

## Stylistic and Performance Musical Aspects in “Sonatina for the left-hand op. 10” for piano by Dinu Lipatti

Andreea BRATU<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** *Dinu Lipatti, one of the greatest Romanian pianists of the 20th century, is highlighted in this study as the composer of a Chamber Music piano piece for his left hand alone, composed in 1941. Starting from a historical investigation of the context in which this type of repertoire developed in the piano instrumental practice, we arrive to analyse, from a musical and stylistically point of view Lipatti’s musical score, and to investigate to what extent, this Sonatina, singular in his compositional catalogue, but also in the interwar Romanian chamber music creation, is integrating in the Stylistic Currents of the Era. The emphases will also switch to delimit elements, which derived from a specific left hand piano writing, referring to specific performing skill. Not least the innovations brought by Dinu Lipatti to a specific texture which can apply efficiently to the piano performance rendition with a left hand.*

**Keywords:** *left-handed piano music repertoire; Neoclassical Romanian style; Dinu Lipatti; inter-war piano performance; specific performing skill; musical analysis;*

### 1. Introduction

In the international scholar community, to start an investigation on a Romanian composer so little known as *Dinu Lipatti* (1917-1950) -even if we are talking about a Piano *icon* of the first half of the last century, (the Twentieth Century) - it is still a pioneer activity. To focus the actual investigation on a *piano piece written for the left hand only*, especially related to this particular high level performer and Neoclassical Romanian composer, is even a more provocative endeavour. Contrary to all expectations, the piano literature dedicated to the left hand exclusively, has a history that begins with the first stages / periods of the Fortepiano instruments and the use of the *sostenuto* (Forte) pedal use in artistic practice<sup>2</sup>, and has gathered enough pieces today to be made a catalog, accesible even online, of about 800 works systematized by the Danish professor Hans Brofeldt.

Leaving aside the situation in which accidents occuring the right hand (neuro-muscular, temporal injuries<sup>3</sup>, even amputation of the right arm), the reasons to be approached such a repertoire, can be various. Sometimes, we can speak of a temporary stage of practice or

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<sup>1</sup> Faculty of Arts, Ovidius University of Constanta, andreea.bratu@365.univ-ovidius.ro

<sup>2</sup> “The history of piano music for the left hand alone really began with the invention of the modern piano in the 18th century. There are a few early works, which may as well be played with one hand on the organ or the harpsichord, but it was the invention of the *sostenuto* (or *forte*) pedal, that made the whole difference. With that it became possible to let one or more tones keep on sounding, after the keys had been released. And by striking other keys immediately after, you could make the illusion that you were actually playing in more places at the same time.” Brofeldt, Hans. Piano Music for the left hand alone (online database). Retrieved April 15, 2022, from <http://www.left-hand-brofeldt.dk/>.

<sup>3</sup> *Johannes Brahms* wrote a left-handed version of Bach's Chaconne and gave it to *Clara Schumann*, who was unable to play with her right hand for a while, due to an injury. Later, the pianist mentioned in a letter to Brahms that she really enjoyed working on this type of piece. Margaret Fingerhut.2005.Putting your Left to rights. Pianist Revue, Education. Retrieved April 15,2022, from [https://www.margaretfingerhut.co.uk/docs/articles/putting\\_your\\_left\\_to\\_rights.pdf](https://www.margaretfingerhut.co.uk/docs/articles/putting_your_left_to_rights.pdf).

*musical-intellectual gymnastics*<sup>4</sup>, in order to push the limits of the technical-instrumental development of the „accompagniamet” hand (left hand), generally considered less trained. Thus a pianist can experience new melodic elements and motoric skills, and of course, a certain improvement of the quality of the left hand sound production. Another extremely serious reason, genetically 10-12% of the global population is left-handed gifted, which is why, pianists with a dominant left hand will continue all their lives, a careful and dedicated instrumental development of their predominant hand, to balance their neuro-physical action system, while playing this complex keyboard instrument. From a functional point of view, the technical operating capacity of the instrument is quite a facilitated situation' for many left-handed, the sight-reading, in many cases, it is at a superior level developed, the way of thinking and acting it is, generally speaking, a particular experience one<sup>5</sup>. Both work situations, either of improvement or of the exploration of the genetic data, lead to the situation in which the performers develop *ambidextrous abilities*, objective fact that raise their technically and expressively-artistically assets.

The first piece for Fortepiano using the left solo hand we know about, was composed in 1812 by the Danish pianist and professor *Friedrich Kuhlau*, in fact a section (*Andante Sostenuto*), with the specification *Linke Hand Solo*, from a three parts Sonata.<sup>6</sup> One of the Ludwig van Beethoven's music close friends circle in Vienna, and *Franz Liszt's*, *Theodore Döhler's* and *Theodor Leschetizchy's* teacher, was the legendary professor and composer *Carl Czerny* (1791-1857), author of over 1000 musical works, mostly dedicated to Fortepiano development of performing skills, where we can easily find many examples of instrumental-technical training of the left hand, but in a standard handwriting (for two hands).<sup>7</sup> Starting with the second half of the 19th century, this didactic contribution stood as a foundation for the accelerated development of the repertoires in which the potential of the left hand is more and more exploited.

In this case, History is built on reference examples. Today, we record the chronicles and testimonies of their contemporaries, speaking of the left-handed gifted extraordinary Fortepiano performing skills as the Jewish pianist established in Paris, *Charles Valentin Alkan* (1813-1888) and later, the Polish pianist *Leopold Godowski* (1870-1938)<sup>8</sup>, both authors of several works (*Etüden*) that surpassed as difficulty, including the section dedicated to the left hand, the *Transcendental Etüden* of Franz Liszt; the unique example of the Czech pianist

<sup>4</sup> Brofeldt, Hans. *Piano Music for the left hand alone* (online database). Retrieved April 15, 2022, from <http://www.left-hand-brofeldt.dk/>.

<sup>5</sup> "Numerous left-handers have found a home at the piano keyboard, including some of the most famous talents of the 20th century — Vladimir Horowitz, Arthur Rubinstein and Glenn Gould — along with stars of today such as Daniel Barenboim and Hélène Grimaud, to name a few". Schroeder, Carl. 2020. *The Left Stuff: left-handedness in the Music World*. Retrieved April 16, 2022, from <https://www.minnesotaorchestra.org/stories/the-left-stuff-left-handedness-in-the-music-world/>.

I am myself a left-handed gifted concert pianist, with extensive experience of study and stage performance, and these opinions are supported also by my experience of over 35 years of exploring, understanding, overcoming my own challenges.

<sup>6</sup> *Friedrich Kuhlau* (1786-1832), a Danish pianist and composer during the late Classical and early Romantic periods, a great admirer of Ludwig van Beethoven's music, composed in 1812, *Sonata in D major no. 2*, in *Trois Grandes Sonates pour le Clavecin ou Piano Forte* (a work recently republished by the Friedrich Kuhlau Society in the *Kuhlau edition: Piano Sonatas I-IV*) Brofeldt, Hans. *Piano Music for the left hand alone* (online database). Retrieved April 15, 2022 <http://www.left-hand-brofeldt.dk/>.

<sup>7</sup> *Die Schule der linken Hand, Op.399; Etuden für die linke Hand op. 718; 2 Etudes op. 735*: and many others Petrucci Music Library: public domain music database. Retrieved April 15, 2022 from [https://imslp.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_works\\_by\\_Carl\\_Czerny](https://imslp.org/wiki/List_of_works_by_Carl_Czerny).

<sup>8</sup> Simply astonishing in terms of its technical requirements, *Leopold Godowsky's* reworking of Chopin's Studies op. 10 and op. 25 sees the pianist conquering the keyboard in a myriad of notes, grouped in very difficult passages. It is worth comparing with the original work which, interestingly, is half a tone lower. This is a set of fifty three arrangements made by him between 1894 and 1914, after the original Chopin's Studies. Twenty two of them are for the left hand alone. Fingerhut, Margaret. 2005. *Putting your Left to Rights*. The Pianist Review. Education. Retrieved April 17, 2022, from [https://www.margaretfingerhut.co.uk/docs/articles/putting\\_your\\_left\\_to\\_rights.pdf](https://www.margaretfingerhut.co.uk/docs/articles/putting_your_left_to_rights.pdf).

*Alexander Dreyschock (1818-1869)*, contemporary to the more well-known virtuoso pianist *Sigismund Thalberg*, who managed to play live in the original tempo, in many concerts, the demanding *Revolutionary Study* op. 10 no. 12 by *Frederic Chopin* with all passages dedicated to the left hand, doubled in octaves (!!); or the case of Liszt's friend and virtuoso student, the injured in childhood Hungarian count *Géza Zichy (1849-1924)*<sup>9</sup>, the first concert pianist in history, (also active in the competitive Golden Romantic Era of virtuosos), to make a brilliant career, using one hand only.<sup>10</sup>

But a major relaunch (in the first half of the Twentieth century) will be made by the Austrian- American pianist *Paul Wittgenstein (1887–1961)*<sup>11</sup> who, following a traumatic experience on the front lines of World War I, after losing his right arm, decides to continue his career by commissioning to acclaimed new composers such as *B. Britten*, *P. Hindemith*, *E. Korngold*, *M. Ravel*, *S. Prokofiev*, *Fr. Schmitt*, *S. Bortkiewicz* some left-hand alone orchestra concerts to play.

## 2. Issue & Objectives

*Dinu Lipatti (1917-1950)*, the legendary pianist of the XXth Century, as well a renowned inter-wars Neoclassical composer in Romania<sup>12</sup>, from a young age developed a high interpretive art, continuously perfecting his instrumental technical abilities, with much dedication and meticulousness.

Following the invitation of a famous French pianist and professor (*Alfred Cortot*), who noticed the young Dinu at *the International Piano Competition in Vienna, Austria* in 1933, the Romanian 17 years old pianist enrolled in the Paris Conservatory in September 1934 under the Maestro's and his assistance, (*Miss Yvonne Lefébure*) piano class. Here, he is regarded with admiration for his previous musical preparation, showing from the first musical meetings, a genuine talent doubled by the good work in understanding and rendering with artistic and technical abilities the musical text, proving a solid instrumental and musical foundation built at *the Bucharest Conservatory* in Romania, by his teachers, *Florica Musicescu* (for the piano class) and the composer *Mihail Jora*. From the very beginning, he enrolled in the composition classes of *Paul Dukas* and *Nadia Boulanger*, which encouraged him to analyse and to include in his interpretive repertoire, contemporary music. In the next four years, together with the established classical and romantic repertoire, he will approach the music of *Claude Debussy*, *Maurice Ravel* (*Alborada del Gracioso*, *La Vallée des cloches*, *Jeux d'eau*), piano pieces by *Al. Casella*, *Paul Hindemith*, excerpts from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Piano Suite and the First Piano Sonata by *George Enescu* and many other Romanian works by composers such as *Filip Lazăr*, *Marcel Mihalovici*, *Mihai Andricu*, a Piano

<sup>9</sup> An amazing transcript of the count Zichy for the left hand only is the *Franz Schubert's* lied *Die Erbkönig*, a traditional piece known to be terribly difficult for pianists who play with both hands, because of its repeated octaves.

<sup>10</sup> Cimirro, Artur. *The Life of Carl Tausig (1841-1871)*. MasterMusic Publications online. Retrieved April 16, 2022, from <https://mastermusicpublications.com/2018/12/discovering-the-left-hand-on-the-piano-cimirro/>.

<sup>11</sup> An older brother of the philosopher *Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951)*, he was borne into a family of wealthy Austrian industrialists, and through his later career as a left-handed only performer and his commissioned works, had a major contribution to the expansion of this specific repertoire. His classicist vision as a performer prevented him, to a large extent, from appreciating all the works dedicated to him (for example, the concerts written by *P. Hindemith* and *S. Prokofiev* he never wanted to perform). He promoted extensively (sometimes in a modified version), the *Concert in D major* written by *Maurice Ravel*, for example.

<sup>12</sup> As a proof of the recognition of his merits in the field of composition, we can mention the three successive prizes and distinctions obtained by D. Lipatti in *the "George Enescu" Composition Competition*, founded and financed by our great violinist and composer, in order to be raised a representative (Modern) Romanian generation of fine European composers. First Distinction for *the Sonata for piano solo* (1932), 2nd Prize for *the Sonata for Violin and Piano* (1933) and 1st Prize for *the Symphonic Suite Sătrarii* (1934).

Concerto with orchestra by *Jean Françaix* including the newest work for piano and the orchestra by the most appraised composer in Paris of those time, *Igor Stravinsky (Capriccio for piano and orch)*. In two letters (from March and April 1938)<sup>13</sup> addressed to his former composition Romanian professor Mihail Jora, is announcing that he was beginning to prepare for a stage performance, *the Left Hand Concerto in D major* (composed by Maurice Ravel in 1930)<sup>14</sup>, which he hoped to be able to play in the autumn of the same year at *the Bucharest Philharmonic* under the baton of its permanent conductor *George Georgescu*. The idea of approaching a newly concert of a contemporary composer, and especially in an original writing and very difficult to master (only for the left hand), is not such awkward choice. The young Romanian brilliant pianist, illustrious internationally unknown for his early years in Paris, was at a time when he was starting his engagement into the circuit of major European Orchestras and Philharmonics, facing fierce competition to the Golden Age high class concert-pianists, both from Europe (*Arthur Rubinstein, Edwin Fischer, Ignacy Paderewski, Rudolf Serkin, Alfred Cortot*) and the United States (*Vladimir Horowitz* and *Sergei Rachmaninov*, for example, came often to perform on the old continent). At his 21 years old, despite his unique talent and praised performing skills<sup>15</sup>, to establish a high rating between the piano stage celebrities of the moment, the exclusive touring of the romantic concerts from the standard repertoire, was not enough to draw the attention of the European impresarios and concerts organizers. Based on his experience with the Ravel Concerto, in 1941 he is enlarging his "unusual repertoire" composing and starting to play in concerts, his own work for the left hand, a Neoclassical chamber music piece in three parts, entitled *Sonatine pour piano, main gauche seule [Sonatina for the left hand alone] op. 10*, a piece that is still in the concert repertoire of our times interested pianists.

We are interested in our investigation:

- to what extent, this work, singular in his compositional catalogue, but also in the interwar Romanian chamber music creation, integrates in the Stylistic Neoclassical Current of the Era;
- to delimit elements, which derived from a specific left hand piano writing, referring to specific performing skill;
- innovations brought by Dinu Lipatti to a specific texture which can apply efficiently to the piano performance rendition with a left hand;
- modalities of exploring the piano registers, the sound palette, pedalling option and the placement of rhythmic-melodic formulas, which enhance in the composer's vision, the abilities to perform melody and accompaniment in one hand.

<sup>13</sup> Lipatti, Dinu. 2017. *Scrisori* (vol. I).București: Grafoart, pp. 99; 103.

<sup>14</sup> In the 1937-38 season of the Paris Philharmonic Orchestra under the botton of conductor *Charles Munch*, in March 1937 the *Concert for the left hand* by Maurice Ravel, is performed by pianist *Jacques Février*. Unlike Wittgenstein, Février is a very appreciated pianist by M. Ravel, the event becoming "the first French performance of the concerto". We know that D. Lipatti assiduously frequented the concerts of all important theaters, especially when contemporary music was presented, fact which certainly attracted his attention about this particular concerto for the left hand. No wonder he is willing to learn it, in order to include it in his repertoire. Kern Holoman, Dallas.2012.Charles Munch. London: Oxford University Press, p. 43.

<sup>15</sup>"Il joue comme Horowitz et il sera un des plus grands pianists de demain!" [He is playing the piano like Horowitz and he will be one of the greatest pianists of the near future" in my translation] are the words of the French concert pianist *Alfred Cortot*, when introduces the young Lipatti, 18y old, in 1935 (!), to his colleagues professors from the Paris Conservatory, on the occasion of his invitation to be part of the Jury at a *Diploma of Excellence* examination .Lipatti, Dinu.2017.Scrisori (vol. I). București: Grafoart, p. 159.

### 3. Material and Methods

At the end of the month of August 1941, from the estate of his parents in Romania (Fundăţeanca), Dinu Lipatti writes in a letter to his former teacher and piano mentor from Bucharest, *Florica Musicescu* about a new composition, named *Sonatine for the left hand*, a musical work in "three parts, which I wrote in two days, on the Romanian theme, quite brilliant"[...].<sup>16</sup> From the same letter we learn that it was scheduled to be presented to the public, for the October, 8th the same year, going to be dedicated to his first master in composition, *Mihail Jora*, and to be played by the author himself, amongst other pieces of various young colleagues composers, in a concert held by various musicians in Bucharest (in the Exhibition Hall of the *Orfeu* store), for the Maestro's 50th anniversary.<sup>17</sup> The score was officially published by Salabert in Paris, in 1953.

A neat, elegant musical signature in Neoclassical style, the work is articulated in three parts, following the characteristics of the musical form specified in the title. The small dimensions are dictated by the particularity of the writing, which presents to the pianist a high difficulty level text to solve, both in technical and musical challenges, raised by the execution requirements with one hand of the melodic discourse and the accompanying compartment. The first part, *Allegro* has 84 measures; D minor is the basic key but there are some sections when the 'polytonal approach' is present, that is why a certain swing by the third tone quality (minor/ major) or by the characteristic of the scale's construction (major scale with minor flattened sixth tone to minor scale with the flattened seventh), so present in the Eastern European Folk (Balkans music.). Ternary meter and 6/8 time signature, allow a versatile development of rhythmic values, both in groups of three eighth notes, and in groups of six sixteenth notes.

*The first theme* is a dynamic one, built on a rhythmic gear of sixteenths that unfolds a mobile perpetual energy, accumulating in like an avalanche. We are talking about a processing development of a bicellular motif, in different combinations (sequencing, reversals), with a first cellule formed by the second tetrachord of the D minor harmonic scale with a raised seventh scale degree, and followed by a second cellule, formed by third intervals in reversal, build on the harmonic version of the D major scale. The 'gypsy colour' of the augmented second in this context of the first cell, and the descent from the second cell into the third on a chromatic descending line, is built on the harmonic canvas of the major, and 'rolls' the motif, with an Urban Romanian folklore flavour, in a development, that leads to a full exploration of the low to the upper piano registers. It starts from A2 in the F key and reaches the medium-high register of the piano instrument, up to the E flat 5.

<sup>16</sup> Lipatti, Dinu. 2017. *Scrisori* (vol. I). Bucureşti: Grafoart, p. 205.

<sup>17</sup> Letter to Florica Musicescu, August 28, 1941 in Lipatti, Dinu. 2017. *Scrisori* (vol. I). Bucureşti: Grafoart, p. 207.

For the occasion, in the programme were scheduled recent Chamber Music works by disciples of the Maestro Jora, all young composers (*Ctin Silvestri, Paul Constantinescu, Ctin Bugeanu, Gheorghe Dumitrescu, Ion Dumitrescu and Dinu Lipatti*), and of course, the end of the event being reserved for some works of the celebrated Romanian musician and professor. 'A historical recital that took place on November 8, 1941, organized by the illustrious disciples of Jora, the future famous conductor and composer Constantin Silvestri and many other composers, at the "Jean Feder" Hall in Bucharest, for the 50th anniversary of their master' Radio Romania Cultural. Mihail Jora: Timpul care aporie. Retrieved April 20, 2022 <https://www.radioromaniacultural.ro/mihail-jora-timpul-care-aporie/>.



Fig. 1. *Allegro*, part I, first theme (bars 1-3)

Throughout this piano low register up to medium and upper register journey, the all display impresses by a lot of movement, full of verve, sustained by longer supporting sounds that create a two-voice writing.



Fig. 2. *Allegro*, part I, first theme (bars 16-21)

Dynamically, the section starts from a piano (p) nuance and through progressive crescendo and the rhythmicity of the pedal sounds; it goes up to mezzo forte (mf).

The second theme of the first part is constructed on the A tone as a Dorian mode with the fourth sharped (#4), present in the Romanian urban folklore use, of the late XIXth century.



Fig. 3. *Allegro*, part I, the second theme (bars 22-30)

The piano display in writing is an ingenious combination distributed to the left hand, in which the melodic line is subtly accompanied by short arpeggios. The punctuated rhythms bring the dancing characteristic of the traditional Romanian folk Song, alternating with the rhythms of the minor ionic type. The texture is clear, not loaded in the development section, the themes alternate, going through different harmonic modulations. In the first half, the appearance of

the themes is reversed (first the second theme, the same Dorian with the 4<sup>th</sup> raised degree, built this time on the sound of Re, of the ambivalent D minor / major, then the first theme).

The second part in B flat major *Andante espressivo*, in 42 bars is one of the most beautiful piano pages written by Dinu Lipatti. The chordal arpeggio alternates with the appearances of the meditative, serene theme, crossed by dramatic echoes in some places, display that goes through a series of harmonic modulations. To a comparative extent, is a subtle reminiscent of Bach's Chaconne's in violin type of writing texture (melodic line alternating with ample chords and accompaniment with plated chords) in a meditative, solemn character.

The harmonic plan leads the theme, successively and gradually, in the order of the descending fifths of the tonalities with flats, up to 5 fifths distance (if we take into account the short transitory towards F major), as follows: from B flat major by dominant as a pivot chord and through the use of deceptive cadences it reaches quietly the minor relative G minor harmonic, E flat major, then a chain of transitory modulation without a stable cadence in F major and continues to A flat major, D flat major, to return to the key of B flat major.

Fig. 4. *Andante espressivo*, part II, (bars 27-34)

The one-part form centred on a single theme brings through its simplicity and expressiveness retained an atmosphere of peace and reflection, a beautiful and calmed breath between the two dynamic parts that frame it.

The third part, *Allegro*, in D major, (164 bars), begins with a lively theme, that by its rhythmic formulas in the measure of two quarters, is mixing arpeggiated chords with plated chords, in vivid tempo.

Fig. 5. *Allegro*, part III, first theme (bars 1-12)

The structure is Sonata form with a limited development, and brings in the Exhibition the two themes, one after the other, using very short transition sections. The second theme, a melodic line accompanied by the constant march of eighths, is in C diesis minor, alternating the harmonic and melodic variants, in a playful but modern manner (through the 6th and 7th mobile degree of the scale, raised or flattened).

Fig. 6. *Allegro*, part III, second theme (bars 31-45)

The positions and the differences between the long notes and the accompaniment formulas are not quite comfortable for the left hand, the dynamic plan that obliges to differentiate not only the intensity, but also the sound texture (full sound for the melodic line and less outlined in harmonics for the given accompaniment), highlights the medium-high register of the instrument. It enters directly into the Development section, through a succession of modulatory sequences that put in dialogue, motifs from the first and second theme, passing alternately through the tonalities of F minor, E major / minor, and melodic and B flat melodic minor with a return to F melodic minor. The 'second beats' (seconds appoggiaturas), also found in Enescu's style, are completed with swings of mobile steps that make references to the Romanian folklore of the Old layer. As a second Development, we have a wide Cadence that takes place in an alert rhythm of equal duration (triplets), returning symmetrically to the ternary pulsation of the first part. The harmonic modulating panel is completed with melodic F minor, D flat major, and short cadences without clear consolidation of the tonal centre in E flat major, D minor, E flat major, and E flat major, the return of a thematic head from the second theme in A minor, then in D minor. The climax is marked by a dizzying climb on the highest registers of the piano in broken chords doubled at the sixth interval reaching as an extreme ambitus, in a very difficult position for the left hand, the G7diesis note (!)

The Recapitulation brings the first theme in the minor key, in the high piano register, in a mixt of strength and difficult positions for the left hand. The dialogue between the thematic entries continues through various presentations, in C major and A minor (material of the first theme).

Coda makes its way back to the lower registers, scrolling in revers the entire piano keyboard, from D7 to D1, in a glittering, virtuoso manner, in a rapid with risky jumps succession, chords based writing.

#### 4. Conclusions

As a musical creator, *to imagine a specific compositional texture, to place in advantage the use of the left hand on the keyboard*, especially in the most effective position for performing musically complex passages, involves lots of ingenuity and certainly, a keen observation in collecting a good level of experience from previous other composers's achievement. In the first part of the study we noticed the experience of learning and assimilation of some specific the left hand specific use, that Dinu Lipatti, was able to extract dealing in practice as a performer with *Concerto in D major by M. Ravel*. Analyzing the different parameters of Sonatina's writing, we are especially interested to observe the distribution of the melodic lines, as well as the distribution of some accompanying formulas / figurations, metrics, or rhythmic values, because some similarities can be found with other previous pieces from the representative history of the repertoire.

On the French circuit, an important work is the collection of "*Six studies for the left hand op. 135*" written by *Camille Saint-Saëns* in 1912, a composer who was also professor at the Parisian Conservatory of many pianist- pedagogues in vogue, while Lipatti was studying here.<sup>18</sup> Undoubtedly, at least as theoretical material, even at library consultation level, Saint-Saens's collection is rather a mini Suite, each piece/ study receiving an appropriate title, clearly referring to Dances of the Baroque Suite (in an early attempt of Neoclassical approach!), suggesting a correlated writing, adapted to the romantic aesthetic requirements of time's musical language. From this perspective, one can easily notice *certain similarities of writing* between Lipatti's Neoclassical Sonatina with the *Study op 135 no. 4 (Bourrée)*, regarding the arrangement of the accompaniment formula in groups of 4 equal eighths (theme 2 of part III of Sonatina), with the *Study op. 135 no. 6 (Gigue)*, in ternary rhythm that refers as the writing to the first theme from part 3 of the Sonatina, with *Study op 135 no. 3 (Moto Perpetuo)* for the first theme of the Sonatina's first part.

Another correlation, an accesible and possible source of inspiration for Lipatti, can be identified among the solutions found for the Second Part of the Sonatina, which borrows from Prelude's type of writing part of Alexander Scriabin's piece *Prelude and Nocturne for the left hand op. 9 (1894)* a specific ritmic and accompaniment formula pattern (where the melody is accompanied by simple chordal structures in equal values). Another characteristic borrowed from Lipatti in Scriabin's Nocturne writing is the idea of advancing with his left hand on the high and extreme - high registers of the piano, as he does, especially in the passages mentioned in this study, from the third part of the Sonatina. situation that creates additional difficulties for the positioning of the pianist, but brings gain in the flexibility of long-term movements of the left hand.

*The knowledge of some essential physiological data*, related to the capacity of a good use of this left arm, it is also very important. We realize or not at first glance, we must not forget that from a physiological point of view, we have arranged the palms with the unfolding of the fingers ... in reverse symmetry, or as the pianist A. Cimirro said, we have 'mirrored hands'.

The specific length of each finger and its placement in the palm, relative to palm's placement on the keyboard, differs depending on the hand we use. From this perspective, the thumb of

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<sup>18</sup> *Camille Saint- Saëns* (1835-1921) is at the Paris Conservatory professor and mentor of the pianist and professor *Isidore Phillip* (1863-1958), a close friend of *Claude Debussy* and an older colleague at the Piano department with the concert pianist *Alfred Cortot*, Dinu Lipatti's professor. I. Phillip arranged numerous pieces for the left hand alone and systematizes the experience and Saint-Saens's preoccupations for the development of the left hand repertoire, in a practical collection for training the left hand "*Exercices et Études Technique pour la Main gauche*" written in 1895, that circulated extensively among the Parisian pianists students of the inter-wars period, perhaps known by D. Lipatti, too. Isidore Phillip Archive at University of Louisville U.S. Retrieved April 20, 2022, from <https://library.louisville.edu/music/special-collections/philipp>.

the left hand has an extremely favorable position, being also a "strong" finger, capable of complex rotation and especially, a good pivot element for the whole arm in the mechanism of playing the piano.

Therefore, in the pieces dedicated to the left hand alone, the sounds that make up the melodic line are generally assigned to it. Its palm's arrangement is so good that it facilitates a differentiated approach in hitting the keys, so that the melodic contour can be clearly differentiated, both dynamically and colouristically (*touchée*, timbral effect). This aspect was also noticed by Dinu Lipatti, who allocates a lot of 'space of maneuver' for this finger, in outlining the melody, in all three parts of the Sonatina.

The ability to be flexible in movement is another characteristic of the left hand, also because this hand of "accompaniment" is long trained to perform chords in long distance jumps. Arpeggiato-type figurations are again an advantage, this hand in the standard two hands virtuosity passages is practicing mainly arpeggios and figurations built on complex structures derived from arpeggios.

In order to write a piece of music that is played with one hand and that retains the two hands characteristics as "auditory effect", it is necessary to possess, *a good knowledge of the possibilities of using the instrument: registers, sounds, timbre possibilities, special color and sound cohesion effects obtained by using the pedalboard.*

As innovations in compositional writing for the pieces dedicated to the left hand, we clearly notice Lipatti's *need to explore both coloristically and for energetic tension development's* (for development sections in the Sonata form, in preparation for the moment of climax in sound / or structural climax) the all registers piano use, not ignoring at all the keyboard extremes. We observe such situations, both in dynamic and energetic parts (first and 3rd parts of the Sonatina). In terms of sound diversity, the palette is extremely diverse. Even though the piece is in a symmetrical, clear, unmistakable, almost austere style of Neoclassicism, thought in a small shaped structure (Sonatina), *the sound texture* is fabulous. From the robust and dynamic writing in perpetual motto specific to pre-classical touches, to the texture with transparent iridescence of the secondary themes from the peripheral parts, we have a full palette of colors in vary and extremely innovative combinations by placing the writing at the registers's, border.

Pedal use indication contributes extensively in creating the two hands on the keyboard auditive illusion. Where it exists, because Lipatti, unlike his compatriot G. Enescu, leaves us more space for reflection and choice, on its combinatorial possibilities. Depending on the position of the left hand following the demanding texture of the piece, each pianist can use the sustain pedal in combination with sostenuto pedal or sourdine pedal, for subtle differences, required by the passages that in turn support, either the melody or the part of accompaniment. A beautiful and learning about example is the audio document-recording of the pianist Dinu Lipatti playing this piece<sup>19</sup>, where in addition, extra indications of pedaling "are heard" in a distinct and refined way.

Over eighty years after the appearance of this musical creation, pianists from all over the world continue to include in their repertoire this extraordinary, but difficult piano piece for the left hand, a masterpiece of the Romanian Neoclassical style.

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<sup>19</sup> Sonatina for the left hand op. 10 in Dinu Lipatti's performance, inestimable and historical audio document Lipatti, Dinu. Sonatine for the left hand op. 10. Audio recording in the Album "Enescu și Lipatti interpretează Enescu și Lipatti" (CD II) SC Brand Tube: Electrecord Retrieved April 20, 2022, from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pQvikDRjULk>.

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