

Stroheim's sinister Prussian—is playing the piece, and intercutting reveals that the soldier is actually polishing the floor, with his bare foot in some kind of brush contraption. The music provides a bizarre accompaniment to the lowly task, which the soldier is forced to perform in humiliating fashion. As the sequence continues, intercutting combines with the use of heavy and heavy-handed strings which fatten the piano score, increasing tension and suggesting a worm about to turn.

The intent of this curious montage is doubtless to associate the bourgeois militarist with the reactionary values of individualistic romanticism, as symbolized by Beethoven, and/or the kind of man who would be playing his music. What looks like cultured enjoyment is revealed to closer attention as exploitation, and culture being a poor consolation for the starving, the dance is suddenly not so enjoyable.

This view of classical music is enhanced when contrasted with another use in Cecil B. de Mille's *The Buccaneer* (1938). Soon after being introduced to the story's rough and attractive pirate/hero Jean Lafitte (Frederic March) we hear a lovely air played on a violin. "Beautiful," says our hero. "What is it?" "Handel's Largo," replies an anomalously musical pirate who stands alongside. The point of this rather protruding incident is to suggest, by classical music, that Lafitte is subject to improvement and culture. This incident occurs immediately before Lafitte catches some rogue mutineers and initiates said self-improvement. (Later, to reinforce the music's civilizing effects and how they are threatened by the brutes of the world, the violinist is killed and in a brief pointed shot some savage steps on his violin.) And what shape does it take? Patriotic pro-American action, of course. It is precisely this kind of connection that informs contradictory pictures like that of the Vasilievs.

De Mille's entertaining film is another entry in the group of movies where a rough-hewn character, an apparent cad, is really just an as yet unfinished heroic individualist, who needs only the influence of a good woman and the call of country to end his rakish adolescence and assume his proper nobility. For other examples, see for instance *The Sea Hawk* (1940), *The Black Swan* (1942)—and *Chapayev*. The actual effect of the latter's Beethoven sequence is not so straightforward as it might first sound or