

AN ANALYSIS OF FORM AND TONALITY IN ARNOLD COOKE'S

SONATA FOR OBOE AND PIANO (1957)

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Arnold Cooke composed many works for oboe including two sonatas, a concerto and several pieces for chamber ensembles; however, his works are rarely performed. Through the analysis of form and tonality in his first oboe sonata, Cooke's musical style and influences become apparent. His musical style was primarily influenced by his teacher, Paul Hindemith, and can be characterized by traditional forms with the contemporary use of quartal harmonies and a variety of tertian sonorities. Cooke wrote music that is accessible for performers and audience members, and one way he achieved this accessibility is through the repetition of melodic ideas. In addition to exact melodic repetition, he also unified his works through fugue-like passages and sequences.

Although he lived during a time of experimentation by many composers, Cooke maintained conservative elements in his music that he learned through his studies at Cambridge and through his studies with Hindemith. His first oboe sonata is tonal although he varied modes and used chromatic harmonies throughout. Cooke's clear writing and unique sound in his *Sonata for Oboe and Piano* (1957) provide oboists a solo piece for the repertoire that demonstrates a modern approach to the traditional style of composition.

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CHAPTER 1

ARNOLD COOKE'S LIFE AND INFLUENCES

Introduction

Arnold Cooke, who lived from 1906 to 2005, composed many works over a long and distinguished career, with most being chamber and instrumental compositions. Cooke wrote many solo and chamber works for oboe; however, these works are rarely performed or studied today. The works include two solo sonatas, a concerto, an oboe quartet, and a woodwind quintet. This paper will focus on one of Cooke's solo works for the instrument, his first *Sonata for Oboe and Piano*, composed in 1957.

In his *Guidelines for Style Analysis*, Jan LaRue discussed the analysis of musical styles by breaking the characteristics of the music into five categories: sound, harmony, melody, rhythm, and growth (form). By using these guidelines, LaRue "attempt[ed] to achieve both comprehensiveness and simplicity" in understanding the style of a piece.¹ This paper will analyze two of these aspects, form and tonality (relating to harmony), for Cooke's first oboe sonata.

Many works for the oboe were written during the 1950s and 1960s; however, Cooke's works demonstrate a unique quality of composition. He composed three solo works for oboe in a short period of time, each having a pleasing tonal aspect while still sounding contemporary. He used traditional forms, even titling the third movement of his first sonata "Rondo," but he deviated from the strict rules usually associated with these forms and types of compositions. Due to Cooke's many contributions to the oboe solo and chamber music repertoire and his unique

¹ Jan LaRue, *Guidelines for Style Analysis*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1970), vii.

writing style, this sonata is worthwhile to study to learn Cooke's compositional style and to bring his music to the attention of more oboists.

Biography

Arnold Cooke was born on November 4, 1906 in Yorkshire, England. He began composing at the age of eight and wrote a piano sonata when he was fourteen years old, his first major composition.² His regular Sunday morning church attendance greatly influenced his early compositions, with his earliest attempts at composition being short hymn-like tunes. Besides composing, Cooke was also a performer. At the age of eight or nine, he began learning to play the piano and, at around age fifteen, he began to play the cello. In 1921, Cooke attended the Repton School where he studied both the piano and the cello. In his second year of studies there, he began to have regular lessons in composition, harmony and counterpoint with Dr. G.G. Stocks.

Beginning in 1925, Cooke studied at Cambridge, first as a history major, and then as a music student.³ There, his main compositional influences were Johannes Brahms, Edward Elgar, and Frederick Delius.⁴ His composition teacher at Cambridge was Edward J. Dent, who was not composing at that time, but was a scholar who regularly introduced contemporary works to the British public through his position as President of the International Society for Contemporary Music.⁵ Dent's specialty was music research, but he had been a composition student of Charles

² John Clapham, "Arnold Cooke: The Achievement of Twenty Years," *Music Survey* III, no. 4 (1951): 250.

³ Stanley Jack Gaulke, *The Published Solo and Chamber Works for Clarinet of Arnold Cooke*, D.M.A. Dissertation, University of Rochester, Eastman School of Music, 1978: 3-4.

⁴ Richard Arnell, "Arnold Cooke: A Birthday Conversation," *Composer* 23 (Summer 1967): 18.

⁵ Eric Wetherell, *Arnold Cooke*, (Upminster: British Music Society Publication, 1996), 11.

Stanford. Stanford was heavily influenced by the late romantic German composers, and Dent passed this influence on to Cooke.⁶

After Cooke earned his Bachelor of Music degree, Dent encouraged him to go to the Hochschule für Musik in Berlin to study with Paul Hindemith.⁷ Many of Hindemith's theoretical ideas are found in Cooke's works as he had a strong influence on the composer. Hindemith stressed that a tonal center should be established at the beginning and end of a melody, but the middle part of the melodic line could include a freer use of the twelve tones available. Hindemith also used harmonic cadences that are clearly recognized.⁸ During a time when many composers were experimenting with new harmonies and atonality, Cooke maintained his use of traditional forms and tonal harmonies. Many of these characteristics of his music can be attributed to his studies with Hindemith. In his composition lessons, Hindemith would play pieces that Cooke and the other students had written, adding comments, criticisms, suggestions, and revisions as he thought necessary.⁹ These suggestions impacted Cooke, as much of his music resembles music by Hindemith and follows the guidelines he learned from his teacher.

Cooke studied with Hindemith from 1929 to 1932 before returning to England. While in Berlin, Cooke was able to attend regular concerts of contemporary operas, the Berlin Philharmonic, and chamber music ensembles.¹⁰ After returning to England, Cooke became musical director at the Festival Theatre in Cambridge where he arranged and composed incidental music for the plays. In 1933, he was appointed to the faculty of the Royal Manchester College of Music, where he taught Rudiments of Music, Harmony and Counterpoint, and Music

⁶ John E. Wheeler, *The Music for Solo Clarinet by Arnold Cooke: The Influence of Paul Hindemith and a Comparison of the Music for Solo Clarinet by Both Composers*, D.M.A Dissertation, North Texas State University, 1987: 4-5.

⁷ Arnell, 18.

⁸ Wheeler, 10-11.

⁹ Arnell, 18.

¹⁰ Arnell, 18.

Form. Later, he also had several composition students.¹¹ However, Cooke wanted to live in London where more musical activities existed, so he moved there in 1938.¹² In 1941, he entered the military and composed music mostly during his periods of leave until he was discharged in 1945, when he was finally able to compose more regularly. In 1947, Cooke began working at Trinity College as a teacher of harmony and counterpoint, orchestration, and composition until his retirement. Cooke earned a doctorate from Cambridge University in 1948 after submitting three of his compositions to fulfill the requirements for the degree.¹³ Even after his retirement from Trinity College in 1978, Cooke continued to compose music and influence other composers and other musicians.

Musical Influences

Much of Cooke's musical style is derived from three main influences: a conventional musical upbringing in England, studies with Paul Hindemith, and a desire for his music to be "intelligible to the ordinary person."¹⁴ During Cooke's early years of training at Cambridge, Ralph Vaughan-Williams, Edward Elgar and Frederick Delius were viewed as the traditional English composers, and many English composers were unaware of the more experimental trends in parts of Europe. Between 1945 and 1962, many new approaches to composition were being circulated such as serialism and electronic indeterminacy; however, Cooke continued to compose based on the conservative influences that shaped his earlier compositions.¹⁵ When asked about these new approaches to music composition, Cooke replied, "I find that the sort of 20th century music I liked best before the war, I still like best; that, and the same sort of music that has

¹¹ Gaulke, 9.

¹² Michael Dawney, "Arnold Cooke," *Composer* 45 (Autumn 1972): 7.

¹³ Gaulke, 11-12.

¹⁴ Gaulke, 202.

¹⁵ Gaulke, 202.

proceeded from it since. Some serial music I have been able to take,” but much of it did not appeal to him.¹⁶ Describing Cooke’s works, Francis Routh wrote, “A simple approach to tonality, inherited from a conventional English background, is overlaid with a certain piquancy, and an unfailing craftsmanship derived from his teacher Hindemith.”¹⁷

Paul Hindemith’s teachings and compositions are most likely the largest influences on Cooke’s music. Of Hindemith’s teachings, Cooke said, “I think it was his concept of musical construction that influenced me most in his teaching, and the use of intervals and not relying harmonically on the classical chord formation.”¹⁸ One of the terms associated with Hindemith’s music is *Gebrauchsmusik*, meaning music for a specific purpose. The term can also apply to music written for amateurs and schools. However, Cooke preferred to use the term in the broader sense, as music written for a specific purpose. He believed that all of his works should meet the basic requirement of being useable for musicians in general.¹⁹ Most of his music was written for a specific performance, and often his pieces were the result of a commission.

Besides determining when Cooke would compose a work, commissions influenced the types of music Cooke wrote as well. Because most commissions are for chamber music, the majority of his output is in that genre of music as opposed to orchestral works or other larger pieces. In addition, much of his output is for wind instruments, owing an influence to Hindemith. As Cooke has stated, “I do have a particular liking for them [wind instruments]. This was of course stimulated by Hindemith. He got each of his students to take up a wind instrument, and we occasionally played together in class. I tried the oboe for a time, not with much success!”²⁰

More specifically, Cooke noted in a radio talk show that his favorite instruments were the

¹⁶ Arnell, 20.

¹⁷ Francis Routh, *Contemporary British Music: The Twenty-Five Years from 1945-1970*, (London: Macdonald and Company, Ltd., 1972), 80.

¹⁸ Gaulke, 6.

¹⁹ Routh, 81.

²⁰ Dawney, 8.

clarinet and the oboe.²¹ Although he did create works for a large variety of instruments and singers as well, the majority of his compositional output is chamber music involving wind instruments.

Musical Style

Cooke's musical style is viewed as conservative in relation to the more experimental compositions from this time such as atonality and serialism; however, he continued with the style of music he learned at Cambridge and with the influences he gained from having studied with Hindemith. This trend can be seen in his own teaching style as well. Cooke did not attempt to teach any one system of composition, and instead allowed students to write in the style they preferred. Although he offered alterations and improvements, he judged the result simply as music and not based on the style of music.²² Although his students were allowed the freedom to explore with various types of composition, Cooke remained on the conservative side for the time he was composing. Due to his conservatism, his pieces were heard less frequently, and about a third of his pieces have never been published. Eric Wetherell wrote, "He is one of a substantial number of composers who were considered too conservative from the 1960s onwards by the BBC who were, at that time, in a position to take the lead in moulding [sic] not so much listening tastes as listening habits."²³ Cooke preferred to write more accessible works that would attract a wide public even if that concept was not the most popular at the time.

Contrapuntal writing is one of the key features of Cooke's music. Canons and fugue-like passages are frequently seen and heard in his pieces, one of the techniques he learned from Hindemith. Hindemith had his students work on two-part writing, adding in the other parts once

²¹ Wetherell, 25.

²² Arnell, 19.

²³ Wetherell, 8.

they had succeeded at two voices. This training led to the cleanness of line that is one of the main characteristics of Cooke's music.²⁴

Cooke's harmonic progressions are overall conservative for the twentieth century; however he did use some more modern techniques. Hindemith believed the traditional tonal system was unavoidable because it was found in the harmonic series, and this belief carried on in Cooke's works.²⁵ However, Cooke also used chords built on fourths and wrote melodies that seemed to veer from the tonal center before making an unexpected turn back to the original tonal center, a concept he also learned from Hindemith.²⁶ Cooke often used perfect intervals in his melodies. These melodies are based on tonal centers but may mix the major and minor modes of that pitch center to create a more modern sound.²⁷ The feeling of tonality is always strong though, with the tonal center clearly established at the beginning and end of each section and movement.²⁸ In addition, Cooke's harmonies often seem to evolve by linear considerations, and his harmonic language often consists of perfect intervals, quartal structures and tertian sonorities.²⁹

Cooke's melodic lines often have a lyrical quality, and many contain sequences of diatonic and chromatic notes.³⁰ His sequences vary in the transposition level of the melodic idea, sometimes moving up or down by step, and sometimes moving by larger intervals such as a sixth. Clarity of texture and line and the composition of rhythmically independent parts are features of Cooke's music.³¹ These transparent textures allow the melodic lines to be clearly audible. Cooke preferred polyphonic textures in his compositions, with an emphasis on fugues,

²⁴ Routh, 83.

²⁵ Wetherell, 19.

²⁶ Wetherell, 43.

²⁷ Gaulke, 204.

²⁸ Gaulke, 208.

²⁹ Gaulke, 204.

³⁰ Clapham, 253.

³¹ Wetherell, 19.

canons, and other imitative passages. He used conventional rhythms and meters and sometimes included augmentation and diminution.³²

In Cooke's works, tonality and form are closely related. Cooke related the two by using tonality to show larger formal sections. Cooke clearly defined cadences to delineate phrases, melodies and sections. He also used overlapping and elided cadences occasionally to create continuity within sections as well as between sections.³³ Cooke's works often have a contrasting middle section, especially in his slow movements. He also often used traditional forms, and he used tonality to reinforce these thematic forms.³⁴ His variety of thematic characters within each movement helps to show the structure of more complex movements.³⁵

Works for Oboe

Arnold Cooke wrote ten solo or chamber works for oboe. The first, *Passacaglia, Scherzo, and Finale* is for an octet of four woodwinds and four strings and was written in 1931. Cooke's *Oboe Quartet* was composed in 1948 for Léon Goossens³⁶ and the Carter String Trio. During 1953 and 1954, Cooke composed his first solo work for oboe, his *Concerto for Oboe and String Orchestra*, also written for Léon Goossens. In 1954, Cooke composed his *Sinfonietta for Chamber Orchestra*, for flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, trumpet, horn and strings. Cooke's first of two oboe sonatas was composed in 1957, also for Léon Goossens. In 1961, Cooke composed his *Wind Quintet*, and in 1962, his second oboe sonata, written for Evelyn Rothwell and Valda Aveling. Cooke composed his *Divertimento* for flute, oboe, violin, cello and piano in 1974, and in 1979 to 1980 he composed *The Seamew for Voice and Chamber Ensemble*. The final chamber

³² Gaulke, 217.

³³ Gaulke, 209.

³⁴ Wheeler, 29.

³⁵ Wetherell, 43.

³⁶ Léon Goossens was the leading English oboist during the early and mid 1900s.

piece for oboe is the *Trio for Oboe, Clarinet and Bassoon* from 1984.³⁷ These pieces span over fifty years and, although they have some similarities, can also show how Cooke's style progressed over his years of compositional output.

Sonata for Oboe and Piano (1957)

Cooke's *Sonata for Oboe and Piano*, written in 1957, is the first of two sonatas he composed for the oboe. In this sonata, Cooke maintained the use of traditional forms, including rondo and ternary forms; however, he also used more contemporary formal ideas, such as forgoing the use of sonata form for the first movement of his sonata. Cooke did not hide his use of forms and even titled the third movement of this sonata "Rondo," which follows a traditional rondo form. One author discussing Cooke's works wrote, "He has always intended that his musical ideas should be easily and readily accessible, whether to the listener or to the performer."³⁸

Cooke's first oboe sonata can be used as a model for analysis of these traditional forms for students as well as professional performers. His use of memorable melodic ideas helps punctuate his use of various forms, such as a refrain in his rondo or his repetition of melodic ideas in a ternary form. These melodies are easily recognized and therefore bring out the structure of the form to the performer and listener.

Although Cooke titled this work *Sonata*, the first movement is not in the traditional sonata form. Sonata form was the principal form used in the Classical period and has been used frequently in works since then. The traditional form is often a three-part form, consisting of an exposition, development and recapitulation. Many twentieth century composers modified this

³⁷ Alan Poulton, *A Dictionary-Catalog of Modern British Composers*, (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2000), 521-542.

³⁸ Routh, 82.

form somewhat, changing standard tonal relationships between sections of the form. However, Cooke abandoned this traditional form altogether and instead chose to use a binary form in which a short coda ends the movement, containing a small selection of both the A and B sections.

CHAPTER 2

FORM AND TONALITY IN MOVEMENT 1 OF ARNOLD COOKE'S

SONATA FOR OBOE AND PIANO (1957)

The overall form of the first movement of Cooke's first *Sonata for Oboe and Piano* is ABA¹B¹ with each of the recurring sections significantly shortened. In addition, the B section can be further divided into the subsections aba¹, with the middle section comprised of a melodic idea from the original A section. However, the return of the melodic idea from the A section is varied enough in both tempo and in length that the B section is still analyzed and heard as one unit. This opening melodic idea and its transformation in the B section can be seen in Examples 3a and 3b.

The A section of the piece begins with a slow and rhythmically varied melodic line for the oboist. The tonality is centered on G, with the minor and major modes alternating. The piano part is accompanimental at the beginning, providing this alternating harmonic idea, illustrated in Example 1.

Example 1: Measure 1 from Movement 1

Piano

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The dotted and syncopated oboe melody, over this shifting modal pattern in the piano part, moves through various tonal centers before ending on the pitch of G. This follows one of the characteristics of Cooke's music in which he will begin and end a melody in a central key or sonority to reinforce the tonality or tonal center of the section. In measure 10, the opening oboe melodic line is stated in the piano part; however the melody is written at the interval of a fourth above the oboe melody and is now ornamented. In measures 13 through 15, Cooke composed a dotted rhythm melody in imitation but at different pitch levels, the minor sixth, between the two voices one beat apart. The oboist begins the melody on beat two of measure 13 on an A, and the pianist begins the melody on beat 3 of the same measure on a C-sharp, a minor sixth below the A. The beginning of this melody is shown in Example 2.

Example 2: Measures 13-15 from Movement 1

The musical score for measures 13-15 of Movement 1 from Oboe Sonata No. 1 by Arnold Cooke. The score is written for Oboe and Piano. The Oboe part is in the treble clef, and the Piano part is in the grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The Oboe melody consists of dotted rhythms, starting on A in measure 13. The Piano part features an imitated dotted rhythm melody, starting on C-sharp in measure 13, which is a minor sixth below the Oboe's starting pitch. The Piano part includes a trill (tr) and a sixteenth note (6) in measure 13. The score is marked with a '6' in the piano part, indicating a sixteenth note.

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This section ends with a short cadenza for the oboist. The A section, consisting of twenty measures, introduces a melodic idea that returns during the B section of the movement and also returns in the third movement, at the very end of the entire sonata. With this reoccurring and varied melodic idea, Cooke creates unity in the first movement and similarly throughout the entire sonata. To illustrate this aspect of the form of the movement and of the piece, see Examples 3a-c. Example 3a is the first statement of the melodic idea.

Example 3a: Measures 2-3 from Movement 1

The image shows a musical score for two instruments: Oboe and Piano. The Oboe part is written on a single staff in treble clef, 4/4 time. It starts with a whole rest in measure 2, followed by a melodic line in measure 3 that includes a triplet of eighth notes. The Piano part is written on two staves (treble and bass clefs) in 4/4 time. It features a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes in measure 2 and a triplet of eighth notes in measure 3. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or F minor).

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The next statement of the thematic material, shown in Example 3b, is at a higher pitch level and is also in cut time instead of common time. The accompaniment has become more active as Cooke used triplets instead of eighth notes in the piano part. However, Cooke maintained the same melodic line, although transposed, and also continued to incorporate chromatic harmonies.

Example 3b: Measures 81-84 from Movement 1

The musical score for Example 3b consists of two staves: Oboe and Piano. The Oboe staff is in treble clef with a 2/2 time signature. It begins with a whole note G4, followed by a half note A4, and then a triplet of eighth notes (B4, C5, D5) in the second measure. The Piano part is in grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with a 2/2 time signature. The right hand plays a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, with triplets of eighth notes in the first, second, and fourth measures. The left hand plays sustained chords, with a triplet of eighth notes in the first measure.

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In the final statement of this melody, as shown in Example 3c, Cooke again used a triplet sounding rhythm in the accompaniment, but the melody has returned to the opening pitch level. This statement of the theme is also varied because it is in triple meter as opposed to duple meter as in the previous two statements.

Example 3c: Measures 215-216 from Movement 3

The musical score for Example 3c consists of two staves: Oboe and Piano. The Oboe staff is in treble clef with a 12/8 time signature. It begins with a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, and then a triplet of eighth notes (B4, C5, D5) in the second measure. The Piano part is in grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with a 12/8 time signature. The right hand plays a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, with a triplet of eighth notes in the first measure. The left hand plays sustained chords, with a triplet of eighth notes in the first measure.

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Although Cooke used this melodic idea several times throughout the movement and the composition, his unique use of varied meters and tempos creates a more contemporary sound in contrast to the traditional form used in the first movement. The thematic idea does not return as an exact replication of the statement, a requirement of traditional rondo form, allowing this movement to be viewed instead as a binary form.

The second section of the first movement, the B section, begins at measure 21 and consists of a contrasting staccato melody in cut time. The section opens firmly in G major, but that tonal certainty only lasts for one measure before Cooke blurred the tonality. This section is considerably longer than the first section but is not seen as a development section as in a traditional sonata form because an entirely new melodic idea is introduced. This section consists of a sequential motive of eighth notes followed by a longer note value. Cooke again used imitation between the oboe and piano parts as the pianist echoes the theme from the oboe part in measures 29 through 31. For this imitation, Cooke did not maintain a constant level of transposition between the two parts as in some of his earlier examples of imitation. The melodic idea is echoed, but the pitch level difference between the oboe and piano parts varies.

In measure 37, Cooke composed a more lyrical melody in the piano part with the imitation occurring five bars later at a higher pitch in the oboe part. In this section of the piece, the tonality is not as clear as in the opening, and Cooke uses sequential ideas and chromaticism to achieve this effect. At measure 70, the staccato melody heard at the beginning of the B section returns, shown in Example 4.

Example 4: Measures 70-73 from movement 1

The image shows a musical score for Oboe and Piano, measures 70-73. The Oboe part is in the upper staff, and the Piano part is in the lower staff. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/2. The Oboe part features a melodic line with a rising fourth interval (B to E) in the first measure, followed by a descending line. The Piano part features a bass line with a descending third interval (B to G) in the first measure, followed by a rising fourth interval (G to C) in the second measure, and finally a descending line. The piano part also features a treble clef melody that rises by fourths (B to E to A) in the first two measures.

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This example shows Cooke's use of the interval of the fourth as well as his use of imitation that is also found earlier in the piece. Besides his use of fourths in the motive in the bass clef of the piano part, the treble clef melody is rising by fourths as well, from B in the first measure of this example to E and then A in the second measure, and finally to D in the third measure. Also, in the bass clef of the piano part, Cooke used a sequential idea, moving the pitches down a third, while maintaining the treble clef motive at the same pitch level.

As mentioned above, a fragment of the A section occurs in the middle of the B section at measure 81, slowing the tempo slightly and changing the style from light to more linear and connected. See Example 3b above. Once again in this section, Cooke mixed major and minor modes of a central tone. This interruption of the staccato melodic idea is short-lived, with the lightness of the section returning a few bars later.

Following the B section is a Coda that contains two short segments: one from the A section and one from the B section. The return of the A section is an exact replication of the first three measures of the oboe melodic line from the beginning of the sonata. The harmony has

changed in the piano part, but the return of the opening melodic material is clearly discernible. The movement ends with an eight measure return of the B section, finishing at a tempo of *Allegro vivace*. As is characteristic of Cooke's works, the movement ends on a G major chord, thus beginning and ending the movement in a clearly defined tonality.

Cooke's clearly delineated form does not create a disjointed movement, however. Cooke's use of melodic and harmonic ideas builds each section into the next to create a piece that, although sectional, sounds unified. He achieved this as well through repetition of melodic ideas, harmonic unity, imitation and sequential passages. Cooke blurred the tonality often during the first movement of this piece through his use of chromaticism, diatonic and chromatic sequences and mode shifts. Although the tonality is not clear during most of the movement, Cooke maintained G as a central tone, beginning and ending the movement with no uncertainty as to the tonality.

CHAPTER 3

FORM AND TONALITY IN MOVEMENT 2 OF ARNOLD COOKE'S

SONATA FOR OBOE AND PIANO (1957)

The second movement of Cooke's sonata is in a simple ternary form, ABA¹. As in the first movement, the opening tonality is clearly defined. This movement begins in the tonal center of C, a diversion from the traditional tonality chosen for the second movement of a sonata. Traditionally this movement would be in the dominant key of the opening tonality of the first movement; however, Cooke chose the subdominant key, another closely related key. In addition, he once again mixed the major and minor modes as he did in the first movement of the sonata, alternating between C major and C minor.

The movement opens with a lyrical oboe melody over changing harmonies in the piano part, illustrated in Example 5.

Example 5: Measures 1-4 from Movement 2

The image shows a musical score for the first four measures of the second movement of Arnold Cooke's Oboe Sonata No. 1. The score is written for Oboe and Piano. The Oboe part is in the treble clef, and the Piano part is in the bass clef. The time signature is 3/4. The Oboe melody is a lyrical line with a slur over the first four measures. The Piano accompaniment consists of chords and single notes in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The key signature is C major, and the mode is major.

Oboe Sonata No. 1 by Arnold Cooke
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The piano part opens with a C major chord, but in the oboe melody, the tonality shifts immediately to C minor as the oboist plays an E-flat on beat three of the first measure.

Throughout the opening of the movement, Cooke did not use traditional cadences, often using elided cadences to move from one phrase to the next. He mixed the major and minor mode, often alternating between the two from one chord to the next. Following this opening melody, Cooke composed an imitative passage beginning at measure 16. The piano part begins a melody that is imitated an octave higher in the oboe part three measures later. In measure 20, Cooke used quartal harmonies as rolled chords in the piano part. This harmonic use of fourths continues for several measures as the harmonies at this point are less definitive as in other sections of this movement, shown in Example 6.

Example 6: Measures 20-23 from Movement 2

The image shows a musical score for Oboe and Piano, measures 20-23. The Oboe part is in the upper staff, and the Piano part is in the lower staff. The Piano part features quartal harmonies (chords of fourths) in the bass clef. The Oboe part is in the upper staff, and the Piano part is in the lower staff. The Piano part features quartal harmonies (chords of fourths) in the bass clef.

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This use of perfect intervals carries over to the melodic line as well. In measures 32 to 37, shown in Example 7, the melody often has skips of a perfect fourth both leaping up and down, the

Example 8: Measures 70-73 from Movement 2

The image shows a musical score for Oboe and Piano, measures 70-73. The Oboe part is in the upper staff, and the Piano part is in the lower staff. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The Oboe part features a melodic line with a long slur over measures 70-73, consisting of quarter and eighth notes with various accidentals. The Piano part consists of a rhythmic accompaniment with eighth and sixteenth notes, also featuring a long slur over the same measures. The piano accompaniment includes some chords with accidentals, such as a B-flat major chord in measure 73.

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In this movement, Cooke used chromatic harmonies and sequences to move from one measure to the next, obscuring the overall tonality. However, as in the first movement, he left no doubt as to the final tonality of the movement, ending on a C major chord. Therefore, the entire movement is seen and heard as centered around C, although he mixed C minor and C major throughout.

Cooke also used many chromatic pitches as well as the interval of the fourth found in the quartal harmonies to bring a modern sound to the movement.

CHAPTER 4

FORM AND TONALITY IN MOVEMENT 3: RONDO OF ARNOLD COOKE'S

SONATA FOR OBOE AND PIANO (1957)

The third movement of Cooke's *Sonata for Oboe and Piano* is in rondo form as the title of the movement suggests. A rondo is a musical form in which the main theme alternates with one or more contrasting themes. The overall form of this movement is ABACABA. The opening tonality of this movement is G as is the first movement of the sonata. The opening piano chords do not distinguish the mode as they sound an open fifth. Cooke's use of the fifth can be seen as an inversion from his use of the interval of the fourth melodically as well as in quartal harmonies in the previous movement. When the oboe part enters in the third movement, the overall modality is established as G minor because the melody contains the minor third, a B-flat, as shown in Example 9.

Example 9: Measures 1-6 from Movement 3

The musical score is presented in two systems. The first system contains measures 1 through 3. The Oboe part (top staff) begins with a quarter rest, followed by eighth notes G4, A4, and B4, then a quarter note C5, and continues with a series of eighth and quarter notes. The Piano accompaniment (bottom staves) features a consistent eighth-note pattern in both the right and left hands, with chords that change every two measures. The second system contains measures 4 through 6. Measure 4 is marked with a '4' above the staff. The Oboe part has a long melodic line spanning measures 4 and 5, ending with a quarter note in measure 6. The Piano accompaniment continues its eighth-note pattern, with some chordal changes.

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After stating the opening theme, Cooke included short fragments from this theme as a transition into the B section.

The B section consists of an insistent melodic motive that involves repeated notes and an uneven rhythm. The insistence can be heard through the repeated rhythmic pattern as well as the repeated notes as seen in Example 10.

Example 10: Oboe part from Measures 33-37 from Movement 3



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This melody continues to rise in pitch, culminating at the pitch of E in measure 42. Starting at measure 33, the harmonic motion of the B section wanders between various keys. The main theme of the A section returns at measure 64, again centered on G. This A section differs from the initial A section in that it is shortened, and the piano part takes over the melodic line in the middle of the section instead of the oboist having the entire melodic line.

The C section, beginning at measure 82, is in a slightly quicker tempo and in a different meter. Instead of being in triple meter as the previous sections, this section is in duple meter. However, the melodic line incorporates a triplet rhythm, contrasting the duple meter against the triplet rhythm. This contrast can be seen in Example 11.

Example 11: Measures 83-86 from Movement 3

The image shows a musical score for Oboe and Piano. The Oboe part is in the upper staff, and the Piano part is in the lower staff. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The Oboe part features a melodic line with triplets and a long note. The Piano part features a rhythmic accompaniment with triplets and a long note.

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The C section combines both legato and staccato passages throughout, occasionally with one part legato and one part staccato to create a variety of styles. As in the B section, the tonality is not definitive, and this section contains sequences as well as imitation. In the imitative passages, Cooke varied the level of transposition between the parts, ranging from the interval of a step to a fourth.

The return of the A section at measure 130 is different from the previous two statements because the pianist starts the melodic motive instead of the oboist. In addition, the melody is ornamented and more rhythmically complex than the earlier A sections, although still maintaining the tonal center of G. The B section returns at measure 162 with the insistent rhythmic pattern returning at a higher pitch level than in the original B section, this time ascending to an F at the peak of the phrase. At measure 197, the A section returns for the final time with a continuous triplet accompaniment in the piano part, and the tonal center returns to G. A short coda begins at measure 215 to end the movement, with a return of the opening melody

from the first movement as illustrated in Example 3c. This return of the opening melody unifies the entire sonata. Instead of writing the cadenza for the oboist at this occurrence, Cooke wrote the cadenza for the pianist. Cooke leaves the final tonality of the entire piece vague by ending with open fifths as the movement began, not including the third to distinguish between the major or minor mode.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

Arnold Cooke composed many works using oboe as either a solo instrument or as part of a chamber ensemble, but as Eric Wetherell has written, “The name of Arnold Cooke has never been widely known in spite of commissions from organisations [sic] as prestigious as the Royal Ballet, the Royal Philharmonic Society and the Bach Festival.”³⁹ This paper explores Cooke’s unique musical style as it is related to tonality and form, his compositional influences, and will encourage other oboists to consider performing and studying these accessible works. This paper demonstrates how Cooke’s writing, while modern in sound, maintains an accessible quality through his use of traditional forms and tonalities, a quality which is in contrast to many compositions from this time period. Oboists often turn to the same body of literature for performances, with Cooke’s works rarely included. In addition, few recordings exist of Cooke’s music for oboe, and this paper will bring his works into a more prominent place in the oboe literature.

Although Cooke had a long career as a composer and as a composition teacher, relatively little has been written about this prolific composer. Two dissertations on Cooke’s music have been written, one by John Wheeler and one by Stanley Gaulke, and both discuss clarinet works by Cooke. Wheeler’s dissertation compares Cooke’s clarinet compositions with compositions by Paul Hindemith, who was one of Cooke’s composition teachers. Gaulke’s dissertation includes information on the published solo and chamber clarinet works by Cooke. In addition to these two dissertations, a short book written by Eric Wetherell contains information on Cooke’s life and his contributions to music literature. Articles have been written that review some of his

³⁹ Wetherell, 7.

compositions, and Cooke has written some articles about his own music including an interview with Michael Dawney in the periodical *Composer*. However, Cooke's oboe music has received little attention except for several short reviews in periodicals. The only readily available recording of Cooke's solo or chamber music involving oboe is a recording of his chamber work "The Seamew."

One of the reasons that Cooke's music is not as well known is that he did not seek the limelight or promote his own performances.⁴⁰ In addition, his works were viewed as too traditional during a time when more experimental trends were being explored in music composition. However, Cooke was able to write pieces that suited the performances and that are both emotional and also humorous at times. Cooke's works convey a modern sound through his use of contemporary techniques, but he never turned completely from tonality and conservative writing. His pieces, including his first oboe sonata, are accessible and enjoyable for both the performer as well as the listener.

Due to the amount of literature for oboe by Cooke, this paper was limited to his first oboe sonata. Further research into Cooke's second oboe sonata or his oboe concerto, as well his chamber works, will further reveal his use of traditional and contemporary techniques of composition. Also, the other guidelines that LaRue mentioned in analyzing a piece, particularly melody and rhythm, can be used to understand more details about Cooke's music and his compositional influences. Although limited in its discussion to Cooke's use of form and tonality in his first oboe sonata, this paper provides a detailed analysis into his style of composition and includes many examples of how Cooke was able to blend both traditional methods of composition with more modern concepts of composing.

⁴⁰ Wetherell, 7.

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