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# "At first the attempt to remember, and then remembrance itself:" A Phenomenological Study of Alfred Schnittke's Piano Quartet

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I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Harry Lee Ward entitled "'At first the attempt to remember, and then remembrance itself:" A Phenomenological Study of Alfred Schnittke's Piano Quartet." I have examined the final electronic copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Music, with a major in Music.

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“At first the attempt to remember, and then remembrance itself.”

A Phenomenological Study of Alfred Schnittke’s Piano Quartet

A Thesis Presented for the

Master of Music

Degree

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Harry Lee Ward

August 2018

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## Abstract

Phenomenology, in its etymological sense, is the activity of giving an account of the way things appear. Thus, a phenomenology of time attempts to account for the way things appear to us as temporal or how we experience time. Alfred Schnittke's Piano Quartet lends itself well to phenomenological analysis due to the anachronistic placement of Gustav Mahler's unfinished, G-minor scherzo sketch into the subjective, intentional realm of time-consciousness. Schnittke's meticulous manipulation of Mahler's theme intentionally creates multi-dimensional objects in time and sound that suggest both small- and large-scale circular-patterns of memory, a musical epitaph for both Mahler and himself.

In order to identify intentionality in Schnittke's realization of Mahler's unfinished sketch, the Piano Quartet is explored through the philosophical lens of affect theory, defined as an impingement or extrusion of a momentary or sometimes more sustained state of relation.<sup>1</sup> Specifically, this thesis explores how Schnittke intentionally manipulates both time and space to create these momentary or sustained states of relation. I begin by providing a brief account of biographical information over Mahler's Piano Quartet (and sketch), the relationship between Schnittke and Mahler, and Schnittke's background. I then reviewing three texts that investigate Schnittke's Piano Quartet, and define and codify the analytical concepts utilized in this analysis. I provide an analysis of Schnittke's Piano Quartet utilizing modern analytical techniques that reveal the intentionality and central structure of experience, including Schenkerian and

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<sup>1</sup> Marie Thompson and Ian Biddle, *Sound, Music, Affect: Theorizing Sonic Experience* (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2013), 6.

Contour analysis. Finally, I summarize my findings by establishing a narrative for future endeavors in the melding of musical analysis and philosophy.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction and Historical Background

### Introduction

Many facets of interest in regards to music are defined temporally, from smaller temporal structures such as rhythm and meter to more advanced structures of temporal space such as musical form.

Music creates temporal form while unfolding in time. This qualifies music as an art of- and in time. Our experience of music is ambivalent: music is particular yet universal, transitory in experience yet lasting in reflection. Our experience of time is similarly ambivalent: time is always present within our everyday concern yet it withdraws from our direct attention. Time is experienced with intensity, yet it recedes ephemerally from our consciousness. We experience time through music and we equally lose track of time in music. Time and music seem equally strange to understand.<sup>2</sup>

Of all the measuring systems used to qualify experience, it is time that creates its own perceptual bias.<sup>3</sup> Time weaves in and out of the past, present, and future, creating an anticipated temporal event available for phenomenological analysis: an observable phenomenon that happens in the “now,” and directly affects future experience. It is by this definition that the measurable experience of time is most closely approximated through music, since music unfolds through time.

As we progress further into the 21<sup>st</sup>-century, music scholars continue to look back through musical time (history) in order to understand the current state of modern music. This cyclical study can also be found in the compositional technique called polystylism<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Goetz Richter, “Music, time and temporality,” *Thinking About Music*, The University of Sydney, August 18, 2009, [http://blogs.usyd.edu.au/thinkmusic/2009/08/music\\_time\\_and\\_temporality.html](http://blogs.usyd.edu.au/thinkmusic/2009/08/music_time_and_temporality.html)

<sup>3</sup> A Perceptual bias is a lens with which we filter experience through. For more information, see: <http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803100316441>

<sup>4</sup> Schnittke describes his music as polystylistic, an intentional melding of musical time and space that uses borrowed material and styles from previous time periods as source material.

and can be seen in the music of Alfred Schnittke (1934-1998). Music critic Alex Ross describes Schnittke's polystylism as the

. . . gathering up in a troubled stream of consciousness the detritus of a millennium of music: medieval chant, Renaissance mass, Baroque figuration, Classical sonata principle, Viennese waltz, Mahlerian orchestration, twelve-tone writing, aleatory chaos, and touches of modern pop."<sup>5</sup>

Schnittke's Symphony No. 1 (1974) "put polystylism into practice,"<sup>6</sup> juxtaposing jazz, hymns, and classical styles against serial, aleatoric, and strictly tonal techniques.

Identifying the polystylistic structures in Schnittke's music reveals much about his music and his compositional style. An analysis of his music must attempt to answer the following questions: Why did he use these specific borrowings? How are they used? Where are they placed? All of these questions can be answered in regards to time. In this thesis, I will attempt to answer these questions about his Piano Quartet, a piece Schnittke based on an unfinished second-movement Scherzo sketch written by Gustav Mahler in 1876. In this chapter I review Schnittke's background and interest in Mahler in an effort to expand upon Schnittke's manipulation of time.

### **"At first the attempt to remember, and then remembrance itself"<sup>7</sup>**

Mahler's Piano Quartet in A-minor is his only surviving chamber work (without voice). The Quartet, written in 1876 by a then sixteen-year-old Mahler while completing his first year of study at the Vienna Conservatory, contains a second-movement

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<sup>5</sup> Alex Ross, *The Rest is Noise* (New York: Picador, 2007), 576-577.

<sup>6</sup> Peter Schmelz, *Such Freedom, If Only Musical: Unofficial Soviet Music During the Thaw*, (Oxford University Press, 2009), 304.

<sup>7</sup> as quoted in: Gavin Thomas Dixon, *Polystylism as Dialogue: A Bakhtinian Interpretation of Schnittke's Symphonies 3, 4, and his Concerto Grosso No. 4/Symphony No. 5* (PhD diss., Goldsmiths College, 2007), 246-247.



unfinished scherzo sketch that lasts only twenty-four bars. The preserved autograph version of the piece was in the possession of Mahler's wife Alma, who kept it in a portfolio with other early works. Presently, it is found in the Pierpont Morgan Library, New York. A copy of the autograph G-minor sketch is provided in Appendix A.

From Mahler's sketch, Schnittke meticulously extracts details of pitch, rhythm, harmonic structure, and contour and places them vicariously into his own Piano Quartet to create a disparate sonic landscape that pays homage to one of his favorite composers, Mahler. Gavin Dixon quotes Schnittke's explanation of why and how he used this sketch in his own piece:

When asked about the genesis of his movement and how he came to use the Mahler fragment, Schnittke replied: 'Much contained therein was and remains a problem for me. I would not be able to find a single explanation, but rather two if I undertook a harmonic analysis – and it could be interpreted this way or that. I believe I have never found this ever – the lacking of finality. I remember that I thought for a long time how I could continue the composition of this work. I tried for years to find a continuation of these measures composed by Mahler. And then I imagined it not as a continuation but rather music that would approach Mahler's music – as a reminder that the end will come, and that was the solution. At first the attempt to remember and then remembrance itself.'<sup>8</sup>

The purpose of this thesis is to identify the intentionality in Schnittke's realization of Mahler's unfinished scherzo sketch by investigating the temporal structures in Schnittke's Piano Quartet. I will identify and explain Schnittke's meticulous placement and manipulation of the theme from Mahler's unfinished sketch – his "attempt to remember." To do this, I investigate the way Schnittke manipulates time, from rhythm and meter, to larger structures of temporal space and musical form, to create both small- and large-scale circular-patterns of memory and, as such, a musical epitaph for

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<sup>8</sup> Gavin Thomas Dixon, *Polystylism as Dialogue: A Bakhtinian Interpretation of Schnittke's Symphonies 3, 4, and his Concerto Grosso No. 4/Symphony No. 5* (PhD diss., Goldsmiths College, 2007), 246-247.

Mahler and himself. Memory plays an important role throughout the Piano Quartet.

Schnittke imagined that his Piano Quartet was “a reminder that the end will come, and that was the solution,”<sup>9</sup> insinuating that the *approach* to Mahler’s scherzo sketch (memory) is more important than the actual *result*.<sup>10</sup>

## Biographical Information

Alfred Schnittke was concealed from the world by Stalin’s Ministry of Art and overshadowed by the greatness of Shostakovich. Like his music, Schnittke’s background can be summarized by the idea of polystylism. Music critic Alex Ross describes Schnittke as

“ . . . a man of haunted, sallow visage, Russian-Jewish and Volga German in origin, was Shostakovich’s heir apparent. A master ironist, he developed a language that he called “polystylistics,” gathering up in a troubled stream of consciousness the detritus of a millennium of music: medieval chant, Renaissance mass, Baroque figuration, Classical sonata principle, Viennese waltz, Mahlerian orchestration, twelve-tone writing, aleatory chaos, and touches of modern pop.”<sup>11</sup>

Schnittke was born in 1934 in Engels, Russia. His father was Jewish and born in Germany, but moved to Russia. His mother was of German descent but was born in Russia. Schnittke began his music studies when the family moved from Russia to Vienna in 1946.

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<sup>9</sup> as quoted in: Gavin Thomas Dixon, *Polystylism as Dialogue: A Bakhtinian Interpretation of Schnittke’s Symphonies 3, 4, and his Concerto Grosso No. 4/Symphony No. 5* (PhD diss., Goldsmiths College, 2007), 246-247.

<sup>10</sup> Several comments found on YouTube videos of Schnittke’s Piano Quartet finds that the general knowledge of Schnittke, and his compositional technique, are severely lacking in popular culture. Schnittke’s music approaches compositional technique from a philosophical point of view, as well as a technical point of view; the two go hand-in-hand. Rather than use a compositional *system*, Schnittke’s music employs polystylism and the manipulation found therein. There is a reason for every note and mark found in a Schnittke score, making the *approach* to music more significant than the actual *result*.

<sup>11</sup> Alex Ross, *The Rest is Noise* (New York: Picador, 2007), 576-577.

It was in Vienna that [Schnittke] first encountered real music, and it was there that he fell in love with that kind of music which is part of life, part of history and culture, part of the past which is still alive. 'I felt every moment there,' wrote Alfred, 'to be a link of the historical chain: all was multidimensional; the past represented a world of ever-present ghosts, and I was not a barbarian without any connections, but the conscious bearer of my task in life.'<sup>12</sup>

Schnittke enrolled in the Moscow Conservatory in 1953. He completed his studies in composition in 1961 and taught composition, instrumentation, and polyphony and harmony there from 1961-1971.<sup>13</sup> Alfred Schnittke's music should have dominated this special epoch of Russian music culture. However, his music was concealed from the world by Stalin's Ministry of Art; Schnittke's compositions were not allowed to be performed in the Soviet Union for not conforming with the 'official' political plot of the Composers' Union.<sup>14</sup> Schnittke was also prohibited from leaving the country to attend premiers of his work elsewhere. Since the film industry was far less regulated than the "cultural art" scene, Schnittke decided to compose for film, completing over 70 film scores from 1962-1993.<sup>15</sup> His film music became the source material for which much of his concert music is drawn.

It was not until 1977, near the end of the Brezhnev Era (1964-1982), that Schnittke's music found the eager ears of Western countries.<sup>16</sup> It was then that Schnittke was finally allowed to leave the Soviet Union to attend premiers of his music and give lectures. This "freedom" to travel would be short-lived, however, for in 1985 Schnittke suffered his first stroke (of an eventual nine), limiting his ability to travel; these strokes would ultimately cause his death in 1998.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Ivashkin, *Alfred Schnittke*, 31.

<sup>13</sup> Ivashkin, *Schnittke Reader*, xx.

<sup>14</sup> Ivashkin, *Alfred Schnittke*, 75.

<sup>15</sup> *ibid*, 224-225.

<sup>16</sup> *ibid*, 126.

<sup>17</sup> Paraphrased from Ivashkin, "The Battle Against Illness, 1985-95" in *Alfred Schnittke*, 172-214.

As Schnittke's Piano Quartet is derived from Mahler's sketch, familiarization of the philosophical and compositional similarities invariant to both composers provides a common tone with which to modulate towards a clear setting of Schnittke's Piano Quartet.

### **Mahler and Schnittke**

Schnittke's music, which is full of allusion, often sonically emulates the communist cultural landscape in which he lived. Composers from this era, including Schnittke, wrote with

a specific 'tone,' a voice now impersonating the Evil Empire's interminable decadence. Anarchic and synthetic, nostalgic and visionary, cynical and serene, music in the Brezhnev era was an overflowing midnight harvest, a classic End-Zeit which might one day draw comparisons to Gustav Mahler's Vienna or to Berlin and Paris between the wars. The government that once made Shostakovich's life a living hell may have lost interest in the tendencies of its composers toward the end, but the composers did not lose interest in the tendencies of their society.<sup>18</sup>

Schnittke's music showed his interest in society through the use of many musical styles, or polystylism. Schnittke's infatuation with the all styles of music, both past and present, represents the circular nature inherent to music history. Ross states that Schnittke "derived his polystylistic method from Mahler, Ives, Berg and Shostakovich, all of whom stitched together a musical language from disparate sources."<sup>19</sup> Schnittke was particularly enamored with Mahler's music. As Ross says:

. . .As a devotee of Gustav Mahler. . .Schnittke has not sought to replicate that composer's luxurious immolation of Romanticism, but rather to expand upon his last-minute discovery (realized fully in the incomplete Symphony No. 10) that the conflict of dissonance and consonance is the forge of the most intense

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<sup>18</sup> Ross, "Connoisseur of Chaos" in *The Rest is Noise*, 1.

<sup>19</sup> Alex Ross, *Schnittke Interview*, 1994 The New York Times, (1994).

expression. An even more important legacy from Mahler is the recurrent juxtaposition of an elegiac tone and polystylistic satire—although that technique could have been derived as well from Mahler's non-identical twin, Erik Satie.<sup>20</sup>

British music writer Norman Lebrecht, in his book *Why Mahler?*, provides a substantial look into Mahler's life and his legacy and suggests why Schnittke found solace in Mahler:

Using his own life as a template for his music, Mahler exposed dark, private traumas to public gaze in a bid to analyze and alleviate human misery. His was not a simple or a nuclear persona. Calling himself “three time homeless,” [Mahler] claimed three identities: his Jewish roots, his German language, and his ineluctable sense of not belonging anywhere in the world. That alienation, so prevalent in a culturally diverse twenty-first century, gives a vital clue to Mahler's contemporary relevance. . . He never preaches or prescribes, neither gloats nor grumbles, but through a long life span he talks to us as a cognate, sensate, laughing, suffering fellow member of the human species, always trying to work out the meaning of it all.<sup>21</sup>

From this quote, it can be surmised that Both Mahler and Schnittke used music as a common language to convey their deepest, darkest feelings of themselves and the world. Both composers have both Jewish and German lineage. The meticulous manipulation of found sources, intricate counterpoint, and precise placement of every sound, note, and tone in both composers' music carries semantic weight.<sup>22</sup>

Maria Ciznic states that

Individuals who have suffered from chaotic situations and emotional passions long to experience in music. . . what the psychologist C.G. Jung called a “symbol of salvation.” The message of such a symbol is that at the root of existence there is order, reason, and perfect form – the actual tones do not matter; the only thing worth experiencing is the supreme relatedness of all there is.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Ross, *Connoisseur of Chaos*, 2.

<sup>21</sup> Norman Lebrecht, *Why Mahler?* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2010), ix-x.

<sup>22</sup> As Dane Rudhyar says: “Sound, note, and tone each have a specific meaning even though they may refer to the same auditory phenomenon; each represents a different response to a music event – a different way of feeling and thinking about what has been heard.” Dane Rudhyar, *The Magic of Tone and the Art of Music* (Boston: Shambhala, 1982), 18

<sup>23</sup> Maria Ciznic, *Performing Pain* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 98-99.

According to Jung, “the conscious mind can perceive and experience symbols. It can be said that symbols are in a way representations in the conscious mind of archetypes per se and that when an archetype manifests in real time, we speak of a symbol.”<sup>24</sup> In the case of Schnittke’s Piano Quartet, the archetype is Mahler’s phrygian theme.

Jung’s “symbol of salvation” reinforces this thesis’ attempt to identify intentionality in Schnittke’s realization of Mahler’s unfinished scherzo sketch. However, Jung also suggests that the actual tones of such a symbol do not matter; the only thing that does matter is the supreme relatedness of all there is.

By investigating the temporal structures in Schnittke’s Piano Quartet, Jung’s statement is both justified and nullified, because the large temporal structures found in Schnittke’s quartet are made up of smaller, individual tones and structures. How these small structures and tones constitute their larger systems is quintessential in understanding Schnittke’s intentionality. More importantly, and specific to Schnittke’s music, understanding these structures creates a foundation with which to further understand musical analysis through a philosophical lens; to show *what* these larger systems are, and *why* they are important. Chapter 2 of this thesis provides background literature on Schnittke’s Piano Quartet, as well as definitions and explanations of the techniques utilized in analysis. In Chapter 3, I provide an analysis of Schnittke’s Piano Quartet utilizing modern analytical techniques to reveal the intentionality and central structure of aural perception. In Chapter 4, I summarize my findings and establish a narrative for future endeavors in the melding of musical analysis and philosophy.

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<sup>24</sup> See: Anja van Kralingen, review of *COMPLEX, ARCHETYPE, SYMBOL in the Psychology of C.G. Jung*, by Jolande Jacobi (February 2017): <https://appliedjung.com/complex-archetype-symbol/>

## Chapter 2: Previous Scholarship and Analytical Techniques

### Previous Scholarship

Very little scholarship exists in regards to Schnittke's work. Alexander Ivashkin<sup>25</sup> has authored two books that explore Schnittke's life and oeuvre, though these texts contain very little theoretical analysis, especially towards the Piano Quartet. Three other texts investigate Schnittke's Piano Quartet. The most substantial essay, "Polystylism as Dialogue: Interpreting Schnittke through Bakhtin" authored by musicologist Dr. Gavin Dixon,<sup>26</sup> is part of a collection of essays from the book *Schnittke Studies*, also edited by Dixon.<sup>27</sup> Dixon defines polystylism as "stylistic plurality to confound stylistic assumptions through extreme heterogeneity and violent aesthetic juxtapositions."<sup>28</sup> Through the dialogic concepts of literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin<sup>29</sup>, Dixon asserts that polystylism is a concept of dialogue, with the multiplicity of linguistic styles within verbal discourse providing an illuminating model for more abstract interactions in a range of artistic contexts.<sup>30</sup> In the case of Schnittke's Piano Quartet, two voices stylistically interact: the voice of Mahler and the voice of Schnittke. Dixon gives an account of various examples from the Piano Quartet that illustrate these two voices (e.g., juxtaposed rhythmic meters) and their interactions. By melding Bakhtin's concept of dialogue with Schnittke's

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<sup>25</sup> See:

Alexander Ivashkin, *Alfred Schnittke* (London: Phaidon, 1996).

Alfred Schnittke, *A Schnittke Reader*, ed. Alexander Ivashkin (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2002).

<sup>26</sup> Dixon's essay is an excerpt from his 2007 dissertation of the same title:

Gavin Thomas Dixon, *Polystylism as Dialogue: A Bakhtinian Interpretation of Schnittke's Symphonies 3, 4, and his Concerto Grosso No. 4/Symphony No. 5* (PhD diss., Goldsmiths College, 2007).

<sup>27</sup> Gavin Dixon, *Schnittke Studies*, ed. Gavin Dixon (New York, NY: Routledge: 2017)

<sup>28</sup> *ibid*, 113.

<sup>29</sup> See Dixon, *Schnittke Studies*, 142 for works cited from Bakhtin.

<sup>30</sup> Dixon, *Schnittke Studies*, 114.

polystylism, Dixon explains many of the stylistic anomalies that pervade every crevasse of the Piano Quartet<sup>31</sup>.

Schnittke was forced to live a very secluded and controlled life due to the conditions under which he lived in 20th-century communist Russia. Dixon suggests that Schnittke asserts his own stylistic voice into his compositions to “allow him to be true to himself by acknowledging the intrinsically cultural nature of his artistic activity.”<sup>32</sup> While Dixon’s thesis is substantial, he performs very little theoretical analysis to support his claim. Theorist Edward Cone suggests that “In order to explain how a given musical event should be heard, one must show why it occurs: what preceding events have made it necessary or appropriate, towards what later events its function is to lead.”<sup>33</sup>

Musicologist Robert P. Morgan furthers Cone’s sentiment:

...if all the analyst is doing is reconstructing a compositional method, something that in all likelihood has already been done by the composer...where does this leave the analyst? The answer, I think, is that he must go further: he must examine the composer’s intentions in relation to their compositional realization, must discuss the implications of the compositional system in regard to the music it generates, consider how the resulting music relates to older music and to other present-day music, examine its perceptual properties and problems, etc. . . .<sup>34</sup>

Morgan’s thesis provides a solid framework with which to view Schnittke’s Piano Quartet through the lens of music theory. Potentially innocuous details in orthography, contour, and duration (stylistic ambiguities) become pivotal points through which Schnittke tells a larger story. Dixon’s analysis describes Schnittke’s Piano Quartet in terms of a dialogue. This thesis provides a theory-based account of Schnittke’s Piano Quartet, as music composition is inherently a personal, intentional act.

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<sup>31</sup> more of Dixon’s thoughts and analysis will be included in the analysis of the work (Chapter 3)

<sup>32</sup> Dixon, *Schnittke Studies*, 116.

<sup>33</sup> Edward T. Cone, “Analysis Today,” *The Musical Quarterly* 46, no. 2 (1960): 187.

<sup>34</sup> Robert P. Morgan, “On the Analysis of Recent Music,” *Critical Inquiry* 4, no. 1 (1977): 40.



The second writing on Schnittke's Piano Quartet is a liner note for a recording of the Brahms, Mahler, and Schnittke Piano Quartet(s) by the Avery Ensemble. In this liner note, the author, cellist Hans Twitchell, accounts for the sense of duality in Schnittke's Piano Quartet as Dixon: "Schnittke creates a representation of an aberrational encounter between two incompatible dimensions. . . *time* versus *eternity* or simply as the *individual* versus a cruel *society*; in the score there is justification for both."<sup>35</sup>

Twitchell also defines two key composition techniques used by Schnittke: the spiral cell and melodic variation. The first technique, the use of a spiral cell, is adapted from Twitchell's 2006 dissertation.<sup>36</sup> In the liner note, Twitchell explains this cell as "a four-note circular motif, i.e. E flat, D, C, C sharp— [that is] ubiquitous to the material constituting this 'entity.' . . . Schnittke's concerns with temporality, eternity, mortality and anachronism invade his instrumental music through musical signs, allusions and pictorial gestures such as this circular motif."<sup>37</sup> Circular gestures from broad (Rondo-esque form) to small (circular motif) can be found throughout each thematic variation (or its transition) in Schnittke's Piano Quartet. This thesis will explain more about how this circular motif is used in the Piano Quartet in the analysis portion to further enhance the melding of musical analysis and philosophy.

The second technique that Twitchell describes is Schnittke's variation of Mahler's phrygian melody used seventeen times throughout four different episodes (thematic variation)<sup>38</sup> in the Piano Quartet. Each instance of Mahler's theme is slightly different. A

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<sup>35</sup> Hans Twitchell, Liner note from the Avery Ensemble's recording of Schnittke's Piano Quartet, (Avery Ensemble: CD Baby, 2008).

<sup>36</sup> Hans B. Twitchell, *Alfred Schnittke's Cello Sonata no. 2 (1993/94): Referential Music in the Composer's Late Style*, (DMA diss, University of Connecticut, 2006).

<sup>37</sup> Twitchell, *Liner Notes*.

<sup>38</sup> The term episode is Twitchell's alone. I include and reference the term here for continuity and clarity in discussing Twitchell's analysis. In this thesis, I use the term "Thematic Variation" instead of episode, for in

brief account of each episode is given in Twitchell's notes, highlighting Schnittke's use of polystylism, inversional symmetry, and canonic stretto. For example: in the third episode, Twitchell identifies the previously unknown counter-melody source material as the theme from the Elegy movement in Richard Strauss' Alpine Symphony, an assumption that will be challenged in Chapter 3 of this thesis.

Twitchell's identification of four different episodes hints at a formal structure of the Piano Quartet, but fails to connect the episodes together in a unifying structure (like this thesis attempts to). As this thesis is an investigation into the manipulation of Mahler's theme, it is paramount that these episodes be fully investigated and collated into temporal structures. The precise placement of each episode (thematic variation), and the contrapuntal manipulation found therein, is investigated in regards to time to highlight Schnittke's compositional technique, as well as to explain why identifying such phenomena is important in musical analysis, and the philosophical implications found within.

A more romanticized description of Schnittke's Piano Quartet is provided by Seth Brodsky in his description of the Piano Quartet in the online music database, *All Music*. Brodsky's focus of interest in his description of Schnittke's Piano Quartet is his belief that Schnittke's Piano Quartet "develops an uncanny phenomenological music -- not 'music' at all, but rather the sound of a psychological process of introspection, increasingly hindered by anxiety and error."<sup>39</sup> Brodsky's review, although affirming a

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contrapuntal terms, an episode is a digression from the main structure of the composition. Since each "episode," or thematic variation contains Mahler's theme, the term episode does not cross-over well.

<sup>39</sup> Seth Brodsky, "Piano Quartet in A Minor After Mahler," *All Music*.

<https://www.allmusic.com/composition/piano-quartet-in-a-minor-after-mahler-mc0002386179>

line of investigation for this thesis, contains no real analysis since it is a review and not an analytical paper. However, his description of the piece is very eloquent:

Schnittke's own Piano Quartet begins with the rocking ostinato-figures of Mahler's own sketch, but quickly wobbles into more precarious territory. . . Thrice the music helplessly swings itself towards a climactic moment of purge-like clarification, finally descending into monolithic explosions of noise, devoid of contour, better yet: memory.<sup>40</sup>

A theoretical investigation into the sound of Schnittke's psychological process is the intention of this thesis. Almost two decades after his death, it is clear that Schnittke is becoming a significant composer of the late twentieth century,<sup>41</sup> as interest in his music continues to grow. A temporal investigation into his music has been suggested by Cone and Morgan, which finds its impetus from Labelle. Brodsky and Twitchell provide their own narratives of Schnittke's Piano Quartet, but they are not analytic analyses of the piece. Therefore, this thesis provides a theoretical analysis of Schnittke's Piano Quartet to provide support for the melding of musical analysis and philosophy.

### **Analytical Systems**

This thesis is not an exploration of music and consciousness, but a brief explanation of certain terms associated with the philosophical idea is important as a bridge with which to better understand Schnittke's use of form, structure, and manipulation in his Piano Quartet. Schnittke and Mahler both had extroverted thoughts on philosophy and music, often employing such statements in their music by way of contrapuntal symbolism. In what remains of Chapter 2, these terms and other analytic

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<sup>40</sup> Brodsky, *All Music*.

<sup>41</sup> Dixon, *Schnittke Studies*, 22.

terminology (and systems) utilized in the analysis of Schnittke's Piano Quartet are defined and codified.

The terms intentionality and temporal structures find meaning in phenomenology, a branch of philosophy founded by German philosopher Edmund Husserl in 1901.<sup>42</sup> Phenomenology, "in its etymological sense, is the activity of giving an account of the way things appear. Hence, a phenomenology of time attempts to account for the way things appear to us as temporal or how we experience time."<sup>43</sup> While this thesis is not an investigation into music and consciousness, it does investigate temporal structures that Husserl relates to as time-consciousness, the way consciousness presents itself through time.<sup>44</sup> This thesis explores Schnittke's use of time as a structural element in constituting his own Piano Quartet by investigating the "central structure of an experience of or about some object."<sup>45</sup> The object(s) analyzed in this thesis are the phrygian melody from Mahler's sketch, and how Schnittke manipulates and varies this theme throughout the entire quartet. These objects of experience are organized through R. Murray Schafer's adaptation of Gestalt psychological perception to aural perception by utilizing three main terms--figure, ground, and field-- to provide a framework for organizing experience. The term figure refers to the focus of interest. Ground is the setting or context of the object being analyzed, and field is the place where the observation occurs. In a musical sense, these three terms can be thought of as investigating the following questions: 1) *What in a musical composition is to be*

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<sup>42</sup> taken from the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy.

<sup>43</sup> taken from the Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy. <https://www.iep.utm.edu/phe-time/>

<sup>44</sup> While investigation into consciousness and music is a worthwhile endeavor, it is beyond the scope of this thesis. An excellent source for beginning study would be: David Clarke, "Music, phenomenology, time consciousness: meditations after Husserl," *Music and Consciousness*, ed. David Clarke and Eric Clarke (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

<sup>45</sup> Stanford.

perceived (figure)? What are the most important musical components in this piece? The melody, harmony, rhythm or something else? 2) *How* does the composer enact this perception (ground/expression)? What compositional devices does the composer use? 3) *Why* does this perception take place (field/impression)? Why and how are we hearing what we are hearing?

Two other terms require definition for further understanding: the words “object,” and “social space.” Brandon Labelle contends that “. . .sound [an object], in traveling away from itself, is picked up elsewhere, overheard, carried forward, or brought back, through memories and recordings, to enliven the making of social space.”<sup>46</sup> Labelle asserts that sound is an affective object that can impact the past, present, and future perceptions of social space. An affective object of sound, or sound-body, “. . .was first conceived in the improvised ontology of [Pierre] Schaeffer’s [sound] experiments in the spring of 1948.”<sup>47</sup> Schaeffer, a French composer, musicologists, and acoustician, worked to create a “symphony of noises”<sup>48</sup> through the electronic manipulation of sound, a theoretical technique he called “Musique concrete.”<sup>49</sup> Over time, and especially in the 21<sup>st</sup>-century, the idea of a “symphony of sounds,” or sound-body, turned from an electronic to an acoustic manipulation of sound with philosophical implications. Much of Schaeffer’s *musique concrete* is cast in the phenomenological terms of Edmund Husserl, whose conception of an object “. . .must not be mistaken for an entity. . .which refers to an externally existent thing. An object only comes into being when it is

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<sup>46</sup> Brandon Labelle, *Acoustic Territories* (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2010), xxiv.

<sup>47</sup> Brian Kane, *Sound Unseen*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 17.

<sup>48</sup> *ibid*, 15.

<sup>49</sup> *ibid*, 16.

cognized, when it is something capable of being apprehended by a subject.”<sup>50</sup> In other words, a sound-body is not a physical body, but a manipulated, multi-dimensional object of sound that affects cognition and perception.

The term “space” can refer to a configuration, conformation, contour, form, shape, or any other spatial attribute. Most people do not think of space in a social sense. As Aimee Haley and Johanna Mellon state: “When the concept ‘space’ is mentioned, initial thoughts often gravitate towards physical, geographical space or even ‘outer space.’”<sup>51</sup> In a musical context, social space is a place for listening where sound has the possibility to impact memory, perception, and action. A social space could include a concert hall, a home, or a busy street if headphones are used.<sup>52</sup> In order to qualify as a social space of music in intentionality, Schnittke’s Piano Quartet is explored through the philosophical lens of affect theory, where Schnittke anachronistically places Mahler’s theme into subjective, intentional temporal spaces, creating an affective autonomous “body” of sound (sound-body).

While affect can be loosely translated to fit any number of scenarios, the question is not what affect means, but what it does<sup>53</sup>:

Affect is an impingement or extrusion of a momentary or sometimes more sustained state of relation. For Brian Massumi, affect exists as ‘the excluded middle,’ the third state between activity and passivity, occupying the gap between content and effect. While much is made of the unpredictable, free-floating circulation of affect, its autonomy from the objects, subjects, and signifiers it flows through and between, its blink-and-you-miss-it fleetingness, affects may also ‘stick’ or formulate into repetitive cycles.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> *ibid*, 19.

<sup>51</sup> Aimee Haley and Johanna Mellon, “Social Space as a Conceptual tool in Education Research,” *European Conference of Educational Researchers (ECER)* (Budapest, Hungary: Department of Education and Special Education: 2015), abstract.

<sup>52</sup> Though it could also begin visually by looking at scores.

<sup>53</sup> *ibid*, 6.

<sup>54</sup> Marie Thompson and Ian Biddle, *Sound, Music, Affect: Theorizing Sonic Experience* (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2013), 6.

In musical terms, affect theory investigates how and why music experienced impacts our state of being. Because not all music possesses narrative, it is important to view Schnittke's Piano Quartet through affect theory in order to understand what is to be perceived. Analysis presented in this thesis will show that Schnittke's manipulation of Mahler's theme, and its subsequent temporal structures, provide an "intense level of organization" that affect theory requires to produce an affective sound-body that occupies the "excluded middle. . . state between activity and passivity." By connecting each thematic variation to itself, Schnittke creates both small- and large-scale circular-pattern of memory, a musical epitaph for Mahler and himself.

In what follows, I define temporal structures by way of Husserl's time-consciousness, as well as Schnittke's polystylism as an analytical system to provide context and support for an investigation of and about time. I also provide brief descriptions of Schenkerian analysis, contour theory, and pitch-class set analysis (the analytical systems used throughout my analysis) to provide continuity and clarity, as some have been adapted and/or modified.

### **Temporal Structures and Husserl's Time-consciousness**

It is only *after* we have experienced a seemingly random phenomenon that a connection is made to previous – and future – phenomena, creating a cyclical pattern of memory. This sentiment is essentially what time-consciousness is: phenomenology, "in its etymological sense is the activity of giving an account of the way things appear. Hence, a phenomenology of time attempts to account for the way things appear to us as

temporal or how we experience [are conscious of] time.”<sup>55</sup> In the Piano Quartet, Schnittke utilizes Mahler’s theme (i.e., the phrygian melody) five times<sup>56</sup>, each varied in some way. Thus, the piece could be thought of as constituting a Rondo-esque style, where each thematic variation (TV) is followed by other material, in this case more transitional material and not thematic material as would appear in a true Rondo. The idea of utilizing the experience of perceiving a melody to emulate a primary task of phenomenology, the activity of giving an account of the way things appear, came from Edmund Husserl in his 1905 lectures. Husserl suggests that

. . . certain temporal mechanisms of consciousness [time consciousness] form the condition for the creation of objects. In hearing a melody, we do not in fact hear merely one note at a time, just as we do not see merely one side of a table at a time. Rather we perceive both aural object and visual object as continua, structured by the immediate past and anticipated future.<sup>57</sup>

In Schnittke’s Piano Quartet, the theme is heard multiple times and experienced temporally from different “angles” in each of its variations. Furthermore, Schnittke’s polystylism is also an example of the temporal mechanisms Husserl speaks of since the listener hears musical elements or techniques borrowed from the past in a different way when used in the present. Husserl called the mechanisms that create such continua retention, or the incorporation of past experience into the present, and protention, the effect of future events on current experience. These twin devices of time-consciousness allow a melody to be conceptualized as an object occurring in the past, present, and future. Figure 2-1 is a visual representation of Husserl’s theory of time consciousness,

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<sup>55</sup> taken from the Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy. <https://www.iep.utm.edu/phe-time/>

<sup>56</sup> As will be shown, each thematic variation contains multiple instances of Mahler’s theme interacting with itself (i.e., stretto). While Twitchell states that the theme is used 17 times, because of the temporal structure created by contrapuntal manipulation, the total number of instances can be reduced to 5.

<sup>57</sup> David Clarke and Eric Clark, “Preface,” in *Music and Consciousness* (Oxford: Oxford University Press: 2011), 33.



showing time as a continuous stream and its interaction with human subjectivity as lines emanating from that stream. For example, in Figure 2-1, we perceive X1 as a single sonic event, the hearing of a tone. The diagonal line descending from X1 illustrates the consciousness of this pitch in time as it becomes ever more distant, a phenomenon that Husserl called running-off or slipping away. Each sub- or super-scripted number in the diagram indicates past or future experiences, respectively, in relation to the present (i.e., the 'phases' of consciousness). In retention, for example, the point X2-1, found on the diagonal line emanating from X1, represents the retention of the X1 note at a latter point. Similarly, this diagram also illustrates protention as it structures the experience of each phase; for example,  $X^{(1)}_2$  indicates how the coming of X2 is intuited in prescience as part of the experience of X1. Finally, the vertical lines on the diagram illustrate the connectedness of this experience; vertical lines indicate how the various retentions and protentions not only join the 'now' phase, but constitute it. This temporal model of time-consciousness also represents a connected spiral motion; as X1 sinks into the past, it is recalled by the enactment of X2 by X2-1. Perceptually, we connect X2 back to X1 by recalling  $X^{(1)}_2$ . This motion is an expanded connected spiral, and is continued indefinitely, as represented as Figure 2-2.

So far, I have defined the terms time-consciousness, retention and protention. The following pages define and codify the analytical systems used to identify the mechanisms of Schnittke's temporal structures.

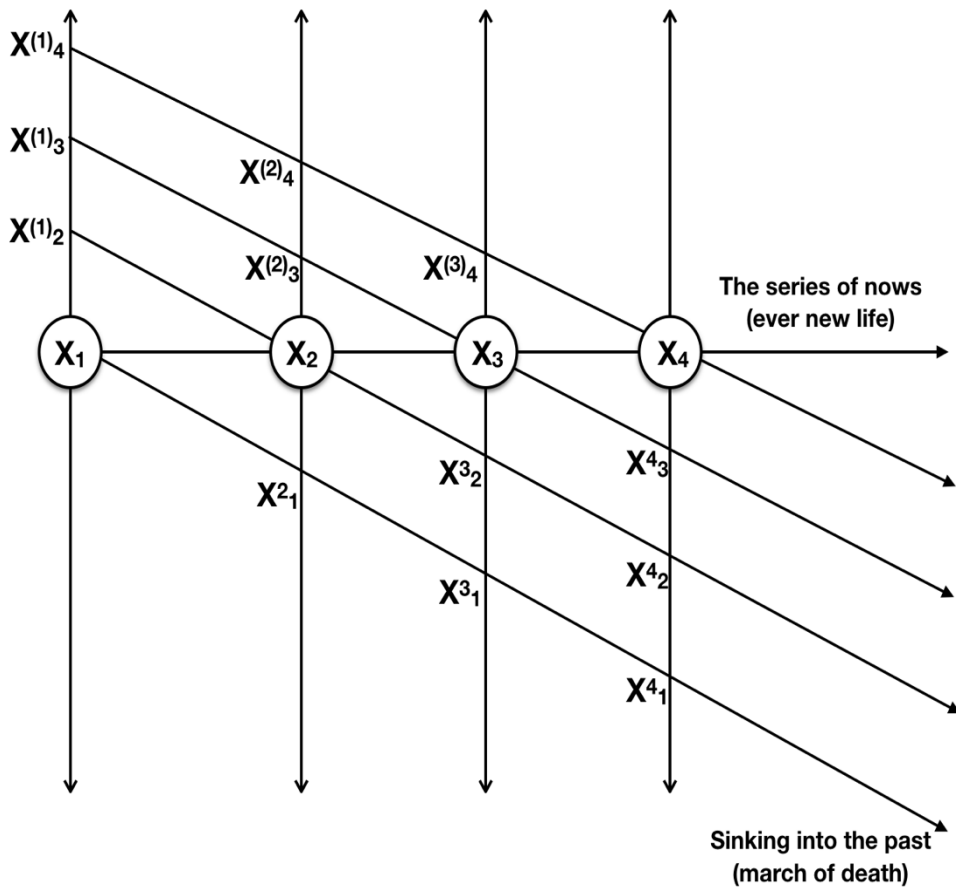
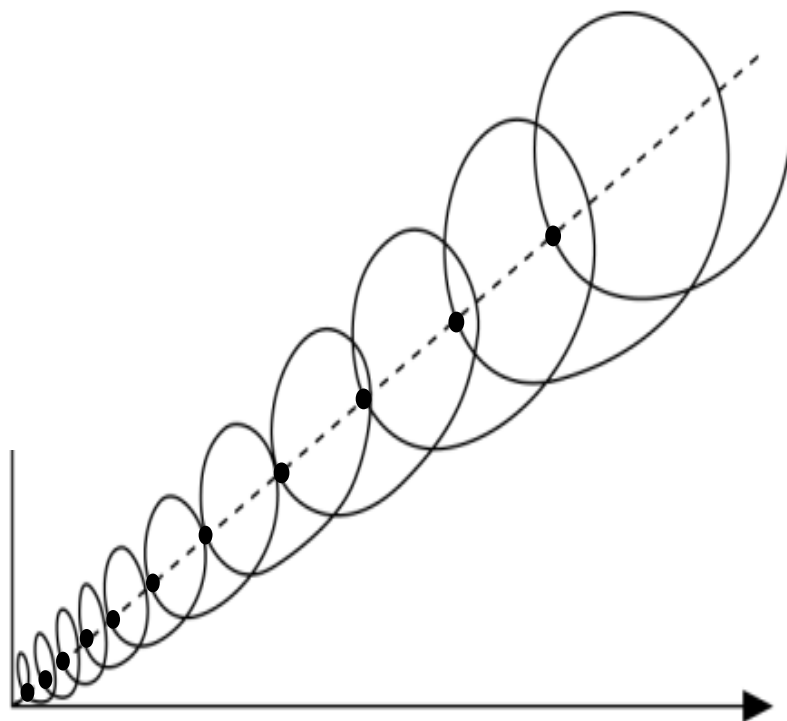


Figure 2-1: Husserl's diagram of time-consciousness, adapted to show retentions and protentions.



**Figure 2-2: 3D-model of a connected spiral, where each points represents X1. Each spiral represents a new sonic event. The dotted line is for visual aid only.**

## Polystylism

While the first technique, polystylism, is more a compositional technique, I argue that it can also be an analytical system. Schnittke uses different types of polystylism which are based on different principles:

*The principle of quotation* manifests itself in many ways, from the quoting of stereotypical micro-elements of an alien style, belonging to another age or another national tradition (characteristic melodic intonations, harmonic sequences, cadential formulae), to exact or reworked quotations or pseudo-quotations.

The principle of *adaptation*—the retelling of a musical text in one's own musical language (analogous to modern literary adaptations of ancient subjects) or a free development of material in one's own style.

*The principle of allusion* manifests itself in the use of subtle hints and unfulfilled promises that hover on the brink of quotation but do not actually cross it.<sup>58</sup>

Schnittke uses the principle of quotation in his use of Mahler's sketch in its entirety. The principle of adaptation takes the form of Schnittke's manipulation of each theme (i.e., the five thematic variations). Schnittke uses the principle of allusion by his use of countermelodies that mimic the contours of Mahler's theme. These sub-categories of polystylism help identify it as both an aural and philosophical fixation. Schnittke states that

The polystylistic tendency has always existed in concealed form in music, and continues to do so, because music that is stylistically sterile would be dead...even without making direct quotations, a composer often plans a polystylistic effect in advance, whether it be the shock effect of a clashing collage of music from different times, a flexible glide through phases of musical history, or the use of allusions so subtle that they seem accidental.<sup>59</sup>

While it is generally understood that a theory in which to analyze new music succeeds new music's creation, in coining the term polystylism Schnittke creates both

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<sup>58</sup> Schnittke, *Reader*, 87-89.

<sup>59</sup> Schnittke, *Reader*, 89.

music and theory at the same time. Schnittke intentionally manipulates the musical space (temporal structures of time and pitch) of the piano quartet by using polystylism. A stylistic emphasis differing from its surrounding textures indicates an important event, one that requires further investigation.

### **Schenkerian Analysis**

The main analytical technique used in this analysis of the Piano Quartet is Schenkerian Analysis.<sup>60</sup> Heinrich Schenker developed this system for the analysis of tonal music, although, as Tom Pankhurst<sup>61</sup> suggests, Schenker's method of analysis may be used with non-tonal music to help identify larger structural elements through reduction.<sup>62</sup> Many similarities in structure still exist between the analysis of the foreground, middleground, and background of tonal and non-tonal music; the levels can be related to the gestalt psychological principles of the figure, ground, and field, where the field (the focus of interest) is the foreground, the ground (the setting or context) is the middleground, and the figure (place where the observation occurs) is the background. Figure 2-3 illustrates the application of Schenkerian analysis to Schnittke's Cello Sonata No. 1<sup>63</sup>. The middleground layer in this Figure shows the juxtaposition of C-minor and major, a rising and falling chromatic inner-voice (d<sub>3</sub> to c<sub>4</sub>, then descends back to d<sub>3</sub>), and a i-ii-V-i bass arpeggiation. The strict organizational style present in

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<sup>60</sup> Many theorists have contributed to translating and defining Schenker's theory, too many to be enumerated here. Instead, I utilize Pankhurst's application of Schenkerian Analysis in his chapter, "Beyond Schenker," in *SchenkerGUIDE*, to emphasize the reductive applications in Schenkerian Analysis. This process identifies elaborations in the structural line (*Urlinie*), thereby revealing a composer's true intent. For further info, see:

Tom Pankhurst, *SchenkerGUIDE*, (New York, NY: Routledge, 2010).

<sup>61</sup> Tom Pankhurst, *SchenkerGUIDE*, (New York, NY: Routledge, 2010).

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid*, 156.

<sup>63</sup> I use Schnittke's Cello Sonata No. 1, instead of the Piano Quartet, to show the versatility available in adapting Schenker's method of analysis.



**Figure 2-3: Schnittke Cello Sonata No. 1, mm. 1-9. Middleground reduction showing the juxtaposition of C-minor and major, a rising and falling inner-voice, and a i-ii-V-i bass arpeggiation.**

Schnittke's Cello Sonata No. 1 is revealed by the reductive qualities of Schenkerian analysis.

### Contour Theory

Musical contour is one of the most general aspects of pitch perception, as it is grounded only in a listener's ability to hear pitches as higher, the same, or lower to other pitches, without discerning the exact differences between and among them.<sup>64</sup> Apart from work by a few ethnomusicologists and a textbook by Robert Cogan and Pozzi Escot,<sup>65</sup> the foundations for a theory of contour were advanced in the later 1980s by Michael Friedmann<sup>66</sup>, Larry Polansky<sup>67</sup>, and Robert Morris<sup>68</sup>, and later extended to non-

<sup>64</sup> Robert D. Morris, "New Directions in the Theory and Analysis of Musical Contour." *Music Theory Spectrum* 15, no. 2 (1993): 205.

<sup>65</sup> Robert Cogan and Pozzi Escot, *Sonic Design: The Nature of Sound and Music* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc, 1976).

<sup>66</sup> Michael L. Friedman, and Schoenberg, "A Methodology for the Discussion of Contour: Its Application to Schoenberg's Music." *Journal of Music Theory* 29, no. 2 (1985): 223-48.

<sup>67</sup> Larry Polansky and Richard Bassein, "Possible and Impossible Melody: Some Formal Aspects of Contour." *Journal of Music Theory* 36, no. 2 (1992): 259-84.

<sup>68</sup> Robert D. Morris, "New Directions in the Theory and Analysis of Musical Contour," *Music Theory Spectrum* 15, no. 2 (1993): 205-228.

tonal music by Elizabeth West Marvin and Paul Laprade<sup>69</sup>. Morris describes contour analysis as

. . .The present image of contour theory involves the *contour*, an ordered set of  $n$  distinct (contour-) pitches, with or without repetitions, numbered (not necessarily adjacently) in ascent from  $x$  to  $y$  ( $x < y$ ). *Normalized* contours are numbered from 0 to  $n - 1$ .<sup>70</sup>

Robert Schultz<sup>71</sup> describes the value of contour analysis:

. . .by virtue of its greater precision, numerical representation has enabled the creation of equivalence classes and sophisticated similarity measurements that would not be so easily conceivable in strictly graphic terms. . .[and] numerical representation allows for a more generalized approach to contour that is not restricted to just modeling pitches in time but can also be applied to duration, dynamics, tone color, and other potentially relevant musical parameters.<sup>72</sup>

Specific contours hidden by Schnittke reveals elements otherwise unnoticed in aural perception, and in turn, musical space. Figure 2-4a<sup>73</sup> shows a contour analysis of the opening piano exposition from Schnittke's Piano Quintet<sup>74</sup>, where, in the C-seg (contour segment) <12101> the integer 0 represents the lowest pitch in the right-hand melody (B), 1 represents the middle pitch (C#), and 2 represents the highest pitch in the melody (D). Figure 2-4b<sup>75</sup> shows a contour and duration analysis<sup>76</sup> (c-seg and d-seg respectively) of mm. 31-33 from Schnittke's Piano Quintet. The contour segment (cseg)

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<sup>69</sup> Elizabeth West Marvin and Paul A. Laprade, "Relating Musical Contours: Extensions of a Theory for Contour," *Journal of Music Theory* 31, no. 2 (1987): 225-267.

<sup>70</sup> Morris, *New Directions*, 206.

<sup>71</sup> Robert Schultz, "Normalizing Musical Contour Theory," *Journal of Music Theory* 60: 1, (April, 2016): 23-50.

<sup>72</sup> Schultz, *Normalizing Musical Contour Theory*, 23-24.

<sup>73</sup> © Used with kind permission MUSIKVERLAG HANS SIKORSKI GMBH & CO. KG, Hamburg

<sup>74</sup> Again, I use Schnittke's Piano Quintet, instead of the Piano Quartet, to show the versatility available in adapting Schenker's method of analysis.

<sup>75</sup> © Used with kind permission MUSIKVERLAG HANS SIKORSKI GMBH & CO. KG, Hamburg

<sup>76</sup> Schultz asserts that numerical representation allows for a generalized approach to equivalence, which includes rhythm. While durational segments are not used in this thesis, they are used in this example to show the equivalence possibilities of seemingly unrelated material. Several post-modern composers have adapted these techniques, so it is worth including here as inspiration for further analysis.

<12101> from m. 1 is embedded in each string voice, where violin 1 and the viola are stated in prime form, violin 2 and the cello are in retrograde <10121>, with all voices having equal durational segments (dseg) <12003>.<sup>77</sup>

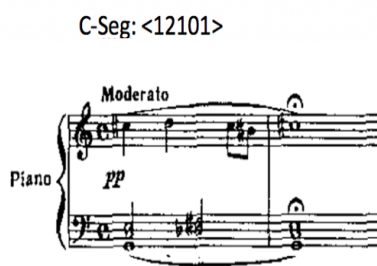


Figure 2-4a: C-seg <12101> of treble clef melody, from Schnittke's Piano Quintet, mm. 1-2.

<sup>77</sup> Schultz states: "Marvin (1991, 64) was the first to systematically explore the application of contour theory to rhythm and duration, positing that rhythmic contours can be used to "represent relative durations in much the same way that melodic contours represent relative pitch height, without a precise calibration of the intervals spanned." See: Schultz, *Normalizing Musical Contour Theory*, 33.



Violin cseg: <12101>  
dseg: <12003>

Violin 2 cseg: <10121>  
dseg: <12003>

Viola cseg: <12101>  
dseg: <12003>

Cello cseg: <10121>  
dseg: <12003>

Figure 2-4b: mm. 31-33 of Schnittke's Piano Quintet showing use of contour segment <12101> from m. 1. The contour segments are in prime form and retrograde, with equal durational segments.

### Pitch Class Set Analysis

Schnittke, like other Russian composers, used serialism in his music before fully adapting his music to the polystylistic aesthetic, a technique which never truly left him.

As Schmelz states:

...From 1964 until the early 1970's, [Russian] composers experimented with a variety of other techniques and devices, gradually incorporating into their personal styles a number of musical languages from increasingly blatant uses of tonality—including citations of particular tonal works from the past – to aleatory methods or other ways of introducing performative spontaneity into their music, even as they continued to apply serial techniques to varying degrees.<sup>78</sup>

Schnittke's use of serialism is a polystylistic endeavor in its own right. Schnittke marries the serial style of writing to Ligeti, but the same strict control of texture can be said about the Piano Quartet:

<sup>78</sup> Schmelz, *Such Freedom*, 216-217.

He devises polyphony of a vast number of imitative voices, precisely calculating the resultant texture in all its dimensions. Rhythm, timbre, and dynamics are structurally controlled, just as in the works of the serialists, not however on the basis of a series (treated) cabbalistically as a ('formula for life') but on the basis of a rational methodology that serves to make the expression of the fundamental poetic idea as clear as possible.<sup>79</sup>

In my analysis of the Piano Quartet, I utilize pitch class set analysis to allow for an ease of comparison among invariant systems of style. These include symmetrical patterns of pitch, contour, and duration. Figure 2-5 shows an example of this invariance, where (0,1,2,3) is the prime form of the pitch class set being used. The cseg *and* dseg of this excerpt are also both <0123>.

## Conclusion to Chapter 2

This chapter has discussed two separate analyses of Schnittke's Piano Quartet: Dixon's "Polystylism as Dialogue," and Twitchell's dichotomy of individual vs. society. Both Dixon and Twitchell offer their own narrative of figure, ground, and field, but withhold key theoretical concepts to support their claims. By applying philosophical and musical theories to Schnittke's Piano Quartet, it is the intention of this thesis to identify the intentionality in Schnittke's realization of Mahler's unfinished scherzo sketch by



Figure 2-5: Invariant pitch-class set, cseg, and dseg.

<sup>79</sup> Schnittke, *Reader*, 228.

investigating the temporal structures in Schnittke's Piano Quartet. In doing so, a narrative is formed, and supported, that elevates the theories of Dixon and Twitchell. Providing a supported analysis creates a pedagogical framework with which to analyze postmodern music. Schafer's definition of field (the place where the observation occurs) supplies the need for such a pedagogical approach, elevating the Russian aesthetic and its rich compositional oeuvre. Chapter 3 provides such a theoretical analysis.

### Chapter 3: Analysis of Schnittke's Piano Quartet

Since the Piano Quartet is based on Mahler's unfinished sketch, it is appropriate to analyze the sketch before analyzing Schnittke's Piano Quartet in order to understand the theory and semiotic relationship between them. An analysis of the sketch is illustrated in Figure 3-1a-b<sup>80</sup>. From the sketch, Schnittke meticulously extracts details of pitch, rhythm, harmonic structure, and contour and places them into his own Piano Quartet to create temporal structures of memory for both Mahler and himself.

#### Mahler's unfinished, G-minor Scherzo Sketch

The sketch's key of G minor is a distantly related key to the first movement's key of A minor. The theme (highlighted in yellow, Figure 3-1a), introduced in m. 2, is in the phrygian mode a characteristically dark mode due to its semitone relationship between scale degree  $\hat{1}$  and  $\hat{2}$ . The phrygian mode can be altered to create phrygian dominant – a phrygian mode with a major third rather than a minor. The harmonic oscillation between D phrygian and D phrygian dominant occurs in the fifth and sixth bar of the sketch (see Figure 3-1a, highlighted in red). The use of the phrygian dominant carries weight in Jewish prayer chant<sup>81</sup>, and could therefore be a musical homage to Mahler's religious background.

The Romantic-era harmonic language<sup>82</sup> used by Mahler is expanded on by the

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<sup>80</sup> For ease of use, I am using the measure numbers from Schnittke's Piano Quartet as reference, rather than Mahler's separate sketch. © *Used with kind permission MUSIKVERLAG HANS SIKORSKI GMBH & CO. KG, Hamburg*

<sup>81</sup> For further study, see: Baruch Joseph Cohon. "The Structure of the Synagogue Prayer-Chant." *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 3, no. 1 (1950): 17-32.

<sup>82</sup> The harmony used by Romantic composers tends to be more dissonant than in the classical period. Mahler's use of diminished 7ths, chromatic alterations, and appoggiatura can be found in his sketch, as well as in Schnittke's Piano Quartet.

15

Gustav Mahler, Scherzo-Fragment zum Klavierquartett (1876)

179

*p* D Phrygian Melody

gm: i iv6/4

183

ii° G Phryg. Dom. - - - Eb Lydian - - - V6/5/ii°

187

Stretto and prolongation of arrival in a minor

AM: | 4 - - - - 3 am: i *ffff*

Figure 3-1a: Mahler's unfinished Scherzo sketch, mm. 179-190, analyzed.

16

191

C Lydian - - - - - E<sup>7</sup> em<sup>7</sup> g<sup>#o7</sup>

195

f<sup>o7</sup> G D<sup>7</sup>

200

arco

E<sup>b6</sup> E<sup>6/5</sup> A<sup>b6</sup> C<sup>#6/5</sup>

Detailed description: The image shows a musical score for Mahler's unfinished Scherzo sketch, measures 191-200. The score is in 3/4 time and features a piano accompaniment with a complex harmonic structure. The analysis highlights specific chords and textures. The score is divided into three systems. The first system (measures 191-194) shows a piano accompaniment with a complex harmonic structure. The second system (measures 195-198) shows a piano accompaniment with a complex harmonic structure. The third system (measures 199-200) shows a piano accompaniment with a complex harmonic structure. The analysis highlights specific chords and textures. The chords are: C Lydian (measures 191-194), E<sup>7</sup> em<sup>7</sup> g<sup>#o7</sup> (measures 191-194), f<sup>o7</sup> G D<sup>7</sup> (measures 195-198), and E<sup>b6</sup> E<sup>6/5</sup> A<sup>b6</sup> C<sup>#6/5</sup> (measures 199-200). The texture is marked 'pizz.' (pizzicato) in measure 195 and 'arco' (arco) in measure 200.

Figure 3-1b: Mahler's unfinished Scherzo sketch, analyzed.

harmonic movement from A minor to C Lydian (mm. 189-190, Figure 3-1b). This change of key and mode sounds smooth and natural, but the ambiguous harmonic movement in mm. 194-195<sup>83</sup> (E7-em7-g#o7-fo7-G-D7) does not, especially given the lack of resolution of this progression of chords. Aurally, this progression can be heard as a prolonged V7 in the key of G (which is not A minor or C Lydian) that *should* resolve *back* to a G minor chord, making the first V7-i progression found throughout the sketch. However, Mahler avoids the resolution in order to repeat the D phrygian melody in octaves (mm. 196-202) before the ambiguous “ending” in m. 205.

The distinguishable chords at the end of the sketch (mm. 203-204) of the sketch (Eb6-E65-Ab6-C#65) show an advanced understanding of contrapuntal inversion, a representation of Mahler’s mature style. The chromatic progression emphasizes the semitone relationship found in the bass voice (root position: G-G#, C-C#). These four notes have a pitch-class set (pcs) of (0156) consisting of two perfect fourths separated by a semitone<sup>84</sup>. Schnittke consistently uses a similar set in his music throughout the 1980’s – the pitch class set (0167), where two sets of semitones are separated by a perfect fourth: “The most distinctively idiolectical harmony that Schnittke uses to represent his own voice is the [0167] collection. This chord has an identity wholly opposed to that of a tonal triad, it also has an aggressive aspect, in that it contains two separate semitone clashes.”<sup>85</sup> The sets (0156) and (0167) are highly similar, consisting of the same cardinality and palindromic adjacent interval sequence (AIS)<sup>86</sup>:

---

<sup>83</sup> For ease of use, I am using the measure numbers from Schnittke’s Piano Quartet as reference, rather than Mahler’s separate sketch.

<sup>84</sup> The fourths come from C-F-C#-F# (normal order [0516]). The pitches Mahler uses (C-C#-G-G#) can be inverted to G-G#-C-C#, which are two perfect fourths separated by a semitone.

<sup>85</sup> Dixon, 2007, *Polystylism as Dialogue*, 264.

<sup>86</sup> Cardinality is the total number of elements in a group. Adjacent interval sequence is the number of intervals between each element of a pitch-class set.

|      |         |         |
|------|---------|---------|
|      | 0-1-5-6 | 0-1-6-7 |
| AIS: | 1-4-1   | 1-5-1   |

The final notes of Mahler's sketch are C and A, the interval of a sixth (see Mahler's Manuscript, Figure 3-1c<sup>87</sup>). Schnittke combines this final notes of Mahler's sketch with a musical anagram of B-A-C-H (Figure 3-1d<sup>88</sup>, m. 205), where the string voices hold the famous anagram (Bb-A-C-B).

Dixon suggests that

By placing the monogram at the [end of the Piano Quartet]. . .Schnittke is reverting to Bach's chronotope in his efforts to create a sense of conclusion. One inspiration for this may be the story about the appearance of the B-A-C-H monogram at the end of the *Art of Fugue* where Bach himself, unable to finish his final work, presents us with the monogram in lieu of conclusion.<sup>89</sup>

Any analysis must take into consideration *what the composer* intends (figure, the focus of interest) versus what the theoretical application (field, where the observation takes place) desires. In this analysis, identifying the musical elements from Mahler's sketch creates a filter with which to identify the musical elements found in Schnittke's Piano Quartet. In turn, these elements are manipulated into larger temporal structures, which provide a reason for such temporal placement: three years before (1985) writing the Piano Quartet, Schnittke would suffer a stroke, leaving him in a comatose state and declared clinically dead several times before making a full recovery. Knowing that his health would soon fail him, it is possible that the Piano Quartet is an epitaph to Mahler and himself.

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<sup>87</sup> Gustav Mahler, *Quartet for piano and strings in A minor* (autograph manuscript, 1878)  
<https://www.themorgan.org/music/manuscript/115204>

<sup>88</sup> © Used with kind permission MUSIKVERLAG HANS SIKORSKI GMBH & CO. KG, Hamburg

<sup>89</sup> Dixon, 2007, *Polystylism as Dialogue*, 241.



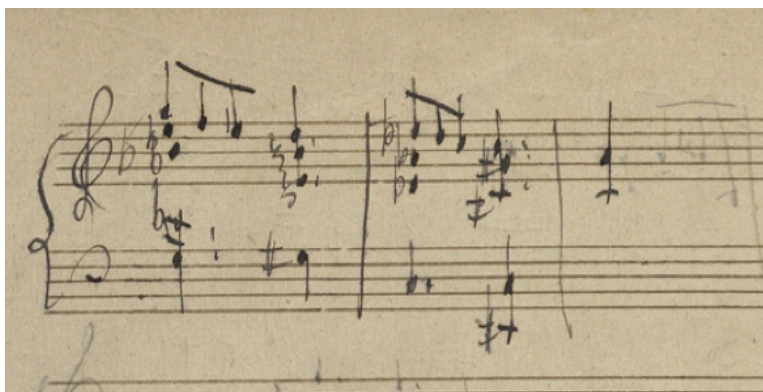


Figure 3-1c: Final 2 bars of Mahler's sketch, followed by final sonority of M6.

 A printed musical score for Schnittke's Piano Quartet. The score is divided into two systems. The top system consists of three staves (violin, viola, and cello/double bass). The bottom system consists of two staves (piano). The final chord is highlighted in yellow. The score includes a tempo marking of 200 and a dynamic marking of *arco*.

Figure 3-1d: Final "chord" of Schnittke's Piano Quartet (highlighted in yellow), a direct copy of Mahler's sketch. Of the last chord (m. 205), the string voices spell the famous BACH anagram.

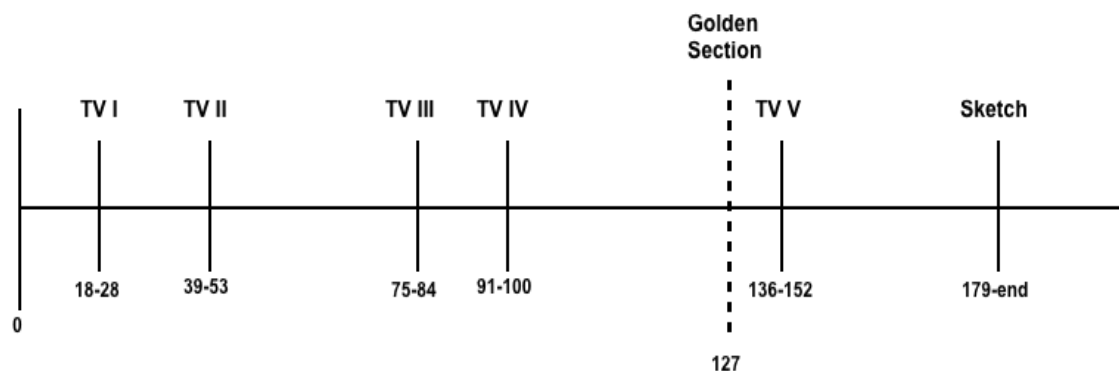
## Schnittke's Piano Quartet

The idea of structure, symmetry, and order will pervade every space of the Piano Quartet, though hidden under dark, dissonant counter-motives that mask the perception of control by juxtaposing the phrygian melody upon itself, often displaced by an eighth note and a semitone, as will be defined in an exploration of each TV. The following analysis of the Piano Quartet is organized according to Schafer's theory of figure (the focus of interest), ground (the setting or context), and field (the place where the observation occurs). The terms field and ground identify and explain how Schnittke manipulates each thematic variation. The field defends this manipulation in terms of temporal placement, and overall structure.

By beginning my analysis with the unfinished sketch, I have intentionally "given away the ending," providing a theoretical basis to answer from *where* Schnittke borrows the musical content for his own Piano Quartet.<sup>90</sup> Schnittke, however, places the unfinished scherzo sketch (in its entirety) **at the end** of his Piano Quartet, creating a Husserlian series of retentions and protentions. The use of Mahler's phrygian melody as the unifying structural element and returning to it in varied form (thematic variations or TV) makes the Piano Quartet a Rondo-esque form (see Figure 3-2). The final statement of this theme is the unadorned version from Mahler's sketch, placed *at the end* of Schnittke's Piano Quartet making the first "pure" statement of the theme the *last*. It is only after the sketch has been heard that previous manipulations, motives, and gestures can be understood.

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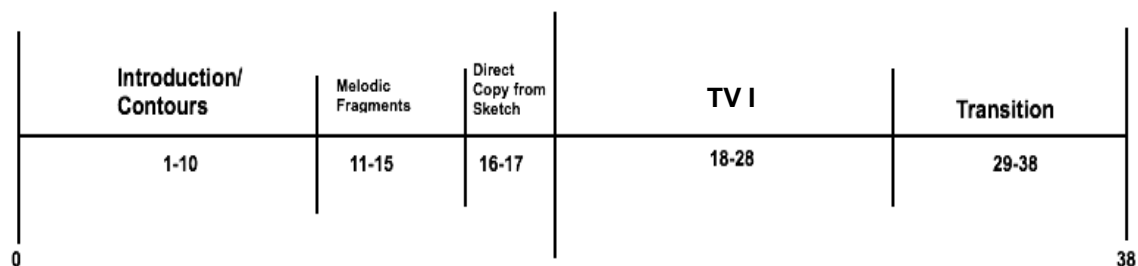
<sup>90</sup> Obviously Schnittke uses the material from Mahler's sketch. The theoretical basis is not just Mahler's phrygian melody, but the minute details of pitch, rhythm, contour, and duration.



**Figure 3-2: Overview of form, Schnittke's Piano Quartet.**

Figure 3-2 shows the placement of each thematic variation (TV) in the overall composition. Each TV presents a unique manipulation of Mahler's phrygian melody, although aurally the listener does not connect the TVs together (due to the strict manipulation of said melody) until the succeeding TV has sounded, creating the circular form that Schafer described in his idea of sound memory and perception: "To be reminded of a sound is to think about it; to miss it is to listen for it next time."<sup>91</sup> This description characterizes the process of retention and protention (described in Chapter 2) where these twin devices of time-consciousness allow a melody to exist as an object and to be conceptualized as such.

<sup>91</sup> R. Murray Schafer, *The Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment and the Tuning of the World* (Rochester, VT: Destiny Books, 1997), 208.



**Figure 3-3: Introduction and first Thematic Variation, Schnittke Piano Quartet mm. 1-38.**

### The Introduction (mm. 1-17)

Figure 3-3 presents the formal outline of mm. 1-38: the introduction (mm. 1-17), TV I (mm. 18-25), and the transition to TV II (mm. 26-38). Schnittke uses the first measure of the sketch as his own first measure, re-voiced from Mahler's duet of viola and cello to all four voices of the quartet. Figure 3-4a<sup>92</sup> show the wave-like ostinato from Mahler's sketch, labelled here as alpha, beta, gamma, delta, and epsilon, while Figure 3-4b<sup>93</sup> reveals the contours in Schnittke's introduction. The use of contour theory can help connect gestures of pitch and rhythm where no connection seems to exist. In m. 9, Schnittke combines these contours, as shown in Figure 3-5<sup>94</sup>, intentionally placing each contour so that the created harmony is simultaneously from the past *and* present. The harmony is from the past because each motive existed in 1876, where it is plausible that Mahler could have combined these motives, like Schnittke. It exists presently because

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<sup>93</sup> © Used with kind permission MUSIKVERLAG HANS SIKORSKI GMBH & CO. KG, Hamburg

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Schnittke *did* combine these motives, taking separate ideas from Mahler and combining them to create an object that is purely of Mahler. This anachronism is significant

15

Gustav Mahler, Scherzo-Fragment zum Klavierquartett (1876)

179

183

187

Alpha Contour:  
<2,1,0,1,2,1>

Beta Contour:  
<1,2,1,0,1,0>

Gamma Contour:  
<0,1,2,1,0,1>

Delta Contour:  
<1,2,3,2,1,0>

Epsilon Contour:  
<0,1,0,1,0,1>

The figure displays a musical score for Gustav Mahler's Scherzo-Fragment zum Klavierquartett (1876), specifically measures 179, 183, and 187. The score is written for a piano quartet (piano, violin, viola, and cello). The key signature is B-flat major (two flats) and the time signature is 6/8. The score is annotated with five contours, each represented by a line graph and a corresponding musical notation. The contours are: Alpha (2,1,0,1,2,1), Beta (1,2,1,0,1,0), Gamma (0,1,2,1,0,1), Delta (1,2,3,2,1,0), and Epsilon (0,1,0,1,0,1). Red lines connect the contours to their respective graphs. The Alpha contour is associated with measures 179-182, the Beta contour with measures 183-186, the Gamma contour with measures 187-190, the Delta contour with measures 191-194, and the Epsilon contour with measures 195-198. The Delta contour graph has a y-axis from 0 to 3, while the others have a y-axis from 0 to 2.

Figure 3-4a: Contours found in Mahler's unfinished sketch.

Für Oleg Kryssa

### Klavierquartett

Alfred Schnittke

Allegro

Violine *pp*

Viola *pp*

Violoncello *pp*

Klavier *pp*

5

*mp*

*mf*

*f*

*pp*

Alpha Contour:  
<2,1,0,1,2,1>

Beta Contour:  
<1,2,1,0,1,0>

Gamma Contour:  
<0,1,2,1,0,1>

Delta Contour:  
<1,2,3,2,1,0>

Epsilon Contour:  
<0,1,0,1,0,1>

Figure 3-4b: The same contours found in Mahler's sketch are copied into Schnittke's Piano Quartet.



Figure 3-5: Combined alpha, beta, gamma, delta, and epsilon contours. Schnittke Piano Quartet, mm. 9-11.

<0,1,4,3,2>

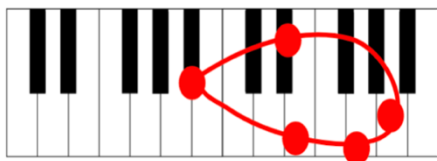


Figure 3-6: Circular-spiral contour of <0,1,4,3,2>.

<0,1,4,3,2>

<0,1,4,3,2>

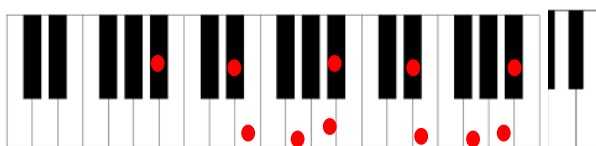


Figure 3-7: Continuous-spiral contour of <0,1,4,3,2>.



VI.  $\langle 42310 \rangle \langle 2310 \rangle$   
 Vio.  $\langle 42310 \rangle \langle 43201 \rangle$   
 Vb.  $\langle 42310 \rangle \langle 34201 \rangle$

Figure 3-8: Spiral motive  $\langle 42310 \rangle$  from mm. 129-131 from Schnittke's Piano Quartet.

in the constitution of the quartet, a manipulation of style emphasizing the subjective, intentional realm of consciousness.

The starting pitches of these motives, Bb-Eb-A-G-and E, are also important to Schnittke. These beginning notes create the contour  $\langle 0,1,4,3,2 \rangle$  which create a spiral when played. Figure 3-6 shows how the contours at the beginning of the piece can create such a spiral motive; if the pattern were repeated, it would create a circular motion (Figure 3-7) which Schnittke was well known to use to represent eternity, due to the possibility of their never-ending circular motion. Another instance of a spiral motive occurs in mm. 129-131 in the strings (see Figure 3-8<sup>95</sup>) where all of the voices begin with the contour  $\langle 42310 \rangle$ , which spiral downward, but differ in the way they end. The violin and cello both have invariant spiral motives (they overlap--the end of one motive begins the next), whereas the viola continues a descending line after the initial spiral motive statement.

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It is in mm. 11-15 (Figure 3-9<sup>96</sup>) that Schnittke rhythmically emphasizes the combined contours (highlighted in yellow) while simultaneously stating the first melodic fragment, emphasizing the unmistakable presence of Mahler (highlighted in blue). This emphasis on Mahler's sketch is further shown by the direct copy of mm. 194-195 from Mahler's sketch (Figure 3-10a<sup>97</sup>) to mm. 16-17 of Schnittke's Piano Quartet (Figure 3-10b<sup>98</sup>), preceded and accentuated by the rhythmic crescendo of the combined contours.

The introduction of Schnittke's Piano Quartet ends with a direct quote from Mahler's sketch, much like the whole piece ends with an iteration of Mahler's sketch. Clearly this introduction is a melding of the compositional voices of both Mahler and Schnittke. The contours, thematic fragments, and mm. 16-17 all come from Mahler's sketch; each component being meticulously placed as to create a thematic build-up into thematic variation I.

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The image displays a musical score for three systems, each containing three staves (treble, bass, and piano). The score is annotated with dynamic markings and highlighted sections.

- System 1 (Measures 9-12):**
  - Measures 9-10: Dynamics *mf* and *f*.
  - Measure 11: Dynamics *mf* and *mp*.
  - Measure 12: Dynamics *p*.
  - Measures 11-12: A blue shaded area highlights a melodic line in the upper staves.
  - Measures 11-12: A yellow shaded area highlights the piano accompaniment.
- System 2 (Measures 13-15):**
  - Measure 13: Dynamics *mp*.
  - Measure 14: Dynamics *mp*.
  - Measure 15: Dynamics *mf*.
  - Measures 13-14: A blue shaded area highlights a melodic line in the upper staves.
  - Measures 13-14: A yellow shaded area highlights the piano accompaniment.
- System 3 (Measures 16-18):**
  - Measure 16: Dynamics *mp*.
  - Measure 17: Dynamics *mp*.
  - Measure 18: Dynamics *mf*.
  - Measures 16-17: A yellow shaded area highlights the piano accompaniment.

Arrows at the bottom indicate measure groupings: a double arrow from measure 13 to 14, a single arrow from 14 to 15, and a double arrow from 16 to 17.

Figure 3-9: Rhythmic emphasis (yellow) with thematic variation fragment (blue), mm. 11-15.

The image displays two systems of musical notation, measures 191-195. The first system (measures 191-194) features a vocal line with a melodic line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part consists of a steady eighth-note accompaniment in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. A yellow highlight covers the final measure of this system (measure 194). The second system (measures 195-198) shows a vocal line with a melodic line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part features a more complex texture with chords and moving lines. A yellow highlight covers the first measure of this system (measure 195). The notation includes various musical symbols such as clefs, key signatures, and dynamic markings like 'pizz.'.

Figure 3-10a: mm. 194-195 from Mahler's sketch, copied directly by Schnittke, mm. 16-17.

The image shows a musical score for measures 16 and 17 of the Schnittke Piano Quartet. The score is in 6/8 time and consists of four staves. The first three staves are for the first three instruments (Violin I, Violin II, and Viola), and the fourth staff is for the Piano. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 6/8. The dynamic marking is *mf* (mezzo-forte). The first staff has a melodic line with a slur over measures 16 and 17. The second and third staves have rhythmic patterns. The fourth staff has a melodic line in measure 16 and a series of chords in measure 17. Below the piano staff, a red box contains the harmonic analysis: E<sup>7</sup>, Em<sup>7</sup>, G<sup>#07</sup>, F<sup>07</sup>, G<sup>7</sup>, G, D<sup>7</sup>.

Figure 3-10b: Harmonic analysis of mm. 16-17, Schnittke Piano Quartet.

## Thematic Variation (TV) I

The reductive qualities inherent to Schenkerian analysis allow for a multi-level viewing of TV-I that shows chromatic wedging, inversional symmetry, and poly-harmony. The chromatic wedging and symmetrical contours present in TV-I can be easily seen in the foreground reduction of mm. 18-25 (Figure 3-11), adopted here as a note reduction without rhythm, stems, or slurs. In Figure 3-11, Schnittke places Mahler's phrygian melody in the cello, its melodic inversion in the violin. The piano mimics the combined contours of the violin and cello lines through chromatic wedging<sup>99</sup>. The highlighted portion of Figure 3-11 represents the phrygian dominant sonority at a point that is rhythmically static, sonically emphasizing the Jewish sentiment of both composers.<sup>100</sup>

Moving from the foreground to middleground reduction of mm. 18-25, Figure 3-12 shows the harmonic and motivic structures present in TV I. Melodically inverting the phrygian melody in the violin creates a dualistic sense of hope (major) and despair (phrygian), where the major third of the violin clashes with the minor third of the phrygian cello voice. This duality is emulated in the piano accompaniment, where the dominant (A7, leading somewhere) and half-diminished (d-half-diminished, self-contained circular motion) sonorities are found. The harmonic and melodic symmetry found in TV-I is all encompassing, represented in pitch class set, contour, and rhythm.

Like m. 9, the beginning harmony of TV-I, a polytonality of G major/minor, is

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<sup>99</sup> where two different lines move in contrary motion, creating a wedge (><).

<sup>100</sup> As stated in Chapter 2, Schnittke was a Russian-Jew, Mahler a German Jew. Both composers felt various forms of anti-Semitism throughout their life, possibly being the main reason that both converted to Catholicism later in their lives. Furthermore, as Dixon suggests, "Mahler has a special place in Schnittke's understanding of the past. Like Schnittke, Mahler was a German speaker and of Jewish descent, and like Schnittke he used stylistic plurality (albeit on a more limited scale) to represent the resulting feelings of cultural detachment in his music." See Dixon, *Schnittke Studies*, 141.

The image shows a musical score for Violin, Violoncello, and Piano. A yellow vertical highlight covers measures 19-21. The Violin and Violoncello parts show melodic lines with various intervals and accidentals. The Piano part shows a complex accompaniment with many notes and accidentals. The highlight indicates a specific area of interest related to rhythm and note reduction.

**Figure 3-11: Rhythm and note reduction of mm. 18-25 showing inversionsal symmetry of both the thematic variation line, as well as the accompaniment.**

The image shows a middleground reduction of the musical score for Violin (Vln.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Piano (Pn.). The reduction highlights inversionsal symmetry and major, phrygian, dominant, and diminished sonorities. The Violin part is labeled with GM: 3 - 4. The Violoncello part is labeled with d Phry.: 6 - 5. The Piano part is labeled with Dominant (0,2,5,8) and Diminished (0,2,5,8). The reduction shows the relationships between the notes in the original score, with brackets and labels indicating the specific sonorities and their inversions.

**Figure 3-12: Middleground reduction of mm. 18-25, highlighting inversionsal symmetry and major, phrygian, dominant, and diminished sonorities.**

predetermined by the momentum of Mahler's sketch and the functional dominant prolongation of mm. 16-17. The prolonged dominant sonority (D7) resolves to its tonic G in m.18, but is construed by Schnittke's placement of the embedded harmonies (see Figure 3-10b) from mm. 16-17. By juxtaposing the dominant, minor (phrygian), diminished, and major sonorities from mm. 16-17 on top of each other in m. 18, Schnittke blurs and hides the contrapuntal control and symmetry found therein. The rhythm of these measures also propels the movement forward. Figure 3-13 shows the filling-in of rhythmic space between the melodic lines and their accompaniment, where the top line represents the rhythm of the violin and cello, the bottom line the rhythm of the piano. The two rhythmic lines complement each other, creating a continuous stream of eighth-notes that produce forward motion.

Mahler's phrygian melody finds itself contained in and against itself throughout TV I, from the two bars before the phrygian melody (mm. 16-17) that control the harmonic texture of TV I, to the phrygian melody laid on-top of itself in inversion. The resulting tension is never resolved, only transitioned to the next thematic variation.



**Figure 3-13: Rhythmic reduction of thematic variation I (top line, violin and cello) and accompaniment (bottom line, piano), highlighting the rhythmic “filling-in” of accompaniment to thematic variation, creating a constant stream of eighth-notes.**



### **Transition 1 (mm. 26-38)**

Figure 3-14a-b shows the analysis of mm. 26-38, the first transition between thematic variations. Figure 3-14a consists of mm 26-33 and shows a textural build-up (highlighted in blue), while Figure 3-14b shows the transition's subsequent peak (highlighted in yellow). Figure 3-14b shows the musical disintegration of TV-I before TV-II, mm. 34-38. The use of semitones and diminished sonorities in mm. 26-33 create melodic and harmonic dissonance while the inversional symmetry of the violin and cello (and emulated by the piano) continues from TV I. The peak of the transition exhibits the utmost contrapuntal control by juxtaposing four different voices in symmetrical inversion (violin and cello, piano left-hand and right-hand) while adding the viola who mimics the symmetrical inversion around it in pizzicato triple stops. In the viola line, the first two bars (mm. 29-30) descend in equal semitones to bar 31, where the top and bottom notes (top – A-Ab-G-F#, bottom – G-Ab-A-A#) of the triple-stop form a wedge (>), culminating at the semitone E-F, emphasized by an arco notation.

The texture drastically changes at mm. 34-38, the highlighted portion of Figure 3-14b, a solo piano episode that drastically changes the transition's texture. This episode consists of a descending quartal/quintal line that ends with a low cluster chord, followed by a seemingly random, almost dodecaphonic theme. Rhythmically, mm. 34-38 changes from a compound-duple (6/8) meter to a simple-triple (3/4) meter. This rhythmic shift will be carried over to TV II in the piano line. Melodically, Figure 3-14c shows a hidden descending line in mm. 34-36. This hidden contrapuntal gesture occurred in the piano during TV I and will be elevated in TV II in the right hand piano line.

Figure 3-14a shows a musical score for measures 26-33. The score is divided into two sections: a blue-shaded transition section (measures 26-30) and a red-shaded culmination section (measures 31-33). The music is written for piano and violin. The piano part features complex chordal textures and arpeggiated figures. The violin part includes a pizzicato section in measure 31. Dynamics range from *mp* to *ff*. The key signature is two flats, and the time signature is 4/4.

Figure 3-14a: Transition (blue) and culmination (red) of mm. 26-33 that precedes thematic variation I.

Figure 3-14b shows a musical score for measures 31-36. The score is divided into two sections: a yellow-shaded section (measures 31-35) and a white section (measures 36-38). The music is written for piano and violin. The piano part features complex chordal textures and arpeggiated figures. The violin part includes an arco section in measure 31. Dynamics range from *mp* to *p*. The key signature is two flats, and the time signature is 4/4.

Figure 3-14b: Disintegration of thematic variation I by pitch and rhythm.

The image displays a musical score for three measures, numbered 34, 35, and 36. The notation is written on two staves. The top staff uses a treble clef and a 6/8 time signature. Measure 34 begins with a quarter rest, followed by an eighth note G4, a quarter note F4, and a quarter note E4. Measure 35 starts with a quarter rest, followed by an eighth note D4, a quarter note C4, and a quarter note B3. Measure 36 begins with a quarter rest, followed by an eighth note A3, a quarter note G3, and a quarter note F3. The bottom staff uses a treble clef and shows a descending line of notes: G4, F4, E4, D4, C4, B3, A3, G3, F3. A slur covers the notes from G4 down to B3, and another slur covers the notes from A3 down to F3. The final note, F3, is marked with a double bar line.

Figure 3-14c: Reduction of mm. 34-36 showing descending line from E to Bb.

### **Thematic Variation (TV) II (mm. 38-53)**

Thematic Variation (TV) II is divided into two similar sections (mm. 39-47, 48-53) each consisting of a four-voice canon with each melodic voice displaced spatially by a semitone and temporally by an eighth-note (see Figure 3-15). This manipulation of time and space creates a multi-dimensional sound-body, an affective object of sound that manipulates aural perception by masking any sense of beginning or ending tone, effectively reducing the number of individual voices from four to one.

Adapting the spirit of Husserl's diagram of time-consciousness (Figure 2-1) to each starting pitch and place in time visually shows this multi-dimensional sound body (Figure 3-16a). Each line on the graph represents a line in the piece. The melodic lines meticulously weave in and out of perception, interacting with the retentions and protentions that hold the autonomous sound-body together. This interaction creates one unified object, reducing the number of affective voices from four to one. A three-dimensional rendition of Figure 3-16a can be seen in Figure 3-16b, visually showing this reduction from four voices to one unified object.

Like TV-I, TV-II contains contrapuntal wedging and inversional symmetry in the left-hand of the piano (see Figure 3-17) that gives support to the overriding narrative of this thesis: Schnittke deliberately expresses individualism through intentionality, symmetry, and control in spite of a Soviet dictatorship that demands the complete opposite. This conflicting duality is further emphasized in mm. 48-53, an almost direct repetition of mm. 39-47, differing only by the expansion of registral-space so that the melodic lines span 5 octaves as compared to the registral limitation of 1-1/2 octaves in mm. 39-47. The melodic voices of mm. 48-53 still occur in four-voice canon, displaced

Violin 1

Viola

Violoncello

Piano

Measures 39, 40, 41, and 42 are shown. The starting notes for each instrument are highlighted in yellow: Violin 1 (F), Viola (E), Violoncello (D#), and Piano (D). The dynamic marking *mf* is present for each instrument.

Vln. 1

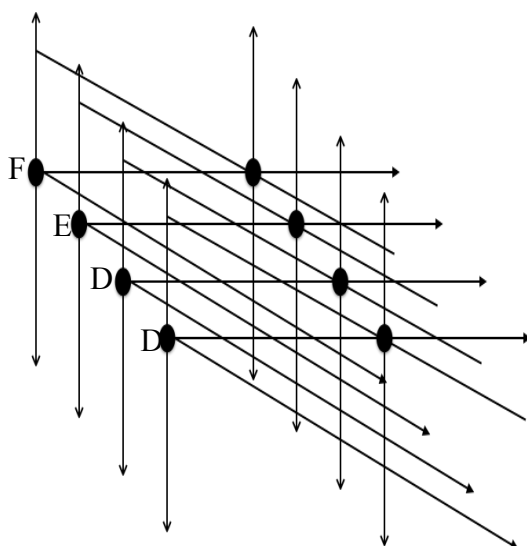
Vla.

Vc.

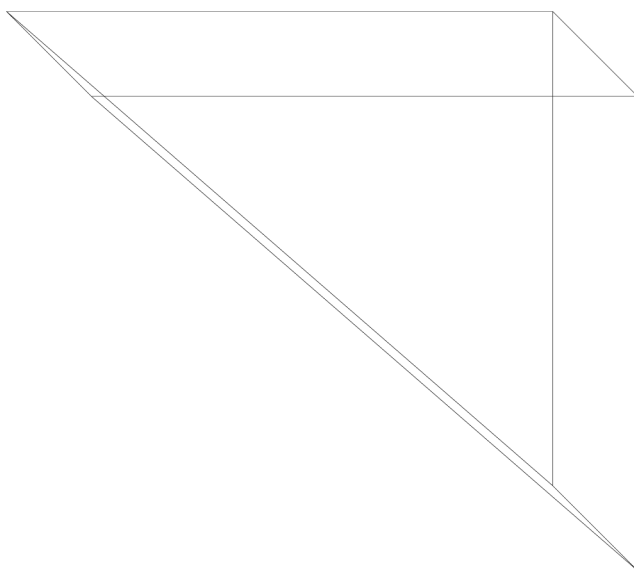
Pno.

Measures 43, 44, 45, 46, and 47 are shown. The starting notes for each instrument are highlighted in yellow: Violin 1 (F), Viola (E), Violoncello (D#), and Piano (D). The dynamic marking *mf* is present for each instrument.

Figure 3-15: Thematic Variation II, mm. 39-47, in four-voice canon, starting notes (in order of appearance) F-E-D#-D.



**Figure 3-16a: Husserl's time-consciousness graph layered in correlation with temporal starting points of Schnittke's thematic variation II.**



**Figure 3-16b: 3-D replication of Husserl's time-consciousness graph, Schnittke's multi-dimensional sound body.**

by a semitone and an eighth-note, but are transposed up a half-step from D-D#-E-F to D#-E-F-F#. Similarly, the autonomous sound-body from mm. 39-47 is registrally expanded in mm. 48-53 to provide greater emphasis. The right hand of the piano also continues the inversional symmetry and contrapuntal wedging from mm. 39-47 (Figure 3-17) through 48-53, albeit at a lower register.

The image displays a musical score for the piano left hand, spanning measures 39 to 47. The score is written in bass clef with a 6/8 time signature. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The notation consists of two systems of staves. The first system contains measures 39, 40, 41, and 42. The second system contains measures 43, 44, 45, 46, and 47. The music features complex rhythmic patterns with many beamed eighth and sixteenth notes. A prominent feature is the 'wedging' of intervals, where the distance between notes in a chord or sequence increases or decreases in a specific, often linear, fashion. This is particularly evident in the descending lines of measures 40, 41, and 42, and the ascending lines of measures 43, 44, and 45. The overall texture is dense and contrapuntal, with multiple voices moving in parallel motion.

**Figure 3-17: Inversional symmetry and wedging in piano l.h., mm. 39-47 of thematic variation II.**

### **Transition 2 (mm. 54-74)**

TV II ends in m. 53 with a sort of half-cadence that is used to modulate to transition 2. This transitional material emulates Mahler's ". . .adult persona through allusions to his mature style, including the use of an emphasized appoggiatura at the start of melodic lines and of tonal harmonies containing major/minor ambiguities."<sup>101</sup> This lyrical transitional passage, while mimicking Mahler, carries forward Schnittke's canonic practice from previous TV's, as the melodic lines of the strings imitate each other. The piano accompaniment connects TV II to TV III by its polytonal harmonic structure. Aside from mm. 71-74 of transition 2, an almost inaudible duet between the cello and piano, Schnittke juxtaposes the duality of major and minor sonorities using the set (01478), a symmetrical set mimicking the pitch-class sets (pcs) from Mahler's sketch (0156) and Schnittke's "idiolectical harmony" (0167), as all three pcs have a palindromic adjacent interval sequence. Schnittke will continue to use this tetrachord throughout TV III.

### **Thematic Variation III (mm. 75-84)**

Thematic Variation III (TV-III), mm. 75-84, is a contrapuntal buffet of previously used techniques, including chromatic cluster chords, two-voice canons, and the use of a counter-melody that is displaced by a minor ninth and an eighth-note. In TV-III, the cello plays the phrygian melody, while the violin and viola produce the counter-melody in canon (Figure 3-18). Although not as contrapuntally complicated (i.e. two-voice canon versus the four-voice canon of TV II), Schnittke achieves the same sound-body phenomena from TV II through the rhythmic and contour interaction of the phrygian

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<sup>101</sup> Dixon, *Schnittke Studies*, 119-120.



The image shows two systems of musical notation. The first system covers measures 75 to 79. The top staff is for Violin, starting with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 6/8 time signature. It begins with a rest in measure 75, followed by a melodic line starting in measure 76. The bottom staff is for Viola, starting with an alto clef and a 6/8 time signature. It begins with a rest in measure 75, followed by a melodic line starting in measure 76. Dynamics include *mf* and *sul pont.*. The second system covers measures 80 to 84. The top staff is for Violin (Vln.), starting with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 6/8 time signature. It begins with a melodic line in measure 80, followed by a more complex melodic line in measure 81. The bottom staff is for Viola (Vla.), starting with an alto clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 6/8 time signature. It begins with a melodic line in measure 80, followed by a more complex melodic line in measure 81. Dynamics include *f*.

Figure 3-18: Thematic Variation III counter-melody,  
mm. 75-84.

The image shows two systems of musical notation for a single Violin staff. The first system covers measures 75 to 79. The staff starts with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 6/8 time signature. It begins with a melodic line in measure 75, followed by a more complex melodic line in measure 76. The second system covers measures 80 to 84. The staff starts with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 6/8 time signature. It begins with a melodic line in measure 80, followed by a more complex melodic line in measure 81.

Figure 3-19: Counter-melody fills-in the rhythmic space of the phrygian melody,  
thematic variation III, mm. 75-84.

melody and its counter-melody.

While the counter-melody is a two-part canon, the violin has the primary voice due to its temporal emphasis on strong beats. The violin line sonically interacts with the phrygian melody, a circular gesture in its own right.<sup>102</sup> As in TV I, the counter-melody fills in the rhythmic space of the melody (Figure 3-19) where the top line represents the rhythm of the counter-melody and the bottom line the rhythm of the phrygian melody. As in TV-I, the two lines rhythmically complement each other, together creating a line of constant eighth notes and forward motion that emphasizes the transition to TV-IV.

Furthermore, the contours of the melody and counter-melody are similar (in a very general sense), as shown in Figure 3-20. Both lines have a bell curve form, with an indented middle portion. Musically, the counter-melody resembles the phrygian melody only in its contour, an important hidden gesture that will be emulated later in TV-V.

Harmonic support for both melodies is an ostensible sonic dichotomy. Both major and minor sonorities<sup>103</sup> are used by Schnittke: the pcs (01478), or Forte 5-22. This harmonic juxtaposition was foreshadowed in m. 54, where Schnittke uses pentachord(s) as agogic accents to draw attention to important tones, corresponding to the stemmed notes in the quasi-Schenkerian reduction of TV-III (Figure 3-20) which further emphasizes the placement of each chord in its temporal space.

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<sup>102</sup> Because the viola is a direct copy of the violin, only the violin voice is taken into consideration as it interacts with the phrygian melody.

<sup>103</sup> I use the word sonorities, rather than chords, because the tonalities major and minor cannot be discerned.

The image displays a musical score for Violin and Violoncello. The Violin part is on the top staff, and the Violoncello part is on the bottom staff. Both parts feature a melodic line with a phrygian mode characteristic (lowered second degree). The phrygian melody in the cello is highlighted in yellow, and the counter-melody in the violin is highlighted in blue. A large black line above the staves indicates the overall melodic contour. The score is for thematic variation III, mm. 75-84.

**Figure 3-20: Similarity between phrygian melody (cello) and counter-melody (violin) in thematic variation III, mm. 75-84.**

Occurring in the middle of the Piano Quartet, TV-III contains contrapuntal techniques from TV-I and TV-II, while foreshadowing TV-IV and TV-V. The sound-body from TV-II changes from a four-voice canon to a more intimate two-voice canon of the counter-melody. While rhythmically complementing the phrygian melody, the counter-melody mimes its contour, providing the sort of dialogue, as Dixon suggests, that “. . . could conceivably have been added by Mahler himself. It represents the highest level of stylistic agreement in the work.”<sup>104</sup> The meticulous trailing of the two-voice canon, coupled with the exact placement of each polychord in TV-III strengthens the thesis of intentionality, the experience of some object, the “symbol of salvation: a message that at the root of existence there is order, reason, and perfect form.”<sup>105</sup>

### **Transition 3 (mm. 83-90)**

The transition to TV-IV consists of two different fragments from the phrygian melody in the cello voice, similar to the transitional material before TV-I in mm. 12-15 (although the primary voice is different). The three upper voices mimic the chromaticism found in the right hand of the piano in mm. 29-31. Furthermore, the fragments precede two measures of harmonic and rhythmic build-up that culminate at the beginning of TV-IV, just as the previously mentioned transition into TV-I does. Although mm. 16-17 reflect the only direct copy from Mahler’s unfinished sketch in Schnittke’s piano quartet, mm. 89-90 have similar harmonic and rhythmic qualities, shown in Figure 3-21. While the upper voices are considerably different between the two sections, the piano part is highly similar in its rhythm and harmony, save for the ascending piano line in the right

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<sup>104</sup> Dixon, *Schnittke Studies*, 123.

<sup>105</sup> C.G. Jung quote from earlier, pg. 21

The image displays two musical excerpts. The top excerpt, labeled '89' and '90', features Violin, Viola, Violoncello, and Piano parts. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 6/8. The dynamics are marked *p*. The piano part includes a yellow highlight under the first two measures and a yellow bar below the piano part with the chord sequence: Em<sup>7</sup>, D<sup>o</sup>, D<sup>7</sup>. The bottom excerpt, labeled '16', features Piano parts. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 6/8. The dynamics are marked *mf*. The piano part includes a blue highlight under the first two measures and a red bar below the piano part with the chord sequence: E<sup>7</sup>, Em<sup>7</sup>, G<sup>#o7</sup>, F<sup>o7</sup>, G<sup>7</sup>, G, D<sup>7</sup>.

Figure 3-21: Similar transitional material from TV IV (top, mm. 89-90) and TV I (bottom, mm.16-17).

hand of mm. 16-17. Unlike the first transition, the transition before TV-IV *does* resolve to a tonic G by way of dominant to tonic function,<sup>106</sup> becoming one of the few tonal cadences and the most important sonic event in the entire piano quartet. Due to the chromatic and disparate harmonic landscape created by Schnittke, the inclusion of a dominant to tonic progression is perceptually jarring, demanding the listener's attention for what follows (i.e., TV-IV).

### **Thematic Variation IV (mm. 91-100)**

The most interesting sonic manipulation of Mahler's phrygian melody occurs in TV-IV, mm. 91-100. As in previous TV's, the phrygian melody appears in a three-voice canon beginning in the violin and followed by the viola and cello in the same register, displaced temporally by an eighth-note. Once again, Schnittke creates an affective sound-body due to the interactions of the canonic voices. However, since this sound-body consists of unison lines (rather than spatially and temporally displaced lines), they create a "reverb effect, an echo created by fast canon in unison"<sup>107</sup> which *interacts* with its accompaniment, an entirely new stylistic feature of the quartet. Dixon, in his analysis, states that until TV-IV, Schnittke has hidden his own voice amongst the TV being manipulated, making mm. 91-100 the first time Schnittke truly reveals his compositional

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<sup>106</sup> Until now, I have tried to avoid using any terms that have a tonal connotation, like tonic and dominant. While Schnittke's Piano Quartet *does* seem to start in G minor (and resolve to G minor here), I am *not* implying that Piano Quartet is in the key of G minor. I am simply stating that there is a functioning D dominant chord that resolves (as it should) to a G chord, regardless of major or minor. Schnittke's earlier expression of this functional chord progression was obfuscated by the juxtaposition of major, phrygian, dominant, and diminished sonorities (see Figure 3-11a for reference). Because of the clear resolution, it is only appropriate to label this transition functioning as such.

<sup>107</sup>Ivana Medić, "Crucifixus etiam pro nobis," *Schnittke Studies* ed. Gavin Dixon (New York, NY: Routledge: 2017), 54.

voice.<sup>108</sup> It is in TV-IV that two *separate* features emerge: the canonic thematic variation interacting with its accompaniment instead of becoming one sound-body, and a different counter-melody than previously stated in mm. 75-82.

Twitchell suggests that the melody in the piano accompaniment of TV-IV is not new, but contains the identical pitch-class set of the first six notes from the Elegy theme of Richard Strauss' *Eine Alpensinfonie* Op. 64.<sup>109</sup> Figure 3-22a shows an analyzed piano reduction of Strauss' Elegy, and Figure 3-22b shows Schnittke's analyzed quotation. The *Elegy* pitch-class set, (0126) and Schnittke's quotation are the same, affirming Twitchell's suggestion. Twitchell further suggests

. . . It is entirely possible that Strauss' theme was an Elegy for none other than Mahler, whose death reawakened Strauss' interest in what would be his last and, perhaps, greatest major symphonic work. By making this reference, Schnittke is drawing into his piano quartet the enormous weight of controversy expressed in Strauss's championing of Nietzsche in opposition to Mahler's affirmation of religious faith.<sup>110</sup>

It is difficult to agree with or counter Twitchell's argument as Schnittke is well-known for his musical borrowing and direct quotations—the essence of polystylism. The respect Schnittke had for Strauss and Mahler is readily apparent throughout his biography, but to assume that the pitch-class set (0126) originates from Strauss' *Elegy* is a bit presumptuous. The melody *sounds* as if it could be a passage from the theme from *Dr. Zhivago*, or a composition by Shostakovich or any other post-modern composer.<sup>111</sup> A theoretical explanation of this counter-melody relies on two motives: what comes before this passage, and Schnittke's meticulous usage of contrapuntal symbolism.

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<sup>108</sup> Dixon, *Schnittke Studies*, 136.

<sup>109</sup> Twitchell, *Liner Notes*.

<sup>110</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>111</sup> These assumptions are purely my own. While it would be interesting to catalog such musical borrowings, the *exact* origin of the accompanying tune to TV IV is still decidedly unknown. For an additional suggestion, see Figure 3-23 from Felix Mendelssohn *Ruy Blas* Overture, Op. 95.

Figure 3-22a shows a musical score for a piano accompaniment and a horn part. The piano part features a prominent pitch-class set (0126) highlighted in yellow, starting at measure 102. The horn part is marked "Hb. espr." and "p". The piano part includes markings for "poco marc." and "pp".

Figure 3-22a: Pitch-class set (0126) from Strauss' *Eine Alpensinfonie*, *Elegy* theme.

Figure 3-22b shows a musical score for a piano part. The piano part features a prominent pitch-class set (0126) highlighted in yellow, starting at measure 91. The piano part is marked "Piano" and "6/8".

Figure 3-22b: Pitch-class set (0126) from Schnittke's *Piano Quartet*, thematic Variation IV, mm. 91-92.



First, in mm. 90-91, there exists a functional dominant-tonic progression that leads the listener from a  $D^7$  chord to a G minor chord, explaining the tonic functioning G minor chord at the beginning of TV-IV. The rhythmic duality of duple versus triple present throughout TV-IV can be attributed to the duple versus triple meter occurring in mm. 29-30 of the transitional material before TV-II.

Additionally, there is an abundance of symbolic quartal gestures present throughout TV IV<sup>112</sup>, emphasized by the repetition of the counter-melody. The leap of a fourth has many significant connotations in music, from horn-calls to the root movement of “sol-do” in functional harmony, and is arguably the strongest movement in tonal music. Music of the Romantic era, especially in the case of Mahler, is saturated with the perfect fourth. The beginning of Mahler’s Symphonies 1, 2, 3, and 9 all have prominent motives that contain the melodic fourth.<sup>113</sup>

From a contrapuntal standpoint, the tetrachord (0126) is similar to that of (0167), since the two sets of semitones are separated by a perfect fourth.<sup>114</sup> Both hands of the piano part contain a pedal G minor triad (mm. 91-92, etc.), where the top and bottom lines of each hand carry the counter-melody in octaves, respectively. The interval of a fourth is important in many parts of the Piano Quartet. Other uses of the fourth interval include the beginning notes of each contour from the introduction (Bb-Eb-A) that span the interval of a fourth, though not obvious to the listener as a quartal harmony due to its temporal spacing. The descending line in m. 34 consists of descending fourths. The

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<sup>112</sup> Due to the inversive properties of fourths and fifths, the terms quartal and quintal are used interchangeably.

<sup>113</sup> While it is easy to go through any number of musical compositions and say “There’s a fourth, and there’s a fourth!”, it is essential that these instances be noted. After all, this piano quartet was written based off an incomplete sketch by Mahler.

<sup>114</sup> 0126 = C C# D F#, 0167 = C C# F# G. While these are not the exact notes used by Schnittke, the interval-class vectors justify my statement in their similarity.

piano accompaniment of m. 62 consists of quartal and quintal harmonies. The accompanying harmony from TV-III (mm. 75-82) consists of the pcs (01478—two semitones separated by a fourth). Rather obviously, the piano quartet is, well, a quartet. Given these instances, it is conceivable that the counter-melody is of Schnittke's own making.

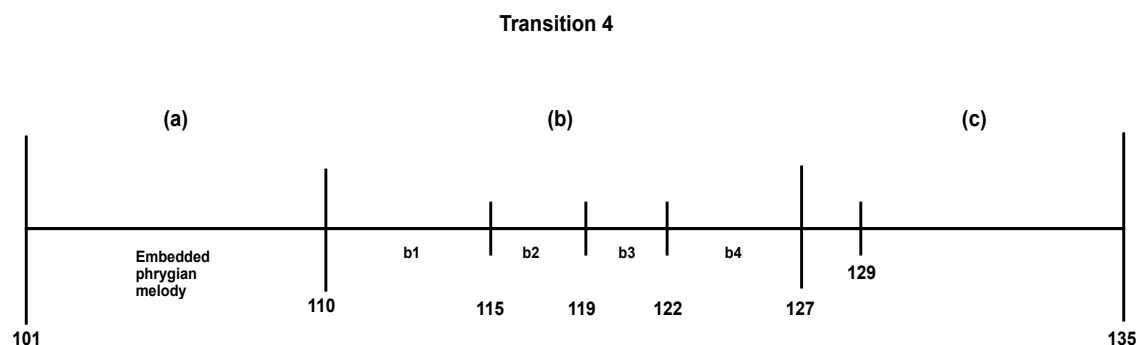
#### **Transition 4 (mm. 101-135)**

The quartal gestures present in TV-IV are expanded on and emphasized throughout transition 4, from bugle horn-calls<sup>115</sup> in the piano, double stops in the string instruments, and in imitation of the foreign piano melody from TV IV. Like previous transitions, transition 4 represents a disintegration of motives and gestures that signal the beginning of the end of the previous section, and the recognizable themes or variations it contained. Most importantly, this transition foreshadows the final material composed by Schnittke before the statement of Mahler's unfinished sketch. Transition 4 can be divided into three parts, (a) mm. 100-109, (b) mm. 110-126, and (c) mm. 127-135 (see Figure 3-23).

Figure 3-24a-c shows the analysis of transition 4, ending just before the Golden Section (more on this later). Bugle calls are highlighted in yellow, the counter-melody from TV-IV is highlighted in blue, and any instance of a quartal/quintal gesture is highlighted in red. The bugle calls, which only occur in the piano in sub-section a, are attention grabbing, ascending successive fourths that signal both a change in musical tone, as well as in Schnittke's approach to the rest of the piano quartet.

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<sup>115</sup> Many examples of these calls can be found at <http://www.music.army.mil/music/buglecalls/>



**Figure 3-23: Overview of Transition 4, mm. 101-135.**

Pizzicato strings produce the resemblance of the TV-IV counter-melody, each iteration finding its harmonic and accompanying voices altered. The original counter-melody is stated in G minor, having a melodic contour of  $\langle 2,1,2,3,2,0 \rangle$ . The first (mm. 101-103) and second (mm. 105-106) altered statements of this melody have a pc set (0167). The violin statement of the melody contains the same melodic contour as the original melody, while the viola and cello lines differ. The third iteration (mm. 108-109) of the melody is completely different in its harmonic pc set (0158) and contour  $\langle 1,1,0,1,2,3 \rangle$ , signaling an end to the first section of this transition.

Transition 4 subsections a and b contain multiple quartal/quintal gestures (highlighted in red, Figure 3-24b) that hide dissonant and fragmented outlines of the phrygian melody, a sonic burying of Mahler's unfinished sketch. Figure 3-25a shows the first occurrence of the embedded theme (mm. 105-107), hidden amidst flowing quartal lines and accented high notes. The fragmented theme begins with a half-step rather than a perfect fourth leap, but functions in the same manner as the first measure of the

(a) 9

97

102

107

(b)

pizz.  
mf

pizz.  
mf

mf

arco  
p

arco  
p

arco  
p

pizz.  
f

pizz.  
f

pizz.  
f

f

f

f

arco gliss.  
p

arco gliss.  
p

arco gliss.  
p

p

p cresc. sempre

- S 1601

Figure 3-24a: mm. 101-111 analyzed. Bugle calls are highlighted in yellow, the counter-melody from TV IV is highlighted in blue, and any instance of a quartal/quintal gesture is highlighted in red.

The image displays a musical score for measures 112 through 128. It is divided into three systems, each with a piano part (top two staves) and a violin part (bottom two staves). The piano part includes dynamic markings such as *f*, *mp*, *mf*, *cresc.*, and *ff*. The violin part includes dynamic markings such as *f*, *mf*, and *ff*. The score is annotated with highlights: yellow highlights indicate bugle calls, blue highlights indicate counter-melody from TV IV, and red highlights indicate instances of a quartal/quintal gesture. A vertical line is drawn between measures 123 and 124, with a circled 'C' above it. The page number '112' is at the top left of the first system, '118' is at the top left of the second system, and '124' is at the top left of the third system. At the bottom center, there is a page number '- 5 - 133'.

Figure 3-24b: mm. 112-128 analyzed. Bugle calls are highlighted in yellow, the counter-melody from TV IV is highlighted in blue, and any instance of a quartal/quintal gesture is highlighted in red.

129

134

138

*mp*

*mp*

*mf*

*ff*

*f*

*ff*

*p sub.*

*p sub.*

*p sub.*

*p sub.*

*mp*

Figure 3-24c: mm. 128-135 analyzed. Bugle calls are highlighted in yellow, the counter-melody from TV IV is highlighted in blue, and any instance of a quartal/quintal gesture is highlighted in red.

phrygian melody (see Figure 3-25b for reference).

Transition 4b (mm. 110-126) yields flowing quartal/quintal gestures, juxtaposed against hidden descending lines. Figure 3-26 (transition 4b1, mm. 110-114) shows a quartal gesture from F# up to Eb and a descending line from F to Bb in the right hand, while the left hand outlines another quartal gesture and passing motion from C up to D. Figure 3-27 (transition 4b2, mm. 115-118) highlights an imitation in both hands, while the right hand outlines a <2,1,0,3,4> spiral cell. The left hand contains an inner-voice appoggiatura that then ascends up in quartal leaps. Figure 3-28 (transition 4b3, mm. 119-121) shows a descending line in the right hand (F-C#), while the right hand outlines two different quartal gestures, which connect by half-step back to the F in Figure 3-27. The last section, transition 4b4 (Figure 3-29, mm. 122-126), begins with an emphasized high G in the right hand which then descends more than an octave. At the end of this descending line, inner-voice quartal gestures interact with the left-hand ascending M7 intervals and descending quartal gestures (see Figure 3-29).

The image shows a piano score for three measures (105-107) in 6/8 time. The right hand has a melody that includes a highlighted phrygian theme fragment in measure 106. The left hand provides accompaniment with chords and moving lines. The key signature has one flat (Bb).

Figure 3-25a: Embedded phrygian theme fragment in transition to TV V, mm. 105-107.

The image shows a single measure of music in 6/8 time, featuring a descending line in the right hand. The key signature has one flat (Bb).

Figure 3-25b: First measure of Mahler's phrygian melody.

Figure 3-26 shows a piano score for measures 110-114. The right hand (RH) features a descending chromatic line, while the left hand (LH) plays a quartal line. The score includes dynamics such as *p*, *cresc. sempre*, and *f*. Performance markings include *8<sup>vb</sup>* and *Ped.*

Figure 3-26: Middleground reduction of transition material (2), mm. 110-114, showing a quartal line in the left hand, while the right hand performs a descending chromatic line.

Figure 3-27 shows a piano score for measures 115-118. The right hand (RH) features a spiral cell  $\langle 2,1,0,3,4 \rangle$ , while the left hand (LH) plays a fragment of the phrygian melody. The score includes dynamics such as *mp cresc.* and *f*. A circle indicates imitation in both hands.

Figure 3-27: Middleground reduction of transition material (2), mm. 115-118, analyzed, showing a right hand spiral cell  $\langle 2,1,0,3,4 \rangle$ , and a left-hand fragment of the phrygian melody. The circle indicates imitation in both hands.



Figure 3-28 shows a middleground reduction of transition material (2) for measures 119-121. The score is presented in two systems. The upper system is for the Piano (Pno.) and includes a treble clef staff with a descending melodic line and a bass clef staff with a quartal line. The dynamic marking is *mf cresc.* in measure 119 and *ff* in measure 121. An *8va* marking is placed above the treble staff in measure 121. The lower system is for the Piano (Piano) and shows a treble clef staff with a descending line and a bass clef staff with a quartal line. The word "Quartal" is written below the bass staff in both measures 120 and 121. An asterisk (\*) is located at the end of the first system.

Figure 3-28: Middleground reduction of transition material (2), mm. 119-121, showing a descending line in the right hand, and a left hand quartal line.

Figure 3-29 shows a middleground reduction of transition material (2) for measures 122-126. The score is presented in two systems. The upper system is for the Piano (Pno.) and includes a treble clef staff with a descending melodic line and a bass clef staff with a succession of major 7ths and 4ths. The dynamic marking is *8va* in measure 122 and *Red.* in measure 123. The lower system is for the Piano (Piano) and shows a treble clef staff with a descending line and a bass clef staff with a succession of major 7ths and 4ths. The word "8va" is written below the bass staff in measure 122. An asterisk (\*) is located at the end of the first system.

Figure 3-29: Middleground reduction of transition material (2), mm. 122-126, showing a descending line in the right hand, and a succession of M7's and 4ths in the left hand.

In total, transition 4b contains four different emphasized sub-sections, where the beginning right-hand pitch of each sub-section outlines a G dominant seventh-chord in third inversion (with an omitted fifth). Transition 4b1 begins with an F in the right-hand; 4b2 and 4b3 begins with a B, and 4b4 with a G. While this dominant seventh-chord (F-B-G) is not aurally obvious, it is present through several motivic lines and connective half/whole-steps.

A middleground reduction of transition 4b1-4 can be found in Figure 3-30. The piano right hand ascends from F to the emphasized high G, and then descends back to the F before one final quartal gesture that continues into transition 4c. The red lines in Figure 3-30 indicate connecting whole/half steps, some with octave displacement, between each subset of transition 4b1-4. The left-hand reduction also shows several lower-neighbor tones and consonant skips before M7 leaps and quartal gestures (that also continue into transition 4c).

Transition 4c continues briefly with descending quartal motion until sputtering out of dynamic and rhythmic energy. The strings follow with material similar to that in the introduction analysis of this chapter (see Figure 3-8). After these connected spiral cells, ascending quartal motion (m. 132) in the piano begins the restart of musical energy. Tone-clusters in the piano are used to rhythmically modulate from a duple-triple feel to more of a simple-duple feel, both a rhythmic and dynamic crescendo into TV-V. While mm. 133-135 may seem like just transitional material, the thematic material from TV-V is derived from the rhythmic and harmonic content of these three measures, further connecting transition 4 and TV-V to one another.

Transition 4c (mm. 127-135) also finds itself at the “Golden Section” of Schnittke’s Piano Quartet, temporally placed 0.618-of-the-way through the piece.<sup>116</sup> Due to the amount of contrapuntal symmetry throughout the piano quartet, it is conceivable that Schnittke knew of and implemented mathematics in his compositions.<sup>117</sup> Normally, the golden section presents itself as the climax of the composition, whether it be defined by dynamics, rhythmic or harmonic gestures, or by the texture of the ensemble. Schnittke, being the master manipulator that he was, writes a musical inverted bell-curve<sup>118</sup>, a descending line that then ascends while dynamically and rhythmically crescendoing until TV-V. The string voices end a long series of glissandi at m. 127, a deep structural element that defends m. 127 as the golden section.

**Figure 3-30: Middleground reduction of transition 4b1-4 (mm. 110-126) showing descending inner-voices of piano right hand. Piano left hand has lower-neighbor motion and consonant skips until M7 leaps and quartal gestures. Red lines indicate connective steps between transition subsets.**

<sup>116</sup> To find the golden section, multiply the total number of measures in a piece by 0.618. In this case, 205 x 0.618 = 126.69. Because m. 127 is a structural point, I rounded 126.69 up. For more info on the golden section, see: Charles Madden, *Fractals in Music* (Salt Lake City, UT: High Art Press, 1999), 57-76.

<sup>117</sup> Currently, no insight into this matter exists, to my knowledge. Perhaps future studies on this matter will be explored!

<sup>118</sup> Or, an upside-down arc, a circumzenithal arc, or a convex half-circle.

### **Thematic Variation V (mm. 136-152)**

The final Thematic Variation (TV-V) expands upon contrapuntal techniques from previous variations and transitions, including contour emulation, rhythmic variance, and harmonically displaced canonic melodies. Temporally, TV V adds to the golden section, m. 127, as the climax of the piano quartet. The piano voice contains the phrygian melody, masked as tone clusters that mimic its rhythm and contour. The string voices, set in simple-duple time and in unison rhythm, rhythmically compliment the piano tone clusters until breaking out into canonic motives.

In Figure 3-31a-b, the red highlighted portion is the varied theme. The blue, yellow, and purple highlighted areas are the canonized tone-rows. The first four measures of TV V (mm. 136-139) connect to previous material by mimicking the interjection of simple-duple meter into compound-duple meter. While the piano performs the phrygian melody in tone clusters and in compound meter, the string voices perform their rhythmic complement (see Figure 3-32) within the same pitch-class set (012) throughout mm. 136-139. All three string lines perform in the same rhythm but differ in their contours to keep the same pc set. For example, the beginning notes (from top to bottom) of m. 139 are D-Db-C (012). The next notes in m. 139 are B-C-C# (012). The next, in this same fashion, are C-Bb-B (012)--and so on. This set pattern continues until m. 140, where Schnittke canonizes the violin line, creating a chaotic and disparate soundscape between each string voice. Each canonic motive begins from pc set (012) and follows the rhythm and contour of the violin line (as seen in Figure 3-31a-b). The violin line continues to rhythmically compliment the piano line, as seen in Figure 3-32.

The image displays a musical score for measures 136-144, divided into two systems. The first system (measures 136-140) features Violin, Viola, and Violoncello parts with blue highlights in measures 139 and 140, and a Piano part with a red highlight. The second system (measures 141-144) features Violin, Viola, and Violoncello parts with blue highlights in measures 141-142 and 143, and a Piano part with a red highlight. The Piano part in both systems is highlighted in red, indicating it mimics the phrygian melody.

Figure 3-31a: Thematic Variation V (mm. 136-152), mm. 136-144, analyzed. The piano line mimics the rhythm and contour of the phrygian melody (red), while the string voices rhythmically complement the piano from mm. 136-139 before breaking out into three different canonized motives, highlighted in blue and yellow.

The image displays a musical score for measures 145 through 152. The score is organized into two systems. The first system includes measures 145, 146, 147, and 148. The second system includes measures 149, 150, 151, and 152. The instruments are Violin 2 (Vln. 2), Viola (Vla.), Cello (Vc.), and Piano (Pno.).

Measures 145 and 146 are highlighted in yellow, indicating a canonized motive. Measures 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, and 152 are highlighted in purple, indicating another canonized motive. The Piano part features complex chordal textures and rhythmic patterns throughout the passage.

Figure 3-31b: Thematic Variation V (mm. 136-152), mm. 145-152, analyzed. Canonized motives, highlighted in yellow and purple.

Like previous TV's, the use of canon and pc sets create an affective sound-body that interacts with Mahler's phrygian melody. Due to the juxtaposition of harmonic, rhythmic, and structural ideas, the sound-body is heard at its most vulnerable and unstable state. With the upward glissandi and hammering tone cluster of the performing ensemble at m. 152, the sound-body dissipates into the last transition before the statement of Mahler's unfinished sketch.

The image displays three systems of musical notation for a piano accompaniment. Each system consists of two staves: a top staff in treble clef and a bottom staff in bass clef. The first system covers measures 136 to 141. The second system covers measures 142 to 147. The third system covers measures 148 to 152. The notation features complex rhythmic patterns, including sixteenth-note runs and chords, with some measures containing glissandi or clusters. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major/D minor), and the time signature is 3/8.

**Figure 3-32: Thematic Variation V rhythmic complements, where the top line is the violin and the bottom line is the piano.**

### **Transition 5 (mm. 153-178)**

Just as the final notes of TV-V begin to dissipate via silence in m. 152, the transition to Mahler's unfinished sketch begins. Transition 5 violently utters contrapuntal techniques from previous TVs and transitions until a five-bar succession of full-ensemble glissandi (mm. 170-175) literally runs out of instrument to play, leaving only silence in its wake. Techniques used from previous TVs and transitions include the counter-melody from TV IV, chromatic wedging, inversional symmetry, and quartal gestures.

A reserved, descending line of fourths played by the violin begin transition 5, only to be cut off by a bombastic piano restatement of the counter-melody from TV IV, m. 91. The counter-melody from TV IV is divided into four-bar phrases, where each restatement is followed by two bars of quartal gestures (see Figure 3-34). In mm. 155-160, the quartal material that follows the counter-melody is extended to include symmetrical wedging ( Figure 3-33).

The string material that accompanies the counter-melody (mm. 155-160) mimics TV V, but in a less structured manner.<sup>119</sup> The counter-melody is stated two more times before the conclusion of transition 5: once from mm. 161-164 and again from mm. 165-170. With every iteration, the counter-melody statement and its accompaniment become more dissonant and sporadic, with mm. 170-174 consisting only of string glissandi and piano tone clusters that accelerate and ascend until, like the end of TV V, there are no more notes registrally left to play on the instrument.

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<sup>119</sup> The string lines in TV V are restricted within the confines of either pc set (012), or in canon. The lines present in transition V are more sporadic, with no restrictions.



The final four measures before the statement of Mahler's unfinished sketch are written rests marked "in tempo." Schnittke uses these four bars as an "ear cleanser" to allow for the perception and cognition of the unfinished sketch. This retention (the incorporation of past experience into the present), allows for the structural endeavor of consciousness and experience, the goal-oriented truth Schnittke sought all along.

The musical score consists of two systems. The first system, labeled 'Piano', contains measures 155 through 158. Measure 155 begins with a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic and features a complex rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. Measure 156 continues this pattern. Measure 157 shows a change in dynamics to mezzo-piano (*mp*) and includes a fermata over the final note. Measure 158 concludes the system with a melodic line. The second system, labeled 'Pno.', contains measures 159 and 160. Measure 159 features a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. Measure 160 shows a dynamic shift from fortissimo (*ff*) to fortississimo (*fff*) and includes a fermata over the final note. A double bar line follows measure 160. A bracket below the bass line of measure 160 indicates an interval of  $8^{vb}$  (octave below).

Figure 3-33: Recapitulation of counter-melody from TV IV, m. 91, followed by inversive wedging.

## Chapter 4: Conclusion

Alfred Schnittke's Piano Quartet is a trichotomy of time, consisting of quoted material from the past, appearing new in the present, and affecting the future. The Piano Quartet draws its inspiration from an unfinished 2<sup>nd</sup>-movement Piano Quartet sketch by Gustav Mahler, written in 1876. More than 100 years would pass (1988) before Schnittke "imagined it [his Piano Quartet] not as a continuation [of Mahler's sketch] but rather music that would approach Mahler's music – as a reminder that the end will come, and that was the solution. At first the attempt to remember and then remembrance itself."<sup>120</sup> Schnittke's meticulous manipulation of Mahler's theme in his thematic variations (TV) creates both small- and large-scale circular-patterns of memory, a musical epitaph for Mahler and himself.

The purpose of this thesis has been to identify the intentionality in Schnittke's realization of Mahler's unfinished scherzo sketch by investigating the temporal structures in Schnittke's Piano Quartet. By identifying and explaining Schnittke's meticulous placement and manipulation of the theme from Mahler's unfinished sketch, I have investigated the way Schnittke manipulates time, from rhythm and meter, to larger structures of temporal space and musical form. In essence, Schnittke has created a large-scale structural endeavor of memory, for both Mahler and himself. Schnittke imagined that his Piano Quartet was "a reminder that the end will come, and that was the solution,"<sup>121</sup> insinuating that the *approach* to Mahler's scherzo sketch (memory) was

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<sup>120</sup> Dixon, *Polystylism as Dialogue: A Bakhtinian Interpretation*, 246-247.

<sup>121</sup> as quoted in: Gavin Thomas Dixon, *Polystylism as Dialogue: A Bakhtinian Interpretation of Schnittke's Symphonies 3, 4, and his Concerto Grosso No. 4/Symphony No. 5* (PhD diss., Goldsmiths College, 2007), 246-247.

more important than the actual *result*.<sup>122</sup>

In my theoretical analysis of Schnittke's Piano Quartet, I suggest that the contrapuntal manipulation of Mahler's theme creates an autonomous sound-body that interacts with previous (and future, arguably) modes of perception to create a circular-pattern of memory. The placement of five separate thematic variations throughout the entire piano quartet with transitional material in between the variations creates a rondo-esque structure. By not using the unadorned theme first, Schnittke further blurs the perception of said theme. It is only after the completion of Schnittke's Piano Quartet, where Mahler's sketch is placed in its entirety, that previous statements (TV) of Mahler's theme begin to make sense.

This circular-pattern of remembering is reminiscent of Edmund Husserl's phenomenologically-driven theory of time-consciousness. According to Husserl, time-consciousness is a continuous stream that interacts with human subjectivity. The mechanisms that create such continua, retention and protention, allow a melody to exist as an object and to be conceptualized as such. By utilizing Husserl's theory, Mahler's theme becomes an object – which in-turn becomes a sound-object (and then sound-body) – that affects memory and perception. Hence, Alfred Schnittke's Piano Quartet is a trichotomy of time, being from the past, appearing in the present, and affecting the future.

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<sup>122</sup> Several comments found on YouTube videos of Schnittke's Piano Quartet finds that the general knowledge of Schnittke, and his compositional technique, are severely lacking in popular culture. Schnittke's music approaches compositional technique from a philosophical point of view, as well as a technical point of view; the two go hand-in-hand. Rather than use a compositional *system*, Schnittke's music employs polystylism and the manipulation found therein. There is a reason for every note and mark found in a Schnittke score, making the *approach* to music more significant than the actual *result*.

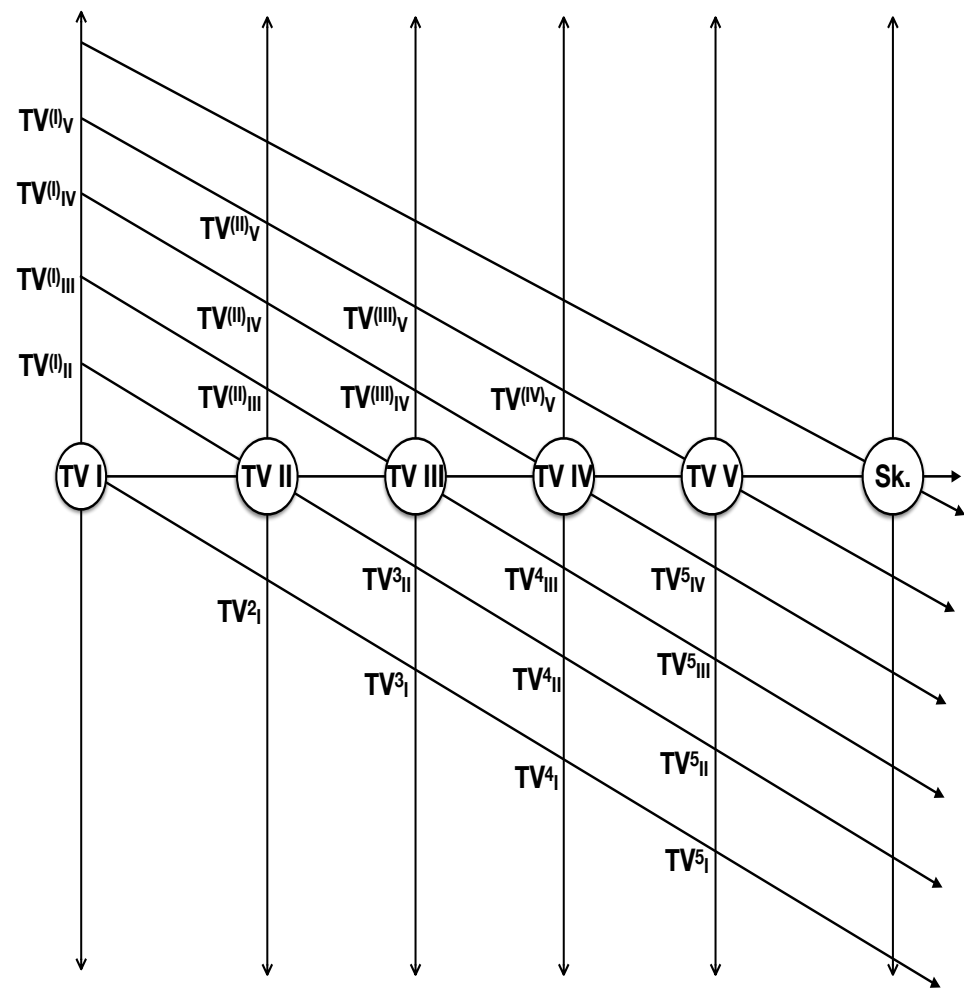


Figure 4-1: Husserl's time-consciousness graph reflecting the thematic variations and sketch of Schnittke's Piano Quartet.

Figure 4-1 places each thematic variation onto Husserl's graph of time-consciousness. The circular-nature inherent to Schnittke's Piano Quartet can be found in Figure 4-1, justifying the quartet as a circular-pattern of memory. Each TV ebbs and flows throughout retention and protention via time. Because Schnittke's quartet is based off of material from the past, which is experienced now and affects the future, Figure 4-1 could be continued indefinitely. As Kane states:

Like the gestalt figures that litter the pages of Merleau-Ponty's text, are we not supposed to find in Schaeffer's explorations of the locked groove (*sillon fermé*) and the cut bell (*cloche coupée*) small figurations of a much larger field – namely, a field of listening understood not simply as the physiological response to an auditory stimulus but as a field of sound objects intentionally constituted by the subject through various modes of listening? Even in Schaeffer's tantalizing sentence, one can sense him standing in the footprints of Merleau-Ponty, who famously proclaimed “that phenomenology can be practiced and identified as a manner or style of thinking, that it existed as a movement before arriving at complete awareness of itself as a philosophy.”<sup>123</sup>

Schnittke's Piano Quartet is not just an auditory phenomenon, a physiological response to an auditory stimulus. Underneath the dissonance and seemingly random events is a meticulously plotted story, or better yet, memory that melds both musical and physical time to pay homage to one of the greatest composers of the 20<sup>th</sup>-century, Gustav Mahler.

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<sup>123</sup> Brian Kane, *Sound Unseen*, 18.

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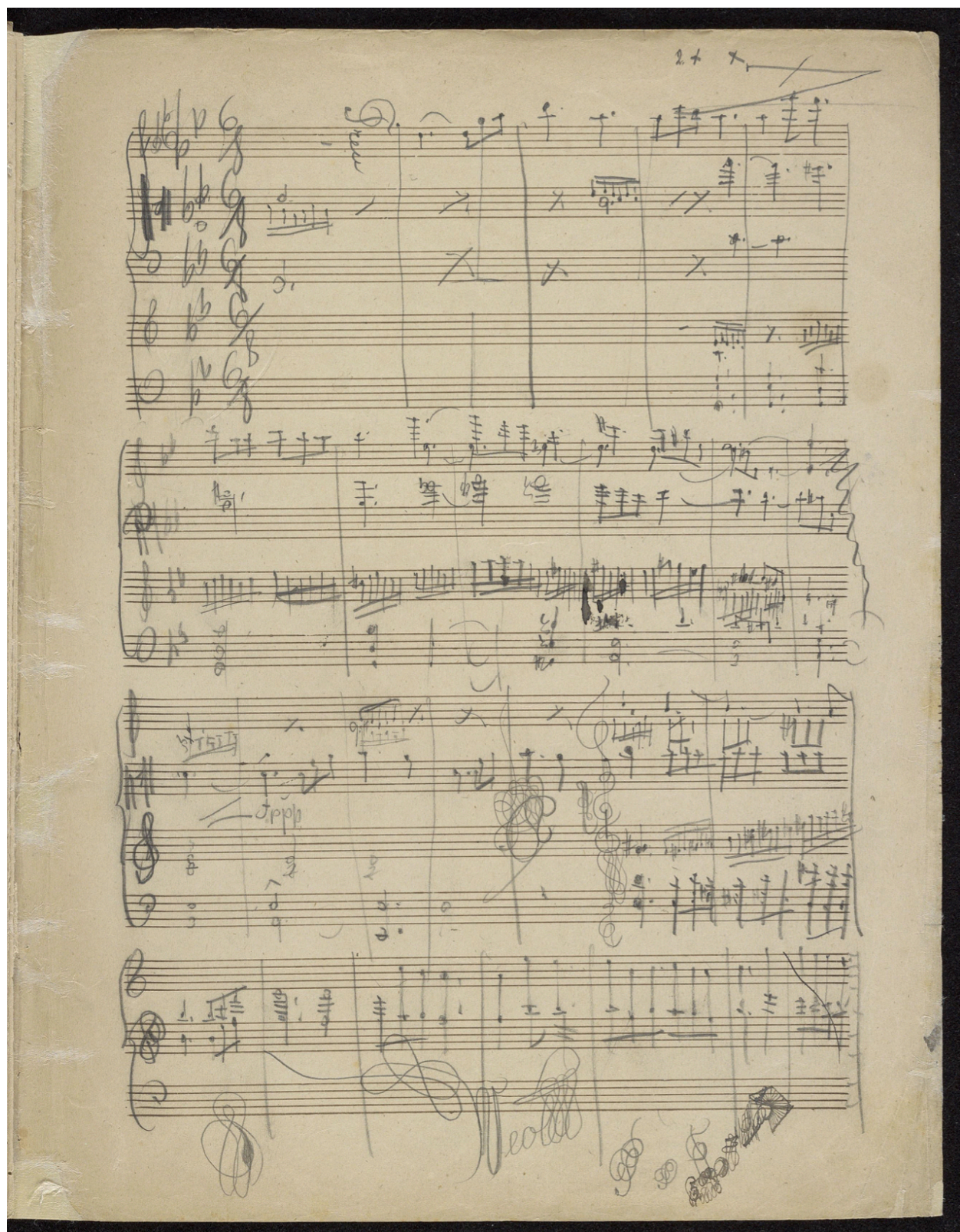


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## Appendix: Mahler's Autograph G-minor Sketch

Handwritten musical score on aged paper, featuring multiple staves with complex notation, including notes, rests, and dynamic markings such as *ppp*. The score is heavily scribbled over with ink, particularly in the lower half, and includes a large signature at the bottom center.

27 X





This image shows a page of handwritten musical notation on aged, yellowed paper. The page is numbered '94' in the top right corner. The notation is arranged in several systems of staves. The top system consists of two staves with a treble clef on the left and a bass clef on the right. The second system also has two staves, with a treble clef on the left and a bass clef on the right. The third system consists of two staves, both with treble clefs. The fourth system consists of two staves, both with treble clefs. The fifth system consists of two empty staves. The sixth system consists of two empty staves. The seventh system consists of two empty staves. The eighth system consists of two empty staves. The ninth system consists of two empty staves. The tenth system consists of two empty staves. The notation includes various notes, rests, and clefs. There are some large, dark scribbles on the right side of the page, particularly on the second and third systems. The paper shows signs of age, including discoloration and some wear along the edges.

## Vita

Harry Ward graduated from Missouri State University, Springfield, MO, in 2014 with a Bachelor of Music degree emphasizing Music Composition. He received his Master of Music Degree in Music Theory from the University of Tennessee – Knoxville in August, 2018.

Harry's research interests include music cognition, philosophy in music, Russian music, analysis of recent music, and music theory pedagogy. He has taught music theory and ear training at Missouri State University and The University of Tennessee. Harry has presented his research at the College Music Society's Southern Regional conference.

Harry's compositions have been performed throughout the United States. His "*Memory Bias*" was the winning composition in the multi-keyboard solo category of the Percussive Arts Society (PAS) and was performed at the 2018 PAS National Conference. Harry plans to attend the University of Arizona – Tucson in the Fall of 2018 to pursue his Ph.D. in music theory.