

How is Sweelinck's 'Pavana Lachrimae' typical of the Renaissance period? You should reference other composers/works in your answer.

'Pavana Lachrimae', a virtuoso work for harpsichord based on the popular John Dowland piece 'Flow my Teares', exhibits many of the trends composers were exposed to during the Late Renaissance/Early Baroque periods. Written within the 15th Century, around the time of the gradual introduction of solo keyboard works, Sweelinck pioneered this idea whilst basing it on one of the most popular pieces of secular vocal music. In this respect Sweelinck was very clever in his decisions as he introduces a new way and concept of writing, whilst basing it on something that the public could relate with. Through pioneering solo keyboard works and experimenting with different structures, such as fugues and tripartite structure, he laid the foundations on which one of the greatest Baroque composers would later build; J.S. Bach. It is said that Bach took inspiration from Sweelinck (amongst others) to create works such as 48 Preludes and Fugues.

'Pavana Lachrimae' was one of the many instrumental versions of 'Flow my Teares' although the only one written for solo harpsichord. The title, when translated, references the structure of the Dowland piece (written as a Pavane) and also the content of the original as Lachrimae translates to 'tears' which combines to make the 'dance of tears'. Conversely, it may also have referenced J. Dowland personally, as he was known to sign his name 'Jo. Dolandi de Lachrimae'. In a performance context, 'Pavana Lachrimae' was probably intended for small private performances, although there is some speculation as to whether Sweelinck wrote it as a study for his students. This would make logical sense, as it is very scalar and would have been a familiar melody to the majority of his students. A less technically challenging piece that seems to focus on a particular area of technique would indicate a study, however, it would also make sense that it was intended for small household performances as harpsichords were common instruments amongst bourgeois households. This reflects the intentions of the stimulus as 'Flow my Teares' was intended for private performances, such as pre/post dinner entertainment.

Akin to 'Flow my Teares', 'Pavana Lachrimae' emulates many of the features it exhibits whilst also displaying something inherently different. For example the *bell canto* melody line of 'Flow my Teares' is quite evident in the singing melody line of the right hand harpsichord part. Another striking similarity is the tonality of the two pieces. Both are in A minor and start with a descending sequence from A to E. Also when listening to the two, one can almost follow the melody of 'Flow my Teares' on the 'Pavana Lachrimae' score although there are an abundance of added passing notes and decorations. This is possibly to do with the mechanics of playing a harpsichord; as the strings were plucked, there was no way of sustaining notes, so passing notes were used to keep the melody lines flowing. This again is a stylistic feature of the period. Despite this, the melody is practically lifted from the vocal part of 'Flow my Teares' and written as the upper part in the right hand. The moods of the two pieces are also identical; the content of Flow my Tears is very dark and reflective and this emulated in 'Pavana Lachrimae' by the minor tonality and singing right hand melody lines. However the two pieces do differ in some ways. The predominant difference is contrasting structures: 'Flow my Teares' was written as a Pavane, the popular dance of the period, whereas 'Pavana Lachrimae' is in a tripartite structure (A, A₁, B, B₁, C, C₁ where every X₁ section is a variation on the preceding section). The second main difference would be the decorations (and variations) on the melody line of 'Flow my Teares'.

As previously mentioned, the piece 'Pavana Lachrimae' exhibits many of the features one would expect from a piece verging between the Late Renaissance and Early Baroque periods. Even when analysing the A section and its corresponding variation, decoration, dissonances and techniques typical of the period are abundant. Within the first ten bars we encounter passing notes (bar 1), lower auxiliary notes (bar 3) and a short 4-3 suspension which is prepared, sounded and resolved (onto an *échappe* note) which was the practice of the time. In terms of decoration, in bar 8 we have an obvious example of a trill and turn, although these are fully notated. Moving further through the section, we encounter references to the Aeolian mode. This distinguishes the piece as verging from Late Renaissance to Early Baroque opposed to a totally Baroque piece, as this was the time when modes (originating from plainchant) were being replaced with the more popular concept of tonal writing. The *musica ficta*, seen in bar 12, anchors the tonality and was frequently used around this period. The section then ends with a 4-3 suspension, a written out turn and trill on the tonic and then the same sequence but modified to pass from the tonic to trill on the dominant and then to end

back on the tonic. The last chord of the section is chord I, however this has been chromatically altered by raising the third a semitone to finish on the major version of chord I (Tierce de Picardie). This was again common of the Baroque period as seen in all of Bach's Chorales; every minor chorale ends with a Tierce de Picardie.

Both canonic and regular imitation are melodic devices which can be seen throughout the piece in all sections and variations, especially in the scalar runs. The beginning of section A₁ is a prime example of this: the scale starting in the right hand from E to A is then canonically imitated a bar later in the left hand, which is a feature common throughout the piece. This has the effect of creating 'horizontally' moving passages which was common of the Renaissance period. Composers often created different melody lines in different instruments or parts (polyphony) which created the harmony as a by-product of the counterpoint. However, showing a more Baroque approach to the harmony, Sweelinck often used more vertical harmonies by creating block chords and then positioning the melody line over the top. This is seen perfectly in the contrasts between A and A₁: A is written mainly with 'vertical' harmonies and the lifted vocal melody line from '*Flow my Teares*', creating a predominantly homophonic (chordal) texture, whilst the scales of the A₁ section create a more contrapuntal feeling, and the harmony seems to be a by-product of the weaving and merging contours. As stated previously, each of these sections, and indeed each of the following sections of the piece, all end with a cadence, which is a distinctly Baroque feature. When moving away from modality, composers sought to clarify their tonality to listeners, which they did by utilising primary chords and simple cadences (only perfect and imperfect are present in '*Pavana Lachrimae*'). The functional harmony of the Sweelinck emphasises the tonality of the work and the fact that each section concludes with a cadence strengthens this point. Sweelinck also stays very close to the original key when modulating, using only the relative major (C major) and the dominant major (E Major). This is again typical of the period; very few composers modulated outside of strictly related keys, and it was only with the late classical/early romantic periods that this began to change.

As was the practice of the time, the performance of '*Pavana Lachrimae*' is heavily decorated, although much is at the performer's discretion, so not notated. This is seen frequently in the performance from the 'New Anthology of Music' when comparing it to the written score. For example, the performer even goes as far as to add a suspension (bar 21). To me this makes musical sense as the dissonance is prepared, sounded (in the recording, not on the score) and then resolved downwards by step. However, due to the nature of performances at the time, which were free and not at all bounded by what was written on the score, we cannot be certain of what Sweelinck intended. As to performing what Sweelinck intended, in the case of an 'authoritative' performance, it is frequently mentioned that '*Flow my Teares*' was the piece most used as a stimulus for improvisation at the time, and therefore it is possible that so many variations existed on the melody that the piece Sweelinck composed and the piece the editor heard were totally different. Also, taking into account the possibility of the piece being written as a study, it is more than possible that students took the piece home and imprinted some form of their personalities onto it. Things such as suspensions could equally have been intended by Sweelinck or added as an extra flourish by an overzealous student. Slightly less obvious, but no less important are added mordents (upper and lower - bars 35, 44.), decorative runs (bar 60) and spread (arpeggiated) chords. As a result, it is virtually impossible to realise an 'authoritative' version.

In conclusion, Sweelinck's '*Pavana Lachrimae*' exhibits an abundance of Renaissance and Baroque traits. It successfully assimilates both periods into one piece, evenly representing them both, creating an imaginative and expressive work that is still remembered and analysed six centuries on.