

PABLO DE SARASATE: HIS LIFE, MUSIC, STYLE OF PERFORMANCE, AND
INTERACTIONS AMONG OTHER PERFORMERS AND COMPOSERS

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Pablo de Sarasate (1844-1908) contributed to the development of violin performance through his innovative virtuosic techniques and popular Spanish characteristics, and his influence on violin performing style remains even in the present day. He composed virtuosic compositions to showcase his excellent technique, and well-known composers of the time such as Camille Saint-Saëns and Edouardo Lalo composed for him as well. These compositions include not only virtuosity but also Spanish characteristics that were suitable to Sarasate's nationalistic heritage. The combination of Spanish and virtuosic characteristics made these pieces as standard violin repertoire for modern violinists.

At the end of the nineteenth century, it was his distinct performance style that broke the boundary of technical virtuosity in violin performing. The following generations – Kreisler, Heihetz, and in the present day, Isaac Permann – developed their performance techniques based on Sarasate's performance style. To examine Sarasate's influences and contributions to the development of violin performing style, this dissertation focuses on Sarasate's performance practices, his technical developments, his unique style of playing, and his music to discuss his influences on composers and violinists alike. This study places Sarasate's performance style in the context of nineteenth- and twentieth-century violin performance practices through a discussion of major violin schools such as Franco-Belgian and German schools. The study is of Sarasate's repertoire such as his *Zigeunerweisen* and Saint-Saëns's *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso*, which offers an interpretation of Sarasate's contributions to the development of violin literature and performance practice. Since his performance style can be observed not only

in the scores and commentary of his contemporaries but also in recordings, this study also includes a comparison of recordings by various violinists such as Sarasate, Kreisler, and Heifetz to reinforce the discussion of individual performing styles and Sarasate's influences. Through his contributions to the development of violin performance, Sarasate made himself one of the most renowned figures in the history of the violin.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Violin *virtuosi* of the nineteenth century such as Nicolo Paganini, Henryk Wieniawski, Joseph Joachim, and Eugène Ysaye, contributed to the development of instrumental music both as performers and composers. Pablo de Sarasate (1844-1908) was one of these *virtuosi*. He composed brilliant compositions to showcase his excellent technique, and well-known composers of the time (Max Bruch, Edouard Lalo and Camille Saint-Saëns) composed for him as well. Their compositions present not only virtuosity but also Spanish characteristics that were suitable to Sarasate's nationalistic heritage.

Sarasate is considered to be one of a group of representative composers for violin as well as one of the great violinist *virtuosi* in the late nineteenth century. Many of his compositions are still considered standard works for violin study and performance. Since he composed his violin pieces for his own performances, these compositions reflected an extremely personalized performance style. Other violinists and critics considered his technique distinctive, and it was his performance style that contributed greatly to later developments in violin technique and influenced composers of his time. The connection of both virtuosic and Spanish traits between Sarasate's own works and those dedicated to him suggest that his performance style was held in high-esteem. Many of these techniques are in existence today as a result of Sarasate's innovations and influences.

His performance style can be observed not only in the scores and commentary of his contemporaries but also in recordings. He recorded some of his own works in 1904 as well as some music of Bach. These recordings are clear, historical evidence of his style and interpretation. There are also comparative recordings of violin performances by Sarasate's contemporaries (Joachim and Ysaye) and the next immediate generation of Kreisler and Heifetz. Even though scholarly research, such as Boris Schwarz's *Great Masters of the Violin*, describes performance styles of major violinists, it is very beneficial to observe styles from the early recordings and compare these recordings to later violinists from the early twentieth century to ascertain the changes and influences that Sarasate may have had on future generations. I will compare Sarasate's recordings with those of his contemporaries (Joseph Joachim and Eugene Ysaye) and with the next generation of *virtuosi* Fritz Kreisler and Jascha Heifetz) to observe influences which were not previously apparent.

In scholarly studies, Sarasate's contributions and influences on other composers and performers have not been discussed extensively. Therefore, this dissertation will focus on Sarasate's performance practices, his technical developments, his unique style of playing, and his music; and how these aspects influenced composers and violinists alike. In my dissertation, I will place Sarasate's performance style in the context of nineteenth- and twentieth-century violin performance practices and will offer an interpretation of Sarasate's contributions to the development of violin literature and performance practice through the study of scores and literatures as well as recordings. Sarasate contributed to the development of violin performance through his innovative

virtuosic techniques and popular Spanish characteristics, and his influence on violin performing style remains even in the present day.

While the dissertation will present the views of various scholars, I will offer many original observations. First, I will discuss Sarasate's performance style based on the contemporary critics such as Carl Flesch and others, comparing Sarasate's playing with violin performance practices in the late nineteenth century to determine how he differed from the convention of the time. For this comparison, I will refer to the performance styles of Nicolò Paganini, Charles de Bériot, Henry Vieuxtemps and Henryk Wieniawski to establish a precedent of mid-nineteenth century performance practices and then I will show the development of late styles and techniques and delimitate the role played by Sarasate in a changing musical world. I will also include a discussion and comparison of bowings and vibrato in relationship to the French, German, and Italian styles of playing; the Franco-Belgian violin school (founded by Charles de Bériot) with its contributions of innovative bowing techniques that are still used today; and the German school (founded by Louis Spohr and represented by Joseph Joachim) with its more rigid and conservative approaches. I will then discuss Sarasate's relationships to these schools, as well as his concert repertoire to interpret his technical and musical characteristics, focusing upon Sarasate's *Introduction and Tarantella* and *Zigeunerweisen*, Saint-Saëns' *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso*, and Lalo's *Symphonie Espagnole*. I will then refer to the recordings of Sarasate's performances in 1904 as a historical proof. Finally, I will conclude with the consideration of how Sarasate's performing style can be placed in the

context of nineteenth-and twentieth- century violin performance practices based on the examination of his repertoire and recordings.

CHAPTER II

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF PABLO DE SARASATE

Pablo de Sarasate was born in Pamplona, Spain, and he first learned violin from his father.¹ At the age of eight, he was already performing in public and had received a scholarship to study at the conservatory in Madrid.² By age twelve he was a well-known prodigy in Spain and was sent to the Paris Conservatoire to continue his studies.³ Between 1856-1859, he studied with Lamber Joseph Massart and Delphin Alard.⁴

After completing his tenure at the Paris Conservatoire, he concertized successfully throughout Europe and North and South America until he died in 1908 in Biarritz, Spain.⁵ He played concertos, sonatas, and short pieces for violin from various periods. In his earlier career, most of his repertoire consisted of difficult showpieces which were operatic fantasias which he himself arranged. Although Sarasate studied composition with Reber in Paris, his violin pieces do not draw on influences outside of his immediate experience.⁶ He composed pieces which were extremely effective for his instrument and himself. Most of his compositions included Spanish flavor because of his national heritage and also because Spanish music had become very popular in Europe.

¹ The general information on Sarasate in this paragraph came from Boris Schwarz and Robin Stowell, "Sarasate, Pablo de," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie, 2nd ed., vol. 22, pp.281-2 (N.Y.: Macmillan, 2001), and Victor Chapin, *The Violin and Its Master* (N.Y.: J. B. Lippincott, 1969), 163-170.

² Boris Schwarz, *Great Masters of the Violin*, (N. Y.: Simon and Schuster, 1983), 237.


³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Robin Stowell, *Violin Technique and Performance Practice in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 78.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Gilbert Chase, *The Music of Spain*, 2nd ed. (N. Y.: Dover, 1959.), 216.

His eight Spanish Dances, *Introduction and Tarantella*, *Romanza Andaluza* and *Zigeunerweisen*, are considered representative repertoire and show strong Spanish influences in their rhythms and harmonies. They illustrate the scope and limitations of his technical and musical characteristics.

Sarasate continually broadened his repertoire to include other styles and literature. However because his hands were small he avoided playing certain pieces like those of Paganini which demanded large stretches. Among his repertoire, there were several dedicated pieces from well-known composers of the time: Camille Saint-Saëns, Max Bruch, Edouard Lalo, Joseph Joachim, Henryk Wieniawski, and Antonin Dvorak. Among these, the most well-known pieces are Lalo's First Concerto and *Symphonie Espagnole*, Bruch's Second Concerto, *Schottisch Fantasi* and Mackenzie's *Pibroch Suite*, Saint-Saëns' concerto for Violin No.1 in A, *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso*, and Concerto No.3 in B minor.⁷ The works that were written for Sarasate reflected his violinistic strengths which were fast passages, double stops, harmonics, high string works, articulated bowings such as spiccato, *sautillé* and various slurred staccatos. Some of these dedicated pieces such as Lalo's *Symphonie espagnole*, Bizet's *Carmen*, and Saint-Saëns' *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso* include the use of Spanish characteristics such as the repeated rhythmic use of  and 2/4 played against 6/8.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 217.

CHAPTER III
COMPOSTIOPNAL CHARACTERISTICS IN THE CONCERT REPERTORIE OF
PABLO DE SARASATE

Performance Related Analytical Discussion and Characteristics of Sarasate's Violin
Compositions

Since the nineteenth century, Sarasate's *Zigeunerweisen* and his eight Spanish Dances have been considered standard repertoire in violin literature and show clear influences of his Spanish folk background and therefore reflect Sarasate's violin playing. In his pieces, Sarasate used "popular origin" in which he used traditional Spanish themes.⁸ One of the characteristics of his music is a lack of extensive alteration, formal development or elaboration from original Spanish melodies. He allowed the melodies to speak for themselves and retain the charm of their folk origins. He created music by using only short themes and virtuosic elaborations. Most of Sarasate's works start with a slow section followed by a lively brilliant fast section.

Zigeunerweisen

Zigeunerweisen (Gypsy Airs), published in 1878, is one of Sarasate's best known pieces. It has the influence of Hungarian flavor which of rich melodic content and stunning technical display. It is considered to be a fantasia composed to demonstrate Sarasate's own enormous facility and, therefore, demonstrates technically demanding elements. The piece stands with difficult passages and every technical possibility is

⁸ Chase, *The Music of Spain*, 252.

exploited, yet the excitement is perfectly balanced by the beautiful Hungarian folk song like. It is a rhythmically vibrant and multicolored evocation of gypsy airs that is perhaps the most popular of all showpieces for violin.

This piece is in two sections. After the statement from the orchestra, the solo violin repeats two bars of exactly same melody. From the beginning, the piece starts with very rich gypsy style on G string followed by four octave scales. A lot of passages are very fast but in free style. After the fast arpeggiated passage, the first phrase ends with pizzicato. In first eleven measure are in *forte*; however starting in measure 12, there are sudden dynamic changes. In measure 12, the melody is used in chords followed by fast passage in three octaves. After the each phrase, there are *fermatas* and between the fast repeating notes on high register, there are *ritardandos*. Each section is in short phrase repeating same materials twice. However, in second time, the theme repeats in octave higher register and with more elaboration. In *Lento* section, Sarasate used a lot of trills and grace notes. He also used one finger glissando and flying staccato with fast three octave scale. In measure 29, marked *a tempo*, shows two measures of phrases twice. In this section Sarasate used harmonics and big leaps of low to high notes. There is also left hand pizzicato with descending scale.

After the elaborated and dramatic section of introduction, the transitional section, marked *Un poco più lento*, is in pianissimo with tempo mark changes from 4/4 to 2/4. It is in four measure phrases, and again same as introduction, the second phrases are played in octave higher than first time. The first section ends with four octave c minor scale.

In contrast to the first section, the tempo in the second section, *allegro molto vivace*, is now very fast. This section feels almost like a variation. Each material is introduced within short phrase but each time in different strokes and techniques. Generally these whole sections in sixteenth notes are played on E string. There are a lot of strings crossings from G to E strings which requires bow control for performer. Sarasate also used double stops in this section along with right-hand four notes pizzicato. In measure 126, combination of main note and harmonics with string crossing on G and A string are used. In measure 132, Sarasate used combination of left and right hand pizzicato. The tempo gets faster as piece goes, and in measure 154, Sarasate indicated marking *animando* to create more excitement of the piece along with string crossing with double stops and left hand pizzicato.

The beginning of the slow section begins richly on the G string followed by a fast run up to a high E flat. Many techniques, such as extensive and high G string work, fast runs on high G and E string, flying staccato, spiccato, other articulated bowings, one finger glissandi, and use of harmonics, pizzicatos (both right and left hand), which Sarasate developed and pushed to their limits, can be found in this slow section.

Before Sarasate's time, the slides were used to connect one note to another in melodic lines for smooth sound. However, Sarasate often used a lot of *portamenti* in his piece to create a vocal quality. (mm. 17-20)

Ex. 1) Pablo de Sarasate, *Zigeunerweisen*, mm.16-23⁹

Sarasate used a lot of fast sequence passages on high the E string and used slides to emphasize the Hungarian flavor with fast repeated notes to be played freely by the performer.

In measure 23, Sarasate used a flying staccato which he mastered with a long scale going up on the E string. This flying staccato presents a technical challenge for the performer to coordinate the bow with left hand articulation.

Ex. 2) Pablo de Sarasate, *Zigeunerweisen*, mm. 23-26¹⁰

⁹ Pablo de Sarasate, *Zigeunerweisen*, *Op. 20*, edited and fingered by Philipp Mittell (Florida: Masters Music Publications, 1999), 2.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 3.

In contrast to the first section, the tempo accelerates drastically in the second section.

Sarasate displayed very fast sixteenth running notes with string crossings from G to the E string in this section.

In measures 126-145, the use of harmonics and a combination of pizzicato and arco is prominent. This kind of technical display creates a virtuosic impression. Moreover, the left hand pizzicati and use of frequent artificial harmonics in the fast passages were fairly new devices that were developed in the late nineteenth century.

Ex. 3) Pablo de Sarasate, *Zigeunerweisen*, mm. 125-148¹¹

Introduction and Tarantella

The word *Tarantella* was an originally from Italian dance which meant “to cure the bite of the Tarantula”; however, in the nineteenth century, composers meant *Tarantella* as the piece with continuous eighth notes or triplets which offer a technical

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 5.

challenge for the performer.¹² Like most of his other pieces, *Introduction and Tarantella* (1899) starts with simple folk tune melody followed by *Allegro vivace*. He used a Paganini like section of technical embellishments and used tarantella rhythms, which includes sextuples and the character of rapid and pining dance elements. In this piece, Sarasate used a lot of fast string crossing passages on high E and A strings, down bow staccato and three note chords, both broken and articulated.

One of the unique techniques in this piece is an unusual pizzicato. In measures 126-138, Sarasate used a combined left and right hand pizzicato. This unusual device is imitated many performers in Maurice Ravel's *Tzigane*, a gypsy, violin showpiece.

Ex. 4) Pablo de Sarasate, *Introduction and Tarantella*, mm. mm. 126-141¹³

Another technique which reflects Sarasate's style of violin playing is shown in measures 79-86. He used a bow stroke called *sautillé* on three strings. This technique creates an articulated sound without having the bow actually leaving the string. The violin triplets are played against sixteenth notes in the orchestra part creating a flavor of

¹² Erich Schwandt, "Tarantella," in *Grove Music Online*, edited by L. Macy (Accessed 23 October 2005), <<http://www.grovemusic.com>>

¹³ Pablo de Sarasate, *Introduction & Trantella*, *Op. 43*, edited by Zino Francescatti (New York: International Music Company, 1973), 3.

Spanish music. It is an example of Spanish rhythmic elements, and a virtuosic right-hand technique.

Ex. 5) Pablo de Sarasate, *Introduction and Tarantella*, mm. 78-89¹⁴

The image shows a musical score for guitar, specifically measures 78-89 of Pablo de Sarasate's *Introduction and Tarantella*. The score is written for guitar and consists of two staves. The top staff is marked "on three strings" and "p sautille", and the bottom staff is marked "p sautille". The music features a complex rhythmic pattern with many sixteenth notes and rests, and includes fingerings and string indications.

Performance Related Analytical Discussion and Characteristics of Dedicated Pieces

Throughout the nineteenth century, Spanish influences were predominant for many French composers. The heritage of Spanish folk music can be found in their works within different types of instrumentation and vocal genres. Many composers borrowed folk material from Spanish folk melodies and characteristics of rhythms and forms of specific folk dances, and later it became the standard symphonic and operatic repertoire with “Spanish idiom.”¹⁵ Edouard Lalo (1823-1892) and Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921), two French composers were inspired by Sarasate to include Spanish characteristics in their music.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ Chase, *The Music of Spain*, 289.

Lalo's *Symphonie espagnole*

The *Symphonie espagnole* is Lalo's best-known Spanish work. It is in five movements which were influenced by numerous melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic characteristics of Spanish folk music. However, different from other French composers, Lalo did not use Spanish music instrumentation such as the tambourine or castanets.

The most popular elements, the habanera rhythms (triplets followed by duplets) can be found from the beginning in the first movement (mm. 8-12).

Ex. 6) Edouard Lalo, *Symphonie espagnole*: First Movement, mm. 1-36¹⁶

The image shows a musical score for the first movement of Edouard Lalo's *Symphonie espagnole*, Op. 21. The score is for Violin and Piano. The tempo is marked "Allegro non troppo" with a quarter note equal to 84 beats per minute. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The score is divided into two systems. The first system (measures 1-23) features a violin part with a "Solo" marking and a piano part with "ff e ben ritmato". The second system (measures 24-36) features a violin part with "f appassionato" and a piano part with "f" and "ff". The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, duplets, and slurs.

Lalo also used the alternation of 2/4 and 6/8 rhythms and frequent syncopation in the last movement which is typical of Spanish music.

¹⁶ Edouard Lalo, *Symphonie espagnole*, Op. 21 for Violin and Piano, edited by Leopold Lichtenberg (New York: Schirmer, 1915), 1.

Ex. 7) Edouard Lalo, *Symphonie espagnole*: Fifth Movement, mm. 189-204¹⁷

The musical score for Ex. 7 consists of three staves. The first staff begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic and a *dolce* marking, followed by a crescendo (*cresc.*). The second staff features a piano-piano (*pp*) dynamic and a *rit.* instruction. The third staff includes a *dolce* marking and various fingering numbers (1, 2, 3, 4) throughout the passage.

Lalo used one finger chromatic scale glissandos in the fourth movement which was one of the Sarasate's virtuosic techniques.

Ex. 8) Edouard Lalo, *Symphonie espagnole*: Fourth Movement, mm. 70-78¹⁸

The musical score for Ex. 8 consists of three staves. The first staff includes a crescendo (*cresc.*), a ritardando (*rit.*), and a forte (*f*) dynamic. The second staff features a piano-piano (*pp*) dynamic and a *Tempo I°* marking. The third staff includes a forte (*f*) dynamic, a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic, a *tr* (trill) marking, a *passionato* marking, and a section marked *IVa* with a 3/4 time signature and an *ad lib.* marking.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 17.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 13.

Saint-Saëns's *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso*

Saint-Saëns, a French composer, organist, and pianist, was inspired by Sarasate's Spanish style.¹⁹ During his friendship with Sarasate, Saint-Saëns wrote three concertos, *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso*, and *Havanaise* for solo violin and orchestra. Even though he was a composer following traditional French style, his violin concertos and short pieces show evidence of Spanish music. For example, *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso* (1863) which was dedicated to Sarasate, has strong contrasts of mood, sudden change of dynamic, and use of popular dance rhythm of Habanera.

The Introduction is in three small sections. The piece starts in *Andante malinconico* with slow introduction as other Sarasate's entire pieces. The first theme is presented by solo violin right after two measures of introduction by piano. It is interesting how Saint-Saëns used melody within two octaves in this section using only A and D string and avoiding use of high E string. As a transitional section, after the first theme in syncopated rhythm, Saint-Saëns used *ricochet* in *animato* to create contrast with previous material. The level of a dynamic and rhythmic figure becomes more complicated and it leads to *tranquillo* with fast running notes which are similar to Sarasate's *Zigeunerweisen*.

The rondo section (ABACACBA), *Allegro ma non troppo*, shows clear Spanish character from the beginning. It is in syncopated rhythm within contrasting style of combining *spiccato* and *legato* repetition. In B section, big leaps of low to high note in fast tempo E to E (three octave) and up staccato in fast passage scale, which are similar to

¹⁹ James Harding. *Saint-Saëns and His Circles* (London: Chapman & Hall, 1965), 43-44.

Zigeunerweisen, can be found. When the A section returns, it is preceded by a scale figure which begins softly and builds to a climax getting into the A theme. A section finish with double stops with four octave fast running scale and harmonics with three eighth notes.

After the short introduction for the C section, a brief cadenza is introduced. Again big leaps between the notes within four octaves are shown there followed by arpeggiated sixteenth notes. The section which is marked *con morbidezza* shows clear Spanish characteristic of rhythm. The orchestra is in 6/8 when the solo violin plays in 2/4. This 6/8 against 2/4 rhythm creates Spanish flavor of *havanera* rhythm. This melody is introduced three times, first time softly then gradually it builds that the third time it appears in double stops which leads to sixteenth running notes in 6/8. Before returning of the A section, Saint-Saëns used one finger glissando in chromatic scale coming down from high E to low E in five octave scale. The returning A section is same as previous section; however, this time it ends with four sixteenth notes with eighth notes instead of three eighth notes as it was shown earlier.

The second C section starts with the material from the previous C section. This time it is more expressive melodies and the section which is marked *con fantasia* with tied notes create more syncopated rhythm and gives Spanish flavor. When the final section B and A return, this time the melody is in the orchestra with accompaniment in the solo violin. Again the solo violin's six arpeggiated scales show huge leaps between the each scale in fast tempo. The section ends with twenty-four chords marked as *ad*

libitum, and a short coda in *Più allegro* is follows. This piece contains the ending with a very fast coda which gives the soloist a chance to show off his technical skill.

The examples which were developed by and related to Sarasate can be found in Saint-Saëns' *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso*.

Ex. 9) Saint-Saëns, *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso*, mm. 18-24²⁰



Spanish elements, another unique characteristic, appear after the slow introduction in the solo violin section in measures 40-43. Use of major and minor modes and frequent use of grace notes give this pieces a Spanish flavor.

Ex. 10) Saint-Saëns, *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso*, mm. 40-50²¹



²⁰ Camille Saint-Saëns, *Introduction et Rondo Capriccioso*, Op. 28, edited and fingered by Henry Schradieck (Florida: Well-Tempered Press, 1991), 2.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 2.

Another Spanish folk characteristic is shown in measures 151-155. In the rondo section, the solo violin is in 2/4 meter while the orchestra is in 6/8 meter to provide rhythmic contrast. The frequent changes of rhythm and sudden dynamic changes that create dramatic effects are considered to be the Spanish elements.

Ex. 11) Saint-Saëns, *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso*, mm. 151-158²²

The image displays a musical score for Saint-Saëns' *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso*, measures 151-158. The score is in 6/8 time and features a solo violin part and a piano accompaniment. The violin part is marked 'p' and 'con morbidezza'. The piano part is marked 'pp' and 'Quatuor'. The score shows a complex rhythmic pattern with frequent changes of rhythm and sudden dynamic changes.

Another example of Sarasate's technique was down-bow *jeté* and use of natural harmonics in measures 77-80.

²² *Ibid.*, 10. (piano score)

Ex. 12) Saint-Saëns, *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso*, mm. 74-82²³



Measures 87-93 show an example of slurred, up-bow staccato.

Ex. 13) Saint-Saëns, *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso*, mm. 83-93²⁴



Saint-Saëns also used one finger glissandos in combination with bowed spiccato. (mm. 195-199)

²³ *Ibid.*, 2.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 2-3.

Ex. 14) Saint-Saëns, *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso*, mm. 192-202²⁵

The image shows three staves of musical notation. The top staff begins with a double bar line and a second ending bracket labeled 'II'. It features a series of eighth notes with slurs and accents. The middle staff continues with a similar rhythmic pattern, including a section with a dotted line above it. The bottom staff starts with a dynamic marking of 'f' and a 'D' above the staff, followed by a series of chords and notes with slurs and accents, ending with a dynamic marking of 'sf'.

Another Sarasate's virtuosic technique of down bow chord – broken chords, was found in Saint-Saëns' *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso* as well as Sarasate's *Introduction and Tarantella*.

Ex. 15) Saint-Saëns, *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso*, mm. 301-307²⁶

The image shows a single staff of musical notation. It begins with a double bar line and a section marked 'ad lib.' with a wavy line above it. The main section starts with a dynamic marking of 'ff' and features a series of chords and notes with slurs and accents. The piece concludes with a triplet of notes marked with a '3' above them.

With all of the above virtuosic techniques that were developed by Sarasate and subsequently used by other composers in works written for him, the overall virtuosity of violin playing was enlarged greatly in the late nineteenth century.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 5.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 7.

Sarasate's Performing Style

Sarasate was known as a virtuoso with an elegant and beautiful sound. Many violinists and critics considered Sarasate's technique as distinctive, and it was his playing style which contributed greatly to the later developments of violin techniques. Sarasate had mastered a perfect technique for both hands with a precise but effortless way of playing.²⁷ Even though he was a well known virtuoso, some of his critics felt that his ethereal style and extraordinary singing sound did not fit large scale compositions such as *concerti*.²⁸ This is a judgment call. There are no extant concerto recordings of Sarasate. However, Lalo wrote one concerto and Saint-Saëns wrote two *concerti* specifically for him, so there were clearly differences of opinion.

Sarasate was primarily involved with Spanish dances and show pieces. According to Carl Flesch, Sarasate's performances of Spanish materials were considered excellent.²⁹ Flesch also felt his style of performance differed from any other contemporary violinist.³⁰ His eight Spanish Dances and other *virtuosic* works show his violinistic technique. It included fast passages, double stops, harmonics, high string works, articulated bowings, and flying slurred staccatos. According to Flesch, Sarasate was the only violinist who played the flying staccato of the last movement of Mendelssohn violin concerto at the extreme point of the bow.³¹ Because of his virtuosic

²⁷ Schwartz, *Great Masters of the Violin*, 237

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ Saint-Saëns and the French Solo concerto from 1850 to 1920. Carl Flesch, *Memoirs*, edited and translated by Hans Keller (London: Rockliff, 1957), 25.

³⁰ Flesch, *Memoirs*, 39.

³¹ Flesch, *Memoirs*, 39.

style and his tone, Sarasate is known as closely aligned with the Franco-Belgian School rather than the German School where Joseph Joachim was a leading violinist.

One of the techniques developed by Sarasate was the use of left hand pizzicato, which was originated from Paganini's violin idioms. Other composers, such as Wieniawski, also used this left hand pizzicato technique, but it rarely shows in their works. Sarasate used a lot of left hand pizzicato as well as harmonics which were very innovative. (refer to EX. 3 Sarasate's *Zigeunerweisen*) These techniques give an extreme virtuosic effect. Moreover, this technique clearly influenced later composers such as Maurice Ravel (1875-1937). When he composed *Tzigane* he combined left hand and right hand pizzicato from measure 236 to measure 247.³²

Most of Sarasate's compositions and pieces dedicated to him include fast passage works in which Sarasate excelled. Sarasate had an extremely fast left hand and his lightness of bow technique assisted his left hand to run without any pressure. His use of harmonics also influenced the immediate successors such as Jascha Heifetz and Fritz Kreisler, even though modern violinists do not use harmonics as frequently. According to Henschel, Sarasate used harmonic on the fifth note of the *Andante* in Mendelssohn's violin concerto which gave quite a different taste from fully-stopped playing with intense vibrato.³³ Both Heifetz and Kreisler played harmonics on the high E in the opening of the first movement of Lalo's *Symphonie espagnole* (refer to EX. 6).

³² Maurice Ravel, *Tzigane: Rapsodie de Concert: Pour Violon et Piano* (Paris : Durand, 1924) 7.

³³ Schwartz, *Great Masters of the Violin*, 238.

CHAPTER IV

PERFORMING STYLES OF SARATE'S CONTEMPORARIES AND LATER GENERATIONS OF VIOLINISTS

The Virtuoso Violinists in Major Violin Schools in the Late Nineteenth Century

In the nineteenth century, the center of the development of violin performance practice evolved from the Paris Conservatoire, which was influenced by the Italian School, established by Giovanni Battista Viotti (1755-1824). Viotti's approach to playing and teaching influenced the French violin school a great deal. Viotti also influenced Louis Spohr (1784-1859), a violinist considered to be the founder of the German School.³⁴ The development of violin playing was influenced by Viotti as the modern violin playing. He was trained in the classical Italian tradition by Pugnani, and he taught and influenced the founders of the French violin school - Baillot, Rode and Kreutzer. They later greatly influenced the developing violin performance practices of the German and Franco Belgian Schools.³⁵ A brief discussion of these violin schools are as follows.

Italian School

Unlike earlier great violinists who wrote treatises on violin playing, the most historically substantive in the concept changes of the violin playing was established by

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 138.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 135.

Viotti who was called “the father of the modern violin playing.”³⁶ In the Baroque and the early Classical period, violinists produced a sweet and soft sound with the help of instruments and bows, which were able to provide such an idealistic sound to performers. Viotti made a huge contribution by changing the traditional violin playing into a new approach to violin performance. His use of a new Stradivarius within violin sound made his sound warmer and richer. A new Tourte bow, which Viotti created in the late eighteenth century, made violin produced a more powerful sound. Along with these new instruments, his grand manner of violin playing and using a larger scale compared to the Baroque and the early Classical School changed a violin concerto into a larger scale of writing. He was the first one to develop the beauties of using only the G string.³⁷ Viotti wrote twenty-nine violin concertos. His new ideal approach to writing the violin concerto greatly influenced the virtuoso Paganini and helped to establish a new standard of violin playing for later generations through larger scale writings.

French School

Viotti was a great influence on Pierre Rode, Rodolphe Kreutzer, and Pierre Baillot, who were considered major figures in the founding of a center of violin playing in Paris. They adopted Viotti’s new concept of concerto writing as a model and developed the French School. This school later developed into the Franco-Belgian School.

³⁶ Robin Stowell, “Violin I, 5 (iii): Since 1820: Technique and Performance Practice (a) Historical Outline,” in *Grove Music Online*, edited by L. Macy (Accessed 23 October 2005), <http://www.grovemusic.com>>

³⁷ *Ibid.*

Franco-Belgian School

The Franco-Belgian School, which was founded by Charles de Bériot, contributed a great deal to developing the nineteenth century violin performance concept, with innovative techniques of the masters at the time including Vieuxtemps, Wieniawski, and Ysaye.³⁸ The Franco-Belgian School style of violin playing was a combination of influences of Paganini's brilliant and virtuosic style with the traditional French school.³⁹ The most important contribution from this school was the new concept of producing a sustained violin sound.

The most significant influence in developing violin playing within the Franco-Belgian school was contributed by one of Bériot's famous students, Henri Vieuxtemps, who later influenced two major *virtuosi* of the Franco-Belgian School, Pablo de Sarasate and Eugène Ysaye.⁴⁰ Vieuxtemps taught the violin at the *Theatrical Music School* in Russia and contributed significantly toward the development of Russian violin playing. However, he returned to his native Belgium to teach at the Brussels Conservatory, a post once held by his teacher Bériot.⁴¹ Paganini's influence developed new technical and virtuosic aspects such as combination of left and right hand pizzicato and various flying staccato in the Franco-Belgian school.

Wieniawski also contributed to developing the Franco Belgian School. He had used a Russian bow grip, in which the second joint of the index finger pressed on the

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ Stowell, *Violin Technique and Performance Practice*, 63.

⁴⁰ David Milson, *Theory and Practice in Late Nineteenth-Century Violin Performance* (Cornwell: Ashgate, 2003), 24.

⁴¹ Stowell, *Violin Technique and Performance Practice*, 63.

bow.⁴² This helped apply more weight on the string and helped control the excessive pressure. However, among twentieth century violinists, the Russian bow grip was used as much as the traditional Franco-Belgian grip. Wieniawski's contribution to violin playing was a very rapid staccato bowing by controlling the motion. The use of this special *staccato* affect bowing defined him as a great virtuoso.

Another virtuoso of the time, Eugène Ysaÿe had considerable influence on development of violin playing after Vieuxtemps and Wieniawski by exploring a French vibrato unique to the Franco-Belgian school. With this French vibrato, developed by Ysaÿe and later Kreisler, the violin produced a much more sensuous sound.⁴³ Ysaÿe also adapted his bowing technique to his expressive needs.⁴⁴ His tone was big and noble and his continuous vibrato was the spontaneous expression of his feeling. Before a whole world was costumed with smooth, light, and elegant style of sound, and Ysaÿe's contribution made an enormous change in violin technique.⁴⁵

German School

Different from the Italian or the Franco-Belgian school's free and virtuosic style, the German School of violin playing was more conservative. The German School was established by Louis Spohr (1784-1859), who later greatly influenced Joseph Joachim. The German School of Violin playing was generally more conservative in technique and serious in musical attitude than its French counterpart.⁴⁶ Spohr characteristics of style

⁴² Schwarz, *Great Masters of the Violin*, 224.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ Flesch, *Memoirs*, 79.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ Milson, *Theory and Practice in Late Nineteenth-Century Violin Performance*, 18.

are shown in his compositions. He often used double stops and wide stretches on left hand extensions. Spohr objected to many of the virtuosic effects such as the ‘thrown’ bowing and artificial harmonics because of his preference to a ‘classical’ bowing approach.⁴⁷ Even though many composers and violinists such as Mendelssohn and Paganini used these techniques, Spohr was totally against all the bouncing bowing strokes, like Spiccato, *Sautillé*, flying staccato, and ricochet, which became popular in the nineteenth century violin performance practice. Instead of using a bouncing bow, Spohr was a master of controlling the bow. Even on rapid staccato runs, his bow never left the violin string and there was no one who could imitate Spohr’s staccato.⁴⁸

After Spohr, Joseph Joachim came as the ideal interpreter of German classicism, which was probably the most remote from the Spanish style of Sarasate, even though both were known as technical virtuoso. However, according to critics, Joachim had an unusual right arm position in which he kept it close to his body. As for his bow grip, he held the bow with his fingertips with the fingers kept close together. Even though his style was very personal, his violin playing contributed to the development of the German violin school in the middle of the nineteenth century.

Other Great Violinists after Sarasate

In the twentieth century, a new generation of violinists developed great personal performing styles. Fritz Kreisler, who was a so-called Frenchified-Viennese, had an unconventional bow arm: perfect short and intense bow strokes, holding his elbow rather

⁴⁷ Stowell, *Violin Technique and Performance Practice*, 9.

⁴⁸ Schwartz, *Great Masters of the Violin*, 244.

high, and tightening the bow hair far more than customary.⁴⁹ Kreisler's used counter-balanced bow style and series of down bow techniques which was developed by Sarasate. Another unique technique of Kreisler was the fast trill and fast vibrato. Kreisler had tremendously fast left fingers which made the speed of his trills and vibrato nearly double faster than other violinists.⁵⁰

Jan Kubelik, who was from the Bohemian school, was influenced by Sarasate's style. He was considered an "automatic perfection," which suggests fantastic and precise technique without musical communication.⁵¹ One of his biggest contributions to the art of violin playing was the slow practice of runs for rhythmic precision, strong left hand pizzicatos, and different style of harmonics, which was influenced by Sarsate.

Jascha Heifetz is one of the admired violinists of the twentieth century. He had precision and perfection of technique in both his left and right hand. Heifetz had a Russian style of holding the bow in which he held the bow with the first joint of the right index finger necessitating a high wrist. One of the most identifiable characteristics of his style was extremely fast tempo like Sarasate's performances. Contrasting Kubelik's careful style of playing, Heifetz exaggerated the tempo and tried to establish speed records. For example, in the last movement of the Mendelssohn's Concerto, Heifetz played so fast that the wind instruments were no longer able to keep up with him.⁵²

⁴⁹ Flesch, *Memoirs*, 79.

⁵⁰ Louis Paul Lochner, *Fritz Kreisler* (New York: Macmillan, 1950), 273.

⁵¹ Flesch, *Memoirs*, 122.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 377.

CHAPTER V

PABLO DE SARASATE AND THE RECORDING INDUSTRY

Throughout history, violin playing has been developed by dominant performers in different times. Among these performers, Joachim, Sarasate, and Ysaye were the first ones to make recordings. Compared to later generations, these three performers were unable to make satisfactory records with a good quality of tone and interpretation due to the primitive states of the recording industry.

Sarasate's Recording in 1904

Sarasate was one of the first violinists to make recordings. In 1904 he recorded his own *Zigeunerweisen*, *Capricio Vasco*, *Capricio Jota*, *Introduction and Tarantella*, *Miramar (Zortzico)*, *Habanera*, *Zapateado*; Chopin's *Nocturnes in E flat major*; and the *Preludio* from the *Partita No. 3 in E major* by J.S. Bach.⁵³

Comparison of Sarasate, Joachim, and Ysaye in Performing Styles as Evidenced in Their Recordings

Sarasate, Joachim, and Ysaye are the most representative virtuoso violinists in the late nineteenth century. Compare to the modern violinists, these three virtuosos made recordings in their late years. Therefore, not only because of the recording industry in their time, but also because of their ages, the quality of the recordings is not as good as it

⁵³ Joseph Joachim, Pablo de Sarasate, and Eugène Ysaye. *Joachim and Sarasate: the Complete Recordings, Ysaye: a Selection of his 1912 Recordings*, Joseph Joachim, violin, Pablo de Sarasate, violin, Eugène Ysaye, violin, time: 69 minutes 9 seconds (E. Sussex: Pavilion Records, OPAL CD 9851, 1992).

could have been. Despite the early recording technique, these recordings are remarkable and it is considered to be a historical proof which shows Sarasate's interpretation in both a technical and musical sense.

In Sarasate's recording, one of the distinctive points was tempo. Because of his light left hand and graceful bouncing bow stroke, he played in a rapid tempo. Compared to modern players, for example, his own piece, *Allegro molto vivace* in *Zigeunerweisen* and *Tarantella* in *Introduction and Tarantella*, Sarasate's tempo was very fast, yet his playing was very precise and clear. In all the fast virtuosic passages, Sarasate played straight forward without any delays for phrasing. In the passages of left-hand pizzicato, Sarasate produced very pure and articulated sounds compared to modern violinists. From the recording, Sarasate's vibrato was very fast. However, it was hard to hear the dynamic difference in his recordings. Compared to Ysaye's recordings, generally Sarasate's volume was soft and never gets loud enough. Riemann stated that Sarasate was one of the virtuosos who have all the best qualities as a violinist with perfect intonation, marvelous technique, and a captivating charm of tone.⁵⁴ Sarasate's tone was very graceful and his sound was effortless, and his intonation on high notes was clean.

Different from elegant and graceful playing of Sarasate's style, Joachim's style heard on his recordings was very solid and his chords were very strong, but the springing stroke was absent. Different from modern violinists who grasp all strings at once in their playing chord, Joachim used the concept of broken chords (Bach Partita in B minor *Bourrée*). It seems like he was using almost no vibrato and often displayed poor

⁵⁴ Milson, *Theory and Practice in Late Nineteenth-Century Violin Performance*, 24.

imprecise shiftings. Maybe it was because he recorded these pieces in his nineties when he was losing his technique. However, in his *Hungarian Dance*, Joachim's tone was very rich and shows a big sound. In *Hungarian Dance*, his grace notes and sound seem to be heavy.

Ysaye's recording represents very rich and sensuous sound compared to Sarasate and Joachim. According to the critics Ysaye's most interests was using his increase of vibrato. Maybe his intention was to show the bright and expressive sound. In my opinion, from these recordings, Ysaye's very rich and sensuous sound showed the best in *Hungarian Dance No. 5* by Brahms. Often he was holding out notes longer and vibrates to produce rich and warm tone. Also, in the *Finale* from the Mendelssohn's *Violin Concerto*, Ysaye was stretching notes whenever there was a tied note. Also, in *Obertass* and *Dudziaiz* by Wieniawski, it was interesting how Ysaye was holding out a note in middle of the piece and was creating a phrase by playing trills. From the research, these recordings were made in 1912 after his physical condition had declined, yet he maintained purity of intonation and near perfect technique.

Recordings of Sarasate's Contemporaries

Joachim made recordings in 1903, which includes Bach *Partita in B minor: Bourrée*, Bach *Sonata in G minor: Adagio*, Joachim's *Romance in C major*, and Brahms *Hungarian Dance No.1 and No.2*.

Ysaye's recordings were made in 1912: Chabrier: *Schero-Valse*, Fauré: *Gerceuse*, Mendelssohn: *Finale (Concerto in E minor)*, Wieniawski: Two mazurkas "*Obertass*" and "*Dudziaiz*," and Brahms: *Hungarian Dance No. 5*.

Recordings of the Next Generation

Kreisler started to make recording in 1910.⁵⁵ He made a lot of recordings which included mostly his short pieces as well as the major violin concertos by composers such as Beethoven, Brahms, Bruch, and Mendelssohn and Mozart. Despite the fact that these recordings were made in his late years, Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto in e minor, Op. 64 which was recorded in 1935, shows marvelous purity of intonation and his characteristic style of warmth and gracefulness, which was similar to Sarasate's performance style.

Kubelik was known as perfectionist in technical sense. He recorded works by his owns compositions as well as pieces by Wieniqwski, Paganini, and Sarasate from 1902 to 1934 in England. From his historical recording, Kubelik's sound is every energetic and flourish. His intonations and shifting are very precise and clean. For example in Bazzini's *La Ronde Des Lutins*, all the fast passages and thrown bow staccatos, which was an influence from Sarasate, are clearly articulated and each note is clearly pronounced well. Also, Kubelik in the last movement from Sarasate's *Carmen Fantasia* and Paganini's *Theme and Variations*, he shows his super perfect technique with clean intonation in double stops and left-hand pizzicatos which were also characteristics of Sarasate's performing style.

Heifetz was the great violinist who has perfect technique and amazingly fast speed. He recorded numerous pieces by various composers; however, he did not make many recordings by Paganini. Even though Heifetz was one of the best violinists who

⁵⁵ Lochner, *Fritz Kreisler*, 267.

have all the technique that need, he never felt he was good enough to make recordings by Paganini. However, there is no doubt that he was the best in the entire history. For example, in the *Allegro moto vivace* of the Saraste's *Zigeunerweisen*, Heifetz played as fast as Sarasate did in his recording. However, even in a fast tempo, his precision on intonations and all the articulations are amazing. On the other hand, both Heifetz and Sarasate played the slow introduction of *Zigeunerweisen* straightforward without any *tempo rubato*.

It is unfortunate that we do not have enough historical recordings. Because from these historical recordings, we can learn and compare how the composers of the time interpreted and played in their own compositions. It could have been a lot better if the recording industries were developed earlier then we could have had more historical recordings by other virtuosos such as Viuxtemps, Wieniawski, and Paganini. Yet it is fortunate that we have a few recordings of Sarasate and his contemporaries which help us to learn the original interpretation of composers.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

After the research and study, I have learned how much Sarasate's techniques influenced today's violinists. In Sarasate's time, few people were able to demonstrate his level of virtuosic techniques; however, there are thousands of young violinists who have the ability to show the clear virtuosic techniques in our time because Sarasate raised the standard of violin playing.

Throughout the history, there were various violinists and composers who brought and developed the best violin style and technique which shows in both their compositions and performance. Bach developed the use of double, triple, and quadruple stops in his fugue. Before Bach, there were other composers who composed precursors to the fugue (Telemans' *Fantasia*) for the solo violin, but Bach was the first to bring the use of four voice textures for the solo violin in his fugues. After Bach, it was Mozart who evolved the violin concerto style designating places for cadenzas and actually providing some of these cadenzas like the ones in his *Symphony Concertante*. In the nineteenth century, Viotti started to play with a modern bow and influenced the French school, which Beriot later developed into Franco-Belgian school whose tradition affected the performing styles of twentieth-century violinists. However, Paganini and Sarasate were the first ones to change the whole concept of violin playing into a more virtuosic style and to write pieces that showcased the new techniques. Their experimental techniques of performance and

styles of writing that developed in the nineteenth century clearly influenced later generations of composers and violinists.

Sarasate's myriad of technical innovations greatly influenced the following eras of violin playing. Even though Sarasate owed his style in part to the Franco-Belgian School for its basis, it was his distinct performance style that broke the boundary of technical virtuosity at the end of the nineteenth century. The following generations developed their performance techniques based on Sarasate's performance style – Kreisler, Heifetz, and in the present day, Isaac Permann. Sarasate's Spanish dance pieces also influenced modern violin playing. The popularity of Spanish music remains even today through the performance of his repertoire by modern violinists. Moreover, it is also beneficial for violin students to work on this repertoire in order to develop their technique further. Through his contributions to the development of violin performance, Sarasate made himself one of the most renowned figures in the history of the violin.

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