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The Socioeconomic Background of Europe During the First Half of the Twentieth Century Reflected in Select Violin Works of Violinist-Composers Kreisler, Ysaÿe, and Bacewicz

Carlie D. Geyer
Eastern Kentucky University, carlie_geyer1@mymail.eku.edu

Eastern Kentucky University

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Carlie Geyer

Mentor

Dr. Sila Darville

Department of Music, Assistant Professor of Violin and Viola

ABSTRACT

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Carlie Geyer

Dr. Sila Darville, Department of Music/Assistant Professor of Violin and Viola

A number of violinist-composers lived and composed during the twentieth century, yielding an abundance of notable violin compositions. During the first half of the century, socioeconomic changes brought about by World Wars I and II significantly impacted culture, including violin repertoire by European violinist-composers. Responses to the socioeconomic climate of a given time and place is very likely to be reflected within art, music, and culture of that time and place. In this study, I will focus on the lives and violin compositions of three violinist-composers of the twentieth century, Fritz Kreisler (Austria-Hungary), Eugène Ysaÿe (Belgium), and Grażyna Bacewicz (Poland). The experiences of these violinist-composers evoked unique responses to their surroundings, and understanding their unique circumstances provides insight into the music they composed. The motivation for this study is to examine the violin compositions of three notable twentieth century violinist-composers to gain a deeper understanding of the violin works written by composers who were impacted by the socioeconomic climate of Europe before, during, and between the World Wars. In order to form a comprehensive understanding of this topic, I will be examining the general history of the violin and its construction as it pertains to technique, the progression of technique within violin

repertoire leading up to the twentieth century, and the general historical overview of Europe and the specific countries pertaining to the violinist-composers relevant to this study.

Keywords and phrases: twentieth century, violinist-composers, World War I, World War II, Belgium, Austria-Hungary, Poland, Fritz Kreisler, Eugène Ysaÿe, Grażyna Bacewicz

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Introduction

Composers of classical music have written repertoire for the violin since the beginning of the instrument's existence. In the years since its inception, the violin has proven to be inherently soloistic due to its capability of wide range and demanding technique. The existing collection of music composed specifically for the violin is extensive and spans the length of several centuries and compositional traditions. Developments in the instrument's construction and innovations in violin technique by prominent violinists and composers have led to distinct styles within the progression of violin literature and the extensive repertoire associated with the violin.

Changes observed in compositional and performance techniques often reflect the historical and social context of specific musical periods, as well as the personal and social situations of individual composers. Perhaps one of the most important considerations of early twentieth century music is the life and experience of its composers. The vast array of reactions from individuals in response to the severity of the turmoil caused by World Wars I and II can account for distinct trends observed within musical compositions that emerged from these times. Political and economic conditions influence those who write musical compositions, providing historical context that can be observed in the details of cultural art forms.[1] A composer's zeitgeist will have much influence on their compositional philosophy and practice. The scope of psychological and emotional responses to significant social conditions can be varied, causing responses of despair,

[1] Eyerman, Ron, and Andrew Jamison. 1998. Music and Social Movements: *Mobilizing Traditions in the Twentieth Century*, 7.

creativity, and/or opportunism.[2] For this reason, the radical transfiguration of the social and economic conditions of the world during the early twentieth century directly affected the music that composers wrote for the violin. The social and political effects of World Wars I and II during the first half of the twentieth century played an important role in the lives and creative output of classical music composers.

An important corpus of the violin repertoire composed during the twentieth century was written by composers who were also accomplished violinists. Each of these composers also had a unique connection to the uneasy socioeconomic environment in which they lived during the first half of the twentieth century. Three of the most notable violinist-composers to emerge from the twentieth century, Fritz Kreisler (1875 – 1962), Eugène Ysaÿe (1858 – 1931), and Grażyna Bacewicz (1909 – 1969), composed important works for the violin that display unique responses to their socioeconomic surroundings within their music and demonstrate the social, psychological, and emotional influence caused by the social shifts during this time period.

[2] William Brooks, Christina Bashford, and Gayle Magee. *Over Here, Over There: Transatlantic Conversations on the Music of World War I*, 3.

Advancements in the Violin's Construction

The earliest known surviving violin was created in Cremona, Italy during the sixteenth century and is credited to be the work of Andrea Amati, whose artistry has served as the model for all violin makers.[3] Since this initial model of the violin emerged, violin makers have altered the instrument in attempt to achieve advancements in the instrument's artistic capabilities. Consequently, violin repertoire has been given the ability to undergo significant developments due to the detailed modifications and advancements in the basic architecture of the instrument over time. The violin is said to have undergone two major revolutions since its invention that have drastically altered the instrument's technical capabilities and repertoire.[4] The first of these revolutions occurred during the late eighteenth century and was initiated by the innovations in violin and bow construction.[5] The second of the violin's major revolutions occurred in the twentieth century and is characterized by modifications in the violin's strings.[6]

Differences between the early violin and the modern violin may not be apparent in the overall appearance of the instrument, but through meticulous alterations to its design the instrument has evolved to accommodate increasingly demanding technical methods.[7] The violin of the Baroque period differs from the modern violin in the shape, angle, and thickness of the instrument's neck. In addition to this modification, violin makers have altered the bridge, tailpiece, fingerboard, and soundpost, which all contribute to the instrument's sound, as well as the violinist's maneuverability. Instruments of the Baroque

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[3] Stowell, Robin. 1992. *The Cambridge Companion to the Violin*, 56.
[4] Dann, Eliass. "The Second Revolution in the History of the Violin: A Twentieth-Century Phenomenon," 64.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Ibid., 68.
[7] Ibid., 34

period were constructed to be lighter in weight, giving them a much lighter sound than the modern violin and allowing only for a more delicate production of sound.[8] These elements of structure created boundaries of which violin technique could not yet emerge, establishing the characteristics that define the Baroque style of violin playing.

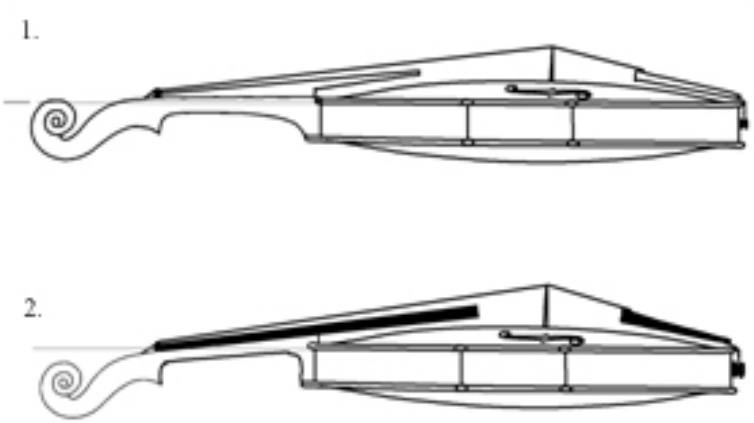

Figure 1: Comparison of Baroque violin (1) and modern violin (2) showing differences in neck, fingerboard, and bridge[9]

The front of the violin is designed to be flat, so the invention of the chinrest by Louis Spohr during the early seventeenth century was a turning point in the somatic aspect of violin playing.[10] The chinrest functioned to close the space between the violin and the player's shoulder and jaw, which alleviated tension produced by the violinist's effort to hold the violin on the shoulder. This development was significant because it granted the violinist increased comfort as well as increased maneuverability and dexterity which led to expansion of violin technique.

[8] Dann, Eliass. "The Second Revolution in the History of the Violin: A Twentieth-Century Phenomenon," 87-8
[9] Diagram by George Stopanni, source: http://www.themonteverdiviolins.org/baroque-violin.html.
[10] Stowell, Robin. *The Cambridge Companion to the Violin*, 78.

Modifications to the violin bow also contribute to the advancement of violin technique and repertoire. The violin bow emerged well before the violin, but the increasing complexity of violin playing demanded modifications to be made in the bow.[11] Perhaps the most evident difference between early violin bows and modern bows is the curvature of the stick. Early bows were designed with a permanent tension which made it difficult to control. Developers of the violin bow opted for a flatter stick and implemented the frog and altered the shape of the stick's tip. These modifications contribute to "the essential playing qualities of the modern bow" which aided in advancing violin technique and repertoire.[12]

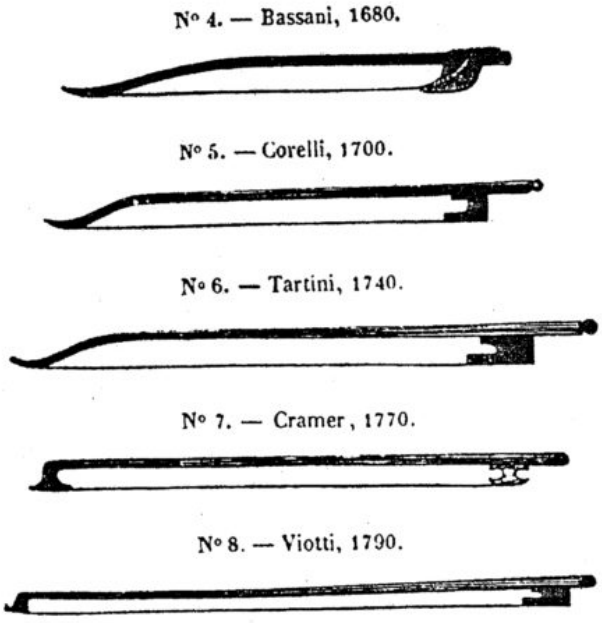

Figure 2: Comparison of violin bows from the seventeenth century to late eighteenth century[13]

[11] Stowell, Robin. *The Cambridge Companion to the Violin*, 82.
[12] Ibid., 92-4.
[13] https://www.esm.rochester.edu/beethoven/orchestra-discussions/.

The Violinist-Composers and their Contributions to the Repertoire from 1600-1900

The violin's shifting role within classical music is largely responsible for the progression of repertoire written for the instrument. The church had some responsibility in the instrument's developments, as the violin's earliest roles were in sacred music.[14] In its early years of existence, the violin functioned as a "lowly dance instrument," but has since transformed to become the soloistic instrument it is today.[15] During the seventeenth century, violinists and singers were the most highly regarded performers due to their similarity in aesthetic, but as advancements in the violin began to emerge violin music surpassed music written for voice in technical demand and virtuosic character.[16] The course of violin repertoire's advancement was set in motion by prominent violinists in the Baroque and Classical periods and has continued to progress over time. Among some of the most significant composers from the Baroque and Classical periods that contributed to the advancement of solo violin repertoire are Heinrich von Biber, Arcangelo Corelli, Antonio Vivaldi, Johann Sebastian Bach, and Giovanni Battista Viotti.[17]

The Baroque and Classical periods generally produced violin repertoire in the form of small sonatas and concertos as well as music for unaccompanied violin. German violin virtuoso Heinrich von Biber (1644 – 1704) initiated development within the violin repertoire with the 'Mystery' (or 'Rosary') sonatas for violin and continuo, c. 1675, in which he employed the use of "brilliant technique" and "expressive intensity" that had not been seen before during the seventeenth century.[18] Biber is perhaps most recognized

[14] Bachmann, Alberto. *An Encyclopedia Of the Violin,* 424.
[15] Stowell, Robin. *The Cambridge Companion to the Violin*, 149.
[16] Ibid., 150.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Ibid., 471, 158.

for his contribution to the unaccompanied violin genre, the extended work *Passacaglia* written around the same time as the Rosary sonatas.[19] Italian violinist Arcangelo Corelli (1653 – 1713) is remembered not as one of history's most virtuosic violinists, but his compositions for the violin were monumental developments in the violin repertoire. His violin sonatas, Op. 5 were significant musical influences for violin sonatas for composers following Corelli.[20] Corelli's violin sonatas are considered as the embodiment of the Baroque style.[21] Corelli's balance of melody and harmony within these pieces was so successful that they became the model for future violin works.[22]

The death of Corelli marked the development of the virtuoso image as well as an emergence of a new style of violin repertoire, the concerto.[23] The violin concerto was created to provide the display of virtuosity, and one of the leading violinists and composers that contributed to this style was Italian virtuoso Antonio Vivaldi (1678 – 1741).[24] Vivaldi's compositions are reflective of shifting musical styles in the early eighteenth century, and he is probably most well-known for his concerti, of which he produced approximately five hundred during his lifetime.[25] Vivaldi consistently composed his concertos in the three-movement format, establishing the standard structure of this relatively new model of violin repertoire for centuries to come.[26] It is important to keep in mind the style characteristics of music from this period, as well as the construction of instruments during Vivaldi's time. While instruments, bows, and styles of

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[19] Stowell, Robin. *The Cambridge Companion to the Violin*, 527
[20] Stowell, Robin. *The Early Violin and Viola: A Practical Guide,* 13.
[21] Stowell, Robin. *The Cambridge Companion to the Violin*, 160.
[22] Bachmann, Albert. *An Encyclopedia Of the Violin,* 424.
[23] Stowell, Robin. *The Cambridge Companion to the Violin*, 162.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Burkholder, J. Peter, Grout, Donald, and Palisca, Claude. 2019. "A History of Western Music." Tenth Edition, 407.
[26] Ibid., 410.

violin playing have transformed considerably since Vivaldi's day, these compositions can still be played effectively on modern instruments and in modern styles. Vivaldi's violin concertos do, however, convey noticeably different sound and style when played as they would have been during the Baroque period.[27]

One of the most significant contributors to the progression of the violin repertoire was German composer and musician Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 – 1750). A staple in the violin repertoire are the set of Six Sonatas and Partitas for Unaccompanied Violin by Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 – 1750). Bach was said to have been a great violinist himself and had a deep understanding of the possibilities of music that could be played on stringed instruments, making his music for solo stringed instruments especially influential.[28] Three hundred years after the emergence of Bach's solo sonatas and partitas, they still remain essential vehicles of technical development and are considered to be a part of the core repertoire in most violin education systems.[29] Bach composed these sonatas and partitas during his service to Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Cöthen between the years 1717 – 1723, where he held the post *kapellmeister,* or conductor and chamber music director.[30] Due to the religious practices of the Prince and the musical demands of Bach's position, Bach's service in Anhalt-Cöthen allowed him to compose a considerable amount of secular music, and during this time he wrote some of his most famous string

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[27] Burkholder, J. Peter, Grout, Donald, and Palisca, Claude. 2019. "A History of Western Music." Tenth Edition, 414

[28] Ritchie, Stanley. *The Accompaniment in 'Unaccompanied' Bach: Interpreting the Sonatas and Partitas for Violin,* 2.

[29] Wang, Yu-Chi. *A Survey of the Unaccompanied Violin Repertoire, Centering on Works by J.S. Bach and Eugene Ysaÿe,* 69.

[30] Marshall, Robert L. and Marshall, Traute M. 2016. *Exploring the World of J. S. Bach: A Traveler's Guide*.

works including six sonatas and partitas for unaccompanied violin, believed to have been completed in 1720.[31]

Bach's six sonatas and partitas became popular and remain so by virtue of their elements that emphasize the violin's soloistic capabilities. These compositions are written for 'unaccompanied violin,' but may be more accurately described as violin sonatas and partitas without continuo, as the voicing of the compositions allow the violin to create its own accompaniment.[32] Bach's solo works for stringed instruments are known for the implementation of counterpoint and polyphony in the form of multiple voices written within a single musical line. Bach's affinity for polyphonic writing for stringed instruments outlines the disruption of typical melodic structure and patterns that multiple voices create.[33] Not all of Bach's compositions for solo stringed instruments contain polyphonic voicing, but most are known for their technical demand and emphasis of the stringed instruments' capabilities of multiple-stopped notes.[34] It is necessary to include the violin works of Bach within this overview of the progression of violin repertoire as the significance of Bach's influence pertains to twentieth century violin works discussed here. Bach's sonatas and partitas for unaccompanied violin are important to mention as they served as a form of inspiration for Ysaÿe to compose his set of sonatas, which will be discussed in more detail in a later chapter.

Italian violinist and composer Giovanni Battista Viotti (1755 – 1824) of the Classical period contributed a number of violin concertos to the violin repertoire that are

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[31] Marshall, Robert L. and Marshall, Traute M. 2016. *Exploring the World of J. S. Bach: A Traveler's Guide*, 66.
[32] Williams, Peter F. *J.S. Bach: A Life in Music,* 140.
[33] Davis, Stacey. "Implied Polyphony in the Solo String Works of J.S. Bach: A Case for the Perceptual Relevance of Structural Expression.", 432.
[34] Davis, Stacey. "Implied Polyphony in the Solo String Works of J.S. Bach: A Case for the Perceptual Relevance of Structural Expression.", 423.

recognized for the serious tone they convey and implementation of less virtuosic display than other composers were writing for the violin at this time.[35] Viotti's preference for this style of composition as opposed to the bravura tradition of other violin works triggered the shift of violin music into the Romantic style that was to come about in the following century.[36]

The nineteenth century violin repertoire is characterized by an elevated focus on virtuosic display in the form of large-scale concertos and the Romantic period musical style. The nineteenth century, referred to by some as the 'age of the virtuoso,' was a period of time in which the violin concerto genre experienced significant developments in the status of the violin concerto.[37] Notable violinist-composers of this century that contributed to the virtuosic nature of the Romantic genre include virtuoso violinists Niccolò Paganini (1782 – 1840),Henry Vieuxtemps (1820 – 1881), Henryk Wieniawski (1835 – 1880), to name a few.[38] These violinist-composers are credited with exploring and pushing the boundaries of the violin as well as developing the technical artistry of the repertoire.[39]

A shift in the way the violin was used as a solo instrument caused a reemergence of solo violin repertoire in the twentieth century. Previously, the violin had not seen a large output of solo repertoire for at least eighty years due to the fact that during the nineteenth century, composers preferred to write less for the solo violin or violin with piano accompaniment, as they were more interested in writing concertos for the instrument.

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[35] Stowell, Robin. *The Cambridge Companion to the Violin*, 188.
[36] Ibid., 189.
[37] Stowell, Robin. *The Cambridge Companion to the Violin*, 422.
[38] Stowell, Robin. *The Early Violin and Viola: A Practical Guide*, 16.
[39] Stowell, Robin. *The Cambridge Companion to the Violin,* 202.

While the nineteenth century is known for the emphasis of large-scale violin concertos, the twentieth century is known as the 'golden age of the violin' in response to the 'golden age' violinists whose prominence revolutionized violin technique, repertoire, and performance practice.[40]

[40] Stowell, Robin. *The Cambridge Companion to the Violin,* 247.

Historical Overview of Europe from 1900-1914

Peace at the Turn of the Century

At the turn of the twentieth century Europe experienced a period of relative peace and harmony, as the preceding century that had begun with wars and revolutions had finally come to a conclusion and most nations of Europe had peace with others.[41] The century commenced with the Paris Universal Exposition world fair of 1900, which served as a celebration of nations' successes and glories of the preceding century as they brought to Paris cultural treasures that displayed their sense of national pride activities.[42] The Exposition highlighted the monumental industrial, scientific, artistic, and technological achievements of the previous century, provoking a sense of unity among the nations.[43] The goal of the colonial and industrial exhibits put on display by attending nations was "to educate the millions of visitors."[44] Although the purpose of the Exposition was to promote unity and celebrate national triumph, the pavilions of some nations doubled as a declaration of their status as a great power, foreshadowing the rivalry for power that would soon follow, leading to World War I.[45] The world fair attracted tens of millions of visitors and provided the recognition of other countries' achievements. Many great powers left the exhibition with an even stronger sense of nationalistic pride.[46]

Europe had seen a drastic increase in population during the decades since the conclusion of the Napoleonic Wars (1803 – 1815) and Franco-Prussian War (1870 – 1871), which was supported by the recent increase in technology, industry, and

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[41] MacMillan, Margaret. *The War That Ended Peace: The Road to 1914*, 65.
[42] Ibid., 57.
[43] Ibid., 68.
[44] Mandell, Richard. *Paris 1900: The Great World's Fair,* 68.
[45] Ibid., 63.
[46] Ibid., 64.

commerce.[47] Increase in populations led to significant changes in the workforce and social class. The expansion of businesses and factories that was a direct result of cities and towns experiencing growth led to greater opportunities for citizens and more people were working in industrial cities than ever before.[48] This shift in society and economic conditions required governments to engage in the success of its members. Remnants of the previous century's wars embedded into the memory of European societies, and the intention of preserving peace and avoiding the turbulence of more wars.[49] Governments began to provide security and education opportunities for their citizens with the goal of promoting peace within their societies. Europeans were not only beginning to experience greater economic prosperity but also improved living conditions and even more nutritious and diverse diets.[50]

Disruption of Peace Leading to 1914

Life in Europe before World War I was peaceful and has been described as the 'Golden Age of Security' by those who experienced their youth during the peaceful years early twentieth century.[51] Peace and harmony among European societies did not last for long. The peaceful atmosphere Europe had come to know experienced a transformation as political tension and struggles for power began to emerge. This shift in peaceful relations between European nations took people by surprise, as most were under the impression that having experienced the devastation of revolution and war in the previous century, the nations would never even think of reentering in the 'barbaric' scheme of

[47] Mandell, Richard. *Paris 1900: The Great World's Fair,* 69
[48] MacMillan, Margaret. *The War That Ended Peace: The Road to 1914*, 70.
[49] Ibid., 73.
[50] Ibid., 77.
[51] Ibid., 78.

war.[52] During this time period, Europe experienced many alterations to the fabric of the social construction of society.

The turmoil and upheaval of the wars in the twentieth century, namely World War I or the "Great War," played a large role in establishing modernism and marked the shifting ideals of romanticism into those of modernity.[53] The influence of the Great War and the political and social climate it contrived are observable within cultural aspects including art and music. Cultural works of this era tended to memorialize and deplore war rather than glorify it.[54] Composers of classical music transformed along with this unsettling and ever-changing social and economic climate, and their most notable works emerged from significant experiences during their lives.

[52] MacMillan, Margaret. *The War That Ended Peace: The Road to 1914*, 79.
[53] Stout, Janis P. 2005. *Coming Out of War: Poetry, Grieving, and the Culture of the World Wars*, 2.
[54] Ibid., 8.

Fritz Kreisler and Nostalgia in Violin Repertoire

Overview of Austria-Hungary at the Turn of the Century

Figure 3: Map of Austro-Hungarian Empire[55]

Prior to the First World War, Austria thrived in its "Golden Age of Security" that had been established by its almost thousand-year-old monarchy.[56] The possession of financial security and freedom – at one point only a luxury enjoyed by wealthier individuals – became possible for the great masses. Poverty became essentially nonexistent, and the feeling of security made life seem "worth while."[57] Financial security created a sense of safety and ultimately an sort of arrogance that led to an emphasis on luxurious lifestyles, and comfort became accessible to not only the upper class but to the middle class as well.[58] More resources and time could be dedicated to things such as education and the improvement of cities' infrastructure. Pre-war Austria – notably the capital city of Vienna

[55] MacMillan, Margaret. *The War That Ended Peace: The Road to 1914,* 494.
[56] Zweig, Stefan. *"The World of Yesterday,"* 1.
[57] Ibid., 2.
[58] Ibid., 3.

– was able to thrive culturally under conditions of financial safety. In Vienna, people lived easily and took much pleasure in the luxurious aspects of life, eating well, visiting theaters, and making "excellent music."[59] Expendable resources turned individuals' attention to extravagance and enjoyment and music was a significant part of this. People spent more money on expensive clothing, education, and transportation, and found more time for leisurely and enjoyable activities, such as salon concert performances given in the residence of a wealthy individual. An atmosphere of elegance emerged and was prominent in the lifestyle and celebration of Austrian culture. This sense of security, however, became dangerous as the notion of progress created a confidence that obscuring the possibility of failure.

During the First World War, Austria-Hungary suffered significant damage to its economy, impacting the lifestyles of Austrian civilian populations. At the onset of World War I, Austria-Hungary and Germany were both quick to send large numbers of forces into war with little consideration of its consequences. This mobilization of Austro-Hungarian armies halted the normal operation of industry and commerce and affected a trend of temporary unemployment in Austrian civilians.[60] Transport of food and goods by locomotive was decreased, as these forms of transportation were in constant use to feed the war machine. Agricultural production plummeted with farmers' lack of access to the foreign fertilizers they depended on to provide the nation's food requirements, and domestic production quickly fell below Austria-Hungary's needs.[61] Austria-Hungary

[59] Smithsonian Journeys Quarterly, *"The Unhurried World of Pre-War Vienna."*
[60] Herwig, Holger. *The First World War: Germany and Austria-Hungary 1914-1918,* 270.
[61] Ibid.

faced an unprecedented grain shortage, leading to the widescale slaughter of livestock and worsening conditions as the war lengthened.[62]

Food shortages and hunger, and the resulting deterioration of the economy, were perhaps the most damaging consequences of the war experienced by Austria-Hungary during World War I. The deficiencies in food production led to high levels of inflation for food prices.[63] Families struggled to keep food on the table, as there was not much food to be purchased. The food that was available was too expensive to be afforded on the incomes of Austrian civilians after the economy plummeted. Food riots and pillaging of shops broke out in protest of rising prices and lack of food.[64] Austro-Hungarian civilians, who had once been full of enthusiasm for the entrance of their forces into the war, now resented the war and were discouraged by the dismal conditions they were unable to escape.

[62] Ibid., 271.
[63] Herwig, Holger. *The First World War: Germany and Austria-Hungary 1914-1918*, 272.
[64] Ibid., 273.

Fritz Kreisler (February 2, 1875 – January 29, 1962)

Perhaps no violinist-composer had the ability to reflect the upheaval of the first half of the twentieth century within music like Austrian violinist Fritz Kreisler. Kreisler was one of the dominant figures of violin during the 'golden age of violin playing' between the world wars.[65] Friedrich-Max "Fritz" Kreisler was born in Vienna, Austria in 1875 and was raised in an "atmosphere of refinement."[66] Kreisler had a natural ability for playing the violin and is said to have had a violin in his hand "as soon as he could hold one."[67] Being a child prodigy led Kreisler to win many awards and spend some time as a touring violinist, after which he expanded his horizons outside of music with studies in medicine in Vienna as well as art in Rome and Paris.[68]

Kreisler likely had the most hands-on experience with war and social upheaval of any of the composers discussed here. When the First World War broke out in 1914, Kreisler spent a brief period of time in combat with the Austrian army. Kreisler's experience at the frontlines of the war in the Austrian army during the war was intense and ignited extreme personal transformation that materialized in his violin works. An individual's unique perception of a daunting experience such as war differs from that of the next, and this interpretation of an experience is affected by many subjective factors. The internalization of an experience such as participation in a war leads individuals to the identification of expression in society through art and culture.[69] Kreisler's experiences and the life he lived after the conclusion of his time in the Austrian army provide insight

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[65] Stowell, Robin. *The Cambridge Companion to the Violin*, 223.
[66] Victor Talking Machine Company. "Catalogue of Victor Records."
[67] Holmes, John. "Fritz Kreisler."
[68] Ibid.
[69] *Bischof, Günter, Ferdinand Karlhofer, and Samuel R. Williamson, eds. 1914: Austria-Hungary, the Origins, and the First Year of World War I.,*146.

into how World War I impacted his life and manifested in the musical decisions he went on to make. In his firsthand recalling of his experiences as an officer in the Austrian Army, "Four Weeks in the Trenches: The War Story of a Violinist," Kreisler expresses the emotional toll that the "extraordinary physical and mental stress" had on those who served in the army during the war.[70] One of Kreisler's chief claims of the impact of the war was the shift in perspective of importance of individuality and personal needs that was brought upon him by his experience. Kreisler felt that the gravity of war lessened the significance of personal problems and even concern for the future, as the war brought such devastation to Europe, and "threatened the very existence of nations."[71] Kreisler's experiences in the trenches brought him face to face with death and learning to adapt to the omnipresence of death was a difficult thing to do. Kreisler witnessed a great amount of violence, suffering, and death among fellow soldiers of his platoon but claimed to have been affected most intensely by the death of the very first victim.[72] In Kreisler's recounting of the war, he discusses the psychologic and "almost hypnotic" effects of being on the firing line.[73] The war caused Kreisler to have an altered sense of perception for the way things really were, and he claimed that he even had voids in is memory trying to recall all of his time on the frontlines.[74]

Kreisler's natural skills on the violin led to success as a violinist as well as a composer and arranger of great works of violin concert repertoire. His beginnings as a violinist from a young age gave him the capacity to rise to prominence, being hailed the 'king of

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[70] Kreisler, Fritz. 1915. *Four Weeks in the Trenches: The War Story of A Violinist.*
[71] Ibid.
[72] Kreisler, Fritz. "A Violinist at the Front," 177.
[73] Kreisler, Fritz. *Four Weeks in the Trenches,* 2.
[74] Ibid., 3.

violinists' by the beginning of the twentieth century. He was known for a "unique combination of intensity and relaxation," a style that was only enhanced by his nearly constant vibrato. His skill on the violin gave him the ability to perform with a sense of naturalness that contributed to his expertise as in interpreter and performer.[75] His artistry provided him with the ingenuity to compose and play violin music with "emotional expression demanded" by his day.[76]

Kreisler's music is compelling in regard to his experience as a soldier on the firing line in that it often conveys an optimistic and cheerful character. One might expect Kreisler's music to lean more to the side of sorrow and mourning, reflecting his firsthand encounter with violence and death in a more pessimistic nature. Though Kreisler had very close encounters with the violence of war, his music was not profoundly affected by it. Kreisler's surroundings during his upbringing in the elegant atmosphere of Vienna impacted his compositional style more heavily than his war experiences did. His compositions after experiencing the war tended to recall the musical styles he was known for prior to the war.

[75] Stowell, Robin. *The Cambridge Companion to the Violin,* 216.
[76] Ibid.

Alt-Wiener Tanzweisen (*Three Viennese Melodies*) (1905)

Alt-Wiener Tanzweisen, or *Three Viennese Melodies*, by Fritz Kreisler is comprised of three short pieces for violin and piano titled "Liebesleid" ("Love's Sorrow"), "Liebesfreud" ("Love's Joy"), and "Schön Rosmarin" ("Beautiful Rosmarin"). Today, the three pieces of this set are typically played separately but were published together in the year 1905. Kreisler was popular as an arranger of violin music and his *Three Viennese Melodies* were believed by many to be arrangements of another composer when they first began to gain popularity.[77] Kreisler's compositional style was strongly rooted in his Viennese childhood and the Viennese tradition, and *Alt-Wiener Tanzweisen* is a reflection of Viennese folk-music traditions Kreisler had a preference for using.[78]

The general character of Kreisler's three pieces encompassed in *Alt-Wiener Tanzweisen* is a call back to the idyllic spirit of Vienna from the nineteenth century. Kreisler uses the titles of the dances literally to convey distinct characters through each. "Liebesleid," or "Love's Sorrow" is meant to suggest a character or mourning, achieved through technical elements like *portamento* and *glissandi*.[79] The *portamento* and *glissando* are both expressive tools that can be employed with the use of shifting in stringed instruments. Shifting in its basic form is a technical function, but when used more artistically can become a "means of expression" through the execution of *glissando* and *portamento*, which entail finger movement without the lightening of pressure in the bow or the fingers.[80] The *portamento* technique is furthered by Kreisler's indication of passages to be played on specific strings. By playing notes that could be played on the A

[77] Holmes, John. "Fritz Kreisler."
[78] Ibid.
[79] Ibid.
[80] Galamian, Ivan. Principles of Violin Playing and Teaching, 109.

string, for instance, on the D string, the use of *portamento* is emphasized. (**Figure 4**) By employing these technical elements in "Liebesleid," Kreisler uses the voice-like quality of the violin to convey human emotions. Through the violin's voice-like quality and the use of technical elements like *portamento* and *glissando* in the piece, Kreisler conveys a sense of elegance corresponding to the atmosphere of refinement in Austria-Hungary, and especially Vienna, at the beginning of the twentieth century.[81]

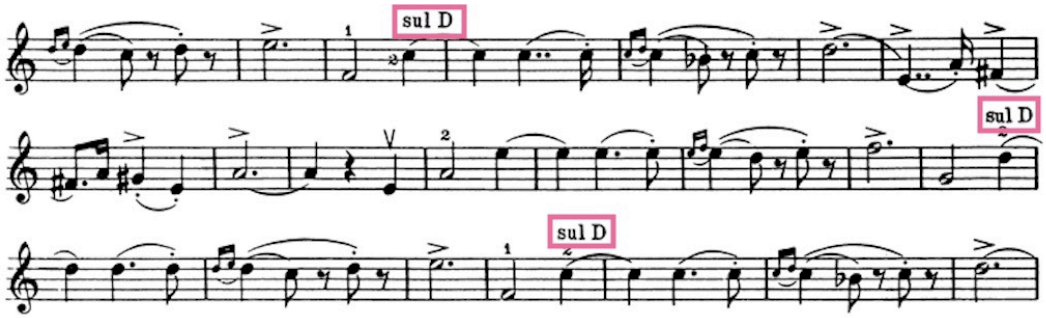

Figure 4: "Sul D" passages in "Liebeslied" add to the mournful tone of the portamento technqique

The second and third pieces of the *Three Viennese Melodies*, "Liebesfreud" and "Schön Rosmarin," suggest a character that is clearly the opposite of "Liebesleid," and also convey a tone implied by their titles. "Liebesfreud" and "Schön Rosmarin" sound lighthearted and cheerful with forward-moving tempi and employ upbeat rhythms and frequent use of double-stopped notes.[82] Kreisler's expressive markings such as *allegro* (brisk and lively) and *grazioso* (graceful and flowing) contribute to the romantic and dance-like character of "Liebesfreud." Kreisler also employs grace notes in passages that contribute to increased rhythmic complexity and add ornamental flourish to the melody. (**Figure 5**) Kreisler's use of lively and graceful tempo markings like *allegro* and *grazioso*

[81] Holmes. John. "Fritz Kreisler."
[82] Ibid.

serve the purpose of portraying the upbeat and cheerful atmosphere of Austria-Hungary during early twentieth century.

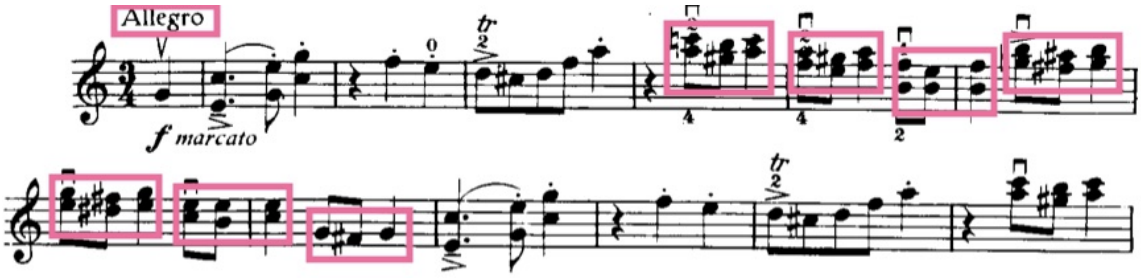

Figure 5: Allegro section of "Liebesfreud" with rhythmic double-stopped sequence

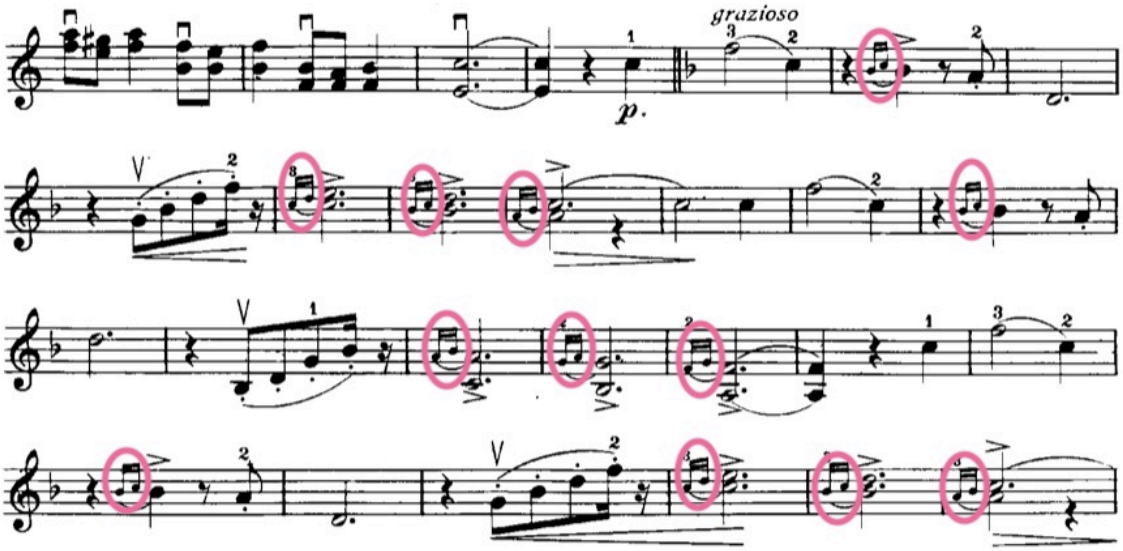

Figure 6: Grazioso section of "Liebesfreud" with frequent use of grace notes

The final piece of the set, “Schön Rosmarin,” is often thought of and played separately from the two preceding pieces in the collection but is a unifying member of the *Three Viennese Melodies.* The expressive marking *grazioso* gives the piece a flowy, dancelike quality, as well as do the articulated scale and chord structure passages. (**Figure 7**) Kreisler perpetuates the beauty, romance, and bliss of pre-war Viennese art and music culture alive within “Liebesfreud,” “Schön Rosmarin,” and “Liebesleid,” drawing on the

atmosphere of elegance enjoyed by aristocracy and bourgeoise in the early twentieth century and setting the tone for much of his later violin works in the salon music genre.

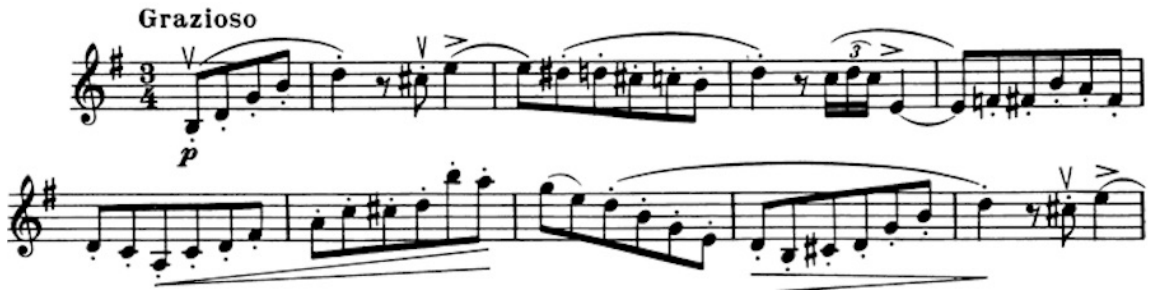

Figure 7: An example of the grazioso marking in "Schön Rosmarin," as well as the dancelike flow of the piece

Kreisler's personal playing styles as well as his life experiences shaped the type of music he composed for the violin. Kreisler is remembered for his "novel technique" which was distinctly marked by a constantly vibrating left hand.[83] Kreisler's distinct vibrato gave his playing a very expressive quality, undoubtedly influencing the stye of music he composed for the instrument. Much of Kreisler's music written for the violin, including the three pieces in *Alt-Wiener Tanzweisen,* is notable for allowing the player to demonstrate skillful and beautiful playing. Kreisler's affinity for this style of composing may be attributed to his experience of Vienna's pre-war salon elegance. Kreisler's life witnessed pre-war as well as post-war Vienna. Vienna before the war was the cultural epicenter of not only Austria, but of Europe.

[83] Stowell, Robin. *The Cambridge Companion to the Violin*, 216.

Eugène Ysaÿe and Emotional Expression in Violin Repertoire

Overview of Belgium

Figure 8: Map of Belgium[84]

The country of Belgium faced extreme social and economic upheaval with the onset of World War I. German invasion and occupation of Belgium during the Great War uprooted the lives of Belgian civilians and brought devastating loss to the country as a whole. Belgium was initially intended to be only a means by which German forces would enter France, but the resistance of the Belgian government ultimately prompted dispute and bloodshed among the German troops and the Belgian people.[85] The German invasion of Belgium disrupted not only the social structure of Belgium, but also led to futile destruction of elements of the nation's culture. German forces responded to Belgian

[84] https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/belgium.
[85] MacMillan, Margaret. *The War That Ended Peace: The Road to 1914,* 25.

resistance by destroying homes and buildings. The burning of the fifteenth century library in Louvain symbolized the destruction of the war in Belgium, and the German invasion of a neutral nation such as Belgium damaged the international reputation of Germany.[86]

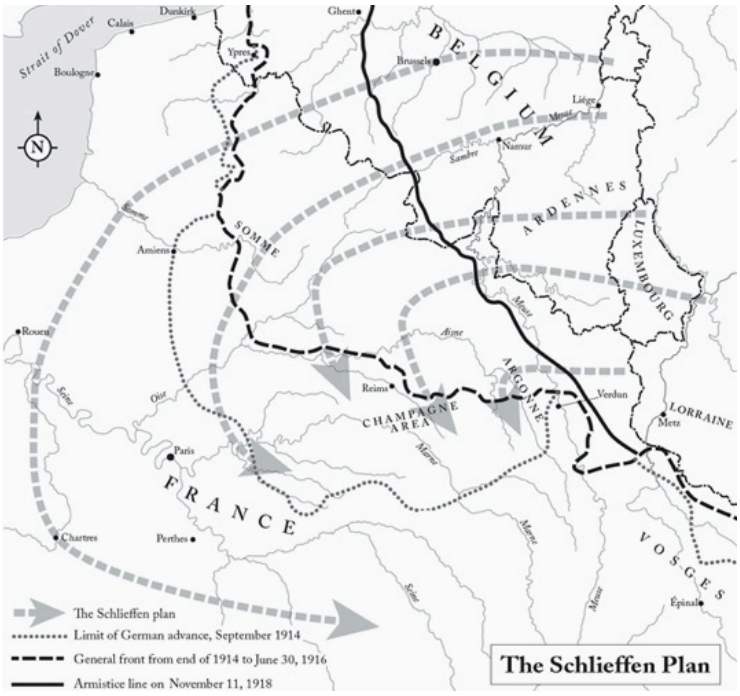

Figure 9:Movement of German forces through Belgium during the Schlieffen Plan[87]

The onset of World War I and the German occupation of Belgium for the duration of the war cast a shadow of oppression and panic over Belgian civilians. At the height of the destruction of Belgian cities, there was "an oppressive silence everywhere," and people lived in a constant state of fear of what German invasion and occupation would mean for their lives.[88] Social devastation was seen in the dramatic alterations to typical lifestyles and fulfilment of basic needs. The threat of starvation was real at times, as German confiscation of Belgian goods and materials caused food shortages until adaptations

[86] MacMillan, Margaret. *The War That Ended Peace: The Road to 1914*, 29.
[87] MacMillan, Margaret. *The War That Ended Peace: The Road to 1914,* 759.
[88] Ibid., 27.

could be made.[89] Many families uprooted life as they knew it in Belgium to find refuge in other nations, and as internal commerce ceased Belgium was essentially cut off from the rest of the world, reshaping life within its borders.[90]

The casualties endured in Belgium during the years 1914 and 1918 were monumental. Not only did tens of thousands of Belgian soldiers succumb to the treachery of war, but also several thousand civilians. Belgium experienced an incredible amount of loss during the Great War, with over 90,000 total casualties. Belgium had a total of 267,000 mobilized soldiers, with more than 13,000 killed, 44,000 wounded, and 3,800 missing or taken prisoner.[91] With more than eight thousand Belgian civilians dead during the Great War, Belgium was the picture of war destruction.[92]

[89] Harper's Pictorial Library of the World War. Volume 7. United Kingdom: Harper, 1920, 126.
[90] Harper's Pictorial Library of the World War. Volume 7. United Kingdom: Harper, 1920, 118.
[91] Facing History & Ourselves. “Casualties of World War I.”
[92] Majerus, Benoît: War Losses (Belgium), in:1914-1918-online, 1.

Eugène Ysaÿe (July 16, 1858 – May 12, 1931)

Eugène-Auguste Ysaÿe was a Belgian violinist of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries known for his excellence as a performer, pedagogue, and composer of violin repertoire. Ysaÿe's journey to his career as a virtuoso violinist was not by virtue of inherent skill, but rather through diligent study with some of the most skillful and prominent violinists of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Ysaÿe cultivated a legacy as a violinist who both experienced and contributed to the emergence of transformative approaches to the violin idiom during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[93] A student of master violinists Henryk Wieniawski (1835 – 1880) and Henry Vieuxtemps (1820 – 1881), Ysaÿe attained a direct connection to the grand romantic tradition which influenced his development of his unique style in the twentieth century.

A common thread among scholars tracing Ysaÿe's development of the twentieth century violin ideal in the twentieth century is connected to Ysaÿe's innovation and personal playing style. Ysaÿe's ability to appeal to emotion and expression through his own playing is largely responsible for his reputation as a master performer and composer of the violin.[94] Ysaÿe is said to have completely dominated the violin scene during his time and has even been regarded as the "most perfect incarnation of the violin."[95] Ysaÿe's contributions to the violin idiom are monumental, and he has been praised by prominent violinists and pedagogues as the bridge to close the "gap between the old and

[93] Goodrich, Clifford M. "Eugene Ysaÿe, Legacy of a Violinist."
[94] Bachmann, Alberto. *An Encyclopedia Of the Violin*, 160.
[95] Ibid.

new school of techniques," and the "greatest innovator after Paganini," perhaps one of the most influential virtuosos in the violin's history.[96]

[96] Wang, Yu-Chi. *A Survey of the Unaccompanied Violin Repertoire, Centering on Works by J.S. Bach and Eugene Ysaÿe,* 69.

Ysaÿe: Six Sonatas for Solo Violin, Op. 27 (1923)

Ysaÿe's most famous and influential compositions are perhaps his set of Six Sonatas for Unaccompanied Violin, Op. 27 completed in 1923. Ysaÿe's solo sonatas are known for following the medium and structure of Bach's solo violin sonatas, however they differ significantly as Ysaÿe's sonatas clearly represent the twentieth century musical traditions and his personal style.[97] Ysaÿe showed great reverence for the unaccompanied violin works of J.S. Bach, expressing the 'genius' of the medium in which Bach composed his set of solo violin sonatas and partitas. In Ysaÿe's opinion, Bach's unaccompanied works represented a 'summit' in violin compositions that can never be emulated.[98] Each sonata was dedicated to a different contemporary violinist of Ysaÿe's time and was composed with the respective violinist's personal playing style and technique in mind.[99] After attending a performance of Bach's first partita by French violinist Joseph Szigeti, Ysaÿe found Szigeti to convey the rare quality of "being simultaneously a virtuoso and musician," and marveled at his ability to combine the art of interpretation with that of expression and technique.[100] Inspired by this performance, Ysaÿe composed the sonatas with the goal of capturing the virtuosity of his contemporary master violinists as well as with the purpose of leaving behind a set of violin works that employed the violin idiom and were "intentionally characteristic" of the violin.[101] Through his own virtuosic skill and the implementation of advanced violin technique, Ysaÿe revolutionized the violin

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[97] Goodrich, Clifford. "Eugene Ysaÿe, Legacy of a Violinist," 30.
[98] Wang, Yu-Chi. "A Survey of the Unaccompanied Violin Repertoire, Centering on Works by J.S. Bach Eugene Ysaÿe," 54.
[99] Stowell, Robin. *The Cambridge Companion to the Violin,* 533.
[100] Wang, Yu-Chi. "A Survey of the Unaccompanied Violin Repertoire, Centering on Works by J.S. Bach Eugene Ysaÿe," 54.
[101] Hoatson, Karen. "Culmination of the Belgian Violin Tradition: The Innovative Style of Eugene Ysaÿe," 18.

repertoire of the twentieth century with his Six Sonatas for Solo Violin, Op. 27 which have become standard in the violin repertoire.[102] Ysaÿe was an ambitious and innovative violinist and a composer who took advantage of the changing world and shifting attitudes during the twentieth century as a way to expand the violin repertoire.

[102] Goodrich, Clifford. "Eugene Ysaÿe, Legacy of a Violinist," 31.

Sonata No. 2 in A Minor "Jacques Thibaud" (1923)

For the purposes of this study only Ysaÿe's second sonata will be examined as it is significantly representative of the twentieth century influence in Ysaÿe's music. The second of Ysaÿe's solo sonatas was dedicated to French violinist Jacques Thibaud, a contemporary violinist of Ysaÿe whose playing was known for its 'enchanting mixture of sensuality and tenderness,' and is remembered as one of the eloquent twentieth century virtuosos.[103] Written in the key of A minor, Sonata No. 2 spans the length of approximately thirteen minutes and contains four movements, "Obsession," "Malinconia" ("Melancholy), "Danse des Ombres" (Dance of the Shadows), and "Les Furies" (Dance of the Furies).

Ysaÿe and the 'Dies Irae' Motive

Dating from the Middle Ages, *Dies Irae* was a poem of three lines with rhyming verses that comprise a funeral motive.[104] The definitive original author is unknown but *Dies Irae* is often attributed to Italian monk Thomas of Celano (c. 1190 – c. 1260) and was meant to portray the Day of Judgement as depicted in Old Testament Psalms and translates to "Day of Wrath."[105]

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[103] Stowell, Robin. *The Cambridge Companion to the Violin,* 219.
[104] Wang, Yi-Chi. "A Survey of the Unaccompanied Violin Repertoire, Centering on Works by J. S. Bach and Eugene Ysaÿe.", 73.
[105] Burkholder, J. Peter, Grout, Donald, and Palisca, Claude. 2019. "A History of Western Music." Tenth Edition, 59.

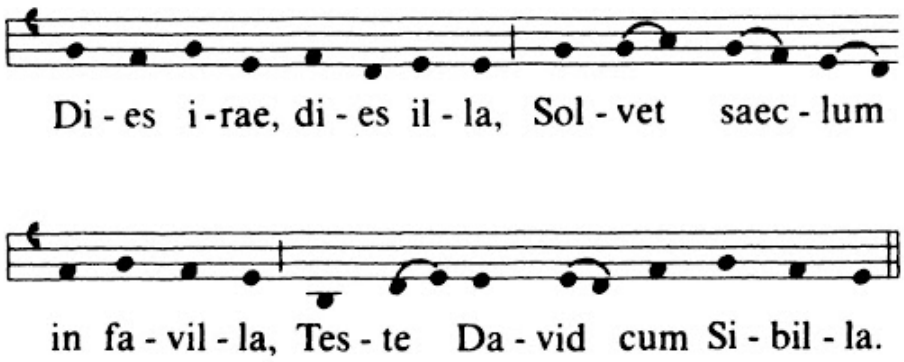

Figure 10: Ancient Dies Irae Gregorian Chant melody/text in modern musical notation[106]

Born in Liège and living during the time of German invasion and occupation, Ysaÿe had direct national ties to the destruction in Belgium during the first World War. Although Ysaÿe and his family fled Belgium to London at the onset of the German invasion, their decision to leave home was difficult, and destruction of his homeland had significant impact on his life.[107] Ysaÿe's addition of the *Dies Irae* motif conjures up the atmosphere of death, and the sonata as a whole has been suggested to allude to a "mystical yearning for death."[108] The persistent utilization of the *Dies Irae* sequence in Ysaÿe's Sonata No. 2 in A minor reveals the impact of the perpetual destruction and death that occurred during the war.

The first movement of Sonata No. 2 in A minor, "Obsession," is the prelude and perhaps the most famous movement of the sonata. The opening of the sonata demonstrates a direct connection to Bach's influence with the opening quotes of the final partita of Bach's set of solo sonatas and partitas, Partita No. 3 in E major, BWV 1006. Ysaÿe's inclusion of this quote from Bach was in honor of Thibaud's dedication to

[106] http://electricka.com/etaf/muses/music/ancient_music/dies_irae/dies_irae.htm.
[107] Goodrich, Clifford. "Eugene Ysaÿe: Legacy of a Violinist," 4.
[108] Curty, Andrey. "A Pedagogical Approach to Eugene Ysaÿe's *Six Sonatas for Solo Violin,* Op. 27," 24.

Bach's music, as he was known for using the Prelude from the Partita in E major to warm up in his daily practice routine.[109] The title of the first movement, "Obsession," is generally thought to have been derived from Ysaÿe's – as well as Thibaud's – obsession with Bach.[110] Although Ysaÿe opened the door of comparison between his sonatas and Bach's, he worked tirelessly to write his sonatas in a way that would be evidently different from Bach's. Ysaÿe expressed that "trying to escape from Bach" was an extremely difficult task to accomplish.[111] While the opening of the movement undoubtedly demonstrates the influence of Bach's works in Ysaÿe's compositional approach, the title reflects how as a whole it is representative of Ysaÿe's obsession with the *Dies Irae* motive throughout the sonata.

The *Dies Irae* sequence is first seen in movement one of the sonata outlined in a basslines, pictured in **Figures 10-12.**

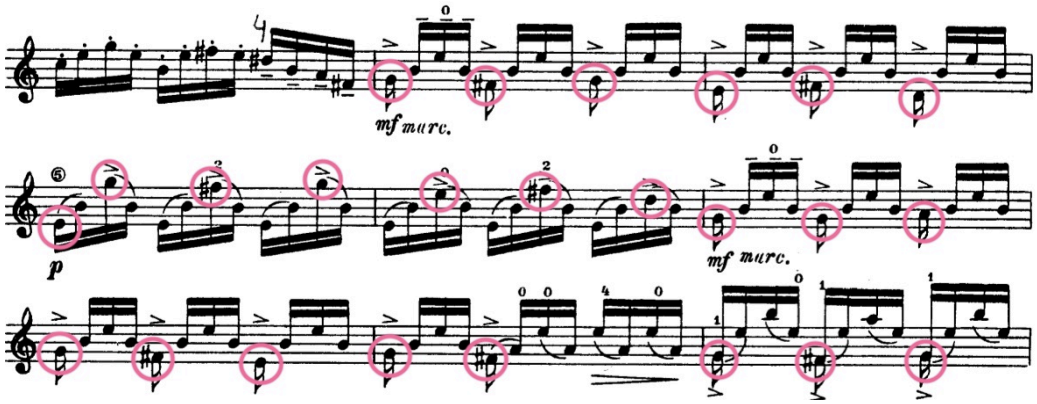

Figure 11: Dies Irae sequence in movement I, "Obsession," outlined in bassline G-F#-G-E-F#-D-E and G-G-A-G-F#-E-G[112]

[109]Curty, Andrey. "A Pedagogical Approach to Eugene Ysaÿe's *Six Sonatas for Solo Violin,* Op. 27," 23.
[110] Wang, Yu-Chi. "A Survey of Unaccompanied Violin Repertoire, Centering on Works by J.S. Bach and Eugene Ysaÿe," 72.
[111] Ibid., 73.
[112] https://ks4.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/9/94/IMSLP441351-PMLP12909-Ysaye_6_sonatas_for_violin_solo;_Op.27.pdf.

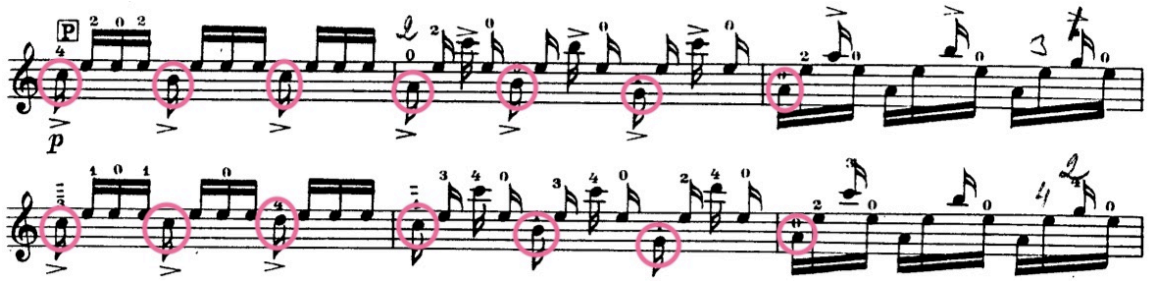

Figure 12: Dies Irae sequence in movement I, "Obsession," outlined by bassline C-B-C-A-B-G-A and C-C-D-C-B-G-A[113]

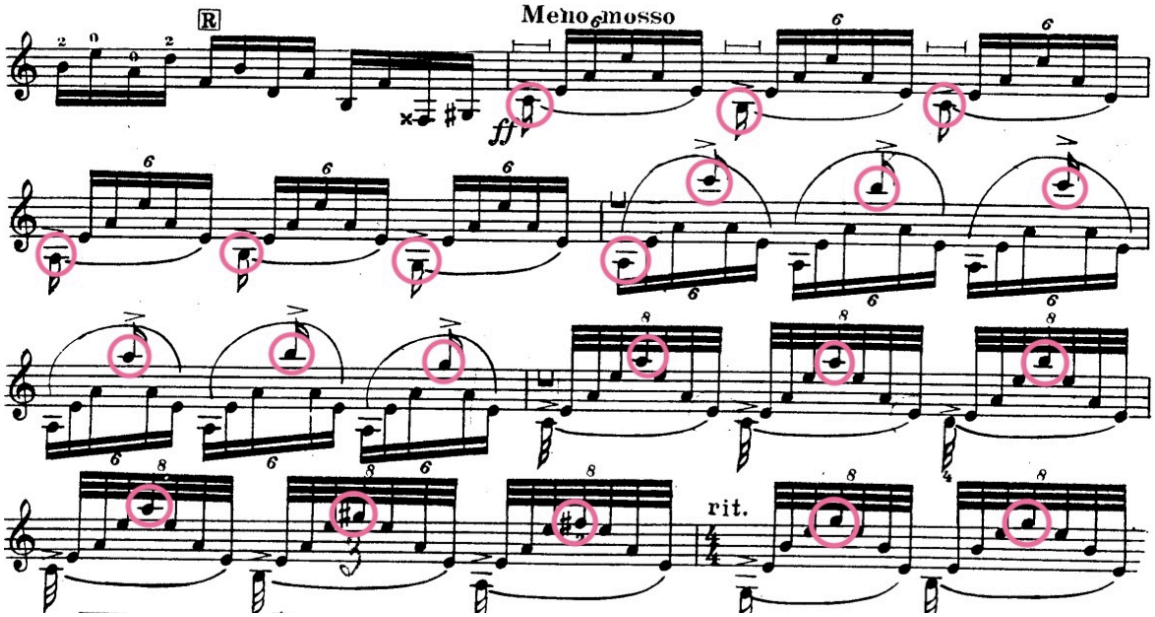

Figure 13: Dies Irae sequence #3 in movement I, "Obsession," outlined by C-B-C-A-B-G-A in the violin's low register followed by the same sequence in higher register[114]

The second movement of Ysaÿe's second solo violin sonata, "Malinconia," (Song of Sorrow) is a slow movement that conveys a melancholy mood and outlines two distinct voices engaging in a duet. In "Malinconia," Ysaÿe utilizes the ability of the violin to imitate the sound of the human voice and emphasizes the expressive and lamenting tone

[113] https://ks4.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/9/94/IMSLP441351-PMLP12909-Ysaye_6_sonatas_for_violin_solo;_Op.27.pdf.
[114] Ibid.

that can be produced on the instrument. Ysaÿe indicates it is to be played *con sordino,* diluting the sound produced by the violin which represents emotion and a "gently restrained mourning" atmosphere of the movement.[115] *Con sordino* indicates the use of a mute, a device that sits on the bridge of the violin, dampening the vibrations of the instrument.[116] The use of a mute is not typical seen in solo or unaccompanied violin music as it diminishes the full intensity of the violin. Solo and unaccompanied works are generally composed with the goal of employing the violin's full intensity and aural capabilities. By incorporating this sound effect, Ysaÿe conveys mourning and death in this movement. It has been said that it is a manifestation of Ysaÿe's own regrets in his life.[117] *The* use of *Dies Irae* in the final phrase of the "Malinconia" theme – marked *pianissimo* – demonstrates the loss of human life in Belgium and the emotional burden of the war on Ysaÿe's psyche.

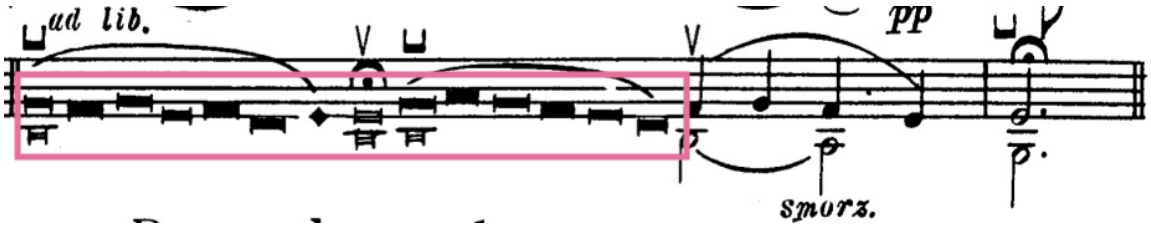

Figure 14: Dies Irae in the final phrase of movement II, "Malinconia"[118]

The third movement of Ysaÿe's Sonata No. 2 is a *Sarabande* composed in a theme and variations form. The title of the third movement, "Danse des Ombres," translates to "Dance of the Shadows," centers on the many faces of destruction and death, and more specifically Belgian loss experienced in World War I. This movement uses variations of

[115] Curty, Andrey. "A Pedagogical Approach to Eugene Ysaÿe's *Six Sonatas for Solo Violin,* Op. 27," 24.
[116] Stowell, Robin. *The Cambridge Companion to the Violin*, 623.
[117] Curty, Andrey. "A Pedagogical Approach to Eugene Ysaÿe's *Six Sonatas for Solo Violin,* Op. 27," 24.
[118] https://ks4.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/9/94/IMSLP441351-PMLP12909-Ysaye_6_sonatas_for_violin_solo;_Op.27.pdf.

the *Dies Irae* motive, which is present throughout. The variations – which number six in total – become increasingly more difficult as the movement progresses, and the final variation is the most technically challenging of all. The growing intensity and restlessness of the third movement is representative of the rise of anger within the process of loss and mourning, which in the case of Ysaÿe's life and background reflects death and destruction in Belgium during World War I. The intensity of the variations builds up to the fourth movement, which is a display of frenzied virtuosity that is remarkably contrasting with the first three movements.[119]

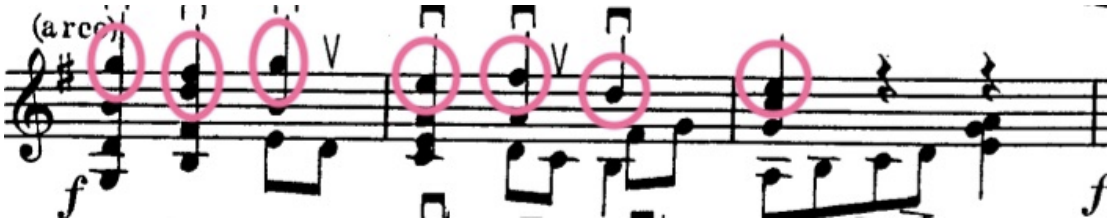

Figure 15: The Dies Irae sequence in the opening of the final variation in movement III, "Danse des Ombres"[120]

The final movement of Sonata No. 2 in A minor, titled "Les Furies," (Dance of the Furies) conveys a tone of agitation and outrage. This movement is based on Furies from Greek mythology, which were hideous and "pitiless avengers of the dead" from Greek mythology.[121] "Les Furies" features unpredictable and sometimes abrasive bursts of dynamic changes that further add to the intensity and virtuosity of the movement as a whole. The *Dies Irae* motive is again in the motivic center of the final movement of the sonata.

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[119] Wang, Yi-Chi. "A Survey of the Unaccompanied Violin Repertoire, Centering on Works by J. S. Bach and Eugene Ysaÿe.", 73.
[120] https://ks4.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/9/94/IMSLP441351-PMLP12909-Ysaye_6_sonatas_for_violin_solo;_Op.27.pdf.
[121] Garland, Robert. *Greek Mythology: Gods and Heroes Brought to Life*, 3.

Figure 16: Dies Irae sequence in movement IV, "Les Furies"[122]

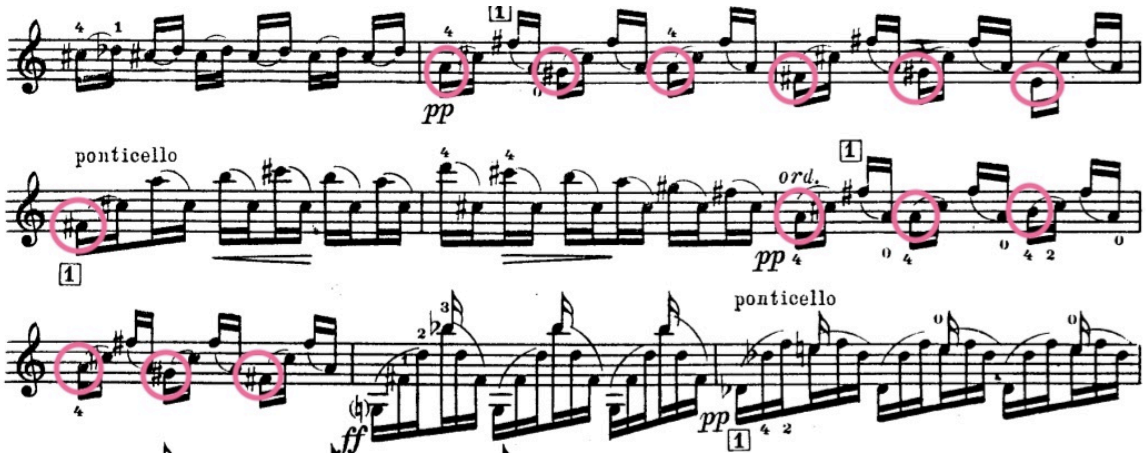

Figure 17: Dies Irae sequence in movement IV, "Les Furies"[123]

Ysaÿe further extends the increasingly turbulent tone of the movement by directing passages to be played *sul ponticello*, or over the bridge of the instrument. *Sul ponticello* is a technique that dramatically alters the tone produced by the instrument by creating a metallic and icy sound. Within Ysaÿe's violin sonata, *sul ponticello* is used to represent the rasping and hissing sounds of the Furies. Ysaÿe shows his inventiveness with this combination of technique and emotional intensity to create an extremely unique ending to the sonata.

Ysaÿe's second Violin Sonata for Solo Violin can be seen as a representation of both Ysaÿe's and Belgium's emotional response to war. Ysaÿe uses the voice of the violin to

[122] https://ks4.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/9/94/IMSLP441351-PMLP12909-Ysaye_6_sonatas_for_violin_solo;_Op.27.pdf.
[123] Ibid.

convey the despair and frustration of the individuals who faced death and tragedy in the war, and the futile efforts of man against the war machine. The first movement introduces the theme of death with the *Dies Irae* motive and hints at the intense emotions that accompany loss and grief. In the second and third movements, Ysaÿe uses the violin to express the process of mourning the loss of the dead, and finally in the fourth movement, the passionate indignation of having lost so much erupts in “Les Furies.”

Bacewicz and Nationalism in Violin Repertoire

Overview of Poland

Figure 18: Map of the Partitions of Poland[124]

Figure 19: Map of Poland during the Second World War[125]

[124] Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopedia. "Partitions of Poland." Encyclopedia Britannica, October 17, 2020. https://www.britannica.com/event/Partitions-of-Poland.
[125] Hanke, Steve H., Nicholas Krus, and Joanna Gawlik. 2020. "Hyperinflation in the General Government: German-Occupied Poland During the Second World War," 116.

During the first half of the twentieth century, Poland experienced turbulent social and political reform, altering the structure of the nation and its culture.[126] Like other nations in Europe during the wars, Poland had faced severe devastation and social reform. Both "physical and fiscal damage" were experienced by the government in Poland due to the World Wars, enacting industrial restructure to accommodate military needs and demands.[127] Like other European nations during this time, Poland experienced periods of food shortages that initiated the emergence of a black market to bridge food gaps.[128] Cultural transformation was a direct result of these changes affected by the wars, and Polish music experienced significant changes as new compositional concepts and traditions were introduced.[129] World War I sparked the beginning of independence for Poland after many centuries, initiating the separation of Poland from its three partitioning powers of Germany, Russia, and Austria-Hungary.[130] Poland enjoyed two decades of independence until the German invasion of Poland and the onset of the Second World War in September of 1939 abruptly put an end to it. Poland suffered great population loss in World War II, with over six million Poles losing their lives.[131]

Following German invasion of Poland, the Soviet occupation that soon occurred brought more challenges to the Polish people and their nationalism. The Poles came to be known for their nationalist pride and demonstrated extreme bravery and willingness to defend their nation.[132] The more than one hundred years that Poland existed as a

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[126] Kirk, Ned Charles. "Grażyna Bacewicz and Social Realism." 10.
[127] Hanke, Steve H., Nicholas Krus, and Joanna Gawlik. 2020. "Hyperinflation in the General Government: German-Occupied Poland During the Second World War," 117.
[128] Ibid.
[129] Chung, Hui-Yun Yi-Chen. "Grażyna Bacewicz and Her Violin Compositions – From a Perspective of Music Performance," ix.
[130] Biagini, Antonello. 2015. *First World War: Analysis and Interpretation*. Volume 1, 12.
[131] Thomas, Adrian. *Polish Music Since Szymanowski,* 16.
[132] Ibid.

partitioned land affected the nationalistic perspectives of Polish people. As an oppressed nation, the Polish people adopted nationalism to display attitudes of self-sufficiency and freedom, hinting at ideas of revolution.[133] The Polish mentality and dedication to maintaining a strong sense of "Polishness" was shaped by numerous artists, musicians, and writers. The literature of Henryk Sienkiewicz, a Romantic poet, was largely responsible for impacting the Polish nationalist mentality.[134] Artists such as the Polish sculptor Stanisław Szukalski – whose art was considered to be nationalist, fascist, and racist – represented ideas of Polishness within their art during the twentieth century.[135] The presence of Polish nationalism within Polish culture is undoubtedly a large contributor to the survival of Poland as a nation.

During the twentieth century and the World Wars, Poles were persistent in the defense of their land during times of war and occupation of other nations throughout the first half of the twentieth century. Polish resistance of occupiers initiated clandestine operations of an underground state unlike anything that had been seen in Europe up to this point.[136] Although Poland suffered the loss of millions of civilians and soldiers by the end of the Second World War, the fervor of Polish allegiance to the defense of its country perpetuates the strongly rooted sense of nationalism still seen in Polish culture today.

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[133]Dawson, A. Hutchinson, Kondracki, Jerzy A., Jasiewicz, Krzysztof, Roos, Hans, Davies, Norman, Smogorzewski, Kazimierz Maciej and Wandycz, Piotr S. "Poland." Encyclopedia Britannica.
[134]Ibid.
[135] Gliński, Mikołaj. 2016. "Szukalski & Polishness as Religion: The Mystical Delirium of a Nationalist Artist."
[136] Ibid., 17.

Grażyna Bacewicz (February 5, 1909 – January 17, 1969)

As a female musician and composer in early twentieth century Poland, Grażyna Bacewicz presents unique insight into twentieth century life and its influences within music. Bacewicz was a concert violinist and composer of the twentieth century, born in Łódź, Poland in February of 1909.[137] Bacewicz began composing music at the young age of thirteen, and though she only lived for a brief sixty years she contributed immensely to the classical music repertoire. She was born into a musical family and began her music studies with her father, who taught her violin and piano.[138] In 1932, Bacewicz began her studies at the Warsaw Conservatory studying violin, piano, and composition with teachers Jòzef Jarzębski, Jòzef Turczyński, and Kazimierz Sikorski, respectively.[139] Upon graduation from the conservatory, Bacewicz began a successful musical career as a concert violinist, pianist, teacher, composer. Bacewicz eventually realized a profound preference for composing and retired from the stage to focus on writing music.[140] She is considered by many to be one of the most significant violinist-composers of the twentieth century. Bacewicz has been referred to as 'the Polish Sappho' after the famed ancient Greek poet, as her talent made her one of the few female composers whose achievements and works compared to those of high-ranking male composers.[141]

Bacewicz was highly intellectual and had a tenacious social and political perspective, and her life was a persistent endeavor to expand her knowledge and stand for her beliefs. Bacewicz's life is especially intriguing in that it displays a composer whose artistic

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[137] Gąsiorowska, Małgorzata. 2019. "Grażyna Bacewicz – The Polish Sappho." *Musicology Today,* 66.
[138] Ibid., 67.
[139] Ibid., 68.
[140] Kirk, Ned Charles. "Grażyna Bacewicz and Social Realism."
[141] Ibid.

freedom was both inspired and restricted by her social, political, and internal surroundings. From the beginning of her life, Bacewicz understood what it meant for decisions to be made in response to social and political factors. Bacewicz's nationality was a result of response to cultural transformation as her father, originally from Lithuania, had relocated to Poland to escape the political circumstances emerging in the Lithuanian social arena toward the end of the nineteenth century. In 1899 Bacewicz's father, Vincas Bacevičius, was motivated to leave Lithuania due to the emerging independence movement, as those who were involved and found to be activists in the movement would be persecuted by Russian authorities.[142]

Bacewicz and Socialist Realism

Under Soviet Socialism and occupation of Poland during the twentieth century, Polish culture and freedom of expression suffered immensely from the stifling of experimentation and individuality put in place by the limitations of 'formalism,' another term for Social Realism.[143] Under the influence of socialist propaganda, art, literature, and music were heavily limited in their freedom to express original thought and international ideologies. The concept of Socialist Realism was imposed upon Polish culture and artists and aimed to progress socialist principles and ideals.[144] Soviet realism ideals placed many restrictions on all art forms.[145] These restrictions were an endangerment to the national identity of the Polish people, and new concepts were instated in the interest of encouraging the national-socialist agenda.[146] The guidelines of

[142] Gąsiorowska, Małgorzata. 2019. "Grażyna Bacewicz – The Polish Sappho." *Musicology Today,* 67.
[143] Thomas, Adrian. *Polish Music Since Szymanowski*,
[144] Kirk, Ned Charles. "Grażyna Bacewicz and Social Realism," 21.
[145] Thomas, Adrian. *Polish Music Since Szymanowski,* 16.
[146] [146] Kirk, Ned Charles. "Grażyna Bacewicz and Social Realism," 21.

Socialist Realism as it applied to art, music, and literature were vague, but aimed at conforming Polish culture to an aesthetic and conscious reflection of the "socialist concept of man and the world."[147] The relationship between art and history as it should be depicted in the creative arts was to endorse the image of the working class Soviet man and positively illuminate socialist tactics.[148]

Bacewicz's music experienced the shift of contemporary Polish music into the modernist and experimentalist styles that occurred during the first half of the century.[149] Bacewicz is one of the many Polish composers whose works represent the issues Polish composers faced during this time, and the trends that emerged in music due to these influential conditions.[150]

Because the creative arts in Poland were closely monitored during the onset of Socialist Realism, composers were forced to adapt to the new policies and find ways to still use music expressively. Composers found their ability to create music in different ways within the socialist realist style, including idioms of the eighteenth-century and the rejuvenation of old Polish music.[151] Instrumental music was somewhat difficult to express in the style of Socialist Realism, as its abstract quality allowed for subjection.[152] Acceptable elements of music that could be conveyed in instrumental music under the movement were links to older styles like neobaroque and neoclassical music, as well as music that suggested ties to nationalism. Those who chose to compose in the folk tradition were met with wider opportunities of creativity, attaining the ability to maintain

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[147] Ibid., 19.
[148] Ibid.
[149] Ibid.
[150] Thomas, Adrian. *Polish Music Since Szymanowski*, 59.
[151] Ibid., 60.
[152] Kirk, Ned Charles. "Grażyna Bacewicz and Social Realism," 38.

a sense of distinctiveness within their music.[153] Vocal music became a common method of composing in the Socialist Realism style, as the use of text could be clearly linked to socialist and nationalist origin.[154]For this reason, the folk idiom became a popular method of composition.[155]

Many Polish composers could not adapt to the limitations of music under Socialist Realism and fled Poland in order to compose freely. Bacewicz's response to the Socialist Realism movement was different, however, and she found the way to avoid censure by authorities was in adopting a seemingly more conservative approach to composing.[156] Bacewicz leaned strongly on folk tradition, going on to compose some of the most significant Polish works of the mid-twentieth century.[157] Commonly seen within Bacewicz's music are Polish national dances such as the *oberek, mazurka,* and *kujawiak.*[158] Through her national ties to Polish folk music, Bacewicz was able to use folk idioms within her compositions to create a distinctive nationalistic character while remaining withing the boundaries of Socialist Realism.

[153] Thomas, Adrian. *Polish Music Since Szymanowski,* 60.
[154] Ibid.
[155] Ibid. 39.
[156] Thomas, Adrian, and Darwin F. Scott. 2003. "Grażyna Bacewicz (Music)," 545.
[157] Thomas, Adrian. *Polish Music Since Szymanowski,* 69.
[158] Kirk, Ned Charles. "Grażyna Bacewicz and Social Realism.", 61.

Polish Caprice (1949)

The violin was one of the earliest instruments used to accompany primitive Polish music and was often emphasized alone in early Polish dances before the addition of other instruments.[159] As a talented violinist and a musician who identified with Polish history and culture, the use of folk melodies and traditions within her violin music was a direct connection to Polish folk music. Bacewicz's surroundings, though they seemed oppressive and limited creative freedom, had a deeper meaning and greater significance to Bacewicz than the sheer conformity to the socialist approach that had been imposed on her, as she was able to realign twentieth century Polish music with its folk traditions.[160]

Polish Caprice (or *Kaprys Polski*) is perhaps Bacewicz's most popular and most frequently performed compositions for the violin.[161] The composition only spans the duration of somewhere between two and three minutes but is an ideal representation of Bacewicz's ability to combine the concepts of neoclassicism and folk idioms to create a violin work that is innovative yet still conforms to the style of Socialist Realism.[162] A caprice is a piece that is typically in a single movement that contains a form of free structure. Caprices generally contain several differing sections with distinct motives.[163] The name of the caprice is actually derived from the term "capricious," meaning "subject to unpredictable change."[164] The style of the caprice (or capriccio) is characterized by being free in form and lively in nature, giving the composer the freedom to loosen the

[159] Kirk, Ned Charles. "Grażyna Bacewicz and Social Realism.", 60.
[160] Ibid.
[161] Chung, Hui-Yun Yi-Chen. "Grażyna Bacewicz and Her Violin Compositions—From a Perspective of Music Performance.", 24.
[162] Ibid., 25.
[163] Ibid., 23.
[164] https://www.dictionary.com/browse/capricious.

reigns and submit to the 'fire of the composition."[165] Although *Polish Caprice* is written in the form of a caprice, it closely resembles the structure of the Polish folk dance *kujawiak,* which is characterized by changes in tempo that reflect a 'walking paced' dance.[166] The *kujawiak* dance is a folk dance from Kujawy, a central Poland lowland region. The *kujawiak* is known for being written in triple time and displaced accents on the second or third beats of measures. The *kujawiak* contains longer phrases and embellishments, as well as more development in its stanzas.[167] *Polish Caprice* closely resembles the *kujawiak* dance form, as it contains two major themes differing significantly in character, and there is an acceleration in tempo nearing the end of the piece. *Polish Caprice* is consistent with these elements, as the opening theme is slow and somber in character, followed by an upbeat, dancelike theme which progresses towards an *accelerando* for a bright finish. [168]

The character of *Polish Caprice* is explored through two distinct sections of juxtaposing moods. The opening theme of the caprice features the violin's voice-like quality with a recitative-like expressive and tragic melody in the key of E minor, directly followed by a cheerful and upbeat dance theme.[169] These two distinct sections can be seen as Bacewicz's nationalistic response to the constraints of Socialist Realism. The first theme, more lyrical and somber in character, represents the early beginning of an artist's adjustment to oppressive rules of Socialist Realism. Bacewicz's had experienced German attempts to obliterate Polish identity, which is something that was highly valued by

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[165] Chung, Hui-Yun Yi-Chen. "Grażyna Bacewicz and Her Violin Compositions—From a Perspective of Music Performance.", 24.
[166] Ibid., 26.
[167] Chung, Hui-Yun Yi-Chen. "Grażyna Bacewicz and Her Violin Compositions—From a Perspective of Music Performance.", 23.
[168]Burns, Alex. 2020. Grażyna Bacewicz: 'Polish Caprice': Encore!
[169] Ibid., 30.

Polish people. The doctrine of Socialist Realism – at first glance – made it difficult to regain this sense of nationalism, which is expressed in the disconsolate melody of the *Andante* section. The second section, much different in overall character, represents the resilience of Bacewicz in the face of strict guidelines in her compositions. The initial hopelessness accompanying Socialist Realism was quickly overcome by Bacewicz as she found hope and optimism within her nationalistic ties, which is represented by the folk elements and the upbeat nature of the juxtaposing second theme, *Allegro non troppo*. This distinction in character within the two sections of *Polish Caprice* can be seen in Figure 20.

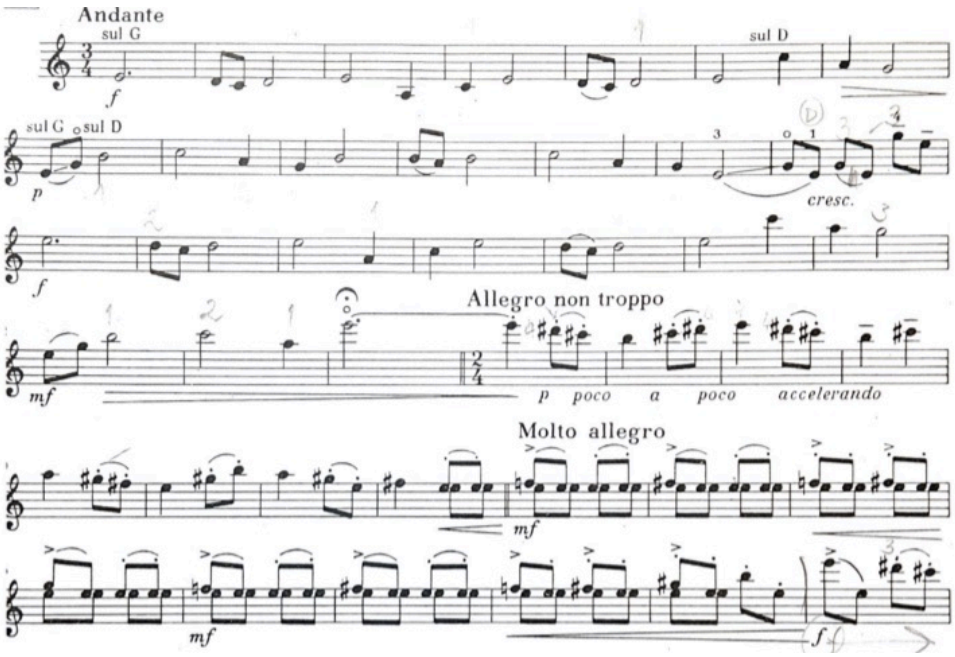

Figure 20: Andante and Allegro non troppo sections in Bacewicz's Polish Caprice

Bacewicz's *Polish Caprice* is the epitome of her folk tradition compositional style. Adopted out of necessity in order to conform to socialist regime, Bacewicz's folk style was able to work in her favor, creating a distinctly nationalistic idiom within her music.

Conclusion

Music of the twentieth century is reflective of the century's historical background, as many composers writing music at this time were affected by major events surrounding them. The influence of the twentieth century has been reflected by violinist-composers in their works for solo and unaccompanied violin, as they experienced firsthand some of the most significant world events and socioeconomic circumstances of the first half of the century. The unique personal reactions each of these composers had to their own experiences in Europe during the twentieth century display the range of emotional responses that accompany hardship and oppression that was all too familiar to people living during the time of the World Wars.

Fritz Kreisler's music for violin is notable for possessing a cheerful and dancelike tone, reminiscent of the elegance and sophistication that was prominent in his homeland of Austria prior to the World Wars. Setting the tone for his violin music post-war, Kreisler's use of the salon style in his violin composition *Alt-Wiener Tanzweisen* is evocative of the Austrian nostalgia for the peaceful atmosphere of Austria-Hungary – and more notably Vienna – in the early years of the twentieth century.

Eugène Ysaÿe's second sonata for solo violin is symbolic of the emotional process of experiencing the loss of death. Ysaÿe's Belgian ties gave the loss of human life endured by that nation during World War I significant meaning. Reflected in Sonata No. 2 in A minor are the emotions of sadness and despair as well as those of anger and fury.

The violin music of Grażyna Bacewicz embodies the resilience of the Polish people in the face of oppression and enforcement of strict policies. Bacewicz's *Polish Caprice* employs traditional Polish folk dances and elements that gave her an alternative path to

composing, allowing her the ability to compose in a distinctive style yet still abide by the doctrine of Socialist Realism that was imposed upon Polish culture during her lifetime.

Each of these violinist-composers offer unique insight into what life was like in European nations during the twentieth century. Their music evokes distinct stories that inform the performer and the listener of the message behind the composition. Examining the historical context of these violinist-composers' music brings a greater understanding of the music from the composer to the musician, eluding the boundaries of time that would preclude communication between composer and performer.

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