems, the power of the mind and the value of the human. Thus, revolutionary conflicts occurred between the old and new ideas. These conflicts had positive effects on Classic Period.

Middle class started to appear in the world of culture and art which belonged only to the nobles in that period. The public’s appearance in the world of music led the content of themes to become more diverse, and all the themes from human relationships to lives of women that were accepted as sins by the religion were performed. The concerts performed in palaces until this period started to be public concerts performed in bigger concert halls. Amateur musicians started to appear in these kinds of vocalizations and this caused music to become simple. All the elements that composing the music became simple. Notation started to be written in a way that could be understood by everyone.

The role of the music in the world of culture and art which belonged only to the noble was to reflect the nature as it is and in an elegant expression. It aimed to enthuse the audience by expressing the emotions directly rather than excessive ornamentation or diversion. The philosophy of enlightenment prepared the important composers of Classical period, Haydn and Mozart (İlyasoğlu, 2001: p. 50-51).

Vienna Classics

This period was developed at the center of Vienna. Beethoven (see fig. 3), Haydn (see fig. 4) and Mozart (see fig. 5) worked for a long time in Vienna throughout their careers although they were not from Vienna. Even though Vienna was the focal point in that period, Classical music was not limited to just Vienna in terms of characters and style.

European musical culture gained a unique power in 18th century and the concept of Vienna Classics emerged. This concept achieved to interiorize and humanize the music. In this period between 1780 and 1827, Vienna Classic Music School was established. Founder composers were Gluck (see fig. 6), Haydn, Mozart and Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827).

Ludwing van Beethoven (1770-1827)



Figure 3.

Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)



Figure 4.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)



Figure 5.

Christoph Willibald von Gluck (1714-1787)



Figure 6.

These composers, also known as Vienna Classics created the start of a historical turning point which represented the creative power of European musical culture in the late 18th century (Say: 1994: p. 291).

There is an embracing, merging and positive feature of cultural nature of Austria. It gets the people closer with its universal culture and as a result, it leads this culture to be internalized. The effects of Mannheim School, church and theatre music of the period, Italian music as well as the cultural substructure of Austria were undeniable for the process of development of Vienna Classic School. But the most important subject in this style was to head for a more humanist and simpler style after breaking away from corrupted late baroque style (Pamir, 1989: p.18-19).

In the middle of 18th century, when bourgeoisie became aware as well as noble class, the music had the opportunity to be a part of public by getting away from the guardianship of palace and aristocracy. This showed how securely the music developed and reached a unity. People felt great admiration for Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven in that period. This is because

they created dynamism in music. Mozart and Haydn were friends and composers who admired each other. The integrity of the symphonies of Haydn and his mastership while scoring inspired Beethoven and Mozart. Classical forms started to be created by Haydn, reached perfection with Mozart and reached a peak of classical music with Beethoven. Beethoven was a composer who learnt from Haydn in his early times. Although he learnt from Haydn, he started to go beyond the classical patterns in his late period. Therefore, Beethoven is accepted as a bridge between the classical and romantic period.

Simple melodies, dances and the catchy music of the middle class who grew up in Classical Period had an important place in the works of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven. As Say stated; “We can say that common language of the music of Vienna Classic Music School developed an understanding and taste peculiar to Vienna in the youth works of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven” (Say, 1994: p. 292).

CONCLUSION:

Classical period has its place in the history of music starting from the second half of 18th century when J.S. Bach died in 1750 till the death of L. von Beethoven in 1827. the movements occurred in that period were Rococo, Storm and Stress, Mannheim School, Enlightenment and Vienna Classics. These movements have important places in the history of music. These movements passed through a lot of stages together and classical period became a period where relief and communication were on the foreground.

In order to sum up these transition movements; Rococo reflects the taste of noble and aristocratic class of that period, It is seen as a movement valued by the noble in the reign of Louis XV (1715-74) in France. This movement is away from the vanity of Baroque period and it is simple. Storm and Stress Movement got its named from Klinger’s novel in German literature. This movement perceives instinct and emotion as the basis of everything. A style known as Mannheim School emerged from the music of a community which consisted of the most famous composers and singers of that period. As an orchestra, this community used the strings and wind instruments together for the first time in the history of music. When Mozart listened to this orchestra, he admired the melancholic sound of the clarinet he had listened for the first time. The most important and complicated movement of that century is Enlightenment. In this period, middle class started to appear in the world of art and culture which had belonged only to the noble. The founders of the Vienna Classic School, also known as Vienna Classics are Haydn, Gluck, Mozart and Beethoven. The most important subject in the development process of Vienna Classic School is to head towards a simpler and more humanist style by getting away from corrupted baroque style. Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven who had dynamized the music in great deal were admired by many.

In consideration of all this information, it has been thought that the research is going to constitute a good source to guide people who listen or perform music in a professional or amateur way and Classical Period and its movements are going to be understood in the scope of historical, social and conceptual approaches.

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