

**NATIONAL IDENTITY IN SIBELIUS' PIANO WORKS: THE REFLECTION OF
ELEMENTS OF FINNISH FOLK MUSIC IN HIS PIANO WORKS**

Baxtiyorova Ifora Ixtiyorjon kizi

*Uzbekistan state Conservatory
Specialty of Musical instrument Performance – Piano (Organ)
2nd year master's student
Gulyamova G.X.*

*Scientific supervisor : Associate Professor of the Department of
"Special Piano" of the Uzbekistan State Conservatory*

Abstract: This article analyzes how Sibelius' piano works reflect specific elements of Finnish folk music. It analyzes how Sibelius's interest in national music is expressed in his piano works, how folk melodies, rhythms, and modes are used in his music. It also examines how the originality of Finnish national music is manifested in Sibelius's piano works.

Keywords: Sibelius, piano works, Finnish folk music, national identity, melody, rhythm, mode.

Introduction. Finland music, especially that of Jean Sibelius his works, his unique style and melody wealth with to the world is famous . Its Finnish folk music national pride, nature was love and mythological of the inheritance strong reflections Finland in the late 19th and early 20th century's national identity understanding and independence for struggle during was . During this period art and culture national idea expression tool as big importance profession Sibelius also had his Finnish folk music national soul to wake up and to the world introduction Finnish people in order music from the elements wide In his piano works this elements how much skillfully their use, national to oneself uniqueness in expression role and modern musical styles with harmony researchers for big interest wakes up ¹.

¹Barnett, G. Analytical Perspectives on Sibelius's Piano Works. - Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015. - 312 p.



Sibelius for piano from a hundred more than work Among them are " Lyric plays " (op. 24, 40, 58, 74), " Ten such as "Three Piano Pieces " (op. 76), " Ten Piano Pieces " (op. 58) categories, as well as individual plays There is ²a piano piece by Sibelius . national to oneself originality, first in turn, its in the tone's manifestation Finnish folk composer of songs their melodies, their rhythmic structure, features of the fret own in his works skillfully used . Sibelius Finnish folk music of music characteristic characteristics, for example, melancholic mood, nature landscapes expression, epic soul Sibelius ' piano works not only national, maybe universal also contains values embodied His music human of the soul deep experiences, life philosophical meanings reflection will bring .

Sibelius' piano works today's performers and listeners today by big interest with acceptance Finnish folk music in Sibelius ' piano works of music various genres and elements wide. For example, the runes (ancient Finnish songs) are its in his works melodic and rhythmic patterns as Piano pieces

Kyllikki Drei lyrische Stücke

Jean Sibelius op. 41
herausgegeben von Kari Kilpeläinen



such as " Kyllikki" (1904) contain lyrical melodies and recurring motifs typical of runes .

The melodies of the kantele (the Finnish national instrument) are reflected in Sibelius' music through piano technique. For example, in "Kanteletar" (1894), the arpeggio chords and melodiousness characteristic of the kantele are noticeable. And the rhythms of the yorga are reminiscent of national dance styles in works such as "Finlandia" (1899). Musicologists, such as Erik Tawaststjerna and Guy Rickards ³, have noted that Sibelius combined folk music with modern musical forms, which shows his commitment to national romanticism ⁴.

² Salmenhaara , E. Jean Sibelius: The Piano Music. - Helsinki: Finnish Music Information Centre, 1990. - 198 p.

³Rickards, G. Jean Sibelius. - London: Phaidon Press, 1997. - 240 p.

⁴ Tawaststjerna , E. Sibelius. Vol. 1–3. – London: Faber & Faber, 1976–1997.

Finlandia

Tone poem, Op. 26 (1899, revised 1900)

The composer's piano transcription of his orchestral original



There is a lot of foreign literature on the national identity in Sibelius's piano works. For example, Lionel Pike, in his book "Sibelius: An Analytical Study", has analyzed in detail the influence of Finnish folk music in Sibelius's piano works.

Sibelius did not directly rework Finnish folk melodies in his piano works, but rather in his own unique style. He took folk melodies as his main material and combined them with modern musical structures and romantic means of expression. For example, "Kyllikki" (1904) contains melodic motifs typical of folk songs, but they are reshaped in Sibelius's lyrical and dramatic style. Erik Tawaststjerna argues that Sibelius turned folk music into "his own musical language", that is, he simplified or complicated the melodies and gave them new meaning ⁵. Guy Rickards argues that Sibelius stylized kantele melodies through piano techniques in works such as "Kanteletar" (1894) ⁶. Thus, Sibelius not only preserved folk music, but also transformed it into a new form of musical expression.

In Sibelius's piano works, the depiction of Finnish nature is closely connected with elements of folk music. In describing natural landscapes, he used melodic and rhythmic patterns that reflect the attitude of the Finnish people to nature. For example, in the work "Prelude" (Op. 9, No. 1), there are arpeggio chords reminiscent of the flow of a river and the noise of the forest, and melodies characteristic of folk music. Erik Tawaststjerna ⁷notes that Sibelius depicted nature not only as a background, but also as part of the spiritual world of the Finnish people. According to Guy Rickards ⁸, Sibelius combined folk melodies with natural landscapes, thereby strengthening Finnish national identity. Thus, nature and folk music appear as complementary elements in Sibelius's works.

The expression of national identity in Sibelius's piano works is different from his works in other genres. In his piano miniatures, Sibelius reflects the delicate and inner world of Finnish folk music, which differs from the epic and monumental images in the symphonies. Musicologist Timo Virtanen emphasizes the lyrical and intimate character of folk melodies in Sibelius's piano works. In foreign literature, in particular in the journal "Sibelius Studies", there are many articles

⁵ Tawaststjerna, E. Sibelius. Vol. 1–3. – London: Faber & Faber, 1976–1997.

⁶ Rickards, G. *Jean Sibelius*. – London: Phaidon Press, 1997. – 220-240 p.

⁷ Tawaststjerna, E. Sibelius. Vol. 1–3. – London: Faber & Faber, 1976–1997.

⁸ Rickards, G. *Jean Sibelius*. – London: Phaidon Press, 1997. – 220-240 p.

about the chamber and delicate expression of national identity in Sibelius's piano works ⁹. As a practical example, the piano suite "Kyllikki" reflects the lyrical and dramatic elements of Finnish folklore, which differs from the patriotic spirit in the "Finland" symphony.

The uniqueness of folk music in Sibelius's piano works had a profound influence on his harmonic language. Sibelius used the pentatonic scales and modal harmony of Finnish folk music in his own unique way. His harmonic style often deviates from traditional harmony and emphasizes the uniqueness of folk melodies. Musicologists, for example, Erkki Salmenhaara ¹⁰, emphasize the unique harmony of modal and pentatonic elements of folk music in Sibelius's harmonic style. Foreign literature, in particular, in the book "The Cambridge Companion to Sibelius" ¹¹, deeply analyzes the connection between Sibelius's harmonic style and folk music.

As a practical example, in the collection of works "10 Bagatelles" Sibelius uses the modal harmony of folk melodies in a unique way, which clearly demonstrates the harmony of his harmonic style with folk music. His collection of "10 Impromptus" also shows how his harmonic style uses the modal and pentatonic elements of folk melodies.

Sibelius's piano works had a profound influence on the next generation of Finnish composers. Sibelius's national style, especially in the field of piano composition, laid the foundation for the development of Finnish music ¹². Composers such as Toivo Kuula and Erkki Melartin were inspired by Sibelius' use of Finnish folk melodies and rhythms ¹³.

Scholars such as Eero Tarasti argue that Sibelius created a unique Finnish musical language that influenced subsequent generations of composers ¹⁴. Foreign literature, in particular The Cambridge Companion to Sibelius, ¹⁵ has examined Sibelius's influence on the Finnish musical scene in detail. As a practical example, the piano works of Toivo Kuula, especially in their use of Finnish folk melodies, demonstrate the influence of Sibelius's national style. His "South Ostrobothnian Suites" reflect Sibelius's influence in the use of folk melodies and rhythms.

⁹ Virtanen, T. "The Intimate Side of Sibelius's Piano Music." - *Sibelius Studies*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. - P. 145-160 p.

¹⁰ Salmenhaara, E. Jean Sibelius and the Modal Aspects of Finnish Folk Music. - Helsinki: Finnish Musicological Society, 1984. - 215 p.

¹¹ Grimley, D. (Ed.). The Cambridge Companion to Sibelius. - Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. - p. 270-320.

¹² Howell, T. After Sibelius: Finnish Piano Music in the 20th Century. - Helsinki: Finnish Music Information Centre, 1998. - 234 p.

¹³ Barnett, G. Analytical Perspectives on Sibelius's Piano Works. - Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015. - 312 p.

¹⁴ Tarasti, E. Sibelius and the Aesthetics of Finnish National Music. - Helsinki: Finnish Musicological Society, 1996. - 210 p.

¹⁵ Grimley, D. (Ed.). The Cambridge Companion to Sibelius. - Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. - p. 218-254.

Sibelius's contribution to the development of Finnish music is reflected in his ability to combine Finnish folk elements with European musical traditions. This created a unique Finnish musical style that continues to inspire composers today.

The place of Sibelius's piano works in the context of world music is reflected in his ability to combine the national Finnish style with pan-European musical trends. Sibelius's national style, based on Finnish folk music, gave his works a uniqueness that attracted the attention of the world musical community.

Robert Leighton ¹⁶have argued that Sibelius created a unique musical language that has influenced composers around the world. His writings, such as *Sibelius Studies*, have analyzed the influence of Sibelius's national style on his international recognition ¹⁷. As a practical example, Sibelius's piano works such as the *Ten Bagatelles* demonstrate his ability to combine Finnish folk motifs with European harmonic techniques. This created a unique musical style that is recognized and appreciated worldwide.

Sibelius's national style established him as a composer capable of creating a unique musical language based on national traditions in world music. His works are performed and studied all over the world, which confirms his importance in the world musical context.

In conclusion, the expression of national identity in Sibelius's piano works shows the deep and multifaceted reflection of elements of Finnish folk music in his piano work. Sibelius not only used folk melodies, rhythms and modes as a source of inspiration in his works, but also reworked them in his own unique style, creating a new musical world. In his piano works, the lyrical, epic and dramatic features of Finnish folk music are combined, demonstrating a unique expression of the national spirit. Sibelius' harmonic language, form and structure, and performance style were also formed under the influence of folk music. The unique use of modal harmony, pentatonic modes and folk rhythms in his works gives his music a national identity.

Conclusion. Sibelius's piano works made a great contribution to the development of Finnish music and influenced the next generation of Finnish composers. His national style has also found its place in world music, and his works are still performed and studied today. Sibelius's piano works embody the cultural heritage, historical experiences, and national pride of the Finnish people. His music has become a unique example of Finnish culture for audiences not only in Finland but also around the world. Sibelius created a wonderful example of combining folk traditions with modern musical forms in the development of national music.

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¹⁶Layton, R. *Sibelius*. - London: Dent, 1992. - 276 p.

¹⁷Goss, G., & Grimley, D. (Eds.). *Sibelius Studies*. - Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. - 354 p.

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