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MUS 361 - Intellectual Standards Assignment: Research Paper

Although this assignment refers to the late eighteenth- and nineteenth century, it can be applied to other musical historical periods as well, such as how does the Renaissance constitutes a break or an inevitable consequence with the Medieval period, the Baroque with the Renaissance, the early twentieth-century with the late nineteenth century, the later twentieth century with the mid-twentieth century, the early twenty-first century with the late twentieth century. To be sure, the question should be modified accordingly when the criteria “break” and “inevitable consequence” do not reflect accurately the historical evidence. In my section of MUS 361, however, these criteria fit well. Other details about the paper regarding length, due date, bibliography and so on are subject to each teacher’s requirements and so are not stated here.

Paper assignment: To what extent did the Romantic period constitute a break with the past and to what extent was it an inevitable consequence?

In answering this question, you may find it easier to focus on specific pieces of music from the late eighteenth century and the early nineteenth century, comparing and contrasting them as you see fit. Your choice of the music will determine to a large extent what you have to say. Hence, choose your pieces carefully, and do some research to see which pieces interest you and will give you lots to talk about (it is always better to have more things to talk about than less). Feel free to run your pieces by me if you are not sure of their suitability. I will not choose your music for you, but I will guide to you make your own choices. Remember to illustrate your answer by reference to contemporary thought and manifestation of this thought in the art of music. Remember also to show specific musical examples.

As you work on this topic, you should pay careful attention to the following intellectual standards as a guide to writing a good paper:

- i) **Clarity** – Are the issues that you address from the pieces you have chosen clearly defined and articulated?
- ii) **Depth** – Have you examined in detail the pieces and texts selected for discussion?
- iii) **Precision** – Are your identifications of the musical parameters precise? Are the points that you make exactly right?
- iv) **Breadth** – Do the sources that you consult reflect the scope of the period? Does your discussion take into account the musical characteristics of the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century as a whole?
- v) **Relevance** – Do your arguments and facts speak to the issues that you are addressing?
- vi) **Logic** – Are the claims that you make logical in terms of cause and effect? Be careful that you don’t give in to generalized and fanciful notions of causation that are actually romantic formulations of clichés.