


12-2015

TRACING JOSEF SUK'S STYLISTIC DEVELOPMENT IN HIS PIANO WORKS: A COMPOSER'S PERSONAL JOURNEY FROM ROMANTICISM TO CZECH MODERNISM

Jana K. Manning

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, jakrajc@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/musicstudent>

 Part of the [Musicology Commons](#), [Music Pedagogy Commons](#), and the [Music Performance Commons](#)

Manning, Jana K., "TRACING JOSEF SUK'S STYLISTIC DEVELOPMENT IN HIS PIANO WORKS: A COMPOSER'S PERSONAL JOURNEY FROM ROMANTICISM TO CZECH MODERNISM" (2015). *Student Research, Creative Activity, and Performance - School of Music*. 93.
<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/musicstudent/93>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Music, School of at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in Student Research, Creative Activity, and Performance - School of Music by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

TRACING JOSEF SUK'S STYLISTIC DEVELOPMENT IN HIS PIANO WORKS:

A COMPOSER'S PERSONAL JOURNEY

FROM ROMANTICISM TO CZECH MODERNISM

by

Janka Krajciova Manning

A DOCTORAL DOCUMENT

Presented to the Faculty of

The Graduate College at the University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements

For the Degree of Doctor of Musical Arts

Major: Music

Under the Supervision of Professor Mark K. Clinton

Lincoln, Nebraska

December, 2015

TRACING JOSEF SUK'S STYLISTIC DEVELOPMENT IN HIS PIANO WORKS:

A COMPOSER'S PERSONAL JOURNEY

FROM ROMANTICISM TO CZECH MODERNISM

Janka Krajciova Manning, D.M.A.

University of Nebraska, 2015

Adviser: Mark K. Clinton

The purpose of this document is to trace the stylistic development in the piano works of the Czech composer, violinist, and pedagogue, Josef Suk (1874-1935). Suk's piano music is largely unknown in the United States and, unfortunately, neglected in his homeland. Because the majority of research about Josef Suk is in the Czech language, this work is intended to be the first English language document pertaining to Suk's piano works. The three chapters synthesize information from both primary and secondary sources, including the composer's first biography, collection of his letters and speeches, musical scores, dissertations, thematic catalogue of his works, articles from music periodicals, and analytical studies on Suk's piano music.

The maturation of Suk's compositional style, from conservative salon miniatures to more progressive works that employ twentieth-century techniques, is explored through the examination of representative pieces from Suk's four piano cycles: *Moods*, Op. 10; *Spring*, Op. 22a; *About Mother*, Op. 28; and *Things Lived and Dreamed*, Op. 30. Because Suk's piano music is extremely personal, one chapter is dedicated to the composer's life, illuminating the importance of his recurring "Love"

and “Death” motives. Elements essential to Czech music heritage, such as the nationalistic tendencies, inspiration in nature and folk song, and the long-standing tradition of autobiographical character pieces, are discussed in connection to the works of Suk’s predecessors and contemporaries. In addition, comparisons with other Romantic and early twentieth-century composers enhance the reader’s understanding of Suk’s place in the context of the musical world of his time. The document concludes with an appendix of Suk’s published works for solo and chamber piano, followed by a discography.

DEDICATION

To Matt, whose love and support made everything possible.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, I would love to extend my sincere gratitude to my professor, advisor and chair of my doctoral committee, Dr. Mark Clinton, for his guidance and help throughout my DMA studies at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. I'm also indebted to other members of my committee, Dr. Paul Barnes, Dr. Anthony Bushard, Dr. Mila Saskova-Pierce, as well as Dr. Christopher Marks, for their involvement with my recitals, comprehensive exams and invaluable feedback to my document. I owe a great deal to my past piano professors, Dr. Sławomir P. Dobrzański, Dr. Francis Yang, Dr. Nikita Fitenko, and Mr. Peter Čerman, as well as to all the professors who inspired and challenged me at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Kansas State University, Northwestern State University of Louisiana, and State Conservatory of Bratislava. Special thanks to my document editors and friends, Amber Knight and Shalvi D'Arcangelo! I also really appreciate email conversations with Jan Charypar and Radoslav Kvapil regarding Suk's place in the context of Czech music.

I'm grateful to my parents, sisters and all the family in Slovakia for their continuing love and encouragement since the beginning of my musical studies at home as well as in the United States. I'm also blessed to have an enduring support from my Nebraska family as well as from host families in both Kansas and Louisiana. Huge thanks to all of my colleagues and friends, here and afar, for being there for me in good and bad times and helping me remember the joys of life outside of the academia. Finally, I'm grateful to my husband Matt for offering his opinions about this document from the non-musical perspective, but most importantly, for always believing in me.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	1
I. DEVELOPMENT OF CZECH PIANO MUSIC FROM THE 19 th TO THE EARLY 20 th CENTURY	
1.1 Founders of the Romantic character piece: Tomášek and Voříšek.....	10
1.2 Nationalistic Tendencies: Smetana, Dvořák and Fibich.....	14
1.3 Czech Music at the <i>fin de siècle</i> : Janáček and Novák.....	18
II. JOSEF SUK	
2.1 Josef Suk as a Man, Composer, Violinist, and a Pedagogue.....	22
III. TRACING THE STYLISTIC DEVELOPMENT IN SUK'S PIANO COMPOSITIONS: FROM SALON MINIATURES TO THE WORKS OF CZECH MODERNISM	
3.1 In the Shadow of Dvořák: <i>Moods</i> , Op. 10 (II).....	34
3.2 Finding His Own Voice: <i>Spring</i> , Op. 22a (I).....	48
3.3 Time of Pain: <i>About Mother</i> , Op. 28 (IV, V).....	58
3.4 Ripening: <i>Things Lived and Dreamed</i> , Op. 30 (I, IV, V, XI).....	73
IV. CONCLUSION: JOSEF SUK'S IMPORTANCE AND LEGACY.....	107
APPENDIX	
Josef Suk: Chronological List of Solo and Chamber Piano Works.....	111
Josef Suk: Discography of Solo Piano Works.....	113
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	114

LIST OF MULTIMEDIA OBJECTS

Fig. Intro. Autograph of <i>Things Lived and Dreamed</i> , Op. 30.....	8
Fig. 2.1. Josef Suk at the age of eight.....	23
Fig. 2.2. Suk's house in Křečovice.....	23
Fig. 2.3. The original Czech Quartet.....	25
Fig. 2.4. Suk and his wife Otilie Dvořáková.....	28
Fig. 2.5. Otilka and Josef Suk Jr.....	28
Fig. 2.6. Suk by his piano in Křečovice.....	30
Fig. 2.7. Suk's Bösendorfer in 2013.....	30
Fig. 2.8. Suk's grave outside of St. Andrew's Church in Křečovice.....	33
Fig. 3.1. Suk: <i>Legend</i> , Op. 10, No. 1, opening	38
Fig. 3.2. Suk: <i>Capriccio</i> , Op. 10, No. 2, opening.....	39
Fig. 3.3. Suk: <i>Capriccio</i> , Op. 10, mm. 13-23.....	40
Fig. 3.4. Dvořák: <i>Humoresque</i> , Op. 101, No. 5, mm. 1-12.....	41
Fig. 3.5. Dvořák: <i>Humoresque</i> , Op. 101, No. 5, mm. 13-24.....	42
Fig. 3.6. Brahms: <i>Capriccio</i> , Op. 76, mm. 1-14.....	43
Fig. 3.7. Suk: <i>Capriccio</i> , Op. 10, mm. 31-35, trio.....	44
Fig. 3.8. Suk: <i>Capriccio</i> , Op. 10, mm. 41-44.....	44
Fig. 3.9. Suk: <i>Capriccio</i> , Op. 10, mm. 61-64.....	44
Fig. 3.10a. Suk: <i>Capriccio</i> , Op. 10, opening.....	45
Fig. 3.10b. Suk: <i>Capriccio</i> , Op. 10, mm. 71-75, reprise.....	45
Fig. 3.11. Suk: <i>Capriccio</i> , Op. 10, mm. 100-104, <i>Coda</i> - end.....	46
Fig. 3.12. Suk: <i>Capriccio</i> , Op. 10, mm. 67-69, end of B section.....	46

Fig. 3.13. Suk: I. <i>Spring</i> , Op. 22a, opening motives A and B.....	51
Fig. 3.14. Suk: <i>Adagio</i> from Suite, Op. 21, opening.....	52
Fig. 3.15. Suk: I. <i>Spring</i> , Op. 22a, mm. 67-74, A and B combined.....	52
Fig. 3.16. Suk: I. <i>Spring</i> , Op. 22a, mm. 161-166, melody in tenor.....	53
Fig. 3.17. Suk: II. <i>Breeze</i> , Op. 22a, mm. 24-25, “Spring” quote.....	54
Fig. 3.18. Suk: III. <i>In Expectation</i> , Op. 22a: opening.....	54
Fig. 3.19. Suk: IV.* *, Op. 22a: opening, “Spring” quote.....	55
Fig. 3.20. Suk: V. <i>Longing</i> , Op. 22a: opening, “Spring” quote.....	56
Fig. 3.21. Suk: V. <i>Longing</i> , Op. 22a: mm. 31-34, “Spring” fanfare.....	56
Fig. 3.22. Suk. Piano Pieces, Op. 7: I. <i>Love Song</i> , opening.....	60
Fig. 3.23. Suk: I. <i>When Mother Was Still a Little Girl</i> , Op. 28, mm. 51-60.....	60
Fig. 3.24. Suk: II. <i>Once in the Springtime</i> , Op. 28, opening.....	61
Fig. 3.25. Suk: III. <i>How Mother Sang at Night to Her Sick Child</i> , Op. 28, opening.....	62
Fig. 3.26. Suk. III. <i>How Mother Sang at Night to Her Sick Child</i> , Op. 28, mm. 13-20....	63
Fig. 3.27. Ravel: <i>Le Gibet</i> from <i>Gaspard de la Nuit</i> , mm. 1-7	64
Fig. 3.28. Suk: IV. <i>About Mother’s Heart</i> , Op. 28, opening.....	65
Fig. 3.29. Medtner: <i>Fairy Tales</i> , Op. 9, No. 3, opening, use of polyrhythm.....	66
Fig. 3.30. Mussorgsky: <i>Pictures at an Exhibition</i> : No. 6, use of polyrhythm.....	67
Fig. 3.31. Suk: IV. <i>About Mother’s Heart</i> , Op. 28, reduction by John K. Novak.....	67
Fig. 3.32. Suk: IV. <i>About Mother’s Heart</i> , Op. 28, mm. 23-28.....	68
Fig. 3.33. Suk: IV. <i>About Mother’s Heart</i> , Op. 28, mm. 50-end.....	69
Fig. 3.34. Suk: “Death” motive from <i>Radúz and Mahulena</i> , Op. 13.....	69
Fig. 3.35. Suk: V. <i>Remembering</i> , Op. 28, opening, “Death” motive.....	71

Fig. 3.36. Suk: I. <i>Allegretto moderato</i> , Op. 30, mm. 1-22.....	78
Fig. 3.37. Suk: I. <i>Allegretto moderato</i> , Op. 30, opening 4mm.....	79
Fig. 3.38. Suk: I. <i>Allegretto moderato</i> , Op. 30, D9 chord.....	80
Fig. 3.39. Suk: I. <i>Allegretto moderato</i> , Op. 30, Trio, chromatic tenor.....	81
Fig. 3.40. Tchaikovsky: <i>Impromptu</i> , Op. 21, No. 3, chromatic tenor.....	82
Fig. 3.41. Tchaikovsky: <i>Volkslied</i> , Op. 39, No. 13, chromatic tenor.....	82
Fig. 3.42. Prokofiev: Sonata Op. 28, No.3, chromatic tenor.....	82
Fig. 3.43. Suk: I. <i>Allegretto moderato</i> , Op. 30, mm. 88-end.....	83
Fig. 3.44. Suk: IV. <i>Poco Allegretto</i> , Op. 30, mm. 1-8.....	84
Fig. 3.45. <i>Slovenské mamičky</i> , Slovak Folk Song, mm. 7-20.....	85
Fig. 3.46. Suk: IV. <i>Poco Allegretto</i> , Op. 30, mm. 11-21, 'quasi Tromba'.....	86
Fig. 3.47. Suk: IV. <i>Poco Allegretto</i> , Op. 30, mm. 65-77, B climax/reprise.....	88
Fig. 3.48. Debussy: <i>Sarabande</i> from <i>Pour le piano</i> , mm. 9-12.....	88
Fig. 3.49. Suk: V. <i>Adagio</i> , Op. 30, mm. 1-19.....	90
Fig. 3.50. Wagner: "Tristan" chord.....	91
Fig. 3.51. Scriabin: "Mystic Chord".....	92
Fig. 3.52. Stravinsky: "Petrushka Chord".....	92
Fig. 3.53 Suk: V. <i>Adagio</i> , Op. 30, mm. 34-46, layering.....	93
Fig. 3.54. Debussy: <i>Sarabande</i> from <i>Pour le piano</i> , mm. 23-27, layering.....	93
Fig. 3.55. Suk: IX. <i>Poco Andante</i> , Op. 30, mm. 1-12.....	95
Fig. 3.56. Suk: IX. <i>Poco Andante</i> , Op. 30, mm. 13-15, white-black key texture.....	96
Fig. 3.57. Ravel: cadenza from <i>Jeux d'Eau</i> , white-black key texture.....	96
Fig. 3.58. Debussy: <i>Fireworks</i> from Preludes Bk 2, white-black key texture.....	97

Table 3.1. Claude Debussy and Josef Suk: comparison.....	98
Fig. 3.59. Suk: IX. <i>Poco Andante</i> , Op. 30, mm. 16-18.....	100
Fig. 3.60. Suk: IX. <i>Poco Andante</i> , Op. 30, mm. 31-33.....	101
Fig. 3.61. Suk: IX. <i>Poco Andante</i> , Op. 30, mm. 40-42.....	101
Fig. 3.62. Suk: IX. <i>Poco Andante</i> , Op. 30, mm. 47-48.....	101
Fig. 3.63. Suk: IX. <i>Poco Andante</i> , Op. 30, mm. 60-62.....	101
Fig. 3.64. Otilie Suková-Dvořáková. <i>Lullaby</i> , mm. 1-4.....	102
Fig. 3.65. Suk: IX. <i>Poco Andante</i> , Op. 30, mm. 53-58, “Otilka’s lullaby”	103
Fig. 3.66. Suk: IX. <i>Poco Andante</i> , Op. 30, mm. 67-70, Reprise.....	104
Fig. 3.67. Suk: IX. <i>Poco Andante</i> , Op. 30, mm. 81-end.....	105

INTRODUCTION

From Dussek to Janáček, the centuries-old Czech classical music tradition abounds with many great piano works. Most American audiences are familiar with Dvořák's *Slavonic Dances*, Smetana's *My Country*, or one of Janáček's many operas. However, the name Josef Suk remains largely neglected. This is true not only in the United States but, sadly, also in his home country of the Czech Republic and adjacent Slovakia. While some of Suk's early piano works are occasionally taught in Slovak elementary music schools, the vast majority of his piano repertoire is rarely studied in music conservatories and colleges.¹ According to the memories of renowned Czech pianist Radoslav Kvapil (b. 1934), the music of both Novák and Suk was frequently performed at Czech Conservatories during the 1950s, but their popularity was ultimately replaced by the music of Smetana, Janáček, and Martinů.² Thus, the purpose of my study is not only to introduce Suk's varied piano repertoire to the American public, but also to revive an interest in Suk's music in his homeland.

Suk was a prolific composer who wrote in every genre except for opera. Born in 1874 in the small town of Křečovice, an hour south of Prague, he was the second violinist of the famed Czech Quartet, a devoted pedagogue, and later a director of the prestigious Prague Conservatory. Composers from several Eastern European countries studied under Suk at the Conservatory, but as a pedagogue he is mostly

¹ Elementary music schools in Slovakia and the Czech Republic are public schools offering applied and group lessons for children ages 7-14 (Level 1) and 15-18 (Level 2). Conservatories are high schools centered on the study of instrumental or vocal performance, offering a comprehensive music curriculum and preparing graduates either for teaching at one of the elementary music schools or continuing to the college level (BM, MM, and DMA/PhD).

² Radoslav Kvapil, email message to author, July 30, 2015.

remembered for bringing up the next generation of modern Czech composers, including Bohuslav Martinů, Rudolf Firkušný, and Jaroslav Ježek. His legacy was passed onto these students as well as his own grandson Josef (1929-2011), who continued in his grandfather's footsteps and became a renowned violinist, violist, and conductor.

Even though Suk's most famous works are his orchestral pieces, such as the popular *Serenade for Strings* and symphonic tetralogy *Asrael- A Summer's Tale- The Ripening- Epilogue*, his lesser-known piano oeuvre encompasses over sixty works, of which eleven are cycles that contain assigned opus numbers. Of all the works for this medium, *Love Song* Op. 7 became Suk's signature piano piece, remaining one of his most famous piano miniatures to this day. From early on, the composer's writing style was characterized by a close connection between his life and his music. This relationship is exemplified by the recurrent use of his "Love" and "Death" motives, as well as cross-references to the above motives between his works of different genres. These programmatic motives thus unify Suk's diverse output in the way Wagner's *Leitmotiv* unified his opera cycles.

Though by no means revolutionary in their style, Suk's piano works are imaginative, supremely lyrical, and idiomatically written for the piano. Many are very intimate in their character, since the composer employed the piano primarily to express his innermost thoughts. Suk's earliest works were composed in the late Romantic spirit, modeled upon Dvořák, Brahms, Tchaikovsky, Grieg, and Schumann. However, by the time he composed his piano cycle *Things Lived and Dreamed* in 1909, one can discern a significant growth in the composer's musical language. His

style had become much more innovative, especially in terms of extended harmonic vocabulary, polyphonic treatment of voices, and concentrated exploration of the piano's entire sonic and technical capacity.

This document will contain three chapters, a conclusion, and an appendix of Suk's published works for solo and chamber piano with a discography. The first chapter will briefly describe the history and development of Czech piano music, with an emphasis on the founders of the Romantic character piece, Tomášek and Voríšek; nationalistic tendencies in the works of Smetana, Dvořák, and Fibich; and Czech music at the *fin de siècle*, represented by the works of Suk's contemporaries, Janáček and Novák. The second chapter deals directly with Josef Suk. His life will be examined from different perspectives: as a man, composer, pedagogue, and performing member of the Czech Quartet. Suk's personal attributes and life circumstances impacted his compositional style and thus need to be considered: the loss of his wife Otilka and his mentor and father-in-law Antonín Dvořák, the composer's love for nature, his enduring fight against Czech music critics, and his strong patriotic sentiments.

In the third chapter, the core of this document, the development of Suk's piano style will be traced chronologically through selections from four piano cycles representative of different stages of Suk's life: Op. 10, Op. 22a, Op. 28, and Op. 30. Elements characteristic of Czech music will be discussed, in addition to parallels with other piano works beyond the borders of Suk's homeland. The author will avoid a lengthy bar-by-bar Roman numeral analysis and will survey instead large-scale motivic, harmonic, rhythmic, textural, formal, and expressive elements that

best capture the progression of Suk's compositional style and place him in the context of the musical world of his time.

The first of Suk's compositional periods fell in the shadow of other late Romantic composers. Five pieces from Op. 10 are selected as representative of this period, with a concentration on the second miniature, *Capriccio*. In *Spring*, Op. 22a, Suk's treatment of harmonic language and pianistic textures becomes more distinctive. For the first time, the composer assigns specific programmatic titles to all but one movement of the set. The analysis will focus on the opening movement, but the author will briefly consider the remaining four movements to demonstrate Suk's unusual employment of thematic cyclicism across this set.

Suk's late piano cycles *About Mother*, Op. 28 and *Things Lived and Dreamed*, Op. 30 belong to the composer's period of pain and maturation. His odyssey of suffering, resignation, and finally, acceptance, is echoed in the rhythmically and harmonically complex musical language of these compositions. *About Mother*, composed for Suk's young son as a fond memory of his deceased mother Otilka, signifies the peak of Suk's subjectivism in his piano oeuvre. The author will concisely study all five movements of the set, with an emphasis on the movements most characteristic of this period, *How Mother Sang to Her Child* and *About Mother's Heart*. These miniatures will be examined in light of their programmatic connotations, extended use of pedal point, suspended tonality, and polyrhythm.

The final pieces to be explored in this document are four movements (Nos. 1, 4, 5, and 9) from the pinnacle of Suk's writing for piano, *Things Lived and Dreamed*, Op. 30. In this cycle of ten pieces, the composer experimented with many

progressive techniques: polychordal structures, use of modes, whole-tone sonorities and fast changing (sometimes unresolved) harmonies, tritones operating on multiple levels of the composition, extended tertian sonorities, and progressions of non-functional parallel chords. Even though only two of the ten movements are assigned a descriptive title, the whole set is permeated by self-quotations and other personal symbols pertinent to the title *Things Lived and Dreamed*.

Much of the extant research about Josef Suk is in the Czech language and was published between the 1930's and 1960's. It includes the first biography of Suk (1934) written by his close friend and musicologist, Jan Miroslav Květ,³ as well as collected essays on Suk's and Novák's music (1945) by musicologist, pianist, and frequent performer of both composers' works, Václav Štěpán.⁴ Excellent primary sources for Suk scholars are a collection of the composer's letters to family, friends, and colleagues, compiled by Jana Vojtěšková (2005),⁵ and a book of Suk's speeches titled *Living Words of Josef Suk*, published by Jan Květ in 1946.⁶ Curiously, the only currently available analytical study of Suk's piano works is Oldřich Filipovský's *Piano Works of Josef Suk: Analysis and Explanation* (1947),⁷ which has not yet been translated into English. The most recent dissertations pertaining to Suk's music were written in Czech by two graduates of the Department of Musicology at Masaryk University of Brno. In 2013, Petra Běhalová examined Suk's *Things Lived*

³ Jan M. Květ, *Josef Suk život a dílo: studie a vzpomínky* (Life and Works: Studies and Reminiscences), (Praha: Česká akademie věd a umění, 1936).

⁴ Václav Štěpán, *Novák a Suk* (Praha: Hudební matice Umělecké besedy, 1945).

⁵ Jana Vojtěšková, *Dopisy o životě hudebním i lidském* (Letters About Human and Personal Life), (Praha: Bärenreiter, 2005).

⁶ Jan M. Květ, *Živá slova Josefa Suka* (Praha: Topičova edice, 1946).

⁷ Oldřich Filipovský, *Klavírní tvorba Josefa Suka; rozbor a výklad* (Pilsner: T. Mareš, 1947).

and *Dreamed*, Op. 30 in her Master's thesis.⁸ The following year, Jan Charypar surveyed Josef Suk's orchestral works as perceived by Czech music critics prior to 1938 in his Bachelor thesis.⁹

Very few scholarly articles and documents about Suk have been translated into English up to this point. One is Jiří Berkovec's *Josef Suk* from 1969,¹⁰ and another is a revised thematic catalogue of Suk's works by Zdeněk Nouza and Miroslav Nový, published by Bärenreiter in 2005.¹¹ However, interest in Suk's music has been on the rise since the 1980's. The Suk society was established in 1981,¹² and in 1985 N. Simrock published three volumes of Suk's complete piano works, many of which were previously unavailable or out of print.¹³ A website devoted to Suk, www.josefsuk.czweb.org, offers comprehensive information on the composer's personal and professional life.¹⁴ Furthermore, Suk's music (and Czech music in general) has in the past few decades piqued the interest of international scholars and performers. This is evidenced by David Yeoman's book *Piano Music of the Czech Romantics* from 2006,¹⁵ analytical articles by John K. Novak¹⁶ and Michael

⁸ Petra Běhalová, *Josef Suk – Klavírní cyklus Životem a snem – antologie* (Piano Cycle Things Lived and Dreamed- anthology), Master's Thesis (Masaryk University: Department of Musicology in Brno, Czech Republic, 2013) http://is.muni.cz/th/263902/ff_m/Josef_Suk_-_Zivotem_a_snem_-_antologie.pdf

⁹ Jan Charypar, *Orchestrální tvorba Josefa Suka v českých kritických ohlasech do roku 1938* (Josef Suk's orchestral works as perceived by Czech music critics prior to 1938), Bachelor's Thesis (Masaryk University: Department of Musicology in Brno, Czech Republic, 2014) http://is.muni.cz/th/384331/ff_b/

¹⁰ Jiří Berkovec, *Josef Suk*, Trans. Jean Layton-Eislerová (Praha, Bratislava: Supraphon, 1969).

¹¹ Zdeněk Nouza and Miroslav Nový, *Josef Suk: tematický katalog skladeb = Thematic catalogue of the works* (Praha: Bärenreiter, 2005). The first thematic catalogue of Suk's works was compiled by Marie Svobodová and Český hudební fond (Czech Music Foundation) in 1993 (Jinočany: H & H).

¹² "Josef Suk society," <http://suksociety.cz/>

¹³ Josef Suk, *Piano works = Klavierwerke*, 3 vls (London/Hamburg: N. Simrock, 1985).

¹⁴ "Website of a composer Josef Suk," <http://josefsuk.czweb.org/index.html>

¹⁵ David Yeomans, *Piano Music of the Czech Romantics: A Performer's Guide* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006).

¹⁶ John K. Novak, "Josef Suk's Non-Obstinate Ostinato Movements: A study of Harmony and Style," *College Music Symposium* 43 (2003), 86-104.

Beckerman¹⁷ on Suk's music in scholarly journals, and numerous recordings by non-Czech pianists, including Niel Immelman,¹⁸ Margaret Fingerhut,¹⁹ and Lauriala Risto.²⁰

An invaluable resource for researchers and pianists is an independent Urtext series of Suk's selected works published by Bärenreiter Praha (Prague), including a new edition of his popular Piano Quartet in A minor, Op. 1. Only recently, in April of 2015, Bärenreiter published their first ever scholarly-critical edition of Suk's *Things Lived and Dreamed*, edited by Jarmila Gabrielová. The work includes a foreword in Czech, English, and German, as well as a detailed critical commentary in English. In her research, Gabrielová considered both the composer's autograph and the first print of the score from 1909, noting that the clean copy that served as the engraver's reproduction has been lost.²¹ Some of the deletes, rewrites, and gaps that Gabrielová had to decipher during her editorial process can be seen in the Figure below, from Suk's autograph of the last movement from *Things Lived and Dreamed*.

¹⁷ Michael Beckerman, "In Search of Czechness in Music," *19th-Century Music* 10, no. 1 (1986), 61-73.

¹⁸ *Josef Suk: Piano Works*, Vols. 1-4, Niel Immelman, Meridian Records, CD, 2002.

¹⁹ *Josef Suk: Piano Works*, 2 Discs, Margaret Fingerhut, Chandos, CD, 1992.

²⁰ *Suk: Six Piano Pieces- De Maman- Moods*, Lauriala Risto, Naxos Music Library, 2002.

²¹ *Josef Suk: Things Lived and Dreamed (Životem a Snem)*, Op. 30: *Ten Pieces for Piano*, Urtext, Jarmila Gabrielová, ed. (Praha: Bärenreiter, 2015), 49-50.

piano repertoire, since Dvořák and Smetana composed for this instrument only peripherally, focusing instead on symphonic, chamber, and operatic literature. Suk's piano works, unknown treasures of Czech piano literature, are waiting to be rediscovered and appreciated alongside the more popular works of Dvořák, Janáček, and Martinů. It is the author's sincere hope that this document will help to convince the reader that Josef Suk should be remembered not only as an outstanding violinist and Dvořák's son-in-law, but also as a composer of great merit in his own right.

CHAPTER 1

DEVELOPMENT OF CZECH PIANO MUSIC FROM THE 19TH TO THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY

1.1 Founders of the Romantic Character Piece: Tomášek and Voříšek

To truly understand development of Josef Suk's compositional style, it is imperative to consider a wider historical context of music making in the Czech tradition as well as some of the notable piano works of his predecessors and contemporaries. During the Renaissance and Baroque eras, Czech music was primarily sacred vocal and folk music. The latter type originated in the Hussite revolutionary songs, named after the reformer, writer, and Rector of the Prague University, Jan Hus (1371-1415). The political and religious oppression of the Austrian Hapsburg dynasty, which had occupied the Czech throne since 1526, increased significantly after the defeat of the Czech nobility at the Battle of the White Mountain in 1620.²³ A century later, vocal music was gradually replaced by increasingly popular keyboard performances. Music was often cultivated at Czech village schools by educated schoolmasters, known as *kantors*.

Unfortunately, many professional Czech musicians who came from this tradition were forced to leave the country because of the ongoing political, economic, and religious unrest. Following his 1722 visit to Bohemia, the English historian, Charles Burney, concluded that next to Italians, Czech musicians were

²³ Vladimír Štěpánek and Bohumil Karásek, *An Outline of Czech and Slovak Music*, Part 1: Czech Music (Prague: Orbis, 1964), 13-18.

among the most musical people in Europe.²⁴ Several Czech émigrés achieved great recognition outside of their homeland, including: violinist Jan Václav Stamic, a notable representative of the so-called “Mannheim School,” pianist Jan Ladislav Dusík (Dussek), the first touring piano virtuoso, and composers Leopold Koželuch and Jan Křtitel Vaňhal, who significantly influenced the Viennese Classical scene.²⁵ Of the abovementioned musicians, Dussek made the most significant contributions to piano literature and performance practice, including such enduring concepts as substituting fingers on the same key to achieve a *cantabile* sound, use of programmatic titles, and audience-oriented onstage positioning of the pianist.

Václav Jan Křtitel Tomášek (1774-1850) became a leading European composer, pedagogue, and critic during the first half of the nineteenth century. His style represents a transition from the Classical to the Romantic, which is most evident in his short expressive miniatures that predate the earliest Romantic character pieces. Tomášek’s most important piano works were composed between 1807 and 1823, and include forty-two *Eclogues*, fifteen *Rhapsodies*, and three *Dithyrambs*. The titles of the above genres are inspired by the literary genres and thus follow the Romantic fascination with the written word. The seven volumes of *Eclogues* are cast in ternary form, featuring lyrical characters and simple harmonies based on triads, scalar passages, and broken-chord accompaniment. According to Tomášek, these works, composed between 1809 and 1823, depict “shepherds whose life style [*sic*] is indeed simple, but who have to endure hardships, as all

²⁴ Charles Burney, *The Present State of Music in Germany, the Netherlands and United Provinces*, Vol. 10, *Bohemia and Saxony* (London, 1773), 131, Quoted in Štěpánek and Karásek, *An Outline of Czech and Slovak Music*, 20.

²⁵ Yeomans, *Piano Music of the Czech Romantics: A Performer’s Guide*, 3-4.

humans do.”²⁶ His fifteen *Rhapsodies*, inspired by Homer’s *Iliad*, are more vigorous and technically challenging. Finally, the three dramatic *Dithyrambs* are longer, improvisatory in nature, and probably the most difficult of the three sets.²⁷

Tomášek, known as a devoted pedagogue, began teaching local aristocratic families in order to financially support himself, and eventually became one of the most prestigious figures of Prague’s musical community. Clara Schumann, Clementi, Paganini, Berlioz, Wagner, and many others sought Tomášek’s musical advice.²⁸ Furthermore, he could claim friendship with Haydn and Beethoven. A fervent teacher, he taught until a few days before he died in 1850. Among his most notable students were J. V. G. Voříšek, Alexander Dreyschock, and the famous Viennese music critic Eduard Hanslick.²⁹

Tomášek’s pupil and immediate successor **Jan Václav Hugo Voříšek (1791-1825)** was among the few Czech composers recognized as both an established piano composer and a virtuoso performer. He excelled in teaching since he took over all of J. N. Hummel’s students when his mentor left Vienna in 1816. His piano works include conventional genres of the Classical era, such as rondos, variations sets, and the Sonata Op. 20, as well as more forward-looking character pieces such as rhapsodies and impromptus. Voříšek’s output thus links “a fifty-year stylistic gap between the idyllic transparency of Tomášek and the ardent nationalism of Smetana.”³⁰ In addition to the obvious influence of his teacher and advocate

²⁶ Zdenka Fischmann “Václav Jan Křtitel Tomášek’s Poetic Piano Pieces,” Quoted in *Essays on Czech Music* (Boulder: East European Monographs, 2002), 32.

²⁷ *Ibid.*,” 32.

²⁸ Yeomans, *Piano Music of the Czech Romantics: A Performer’s Guide*, 42.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ Yeomans, *Piano Music of the Czech Romantics: A Performer’s Guide*, 47.

Tomášek, Voříšek shared a mutual admiration and professional connection with his contemporary, Beethoven. Voříšek's style was also shaped by Bach's counterpoint, Schubert's lyricism, and the technical demands of the works of Hummel, Moscheles, and Weber.³¹

Voříšek's six *Impromptus*, Op. 7, published in 1822, represent a direct extension of Tomášek's *Eclogues*. Despite their title that suggests extemporization, the six pieces use a predictable ternary form akin to the Classical minuet and trio structure. Yet, Voříšek portrays a Romantic pastoral feeling with his sweeping lyrical gestures and *Ländler*-like middle sections. Parallels have been drawn between his *Impromptu*, Op. 7, No. 4 in A Major and Schubert's *Impromptu*, Op. 90, No. 4 in A-flat Major. Voříšek's *Impromptus* do in fact predate Schubert's sets Op. 90 and Op. 142 by five years, but the newest manuscript evidence reveals that the title "impromptu" was the choice of the publisher, rather than the composer's decision.³²

³¹ Ibid.

³² Kenneth DeLong, "Voříšek, Jan Václav." *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press, <http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.library.unl.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/29688> (accessed January, 26, 2015)

1.2 Nationalist Tendencies: Smetana, Dvořák and Fibich

Although Voříšek and Tomášek played an important role in establishing the groundwork of Czech piano music, the widely recognized founder of Czech national idiom was **Bedřich Smetana (1824-1884)**. According to Štěpánek and Karásek, “the established traditions of Czech folk and classical music were brought to a logical climax with Smetana’s music.”³³ Though he grew up in a German-speaking household, Smetana was an avid supporter of the 1848 Revolution during which the Czechs strove for independence of their own language, culture, and governance. Their efforts culminated in 1862 when the Czech Provisional Theater was founded in Prague. Smetana returned from his residence in Sweden where he had achieved considerable success as a teacher, composer, and conductor of the Gothenburg Society for Classical Choral Music. In fact, Michael Beckerman believes that Smetana was first recognized not as a father of the Czech national style, but as a representative of modern music in Gothenburg.³⁴

Smetana’s most popular opera, *The Bartered Bride*, was premiered in the newly established Provisional Theater in 1866. This work only features peasant characters; traditional Czech dances such as the polka³⁵ and the *furiant*,³⁶ and text that reflects the inflections of the Czech language. Smetana’s other well-known work with strong patriotic tendencies is his cycle of six programmatic symphonic poems,

³³ Štěpánek and Karásek, *An Outline of Czech and Slovak Music*, 38.

³⁴ Beckerman, “In Search of Czechness in Music,” 63.

³⁵ Popular ballroom hopping dance in duple time that originated in 19th-century Bohemia, usually marked by a strong downbeat.

³⁶ Rapid Bohemian dance in 2/4 or 3/4 with shifting accents.

entitled *Má Vlast* (My Country). Its theme has over the years become a symbol of Czech pride.³⁷

While Smetana is most famously known for his operatic and orchestral works, it is his two hundred piano pieces, written over a fifty-year period, that provide deeper understanding of his compositional evolution. His primary influences were pianists of his own generation, namely Chopin, Robert and Clara Schumann (whom he met in 1847), and his mentor and supporter Franz Liszt. Smetana's vast piano repertoire includes a one-movement sonata, etudes, cadenzas to Beethoven's and Mozart's concerti, and set of character pieces titled *From Bohemia's Woods and Fields*. However, it is the composer's thirty polkas that are most representative of the Czech folk idiom.³⁸ In these works, Smetana transformed the middle-class ballroom dance into a stylized art form similar to that of Chopin's mazurkas. The most renowned collection of Smetana's stylized dances is the two-volumes of *Czech Dances* (1879), composed after he lost his hearing.³⁹ Finally, it should be noted that Smetana's highly personal string quartet *Z mého života* (From My Life, 1876) began the trend of autobiographical works that clearly inspired the next generation of Czech composers, namely Zdeněk Fibich, Josef Suk, and Leoš Janáček.

Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904) followed in Smetana's footsteps by composing music with lyrical melodies, innovative rhythms, and frequent employment of stylized Czech dances, especially the *dumka*, *skočná*, and *sousedská*.

³⁷ Beckerman, "In Search of Czechness in Music," 68.

³⁸ Yeomans, *Piano Music of the Czech Romantics: A Performer's Guide*, 62-3.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 64.

As compared to Smetana's local artistic career, Dvořák was a cosmopolitan composer who demanded that the titles of his pieces were printed in both German and Czech.⁴⁰ His growing international reputation resulted in an honorary doctorate from Cambridge University (1891), followed by his appointment as director of the recently established National Conservatory of Music in New York in 1892. Upon his return to Prague in 1895, Dvořák resumed his teaching position at the Prague Conservatory, guiding the next generation of prominent Czech composers that included Josef Suk, Oskar Nedbal, and Vítězslav Novák.⁴¹

When considering Dvořák's pianistic output, one must keep in mind that his primary keyboard instrument since early childhood was the organ. Far from being a piano virtuoso, his only large-scale compositions for this instrument include the Piano Concerto in G Minor, Op. 33 and his Theme with Variations, Op. 36. The traditional structure of sonata form seemed well suited for the composer's artistic goals, as evident from his symphonic and chamber works. In fact, Dvořák's most idiomatic and effective works for piano come from the latter category, with the most popular being his Piano Quintet in A Major, Op. 81 and the "Dumky" Trio, Op. 90. Many of his small-scale piano works, including *Humoresques*, *Silhouettes*, and *Legends*, are dances and character pieces with evocative titles that follow conservative, symmetrical structures. Although composed mostly out of financial necessity for the growing *Hausmusik* market, David Yeomans believes that these

⁴⁰ Walter Frisch, *Music in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Norton and Company, 2013), 130.

⁴¹ Štěpánek and Karásek, *An Outline of Czech and Slovak Music*, 58.

simple works “continue the idyllic language of Tomášek’s eclogues, and reflect the descriptive lyricism of Smetana’s sketches.”⁴²

The last significant representative of the Czech national school is **Zdeněk Fibich (1850-1900)**. The son of a forestry official, Fibich’s poetic pieces often reflect his love for nature and fascination with the mystical. Although Fibich was a truly versatile and well-rounded musician (having studied in Prague, Paris, Vienna, Mannheim, and Leipzig), he is also the least known of the three nationalistic composers. Upon his return to Prague in 1874, Fibich worked as a private teacher, composer, assistant conductor, and opera coach. Despite all of these experiences, he was never appointed to the music faculty at the Conservatory, as he seemed to lack the gift of self-promotion. In his brief lifetime, Fibich composed operas, chamber music, and symphonic works, but was most celebrated for his melodramas. The composer’s expertise is summed up in the five-volume method *Grand Theoretical and Practical School for Piano*, an important pedagogy treatise in Czech piano literature next to Dussek’s *Instructions on the Art of Playing the Piano (Harpsichord)* from 1796.⁴³

Fibich’s most important contribution to nineteenth-century piano literature is his substantial four-volume cycle *Nálady, dojmy a upomínky* (Moods, Impressions, and Reminiscences). The 376 pieces in this set form a kind of autobiographical diary, based on the composer’s love affair with his former student and later his opera librettist, Anežka Schulzová.⁴⁴ To portray personal events and his emotions,

⁴² Yeomans, *Piano Music of the Czech Romantics: A Performer’s Guide*, 78-79.

⁴³ Ibid., 96.

⁴⁴ Štěpánek and Karásek, *An Outline of Czech and Slovak Music*, 64.

Fibich employs various cryptic abbreviations and quotations from his previous works as well as those taken from other composers. His piano works are firmly rooted in the tradition of the Romantic character piece, harkening back to Schumann, Chopin, and Mendelssohn. Yet, Fibich masterfully inserted polkas, waltzes, and *furiants* in what Bartoš calls “a musical daybook in which we may read with considerable entertainment.”⁴⁵ These techniques, especially that of self-quotation, will be frequently employed in Josef Suk’s works, discussed in the third chapter of this document.

1.3 Czech Music at the *fin de siècle*: Janáček and Novák

Due to his slowly maturing and highly original style, Moravian composer, **Leoš Janáček (1854-1928)**, who was four years Fibich’s junior, won fame as one of the most influential twentieth-century composers.⁴⁶ Janáček grew up in the *kantor* family tradition and like Fibich, studied in Vienna, Prague, and Leipzig, only later to return to his native Moravian region. Janáček’s status as a provincial composer changed when his opera *Jenůfa* gained international recognition in its 1917 premiere. In addition to being a composer, teacher, choirmaster, director of the Brno Organ School, and a critic for the music journal *Hudební listy* (Musical Letters), Janáček was also an ardent ethnographer, having collected and transcribed over 1000 folk songs by 1900.⁴⁷ Consequently, most of his compositions are underscored by his life-long affection for the Moravian folk song, written in a style described by

⁴⁵ Josef Bartoš, *Zdeněk Fibich*, trans. Katerina Fisher, “Zlatoroh” series No. 22-23 (Prague: 1914), 1, Quoted in Yeomans, *Piano Music of the Czech Romantics: A Performer’s Guide*, 96.

⁴⁶ Štěpánek and Karásek, *An Outline of Czech and Slovak Music*, 79.

⁴⁷ Janáček’s ethnomusicology efforts thus anticipate Bartók’s and Kodály’s research.

Robert Morgan as “tonal but rich in modal inflections and marked by the idiosyncratic repetition of small motifs.”⁴⁸ In addition to the composer’s fascination by the rich folk heritage of his country, Janáček’s music also betrays influences of Realism, Impressionism, and Expressionism.

Even though Janáček’s piano output is modest, it summarizes his life from early student exercises, such as the late romantic *Zdenka Variations* (1879), to his last miniature piece *Reminiscences*, written three months before his death. The piano became Janáček’s vehicle through which the composer could express his childhood memories, personal tragedies of his family, and anger over the ongoing political situation.⁴⁹ Many of these emotions can be found in his most popular piano work: two volumes of autobiographical character pieces known collectively as *On the Overgrown Path* (1902-1910).⁵⁰ Characteristics of this set include a strong lyrical element akin to the nature of the folk song, frequent use of sustained pedal tones, irregular phrases, a predilection for enharmonic spellings and relationships, a preference for slower tempi and the black-key tonalities of C-sharp/D-flat major, fluctuations of tempi, time and key signatures, and a unique transformation of melodic and rhythmic motives. Curiously, many of the above characteristics will also become a trademark of Josef Suk’s late pieces, specifically *Things Lived and Dreamed*, Op. 30 (1909).

⁴⁸ Robert Morgan, *Modern Times: From World War I to the Present* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1994), 136.

⁴⁹ Having been under the Austro-Hungarian Hapsburg Empire until the establishment of the independent Czechoslovakia in 1918, Moravians demanded a new Czech university to be founded in Brno. On October 1, 1905, the Austrians of Brno organized a demonstration against this Czech request. The gathering resulted in the death of a 20-year-old wood-worker František Pavlík, who was fatally stabbed. Janáček’s two-movement Sonata titled *Street Scene I.X. 1905* was the composer’s immediate reaction to this tragic event.

⁵⁰ Yeomans, *Piano Music of the Czech Romantics: A Performer’s Guide*, 115-116.

Despite the fact that **Vítězslav Novák (1870-1949)** was born into a non-musical family and was self-taught, he, like Josef Suk, was a graduate of Dvořák's studio, making him Suk's colleague and life-long rival. Even though Suk and Novák had strikingly different artistic personalities, they both marked the beginning of Czech modernism at the *fin de siècle*. Suk was an introvert whose mature style featured irregular structures with complicated harmonies, rhythms and a wealth of musical ideas, while the impulsive Novák employed monothematicism, straightforward, often binary forms, and a carefully planned gradation of thematic material through the use of sequences.⁵¹ After a visit to Moravia in 1896, the composer turned to the study of Moravian and Slovak folk traditions, an essential influence on his formative style. Even though his folklore studies were not as systematic as those of his contemporary Janáček, most of Novák's compositions after 1896 are unmistakably infused with folk elements.⁵²

Novák soon became one of the most sought after composition teachers of the early 1900s. During his thirty-year tenure as the Professor of Composition at the Prague Conservatory, he passed on his knowledge to another generation of progressive Czech and Slovak composers. His most famous pupil was Alois Hába, founder of the groundbreaking microtonal system. Novák's early piano works are character pieces with familiar titles, such as *Eclogues* and *Barcarolles*. His mature works, however, display the composer's patriotic sentiments, passion for sensuous imagery, and abundance of coloristic effects. As a matter of fact, of the Czech composers surveyed thus far, Novák's five-movement piano cycle, *Pan*, comes

⁵¹ Štěpán, *Novák a Suk*, 11-12.

⁵² Yeomans, *Piano Music of the Czech Romantics: A Performer's Guide*, 132.

closest to French impressionism. His effective two-movement *Sonata Eroica* is the first substantial Czech piano sonata since Smetana.⁵³ The last pieces he wrote for piano were the two volumes of children pieces, *Mládí* (Youth), Op. 55 (1920).⁵⁴

This introductory chapter offered a brief summary of music making in the Czech tradition, with the focus on the founders of the Czech Romantic character piece, Tomášek and Voříšek, the Czech nationalistic composers Smetana, Dvořák and Fibich, and Suk's contemporaries, Janáček and Novák. The survey highlighted the importance of the *kantor* tradition, as well as the composers' fascination with Czech folk songs, dances, legends, and patriotic sentiments. Furthermore, Czech music prides itself for its deeply rooted tradition of character pieces, which are autobiographical and predate works of the well-known composers of this genre like Schubert and Schumann. The abundance of high quality piano literature composed by Czech composers is impressive considering the lack of published methodologies and the fact that only a handful of these composers were virtuoso pianists. The following chapter will explore the various aspects of Josef Suk's life, with regard to his life as a composer, performer, and a teacher during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

⁵³ This work is based on a popular Slovak legend of the national hero *Juraj Jánošík*.

⁵⁴ Yeomans, *Piano Music of the Czech Romantics: A Performer's Guide*, 132.

CHAPTER 2

JOSEF SUK AS A MAN, COMPOSER, VIOLINIST, AND PEDADOGUE

"I do not bow to anyone, except for my own conscience and our own noble Lady Music."
- Josef Suk⁵⁵

Josef Suk was the youngest of his parents' three children. He was born "in the beautiful countryside of the middle reaches of the Vltava valley, not far from the banks of the Mastník"¹ in the small village of Křečovice. His father, Josef, was a head teacher, band musician, and respected cantor at St Andrew's Church whose spectacular choir attracted crowds from near and far. This musical environment shaped young Josef's early development. He sang with the other pupils at the school when he was four and began violin studies at the age of eight (Fig. 2.1). Soon thereafter, he took piano and organ lessons, although his father had to alter the pedals so that he could reach them.⁵⁶

Josef was a diligent student who practiced piano in the morning, violin in the afternoon, and organ in the evening. One of his first compositions was a miniature polka for violin composed for his mother's birthday, which was harmonized for piano by his father. There were occasional visits to the National Theater in Prague, which were very influential to his development. One of his earliest attempts at composing for the piano was his *Ouverture* in D Minor, which followed one such visit.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Quoted in Berkovec, *Josef Suk*, Jean Layton-Eislerová, 65.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 6

⁵⁷ Tereza Dítětová and Jan Charypar, "Website of a composer Josef Suk: Life," <http://josefsuk.czweb.org/index.html> (accessed December 11, 2014).

Fig. 2.1. Josef Suk at the age of eight.⁵⁸Fig. 2.2. Suk's house in Křečovice⁵⁹

A further development toward his professional career began when Suk entered the Prague Conservatory at the age of eleven. Antonín Benewitz, the director of the school, was Suk's violin instructor. Benewitz had studied piano with Josef Jiránek, composition with Karl Stecker, and chamber music with famed cellist, Hanuš Wihan. Initially Suk was homesick because of the city environment and vigorous academic requirements at the Conservatory. Yet, during his second year his situation improved after the pianist Oskar Nedbal became his roommate. The two often played four-hand piano duets and discussed their passion for music. The fourteen-year-old Suk dedicated his String Quartet in D Minor to Nedbal, a three-

⁵⁸ <http://josefsuk.czweb.org/fotogalerie.html>

⁵⁹ Photo by the author.

movement work best known for its *Barcarolle*. It was at this time that Suk composed his first piano cycle, *Jindřichův Hradec*, and his *Křečovice Mass*.⁶⁰

After Dvořák joined the composition faculty of the Conservatory in January 1891, Suk quickly became one of his favorite pupils. Suk had the opportunity to work with Dvořák for six months prior to his mentor's appointment to the New York Conservatory. Under Dvořák, Suk published his first work (and his teacher's personal favorite) the Piano Quartet No. 1 in A Minor. Suk held Dvořák in high esteem, deciding to extend his studies an extra year in order to work with him upon his return to Prague. In 1892, under Dvořák's dedicated guidance, Suk composed and conducted his graduation piece, *Dramatic Overture No. 4*.⁶¹

That same year, Suk joined a string quartet directed by two Conservatory faculty members, Hanuš Wihan and Antonín Benewitz. The group became known as the Czech Quartet or Bohemian Quartet: Karel Hoffmann on first violin, Suk on second violin, Oskar Nedbal on viola, and Otto Berger on violoncello (Fig. 2.3). From their first performance in Prague on November 12, 1891 until their last performance and dismissal in 1933, the group gave more than four thousand concerts. The Czech Quartet's performance in Vienna in January of 1893 proved to be a major turning point that established their international reputation. Viennese critic, Eduard Hanslick, and composers, Brahms and Bruckner were present at that concert and demonstrated their support to the aspiring group of young Czech

⁶⁰ Dítětová and Charypar, <http://josefsuk.czweb.org/zivot.html> (accessed December 11, 2014).

⁶¹ John Tyrrell, "Suk, Josef (i)," *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press, <http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.library.unl.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/27094> (accessed December 11, 2014).

musicians.⁶² From that point forward, the busy career of a touring musician allowed Suk to compose in his hometown of Křečovice only during the summers between the concert seasons.

Fig. 2.3. The original Czech Quartet: (from left) Hoffman, Suk, Berger, Nedbal⁶³



Suk, an outstanding violinist, performed on a 1683 Antonio Stradivari that he purchased in 1896, and although he was an excellent soloist, performing Spohr's Sixth Concerto as his graduation piece, he truly flourished in the chamber setting as second violinist. According to the memories of the group's last cellist, Ladislav Zelenka, Suk did not spend much time on individual practice. Before a performance, all he needed was a quick scalar warm-up.⁶⁴ The quartet cycled through performers multiple times throughout its forty-two year existence, with the only permanent member being its founder, violinist Hoffmann. Suk gave up his position in 1933 as a result of his deteriorating health. Stanislav Novák took his place, but the new group

⁶² Dítětová and Charypar, <http://josefsuk.czweb.org/zivot.html>

⁶³ Ibid., <http://josefsuk.czweb.org/fotogalerie.html>

⁶⁴ Berkovec, *Josef Suk*, 60-61.

was short-lived and by December the Czech Quartet ended their impressive career.⁶⁵

Performing in the Czech Quartet exposed Suk to a wide range of classical repertoire as well as contemporary musical styles, which he acknowledged as being very beneficial for his growth as a composer.⁶⁶ The group's repertoire naturally focused on works of Smetana and Dvořák, as well as the standard eighteenth and nineteenth-century chamber literature. In addition, they performed contemporary works by Debussy, Ravel, Milhaud, Schoenberg, Janáček, and Suk himself, including his Second String Quartet, Op. 31. Pianist Artur Schnabel remembered the quartet as "four fascinating men, a wonderful blend of great simplicity and great vitality, and they were also superb players. . . ."⁶⁷ Not surprisingly, in the first volume of Robert Smetana's *History of Czech Musical Culture from 1890-1945*, the Czech Quartet is described as the first professional chamber ensemble in Czech history, one that inspired the formation of many future outstanding professional quartets.⁶⁸

In 1896 Brahms encouraged his Viennese publisher, Simrock, to publish Suk's early work Serenade for Strings, Op. 6. That same year Suk's first String Quartet in B-flat Major, Op. 11 was published in Berlin by the same company. Musicologist, Hugo Leichtentritt celebrated Op. 11 with these words: "I know of very few string quartets since the time of Brahms which do justice to the style of the artistic form with such certainty as this work of the remarkable second violinist of

⁶⁵ Dítětová and Charypar, <http://josefsuk.czweb.org/zivot.html>

⁶⁶ Jan M. Květ, *Živá slova Josefa Suka*, (Praha: Topičova edice, 1946), 115.

⁶⁷ Artur Schnabel, *My Life and Music*, e-book (Dover publications: 2013), 56.

⁶⁸ Quoted in Dítětová and Charypar, <http://josefsuk.czweb.org/zivot.html>

the 'Bohemians'.'⁶⁹ Returning Brahms's favor, the Czech Quartet frequently featured his chamber music in their recitals. Moreover, Suk dedicated his only Piano Quintet in G Minor (composed in 1893) to this German composer.⁷⁰ Serenade for Strings, a youthful but effective work, composed in 1892, is now one of the most popular of Suk's oeuvres. It was also the first one to find its rightful place in the international orchestra repertoire.⁷¹

The joyful character of this work was most likely inspired by Suk's growing affection for Dvořák's young daughter Otilie, affectionately called Otilka (Fig. 2.4). He was enchanted by this fourteen year old during the summer of 1892 when he was invited to join Dvořák and his family in Vysoká, at their summer vacation home.⁷² Otilka's mother, Anna, was originally against the courtship, wishing for someone with a more stable profession for Otilka's future. Dvořák was supposedly the last one to notice this burgeoning romance. On November 17, 1898, the day of the Dvořáks' silver anniversary, Josef and Otilka got married. Three years later their only son Josef was born (Fig. 2.5). But during her pregnancy Otilka was diagnosed with heart disease, a condition that significantly worsened after her beloved father died on May 1, 1904. Suk was devastated by Dvořák's death; his grief was compounded when Otilka suffered heart failure and passed away on July 5, 1905, at the young age of twenty-seven.⁷³

⁶⁹ Quoted in *Signale für die musikalische Welt* 48/ 4 (26 January 1910), 134, "Aus Berlin" In Jonáš Hájek, "Things lived and dreamt by a music editor: reflections on Josef Suk's oeuvre," *Czech Music* 4 (2012), 33.

⁷⁰ Dítětová and Charypar, <http://josefsuk.czweb.org/zivot.html>

⁷¹ Berkovec, *Josef Suk*, 12.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Dítětová and Charypar, <http://josefsuk.czweb.org/zivot.html>

Fig. 2.4. Suk and his wife Otilie Dvořáková⁷⁴Fig. 2.5. Otilka and Josef Jr.⁷⁵

The loss of these two people deeply affected Suk's life and subsequent compositions. He never remarried, remaining true to the memory of his wife and father-in-law. Suk's love for his wife was always reflected in his compositions. Even though his ever-popular *Love Song*, Op. 7 was officially dedicated to his Conservatory piano teacher Josef Jiránek, Suk later employed the theme from this miniature as a symbol of his love for Otilka.⁷⁶ In 1896, Suk dedicated his eight *Piano Pieces*, Op. 12 to his wife. The composer's happiness was for the first time openly expressed in his stage music to Julius Zeyer's dramatic fairy tale, *Radúz and Mahulena* (1897). The main theme offered a perfect subject: the faithful love of prince Radúz and his beloved princess Mahulena, underlined by the struggle between good and evil.⁷⁷ Suk made note of the piece's impact upon his compositional style, stating: "I admit that I found myself in the music for *Radúz a*

⁷⁴ <http://josefsuk.czweb.org/fotogalerie.html>

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ This piece was originally titled *Romance*.

⁷⁷ Berkovec, *Josef Suk*, 17-19.

Mahulena, and that this work impacted my compositions for many years. But I had no idea that the motives of love and death, found in the music of *Radúz*, would accompany my artistic growth from the beginning until the end.”⁷⁸ These prominent motives of love and death will be discussed in Chapter 3.

Suk’s piano pieces written after 1905, especially the cycles *About Mother* (1907), *Things Lived and Dreamed* (1909), and *Lullabies* (1910-1912), became a vehicle for the composer to “rise above profound personal tragedy.”⁷⁹ Although not a virtuoso, Suk was an accomplished pianist (Fig. 2.6). His public piano performances were rare, as he preferred to play for friends at private events, and greatly enjoyed collaborative playing. He accompanied his sister-in-law, the accomplished singer Olga Dvořáková, in performances of her father’s vocal works. In addition, he often collaborated with his colleague and lifelong friend, Karel Hoffmann, to whom he dedicated his Four Pieces for Violin and Piano, Op. 17 and Fantasy for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 24.⁸⁰ One of Suk’s rare piano performances took place on January 11, 1910, during the concert series “Intimate Musical Evenings of Josef Suk’s Piano Poetry” at the National Hall in Prague. He played his own *Spring*, Op. 22a and *Summer Impressions*, Op. 22b, and also premiered his cycles *About Mother*, Op. 28 and *Things Lived and Dreamed*, Op. 30.⁸¹

⁷⁸ Translated by author. Quoted in Suk and Jana Vojtěšková, *Dopisy o životě hudebním i lidském*, 545.

⁷⁹ Yeomans, *Piano Music of the Czech Romantics: A Performer’s Guide*, 144.

⁸⁰ Berkovec, *Josef Suk*, 61.

⁸¹ Suk and Vojtěšková, *Dopisy o životě hudebním i lidském*, 546.

Fig. 2.6. Suk by his piano in Křečovice⁸²Fig. 2.7. Suk's Bösendorfer in 2013⁸³

In addition to his active performing career and summers filled with composing, in 1922 Suk was appointed Professor of Composition at his alma mater, the Prague Conservatory. During the thirteen years of his pedagogical praxis, he was elected the Conservatory's Dean four times, as he constantly strove to increase the school's standards and professionalism. His inaugural speeches and inspiring lectures to students on Beethoven, Brahms, and a wide array of Czech composers revealed the breadth of his knowledge.⁸⁴ He taught approximately forty students, most of whom were Czech, but there were others from Poland, Croatia, Slovenia, and Serbia. His most popular pupils were: Jaroslav Ježek, Klement Slavický, Rudolf Firkušný, and Bohuslav Martinů. However, Martinů studied under Suk briefly before

⁸² <http://josefsuk.czweb.org/fotogalerie.html>

⁸³ Photo by the author.

⁸⁴ Berkovec, *Josef Suk* 63.

moving on to Albert Roussel in Paris; thereafter, Suk bitterly concluded, “he left my school just to realize that the master Roussel had the same expectations as I did.”⁸⁵

According to František Pícha’s recollections, Suk, like Dvořák, was a caring yet strict teacher. While maintaining a busy performance schedule, he allotted about twenty hours per week for teaching. The relationships with his pupils extended beyond the Conservatory classroom, as he often invited his most dedicated students for dinners and even holidays at his house.⁸⁶ Staying true to his own compositional style, Suk insisted that a motive must be distinct and concise, with a strong rhythmic presence. He also required meticulous attention to detail, particularly concerning the development of themes, dynamic, and agogic markings, all prevalent in his own writing.⁸⁷ His teaching philosophy is captured in his own words to his students: “I would like to teach you more than what I am capable of!”⁸⁸

Suk continued in Dvořák’s tradition as a nurturing pedagogue and an influential figure at the Prague Conservatory. Beginning in 1911, the two composers were unfortunately attacked by a group of publishers led by music critic Zdeněk Nejedlý. Novák, Dvořák and Suk were classified as naïve, conventional, and reactionary composers, as opposed to Smetana, Fibich, and Ostrčil, who were seen as progressive and realistic.⁸⁹ The verbal assaults continued throughout the First World War. After one such attack in 1918, Suk suffered an emotional breakdown. Nevertheless, he received the honor of having two of his pieces performed at the

⁸⁵ Translated by author. Květ, *Živá slova Josefa Suka*, 99.

⁸⁶ František Pícha, “Suk- učitel a člověk,” (Suk- Teacher and Human), in Jan Květ, *Josef Suk život a dílo: studie a vzpomínky*, 439-440.

⁸⁷ Berkovec, *Josef Suk*, 63.

⁸⁸ Translated by author. Pícha, “Suk- učitel a člověk,” 439.

⁸⁹ Morgan, *Modern Times: From World War I to the Present*, 302.

historically important first concert of the Czech Philharmonic following the establishment of independent Czechoslovakia: the *Meditation on an Old Czech Hymn* “*St. Wenceslas*,” also arranged for piano and string quartet, and the symphonic poem *Praga*.

The birth of Suk’s first grandson in August of 1929 brought immense happiness to composer. In his letter to Karel Hoffmann the following month, Suk rejoices at his grandson’s birth, affectionately calling him “Pepoušek.”⁹⁰ Josef Suk Jr. (1929-2011) upheld the family tradition as professional musicians. He was an internationally renowned violinist/violist, conductor, and founder of the Suk Trio and the Czech Chamber Orchestra.⁹¹ Suk’s third grandson, Jan Suk (b. 1952), is an essayist and philosopher.

In his later years, Suk achieved several well-deserved distinctions. His triumphant march *Towards a New Life*, Op. 35c (1920) won a silver medal at the 1932 Olympics in Los Angeles. The following year, the Masaryk University of Brno awarded him an honorary doctorate. Shortly before his sixtieth birthday, his final symphonic work *Epilogue* was premiered, winning the “Smetana” award. This powerful work for soloists, chorus, and orchestra is an ultimate summation of Suk’s style in which he openly contemplates his own death.⁹² Josef Suk died of heart failure on May 29, 1935 and was buried next to his parents, in his treasured hometown of Křečovice (Fig. 2.8). The music played during this occasion was his

⁹⁰ Suk and Vojtěšková, *Dopisy o životě hudebním i lidském*, 354.

⁹¹ For more on Suk Jr., visit <http://www.allmusic.com/artist/mn0001664235/biography>

⁹² Tyrrell, “Suk, Josef (ii),” *Grove Music Online*. Oxford Music Online.

own Funeral March in C-Minor, which he ironically dedicated to himself as a fifteen-year-old Conservatory student.⁹³

Fig. 2.8. Suk's grave outside of St. Andrew's Church in Křečovice⁹⁴



⁹³ Dítětová and Charypar, <http://josefsuk.czweb.org/zivot.html>

⁹⁴ Photo by the author.

CHAPTER 3

TRACING THE STYLISTIC DEVELOPMENT IN SUK'S PIANO COMPOSITIONS:
FROM SALON MINIATURES TO THE WORKS OF CZECH MODERNISM**3.1 In the Shadow of Dvořák: *Moods*, Op. 10**

Because Josef Suk primarily established himself as a vital member of the Czech Quartet, a pedagogue at the Prague Conservatory, and an orchestral composer of the famous *Serenade for Strings*, musicians may not be aware that he also composed for piano. However, Suk's over sixty neglected piano works are among the most essential works of the Czech piano repertoire since Smetana. From his earliest set of piano miniatures (Op. 7) to the ultimate summit of his piano writing, the cycle of ten pieces *Things Lived and Dreamed*, Op. 30, one can trace the remarkable development of Suk's growth as a composer and human being.

Suk's compositional style can be divided into two periods. The early period reflects his formal musical training, musical influences from the Romantic period, and the happy events in his life. The later period began in 1905 when the double blow of fate stole both Suk's mentor Dvořák and his wife Otilka. It was at this point that his style turned inward and his work became autobiographical in nature, as he searched for the means to express his feelings about, and eventually cope with, the tragic losses. At the turn of the century, Suk's frequent quartet tours around Europe exposed him to new and innovative musical styles, including impressionism and expressionism. According to Vladimír Helfert, "he had assimilated them [these inspirations] and welded them with the foundations he had built up in the Dvořák

tradition. A second period now began in Suk's career: the quest for new sounds, new techniques, new musical expression. Suk now became, next to Novák and Ostrčil, the chief pioneer of Czech modernism in music.⁹⁵

In his book *Piano Works of Josef Suk: Analysis and Explanation*, Oldřich Filipovský divided Suk's works into five chronological categories:

1. "Time of the Beginning and Preparation," with conservative formal designs modeled upon Dvořák, Brahms, Schumann, and Tchaikovsky. The *Fantasy-Polonaise*, Op. 5 and Piano Pieces, Op. 7 are representative of this period.
2. "Time of Individualization," which culminates in 1898 with the stage music to Zeyer's folk legend *Radúz and Mahulena*, Op. 13. This period includes piano cycles *Moods*, Op. 10 and Piano Pieces, Op. 12.
3. "Time of Large Forms," as seen in Suite, Op. 21; followed by the smaller scale *Spring*, Op. 22a and *Summer Impressions*, Op. 22b, where the expression is concentrated on detail, with a certain sense of foreboding.
4. "Time of Pain," leading into an autobiographical style while moving away from the large forms back to piano miniatures, including *About Mother*, Op. 28.
5. "Time of maturing, resignation and acceptance," which resulted into a highly personal style found in *Things Lived and Dreamed*, Op. 30; *Lullabies*, Op. 33; and *About Friendship*, Op. 36.⁹⁶

The cycle of five character pieces *Moods*, Op. 10 from 1895 was composed in the so-called time of individualization of the *Radúz* period. *Capriccio*, the second movement, demonstrates Suk's efforts to synthesize his experiences from the Prague Conservatory, but also marks the beginning of his search for a unique compositional voice. The other four movements also bear distinctively Romantic

⁹⁵ Vladimír Helfert, "Two Losses to Czech Music: Josef Suk, Otakar Ostrčil." *Slavonic and East European Review* 14, no. 42 (April 1936), 641, <http://jstor.org/stable/4203158> (accessed July 13, 2015).

⁹⁶ Translated by author. Filipovský, *Klavírní tvorba Josefa Suka, rozbor a výklad*, 11-12.

titles: *Legend*, *Romance*, *Bagatelle*, and *Spring Idyll*, the latter being the first of several of Suk's piano miniatures portraying that particular season. According to the Nouza-Nový Thematic Catalogue, Suk's autograph also contained a sixth piece, titled with three asterisks.⁹⁷ This same cryptic designation is also found in the fourth piece of Suk's *Spring*, Op. 22a (to be discussed in section 3.2) and, interestingly enough, also in Robert Schumann's cycles *Album for the Young* as well as in selected piano pieces by Enrique Granados.

Before analyzing any of Suk's works from an historical and analytical standpoint, it is necessary to consider Michael Beckerman's article "In Search of Czechness in Music."⁹⁸ The author questions what it is that makes music Czech, and whether it is indeed possible to define "Czechness." Beckerman lists nine traits that are characteristic of the Czech musical idiom after 1850, many of which are prominent in the forthcoming analysis of Suk's *Capriccio*, as well as in Suk's subsequent pieces. These characteristics are:

1. First beat accent (linked to the speech patterns and folk song)
2. Syncopated rhythms (often related to characteristic dances)
3. Lyrical passages, often as a trio in a dance-like scherzo
4. Harmonic movement outlining triads a major third apart
5. Two-part writing involving parallel thirds and sixths
6. Oscillation between parallel major and minor modes
7. Use of modes with lowered seventh (mixolydian) and raised fourth (lydian)
8. Avoidance of counterpoint
9. Use of melodic cells that repeat a fifth above.⁹⁹

It should be noted that although these elements are Czech in nature, they can be easily found in music of other nationalities. For example, the use of mediant

⁹⁷ Nouza and Nový, *Josef Suk: tematický katalog skladeb*, 102-103.

⁹⁸ Beckerman, "In Search of Czechness in Music," 64.

⁹⁹ Ibid..

relationships and major-minor shifts have been exploited in the works of many great Romantic masters, most notably Frédéric Chopin and Franz Schubert. At the same time, there are a number of Czech composers who do not employ the above traits, as well as non-Czech composers whose compositions could be classified as quasi-Czech because they reference a Czech folk tune.¹⁰⁰ Suk's works demonstrate all of the above elements, except for the last two, since the employment of free counterpoint is evident in the composer's mature works.

Moods, Op. 10 was sketched between 1894-5 during the quartet's tour around Russia, Austria, Italy, and Germany. The cycle was then completed during Suk's summer vacation in Křečovice and Vysoká.¹⁰¹ In Suk's affectionate letter to his parents, dated January 1, 1895, the composer described some of the tour's achievements: "Do not worry about me, people here in Russia like and appreciate us [the Czech Quartet] much more than at home. I wish you could read today's reviews: they are quite the odes on our playing."¹⁰² Of the five pieces, perhaps the most evocative of the Russian tour is the opening *Legend* in D-flat Major, with its broad left-hand arpeggios and melancholic character (Fig. 3.1), suggestive of *dumka*.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.,

¹⁰¹ Berkovec, 67.

¹⁰² Translated by author. Suk and Vojtěšková, *Dopisy o životě hudebním i lidském*, 17.

¹⁰³ The Oxford Companion to Music describes Dumka as "a Slavonic folk ballad from Ukraine, with a lamenting quality, derived from Polish *dumać* and Czech *dumat*, meaning to ponder," Kenneth Chalmers, "Dumka," *The Oxford Companion to Music*, *Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press, <http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.library.unl.edu/subscriber/article/opr/t114/e2118> (accessed January 30, 2015).

Fig. 3.1. Suk: *Legend*, Op. 10, No. 1, opening.



The cycle is dedicated to Clothilde Kleeberg, an accomplished Viennese pianist and Brahms expert, who often performed with the Czech Quartet. As was customary at the time, Berlin publisher N. Simrock published Op. 10 in 1896 under both Czech and German titles (*Náladý* or *Stimmungsbilder: Fünf Clavierstücke*), along with Suk's popular Serenade for Strings, Op. 6, String Quartet, Op. 11, and Piano Pieces, Op. 12. Publication of these works by Brahms's editor Simrock proved to be a turning point that launched Suk's international career, as mentioned in the previous chapter. However, it took another two years before the audience heard Josef Jiránek premiere *Moods* in its entirety on November 14, 1898, at the evening concert of the Prague Youth Club.¹⁰⁴

The title *Capriccio* was certainly not a novelty in the nineteenth-century piano repertoire: Brahms, Mendelssohn, and Tchaikovsky, among others, all composed pieces subtitled *capriccio* or *capriccioso*.¹⁰⁵ Seventeen-year-old Suk previously composed *Capricietto* as the last movement of his Piano Pieces, Op. 7.

Like Brahms and Chopin, Suk frequently assigned generic, evocative titles like

¹⁰⁴ Filipovský, *Klavírní tvorba Josefa Suka; rozbor a výklad*, 48.

¹⁰⁵ According to the abridged definition of the Oxford Music Online, *capriccio* is "a term applied to a piece of music, vocal or instrumental, of a fantastical or capricious nature." Wendy Thompson and Jane Bellingham, "Capriccio," *The Oxford Companion to Music*, <http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.library.unl.edu/subscriber/article/opr/t114/e1159> (accessed February 2, 2015)

capriccio, *polonaise*, *albumleaf*, and *idylle*, to his early works. Despite Suk's choice of a conservative ternary form in the gloomy key of E-flat minor, the four-page miniature effectively portrays the impulsive character of its title through the use of deceptive cadences with dramatic *fermata* pauses. Suk's witty use of rhythmic variations of the main motive, along with written out turns and grace notes, gives the piece an improvisatory feel.

The opening statement, marked as *Allegro ma non troppo* (Fig. 3.2), features a modulating parallel double period where the antecedent phrase of four bars (marked with bold black line) is followed by a consequent phrase half as long (marked with bold red line). Suk successfully balances out this asymmetry by pausing the question on a *fermata* and considerably slowing down the answer with *meno mosso* and *ritardando*. Circled in green are three of the Czech traits discussed earlier: accent on the first beat, syncopations, and use of parallel sixths. The tonality oscillates between the home key of E-flat minor and its submediant, C-flat major, to which the double period modulates.

Fig. 3.2. Suk: *Capriccio*, Op. 10, No. 2, opening.

The musical score for the opening of Suk's *Capriccio*, Op. 10, No. 2, is shown in E-flat minor, 3/4 time. The score is divided into two systems. The first system (top) shows the antecedent phrase (4 bars) marked with a bold black line, followed by the consequent phrase (2 bars) marked with a bold red line. The score includes various musical notations such as accents, syncopations, and parallel sixths, which are circled in green. The tempo markings 'Allegro ma non troppo', 'meno mosso', and 'ritardando' are present. The key signature is E-flat minor, and the time signature is 3/4. The score is written for piano (p) and includes dynamic markings like 'f marcata' and 'p'.

Suk further elaborates on the principal syncopated motive in a harmonic descent using modulations in thirds, mm. 13-20 (E-flat, b, D, b, G, B-flat), as seen in Figure 3.3. These types of mediant key relationships represent yet another popular feature of Czech music and Suk's harmonic vocabulary, one that remained constant even in his subsequent mature works. It should be pointed out, however, that in these later works Suk most frequently employed chromatic mediant and double chromatic mediant relationships, often in their enharmonic spellings, to achieve modulations to distantly related key areas. Also notable are the frequent tempo changes within this section, including *poco più mosso*, *ritardando*, *tempo I.*, *meno mosso*, and *andante*. On a much smaller scale, these carefully indicated tempo inflections foreshadow the opening piece from Suk's *Things Lived and Dreamed*, Op. 30.

Fig. 3.3. Suk: *Capriccio*, Op. 10, mm. 13-23, modulations in thirds.

The musical score for Suk's *Capriccio*, Op. 10, mm. 13-23, is presented in two systems. The first system (mm. 13-17) begins in E-flat major and modulates to B-flat major. The second system (mm. 18-23) continues the modulation, passing through D major and returning to B-flat major. The score includes various tempo markings: *p poco più mosso (vivo)*, *cresc.*, *rit.*, *tempo I.*, and *rit.*. The key signatures are indicated by flats: E-flat, B-flat, D, and B-flat. The score also includes fingerings, articulation marks, and a 'Ped. sempre' instruction.

It is interesting to note similarities between this *Capriccio* and other character pieces of the late nineteenth century, such as Dvořák's fifth *Humoresque*

from his Op. 101 (Fig. 3.4). This set was sketched during Dvořák's stay in the United States (1892-95), but finished upon his short summer vacation in Vysoká in 1894.

Suk was among those who heartily welcomed Dvořák home and, according to Berkovec, he also heard his teacher's newest works from the New World.¹⁰⁶ Suk's cycle *Moods* was, perhaps coincidentally, completed the following year.

Nevertheless, according to Suk's own recollections of this time period in *Living Words of Josef Suk*, the composer finished the whole set during Dvořák's absence.¹⁰⁷

Fig. 3.4. Dvořák: *Humoresque*, Op. 101, No. 5, mm. 1-12.¹⁰⁸



Similarly to Suk's *Capriccio*, Dvořák's *Humoresque* is composed in a minor key, reiterates the opening tonic and employs duple meter, with selected second beats emphasized with *sforzandi*. The melody is typical of Dvořák's style: dance-like and rather conventional, underlined by its 4+4 periodic structure. However, comparing these two excerpts exhibits some differences between the mentor and

¹⁰⁶ Berkovec. *Josef Suk*, 66.

¹⁰⁷ Květ, *Živá slova Josefa Suka*, 115.

¹⁰⁸ http://conquest.imsip.info/files/imglnks/usimg/9/9e/IMSLP235663-SIBLEY1802.14575.c345-39087012633691_op_101_book_2.pdf

his student: while Dvořák's style was deeply rooted in the purity of Classical tradition, as evident from the conservative harmonic language and symmetrical phrase structure, Suk's style, with many tempo changes, dynamic inflections, and harmonic twists, pointed toward lyrical Romanticism. Like Suk, Dvořák employed modulations in mediant relationships in this miniature (marked in red in Fig. 3.5), for example from E major (m. 17) to C-sharp minor (m. 21).

Fig. 3.5. Dvořák: Humoresque, Op. 101, No. 5, mm. 13-24, modulations in thirds.¹⁰⁹



Another comparison can be made with Johannes Brahms's own *Capriccio* in B Minor, Op. 76 from 1878 (Fig. 3.6). Comparing this excerpt with Suk's opening of his *Capriccio* (Fig. 3.2), one can find many parallels: choice of a minor key, duple meter, twelve-bar long opening period, accented off-beats, and descending stepwise left hand voice leading. Unlike Suk's diatonic descending bass in his *Capriccio*, Brahms's rendition is chromatic (circled in red). Brahms also effectively exploits major-minor

¹⁰⁹ http://conquest.imsip.info/files/imglnks/usimg/9/9e/IMSLP235663-SIBLEY1802.14575.c345-39087012633691_op_101_book_2.pdf

duality (circled in green), which further underlines the whimsical character suggested by the piece's title.

Fig. 3.6. Brahms: *Capriccio*, Op. 76, mm. 1-14, Major/Minor shifts.¹¹⁰



The central section of Suk's *Capriccio* (Fig. 3.7), marked *Allegro scherzando*, provides the expected contrast within the ternary form with a playful atmosphere characteristic of the lyrical Czech trio. The mood change is achieved by direct modulation to the parallel major and an effective shift to the treble register for both hands. The unifying syncopated pattern from the beginning is now featured in the left hand as a rather narrow *legato* melody (marked with green arrow). It is juxtaposed with the more embellished *staccato* counter melody in the right hand.

¹¹⁰ http://conquest.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/d/d9/IMSLP02507-Brahms_-_Capriccio_B_Minor_Op.76_No.2.pdf

Furthermore, the sustained tonic pedal point E-flat (circled in red) helps to generate a new, thicker texture.

Fig. 3.7. Suk: *Capriccio*, Op. 10, mm. 31-35, trio section beginning.



As was typical in much nineteenth-century salon piano writing, Suk achieves diversity and gradual build-up in this central section by effectively employing variation technique. He uses rhythmic diminution in two successive modulatory statements in the right hand (marked with green arrows in Fig. 3.8 and 3.9) before the reprise takes place in measure 71.

Fig. 3.8. Suk: *Capriccio*, Op. 10, mm. 41-44, rhythmic diminution/variation.



Fig. 3.9. Suk: *Capriccio*, Op. 10, mm. 61-64, rhythmic diminution/variation.



Suk's preference for simple ternary form is typical for the vast majority of his piano miniatures from the early to late style. Thus, it is not surprising that the restatement of the A section in this *Capriccio* is almost completely verbatim. The only differences are an addition of one bar in the *Andante* section (mm. 95-99, not shown) and the re-harmonization of the opening antecedent phrase (Fig. 3.10a). In the reprise of the opening line in m. 71, Suk reverses the harmonic progression: he begins with C-flat (VI), then finishes the phrase on the tonic minor (Fig. 3.10b). The rest of the period proceeds in the same fashion as the original statement.

Fig. 3.10a. Suk: *Capriccio*, Op. 10, opening.

Allegro, ma non troppo

f marcato

meno mosso

p rit.

Eb m i p x P x P x P x P VI x

Fig. 3.10b. Suk: *Capriccio*, Op. 10 mm. 71-75, reprise: re-harmonized.

Tempo I.

ff

meno mosso

p

VI Ped. come prima i

As opposed to the subdued ending of the A section, Suk's *Coda* brings his *Capriccio* to an exciting ending by combining *crescendo* with *accelerando* swell, concluding on two emphatic tonic minor chords (Fig. 3.11). Even though this brief

section seems to present completely new material, the thirty-second note ascending passage originates from the end of B section (Fig. 3.12). Here it outlined a minor subdominant (A-flat) with added sixth in four statements separated by persistent *fermata* pauses.

Fig. 3.11. Suk: *Capriccio*, Op. 10 mm. 100-104, *Coda*- end.



Fig. 3.12. Suk: *Capriccio*, Op. 10, mm. 67-69, end of B section.



The above discussion of Suk's *Capriccio* places this piano miniature alongside the works of Suk's role models, especially those of Brahms and Dvořák. Additionally, *Capriccio* features some of the Czech elements outlined by Beckerman at the beginning of this chapter, including Suk's use of syncopation, modulation in median relationships, lyrical trio section, and major/minor parallelism. Although the composer's use of variation technique and a relatively predictable harmonic vocabulary are still firmly rooted in the late Romantic era of salon piano pieces, his

treatment of the primary syncopated motive reveals a gift for melodic and rhythmic inventiveness as well as a successful large-scale plan of cohesive musical structure. In addition, the fluidity of Suk's tempi, including the dramatic role of rests and *fermatas*, along with detailed dynamic, articulation, and agogic markings, all demonstrate the composer's efforts to achieve a more individual means of expression, thus foreshadowing the development of his mature compositional style.

3.2 Finding His Own Voice: *Spring*, Op. 22a

Suk's set of five exuberant character pieces entitled *Spring*, Op. 22a presents another phase of the composer's stylistic development, in which his works become more personal and detail-oriented. Filipovský called this period a "time of large forms," particularly because of the work that precedes *Spring*, the four-movement Suite, Op. 21 (1900). The composer strove for a more balanced design in this piece, revising what was originally Sonatina in G Minor from 1897. Curiously, the four movements of the Suite are not unified by a single key and feature a variety of different forms, including sonata, rondo, ternary form, and their combinations. Yet, the suite was Suk's last attempt at an objective approach to formal design.¹¹¹

It was with his two sets of character pieces from 1902, *Spring*, Op. 22a and *Summer Impressions*, Op. 22b, that the composer returned to the smaller-scale ternary form that best captured his lyrical tendencies. In a letter to his publisher, Mojmír Urbánek, from June 15, 1902, Suk expressed his intentions to compose a cycle of four sets under the same opus number, each depicting one of the four seasons. *Summer Impressions*, following *Spring*, was to be called *Summer Eclogues*, followed by *Autumn Moods* and *Winter*. It is not known why Suk only composed the first two sets; however, in the same letter to Urbánek, the composer insisted that the same company publish the entire opus.¹¹² The five movements of *Spring* were

¹¹¹ As opposed to his predecessor Smetana and his contemporaries Novák, Janáček, and Fibich, Suk did not leave behind a substantial piano sonata. He did, however, compose a youthful Sonata in C Major in 1883, at the age of nine.

¹¹² Suk and Vojtěšková, *Dopisy o životě hudebním i lidském*, 42-3.

written in a brief time span between April 2 and April 19, 1902.¹¹³ M. Urbánek published this cycle in 1903 and the premiere took place on April 13 of the same year: in a Prague performance by Czech pianist and composer, Lola Beranová.¹¹⁴

The beginning of the twentieth century was one of the happiest periods of Suk's personal and professional life. In 1901, Suk's String Quartet No. 2 had merited great success in its Munich performance. Furthermore, Italian pianist Ernesto Consolo performed Suk's Suite, Op. 21 around Europe and American pianist John Percy premiered the same work to great acclaim in the United States, including the cities of New York, Chicago, and San Francisco.¹¹⁵ Most importantly, Suk's son Josef was born in December of 1901. The composer's feelings of personal fulfillment as a husband and father are poignantly captured within the five movements of Op. 22a, each of which portrays the season of a new life: I. *Spring*, II. *Breeze*, III. *In*
*
Expectation, IV. * * *,¹¹⁶ and V. *Longing*. Suk dispensed with the generic titles of his previous compositions for the sake of more personal names that corresponded with current life events. According to Rosa Newmarch, Suk's musical evolution was as much the result of circumstances as of any sudden inward impulses. Every note he

¹¹³ The first two movements were written during the quartet's tour in Berlin, while movements 3 and 4 were composed in Prague. The last movement lacks an exact location of its composition.

¹¹⁴ Nouza and Nový, *Josef Suk: tematicky katalog skladeb*= *Thematic catalogue of the works*, 206.

¹¹⁵ Jiří Berkovec, "Josef Suk a evropské stylové proudy"(Josef Suk and European stylistic movements), *Hudebni rozhledy* 39, no. 1 (1986), 47.

¹¹⁶ For more information on the three asterisks used by Suk and others, refer back to p. 36. This movement proceeds *attaca* to the next movement and the two originally shared the title, *In Expectation*. However, in the first edition, the fourth movement was labeled with three asterisks (Nouza and Nový, 204). It is not known whether this was Suk's choice or the publisher's choice. The reason behind this symbolism remains unknown. Some sources and many recordings refer to this movement without the asterisks, only using its tempo indication *Andante*.

writes is part of his life, an experience or a dream. He does not need to search for sources of inspiration apart from his own rich subjectivity.¹¹⁷

As opposed to *Moods*, which form a collection of five contrasting vignettes that are ideologically, technically, and structurally disparate, *Spring* is a unified cycle and thus should be performed in its entirety. The movements are linked not only by the portrayal of the composer's life during the spring of 1902, but also by means of the opening "Spring" motive, present in melodic and rhythmic variations throughout all five movements. Due to Suk's employment of thematic cyclicism, Op. 22a holds a special place in his diverse piano output. From now on, Suk conceived his piano pieces as cohesive cycles, as evidenced from the ensuing opera of piano works: 22b, 28, 30, and 33. The following analysis will consider all movements of Op. 22a, with particular attention given to the opening movement.

The opening "Spring" theme in the first movement, *Allegro con brio*, encompasses two principal building blocks, shown in Figure 3.13. After the initial fanfare, the A motive (marked with green) is characterized by a dotted rhythm and descending intervals of a major second and a perfect fourth. The B segment (marked in red) consists of an ascending stepwise motion. It should be noted that even though the home key is E major, the tonic is not clearly established until measure 47.

¹¹⁷ Rosa Newmarch, *The Music of Czechoslovakia* (New York: J. & J. Harper Editions, 1969), 204.

Fig. 3.13. Suk: I. *Spring*, Op. 22a, opening motives A and B.

The image shows a musical score for Suk's I. *Spring*, Op. 22a. The tempo is marked 'Allegro con brio'. The score is in 3/4 time and the key signature has two sharps (D major). The opening sequence starts with a piano (p) dynamic. Motive A, highlighted in a green box, occurs in measures 1-4. Motive B, highlighted in a red box, occurs in measures 5-8. The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, slurs, and dynamic markings like 'cresc.' and 'ff'. Chord labels 'E', 'D', 'F4/3', and 'B7' are placed below the bass staff to indicate the harmonic progression.

Suk's unorthodox opening chord progression is indicative of the new direction the composer is taking with Op. 22a: D major followed by F4/3, which then resolves into the expected dominant seventh chord. Difficult to label with traditional Roman numeral analysis, this progression could be instead understood as three chords in chromatic mediant relationships, centered on D (D to F4/3 and D to B7). According to the study "Melodic 'Archetypes' in Compositions by Josef Suk" by Czech musicologist Jaroslav Volek, Suk's use of three ascending chords in which the first, smaller interval (e.g. minor third) is followed by a larger leap (e.g. augmented fourth), is one of the two archetypes of Suk's musical openings.¹¹⁸ Within this category, Volek also lists the openings of Suk's first String Quartet, Op. 11 and *Adagio* from Suite, Op. 21, the latter of which is strikingly similar to the opening of *Spring*, with initial chords' outer melodies outlining a major second, then a tritone (Fig. 3.14).

¹¹⁸ The second archetype is an ascending stepwise motion in a slow or moderate tempo, followed by a leap in the opposite direction. Jaroslav Volek, *Struktura a osobnosti hudby* (Praha: Panton, 1988), 247-249.

Fig. 3.14. Suk: *Adagio* from Suite, Op. 21, opening.



In the central section of this free ternary form, Suk continues to develop the primary “Spring” theme, combining the stepwise B motive with the dotted A motive, as seen in Figure 3.15. The statement is now clearly in the key of E major, confirmed by the tonic pedal point (circled in blue). Suk gradually builds up the momentum from *piano* in m. 67 to triple *forte* in m. 115, as the spring season comes into full bloom through a series of keys related by minor thirds: E, G, B-flat, and D-flat (later respelled as C-sharp).

Fig. 3.15. Suk: I. *Spring*, Op.22a, mm. 67-74, motives A and B combined.

Whereas at the beginning of *Spring* the tension between duple and triple subdivisions of the beat was stabilized by recurring interjections of homophony (e.g., the B motive in Fig. 3.13), the central section in Figure 3.15 fully exploits this

polyrhythm. The last full statement of the “Spring” motive is unusual. It is heard, for the first time in the piece, *dolce* in the tenor voice (marked with a green arrow), underlined by the tonic pedal point E (circled in blue), and juxtaposed with the soprano countermelody, circled in red (Fig. 3.16). This passage could be perceived as yet another derivation from the A and B motives, wherein the soprano progresses in stepwise motion (B, C-sharp, D-sharp, E), while the tenor employs the familiar dotted rhythm.

Fig. 3.16. Suk: I. *Spring*, Op. 22a, mm. 161-166, melody in tenor.

The image shows a musical score for Suk's I. Spring, Op. 22a, measures 161-166. The score is in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. It features a piano accompaniment and a tenor voice line. The piano part has a tonic pedal point on E in the bass, circled in blue. The tenor voice line has a dotted rhythm, also circled in blue. The soprano line has a stepwise melody, circled in red. The score includes markings for 'dolcissimo', 'sempre p', 'dolce', 'poco rit.', and 'dim.'. A green arrow points to the tenor voice line. The measures are numbered 161, 164, and 166.

Suk's technique of thematic cyclicism transcends the boundaries of the first movement of Op. 22a and thus deserves to be examined within the remaining four movements. In the second movement, subtitled *Breeze*, the composer seems to have let go of his fixation with motivic development and repetitive harmonic structure in favor of irregular phrase structures and quickly changing harmonies in a modal idiom. Despite this sudden shift, an attentive listener will, perhaps unconsciously, recognize the opening “Spring” motive in various disguises (Fig. 3.17). The three

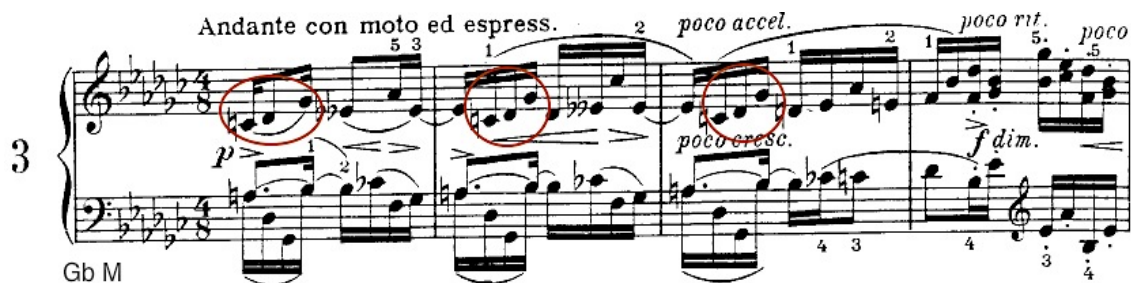
circled notes, now transposed to the key of C major, preserve the familiar outline of the opening theme: a descending major second followed by a perfect fourth (in octave transposition). Suk's flexible stacking up of the thirds in this movement results in some Impressionistic sonorities, such as the C13 opening arpeggio.

Fig. 3.17. Suk: II. *Breeze*, Op. 22a, mm. 24-25, "Spring" quote.



Similarly, the third movement, *In Expectation*, also employs the "Spring" motive, but as an ascending gesture with the first interval changed to a minor second, followed by a perfect fourth, thus fitting well into the previously discussed idea of Suk's first archetype (Fig. 3.18). Motivically, *In Expectation* is completely based on the "Spring" motive, which Suk presents in an array of characters and keys in what could be labeled a miniature set of free variations.

Fig. 3.18. Suk: III. *In Expectation*, Op. 22a: opening, "Spring" quote ascending.



*

The peculiarly titled * * penultimate movement *Andante* (see footnote 116) possesses an improvisatory, mysterious nature. Yet, the opening three notes can be easily discerned as structurally related to the “Spring” motive, as seen in Figure 3.19. Musically and emotionally, this one-page miniature is the darkest (the only movement in a minor key) and most harmonically unstable of the five, possibly symbolizing the premonition of Otilka’s heart disease.¹¹⁹ Despite the strong presence of the leading tone G-sharp throughout this movement, Suk avoids the home key of A minor for the first sixteen measures, eventually relieving the accumulated tension by a surprising arrival at the parallel major three bars before the end of this movement (not shown). As will be discussed later in this chapter, optimistic endings are typical for Suk’s oeuvre, including pieces that bespeak a great struggle, such as his funeral symphony *Asrael* (1905).

*

Fig. 3.19: Suk: IV. * *, Op. 22a: opening, “Spring” quote.

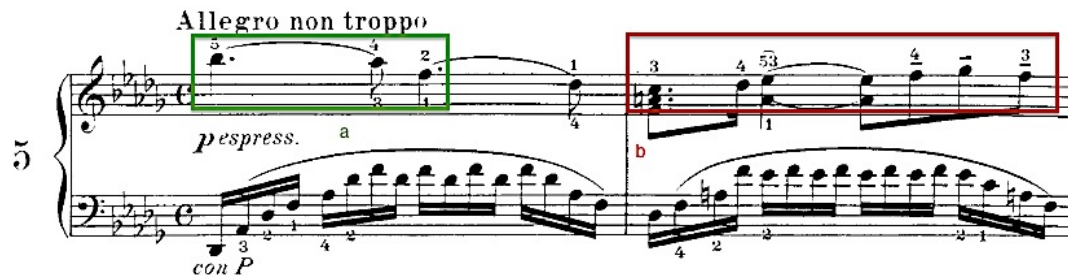


The last movement, *Longing*, finishes *Spring* with a triumphant ending on the D-flat major tonic. Because of its tuneful primary theme and effective sonic and tempo gradations, this movement became the most popular of the whole set, and in fact, one of the most favored of Suk’s piano pieces after *Love Song*, Op. 7. The

¹¹⁹ Otilka’s heart disease was detected for the first time during her pregnancy.

opening statement, like the first movement, consists of two parts: the first measure employs the dotted rhythm of the A motive in rhythmic augmentation, while the following measure preserves the original dotted rhythm of A, but structurally outlines the ascending stepwise B motive (Fig. 3.20).

Fig. 3.20. Suk: V. *Longing*, Op. 22a: opening, “Spring” quote.



Halfway through the movement, Suk brings back the “Spring” fanfare, re-harmonized and transposed. Marked *tranquillo*, this quote evokes a nostalgic remembrance of the beginning of the season that is now coming to an end (Fig. 3.21).

Fig. 3.21. Suk: V. *Longing*, Op. 22a: mm. 31-34, “Spring” fanfare quote from I.



Due to its lyrical character, predictable late-Romantic harmonic language, and remarkable structural cohesion across the movements, *Spring*, Op. 22a has gained considerable fame among Suk’s performers and audiences. Its reputation can be traced back to 1905, when the legendary pianist Artur Schnabel performed both

this set and *Summer Impressions* in Berlin.¹²⁰ Suk's concentrated motivic work in this set marks a new stylistic phase that focuses on carefully planned gradations of smaller units within a larger whole. In addition, this rare cyclic work also features Suk's first experimentation with non-functional chord progressions, Impressionistic harmonies, and passages of tonal ambiguity. Finally, Op.22a is both Suk's first personal piano cycle and his last work for this instrument that radiates exuberant joy and youthful optimism.

¹²⁰ Berkovec, "Josef Suk a evropské stylové proudy," 47. Unfortunately, there are no recordings available of Schnabel performing Suk's piano works.

3.3 Time of Pain: *About Mother*, Op. 28

Although Suk openly grieved the loss of Otilka and Dvořák in his funeral symphony *Asrael*, Op. 27, his piano cycle *About Mother*, Op. 28 was the first set for this medium in which the composer revealed his innermost feelings for his wife.¹²¹ Furthermore, it represents a turning point whereby Suk's music became more philosophical and increasingly complex. Suk composed the five miniatures of Op. 28 between May and June 1907, two summers after Otilka's passing, with the dedication of "simple piano pieces for my little son." The subsequent five titles reflect various memories of Otilka that Suk wished to be preserved for his son, who was only three years old when his mother died: 1. *When Mother Was Still a Little Girl*, 2. *Once in the Springtime*, 3. *How Mother Sang at Night to the Sick Child*, 4. *About Mother's Heart*, and 5. *Remembering*.¹²²

On January 11, 1910, the composer himself premiered this work, three years after it was composed, along with his freshly written set *Things Lived and Dreamed*, Op. 30, during a series called "Intimate Musical Evenings of Josef Suk's Piano Poetry." In this performance, Suk also played his cycles Op. 22, *Spring* and *Summer Impressions*. According to the 1910 review in the reputable Czech journal *Hudební rozhledy* (Musical Landscapes), a new Bechstein concert grand piano from Berlin was provided for this occasion, and the audience was seated in a half circle

¹²¹ A loving tribute to a wife and a mother, Suk's Op. 28 could be seen as a musical parallel to the touching poem "For My Mother," written thirty-five years earlier by an important representative of the Czech literary realism, Jan Neruda (1834-1891).

¹²² The cycle was originally comprised of only four pieces; *Once in Springtime* was added later and placed after No.1 (Nouza and Nový, 243).

surrounding the composer.¹²³ The dim lighting augmented the overall intimate atmosphere of this evening, possibly explaining Suk's courage to publically perform on an instrument that was secondary to him.

About Mother presents a free chronological narrative, following Otilka's life experiences: from her childhood, to her courtship and marriage with Suk, to the time of her motherhood, to her eventual death. To capture this programmatic content, Suk employs motives that evoke nature, self-quotations of his "Love" and "Death" motives from previous works, and effective polyrhythms to portray Otilka's troubling heart condition. In order to explore these programmatic elements, the author will succinctly discuss all five movements of the set, with emphasis on the most individualized movements, Nos. 3 and no. 4.

In the opening of the first movement, *When Mother Was Still a Little Girl* (*Allegretto molto moderato*), the composer openly refers to his love for Otilka. In the B section, Suk quotes his famous piano work, *Love Song* from 1893. Figure 3.22 illustrates the original statement of this motive from the opening of Piano Pieces, Op. 7. Figure 3.23 features Suk's quotation technique used in the central section of *When Mother Was Still a Little Girl*, wherein the motive is transposed to B major and rhythmically augmented to accommodate the triple meter.

¹²³ Nouza and Nový, *Josef Suk: tematicky katalog skladeb= Thematic catalogue of the works*, 246.

Fig. 3.22. Suk. Piano Pieces, Op. 7: I. *Love Song*, opening.



Fig. 3.23. Suk: I. *When Mother Was Still a Little Girl*, Op. 28, mm. 51-60, "Love" motive.

The second movement, *Once in the Springtime (Adagio)*, brings back the joyful memories of Otilka's relationship with Suk during the spring season (Fig. 3.24). Suk's fascination with this particular time of year was evident in *Moods*, Op. 10 and most importantly in *Spring*, Op. 22a, which the composer himself described as a "work full of joy, love and tender compassion for those suffering, and even full of humor."¹²⁴ Suk was known for his love of nature and frequent walks in the countryside around his hometown, as well as in the nearby villages of Neveklov and

¹²⁴ Translated by author. Quoted in the letter to Otakar Šourek from May 25, 1921 in Jana Vojtěšková, *Dopisy o životě hudebním i lidském*, 219.

Sedlčany. The composer claimed to find reassurance in nature.¹²⁵ According to Berkovec, the opening of *Once in the Springtime* suggests a pastoral atmosphere because of the prominent cuckoo-call, based on an interval of a descending third, followed by its echo (marked with red squares).¹²⁶ Suk's irregular treatment of the phrase structure in the opening of this movement is also noteworthy: it functions in units of four, five, and four bars (marked with green lines), yet succeeds in sounding completely organic.

Fig. 3.24. Suk: II. *Once in the Springtime*, Op. 28, opening "Cuckoo" motive.

The next two movements, *How Mother Sang at Night to Her Sick Child* and *About Mother's Heart*, deliver the emotional climax of the whole cycle. Furthermore, they are both excellent examples of Suk's effective employment of the ostinato pedal point and its impact on the underlying tonal plan. *How Mother Sang at Night to Her*

¹²⁵ Translated by author. Quoted in Květ, *Živá slova Josefa Suka*, 117.

¹²⁶ Berkovec, *Josef Suk*, Trans. Jean Layton-Eislerová, 35.

Sick Child offers a moving image of a loving mother, whose heartbeat is echoed in the left hand ostinato B-flat while the right hand sings a sorrowful lullaby (Fig. 3.25).

Fig. 3.25. Suk: III. *How Mother Sang at Night to Her Sick Child*, Op. 28, opening.

The musical score is for the opening of 'How Mother Sang at Night to Her Sick Child' by Janáček. It is in B-flat major, 3/4 time, and marked 'Andante.' The right hand features a lullaby melody with fingerings and dynamics (p, pp) indicated. The left hand has an ostinato B-flat line with a 'B-flat minor?' annotation. A red box highlights the first four measures of the right hand melody. The score continues for 15 measures, ending with a 'simile sempre' instruction.

Formally speaking, this miniature is rather exceptional. It is the only one of the five pieces from Op. 28 that does not adhere to the ternary form representative of most of Suk's piano character pieces. It is composed in what seems to be a binary ABAB form, with varied returns of both sections and a brief *Coda*. As seen in Figure 3.26, the B section is derived from the primary motive. The two motives are structurally identical, the only difference being their closing interval: the opening motive concludes with a rising minor third, while the same motive in m. 15 descends by a whole step. The binary structure also seems to frame the miniature harmonically: while the A section is centered on the dominant C seventh chord, the B section outlines a tritone-related G-flat major.

Fig. 3.26: Suk. III. *How Mother Sang at Night to Her Sick Child*, Op. 28, mm. 13-20.

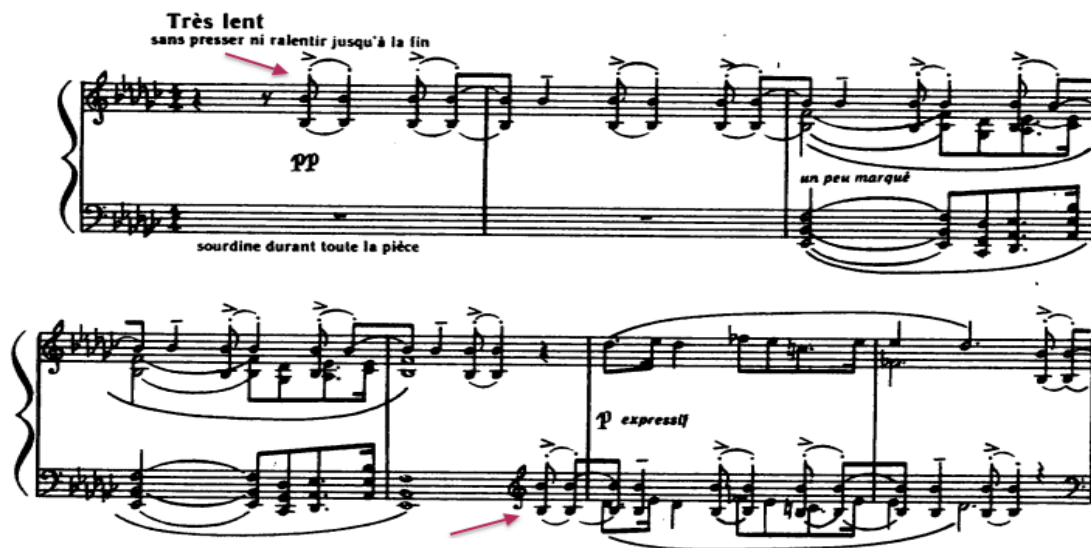
The musical score for Suk's 'How Mother Sang at Night to Her Sick Child', Op. 28, mm. 13-20, is shown. The score is in 3/4 time and features a constant ostinato pedal point of B-flat in the left hand. The right hand has a melodic line with various ornaments and dynamics. A red box highlights measures 13-14, where the B-flat is labeled 'B espress.' and 'p'. The key signature is B-flat major, and the tempo is marked 'espress.'.

Suk's manipulation of the ostinato pedal point B-flat in this miniature is remarkable. The syncopated rhythm given in the first measure remains constant throughout the entire movement, except for three fleeting instances when the heartbeat is momentarily disrupted, such as in m. 6 (marked with red arrow in Fig. 3.25). At first glance, the B-flat seems to tie this piece harmonically to the tonic pitch. However, aside from a few brief moments like the downbeat of m. 2, this note does not function in its usual role of a tonic or dominant pedal point. When the right hand enters in the opening measure (Fig. 3.25), the B-flat is heard in a new context as the seventh of the C major chord in third inversion. Two bars later, the same pitch becomes the fifth of the E-flat major. Finally, when the B section begins in m. 14 (Fig. 3.26), the pedal point is now the structural third of a new temporary tonic, G-flat major. In his article "Josef Suk's Non-Obstinate Ostinato Movements," John K. Novak described this phenomenon with the following statement: "The irony of this piece is

that the note B flat takes turn being the root, fifth and a third of a harmony, but is only at rest when it is the seventh!"¹²⁷

The fascination with prolonged pedal points for coloristic purposes, drama, or assertion of tonality was by no means a novelty in early twentieth-century piano literature. Among others, French composers Claude Debussy and Maurice Ravel frequently exploited this technique. In Ravel's *Le Gibet* from *Gaspard de la Nuit*, composed one year after *About Mother* in 1908, the composer employed a hypnotic B-flat octave, repeated 153 times, as a crucial part of his musical narrative. While Suk's syncopated B-flat presumably suggested the mother's heartbeat, or possibly the repetition of rocking a child during the night, the same pitch in Ravel symbolized the tolling of bells for the hanged corpse on a gibbet (Fig. 3.27).

Fig. 3.27. Ravel: *Le Gibet* from *Gaspard de la Nuit*, mm. 1-7.



¹²⁷ Novak, "Josef Suk's Non-Obstinate Ostinato Movements: A study of Harmony and Style," 97. Novak uses the word non-obstinate to refer to the pitch that temporarily moves a tone or semitone away to achieve a certain dramatic and musical purpose.

The following miniature, *About Mother's Heart*, serves as a sequel to *How Mother Sang at Night to Her Sick Child*. While in the previous movement Suk emotionally restrained himself, keeping the drama confined within a subdued dynamic range that never exceeds *mezzo piano*, *About Mother's Heart* is an overt witness to the composer's grief. A true culmination of the cycle, it features dramatic sweeps of dynamics, suspended tonality with modulations to distant keys, complex rhythmic layering that imitates Otilka's heart condition, and a direct reference to the "Death" motive.

Like the previous piece, *About Mother's Heart* features an ostinato pedal point, this time in the upper voice. The A-flat in this miniature enters timidly and off the beat, yet it is accented (Fig. 3.28). Suk further captures the irregularity of Otilka's heartbeat with triple, quadruple, and quintuple subdivisions of the beat, while the left hand outlines the tonic minor harmony, only allowing the major mode to sound briefly in the fifth bar (circled in red). The uneven subdivisions first affect the rhythmic structure on the horizontal plane, but beginning in measure 3, the different groupings also begin to clash vertically.

Fig. 3.28. Suk: IV. *About Mother's Heart*, Op. 28, opening.

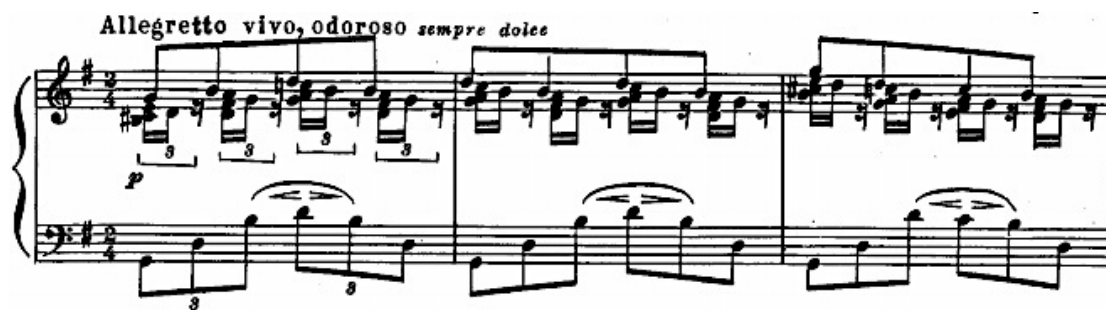
Josef Suk, op. 28.

Andante sostenuto.

The musical score for the opening of Josef Suk's 'About Mother's Heart, Op. 28' is presented in two systems. The tempo is marked 'Andante sostenuto.' The key signature is three flats (B-flat major/D-flat minor). The score features a complex rhythmic structure with triple, quadruple, and quintuple subdivisions. The upper voice has an ostinato pedal point on A-flat. The left hand outlines the tonic minor harmony. The score includes dynamic markings such as *p*, *mp*, and *più cresc.* The score is annotated with 'Db M/m' and 'Db M:'. A red circle highlights a specific chord in the fifth bar.

Filipovský believed that Suk's use of polyrhythms demonstrates influences of Russian music on his output, specifically the piano works of Nikolai Medtner (1880-1951).¹²⁸ Figure 3.29 illustrates Medtner's use of polyrhythm in the third piece of his cycle *Fairy Tales*, Op. 9 (1904-5). In Petra Běhalová's Master's thesis on Suk's late cycle *Things Lived and Dreamed*, the author argued that Suk found inspiration for his complex rhythmic structures in the works of Medtner's older colleague, Modest P. Mussorgsky (1839-1881).¹²⁹ Figure 3.30 features Mussorgsky's use of polyrhythm in the sixth movement, "Rich and Poor" from his well-known set *Pictures at an Exhibition* (1874). Suk's letter to Otakar Šourek from May 25, 1921 contains an important piece of information regarding the international influences on his style: "Although consciously or unconsciously, I have learned much from German, French, Russian and perhaps from other music as well . . . my feelings and desires are expressed differently than in other cultures."¹³⁰

Fig. 3.29. Medtner: *Fairy Tales*, Op. 9, No. 3, opening, use of polyrhythm.¹³¹



¹²⁸ Filipovský, *Klavírní tvorba Josefa Suka: rozbor a výklad*, 159.

¹²⁹ Petra Běhalová, *Josef Suk – Klavírní cyklus Životem a snem – antologie* (Piano Cycle Things Lived and Dreamed- anthology), Master's Thesis. Masaryk University: Department of Musicology in Brno, Czech Republic, 2013, http://is.muni.cz/th/263902/ff_m/Josef_Suk_-_Zivotem_a_snem_-_antologie.pdf (accessed December 20, 2014).

¹³⁰ Translated by author. Underlined markings found in the original book of letters. Quoted in Jana Vojtěšková, *Dopisy o životě hudebním i lidském*, 221.

¹³¹ http://japanese.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/6/66/IMSLP05793-Medtner_3tales_op9.pdf

Fig. 3.30. Mussorgsky: *Pictures at an Exhibition*: No. 6, use of polyrhythm.¹³²



In contrast to the unchanged pitch of the ostinato in *How Mother Sang at Night to Her Sick Child*, the dominant ostinato A-flat in this movement features the flexibility of a half step in each direction, largely dependent on its harmonic context. Novak believes that Suk is being perceptive of the dissonance and manipulates the ostinato pitch so that it moves consonantly with most of the chords, without serving as a tonic.¹³³ His subsequent reduction of the opening fourteen measures (Fig. 3.31) reveals an array of roles this ostinato plays in this first third of the miniature: it serves as the fifth for both the major and minor tonic (mm. 1-5), the third for the keys in mediant relationships to the tonic, F-flat major/minor and F major/minor (mm. 6-12), and temporarily, the root to A major in m. 13.

Fig. 3.31. Suk: IV. *About Mother's Heart*, Op. 28, reduction of opening 14 mm. by John K. Novak.¹³⁴



¹³² http://petrucci.mus.auth.gr/imglnks/usimg/8/8f/IMSLP10719-Moussourgsky_-_Pictures_at_an_Exhibition_Bauer_Ed._.pdf

¹³³ Novak, "Josef Suk's Non-Obstinate Ostinato Movements," 99.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 100.

While the opening section in this movement outlines the non-functional, angular progression, i-flat vii-I, the central section of *About Mother's Heart* returns to Suk's characteristic lyrical writing, marked *dolcissimo, ma espressivo*. The change of mood is successfully achieved through Suk's modulation to the tonic major, shift to the treble register in both hands, and swaying triplet accompaniment in the left hand that for the first time replaces the ever-present irregular heartbeat (Fig. 3.32).

Fig. 3.32. Suk: IV. *About Mother's Heart*, Op. 28, mm. 23-28, B section.

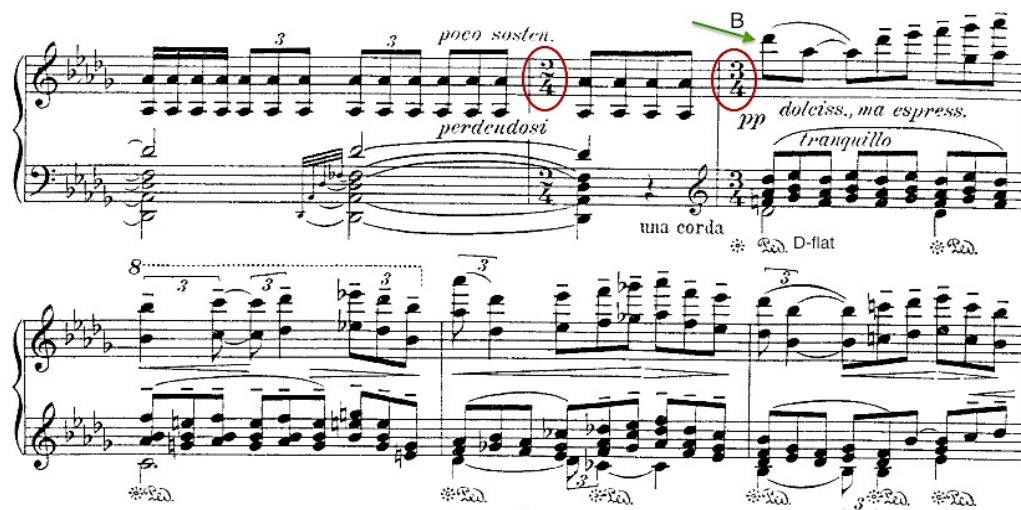


Figure 3.33 shows the *Coda*, with the first appearance of the tonic pedal point, circled in red. A distinct motive appears underneath, consisting of an ascending and descending augmented fourth. This tritone motive signified the death of Radúz's father in Suk's stage music for the dramatic fairytale, *Radúz and Mahulena* (Fig. 3.34). Later, it was also quoted in the composer's funeral symphony *Asrael* and selected movements from *Things Lived and Dreamed*, among other works. It is not surprising that Suk chose the tritone, an interval known since Medieval times as the "devil's interval," to become a symbol of pain, death, and emotional intensity in his music. In addition to its programmatic connotations, the tritone's inherent

inversional symmetry lends a sense of functional ambiguity to the composer's harmonic language.¹³⁵

Fig. 3.33. Suk: IV. *About Mother's Heart*, Op. 28, mm. 50-end, "Death" motive.

Fig. 3.34. Suk: "Death" motive from *Radúz and Mahulena*, Op. 13.¹³⁶

It should be pointed out that this ominous interval played an important role earlier in this piece, though maybe not as obviously as in the *Coda*. The B section, for example, gradually moved from D-flat major in m. 25 to G major in m. 34. Referring

¹³⁵ The reader may recall that the opening chord progression in *Spring*, Op. 22 (Fig. 3.13) also contained a tritone relationship (D- F4/3- BM), yet that cycle represented Suk at his most exuberant. However, in both *Radúz* and *About Mothers Heart*, the two tritones are presented horizontally as isolated intervals in both directions, thus making them more easily discernable for the listener (Fig. 3.33-3.34). In Op. 22a Suk employed the augmented fourth on a vertical plane, as a part of the unusual chord progression, in which the F7 does not resolve to the expected B-flat, but is instead shifted up a half step to B major.

¹³⁶ Novak, "Josef Suk's Non-Obstinate Ostinato Movements," 94.

back to Figure 3.33, Suk keeps the listener uncertain of the next step, connecting parallel major and minor chords in what Novak calls the “universal chromatic key.”¹³⁷ Even though the heartbeat gradually died out in m. 55, the final outcry in the tonic minor, marked *sforzando*, still sounds shocking and truly heartbreaking.

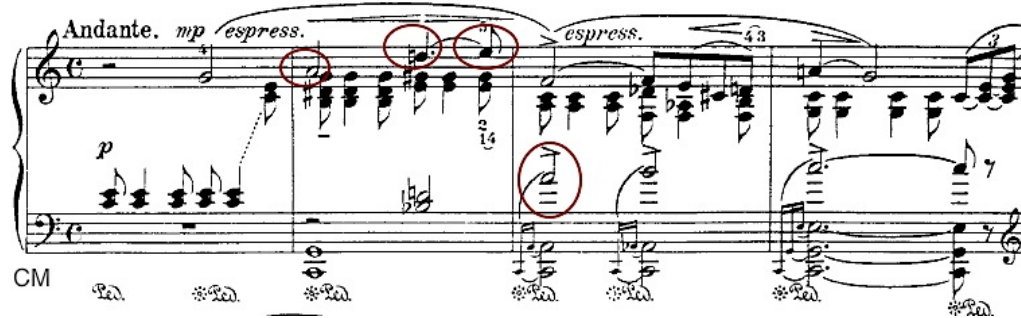
The last movement, *Remembering*, serves as an epilogue to the story *About Mother* (Fig. 3.35). As Rosa Newmarch thoughtfully concluded: “It is typical of Suk that his suffering does not end in a desperate hopelessness. Though his life was full of struggle, he always answered misfortune with courage and self-reliance.”¹³⁸ The purity of the movement’s C major tonality, the shift to a higher register (much of the movement takes place in the treble clef for both hands), subdued dynamics with only one major *ff* climax, and gently rocking syncopations that evoke *How Mother Sang at Night to Her Sick Child* (Fig. 3.25), calm the emotional turmoil of not only the previous movement, but the whole cycle. Nevertheless, Filipovský and Štěpán both believed that the emerging *espressivo* melody in the right hand (circled in red) is derived from the “Death” motive, but features its more serene form: a rising perfect fourth and a descending perfect fifth instead of two tritones.¹³⁹

¹³⁷ Novak, “Josef Suk’s Non-Obstinate Ostinato Movements,” 100.

¹³⁸ Newmarch, *The Music of Czechoslovakia*, 203.

¹³⁹ Filipovský, *Klavírní tvorba Josefa Suka; rozbor a výklad*, 166. Štěpán, Václav. *Novák a Suk*. 166.

Fig. 3.35. Suk: V. *Remembering*, Op. 28, opening, “Death” motive.



About Mother reveals the thin line between Suk's personal and musical life after 1905, finding the composer in his most intimate mood. Despite its personal, non-virtuosic character, pianist Rudolf Serkin chose to perform this work in Vienna on three different occasions organized by the Schoenberg's Association for Private Musical Performances in the fall of 1920. In Alban Berg's letter to Erwin Shulhoff (dated February 24, 1921), the composer described Suk's Op. 28 as "very beautiful."¹⁴⁰ According to Berg's friend and pupil, musicologist Theodor W. Adorno, "[Berg] had a weakness for Suk; in general he felt very drawn to the Czechs."¹⁴¹ It is fascinating that Suk's piano works were performed and positively received in Austria at this time, while the previous year Suk's countryman, music critic Zdeněk Nejedlý, openly attacked his music.¹⁴²

Suk's free oscillation between major and minor mode, along with his preference for mediant relationships and syncopation, carried over from earlier

¹⁴⁰ Ivan Vojtěch: 'Arnold Schoenberg, Anton Webern and Alban Berg, *Unknown Letters to Erwin Shulhoff*' in *Miscellanea Musicologica XVIII* (Charles University: Prague, 1965), 64. Quoted in Nouza and Nový, *Josef Suk: tematicky katalog skladeb= Thematic catalogue of the works*, 246.

¹⁴¹ T. W. Adorno: *Berg, The Master of the Smallest Transition* (Vienna: 1968), 36. Quoted in Nouza and Nový, *Josef Suk: tematicky katalog skladeb= Thematic catalogue of the works*, 246.

¹⁴² For more details on this matter, refer to Chapter 2. <http://josefsuk.czweb.org/zivot.html>

works as an inevitable part of his Czech heritage. Despite the composer's efforts to keep the cycle simple for his little son to comprehend, Op. 28 is motivically, rhythmically, and harmonically more profound and forward-thinking than the easily accessible *Spring*. As a matter of fact, it was with this cycle that the composer began to experiment with simultaneous rhythmic layers, ostinato pedal points, irregular phrase structures, and the interval of a tritone employed for both programmatic reasons and its effect of harmonic ambiguity. Moreover, in his reminiscences about this cycle, Suk stated that Op. 28 deals with love, beauty, and death, subjects relevant to all of his subsequent works.¹⁴³ In all of these respects, *About Mother* anticipates what will be fully developed two years later in *Things Lived and Dreamed*, the final piano cycle to be examined in this document.

¹⁴³ Translated by author. Quoted in Květ, *Živá slova Josefa Suka*, 117.

3.4 Ripening: *Things Lived and Dreamed*, Op. 30

Suk's ten-piece piano cycle, *Things Lived and Dreamed*, is the pinnacle of his piano writing, in which Czech elements are blended with Suk's most original style of writing. It is also the technically and most intellectually demanding of his piano cycles, proving his skill in terms of exploiting the piano's full acoustical capabilities. Even though this is not Suk's last work for this medium, the primary harmonic, rhythmic, and formal features of Suk's mature style had crystallized by this point. Suk's subsequent piano works, six *Lullabies*, Op. 33 (1910-12) and a single brief piece *About Friendship*, Op. 36 (1920), are considerably smaller in scale and do not exhibit any substantial stylistic development beyond that of Op. 30.¹⁴⁴ On the contrary, some of the *Lullabies* revert back to the Dvořákian period with their simplification of harmonic language and formal treatment.

Op. 30 was originally titled *New Pieces for Piano* but was renamed for Brietkopf & Härtel's publication purposes as *Things Lived and Dreamed*, sometimes also translated as *Through Life and Dream*. The set was composed between April 10 and June 3, 1909 and dedicated to Suk's dear family friend, Mrs. Olga Drtinová.¹⁴⁵ According to Suk's first biographer J. M. Květ, Suk had composed this cycle after another busy concert season with the Czech Quartet. The composer referred to these pieces as "a kind of an artist's diary," the music of which was likely inspired by

¹⁴⁴ Štěpán, *Novák a Suk*, 168.

¹⁴⁵ Of the ten pieces, six were composed in Křečovice (Nos. 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 10), two (Nos. 6 and 7) in Prague, and two were assigned a date of completion but lack a specific location (Nos. 4 and 5). Nouza and Nový, 266.

Suk's favorite long walks in the countryside.¹⁴⁶ Suk's love for his birthplace was previously addressed with regard to the second movement of *About Mother*, as well as in Chapter 2. The affection for both his native village and his homeland may have its roots in the long-standing *kantor* tradition, wherein the deep sense of nationalism and cultivation of musical education is passed on from generation to generation.¹⁴⁷ In Suk's own words, "I serve my own country, and praise the great people from the period of our wakening who taught us to love our country."¹⁴⁸

As compared to the openly programmatic cycle *About Mother*, in which one can easily follow the storyline of Suk's beloved wife, *Things Lived and Dreamed* seems to be taking a more objective approach. The composer himself said: "in this cycle my music gains new expression. The term 'things dreamed' refers to numerous thoughts on people's last matters."¹⁴⁹ Suk's fixation with death and destiny had been on his mind since the tragic years of 1904-5. It symbolically culminates in his last symphonic work, *Epilogue*, Op. 37, finished just a year before his passing in 1933.¹⁵⁰ The departure of loved ones was also of significance to Suk's admirer, Austrian composer and conductor Gustav Mahler (1860-1911), most notably in his works *Das Lied von der Erde* (The Song of the Earth) and *Kindertotenlieder* (Songs of the Death of Children). Indeed, it is a little known fact that Mahler expressed an interest in

¹⁴⁶ Květ, *Živá slova Josefa Suka*, 117.

¹⁴⁷ For more on *kantor* tradition, refer back to Chapter 1.

¹⁴⁸ Jaroslav Vogel: *Leoš Janáček: a biography* (Prague: Artia, 1962), 333. Quoted in Beckerman, "In Search of Czechness in Music," 63.

¹⁴⁹ Translated by author. Květ, *Živá slova Josefa Suka*, 117.

¹⁵⁰ Suk's final work, however, was Czech dance *Sousedská*, composed for small Křečovice band in 1935.

conducting Suk's symphonic poem *A Summer's Tale* (1909), but unfortunately, his death in May of 1911 put an end to those intentions.¹⁵¹

Suk's *Things Lived and Dreamed* is organized into two books of five movements each.¹⁵² John K. Novak pointed out Suk's predilection for the number five, also reflected in Filipovský's five periods of composer's stylistic development, discussed in more detail at the beginning of this chapter. Previously examined piano cycles *Moods*, *Spring*, *About Mother*, as well as each of Suk's works from his symphonic tetralogy *Asrael*, consist of five movements, and thus conform to Novak's peculiar observation.¹⁵³

Similarly to many other twentieth-century works, Op. 30 is filled with detailed instructions for the performer. Moreover, Suk included character indications that were to be printed on the concert programs next to the customary Italian tempo markings.¹⁵⁴ These performance directions serve as guideposts for the pianist and quasi-programmatic clues for the audience, especially because in this cycle Suk had begun to reflect on his life experiences via abstract vignettes of contrasting moods and ideas. The following is the list of all ten movements in *Things Lived and Dreamed*.

Book 1

- I. *Allegretto moderato* (With humor and irony, agitated in places).
- II. *Allegro vivo* (Restless and somehow timid, without strongly marked expression).
- III. *Andante sostenuto* (Mysterious and light, and airy in manner).

¹⁵¹ Berkovec, *Josef Suk*, Trans. Jean Layton-Eislerová, 73. It is presumed that it was Mahler who wrote on the manuscript of *Summer's Tale* the following words: "come softly, o death." Suk then used this text as a title to his last lullaby from six *Lullabies*, Op. 33, dedicating this miniature to the unknown author of the above words.

¹⁵² Nouza and Nový, *Josef Suk: tematicky katalog skladeb= Thematic catalogue of the works*, 268.

¹⁵³ Novak, "Josef Suk's Non-Obstinate Ostinato Movements," 88.

¹⁵⁴ Nouza and Nový, *Josef Suk: tematicky katalog skladeb= Thematic catalogue of the works*, 269.

- IV. *Poco allegretto* (Meditative, then increasingly resolute in mood).
 V. *Adagio* (Calm, with deep feeling)- “On the Recovery of My Son.”

Book 2

- VI. *Moderato quasi allegretto* (With the expression of quiet, carefree gaiety).
 VII. *Adagio non tanto* (Simply, later with expression of overpowering force).
 VIII. *Vivace* (Delicate and Twittering).
 IX. *Poco andante* (Whispering and mysterious).
 X. *Adagio* (Dreamily)- “Dedicated to the Forgotten Graves in the Křečovice cemetery.”¹⁵⁵

As seen from this list, the only two movements with prescribed programmatic titles are the fifth, “On the Recovery of My Son,” and the tenth, “Dedicated to the Forgotten Graves in the Křečovice Cemetery.” These descriptions suggest Suk’s feeling of gratitude rather than an exact program, such as that found in Op. 28. Because of this document’s limited scope, the forthcoming analysis of Suk’s mature style will focus on four movements from the set: Nos. 1, 4, 5, and 9. Some of the examined autobiographical clues will include quotations from Suk’s past works: e.g., employment of the tritone as well as references to one of Otilka’s own works. However, the author would like to emphasize that while these allusions can enhance listeners’ understanding of the work, *Things Lived and Dreamed*, like many other works by Suk, can be fully appreciated by experiencing the music alone.

The opening piece of the set, *Allegretto moderato* (With humor and irony, agitated in places) demonstrates the variety of tempo inflections and moods that are characteristic of Suk’s late style. The 2/4 time signature may evoke the polka, a popular Czech dance that has been previously stylized in Smetana’s and Fibich’s

¹⁵⁵ The pieces were published in the same order that they were composed, however the last page of the manuscript contained a re-arranged, crossed out list of the keys for each piece, possibly suggesting that Suk was considering a different order from the one published. Nouza and Nový, 267.

piano works, as discussed in the opening chapter of this document. Nonetheless, the ensuing analysis will reveal that Suk's polka from Op. 30 is strikingly different from the stylized dances of his predecessors.

Because of Suk's lifelong inclination toward melancholy and a high level of complexity, music critics from the magazine *Smetana* accused him of being incapable of composing a true polka.¹⁵⁶ As a result of this criticism, Suk composed what seems to be a caricature of this dance for the opening of *Things Lived and Dreamed*.¹⁵⁷ The persistent offbeat accents are marked in Figure 3.36 with blue arrows. The ensuing syncopations portray a feeling of irony, as if the polka in Suk's version was limping rather than gracefully dancing. Red arrows from mm. 8-11 show the sudden shift of emphasis to the expected strong beat while the abundant tempo changes are circled in green. It should be noted that Suk used humor and irony in this piece not only to mock his opponents but, according to J. M. Květ, also as a new means of coping with pain and anger.¹⁵⁸ Interestingly, Suk did actually compose a polka that satisfies the expected rhythmic pattern of this dance: his *Ella Polka*, composed shortly before Op. 30, on March 3, 1909.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁶ Curiously, when Suk was an eighteen-year-old Conservatory student, Dvořák ordered him to compose light and cheerful pieces to fight his melancholic tendencies. Štěpán, *Novák a Suk*, 180.

¹⁵⁷ Dítětová and Charypar, "Website of a composer Josef Suk: Life," <http://josefsuk.czweb.org/zivot.html> (accessed July 13, 2015).

¹⁵⁸ Květ, *Josef Suk život a dílo: studie a vzpomínky*, 177.

¹⁵⁹ This work is now considered one of the four pieces of Suk's *Episodes*.

Fig. 3.36. Suk: I. *Allegretto moderato*, Op. 30, mm. 1-22.

I.

(S humorem a ironii, misty neodurdžat) – (C. xomopox a nponexk, mocraxa raxexo)
 (Mit Humor und ironisch, stellenweise grimmig erregt) – (With humour and irony, agitated in places) JOSEF SUK, op. 30
 (1874–1935)

Allegretto moderato

1 **Intro** *poco poco poco sosten. a tempo*

G *poco poco poco dolce ten.*

6 *poco marc. poco p*

12 *poco rit. a tempo f p dolce*

18 *poco animato a tempo f marc. p cresc.*

The opening rhythmic motive, marked in dark blue square in the above Figure, permeates the whole miniature, creating one of the most motivically homogenous pieces of the whole set. The primary sections follow the expected

“polka form:” short introduction, A section, trio, free reprise, and *Coda*.¹⁶⁰ While the phrase structure is constructed upon units of four bars, Suk shortens and lengthens the phrases freely to highlight the unpredictability of this comical miniature. Moreover, the harmonies change rapidly, particularly because of the flexible bass movement. Yet, an attempt at Roman numeral analysis of the first four measures reveals a very conservative harmonic skeleton (Fig. 3.37): the opening suggests B minor, with oscillations between subdominant and dominant seventh chords in this key (squared in green).¹⁶¹ Thus, it is not the chord progression *per se*, but the constantly moving chromatic middle voices that give this passage an audacious sound.

Fig. 3.37. Suk: I. *Allegretto moderato*, Op. 30, opening, basic harmonic structure.

Allegretto moderato

G. V7/VI vi6 or iv6 of B V4/3 iv6 V4/3 iv V4/3 iv6 V4/3

Suk did, however, make use of altered and extended sonorities in Op. 30. In his chapter “About Suk’s Harmony,” Otakar Šín discussed some of Suk’s most favorite chords, including minor subdominant, half-diminished seventh, minor seventh, minor ninth, and dominant seventh chords with raised or lowered fifths.¹⁶² In m. 19 of this movement (Fig. 3.38), the composer employs what seems to be a D

¹⁶⁰ Kvěť, *Josef Suk život a dílo: studie a vzpomínky*, 176.

¹⁶¹ Štěpán, *Novák a Suk*, 177. The crossed-out notes denote non-chord tones. The author acknowledges that in Suk’s late style the harmony is primarily used as an expressive and dramatic element so that the traditional Roman numeral analysis is often impossible and, furthermore, irrelevant.

¹⁶² Otakar Šín, “About Suk’s Harmony,” in Kvěť, *Josef Suk život a dílo: studie a vzpomínky*, 406-7.

major ninth chord. However, the sonority appears in a third inversion which distorts the effect of the ninth chord, creating a polychordal structure instead: A minor and D major chords stacked up at a distance of a perfect fourth, underscored with accents and a *marcato* indication. According to Šín, this particular organization gave Suk a more distinct sound as compared to a usual ninth chord in the root position, as well as greater freedom in voice leading, since there is neither a seventh nor a ninth to be resolved.¹⁶³

Fig. 3.38. Suk: I. *Allegretto moderato*, Op. 30, D9 chord (4/3).



The central Trio section opens with an accented two-note slur akin to that of the opening gesture (marked with a purple arrow in Fig. 3.39). However, corresponding with Suk's performing directions, the mood changes from humorous and ironic to more agitated, almost angry. The contrast in character is achieved by a sudden shift in dynamics to *fortissimo sempre appassionato*, as well as a new texture dominated by a chromatically rising tenor in the left hand (marked with blue squares). Numerous Suk scholars concluded that a chromatic melody in the middle voices, primarily tenor, sounding against a slower moving diatonic treble part, is one of the characteristic features of Suk's musical language.¹⁶⁴ Its occurrence spans

¹⁶³ Šín, "About Suk's Harmony," in Květ, *Josef Suk život a dílo: : studie a vzpomínky*, 407.

¹⁶⁴ Štěpán, *Novák a Suk*, 178. Filipovský, *Klavírní tvorba Josefa Suka; rozbory a výklad*, 26.

the composer's entire oeuvre, beginning in his early works, such as his *Love Song*, Op. 7 (refer back to Fig. 3.22).

Fig. 3.39. Suk: I. *Allegretto moderato*, Op. 30, Trio, chromatic tenor.

The image shows a musical score for Suk's I. *Allegretto moderato*, Op. 30, Trio, chromatic tenor. The score is in G major and 3/4 time. It features a piano accompaniment and a vocal line. The piano part has markings 'molto p e scherzando' and 'poco'. The vocal line has markings 'poco', 'ff sempre appassionato', and 'marc.'. A blue box highlights a chromatic moving tenor voice in the piano part, and a blue arrow points to it from the word 'Trio'.

According to Filipovský, this texture demonstrates influences of Russian music on Suk, particularly that of Tchaikovsky.¹⁶⁵ Though this correlation may seem too broad of a generalization, below are two examples from Tchaikovsky's piano miniatures that in fact feature a chromatic moving tenor voice (marked with blue arrows): *Impromptu* from his *Seasons*, Op. 21 (Fig. 3.40) and *Volkslied* from his *Album for the Young*, Op. 39 (Fig. 3.41). Prokofiev is another Russian composer whose highly lyrical writing is frequently interjected with dissonant, often half-step shifts, placed in the middle voices. Figure 3.42 features a chromatic tenor in the second theme of Prokofiev's third piano sonata in A Minor, composed in 1907 (revised in 1917).

¹⁶⁵ Filipovský, *Klavírní tvorba Josefa Suka; rozbor a výklad*, 275.

Fig. 3.40. Tchaikovsky: *Impromptu*, Op. 21, No. 3, chromatic tenor.¹⁶⁶



Fig. 3.41. Tchaikovsky: *Volkslied*, Op. 39, No. 13, chromatic tenor.¹⁶⁷



Fig. 3.42. Prokofiev: Sonata, Op. 28, No. 3 "From Old Notebooks," chromatic tenor.¹⁶⁸



Curiously, the more individualized Suk's compositional style becomes, the more difficult it is to readily identify Czech features in his music, outlined by Beckerman at the beginning of this chapter. With Suk's displaced accents, unpredictable phrase structure, and constant tempo changes, the first movement of

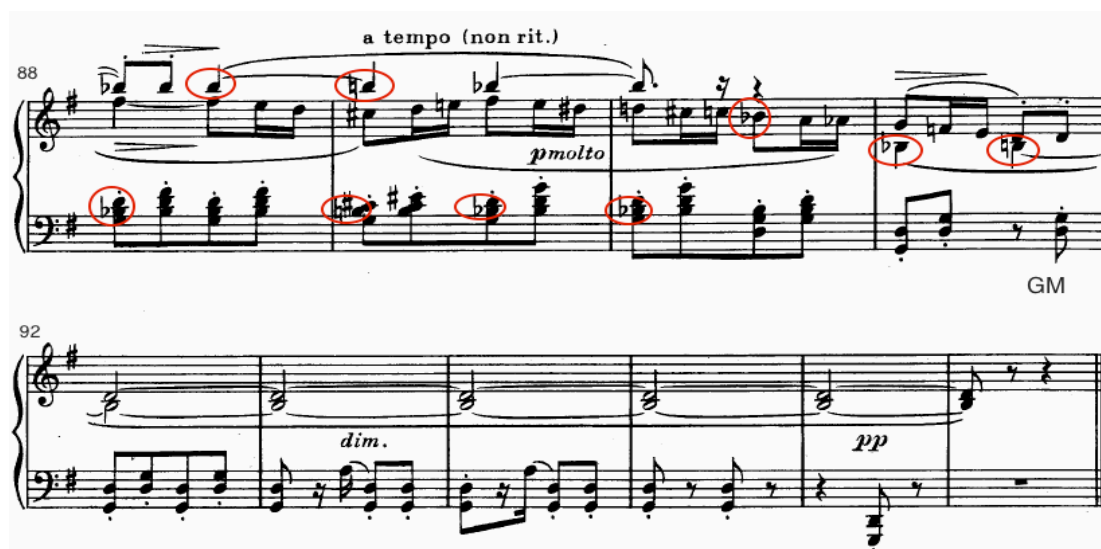
¹⁶⁶ http://imslp.nl/imglnks/usimg/0/09/IMSLP309777-PMLP19411-6_Pieces_Op.21_III_Impromptu_Allegro_molto_.pdf

¹⁶⁷ <http://petrucci.mus.auth.gr/imglnks/usimg/a/a0/IMSLP154638-WIMA.779f-volkslied.pdf>

¹⁶⁸ http://conquest.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/e/e7/IMSLP153465-PMLP03202-Prokofiev_-_Piano_Sonata_No._3_op._28.pdf

Op. 30 shows hardly any traces of consistent first-beat accents. Yet, the composer incorporates three other prominent Czech traits in the opening piece of this set (Fig. 3.36): recurring syncopations, writing in thirds and sixths, and major-minor parallelism, most prominent in the *Coda* (Fig. 3.43). The last two lines of this section finish this miniature in the humorous spirit in which it began. B natural and B flat alternate back and forth (circled in red), ultimately arriving at major tonic in m. 91.

Fig. 3.43. Suk: I. *Allegretto moderato*, Op. 30, mm. 88-end.

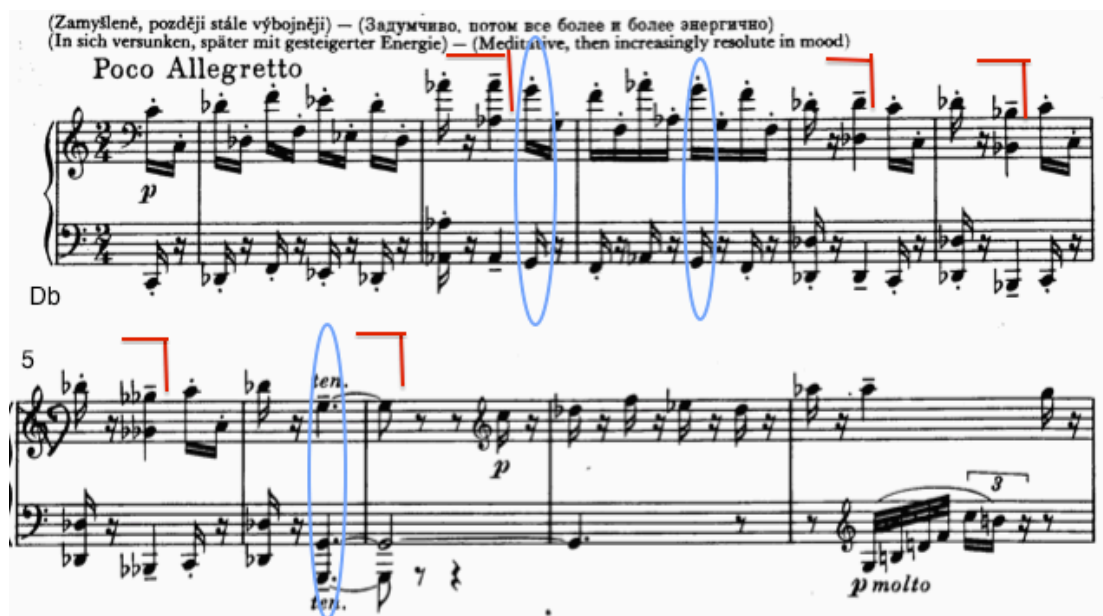


The opening of the fourth piece, *Poco Allegretto*, titled “Meditative, then increasingly resolute in mood,” is a rare example of Suk’s partial use of heterophony (Fig. 3.44). This technique is described by the Oxford Companion of Music as “the simultaneous sounding of a melody with an elaborated variant of it, and also the quasi-canonic presentation of the same or similar melodies in two or more vocal or instrumental lines.”¹⁶⁹ Heterophony is typically employed in folk songs of Central and Southeastern Europe, as well as in Indonesian gamelan music. In the case of this

¹⁶⁹ Arnold Whittall, “Heterophony,” *The Oxford Companion to Music*. Oxford University Press, <http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.library.unl.edu/subscriber/article/opr/t114/e3240> (accessed July 27, 2015).

miniature, Suk's choice of the heterophonic texture suggests the idiom of a Czech folk band. In this particular group, the first violinist (called *primáš*) ornaments and improvises upon the plain melody of the second violin, supported by other traditional folk instruments, such as clarinet, double bass, and cimbalom. The folk-like nature of this opening is additionally underscored by the composer's use of the Lydian mode in the key of D-flat major. The raised fourth scale degree G natural, circled in blue, is not only the goal of the opening phrase, but also serves as a dominant preparation to the motive's first variation in m. 7.

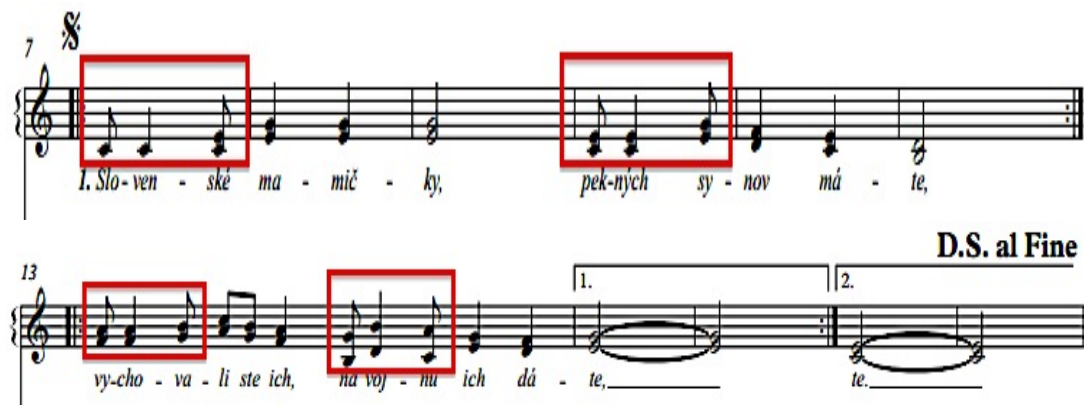
Fig. 3.44. Suk: IV. *Poco Allegretto*, Op. 30, mm. 1-8.



Suk's treatment of the phrase structure in *Poco Allegretto* is quite unpredictable and, like the first movement of Op. 30, its basic pulse is undermined by the opening on a weak beat. Two-bar units are established, but soon this pattern is compressed to single measures (marked in red in Figure 3.44), resulting in an irregular structure of seven measures. Both asymmetric and modal melodies are

typical for folk music of the Moravian and Silesian regions in the Czech Republic, as well as in Slovakia, Poland, and Hungary.¹⁷⁰ Rhythmically, Suk exhibits his fondness for syncopation. According to Dr. Pavel Štěpán, a Suk scholar and one of the first interpreters of his piano music, the composer's predilection for syncopations stemmed from the accentuation of the Czech language, which in turn was derived from the speech patterns of Slovak folk songs. As Štěpán noted, most Czech and Slovak adjectives feature the following pattern: [>] ♪ ♩. This rhythm translates into speech as an accented but short first syllable, followed by an unaccented longer syllable, such as the Czech adjective for beautiful: *pěkný* [pjɛknɪ:].¹⁷¹ Figure 3.45 illustrates the popularity of a syncopated rhythm in an excerpt from a well-known Slovak folk song, *Slovenské mamičky* (Slovak Moms).

Fig. 3.45. *Slovenské mamičky*, Slovak Folk Song, mm. 7-20, arr. Igi Karchi.¹⁷²



The mood of Suk's fourth miniature turns more playful when the *quasi Tromba* (sounding like a trumpet) motive enters in m. 15. Based on the interval of a perfect fourth and fifth, this motive employs an oscillating rhythm of syncopation

¹⁷⁰ Lenka Dohnalová, *Czech Music Guide* (Praha: Arts and Theatre Institute, 2011), 15-16.

¹⁷¹ Štěpán, *Novák a Suk*, 141.

¹⁷² <http://andrea-ucitelka.wz.sk/hudba/noty/Slovenskemamicky.pdf>

and an accented downbeat, as demonstrated in Figure 3.46 with red arrows. The structural importance of this interval, as well as that of a tritone, will play an essential role in other movements of *Things Lived and Dreamed*.

Fig. 3.46. Suk: IV. *Poco Allegretto*, Op. 30, mm. 11-21, 'quasi Tromba' motive.



Even though this dancing motive again suggests folklore, it should be noted that Suk's references to folk music were not nearly as frequent and direct as, for example, those by Smetana, Novák, or Janáček. In his chapter "A Folk Song in the Works of Josef Suk," Bohumír Štědroň emphasized that Suk rarely openly quoted folk songs, and stylized only a few dances, including the previously mentioned *Ella Polka*.¹⁷³ Instead, the composer appears to have found his inspiration in folk tales, of which *Radúz and Mahulena*, explored in the second chapter, is the most representative. According to Štědroň, as a child Suk preferred attending his father's band and orchestra rehearsals to the choir practices at St. Luke's Church. Ultimately,

¹⁷³ The few examples of Suk's direct quotation of the folk song are "Hushaby My Little Son," used in the fourth movement of String Quartet, Op. 11, and "Farewell, Farewell," quoted in the first movement of Suk's Piano Pieces, Op. 12.

the composer chose string quartet, piano, and orchestra, not the human voice, as the primary media for some of his best works.¹⁷⁴

In the climax of the B section, Suk is not afraid to experiment, even temporarily employing polychordal structures. As a matter of fact, this piece is one of the most harmonically adventurous of the *Things Lived and Dreamed*. At the triple forte in bar 66, the right hand “dancing” motive in B-flat major clashes with the tritone-related E pedal point, circled in red (Fig. 3.47). Moreover, the moment this pedal point finally resolves up a half-step to blend with the B-flat minor harmony in m. 67, Suk writes a succession of *marcatissimo*, non-functional root position chords in stepwise motion (mm. 68-69). This technique, commonly known as chord planing, is frequently found in the music of Claude Debussy (Fig. 3.48). A series of three chords in mediant relationships (D-flat major, B-flat minor, G major, circled in blue) suddenly break off the sequence. The arrival point at G major is identical to m. 6 and it confirms that Suk’s unusual turn of harmonies always has a clear goal; in this instance, to serve as a dominant pedal point for the reprise in m. 76 (marked with red arrow).

¹⁷⁴ Bohumír Štědroň, “A Folk Song In the Works of Josef Suk,” in Květ, *Josef Suk život a dílo*, 412-13.

Fig. 3.47. Suk: IV. *Poco Allegretto*, Op. 30, mm. 65-77, B climax/reprise.

65 *poco sosten. e pesante* *a tempo* *feroce*
 69 *marc.* *marcatissimo*
 73 *rit.* *dim.* *p sotto voce* *Text* *molto p*
 A' *Tempo I. (sostenuto)*

Fig. 3.48. Debussy: *Sarabande* from *Pour le piano*, mm. 9-12, chord planing.¹⁷⁵

9 *p* *molto p*

The fifth piece of Op. 30, *Adagio*, occupies a special place within the set. Suk underscores its emotional content with a prescribed title: “On the Recovery of My Son” (calm, with deep feeling). After Otilka’s death, the composer was said to be

¹⁷⁵ http://conquest.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/d/db/IMSLP57635-PMLP05501-Debussy_Klavierwerke_Band_6_Peters_Pour_le_Piano_filter.pdf

extremely worried about their only son, who was a sickly child. Unfortunately, the sources available to the author do not specify what illness Suk's son suffered at the time this miniature was composed. Karel Hoffmeister believed that this *Adagio* is the best understood as Suk's hymn of thanksgiving to fate, which spared him from yet another tragic loss.¹⁷⁶

The programmatic content is also inherently embedded in the music itself. The whole piece is permeated by the interval of a fourth and its inversion, the fifth (circled in blue in Fig. 3.49).¹⁷⁷ The variants of this interval are employed as a unifying motivic device, most frequently in a descending motion as a two-note slur, possibly symbolizing a sigh, or the relief the composer may have felt at his son's recovery. At the first climactic moment of the piece in m. 16, the interval changes from a perfect fourth to a tritone (diminished fifth, circled in red), which is thereafter used as a building block for the B section. Suk's use of this particular interval possibly suggests the seriousness of his son's illness. The reader hopefully recalls the "death" motive from the earlier discussion of *About Mother's Heart* (compare the motive in purple with Fig. 3.34).

¹⁷⁶ Karel Hoffmeister, "Piano Works of Josef Suk," in Květ, *Josef Suk život a dílo: studie a vzpomínky*, 377.

¹⁷⁷ In his chapter "Suk's importance for modern music," Karel Reiner goes as far as claiming that Suk's reliance on the interval of a fourth is at the core of his melodies and harmonic language. Karel Reiner, "Suk's importance for modern music," in Květ, *Josef Suk život a dílo: studie a vzpomínky*, 424.

Fig. 3.49. Suk: V. *Adagio*, Op. 30, mm. 1-19.

(Klidné, s hlubokým citem) – (Спокойно, с глубоким чувством)
(Ruhig mit innerer Empfindung) – (Calm, with deep feeling)

Adagio

1 *p* C

5 *espress.* D F Bb Db *dim. ten.* *dimin.* *pp* G

9 *molto dim.* V/D V/Db V/C C

13 *m.s.* *m.d.* *espress.* *cresc.* *dimin.* B

17 *poco* *più p cresc. poco a poco* *cresc. molto*

The opening of this miniature features Suk's favorite type of voice leading: the juxtaposition of a diatonic melody against a chromatically moving line in the middle voice, marked with a green arrow (Fig. 3.49). The simple hymn-like texture increases in intensity as the tenor voice moves from chromatic to diatonic in a steady rhythmic diminution: from half notes to quarter notes to quarter note triplets. What is more, even though this movement clearly begins in the key of C

major, Suk wanders through multiple tonal areas, avoiding the tonic for eleven measures via unresolved dominant chords and abundant non-harmonic tones. Yet, he supports the prolonged melodic line with clearly defined root position chords, mostly at the downbeat of each measure.¹⁷⁸

Other composers of Suk's generation were interested in building their harmonic structures upon the interval of a fourth. The breakdown of tonality in the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century classical music can be traced back to German composer Richard Wagner. The famous "Tristan" motive from his opera *Tristan and Isolde* (1859) consists of simultaneously sounding intervals of a tritone (augmented fourth) and a perfect fourth (Fig. 3.50). According to Robert Erikson, author of the *Sound Structure in Music*, this sonority is truly groundbreaking because its sound quality now stands above its function.¹⁷⁹

Fig. 3.50. Wagner: "Tristan" chord.¹⁸⁰



Suk's contemporaries were also exploring the possibilities of quartal harmonies and their effects on blurring of tonality. Alexander Scriabin's famed "Mystic" or "Prometheus Chord," found, for instance, in his Sixth Piano Sonata (1911), is a six-note synthetic chord that consists of two augmented fourths, two

¹⁷⁸ Filipovský, *Klavírní tvorba Josefa Suka; rozbor a výklad*, 202-3.

¹⁷⁹ Robert Erickson, *Sound Structure in Music* (Oakland, California: University of California Press, 1975), 18.

¹⁸⁰ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tristan_und_Isolde

perfect fourths and one diminished fourth (Fig. 3.51). In the same year, Igor Stravinsky combined two major triads at the distance of a tritone to achieve a dissonant clash in his controversial ballet *Petrushka* (Fig. 3.52).

Fig. 3.51. Scriabin: “Mystic Chord.”¹⁸¹

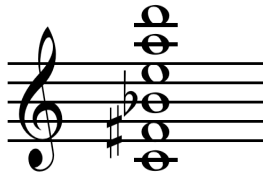


Fig. 3.52. Stravinsky: “Petrushka Chord.”¹⁸²



While in the beginning of Suk's *Adagio* the intervallic structure of a descending fourth/fifth plays a rather subtle role, this characteristic interval gains a new role at the end of the development (Fig. 3.53). Beginning in m. 35, the descending fourth (circled in blue) becomes a rhythmic ostinato. Filipovský compared this motive to church bells, first sounding from afar but gradually becoming more ominous.¹⁸³ In addition to the indicated *crescendo il basso*, Suk gradually employs an effective addition of voices, creating a three-layered, organ-like texture (mm. 40-42). This masterfully crafted gradation leads right into a *grandioso* reprise of the opening “hymn” in m. 43. The three voices from the opening chorale are now doubled in octaves, eventually spanning over five octaves of the keyboard. The ensuing example, Figure 3.54, features a strikingly similar stratification of three textures, with the descending fourth in the bass circled in blue, in Debussy's *Sarabande* from *Pour le Piano*.

¹⁸¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mystic_chord

¹⁸² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Petrushka_chord

¹⁸³ Filipovský, *Klavírní tvorba Josefa Suka; rozbory a výklad*, 207.

Fig. 3.53 Suk: V. *Adagio*, Op. 30, mm. 34-46, layering.

34 *perdendosi* **Tempo I.** *tranquillo* *pp*

37 *cresc. poco a poco* *marc. e cresc. il basso* *pp ma marcato*

40 *mp* *cresc.* *cresc. molto*

43 *grandioso* *A* *sempre più marcato e cresc.*

H 3613

Fig. 3.54. Debussy: *Sarabande* from *Pour le piano*, mm. 23-27, layering.¹⁸⁴

23 *pp*

¹⁸⁴ http://conquest.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/d/db/IMSLP57635-PMLP05501-Debussy_Klavierwerke_Band_6_Peters_Pour_le_Piano_filter.pdf

Despite its lack of prescribed programmatic title, the evocative ninth piece *Poco Andante* (whispering and mysterious) contains many traces of autobiographical references. These include quotes from Suk's previous works as well as an allusion to one of his wife's own miniatures. In his 1934 lecture on Suk's piano works, Štěpán called this piece "the realm of memories," while Filipovský referred to it as "an inner monologue of countless subconscious ideas."¹⁸⁵ The longest movement of the whole set, this piece is composed in a modified ABA form. Even though the A section does return motivically and tonally in m. 68, instead of one contrasting middle section, there are five seemingly unrelated parts between the opening and the reprise.¹⁸⁶ Musicologist and esthetician Jaroslav Volek believed that Suk purposefully employed self-quotations in his works to counterbalance the wealth of thematic ideas, which is particularly evident in this movement.¹⁸⁷

In the opening section, the mysterious character indicated by the composer is intensified by a hidden pulse. Suk distorts the given 2/4 meter with a series of sequences of descending thirty-second notes that consistently enter on a weak beat of each unit, marked with blue arrows (Fig. 3.55). As is typical for the composer, the established three-bar phrase structure soon becomes irregular. Just like his French counterpart Claude Debussy, Suk struggled to free himself from the tyranny of the bar line. Nonetheless, he still used traditional metric notation with prescribed time signatures, while also employing changing meters (circled in green). To achieve a

¹⁸⁵ Translated by author. Květ, *Josef Suk, 1874-1935 život a dílo: studie a vzpomínky*, 179. Filipovský, *Klavírní tvorba Josefa Suka; rozbor a výklad*, 229.

¹⁸⁶ The only other movement from Op. 30 that features this kind of irregular approach to the ternary form, as well as a lack of a single unifying motive, is No. 2. *Andante sostenuto. Vivace* (not analyzed in this document).

¹⁸⁷ Volek, *Struktura a osobnosti hudby*, 245.

desired sense of metric freedom, Suk also employed displaced accents, asymmetrical phrase structures, polyrhythms, and frequent tempo fluctuations. In this particular opening, it takes eleven measures before both hands meet on a downbeat, marked with a red square in Figure 3.55.

Fig. 3.55. Suk: IX. *Poco Andante*, Op. 30, mm. 1-12

The musical score for Suk's IX. *Poco Andante*, Op. 30, mm. 1-12, is presented in four systems. The first system (measures 1-2) is marked "Poco Andante" and "IX". The second system (measures 3-5) has a "3" above the first measure. The third system (measures 6-8) has a "6" above the first measure. The fourth system (measures 9-12) has a "9" above the first measure. Blue arrows point to specific notes in measures 1, 3, 5, 7, and 9. A red square highlights the downbeat of measure 11. Green ovals highlight the notes in measures 10 and 11. Chord symbols are written below the fourth system: G#m, Dm, Fm, Am, BM, Em, Gm, and V7/V.

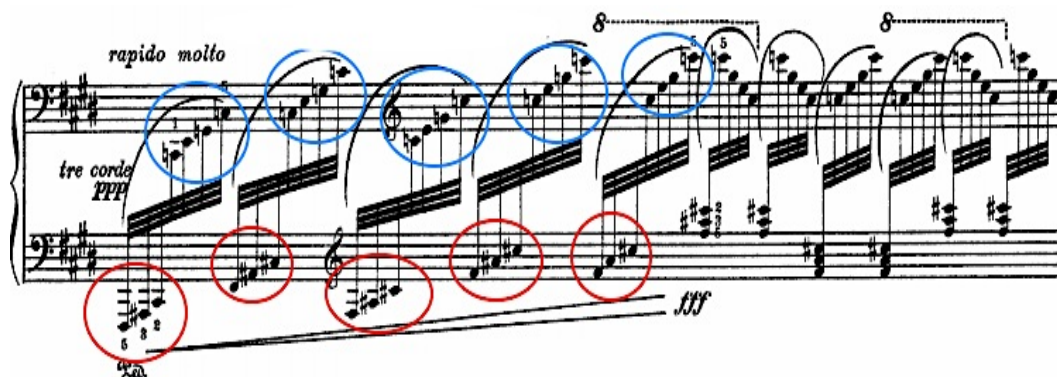
As opposed to some of Suk's previously surveyed works containing pedal points in the lowest voice, the opening of *Poco Andante* features an inverted pedal point: a sustained tonic B in the soprano. The sense of tranquility, evoked by the established sequential pattern in the key of B natural minor, is broken when these

sequences become chromatically altered in m. 7. The first climax takes place two measures later, at which point Suk employs, almost exclusively, chords in mediant relationships: G-sharp, D minor, F minor, A minor, B major, E minor, and G minor. The music comes to an abrupt halt in m. 13 on a dominant pedal point, this time in the bass register (Fig. 3.56). What follows is one of the most obvious of Suk's references to the Impressionistic style in this set: white against black key figuration, circled in blue and red, respectively. Ravel employed the same type of figuration in his *Jeux d'Eau* from 1901 (Fig. 3.57), and Debussy in his prelude *Fireworks*, composed from 1912-13 (Fig. 3.58).

3.56. Suk: IX. *Poco Andante*, Op. 30, mm. 13-15, white-black key texture.



Fig. 3.57. Ravel: cadenza from *Jeux d'Eau*, white-black key texture.¹⁸⁸



¹⁸⁸ http://imslp.nl/imglnks/usimg/b/b8/IMSLP03175-Ravel-Jeuxd_Eau-Demets.pdf

Fig. 3.58. Debussy: *Fireworks* from Preludes Bk 2, white-black key texture.¹⁸⁹



Several comparisons have been drawn between Josef Suk and Claude Debussy throughout this chapter, particularly in terms of rhythm, texture, harmony, and formal treatment. In his *Grove Music Online* description of ten pieces from *Things Lived and Dreamed*, John Tyrrell states that “all inhabit a very personal world; in their economical evocation of mood, their exploration of new musical means and their assured piano technique they foreshadow Debussy’s *Préludes*.”¹⁹⁰ Table 3.1 features some of the primary characteristics of both Suk’s and Debussy’s compositional styles, with common characteristics highlighted in green.

¹⁸⁹ http://conquest.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/b/b8/IMSLP246895-PMLP02396-Debussy_Claude-Klavierwerke_Peters_Klemm_Band_III_01_Preludes_2e_Livre_filter.pdf

¹⁹⁰ Tyrrell, “Suk, Josef (iii),” *Grove Music Online*.

Table 3.1. Claude Debussy and Josef Suk: comparison of their compositional styles

	CLAUDE DEBUSSY (1862-1918)	JOSEF SUK (1874-1935)
Rhythm	Ambiguity, Hidden Pulse, Polyrhythm	Syncopations, Polyrhythm , Independence of bar line
Melody	Fragmentation and transformation of motives	Asymmetric motives, self-quotations, P4/P5 and tritone
Harmony	Unresolved dissonance, slow harmonic changes, chord planing , combines tonal-modal and atonal	Dissonance resolves to consonance, fast moving harmonies, some chord planing , M/m parallelism, mediant relationships
Modes	Major with raised 4 th and flat 7 th , Lydian , Mixolydian	Lydian , Mixolydian , Phrygian
WT/pentatonic	Extensively: also in combination	Selectively: within tonal context
Chord structures	D9, 11, 13, quartal /quintal	Minor 7/9 th , augmented, half dim., T/D combinations, quartal
Form	ABA (gestural returns), sectional, through-composed	Mostly ABA (tonal returns: in late style often compressed)
Texture	Layering (use of three staves), counterpoint, white-black key figuration, doubling of outside voices	Layering , free polyphony, some white-black key figuration, diatonic melody against chromatic inner voice (mostly tenor)
Pedal	Assertion of tonality, pedal for sonority	For drama and/or programmatic purposes, ostinato pedal points
Use of instrument	Idiomatic use of the whole keyboard	Idiomatic , some violin figurations (double thirds/sixths)

Suk may have been among the Czech audiences that heard Debussy's famous work *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun* in its Prague premiere in 1905. Debussy's

works were also a staple of the Czech Quartet's contemporary repertoire.¹⁹¹ Yet, when the Russian composer Vladimir Rebikov asked Suk's friend and musicologist Boleslav Kalenský about a possible influence of Debussy on Suk's *Asrael* (1906), mainly referring to the composer's use of whole-tone scales, Kalenský doubted that Suk was familiar with Debussy's music. He recalled that Suk found the French composers "amusing, but he was bothered by their mannerism and superficiality."¹⁹² Oldřich Filipovský noted that while Impressionists would frequently get adrift in their colorful sonorities, Suk's sonic combinations were always subservient to the overall harmonic and formal plan.¹⁹³

A renowned Czech pianist and composer, Radoslav Kvapil (b. 1934) considers Suk a late Romantic, one who lived in the same era as Debussy but remained untouched by the Frenchman's reforms. He added that Suk's harmonies gradually became more progressive, reaching the high point of subjectivism in his Op. 28, 30, and 36. In these works, Suk openly and thoroughly analyzed his most inner feelings. That is why, Kvapil said, he recorded *About Mother* and *Things Lived and Dreamed* but chose not to perform them publically, focusing on his earlier works instead. According to Kvapil, the portrayal of emotions is the primary difference between Suk and Debussy- the music of the latter composer is "cold, mastered, and calculated- a reflection of a feeling but not the feeling itself."¹⁹⁴ Suk, on the other hand, always wore his heart on his sleeve, which inevitably contributed

¹⁹¹ Unfortunately, the author lacks the exact details about the quartet's study and performance of Debussy's works.

¹⁹² Translated by author. Boleslav Kalenský, "K našim sporům a potřebám," *Smetana*, 1, no. 14 (1906), 193- 98. Quoted in Berkovec, "Josef Suk a evropské stylové proudy," 47.

¹⁹³ Filipovský, *Klavírní tvorba Josefa Suka; rozbor a výklad*, 275.

¹⁹⁴ Radoslav Kvapil, email message to author, July 30, 2015.

to the expressive nature and intimacy of his works. This disparity between Suk and Debussy is also evident in their choices of programmatic titles for their piano works: Debussy's "La Cathedrale engloutie" (The Submerged Cathedral) and "La Fille aux cheveux de lin" (The Maid With the Flaxen Hair), as opposed to Suk's "Dedicated to the Forgotten Graves in the Křečovice Cemetery" and "When Mother Was Still a Little Girl."¹⁹⁵

Returning to the analysis of *Poco Andante*, the "composite" middle section is framed by an absence of the B minor key signature, that is until the composer modulates back to the tonic in the reprise (m. 68). Below are the opening measures of each of the five contrasting sections that comprise this middle section (Fig. 3.59-3.63).¹⁹⁶ Interestingly, each section emerges from a subdued dynamic and most entries are marked by a tempo and/or character change, circled in green. Even though the successive ideas in this B section change quickly and seem to have nothing in common, they are all characterized by a subdivision of either sixteenth or thirty-second notes. In fact, Suk employs this sense of forward motion to internally unify the irregular structure of this miniature.¹⁹⁷

Fig. 3.59. Suk: IX. *Poco Andante*, Op. 30, mm. 16-18.



¹⁹⁵ Jan Charypar, email message to author, September 27, 2015.

¹⁹⁶ These are labeled as sections II to VI, since the A section serves as section I, and A' as section VII.

¹⁹⁷ Štěpán, *Novák a Suk*, 171. Filipovský, *Klavírní tvorba Josefa Suka; rozbory a výklad*, 230.

Fig. 3.60. Suk: IX. *Poco Andante*, Op. 30, mm. 31-33.

III. *poco cresc.* *poco scherzando* *poco sostenuto poco*
 31 *molto p* *pp sempre* *ten.*

Fig. 3.61. Suk: IX. *Poco Andante*, Op. 30, mm. 40-42.

40 IV. *ten. poco tranquillo* *pp* *poco marc. il basso*

Fig. 3.62. Suk: IX. *Poco Andante*, Op. 30, mm. 47-48.

47 V. *espress.* *p*

Fig. 3.63. Suk: IX. *Poco Andante*, Op. 30, mm. 60-62.

60 VI. *sub. pp* *pp*

The fifth section of this miniature is exceptionally peculiar because it is constructed as a ternary form within itself. Its outer sections are characterized by Suk's typical chromatic voice leading in the middle voices against a diatonic melody (Fig. 3.61). The "B section" preserves this chromaticism in the same register but introduces a new lyrical theme, marked *poco più sostenuto, espressivo*. This melody is a variation on a short lullaby written by Suk's wife Otilka, a composer in her own right (Fig. 3.64).¹⁹⁸ In Suk's rendition, this simple tune is inserted into a polyrhythmic four-layered texture centered on D major, with the ostinato dominant pedal point A (circled in green in Fig. 3.65). The sweetness of this melody is accentuated by a parallel motion in minor thirds between the closely spaced alto and tenor voice, marked with blue squares.

Fig. 3.64. Otilie Suková-Dvořáková: *Lullaby*, mm. 1-4.¹⁹⁹



¹⁹⁸ The date of this composition unknown. Published in 1910 as a supplement to the magazine *Zlatá Praha* (Golden Prague) XVI, no. 1. <http://0-unl.naxosmusiclibrary.com.library.unl.edu/sharedfiles/booklets/ARD/booklet-UP0025-2.pdf> (accessed August 20, 2015).

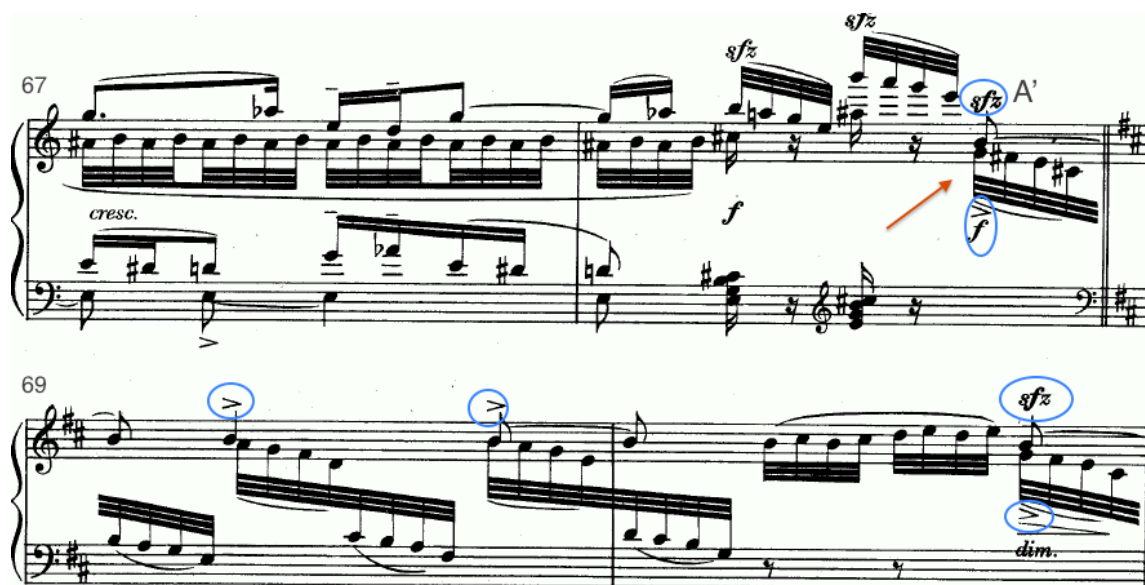
¹⁹⁹ Berkovec. *Josef Suk*, 130.

Fig. 3.65. Suk: IX. *Poco Andante*, Op. 30, mm. 53-58, “Otilka’s lullaby.”

The image displays two staves of a musical score. The top staff, labeled with the number 53, features a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. It contains a melodic line with various ornaments and a red arrow pointing to a specific note. The bottom staff, labeled with the number 56, features a bass clef and a key signature of one flat. It contains a bass line with various ornaments. The score includes several annotations: "poco più sostenuto espress." with a red arrow, "sub. p", "DM", "a tempo leggiero", and "molto p e dolcissimo". Blue boxes highlight specific musical phrases in both staves, and green circles highlight specific notes in the bottom staff.

The final, sixth segment of the B section is again autobiographical (see Fig. 3.63). It begins with an easily recognizable “cuckoo call,” followed by a march-like figure from the second movement of Suk’s *About Mother*, Op. 28, analyzed earlier in this chapter (see Fig. 3.24). Suk’s variation of the same tune is now transposed to the key of E-flat major and employs a rhythmic diminution with altered middle voices, which again corresponds to the chromatic voice leading established in the previous section. When the opening motive returns for the first time in the course of this miniature *forte* in m. 68, the displaced accents are underscored by the reiterated tonic pitch, accents, and *sforzando* markings, circled in blue (Fig. 3.66).

Fig. 3.66. Suk: IX. *Poco Andante*, Op. 30, mm. 67-70, Reprise.



The story of the ninth miniature comes to a close with a final thought on Suk's only son. It is at this point that the ever-present moving pulse finally ceases. Figure 3.67 features an almost exact quote of the hymn-like opening from the fifth piece of the set, "On the recovery of my son" (compare with Fig. 3.49). However, the character of thanksgiving is foreshadowed by what seems to be the distant memory of his wife's passing, as a citation of the death motive is clearly heard with an ascending and descending augmented fourth, circled in red (compare with the original "Death" motive in Fig. 3.34). The danger has apparently passed by the end of the phrase, and the piece concludes, like most of Suk's compositions, affirmatively, on a soothing B major chord.

Fig. 3.67. Suk: IX. *Poco Andante*, Op. 30, mm. 81-end, quote from V. *Adagio*.

81

poco a poco rit. Adagio from mvt V

p dim. molto

"Death"

F# 7 ten. BM

rit. ten. ppp

Things Lived and Dreamed, Op. 30 represents Suk's maturation as a composer who came to terms with his fate by combining humor, irony, and reminiscences from the past with a complex musical language. The composer employs a flexible approach to phrase structure that is often dictated by the expressive content rather than the expected rules of symmetrical design. Despite Suk's almost exclusive use of a simple ternary form, the abundance of ideas, wherein each gesture, tempo, and character change is painstakingly marked, requires a sensitive and highly imaginative performer. Additionally, as was the case over a hundred years ago when Suk's late style met with a lukewarm reception from the public, a real understanding of this composer's pianistic magnum opus requires an open-minded audience.

Op. 30 also demonstrates Suk's remarkable gift for combining a diverse range of ideas into a musically appealing whole. The interval of a fourth is not only utilized to reference death, but also as a structurally unifying motivic element of the fifth movement. And while the first miniature is completely based on a single rhythmic motive, the ninth movement seems almost athematic. Nonetheless, Suk effectively tied together seven parts of this miniature by his use of autobiographical quotes, united by one continuous pulse. Even though *Things Lived and Dreamed*

features some of Suk's most advanced musical vocabulary, the cycle still contains traces of "Czechness," such as the composer's use of the Lydian mode and syncopations. The first movement, with his caricature of the polka, also reveals Suk's original approach to the folk idiom. Finally, comparisons have been drawn between Suk and other composers of his generation; specifically, his approach to rhythm, texture, and harmony has been likened to that of Claude Debussy.

CONCLUSION: JOSEF SUK'S IMPORTANCE AND LEGACY

*"I know my music will endure despite jealousy and criticism . . . I'm quite certain about this because I was touched by the grace of God."*²⁰⁰

The primary objective of this document was to survey and recognize the fine piano works of the little-known Czech composer Josef Suk, "the boldest creative achievement of his generation."²⁰¹ Thus, the author did not intend to offer a comprehensive study of Suk's piano oeuvre. Throughout the analysis and discussion of various musical topics found in selected movements from the composer's four piano cycles, *Moods*, Op. 10; *Spring*, Op. 22a; *About Mother*, Op. 28; and *Things Lived and Dreamed*, Op. 30; the reader was given the opportunity to explore the progression of Suk's stylistic development from Romanticism to Czech modernism and place his piano music within the context of other, more renowned fellow composers like Dvořák, Brahms, Tchaikovsky, Debussy, and Ravel. Moreover, it should be noted that of Suk's total compositional output of thirty-seven opus numbers, only eleven are piano cycles. A holistic study of Suk's compositional style must therefore also consider his symphonic and chamber compositions. Additionally, Suk's piano compositions sometimes ideologically foreshadow his orchestral works (e.g., the themes from the symphonic poems *Ripening* and *Epilog*

²⁰⁰ Quoted in *Dotkl se mně prst Boží* (Touched by the Grace of God), Documentary Film, Directed by Petr Kaňka, Czech Television, 2006, <http://www.ceskatelevize.cz/ivysilani/10096383728-dotkl-se-me-prst-bozi/20656226232> (accessed August 15, 2015).

²⁰¹ Štěpánek and Karásek, *An Outline of Czech and Slovak Music*, 76.

first appearing in *Things Lived and Dreamed*), unveiling another avenue of possible research.²⁰²

Czech piano literature from the late nineteenth to early twentieth century features a longstanding tradition of autobiographical works and character pieces, colored by the patriotic convictions of the country that was for centuries oppressed by the Austro-Hungarians. Despite this profound nationalism, from Voříšek to Janáček, the Czech composers, performers, and pedagogues justly earned international recognition that is still accepted today. Josef Suk's career as a touring violinist with the Czech Quartet not only won him fame across Europe, but also exposed him to other compositional schools of his times, which he absorbed into his own unique compositional style. Among the composers that Suk personally met during these tours were Rimsky-Korsakov, Glazunov, Scriabin, Reger, and R. Strauss.²⁰³

Suk's music is highly subjective, essentially derived from the joys and tragedies of the composer's life. This autobiographical nature is exemplified by the composer's reliance on the programmatic motives of "Love" and "Death" that permeate a number of his works. Famous Czech pianist Ivan Moravec (1930-2015) captured this notion with the following statement: "If I didn't know from the accounts of Suk's friends how charming and what a very kindhearted man he was, I would have certainly assumed it from every one of his notes. I feel that Suk means to

²⁰² Filipovský, *Klavírní tvorba Josefa Suka; rozbory a výklad*, 271.

²⁰³ Berkovec, "Josef Suk a evropské stylové proudy," 47.

the Czechs what Gustav Mahler meant for the German world.”²⁰⁴ Suk was admired by such celebrated composers as Brahms, Berg, Schoenberg, and Mahler, yet was initially misunderstood, criticized, and even ridiculed in his homeland, only achieving true recognition in his fifties. Suk’s dedicated work as a successful director and inspiring, compassionate professor at the Prague Conservatory bespeaks a legacy that resounds in the lives of his students. He passed along the compositional heritage of Dvořák to pupils such as Emil Hloubil and Pavel Bořkovec, who in turn passed it along to their students at the Prague Academy of Performing Arts.

Suk’s piano music is an intimate diary of a great man and humanist, a composer whose first instrument was not the piano but who nonetheless created some of the most genuine, colorful, and inspired works of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Czech piano music. As opposed to some of his predecessors and contemporaries, Suk’s piano compositions, masterfully crafted to the smallest detail, never strove for an empty virtuosity or sonority for sonority’s sake. In recent years, Suk’s symphonic works have been introduced to enthusiastic audiences in London, Helsinki, and Madrid, while a discography of Suk’s piano works (see Appendix) confirms that more pianists than ever before are choosing to perform Suk’s music. As Berkovec poignantly concluded: “His music is always there, ready to gratify the appreciative listener.”²⁰⁵ It is hoped that this document will serve as a further stimulus for current and future generations of appreciative pianists, scholars, and

²⁰⁴ Translated by author. Quoted in Dítětová and Charypar, <http://josefsuk.czweb.org/rubrika.html> (accessed September 30, 2015). Given that Gustav Mahler was an Austrian composer, Moravec most likely used the word German in a broader meaning, referencing “Germanic” culture or countries that use German language, which would include Austria.

²⁰⁵ Berkovec, *Josef Suk*, Trans. Jean Layton-Eislerová, 75.

audiences ready to look beyond the better known works of Brahms, Chopin, and Debussy in order to take an extraordinary musical journey into the piano works of Josef Suk.

APPENDIX

Josef Suk: Chronological List of Solo Piano Works²⁰⁶

- Sonata in C Major (1883)
- *Ouverture* in D Minor (1885)
- *Jindřichův Hradec cycle*- compositions from childhood: I. *Polonaise*, II. *Andante*, III. *Adagio- Allegro vivace*, IV. *Vivace* (1886-1887)
- Two Piano Pieces: *Albumleaf, Dreaming* (1891)
- *Fantasie- polonaise*, Op. 5 (1892)
- Piano Pieces, Op. 7: I. *Love Song*, II. *Humoresque*, III. *Memories*, IV. *Two Idylls*, V. *Dumka*, VI. *Capriccietto* (1892-93)
- *Humoresque* (1894)
- *Moods*, Op. 10: Five Pieces for Piano: I. *Legend*, II. *Capriccio*, III. *Romance*, IV. *Bagatelle*, V. *Spring Idyll* (1894-5)
- Piano Pieces, Op. 12: I. *Andante*, II. *Allegro moderato*, III. *Adagio, ma non troppo*, IV. *Allegro ma non troppo*, V. *Andante con moto*. VI. *Allegro vivace*. VII. *Allegretto*, VIII. *Andante*, IX. *Moderato* (1895-6)
- *Village Serenade* (1897)
- Three Piano Pieces: *Capriccietto* (1893), *Albumleaf* (1895), *Bagatelle* (1898)
- Suite, Op. 21: I. *Adagio*, II. *Allegro vivace*. III. *Minuet*, IV. *Dumka*, V. *Allegro ma non troppo* (originally Sonatine in G Minor- 1897, rev. 1900)^{*}
- *Spring*, Op. 22a: I. *Spring*, II. *Breeze*, III. *In Expectation*, IV. ^{*} ^{*}, V. *Longing* (1902)
- *Summer Impressions*, Op. 22b: I. *At Noon*, II. *Children Playing*, III. *Evening Mood* (1902)

²⁰⁶ Zdeněk Nouza and Miroslav Nový, *Josef Suk: tematicky katalog skladeb = Thematic catalogue of the works* (Praha: Bärenreiter, 2005), 468-9.

- *About Mother*, Op. 28: I. *When Mother Was Still a Little Girl*, 2. *Once in the Springtime*, III. *How Mother Sang at Night to Her Sick Child*, IV. *About Mother's Heart*, V. *Remembering* (1907)
- *Spanish Joke* (1909)
- *Things Lived and Dreamed*, Op. 30: I. *Allegretto moderato* (With humor and irony, agitated in places), II. *Allegro vivo* (Restless and somewhat timid, without strongly marked expression), III. *Andante sostenuto* (Mysterious, and light and airy in mood), IV. *Poco Allegretto* (Meditative, then increasingly resolute in mood), V. *Adagio*- "On the Recovery of My Son," (Calm, with deep feeling), VI. *Moderato quasi allegretto* (With the expression of quiet, carefree gaiety), VII. *Adagio non tanto* (Forthright, later with the expression of overpowering strength), VIII. *Vivace* (Delicate and twittering), IX. *Poco Andante* (Whispering and mysterious), X. *Adagio*- "Dedicated to the Forgotten Graves in the Křečovice Cemetery" (Dreamily). (1909)
- *Lullabies*, Op. 33: I. *The Sleeping Children*, 2. *Ditty*, 3. *Sentimental Self-parody On a Popular Song*, IV. *On a Friend's Recovery*, V. *Christmas Dream*, VI. *Come Softly, Death!* (1910-12)
- *About Friendship*, Op. 36 (1920)
- *Episodes: Andante* (1897), *Ella polka* (1909), *Albumleaf* (1918), *About Christmas Day* (1925)
- *Sousedská* (originally for five violins, double bass and percussion), arr. K. Šolc (1935)

Josef Suk: Chamber Piano Works

- Piano Trio in C Minor, Op. 2 (1889, rev. 1890-91)
- Piano Quartet in A Minor, Op. 1 (1891)
- Piano Quintet in G minor, Op. 8 (1893, rev. 1915)
- *Elegie* for Piano Trio, Op. 23 (1902)

Josef Suk: Discography of Solo Piano Works

Anthology of Czech Piano Music, Vol. 8: Josef Suk. Radoslav Kvapil. Musical Concepts. CD. 1995.

Intimate Studies- Piano Music by Janáček, Haas, Martinů and Suk. Lada Valešová. Avie. CD. 2009.

Ivan Moravec Plays Czech music (Smetana; Suk; O. F. Korte), Ivan Moravec. Supraphon. CD. 2000.

Josef Suk: Piano Works. 2 Discs. Margaret Fingerhut. Chandos. CD. 1992.

Josef Suk: Piano Works. Vols. 1-4. Niel Immelman. Meridian Records. CD. 2002.

Josef Suk: Piano Works. 3 Discs. Pavel Štěpán. Supraphon. CD. 2005.

Josef Suk: Complete Piano works. 4 Discs. Markéta Týmlová. JC Audio. CD. 2007.

Life and Dreams: Czech Piano Music (Voříšek; Suk; Janáček; Haas), Edith Kraus. Koch International Classics. CD. 1993.

Song of Love. Piano Music by Novák, Smetana and Suk. Igor Ardašev. Supraphon Records. CD. 1995.

Suk: Six Piano Pieces- De Maman- Moods. Lauriala Risto. Naxos Music Library. 2002.

Suk: Piano Music. Tomáš Víšek (on Suk's original Bösendorfer piano in Křečovice). ArcoDiva. CD. 2000 [includes piano works of Otilie Suková- Dvořáková and Suk's son, Ing. Josef Suk].

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Beckerman, Michael. "In Search of Czechness in Music." *19th-Century Music* 10, no. 1 (1986): 61-73.
- Běhalová, Petra. *Josef Suk – Klavírní cyklus Životem a snem – antologie* (Piano Cycle Things Lived and Dreamed- anthology). Master's Thesis. Masaryk University: Department of Musicology in Brno, Czech Republic, 2013.
http://is.muni.cz/th/263902/ff_m/Josef_Suk_-_Zivotem_a_snem_-_antologie.pdf (accessed December 20, 2014).
- Berkovec, Jiří. *Josef Suk*. Trans. Jean Layton-Eislerová. Praha, Bratislava: Supraphon, 1969.
- _____. *Josef Suk, 1874-1935: život a dílo* (life and works). Praha: Státní nakl. krásné literatury, hudby a umění, 1956.
- _____. "Josef Suk a evropské stylové proudy" (Josef Suk and European Stylistic Movements). *Hudebni rozhledy* 39, no. 1 (1986). 43-48.
- Chalmers, Kenneth. "Dumka." *The Oxford Companion to Music*. *Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press. <http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.library.unl.edu/subscriber/article/opr/t114/e2118> (accessed January 30, 2015).
- Charypar, Jan. *Orchestrální tvorba Josefa Suka v českých kritických ohlasech do roku 1938* (Josef Suk's orchestral works as perceived by Czech music critics prior to 1938). Bachelor's Thesis. Masaryk University: Department of Musicology in Brno, Czech Republic, 2014. http://is.muni.cz/th/384331/ff_b/ (accessed July 24, 2015).
- Černý, Jaromír. *Hudba v českých dějinách: od středověku do nové doby*. Praha: Supraphon, 1989.
- DeLong, Kenneth. "Voříšek, Jan Václav." *Grove Music Online*. *Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press. <http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.library.unl.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/29688> (accessed January 26, 2015).

- Dítětová, Tereza, and Jan Charypar. "Website of a composer Josef Suk." <http://josefsuk.czweb.org/index.html> (assessed December 11, 2014).
- Dohnalová, Lenka. *Czech Music Guide*. Praha: Arts and Theatre Institute, 2011.
- Erickson, Robert. *Sound Structure in Music*. Oakland, California: University of California Press, 1975.
- Filipovský, Oldřich. *Klavírní tvorba Josefa Suka; rozbor a výklad* (Piano Works of Josef Suk: Analysis and Explanation). Pilsner: T. Mareš, 1947.
- Fischmann, Zdenka. "Václav Jan Křtitel Tomášek's Poetic Piano Pieces," in *Essays on Czech Music*. Boulder: East European Monographs, 2002.
- Frisch, Walter. *Music in the Nineteenth Century*. New York: Norton and Company, 2013.
- Hájek, Jonáš. "Things lived and dreamt by a music editor: reflections on Josef Suk's oeuvre." *Czech Music* 4 (2012), 31-40.
- Helfert, Vladimír. "Two Losses to Czech Music: Josef Suk, Otakar Ostrčil." *Slavonic and East European Review* 14, no. 42 (Apr. 1936), 639-646. <http://jstor.org/stable/4203158> (accessed July 13, 2015).
- Květ, Jan M. *Živá slova Josefa Suka* (Living Words of Josef Suk). Praha: Topičova edice, 1946.
- _____. *Josef Suk život a dílo: studie a vzpomínky* (Life and Works: Studies and Reminiscences). Praha: Česká akademie věd a umění, 1936.
- Morgan, Robert P. *Modern Times: From World War I to the Present*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1994.
- Nouza, Zdeněk, and M. Nový. *Josef Suk: tematicky katalog skladeb = Thematic catalogue of the works*. Praha: Bärenreiter, 2005.
- Newmarch, Rosa. *The Music of Czechoslovakia*. New York: J. & J. Harper Editions, 1969.

Novak, John K. "Josef Suk's Non-Obstinate Ostinato Movements: A study of Harmony and Style." *College Music Symposium* 43 (2003), 86-104.

Štěpán, Václav. *Novák a Suk*. Praha: Hudební matice Umělecké besedy, 1945.

Štěpánek, Vladimír, and Bohumil Karásek, *An Outline of Czech and Slovak Music*. Part 1: Czech Music. Prague: Orbis, 1964.

Štrausová, Michaela, ed. "Josef Suk society." <http://suksociety.cz/> (accessed December 11, 2014).

Suk, Josef, and Jana Vojtěšková. *Dopisy o životě hudebním i lidském* (Letters About Human and Personal Life). Praha: Bärenreiter, 2005.

Suk, Josef. *Dotkl se mně prst Boží* (I was touched by the grace of God). Documentary Film. Directed by Petr Kaňka. Czech Television, 2006.
<http://www.ceskatelevize.cz/porady/10096383728-dotkl-se-me-prst-bozi/20656226232> (accessed August 15, 2015).

Thompson, Wendy, and Jane Bellingham. "Capriccio." *The Oxford Companion to Music*. *Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press. <http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.library.unl.edu/subscriber/article/opr/t114/e1159> (accessed February 2, 2015).

Tyrrell, John. "Suk, Josef (i)." *Grove Music Online*. *Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press. <http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.library.unl.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/27094> (accessed December 11, 2014).

Volek, Jaroslav. *Struktura a Osobnosti Hudby* (Structure and Personalities of Music). Praha: Panton, 1988.

Whittall, Arnold. "Heterophony." *The Oxford Companion to Music*. *Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press. <http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.library.unl.edu/subscriber/article/opr/t114/e3240> (accessed July 27, 2015).

Yeomans, David. *Piano Music of the Czech Romantics: A Performer's Guide*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006.

Suk's Piano Scores

Josef Suk. *Piano works= Klavierwerke*, 3 vls. London/Hamburg: N. Simrock, 1985.

_____. *Nálady= Stimmungsbilder*. Berlin: N. Simrock, 1896.

_____. *Nálady= Stimmungsbilder= Moods: five pieces for piano*. Karel Šolc, ed.
N. p.: Simrock, 1961.

_____. *Jaro- Le Printemps*. Karel Šolc, rev. Prague: Orbis, 1950.

_____. *Jaro (Spring) for Solo Piano*. Karel Šolc, ed. Miami Lakes, Fla: Master Piano
Series, 1989.

_____. *O Matince, prosté skladby klavírní svému synáčkovi*, op. 28- *De Maman,*
simples morceaux de piano pour son fils, op. 28. Blanche Selva, ed. Praha:
Mojmír Urbánek, 1902.

_____. *O Matince- About Mother- De Maman*. Blanche Selva, ed. Prague: Orbis, 1950.

_____. *Životem a Snem- Erlebtes und Erträumtes- Things Lived and Dreamed*.
Leipzig: Breitkopf und Hartel, 1909.

_____. *Things Lived and Dreamed (Životem a Snem), Op. 30: Ten Pieces for Piano*,
Urtext. Jarmila Gabrielová, ed. Praha: Bärenreiter, 2015.