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Anarchy in the Unity: Compositional and Aesthetic Tensions in Mauricio Kagel's Antithese für einen Darsteller mit elektronischen und öffentlichen Klängen (1962)

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Graduate Program in Music

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree in Doctor of Philosophy

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ANARCHY IN THE UNITY:
COMPOSITIONAL AND AESTHETIC TENSIONS
IN MAURICIO KAGEL'S *ANTITHESE FÜR EINEN DARSTELLER
MIT ELEKTRONISCHEN UND ÖFFENTLICHEN KLÄNGEN* (1962)

(Spine title: Anarchy in the Unity: Mauricio Kagel's *Antithese*)

(Thesis Format: Monograph)

by

Makoto Mikawa

Graduate Program in Music

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

The School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
The University of Western Ontario
London, Ontario, Canada

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THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE AND POSTDOCTORAL STUDIES

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ABSTRACT

In 1962 the Argentine-German composer Mauricio Kagel (1931-2008) completed an innovative multimedia/interdisciplinary piece, *Antithese für einen Darsteller mit elektronischen und öffentlichen Klängen*. The unique compositional style and formal structure consisting of heterogeneous compositional components reflected his profound insights into issues inherent in postwar avant-garde music. Kagel remarked strikingly that “anarchy in the piece was omnipresent.” Indeed, his use of the term ‘anarchy’ is a keystone not only of the structural features of *Antithese*, but also of Kagel’s aesthetic of music in the piece. The present study seeks to reveal Kagel’s idea of anarchy in musical context and how he attempts to epitomize this particular thought in the complex and transliterate formal structure of *Antithese*.

This study first reviews Kagel’s Buenos Aires period in terms of the cultivation and development of his musical composition and notion of anarchy. The review also incorporates problematic aspects of postwar new music in Europe which emerged in the period chronologically parallel to Kagel’s Argentinian era. The next stage deals with Kagel’s engagement in electroacoustic composition in Germany and the development of his own compositional method and style in its realm, where he consciously distanced himself from controversy between Parisian *musique concrète* and Cologne *elektronische Musik*.

Because *Antithese* is a unique form of Instrumental Theater – a compositional approach Kagel invented – and a piece he dedicated to John Cage, this study examines distinctive features of Kagel’s theatricalization in the piece in contrast to his other theatrical pieces, as well as to Cage’s musical theater work. This examination clarifies the aesthetic distinction between Kagel and Cage which underlies their theatrical-theoretical differences. Intriguing in terms of compositional aesthetic content is that *Antithese* encompasses Kagel’s serial thought and an approach of *Grenzüberschreitung* of art genres which may seem antithetical in compositional-characteristic terms. This feature suggests that a latent part of his aesthetic intention was to create tension as a concealed component derived from the coexistence of heterogeneous ideas and elements on various levels of *Antithese*’s complex structure. Indeed, tension, as an indispensable element of

the piece, is a key to deciphering Kagel's notion of anarchy in music.

Keywords: anarchy in music, postwar avant-garde music, electroacoustic music, multimedia/interdisciplinary composition, musical continuity, theatricalization, sectionalization, montage technique, psychologization, Instrumental Theater, serial thought, open form, *Verfransung* of art genres, *Grenzüberschreitung*, liberal anarchism.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background and Context

Due to the diversity of compositional styles in the 1960s, multifariousness as the characteristic signature of this period carries a connotation of compositional individualism, where composers sought their own musical language and materials, and their own structural design. In this context, some of the postwar avant-garde were keen on exploring new interrelations between musical composition and other fields of art. In other words, interdisciplinarity became an attractive proposition for the artistic expression of many avant-garde composers.

While such multimedia work extended the range of concepts and contexts in compositional thought, it often aroused controversy about the definition of music. Critics and audiences could even occasionally question whether a piece was still music, in their encounters with unprecedented multimedia hybrids. This question seems to have derived from “[t]he conflicts and tensions between the two principles . . . of heterogeneity and unity, run[ning] through the history of twentieth-century music.”¹ This aspect is one of the unavoidable but significant theoretical and aesthetic issues in any examination of postwar avant-garde interdisciplinary work.

This dissertation focuses on a composer who related the tensions created by the coexistence of heterogeneity and unity to an idea of anarchy. The concept of anarchy in this context is important, because it contains ideological, aesthetic, and musical implications. Growing out an early 1960s’ tendency in which postwar avant-garde composers and artists became ever more conscious of multimedia work of art, Mauricio Kagel (1931-2008) composed *Antithese für einen Darsteller mit elektronischen und öffentlichen Klängen* (1962) with an interdisciplinary principle of his own. Consisting of electronically generated music emitted by loudspeakers and a series of “main actions” executed by a performer, this work has played a significant role in the development of multimedia/interdisciplinarity in musical composition. With the amalgamation of the

¹ Björn Heile, “Collage vs. Compositional Control: The interdependency of modernist and postmodern approaches in the work of Mauricio Kagel,” in *Postmodern Music/Postmodern Thought*, edited by Judy Lochhead and Joseph Auner (New York and London: Routledge, 2002), 288.

“autonomous work”² (a self-contained piece recorded on magnetic tape) and the mutable, performer-dependent visual components, there are further syntheses or interactions within each of the prerecorded and live performance domains.

The musical part, on the one hand, combines two different compositional styles prevalent in electroacoustic music at that time; *elektronische Musik* in Cologne and *musique concrète* in Paris.³ The fundamental difference between these methods is that the former creates a musical piece “on the basis of synthetic sounds,” and the latter “on the basis of real noises.”⁴ The performing part, on the other hand, consists of the performer arbitrarily choosing “main actions” specified by the composer and forming an order for them. In other words, the performer’s task is to create a *series* of actions, although there are cases in which “the actor cannot give an interpretation of the musical processes” due to “the variable forming of the scenic order.”⁵ In any case, Kagel provides a graphic score with verbal instructions intended only for the actor. Each of twenty-three different main actions indicated by an adjective or verb – for instance, “gastronomic,” “furious,” “destroy,” – contains specific directions for its realization. Subtly underlying the structural concept of the acting part are the concomitant notions of arbitrariness and the serializing procedure.⁶ Finally, Kagel provides specific instructions for the stage scenery, consisting of various technical devices and props that are all related to the recording and reproduction of musical pieces. The main purpose of this idiosyncratic stage scenery is, according to Kagel, to “give the impression of a retrospective exhibition of the apparatus

² Mauricio Kagel, “Antithese: Spiel für einen Darsteller mit elektronische + öffentlichen Klängen” in *Das filmische Werk I: 1965-1985*, ed. Werner Klüppelholz and Lothar Prox (Amsterdam: Meulenhoff/Landshoff, 1985; Köln: DuMont Buchverlag, 1985), 17: “autonomes Werk.” Unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own.

³ For this synthesis of compositional principles of *elektronische Musik* and *musique concrète*, see Dieter Schnebel, *Mauricio Kagel: Musik Theater Film* (Köln: Verlag, M. DuMont Schauberg, 1970), 104; Björn Heile, *The Music of Mauricio Kagel* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 45. In the present study, to specify individual characteristic features, I will indicate *elektronische Musik* (in German) and *musique concrète* (in French), depending upon the context. When discussing electronic music in general or from a broader point of view, I will use the term “electroacoustic music.”

⁴ Werner Klüppelholz, *Über Mauricio Kagel* (Saarbrücken: Pfau-Verlag, 2003), 64: “auf der Basis synthetischer Klänge,” “auf der Basis realer Geräusche.”

⁵ Mauricio Kagel, *Antithese: Spiel für einen Darsteller mit elektronischen und öffentlichen Klängen 1962*, libretto-score by Mauricio Kagel (Frankfurt: Henry Litolf’s Verlag/C. F. Peters, 1965), 23.

⁶ Here serialization does not mean its procedure of twelve-tone pitch structure, for instance, like that explored and then established by the Second Viennese School. Rather, it is to create a series of order of the selected actions. In other words, the series deals not with pitch, but with the main actions as visual materials. The details of this serial aspect are discussed in Chapter Four.

which has been used for relaying sound from the beginning of the [twentieth] century up to the present day.”⁷

Antithese as a whole thus comprises conceptually heterogeneous and incompatible components, principles, and techniques. Its multicomponent, multilayered, polymorphic structure is, so to speak, a hallmark of Kagel’s composition, as is characteristic of many other works in his oeuvre. Due to the new approach of combining electroacoustic music and theatrical performance, as well as an eccentric stage setting, *Antithese* could be perceived as just another experimental multimedia work characteristic of the period. A close examination, however, reveals that its distinct “theatricalization of music”⁸ resulted not only from Kagel’s painstaking compositional plan, but also from an extraordinary original aesthetic force. More specifically, the motivation behind this force was based on Kagel’s critical perspective on the development of postwar avant-garde music, as well as his sharp observation of music in society at that time.

Hence, the stage version of *Antithese* is not an experimental work, although it does contain an element of aleatory since the form of the piece is arbitrarily constructed by the performer prior to the performance. In any case, the complex of heterogeneous compositional components, in which the individual component is also a complex of materials, elements, and methods, can hardly be deciphered without considering it from the perspective of Kagel’s original musical thought, which is inseparable from his aesthetic and philosophical intention. In *Antithese*, the idiosyncratic, novel, multiplexing and amalgamating compositional procedures of these incongruities diversely reflect Kagel’s thought.

Scope and Object of Study

Kagel’s selection of the title “*Antithese*” is likely to raise questions. “Antithesis” generally indicates a state of polarity or irreconcilability, and in a dialectic sense it represents a stage prior to synthesis. In this respect, the work’s title invites one to ask whether dialectical tension has already been resolved in the piece, is supposed to be

⁷ Kagel, *Antithese*, 19.

⁸ Klüppelholz, *Über Mauricio Kagel*, 61: “die Theatralisierung der Musik.”

resolved by the performer, or remains present as an irresolvable characteristic – a state of tension without reconciliation.

Further perplexing are the composer's various accounts of the piece. There are three distinctive descriptions of *Antithese* by Kagel: a letter to John Cage, who is the dedicatee of the work (1962), a lecture given in English for the Slee Lecture Recitals at the State University of New York at Buffalo (1965), and an interview with Wulf Herzogenrath and Gabriele Lueg (1986).

In the lecture, Kagel concisely explained his aesthetic motivation and the concept of Instrumental Theater and, subsequently, how these apply to *Antithese*.⁹ Interestingly, Kagel stated then he was “very much [convinced] that each musical process in composition is dialectical. This means that by the opposition of fundamental statements or behavior, you can arrive at very intense results, which are not only ideological but also musical.”¹⁰ Kagel thus suggests that even though *Antithese* may be characterized by a dialectical process, what the piece primarily achieves are “very intense results”; in other words, a concurrence of irresolvable tensions, rather than a harmonious synthesis. In terms of the ideological aspect of dialectic procedure in *Antithese*, Kagel's message to Cage may seem perplexing as well. In the letter written in December 1962, Kagel assured Cage that “the piece has no ‘anti’ and no ‘thèse’ which characterizes the music written to wide-awake antithesis.”¹¹ Although what Kagel meant by this statement is unclear, it seems to signal Kagel's aesthetic and philosophical conception in *Antithese*, rather than a formal or structural method for the piece.

In the interview conducted almost two decades after the lecture, Kagel provided clearer and more detailed thoughts concerning *Antithese*. Particularly striking is his reference to the notion of anarchy in the work. At first, Kagel pointed out a general issue of electroacoustic music up to the time of *Antithese*, as “something strangely hygienic: no

⁹ The content of the lecture is similar to that in the last half of Kagel's description regarding the music and film of *Antithese* in Kagel, *Das filmische Werk I*, 17; see Mauricio Kagel, “About the musical theater,” SLR 257 (lecture presented at the Slee Lecture Recitals at the State University of New York at Buffalo on 3 April 1965), in *Slee Lecture Recitals: A Catalogue*, 1957-1976, Music Library, State University of New York at Buffalo, Buffalo, transcribed by Sam Mirelman. Incidentally, the last sentence in his lecture at the SUNY Buffalo is virtually the same as a footnote in the English version of the libretto-score; see Mauricio Kagel, *Antithese*, 23.

¹⁰ Kagel, “About the musical theater.”

¹¹ Mauricio Kagel to John Cage, 23 December 1962, original letter in typescript, John Cage Collection, Northwestern University Music Library, Evanston, Illinois.

interpreter on the stage, neatly installed loudspeakers, and unalterable, repeatable sounds and always a whiff of antiseptic acoustics from the magnetic tape.”¹² Subsequently he attributed to *Antithese* the characteristic of anarchy:

Indeed, the hybrid form of electronic music plus live-performance then also began to take shape. But the anarchy in this piece was omnipresent. I do not deny that some sources of my work emerged already in Argentina, where I became acquainted with Spanish anarchists who lived there in exile due to the civil war. Anarchy in a classical sense – and not in the perverted conceptual confusion with which one later operated in the whole of Europe – is assuredly one of the noblest equalizations for utopia and deals with freedom rather than with violence. The motor of anarchism is a yearning for a far-reaching, fair freedom and not for permanent discord and terror. The actions, which the performer of *Antithese* incessantly carries out, . . . aim at an anarchic unity of life and art.¹³

Although extraordinary, this anecdotal reflection on *Antithese* creates further confusion.

Kagel articulates his musical-aesthetic thoughts on different planes: a tacit procedure inherent in his composition (the dialectic process in musical composition); a characterization of the piece through its title (neither “anti,” nor “thesis,” but “wide-awake antithesis”); and distinguishing features of antithetical elements and an implication of their coexistence (omnipresent anarchy and anarchic unity). However, when looking for a logical consistency among the statements cited above, one can assume that the individual aesthetic principles themselves are antithetical to one another. Such a hypothesis highlights the compositional and aesthetic tensions inherent in *Antithese* on a more detailed, theoretical level.

If it is true in Kagel’s oeuvre that “each musical process in composition is dialectical,” *Antithese* can be understood as a work yielded by synthesizing manifold

¹² Wulf Herzogenrath and Gabriele Lueg, “Gespräch mit Mauricio Kagel,” in *Die 60er Jahre: Kölns Weg zur Kunstmetropole: vom Happening zum Kunstmarkt: Kölnischer Kunstverein, 31.8.-16.11.1986*, ed. Wulf Herzogenrath and Gabriele Lueg (Köln: Kölnischer Kunstverein, 1986), 180: “weil die elektronische Musik damals etwas seltsam Hygienisches ausstrahlte: Auf der Bühne keine Interpreten, nur sauber aufgestellte Lautsprecher, nicht veränderbare, vom Tonband wiederholbare Klänge und immer ein Hauch antiseptischer Akustik.”

¹³ Ibid.: “Zwar begann auch damals die Mischform elektronische Musik plus Live-Aufführung Gestalt anzunehmen. Aber die Anarchie in diesem Stück war omnipräsent. Ich leugne es nicht: Einige Quellen meiner Arbeit entstanden schon in Argentinien, wo ich spanische Anarchisten kennenlernte, die dort aufgrund des Bürgerkrieges im Exil lebten. Anarchie im klassischen Sinne – und nicht in der perversierten Begriffsverwirrung, mit der man später in ganz Europa operierte – ist sicher eine der edelsten Gleichsetzungen für Utopie und hat eher mit Freiheit als mit Gewalt zu tun. Motor des Anarchismus ist die Sehnsucht nach einer tiefgehenden, gerechten Freiheit und nicht nach Unfrieden und Terror in Permanenz. Die Aktionen, die der Darsteller von *Antithese* pausenlos durchführt, . . . zielen auf eine anarchische Einheit von Leben und Kunst.”

elements as well. Nevertheless, in his letter to Cage, the composer suggests that the work contains no contradictory materials, but is itself the antithesis of something. Further, assuming there is no ‘anti’ and ‘thèse’ in the piece, at least the acting part is supposed to depict an “anarchic *unity* of life and art,” which implies that incongruous materials, elements, and ideas are somehow ‘omnipresent’ in the work. Moreover, the acting part as a compositional component is supposed to be performed with the musical part, which itself amalgamates the compositional principles of *elektronische Musik* and *musique concrète*. One may therefore hypothesize that unity results from a dialectical composition of those heterogeneous aspects. And yet the title itself still poses the paradoxical riddle, locking us in a vicious cycle.

According to the 1986 interview, Kagel’s idea of anarchy in musical composition originates in part from his own experience, which he then transmuted into *Antithese*. Therefore, anarchy could simply represent Kagel’s thoughts about composition at a specific time in his personal history. Particularly in the context of his remark cited above, anarchy in *Antithese* is equivocal, depending on whether it refers to a technical-theoretical context, a philosophical-aesthetic context, or to an integrated conception of these. Hence, certain keywords such as “hybrid form,” “omnipresent anarchy,” “motor of anarchism,” and “anarchic unity” evoke different meanings depending on contexts and compositional perspectives. At the same time, Kagel did not define anarchy as “discord,” but rather implied “harmony” as a result of “noble equalization.” This can perhaps be a basis for investigating individual meanings or connotations of the term in different contexts – for example, compositional-theoretical aspects of *Antithese*, Kagel’s philosophy and aesthetic of music at the time of this particular piece, and his political or ideological commitments.

Taking Kagel’s conceptions of anarchy as a starting point, the present study seeks to explain the composer’s philosophical and aesthetic thoughts in *Antithese* by examining individual components of the piece and its overall formation. In deciphering their complex interactions and interrelations, some contradictions may be expected due to the potential for multiple interpretations, as well as the fluidity of the work itself. However, the internal and external facts regarding *Antithese* provide some hints on how to construe the work in a logical way. By this means, I hope to illuminate the intention behind the composer’s titling of the work.

This study also seeks to clarify the relationship of anarchy to the idea of multimedia/interdisciplinary composition. If the work transgresses boundaries [*Grenzüberschreitung*] of art genres, Kagel's incitement of anarchy may just be an idiomatic symptom of interdisciplinary composition. Theodor W. Adorno, for instance, called the tendency or phenomenon of musical works to become involved with techniques or principles of other arts a *Verfransung* [infringement] of art genres.¹⁴ Interpreting *Antithese*'s interdisciplinary traits in this light provides an interesting example of a discrepancy between Kagel and Adorno. Adorno's use of the term *Verfransung* is not exactly positive, but rather suggests his skepticism about the musical (and artistic) tendencies present at that time. In contrast, Kagel's interdisciplinary approach in *Antithese*, which was in fact an instance of *Grenzüberschreitung*, indicates a positive direction, and an affirmative meaning of anarchy. This example illuminates a salient contrast in aesthetic orientation between the influential philosopher of "neue Musik" (but not postwar avant-garde music) and one of the standard-bearers of postwar avant-garde music. Kagel's affirmative characterization of anarchy in *Antithese* reflects his eager exploration of collaborative musical composition. However, it is too reductive to consider anarchy and interdisciplinarity in a simple one-to-one relationship. Instead, the present study seeks to pinpoint the significant connection by considering the historical background that motivated Kagel to achieve the extraordinary form of *Antithese*. Thus, this project also aims to reveal the significance of *Antithese* as an agent of Kagel's distinct aesthetic and critical thought in social, political, and philosophical contexts.

¹⁴ This term first appeared in Theodor W. Adorno, "Die Kunst und die Künste," in *Ohne Leitbild: Parva Aesthetica* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1967) in his writings. Part of his conception of *Verfransung* reappeared in Adorno, *Ästhetische Theorie* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1972), 271. Incidentally, *Grenzüberschreitung* is a specific and later interpretation of *Verfransung*. For a discussion in this regard, see Christine Eichel, *Vom Ermatten der Avantgarde zur Vernetzung der Künste: Perspektiven einer interdisziplinären Ästhetik im Spätwerk Theodor W. Adorno* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1993) and "Von einem, der auszog, die Theorie ästhetisch werden zu lassen," in *Klischee und Wirklichkeit in der musikalischen Moderne*, ed. Otto Kolleritsch (Wien: Universal Edition, 1994), 159-173. For a direct application of the term to Kagel's *Antithese*, see Rudolf Frisius, "Musik – Hörspiel – akustische Kunst: Mauricio Kagel und seine Radiostücke," *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 162/6 (2001), 38.

Literature Review

Antithese (1962)

While there are no previous studies in which the central topic is *Antithese*, the work has been discussed in several important texts describing Kagel's music. The first comprehensive description of *Antithese*, in Dieter Schnebel's *Mauricio Kagel: Musik Theater Film* (1970), elucidates technical details of the composition, scenic and action schema, and antithetical aspects within the music and theatrical part of the piece.¹⁵ Especially notable is the author's interpretation of collage in the "synthetic music," as well as his account of the manifold interaction and interrelation among heterogeneous compositional elements. In the excellent resource *Im Zenit der Moderne: Die Internationalen Ferienkurse für Neue Musik Darmstadt 1946-1966* (1997), Pascal Decroupet and Inge Kovács investigate the aspect of "scenic composition" in *Antithese* from the perspective of "'music and technique' and their historicity."¹⁶ Noteworthy is the authors' observance of the presence of serial thought in the work: "even though Kagel preferred to represent himself as an opponent of 'serialism' at that time."¹⁷ In his *Komposition zwischen Musik und Theater: Das instrumentale Theater von Mauricio Kagel zwischen 1959 und 1965* (2007), Matthias Rebstock postulates that "[t]here is perhaps no other work than *Antithese* that articulately shows Kagel's position vis-à-vis Cage's musical-theatrical pieces."¹⁸ Based on this intriguing thesis, Rebstock compares Kagel's distinct theatrical staging and "linearly contiguous actions"¹⁹ to Cage's compositional approach, which is characterized by "Dadaist's simultaneous poetry combined with Eastern philosophy of non-intentionality and equality concerning everything."²⁰ This methodological approach vividly contrasts aesthetic and conceptual differences of theatrical composition between Kagel and Cage. Lothar Prox's essay

¹⁵ Schnebel, *Mauricio Kagel: Musik Theater Film*, 102-118.

¹⁶ Pascal Decroupet and Inge Kovács, "Szenische Kompositionen," in *Im Zenit der Moderne: Die Internationalen Ferienkurse für Neue Musik Darmstadt 1946-1966, Band 2*, ed. Gianmario Borio and Hermann Danuser (Freiburg: Rombach, 1997), 326: "'Musik und Technik' und deren Historizität."

¹⁷ Ibid., 328: "Auch wenn Kagel sich in dieser Zeit gerne als Gegner des 'Serialismus' darstellte."

¹⁸ Matthias Rebstock, "Kagels Kommentar zu Cage," in *Komposition zwischen Musik und Theater: Das instrumentale Theater von Mauricio Kagel zwischen 1959 und 1965* (Hofheim: Wolke, 2007), 180: "Es gibt wahrscheinlich kein anderes Stück, bei dem Kagels Position gegenüber Cages musiktheatralischen Stücken so deutlich wird."

¹⁹ Ibid., 182: "zusammenhängenden, linearen Handlung," "

²⁰ Ibid.: "dadaistischen Simultangedichte mit der östlichen Lehre der Intensionslosigkeit und der Gleichwertigkeit aller Dinge."

“Musik und Regie: Mauricio Kagel ‘*Antithese*,’ ‘*Match*,’ und ‘*Solo*’ analytisch betrachtet,” included in Kagel’s *Das filmische Werk I 1965-1985* (1985), scrutinizes the formation of antithetical materials and elements inherent in the work.²¹ Focusing on the methodological and theoretical aspect of *musique concrète*, André Ruschkowski’s essay “Das Phantom lebt: Die Idee der Musique concrète zwischen Wunsch und Wirklichkeit” (1999) sees *Antithese* as a piece that belongs to a category of “compositions in which original sound recordings are used in their original form.” Ruschkowski considers the work to be “dominated by raw original sound recordings” and “the application of the sounds to be comparable, for instance, to the role of a ‘readymade’ in the visual art of the 1960s.”²²

Despite a large number of publications on Kagel and documents written by the composer, most of this literature is available only in German and has not yet been translated into English. However, Björn Heile’s *The Music of Mauricio Kagel* (2006), the first English book about the composer, provides an account of virtually all of Kagel’s works, and it includes a vast range of additional information including biography, friendships with contemporaries, and his aesthetics. For *Antithese*, Heile neatly summarizes the individual characteristics of musical and acting parts and identifies a baffling point in the piece as a whole: “a switching between semantic and aesthetic listening involved, as one can never be quite certain whether the music is a product of the stage action or accompanies it.”²³

Anarchy in Music

Aside from Kagel’s anecdotal statements mentioned above, there is no literature that focuses on the anarchic aspects and characteristics of *Antithese*. However, Heile’s reference (2006) to an anarchic element in Kagel’s artistic activity in the early 1960s provides a significant key to understanding the “omnipresent anarchy” and “anarchic unity” in *Antithese*. For instance, Kagel cofounded an artist group with Wolf Vostell

²¹ Lothar Prox, “Musik und Regie: Mauricio Kagel ‘*Antithese*,’ ‘*Match*,’ und ‘*Solo*’ analytisch betrachtet,” in Mauricio Kagel, *Das Filmische Werk I 1965-1985*, ed. Werner Klüppelholz and Lothar Prox (Amsterdam: Meulenhoff/Landshoff, 1985; Köln: DuMont Buchverlag, 1985), 163-167.

²² André Ruschkowski, “Das Phantom lebt: Die Idee der Musique concrète zwischen Wunsch und Wirklichkeit,” in *50 Jahre Musique Concrète*, ed. Ingrid Beirer and Frank Gertich (Saarbrücken: Pfau, 1999), 52-62.

²³ Heile, *The Music of Mauricio Kagel*, 46.

called “Labor”,²⁴ which “was active in the underground art scene and connected to the student rebellion of the 1960s.” Heile relates this event to “[Kagel’s] embrace of anarchy as both a political and aesthetic aim.” Given that the group’s primary orientation was to explore the interrelation of acoustic and visual arts and “the connection between experimentalism and multimedia,” it seems possible to reexamine the anarchic aspects of *Antithese* from an interdisciplinary perspective. In addition, Heile mentions Kagel’s involvement “with the anti-Perónist student movement” during his Buenos Aires period, which would become the essential “backbone of his aesthetic beliefs and the hallmarks of his later style.”²⁵ Paul Attinello’s dissertation “The Interpretation of Chaos: A Critical Analysis of Meaning in European Avant-Garde Vocal Music, 1958-68” (1997) also briefly touches upon “Kagel’s sympathy with anarchists,” and states that “his world view is associated with a band of the political spectrum which is as far to the left as possible, the one that most strongly resists reification into institutions or ideologies.”²⁶

As a supplementary resource, literature on Jorge Luis Borges’s political-ideological engagement with anarchism provides an important reference point, because Borges’s thought profoundly influenced Kagel’s aesthetic and ideological cultivation of anarchy in his Buenos Aires period. Emir Rodríguez Monegal’s essay “Borges and Politics” (1978) illustrates significant episodes of Borges’s resistant attitude towards Perón’s dictatorship which seem to have solidified his belief in anarchism. The importance of this resource is that Kagel perhaps learned about some of these episodes directly from Borges and discerned his anarchist traits.²⁷ The essay also gives a sense of the limitation on artistic freedom under the Perón regime and its influence on Kagel’s compositional activity. As the title indicates, Alejandra Salinas’s “Political Philosophy in Borges: Fallibility, Liberal Anarchism, and Civic Ethics” (2010) characterizes Borges’s anarchist thought as liberal anarchism whose defining criteria are “the ethics of self-restraint” and thus “self-restrained individuals.” Borges’s liberal anarchism as such is not

²⁴ For the details of “Labor,” see Wulf Herzogenrath, “Die Geburt der Kunstmetropole Köln” in *Die 60er Jahre Kölns Weg zur Kunstmetropole vom Happening zum Kunstmarkt*, ed. Wulf Herzogenrath and Gabrielle Lueg (Köln: Kölnischer Kunstverein, 1986), 12-25; and Herzogenrath and Lueg, “Gespräch mit Mauricio Kagel,” *ibid.*, 174-183.

²⁵ Heile, 15.

²⁶ Paul Attinello, “The Interpretation of Chaos: A Critical Analysis of Meaning in European Avant-Garde Vocal Music, 1958-1968” (Ph.D. diss., University of California Los Angeles, 1997), 112.

²⁷ Kagel’s connection with Borges is discussed in Chapter Two.

simply idealized thought, but rather is based on the notion that his “political stance had a historical as well as an intellectual source.”²⁸ Characteristics of Borges’s liberal anarchist thought resurface in Kagel’s idea of anarchy in *Antithese*.

Discussions of anarchy in other musical works also shed light on Kagel’s ideas. In his essay “Anarchie als ästhetische Kategorie” (1991), Heinz-Klaus Metzger examines John Cage’s *Concert for Piano and Orchestra*, applying the “socio-political concept” of anarchism that “governance would be abolished and no violence would be held or practiced.”²⁹ Metzger’s interpretation of *Concert* focuses on the unconventional notation, the distinctiveness of tones and noises, and the large degree of freedom given to the performers, maintaining that these elements preserve the individuality of the performers. While this freedom and individuality are further characterized by the absence of a score and thus “synchronization” of the parts, Metzger nevertheless stresses that all these distinguishing components form a unique structure.

Postwar Avant-Garde Music

Literature on postwar avant-garde music offers further insight into the ways in which *Antithese* evolved. Hermann Danuser’s *Die Musik des 20. Jahrhunderts* (1984) addresses a diverse range of issues in postwar avant-garde music such as serialism, *musique concrète* and *elektronische Musik*, chance music, indeterminacy, open form, musical theater, and sound composition. “[I]n order to illustrate the extraordinary breadth of today’s pluralistic musical culture,” the book is based on the author’s perspective on the “contradictory and interlocking aspect of the equivocal categories, ‘tradition’ and ‘new music’.”³⁰ The four volumes on postwar music at Darmstadt *Im Zenit der Moderne* (1997), edited by Gianmario Borio and Hermann Danuser, give the history of the

²⁸ Alejandra Salinas, “Political Philosophy in Borges: Fallibility, Liberal Anarchism, and Civic Ethics,” *The Review of Politics* 72 (2010): 311.

²⁹ Heinz-Klaus Metzger, “Anarchie als ästhetische Kategorie,” in *Musikalische Gestaltung im Spannungsfeld von Chaos und Ordnung*, ed. Otto Kolleritsch (Wien and Graz: Universal Edition, 1991), 10: “Als gesellschaftlich-politisches Konzept aber, bezeichnet Anarchismus die Auffassung, daß Herrschaft abzuschaffen sei und keine Gewalt innegehabt oder geübt werden dürfe.”

³⁰ Hermann Danuser, *Die Musik des 20. Jahrhunderts: Mit 108 Notenbeispielen, 130 Abbildungen und 2 Farbtafeln*, ed. Carl Dahlhaus (Laaber: Laaber-Verlag, 1984), 286-287: “um die außerordentliche Breite der pluralistischen Musikkultur der Gegenwart zu veranschaulichen,” “Gegensätzlichkeit und Ineinandergreifen der mehrdeutigen Kategorien »Tradition« und »Neue Musik«.”

Darmstädter Ferienkurse and detail pertinent aesthetic issues and compositions. These volumes also include important documents by postwar avant-garde composers and critics.

Amy C. Beal's *New Music, New Allies: American Experimental Music in West Germany from the Zero Hour to Reunification* (2006) is an accomplished and exhaustive account of the new music scene after World War II and provides an account that helps capture not only the diverse background of Kagel's early compositions, but also his musico-aesthetic direction as distinct from that of his contemporaries. Beal also reports in detail on Cage's enormous influence upon European-based composers. With respect to Kagel, who was distraught by the poor reception of Cage in the United States, she points out his "resilient views about American musical life" in which he sees "the separation between university composers and independent avant-gardists."³¹

Viewing serial music as "one of the most important aesthetic movements to emerge in post-war Europe," M. J. Grant's book *Serial Music, Serial Aesthetics: Compositional Theory in Post-War Europe* (2001) examines the inseparable and reciprocal connections of serial music with electroacoustic and aleatoric music. Grant cites Kagel's dissatisfaction "with the absence of a performer" in electroacoustic music concerts as an example of the kinds of issues raised by the development of this medium.³² Based on his observation of important events in the *Darmstädter Ferienkurse*, Attinello (1997) categorizes non-serial (or post-serial) works of Kagel, Schnebel, and Bussotti as a "'third type' of avant-garde music . . . in Europe in the fifties and sixties."³³ This type of composition is characterized by neither "determinism" nor "aleatoricism," but creates a new musical space "by the avoidance of consistency and the expression of non-formal or non-conceptual qualities."³⁴

³¹ Amy C. Beal, *New Music, New Allies: American Experimental Music in West Germany from the Zero Hour to Reunification* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2006), 134-135.

³² M. J. Grant, *Serial Music, Serial Aesthetics: Compositional Theory in Post-War Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 99.

³³ Attinello, "The Interpretation of Chaos," 25.

³⁴ Ibid.

Methods and Approaches

Musical Continuity and Sectionalization

The present study traces the applicability of Kagel's distinct theoretical concepts concerning musical structure to compositional features of *Antithese*. The conception of musical continuity was a major concern among postwar avant-garde composers and especially important for Kagel. The practicability of technology for musical composition contributed not only to solidifying individual composers' definitions of musical continuity, but also to establishing their personal styles and forms. At the same time, composers also attempted to create musical continuity in instrumental composition, the concept and procedure of which could be applicable to an electroacoustic piece or vice versa. Taking a keen interest in formalizing his own approach to structure in these terms, Kagel attempted to define necessary elements of musical continuity. For instance, he stated that in a perfect musical continuity, no clear concept of beginning and ending can be detected.³⁵ Furthermore, Kagel distinguished musical continuity from "continuous music," for which the latter term meant "a sound succession with or without pauses."³⁶ In this, however, he did not mean that a sound succession had nothing to do with musical continuity. Instead, Kagel regarded an operation of continuous sound structures – more specifically, composition of continuous sound layers or movements – as an important element to create musical continuity. Yet, these materials had to preserve "the unbroken, logical connection" especially, according to Kagel, in electroacoustic composition. With the aid of this theorization of musical continuity, as well as of his original method "Translation – Rotation," Kagel produced *Transición I*, his first electroacoustic composition in Europe, by combining both continuous and discontinuous musical elements in the continuous sound process.³⁷

The examination of *Transición I* is a prerequisite for the present study in two significant respects. First, the piece reflects Kagel's distinct theoretical and aesthetic attitude towards electroacoustic composition as compared to that of his contemporaries.

³⁵ See Mauricio Kagel, "On new electronic and instrumental music, 'Transition 1'," in SLR 249 (lecture presented on 22 February 1965), in *Slee Lecture Recitals: A Catalogue, 1957-1976*, Music Library, The State University of New York at Buffalo, page 1, transcribed by Sam Mirelman.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ See Rudolf Frisius, "Personalstil und Musiksprache: Anmerkungen zur Positionsbestimmung György Ligeti's," in *György Ligeti: Personalstil – Avantgardismus – Popularität*, ed. Otto Kolleritsch (Wien: Universal Edition, 1987), 188.

An examination of particular pieces by Xenakis and Ligeti highlights not only how non-serialist composers formed their individual methods to create musical continuity, but also Kagel's distinctive approach and aesthetic in *Transición I*. Second and more importantly, a formal analysis of *Transición I* from a perspective of musical continuity reveals marked contrasts to the formal design of the musical part of *Antithese*. Not only is the technique of continuous sound structure more sophisticated in *Antithese*, but even more striking is the compositional plan Kagel used to produce the musical continuity.

The plan for *Antithese* involved an ingenious combination of sectionalization and musical continuity. In the first phase of *Antithese*'s compositional evolution, Kagel composed several sections individually, focusing not on breaks but on characteristics of each section. Then Kagel unified these sections by means of a dextrous technique of montage which preserved musical continuity without overshadowing the sectionalization. That is to say, these processes were necessary to articulate musical continuity in the concatenation of the sections. Also, these processes were directly related to Kagel's intention of using both *elektronische* and *concrète* musical materials in the music of *Antithese*. Kagel's formal sketches of the piece are particularly useful to understand the structural evolution of the formal design; that is, how he manipulated the two types of electroacoustic musical materials in terms of synthesizing musical continuity and formal sectionalization. Kagel's creation of such a distinct form was, however, not just for the sake of formal invention, but rather to produce a narrative cohesion of his critical thought on music at that time which included his rhetorical question: "what is music?"

Instrumental Theater

The stage version of *Antithese* is subsumed under the category of Instrumental Theater work in Kagel's oeuvre. "Instrumental Theater" is Kagel's original compositional concept that "emphasizes the procedures of music making and sound production, respectively, and . . . [the] acting out of visual components," wherein "the actions are not directly connected with the production of music."³⁸ Such a concept, however, was derived

³⁸ Christa Brüstle, "Wandelszenen bei Kagel – Thesen zum Theater der Musik," in *Theater als Paradigma der Moderne?: Positionen zwischen historischer Avantgarde und Medienzeitalter*, ed. Christopher Balme, Erika Fischer-Lichte, and Stephan Grätzel (Tübingen: Franke Verlag, 2003), 343: "Gewichtung der Prozeduren des Musikmachens beziehungsweise der Klangerzeugung und . . . der

not really from the motivation to be the pioneer of a new genre but from Kagel's observation and consideration regarding the present issues in musical presentation. In other words, his critical view of the state of music at that time was an indispensable factor that led him to invent Instrumental Theater.

For instance, although Kagel was not the first person to point it out, the fact that the audience no longer needed to see but only to listen was a source of controversy in electroacoustic music concerts. For Kagel, who had already conceived of an important association between acoustic and visual elements in his Buenos Aires period, the conspicuous absence of live performers on stage triggered his pursuit of theatricalization of music. Kagel's musical theatricalization (Instrumental Theater) distinguishes itself from other composers' attempts to address this problem. Boulez, for instance, was also aware of the problem. Although not deeply involved in and to some extent skeptical of "taped music played in a concert hall," Boulez had

always been painfully embarrassed by the resemblance to a crematorium ceremony, and found the absence of *action* a redhibitory vice. . . . For a larger audience – let alone huge crowds – it is a very lame, one-sided affair, with nothing visual to correspond to what is heard.³⁹

In his *Poésie pour pouvoir* (1958), Boulez attempted to solve his "painful embarrassment" by means of "placing the loudspeakers behind the audience" and "the orchestra in the middle – on three platforms and in a mounting spiral."⁴⁰ Though an interesting staging arrangement, the visual presentation had no theatrical component.

The blueprint of *Antithese*'s tactic to regain and recast the visual presence was unequivocally different from Boulez's stage formation in *Poésie pour pouvoir*. In the *Slee Lecture Recitals*, Kagel explained:

Antithese could be regarded as a kind of 'illusion music-theatre.' Electronic sounds are on the stage. The composed public reacts all at the same time, with applause, rejection, excited whistles and loud commentary. The listeners, that is [,] the people on the main floor, respond to these electronic sounds with similarly conditioned references. . . . This piece is . . . perceived in third person, because the

Hervorkehrung der visuellen Komponenten ,” "Handlungen, die nicht unmittelbar mit der Hervorbringung von Musik in Verbindung stehen."

³⁹ Pierre Boulez, "An Interview with Dominique Jameux: *Polyphonie X*, *Structures* for Two Pianos and *Poésie pour pouvoir*," in *Orientations: Collected Writings*, ed. Jean-Jacques Nattiez, trans. Martin Cooper (London: Faber and Faber, 1986), 201. The author's italics. The article first appeared as "Pierre Boulez: sur *Polyphonie X* et *Poésie pour pouvoir*," *Musique en jeu* 16 (November 1974): 33-35.

⁴⁰ Boulez, "An Interview with Dominique Jameux," 201.

listener of *Antithese* is observing, as if trying to invent, in which the artificially created public is actively dedicated as far as he is concerned, . . . for reality is an invention of the power of the imagination.⁴¹

The idea of Instrumental Theater, the new genre Kagel invented, was derived also from his criticism that “in general, musicians are bad actor [*sic*],” since “they are not trained to make any kind of movement.”⁴² Any actions that Kagel wanted his performers to execute are, of course, not to entertain the audience, but are intended as components of the work. With his strong background in the visual arts, theatrical enactment was, in a sense, an inevitable reaction to and the result of the visual deficiency of electroacoustic music. It is therefore no surprise that Kagel decided to use an actor, instead of a musician, in *Antithese*.

More comparable to Kagel’s resurrection of the visual aspect of musical performance are certain works of John Cage, the dedicatee of Kagel’s *Antithese*. Regardless of their reception, Cage’s compositional means, concepts, and aesthetics were enormously influential among postwar avant-garde composers, Kagel included. However, Kagel’s musical and aesthetic orientation was never completely swayed by Cage’s, regardless of the extent to which Cage stimulated Kagel’s creative activity. It may be tempting to group certain works of Kagel and Cage together, based on their musical-aesthetic intention. However, unlike Boulez or Kagel, Cage seems not to have been troubled by the problematic nature of electroacoustic music presentation. Nevertheless, the “multimedia event at Black Mountain College in 1952” organized by Cage, for instance, might bear comparison to Kagel’s technique of acoustic-visual consolidation in *Antithese*. The event consisted of an improvisational dance by Merce Cunningham and other dancers, a lecture read aloud by Cage, a piano performance by David Tudor, Robert Rauschenberg’s playing of records on a phonograph, and performances by M. C. Richards and Charles Olsen. Additionally, “a film was projected”⁴³ and “Rauschenberg’s pictures were suspended above the audience.”⁴⁴

⁴¹ Kagel, “About the musical theatre.”

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Sally Banes, “Introduction: Sources of Post-Modern Dance,” in *Terpsichore in Sneakers* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1980), 9-10.

⁴⁴ John Cage, Michael Kirby, and Richard Schechner, “An Interview with John Cage,” *The Tulane Drama Review* 10/2 (Winter 1965): 52-53.

This interdisciplinary experiment might initially seem to share some aspects of Cage's theatricalization of music. Cage's *Water Music* (1952), performed by Tudor at Mary Bauermeister's atelier in Cologne, a performing space offered to avant-garde composers, critics, and writers, where Kagel was also occasionally present,⁴⁵ is another example of how Cage's work might have directly inspired Kagel to conceptualize a space unifying audio and visual dimensions. Kagel's admiration for and support of Cage's musical aesthetic are also evident in his writings. Composed for Cage's fiftieth birthday, *Antithese*'s musical and visual characteristics can, however, be clearly distinguished from Cage's theatrical works. This is an important key to deciphering the meaning of Kagel's later claim that the "aesthetics of Cage and my own are diametrically opposed."⁴⁶ The present study will examine what exactly Kagel meant by this in connection with his notion of Instrumental Theater.

Application of Serial Thought

When Kagel was composing *Antithese*, compositional approaches to serial music varied with respect to the "traditional definition of serialism, which implies a sequential preordering of musical events."⁴⁷ Although "parametric thinking" as "the fundamental principle of serial technique" was already present at that time, the definition of postwar avant-garde serialism was not as fixed as it has become in retrospect.⁴⁸ What we call serialism in music was, despite the presence of influential pieces such as Karlheinz Stockhausen's *Kreuzspiel* (1951) and *Klavierstücke* (1952-56) and Pierre Boulez's *Structures Ia* (1952), still in process of establishing itself. Also, the idea of a "series" was not unique to musical composition, but rather was developing its own forms and applications in other fields such as architecture, visual art, and poetry.⁴⁹ In other words, serial thought as the basis for an original vocabulary and grammar was a significant concept in various disciplines of art.

⁴⁵ See Dörstel, Wilfried et al., eds., *Intermedial Kontrovers Experimentell: Das Atelier Mary Bauermeister in Köln 1960-62*, ed. Historisches Archiv der Stadt Köln (Köln: Emons Verlag, 1993).

⁴⁶ Werner Klüppelholz, ".../1991: Ein Gespräch zwischen Mauricio Kagel und Werner Klüppelholz," in *Kagel..../1991*, ed. Werner Klüppelholz (Köln: DuMont Buchverlag, 1991), 48: "Die Ästhetik von Cage und meine eigene sind diametral entgegengesetzt."

⁴⁷ Grant, *Serial Music*, 61.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 62.

⁴⁹ See *ibid.*, 165-177.

Kagel's application of serial thought in relation to the performing part of *Antithese* has been discussed mainly from a structural perspective. As Decroupet and Kovács note, with regard to Kagel's subtle stance against serialism, Kagel did not absolutely deny the serial-compositional principle in his music. Serial thought may not be immediately perceivable in *Antithese* if glancing at the graphic notation, due to the absence of any notations for musical sounds that could be represented numerically. However, if one reads the instructions for the piece, one may speculate that Kagel's deliberate avoidance of specific numbers invokes a traditional characteristic of serial composition. Referring to this aspect, Decroupet and Kovács point out that in *Antithese* "there are a total of 23 main actions; the performer should allow for at least 11 forms of realization and a compulsory duration of at least 5 minutes and 30 seconds."⁵⁰

The characteristic of numerical avoidance of "twelve and its multiples"⁵¹ (or divisions), as Decroupet and Kovács suggest, may be regarded as Kagel's implicit resistance against serial standardization. More important, however, is Kagel's original, creative way of applying a serial principle to *Antithese*, not as an arithmetic compositional method, but rather as an expandable concept that is capable of embodying an idea. That is to say, while Kagel composed *Antithese* with his serial thought, he had no intention to compose it as a serial piece. Thus, the work is not a matrix-driven example of serial practice, either. Instead, the extended application of serial principle was a significant component for construing the interrelations of Kagel's musical-aesthetic idea with the organization of the work. In short, Creativity of such an expansion was a basic idea of serial thought. Regarding this particular thought, Pierre Boulez has asserted "that numbers are not sufficient to unify the different characteristics of the sound so as to integrate them into a general structure." On this basis, he continues:

The series has become a polyvalent mode of thought. . . . The series must not only generate the actual vocabulary, but must expand into the very structure of the work. . . . Against classical thought, . . . here there are no preconceived scales – general structures into which a particular thought is fitted. . . . Classical tonal

⁵⁰ Decroupet and Kovács, "Szenische Kompositionen," 328: "es gibt insgesamt 23 Hauptaktionen, der Darsteller soll mindestens 11 Realisationsformen berücksichtigen, und vorgeschrieben ist eine Minstdauer von 5 Minuten und 30 Sekunden."

⁵¹ Ibid. "die Zahl zwölf und deren Vielfache."

thought is based on a universe defined by gravity and attraction; serial thought on a universe in continuous expansion.⁵²

Umberto Eco cites this as a fundamental principle of serial thought and as a departure point for his discussion of “Structure and ‘Series’.”⁵³ Based on Boulez’s definition of serial thought, Eco states: “serial thought creates the objects it needs and the form necessary for their organization each time it has occasion to express itself.”⁵⁴

While Eco’s main point is to contrast characteristics of serial thought with those of “structural thought,” his statement seems to follow Boulez’s distinction between serial thought and classical thought. The following sentence of Eco is indicative: “the aim of structural thought is *to discover* [a primary code – *Ur-code*], whereas that of serial thought is *to produce*.”⁵⁵ Regardless of Kagel’s familiarity with the discourses of Boulez and Eco, characteristics of serial thought (i.e., “continuous expansion” for Boulez and production of a form of organization for Eco) are unmistakably present in the series of main actions in *Antithese*. Of note here is Kagel’s application of serial thought not to the musical part, but to the acting part. This unique “parameterization” is an intriguing aspect of the work, in that serial thought can be said to mediate the interdisciplinary components.⁵⁶ Examining the presence of serial thought in *Antithese* will, paradoxically, help us to understand the organization of anarchy – in other words, the state of anarchy in the unity of the piece in both theoretical and aesthetic terms.

Organization

The present study seeks to elaborate significant details with regard to Kagel’s idea of anarchy in *Antithese*. Chapter Two consists of two different overviews that are related to Kagel’s musical-compositional and aesthetic-philosophical development in his early career as a composer. The first half of this chapter investigates Kagel’s musical-artistic

⁵² Pierre Boulez, “Series,” in *Stocktakings from an Apprenticeship*, ed. Paule Thévenin, trans. Stephen Walsh (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 236. Original French text of the citation is in Boulez, *Relevés d’apprenti*, ed. Paule Thévenin (Paris: Seuil, 1966), 297.

⁵³ See Umberto Eco, “Series and Structure” in *The Open Work*, trans. Anna Cancogni (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), 217-218. The original Italian publication is Umberto Eco, *La Struttura Assente: Introduzione alla ricerca semiologica* (Milano: Bompiani, 1968).

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 223.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 221.

⁵⁶ In conversation with Werner Klüppelholz, Kagel said that he used “serial” decorations [“*serielle*” *Dekorationen*] in the film version of *Antithese*, based on the scenario of the stage version. See Mauricio Kagel, *Dialogue, Monologe*, ed. Werner Klüppelholz (Köln: DuMont, 2001), 182.

activities and social-political experiences in Buenos Aires until his departure for Europe in 1957, in terms of his aesthetic cultivation of anarchy and his engagement in musical composition. This section also touches upon the Argentine writer Jorge Luis Borges as the most influential figure of Kagel's aesthetic development in Buenos Aires. In addition to recounting the cultivation of Kagel's early aesthetic and ideological thought, the first half of Chapter Two also examines his keen interest in and attempt at electroacoustic composition in this period. The second half of this chapter includes a thorough review of the postwar avant-garde musical scene in Europe as a chronologically parallel event to Kagel's musical and aesthetic development in Argentina. This section focuses mainly on the compositional development of electroacoustic music in connection with serial music, both of which are important in *Antithese*. The work of M. J. Grant and Amy C. Beal will help to pinpoint significant achievements and issues in the development of these musics. The review prepares for the discussion of how Kagel reacted to the scene of European postwar avant-gardes and how he pioneered his own realm of compositional approach in the following chapters.

Based on the discussion of the two streams of music in the preceding chapter, Chapter Three discusses Kagel's involvement in electroacoustic musical composition in West Germany as well as developmental and compositional processes of *Antithese*. This chapter introduces the important concept of musical continuity, by which Kagel and his contemporaries sought to establish individual compositional styles. In fact, musical continuity plays a significant role in the formal design of *Antithese*. To clarify the structural details of *Antithese*, this chapter first observes specific pieces by Xenakis and Ligeti which focus on creating original forms of musical continuity, and then examines Kagel's first electroacoustic work *Transición I*, composed in the electronic studio at the WDR [*Westdeutscher Rundfunk* (West German Broadcasting)], as a predecessor of *Antithese*. Devising a method of 'Translation – Rotation' in the process of composing *Transición I* (and *II* as well), Kagel strove for the creation of a musical continuum in which he "integrates continuous sound processes with discontinuous elements."⁵⁷ The acoustical result was "unusually rich and complex sonorities" with "long sustained

⁵⁷ Rudolf Frisius, "Personalstil und Musiksprache," 188: "In diesem Stück werden kontinuierliche Klangprozesse . . . mit diskontinuierlichen Elementen Kombiniert."

sounds that change in pitch, bandwidth and timbre over time.”⁵⁸ Similar musical characteristics are evident in *Antithese* as well. This chapter next examines the musical component of *Antithese*, focusing principally on Kagel’s intention to synthesize principles of *elektronische Musik* and *musique concrète*, as well as the rationale for his choice of the *concrète* sounds. While the formal design of the piece demonstrates his original approach to musical continuity, for example, his use of montage technique, the underlying aesthetic intention is Kagel’s sharp criticism of the prevailing musical norms. Kagel’s striking musical sarcasm in *Antithese* takes specific aim at issues in electroacoustic composition at that time.

Chapter Four examines the origins of Kagel’s Instrumental Theater and the reasons and processes for shaping the concept of musical theatricalization. In *Antithese*, Kagel conceptualizes the theatricalization of music as an interdisciplinary creation of music that regains the visual component lost in electroacoustic music concerts. In other words, the concept is derived from the intertwining of advanced and retrospective points of view in Kagel’s aesthetic thought. Also, it is worth observing the various revisions of the performing part with the professional actor Alfred Feussner who premiered the piece. The different versions illuminate Kagel’s close cooperation with Feussner, which further solidified his musical and aesthetic concepts in *Antithese*. These aspects seem to distinguish his embodiment of the musical idea significantly from that of Cage, who also composed unique pieces of musical theater. In light of Kagel’s foundation of Instrumental Theater, this chapter also investigates what Kagel meant by the “diametrically opposed aesthetics” between Cage and himself, by examining how the two composers’ aesthetics and philosophical thoughts are reflected in the compositional materials and structures of their representative works. In short, it attempts to specify “Kagel’s position vis-à-vis Cage” through the lens of theatricalization in *Antithese*. The aesthetic differences between Kagel and Cage reflect crucial differences between their ideas of anarchy in music as well.

After pinpointing the distinguishing features of Kagel’s notion of anarchy in music, Chapter Five focuses on two aesthetic issues that underlie his remark, “anarchy is omnipresent in *Antithese*.” The first half of this chapter examines the notion of serial

⁵⁸ Heile, 30-31.

thought in general and Kagel's specific application of it to the work. Relevant writings by Boulez and Eco will be addressed in order to explore Kagel's understanding of serialism and his original serial thought. In addition, this section includes a brief analysis of Henri Pousseur's electroacoustic open work, *Scambi* (1957), which he composed on the basis of serial thought, in order to highlight Kagel's own use of this in *Antithese*. The last half of Chapter Five compares and contrasts Kagel's multimedia/interdisciplinary approach in *Antithese* with Adorno's notion of "*Verfransung* of art genres." The *Verfransung* theory presents Adorno's view of the rapid artistic diversification and intersection of art genres in the late 1950s and early 1960s, which has been often described more neutrally as *Grenzüberschreitung*. Adorno, on the one hand, negatively appraised such interplay from the standpoint of a critic; on the other hand, Kagel created works but not appraised interdisciplinarity per se.

Based on the studies in the preceding chapters, Chapter Six attempts to trace an underlying logical consistency between paradoxical tenets, that is, between 'omnipresent anarchy' and 'anarchic unity,' and between the structures of *Antithese* and the title itself. Regardless of whether a persuasive theory in this respect is acquired, or whether the essential idea of anarchy in the work, as well as in Kagel's sense, still remains equivocal, the result will provide a picture of the work's "anarchic unity" shaped by heterogeneous elements and ideas that reflect the whole and details of the interdisciplinary structure. Finally, the present study suggests Kagel's question about definition of music behind the multimedia/interdisciplinary practice and his idea of anarchy in *Antithese*, as well as of "music = thought."

CHAPTER TWO

TWO BACKDROPS FOR *ANTITHESE*

Introduction

An examination of the term anarchy in a musical context merely from a viewpoint of liberation-from or struggle-with convention would be of little help in grasping the complex structure of *Antithese* and its underlying aesthetic. Indeed, by the early 1960s, such an idea and attempt had already brought about a vast variety of new compositional approaches. For most so-called postwar avant-garde composers, the exploration and establishment of “a special vocabulary and syntax”¹ of their own was a tacit requirement of self-preservation in order to distinguish themselves from the pre-1945 idea of modernity. This apparent pressure, which some avant-garde composers might have seen as a historical necessity, contributed not only to intensifying the inventive force of the composers’ creativity, but also to creating complex structures of musical composition. These, in turn, shaped subsequent debates that involved both the composers and their critics. Under the circumstances, the idea of anarchy in music may be easily simplified to a loosely defined, stereotypical notion that it is a form of chaos and outrageous behavior.

The oversimplification as such is highly misleading, not only in the social and political context, but also in the musical. Especially for the latter, if the impact of an uncontrolled state in a musical composition is described as anarchic, many musical pieces composed in the mid-twentieth century can be so labeled. Because the present study pays special attention to the interrelation among the technical, theoretical, and aesthetic aspects inherent in *Antithese* and Kagel’s notion of anarchy, a superficial linkage of complexity and anarchy must be avoided. Meanwhile, it is necessary to bear in mind that Kagel’s conception of anarchy was developed during his Buenos Aires period and that the significant events he experienced at that time are important keys to deciphering his characterization of the piece: “anarchy is omnipresent.” For this reason, a review of his early biographic background will reveal his specific and nuanced idea of anarchy.

¹ György Ligeti, “Metamorphoses of Musical Form” in *Die Reihe 7: Form – Space* (Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania: Theodore Presser Company, 1965), 7. Original German print is “Wandlungen der musikalischen Form,” in *Die Reihe 7: Form-Raum* (Wien: Universal Edition, 1960).

This chapter follows two separate musical and political streams in the 1950s – more specifically, up to 1957, the year of Kagel’s departure for Germany: first, Kagel’s musical, philosophical, aesthetic cultivation in Buenos Aires; second, the development of electroacoustic composition and the polemical issues in Europe. These two backdrops are basically separate; however, there are a few significant connections between them, which led to Kagel’s strong wish to relocate to Europe. Both the connections and contrasts help to explain Kagel’s unique stance not only toward the field of electroacoustic composition, music aesthetics, and multimedia composition, but also toward the idea of anarchy.

These two streams eventually merged into one as Kagel started participating in the European musical scene in 1957. From that point onward his creative force flourished flamboyantly, and his works immediately began to establish his unique position in the existing constellation of postwar avant-garde composers. Although most pieces of Kagel’s oeuvre were composed in this newly united (or third) stream, his previous experiences on both sides of the Atlantic are indispensable sources for capturing the aesthetic and philosophical spectrum of his music. In understanding them Kagel’s compositional and aesthetic intention in *Antithese* becomes distinct, together with the clarification of his concrete conception of anarchy.

Kagel in Buenos Aires

Anti-Despotism – Kagel’s Views on Social and Cultural Life

Kagel’s artistic and aesthetic cultivation in Buenos Aires, where “there developed after 1950 the most flourishing musical life in Latin America,”² reflects the “backbone of his aesthetic beliefs and the hallmarks of his later style.”³ In other words, Kagel’s musical, artistic, and philosophical experiences shaped the ingeniousness of his work, which is distinctive from that of his European and American contemporaries in important respects. Together with these experiences, Kagel’s critical views on the social and

² Béhague, Gerard. *Music in Latin America: An Introduction* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1979), 328.

³ Björn Heile, *The Music of Mauricio Kagel*, 15. The first chapter of this book, “Buenos Aires,” is the most detailed and thoroughly researched description of Kagel’s Argentine era in English. See pp. 7-15. It is worth bearing in mind that in the concluding paragraph, the author reaffirms the importance of that era: “[i]t is conspicuous how in conversation he [Kagel] will always refer to his Argentine experiences, and name figures from his years in Buenos Aires as his most profound influences. . . the roots of his diverse activities – as composer, performer, critic, anthropologist, cinematographer – can all be traced to Buenos Aires and its unique cultural environment during the 1940s and ’50s,” *ibid.*, 15.

political conditions in Buenos Aires are equally important since his social experiences constitute a significant part of his initial aesthetic and philosophy of music. These views also shed light on the crystallization of Kagel's idea of anarchy.

In addition to the descriptions of Heile and Attinello in Chapter One, a number of Kagel's reminiscences about his cultural and social life in Buenos Aires illustrate not only the process of formation of his own philosophy and aesthetic, but also that of the idea of anarchy. Although the latter idea may seem somewhat naïve with respect to political ideology, it nonetheless became a salient part of Kagel's philosophy and aesthetic. Anarchy is often regarded as synonymous with freedom especially in the context of a tyrannical rule; however, such an oversimplified formula would lead to a reckless understanding of Kagel's thoughts. In fact, Kagel's idea of anarchy is not simply equivalent to that of freedom, but rather combines his own ideas of freedom *and* organization.

Observing the development of this particular thought, one must recall that Kagel's Buenos Aires period includes an era of Juan Domingo Perón's (1895-1974) dictatorship. Particularly important are the extent to which artistic activities were restricted under the Perón regime, how Kagel in fact experienced this constraint, and how the specific events he experienced contributed to his idea of anarchy. Hence, it is necessary to investigate the social, political, and cultural circumstances of this period, as well as Kagel's experiences and critical observations, before discussing his conception of anarchy.

In reflections on his homeland in the 1940s and 1950s, Kagel often expressed negative aspects and situations, although he insisted he did not "disdain the native country, nor does the Argentine nationality discomfort" him.⁴ In his essay "Denke ich an Argentinien in der Nacht" (When I Think of Argentina in the Night), for instance, Kagel's narrative of his view on Argentina is not just pessimistic, but even hopeless:

When hearing the word "Argentina," I first think not of music, literature, theater, or visual arts, but of the series of dreadful governments and dictator, of the censorship – which displays unbelievable naïveté rather than excessive malice – of the dismal role of the church, of the systematic dismantling of progressive

⁴ Mauricio Kagel, "Denke ich an Argentinien in der Nacht," in *Tamtam: Dialoge und Monologe zur Musik*, ed. Felix Schmidt (München: R. Piper & Co. Verlag, 1975), 11-13, also in *Lese-Welten: Mauricio Kagel und die Literatur*, ed. Joseph A. Kruse (Saarbrücken: Pfau, 2002), 68-69. Kagel wrote the essay in December 1967 in a request of Sweden broadcast for the issue of February 1968 of the journal *Nutida Musik*. In Germany, it first appeared in the newspaper *Die Zeit* on 5 April 1968.

universities, of the charming selling out of natural resources, of the short-sightedness with respect to social needs, and of the endless chain of false assessments, self-pity, betrayal, deficiencies, and incompleteness, which these degrading and inhumane people accomplished, who girdle themselves with boots and hierarchical polished tin and whom one simply calls “military.”⁵

No doubt Kagel’s desperate picture of Argentine society as such resulted from Perón’s dictatorial policy, under which the composer perceived that significant elements of the society had degenerated.

As Matthias Rebstock states, Kagel’s youth exactly corresponds to Perón’s first and second presidencies (1946-1951 and 1951-1955, respectively). Rebstock’s summary of the negative aspects of the Perón regime at that time well elucidates Kagel’s bleak portrait.

With his right-wing populist policy, he [Perón] consequently tried to win the working class’s favor and was finally elected to the president by a large majority, supported by the masses and trade unions, but with a widespread opposition in the military, Catholic Church, aristocracy, socialists, communists, and intellectuals. Perón governed without the parliament and persecuted political opponents, especially those on the left. All areas of public life including the economy, culture, media, and education were forced into line directly under the president. Critical intellectuals were dismissed from the offices and replaced with puppet figures. Perón’s policy was anti-clerical, authoritarian, and nationalistic, even fascistic.⁶

Both the above statements of Kagel and Rebstock pinpoint the negative characteristics of dictatorship in the Perónist government, but there were arguably positive sides to Perón’s

⁵ Ibid.: “Wenn ich das Wort »Argentinien« höre, denke ich nicht zuerst an Musik, Literatur, Theater oder die Bildenden Künste, sondern an die Reihe miserabler Regierungen und Diktaturen, an die Zensur – die eher von unglaublicher Naivität als von übertriebener Bosheit zeugt –, an die triste Rolle der Kirche, an den systematischen Abbau fortschrittlicher Universitäten, an den charmanten Ausverkauf der Bodenschätze, an die Kurzsichtigkeit gegenüber sozialen Notwendigkeiten, an die unendliche Kette von Fehleinschätzungen, Selbstmitleid, Verrat, Mängel und Unvollkommenheit, die diese menschenunwürdigen Menschen vollbrachten, die sich mit Stiefel und hierarchische poliertem Blech umgeben und die man schlicht »Militär« nennt.”

⁶ Matthias Rebstock, *Komposition zwischen Musik und Theater*, 31-32: “Mit seiner rechtspopulistischen Politik buhlte er konsequent um die Gunst der Arbeiterklasse und wurde schließlich 1946 mit großer Mehrheit zum Präsidenten gewählt, unterstützt von den Massen und den Gewerkschaften, aber mit einer breiten Gegnerschaft im Militär, der katholischen Kirche, der Aristokratie, den Sozialisten und Kommunisten und den Intellektuellen. Perón regierte ohne Parlament und ließ politische Gegner, besonders aus dem linken Lager, verfolgen. Alle Bereiche des öffentlichen Lebens einschließlich Wirtschaft, Kultur, Medien und Bildung wurden gleichgeschaltet und direkt dem Präsidenten unterstellt. Kritische Intellektuelle wurden aus ihren Ämtern entfernt und durch entsprechende Marionettenfiguren ersetzt. Peróns Politik war antiklerikal, autoritär und nationalistisch bis faschistisch.”

attempt to reconstruct the country; “updating Argentine legislation dealing with both social reform and the protection of workers’ rights,” for instance.⁷

In any case, Kagel’s severe criticism of the social conditions reflects the political oppression of intellectuals and artistic activities. It was his way of opposing the Perónist government’s dictatorial-political control of social and cultural life. This does not mean that Kagel focused on political activism as a crucial element of anarchism. Instead, it is a reflection of anti-despotism shaped through his own experiences and observations of the dictatorial social condition. That is to say, while in his Buenos Aires period Kagel did not compose musical pieces to protest the dictatorship, this particular political context did influence his conception of anarchy in music as a significant part of his aesthetic of musical composition.

Jorge Luis Borges as Opposition to Perón

In consideration of the cultivation of Kagel’s conception of anarchy, his personal contact with Jorge Luis Borges (1899-1989), one of the most prominent Argentine writers in the twentieth century, was decisive. In fact, scholars and indeed, Kagel himself, highlighted the positive aspects of Borges’s influence in the course of the formation of Kagel’s compositional approaches. As a writer and artist, Borges was in fact an outstanding figure who experienced Perón’s “fascist methods of humiliation and manipulation.”⁸ Under the circumstances, however, Borges never acted in conformity with the dictatorial policy, but rather stood against it despite difficulties presented by the government. Notably, Borges maintained this attitude only for the sake of freedom of artistic creation, which to a large extent impacted the formation of Kagel’s aesthetic thoughts. This specific focus on freedom taught Kagel something valuable not only artistically, but also philosophically. Meanwhile, Kagel intensified his idea of artistic individuality through the example of Borges’s struggle to preserve artistic freedom and his resolute stand against political oppression under Perón’s regime.

It is uncertain to what extent Kagel and Borges talked about issues of Perónist policy (particularly about the oppression of the intellectuals), but to a certain degree he

⁷ Emir Rodríguez Monegal, “Borges and Politics,” trans. Enrico Mario Santi and Carlos J. Alonso, *Diacritics* 8/4 (1978): 68.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 64.

recognized the difficulties Borges experienced resulting from Perón's sanctions.⁹ At least, Kagel did know that "during the dictatorship of Perón, Borges could survive only as free lecturer at the *Colegio Libre [de Estudios Superiores]* (Free School for Higher Studies)"¹⁰ after his resignation from the municipal library in 1946, where he had worked for eight years as an assistant librarian.¹¹

Before Perón officially came to power as president of Argentina in 1946, Borges had already detected symptoms of fascism in Perón's government;¹² and therefore as early as 1945, he criticized the fascist tendency of the military government in publications.¹³ As soon as Perón was elected to the presidency of the country, he started purging intellectuals who opposed and condemned his political orientation and the regime itself. While Perón dismissed 1,500 intellectuals from their university positions outright,¹⁴ in other cases, including Borges, he deliberately engineered resignations as revenge for the condemnation of the government. Emir Rodríguez Monegal, the first Borges biographer who closely knew him since their first meeting in 1945,¹⁵ describes Borges's resignation from his assistant librarian position:

In August, 1946, Borges was sent official notice of his promotion to the rank of inspector of chicken and rabbit coups at the municipal marketplace. . . . Perhaps out of embarrassment, Borges does not explain what the promotion entailed. The new job had an obviously allegorical meaning: chickens and rabbits are tame, almost cowardly animals, perennial butts of the grossest machismo jokes in Argentina. . . . He resigned his position.¹⁶

The disgraceful demotion was, however, not sufficient to make Borges fall silent, nor could it diminish his indomitable spirit against political coercion and the Perónist government.

⁹ A few specific examples of Borges's difficulties under the Perón regime are discussed below.

¹⁰ Kagel, *Dialogue, Monologue*, 264-265: "Während der Diktatur von Perón konnte er [Borges] nur als freier Dozent am Colegio Libre überleben."

¹¹ Emir Rodríguez Monegal, "Borges and Politics," 64.

¹² Monegal points out that Borges's solid belief that Perón was a Nazi "was technically wrong" but he "was not wrong about his [Perón's] Fascism. Borges knew that Perón "granted immunity to [Argentine] Nazi-fascist groups. . . and gave encouragement" to them. See *ibid.*, 64 and 68.

¹³ According to Salinas, "Political Philosophy in Borges," 311-312 footnote, the criticism appeared in the "Manifiesto de escritores y artistas" (A manifest [*sic*] of Writers and Artists), 22 March 1945. See Salinas. Monegal refers to another source *La Plata*, a Montevideo newspaper, on 31 October 1945. See Monegal, 64.

¹⁴ David Rock, *Argentina 1516-1987: From Spanish Colonization to the Falklands War and Alfonsín* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1986), 280.

¹⁵ Ilan Stavans, "Bi(bli)ographies: The remains of Jorge Luis Borges," *Transition* 74 (1997): 65.

¹⁶ Monegal, 64-65.

Surprisingly, in the same month Borges presented a short text reprimanding the dictatorship that illustrated both his opposition toward the government and his fortitude:

dictatorships foster oppression, dictatorships foster servitude; dictatorships foster cruelty; more abominable is the fact that they foster idiocy. Hotel clerks mumbling orders, effigies of caudillos, prearranged “long live’s” and “down with’s” walls embellished with names, unanimous ceremonies, mere discipline substituting for lucidity. . . . To combat such sad monotonies is among the writer’s many duties.¹⁷

For Borges and other intellectuals in the minority, however, the dictatorship reached a point even worse than his characterization of it.

Relishing his complete control over the government, Perón restricted freedom of speech as well, and targeted any criticism of him in the press. By his use of the police, Perón coerced the socialist newspaper *La Vanguardia* into closing down in 1947 and “raid[ed] the leading metropolitan dailies *La Prensa*, *La Nación*, *Clarín*, and the offices of the United Press and Associated Press” in 1949.¹⁸ Moreover, the Perónist government issued its own propaganda to eulogize Perón and his wife Evita; as a consequence, “[p]ortraits of both now smiled out from every corner of the republic, and endless batteries of slogans were promulgated.”¹⁹

In the course of these events, Borges experienced another humiliation by the government in 1948, involving his sister and mother. Joining a demonstration against the Perónist government, which was carried out by a female anti-government group, Borges’s sister and mother – and other leaders of the group – were arrested by the police and then were sentenced to a month in prison.²⁰ Furthermore, having become the president of SADE, *Sociedad Argentina de Escritores* (Society of Argentinian Writers), after his resignation as librarian, Borges “was expelled from the presidency for refusing to hang Perón’s portrait”²¹ in his office. Afterwards, a hoodlum, who described himself as a Perónist, menaced Borges and his mother although they were not physically assaulted.²²

¹⁷ Ibid., 66.

¹⁸ Rock, 281 and 303.

¹⁹ Ibid., 304.

²⁰ See Monegal, 66. Due to her advanced age, Borges’s mother was placed under house arrest, see *ibid.* Salinas also briefly describes this event in Salinas, 312.

²¹ Jorge Luis Borges and Roberto Alifano, “Jorge Luis Borges: Interview,” trans. Nicomedes Suárez-Aráuz and William Barnstone, *The Massachusetts Review* 24/3 (1983): 505.

²² Ibid.

Nevertheless, in contrast to many other intellectuals, Borges never ceased to publicly criticize the regime until the overthrow of Perón. According to Monegal,

To endure Perón, to survive, that was Borges' main problem during those years. But instead of spending those years in dignified silence (as Eduardo Mallea, another Argentine writer, would do), or on his knees (like many others) Borges spent them speaking out. In the occupied city that Buenos Aires had become, Borges continued to speak out until one day he was able to wake up and learn of Perón's downfall.²³

Perón's fascist oppression of Borges occurred before Kagel began to study with him at the *Colegio Libre*. Presumably through their personal contact outside the *Colegio Libre*, Kagel knew some details of Borges's disastrous experiences and understood Borges's unflagging aesthetic belief in art. It was the fact that Borges remained unshaken in his belief that artists must not bow to dictatorship, but instead preserve their strength of individuality. This is, indeed, an essential principle of a specific form of anarchy – liberal anarchism.

Liberal Anarchism

In contemplation of Borges's determined attitude against the Perónist government and its influence on Kagel's thoughts especially in reference to musical composition, it is also necessary to investigate Borges's notion of liberal anarchism. Whereas its germination cannot be separated from the socio-political context under the Perón regime, Borges's ideological notion of liberal anarchism is distinguishable from other conceptions of anarchism. This distinction is worth stressing because Borges's particular conception of liberal anarchism formed the significant ideological backbone of his intellectual activity under the tyrannical control of culture by the government.

In general, anarchy is a state that “excludes arrangements structured with a controlling centre,”²⁴ but without eliminating the central element or component from the structure. Politically and ideologically, it therefore assumes the place of an antipode against authoritarianism or totalitarianism. However, as William O. Reichert claims, characterization of anarchy as “synonymous with the breakdown of law and order” is a

²³ Monegal, 67.

²⁴ Richard Sylvan, “Anarchism” in *A Companion to Contemporary Political Philosophy*, ed. Robert E. Goodin and Philip Pettit (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993), 219.

misconception the intelligentsia often believe.²⁵ That is to say, destruction is not an essential characteristic of anarchy; on the contrary, in anarchism an organization has to be constructed by “non-coercive, non-authoritarian” means. The key is not that government be destroyed, but that government be created from the bottom up and not from the top down. Thus, “holistic and tribal means are anarchistically admissible, as are utterly individual ones.”²⁶

In such a broad context, as Alejandra Salinas points out, “conceptually, anarchy can be compatible with a communist organization” as well.²⁷ Yet Borges never had a communist commitment, nor was he interested in anarchy in the economic context, which could be called “market anarchism or anarchocapitalism.”²⁸ Thus, in a discussion of Borges’s conceptualization of anarchy, the specific characterization with the modifier “liberal” is necessary to clarify its distinction from these other forms of anarchist ideologies. To be sure, Borges’s liberal anarchism was framed not in economic terms, but in moral/philosophical ones.

According to Salinas, “an ethics of self-restraint” is indispensable for liberal anarchism in Borges’s sense.²⁹ This ethics cannot be gained without being “a strong individual” and is a crucial factor to form “the well functioning of a self-organized society.”³⁰ In other words, if the whole is comprised of individuals with no ethics of self-restraint, but merely a self-centered wish for freedom, such a state easily leads towards violent chaos, which is incompatible with the idea of liberal anarchism. Again, even though the notion of anti-authoritarianism underlies a conceptualization of anarchism, liberal anarchism has nothing to do with physically destructive actions. Nor did Borges have such intentions; instead, he insisted on ethics and self-discipline as the essentials of the anarchist idea.

Regardless of the degree of Borges’s self-consciousness as an anarchist, one can see that anarchism fundamentally rejects an “authoritarian principle which conditions

²⁵ William O. Reichert, “Anarchism, Freedom, and Power,” *Ethics* 79/2 (1969): 143.

²⁶ Sylvan, 219.

²⁷ Salinas, 310.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid., 302.

³⁰ Ibid.

people to look toward leaders for guidance.” In fact, the intensification of Borges’s anarchist leanings can be attributed to Perón’s cultural policy.

The Peronist state endeavored to politicize certain aspects of everyday life and popular culture such as education, the military, the universities, the public administration, the media, welfare and sport.³¹

Under the circumstances, it is thus no surprise that Borges attempted “to convert the SADE into a cultural forum in order to oppose the nacionalista and populist orientation,” during his presidency of the association.³² His goal was not to organize a political group, but rather to guard the dignity and liberty of art against the “vulgarity of state-promoted-cultural activities.”³³

Engaged in musical and artistic activities, as well as in Borges’s lectures on literature, Kagel must have sharply sensed Borges’s liberal-anarchist thought as a significant part of his aesthetics, even though Borges made no direct remarks about this. While Kagel was impressed not only with the formidable intelligence Borges displayed in his lectures and writings, but also with his cosmopolitan perspective, the composer knew how Borges’s literature and his dignity were distorted by the misguided cultural policy of the Perón’s regime. “For love of Borges,” Kagel explains:

If one speaks of Peron’s culture policy – more appropriately, politics of unculture, populism was the catchword then. Politicians of every shade of opinion often have an unmistakable sense for bad quality. They vehemently defend anachronistic manifestations, which they claim to understand, always keeping the anonymous voter in the corner of their eye. In the context of this hopeless situation, Borges’s literature was dressed up as elitist, and he even lost his small position as a librarian. To give in to the political pressure and to commit himself to writing “popular” [*volksnah*] literature would have been identical to suicide for him.³⁴

Here, Kagel suggests two significant points: first, political intervention results in cultural degeneration; second, repressive circumstances constrain artistic originality. In the latter,

³¹ Marcela García Sebastiani, “The Other Side of Peronist Argentina: Radicals and Socialists in the Political Opposition to Perón,” *Journal of Latin American Studies* 35/2 (2003): 335.

³² Flavia Fiorucci, “Between Institutional Survival and Intellectual Commitment: The Case of the Argentine Society of Writers during Perón’s Rule (1945-1955),” *The Americas* 62/4 (2006): 612.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Kagel, *Dialogue, Monologue*, 269: “Wenn man von Peronistischer Kulturpolitik – richtiger: Politik der Unkultur – spricht, dann war Populismus das Leitwort. Politiker jeglicher Couleur haben oft einen untrüglichen Sinn für schlechte Qualität. Leidenschaftlich verteidigen sie unzeitgemäße Manifestationen, die sie selbst zu verstehen glauben, stets auf den anonymen Wähler schielend. Im Zuge dieser trostlosen Situation wurde die Literatur von Borges als elitär verbrämt, und er verlor sogar seine kleine Stelle als Bibliothekar. Dem politischen Druck nachzugeben und sich zu verpflichten, »volksnah« zu schreiben, wäre für ihn identisch mit Selbstmord gewesen.”

especially, he implies that Borges never sold out to become a preferred writer of the government who would fit within the frame of its restrictive definition of culture.

Kagel's encounter with Borges's sturdy spirit and determined attitude was a momentous lesson that influenced his philosophy and aesthetic throughout his career. Kagel must have assimilated Borges's liberal anarchist doctrines (which Salinas termed "the ethics of self-restraint" and the indispensability of the "strong individual") through his observation of Borges's practices for the sake of artistic freedom. For both Kagel and Borges, Perón's cultural populism was nothing but a degeneration of art, a "hopeless situation" they had to face as an everyday reality which they could never condone. Although Kagel was not as pronounced an opponent of the Perónist government as Borges, he also experienced the restriction of creative freedom under Perón's dictatorship. Such a situation must have made Kagel more conscious of Borgesian liberal anarchist concepts in the cultivation of his own aesthetics.

Even before he met Borges, Kagel was already familiar with some aspects of anarchism because he grew up in a left-leaning family. According to Kagel, his mother was "very left" and extolled Rosa Luxembourg as "the most important female figure in history."³⁵ Also, in his boyhood, his mother taught him "the history of Sacco and Vanzetti,"³⁶ two controversial Italian anarchists arrested on charges of robbery and murder in Massachusetts, 1920. It is unclear how Kagel's mother may have explained the idea of anarchy to him, but presumably she meant to convince him that the execution of violence never deserved to be a principle of anarchy.³⁷ This could have become the basis for the ideological and structural formation of Kagel's own concept of anarchy. That is to say, his family background could have contributed to Kagel's cultivation of the idea that one must distinguish anarchy from terrorism or assassination. These hypotheses suggest that Kagel was already a potential liberal anarchist not only as a composer and artist, but also as "a strong individual." For this reason, it is no surprise that he later viewed Borges's resolute attitude against Perón with great sympathy.

³⁵ Anthony Coleman, "Mauricio Kagel," *Bomb* 88 (2004).

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ See *ibid.* Kagel argues against the misconception of anarchy: "Some people . . . think immediately of planting bombs, but this is also unjust. Ninety-nine percent are not planting bombs."

In the early 1950s, Kagel was working at an Argentine cinémathèque where he was a cofounder. He mainly restored damaged films, but also worked as a critic of film and photo journals. In 1952, Kagel used the experience and knowledge that he gained at the cinémathèque to produce his first film, which featured Borges's poem *Muertes de Buenos Aires*. However, this film was "immediately forbidden by the censorship of the Perónist regime."³⁸ According to Kagel, "like a classical persona non grata," he and his co-producer "automatically became lepers for the dictatorship."³⁹ As a consequence, the film was never screened in public, which might have triggered Kagel's involvement in the student protest movement against Perón, although the details are unclear.⁴⁰ In general, the cultural climate of the Perónist regime devalued Kagel's musical pieces, although they neither dealt with Borges, nor contained a political message. It was simply due to a tyrannical reason typical in a dictatorial state: "his music was scarcely performed, since it did not fit the official direction anyway."⁴¹ Together with his exposure to liberal anarchist thought, his experiences under the dictatorial regime shaped Kagel's anti-despotic idea and, consequently, led to him becoming a non-conformist in music and art. Thus it is clear why the word "Argentina" always reminded Kagel of the darker side in the first place, even if there may have been other factors that alienated him from the (mis)government.

For Kagel, who was deeply involved not only in music but also in visual art, literature, and film in his Argentine period, the Perónist intervention in freedom of speech and artistic activity was perhaps the most unforgivable folly. It is thus understandable that Kagel was struck by Borges's unshakable stance on independence of art as well as by his idea that the artist was an individual working against the controlling authorities. Equally important was Borges's outstanding intelligence and distinct aesthetic of art, which more directly influenced Kagel's musical composition.

³⁸ Joseph A. Kruse, ed. "Kagel Biographie II," in *Lese-Welten* (Saarbrücken: Pfau, 2002), 13: "Seinem ersten eigenen Film – der von der peronistischen Zensur sofort verboten wird – liegt das Borges-Gedicht 'Muertes de Buenos Aires' zugrunde." It is unclear whether the film still exists.

³⁹ Kagel, *Dialoge, Monologe*, 179: "Mit der Gedichtvorlage einer Persona non grata wurden wir für die Diktatur automatisch zu Aussätzigen."

⁴⁰ See Heile, 15. The author also notes that Kagel's sister was put under arrest "during student protests (probably in 1951)," *ibid.*

⁴¹ Author unknown, "Mauricio Kagel: Biographische Notiz," in *Collage: dialoghi di cultura. Rivista trimestrale di nuova musica e arti visive contemporanee* 3-4 (1964): 42: "Seine Musik wurde kaum gespielt, da sie ohnehin nicht zur offiziellen Richtung passte."

Borges as Composition Teacher

In his Buenos Aires period, Kagel held Borges in the highest esteem. Despite the fact that he was neither composer nor musician, Borges in fact played a pivotal role in the development of Kagel's distinct aesthetic and philosophy of music and his cosmopolitan viewpoint as a composer.⁴² Due to Borges's enormous influence, Werner Klüppelholz regards Borges as Kagel's "composition teacher, while – paradoxically enough – he never studied music at a conservatory."⁴³ This viewpoint is indeed a significant observation about the formative stages of Kagel's aesthetic of musical composition.

What Kagel absorbed from Borges in his seminars at the *Colegio Libre*⁴⁴ and other personal contacts with him was not actual skills of musical composition, but rather meanings of liberality of art and multiculturalism as parts of the cultural identity of Argentina.⁴⁵ Reflecting on his participation in the seminars, Kagel said that the school could have been modeled on the *Collège de France*: "Seminars on the highest possible level, only invited lecturers, a limited number of participants, and a change of theme after every semester."⁴⁶ Furthermore, according to Kagel, it was also "a refuge for many European university lecturers forced into exile" in Argentina and thus called "University in Exile."⁴⁷

At the *Colegio Libre*, Kagel enjoyed Borges's lectures about literature and history "on the highest level possible." In his lecture of English literature, for instance, Borges's extraordinarily extensive knowledge astonished Kagel as well as the attendees. Greatly

⁴² Regarding the specific matters and their details, see Heile, 11 and Rebstock, 35-38.

⁴³ Werner Klüppelholz, *Über Mauricio Kagel*, 92: "[Borges] war – paradox genug – der eigentliche Kompositionslehrer dessen, der nie ein Konservatorium der Musik besucht hat."

⁴⁴ For the details, see Klüppelholz, *ibid.*; Rebstock, 35-38; Heile, 11; and Kagel, *Dialogue, Monologe*, 264-268.

⁴⁵ Borges's idea of multicultural, however, essentially meant cultural diversity within Western countries. This stance is very similar to that of Kagel. Even during a period when Kagel had a close friendship with John Cage, for instance, an application of Asian philosophy to musical composition is not present in any of Kagel's early work. This aspect informs a clear distinction between their methodological and aesthetic approaches in the light of, for instance, aleatory or indeterminacy in music. On the one hand, Cage's indeterminate concept is, for some pieces, derived from the idea "everything can be music" which seems to be attributed to his study of Zen-Buddism with Daisetz Suzuki. Indeterminate aspects in Kagel's early works, on the other hand, dealt nothing with oriental philosophy. This does not mean that, of course, Kagel did not pay any respect to the non-Western concept and conception, but rather he knew well enough that it was a significant and perhaps indispensable component of musical composition for Cage, but not for Kagel. Interestingly, in this respect Kagel's viewpoint as such is similar to that of Morton Feldman.

⁴⁶ Mauricio Kagel, *Dialogue, Monologe*, 264: "Seminare auf höchstmöglichem Niveau, nur eingeladene Dozenten, eine begrenzte Anzahl von Teilnehmern und Themenwechsel nach jedem Semester."

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*: "für viele europäische Hochschullehrer in der erzwungenen Emigration ein Refugium."

admiring Borges's ability to cite long lines of various English and Anglo-Saxon writers by heart, Kagel states:

One positively felt how he always turned the pages in the folios of the world library in his head. And all these occurred without a triumphant tone of an English specialist, but rather almost with humility, from the deepest love for the musicality of this language.⁴⁸

In addition, Kagel appreciated Borges's lectures on German literature. Through these lectures, Kagel perceived a significant aspect in Borges's posture of art; "his totally laid-back, liberal relation to different literature and even to every composition of words, where the profundity of thought and charm are combined."⁴⁹

Indeed, this perception represents a characteristic of heterogeneity in works of art, which is one of the prominent principles in Kagel's composition. Borges's multilingualism could hint at Kagel's extensive application of multiple languages to his musical composition. This distinct compositional approach is noticeable in his early piece, *Anagrama*, for vocal soloists, speaking choir, and chamber ensemble (1958) in which Kagel uses four different Western languages (French, Italian, Spanish, and German), based on decomposition and re-composition of a Latin palindrome (which I will discuss the details of the compositional method in Chapter Three). The idea of linguistic decomposition and re-composition also underlies Kagel's unique compositional approach in *Sur scène*. In this theatrical music, he montages different musicological and music-critical texts from various authors in various periods, re-composing paragraphs, sentences, or phrases that are previously decomposed.

Contrast, whether explicit or implicit, is equally an important concept of structural and formal design in Kagel's composition. Coexistence of antithetical or heterogeneous elements, like "profundity of thought and charm" in Borges, often appears in Kagel's pieces but in a specific manner such as that of Kagel's social critical thought and humor. In relation to these characteristics, Kagel's acknowledgement of Borges's multifaceted features in his writing seems markedly reflected in the multidimensionality of *Antithese* as well:

⁴⁸ Ibid., 265: "Man spürte förmlich, wie er in den Folianten der Weltbibliothek seines Kopfes ständig umblättert. Und das alles geschah ohne den triumphierenden Ton eines eilten Anglisten, eher fast mit Demut, aus tiefster Liebe zur Musikalität dieser Sprache."

⁴⁹ Ibid.: "sein gänzlich unverkrampftes, großzügiges Verhältnis zur Literatur anderer und überhaupt zu jeder Zusammensetzung von Worten, wo Gedenktiefe und Anmut sich paaren."

Borges's texts are like a prism, in which the light reflects in various directions, but the surfaces of some facets are not sparkingly polished, but raw.⁵⁰

Kagel's metaphor of a prism is virtually indispensable for the examination of *Antithese*.

In the piece, indeed, Kagel's thoughts are reflected in various directions as well.

Kagel's Involvement in Electroacoustic Composition

Despite the undesirable political situation, Kagel's distinct cultural experiences in Buenos Aires fostered his musical and artistic cultivation. Aside from studying literature, Kagel expanded and deepened his musical appreciation and his compositional skills through participation in the *Agrupación Nueva Música*, a group of composers who examined musical works of twelve-tone and experimental composers outside of Argentina or South America. Kagel studied musical composition with Juan Carlos Paz (1901-1972), the founder of the group, who was "the most radical composer of his generation"⁵¹ in Argentina. Active in integrating the newest compositional trends such as neo-classicism, polytonality, and to a lesser extent atonality into his composition, Paz had already in the mid-1930s immersed himself in the Second Viennese School's twelve-tone technique.⁵² Paz was also eager to learn about works of North American and European contemporary composers such as Henry Cowell, Edgard Varèse, Charles Ives, John Cage, Olivier Messiaen, and Pierre Boulez.⁵³ Thanks to Paz's collection of musical scores by these composers, members of the *Agrupación* were able to study them.

Although Paz was nominally Kagel's composition teacher, rather than learning compositional skills from Paz himself, Kagel's study of avant-garde music was in fact autodidactic with the aid of Paz's "fantastic library."⁵⁴ One influential work in this collection was Messiaen's *Mode de valeurs et d'intensités* (1949), a cornerstone work of serialism and the idea of parameterization. Together with a colleague from the *Agrupación*, Kagel keenly scrutinized the modal formation and parameterization of the

⁵⁰ Ibid., 267: "Borges' Texte sind wie ein Prisma, in dem das Licht in verschiedene Richtungen reflektiert, jedoch die Oberfläche einiger Facetten nicht glatt geschliffen, sondern rauh ist."

⁵¹ Gerard Béhague, *Music in Latin America*, 272.

⁵² Ibid., 273-274

⁵³ See Rebstock, 49.

⁵⁴ Ibid., in the author's interview with Kagel conducted in Cologne on 9 March 2009, 354.

piece, a prototype of serial concept⁵⁵; “nevertheless, this attempt annoyed Paz.”⁵⁶ Paz does not seem to have agreed with the new compositional approaches of the younger generation at that time, e.g., aleatory and serialism, although his knowledge of them was extensive. In fact, while Kagel’s engagement in learning in the *Agrupación* heightened his appreciation of contemporary music, he came to regard Paz as “not a good [composition] teacher” and his teaching as “partly very conservative.”⁵⁷ No matter which of the latest compositional styles Paz employed, his approaches almost always clung to tonal vocabulary. Even Paz’s composition with twelve-tone technique, for instance, had a tangible stylistic tendency “to construct tone rows on tonal patterns” associated with tonal centers, as well as to use a twelve-tone row in a somewhat monotonous manner.⁵⁸ This aspect explicitly illustrates not only Kagel’s view of Paz’s conservative bent, but also their contrary views on new music at the time. For Paz, stylistic diversification “opened the doors to the most extreme individualism” and thus he virtually lost his path regarding what and how to compose in the 1950s.⁵⁹ For Kagel, in contrast, such diversification stimulated him to seek out his own musical vocabulary. Kagel’s strenuous effort to analyze Messiaen’s *Mode* was thus quite natural.

Despite his disagreement with Paz’s musicality, Kagel’s membership in the *Agrupación* allowed him to inspect various musical literatures and enabled him to develop a foundation of wide-ranging musical perception. Especially important is that Kagel had the opportunity to read Pierre Schaeffer’s *A la recherche d’une musique concrète* (1952), his first treatise on *musique concrète*. According to Rebstock’s interview with Francisco Kröpfl, who was a close friend of Kagel’s during their membership in the *Agrupación*, the book was given to Kröpfl by Paz and Kagel read it avidly.⁶⁰ Although there was no official electroacoustic studio at that time in Buenos Aires, Schaeffer’s treatise probably inspired Kagel to undertake electroacoustic composition. Notably, Kagel seems to have developed an interest in electroacoustic music already as early as 1950. According to Hugh Davies, Kagel began experimental studies of electronic composition

⁵⁵ As Grant asserts, the *Mode* is not serial, but modal, because “the actual sequence of the notes is not predetermined.” For other reasons in detail, see Grant, 61-62.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 49-50.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 354-355.

⁵⁸ Béhague, 274-276.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 335.

⁶⁰ See Rebstock, 50. A brief profile of Kröpfl is available in Béhague, 336.

at the *Ion, registros sonoros*, where he produced 8 *estudios* between 1950 and 1953.⁶¹

This period in fact overlapped with that of his involvement in the *Agrupación*.⁶²

Unfortunately, the profile of the studio and the details of Kagel's experiment there have never been made public.⁶³ Kagel describes to Rebstock what he attempted with the few electronic devices available for musical composition:

... at that time there were no audio tape machines for hobby use in Argentina – maybe there were for professional use at a radio institution. A wire recorder [Drahtgerät] was the first machine that I got from my father as a gift. And then I had something wonderful, a blank *Pyral* – French magnetic recording media – in which one could directly record just like an electroacoustic recording disc in its early phase. In addition to concrete sounds, I used quite primitive electronic sounds – I knew nothing at all of the early electronic music in Cologne – which I produced by three sawtooth wave generators, but without the necessary technology and system, since I did not have three tape-recorders to mix them.⁶⁴

It is worth noting that Kagel experimented with a composition by means of a mix of concrete and electronically generated sound materials, no matter how primitive and unsophisticated the result would be. That there was no electronic music studio in Buenos Aires at that time seems, however, not wholly disadvantageous, but probably favorable for Kagel in terms of his penchant for artistic creations in non-institutionalized circumstances.⁶⁵

Despite the unsatisfactory circumstances for electroacoustic composition, in 1954 Kagel achieved his first multimedia musical work *Música para la torre* [Tower Music], which contains electroacoustic sounds. As Schnebel, Heile, and Rebstock point

⁶¹ Hugh Davies, *Répertoire international des musiques electroacoustiques : International Electronic Music Catalog* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1968).

⁶² Also, according to Heile, Kagel touches upon *musique concrète* in his article published in the journal *Buenos Aires Literaria* in 1953, see Heile, 9 and 176.

⁶³ According to Attinello, Kagel would experience “an unsuccessful attempt to establish an electronic studio.” This event might be at the *Ion, registros sonoros*. See Paul Attinello, “Mauricio Kagel,” in *Cut and Splice 2005* [article on-line] available from <http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio3/cutandsplice/kagel.shtml>; Internet; accessed 6 July 2009.

⁶⁴ Rebstock, “Interview mit Mauricio Kagel” in *Komposition zwischen Musik und Theater*, 351: “es gab zu diesem Zeitpunkt in Argentinien keine Tonbandmaschinen für den Hobbygebrauch – professionelle vielleicht bei einer Rundfunkanstalt. Das Erste, was ich von meinem Vater geschenkt bekam, war ein Drahtgerät. Und dann hatte ich etwas Wunderbares, französische Rohlinge *Pyral*, die man direkt aufnahm, so wie in den ersten Zeiten der elektroakustischen Schallplattenaufzeichnung. Neben den konkreten verwendete ich recht primitive elektronische Klänge – ich wusste gar nichts von der frühen elektronischen Musik aus Köln –, die ich mit Sägezahngeneratoren produziert habe, aber ohne die erforderliche Technologie und Systematik, weil ich keine drei Tonbandmaschinen zum Mischen hatte.”

⁶⁵ Incidentally, a dispute had already come about between schools of Parisian *musique concrète* and Cologne's *elektronische Musik* at that time. The details and Kagel's view on them are discussed in Chapter Three.

out, it is a spectacular and potentially epoch-making work in significant respects. As the title indicates, the piece was composed for a “geometrically abstract” tower designed by an Argentine architect and designer César Janello, who named the object *Torre alegórica* [Allegoric tower].⁶⁶ The gigantic tower consists of cubes that are composed of steel bars, and the five cubes contain two pyramids, respectively, in each of which a light is installed. Furthermore, loudspeakers were placed forty meters high in the tower.

Because all but one page of the score has been lost⁶⁷ and no recording of the performance has survived, information about the piece has to be reconstructed from contemporary accounts. Rebstock’s research highlights the confusion about the piece: the *Enciclopedia de música argentina* claims that the piece comprises “orchestra, a study of percussion, an ostinato for chamber ensemble, and a study of *concrète* music;”⁶⁸ the newspaper *Los Andes* reports that “the composition has been recorded with the participation of an ensemble of four pianos, an orchestra with brass and percussion instruments, and noises of current machines;”⁶⁹ and finally, Schnebel describes *Música para la torre* as a piece that consists of “various combinations of concrete noises and denaturalized instrumental sounds.”⁷⁰ Although the variety of explanations is bewildering, Kagel clearly produced an electroacoustic composition whose principle has much in common with that of Parisian *musique concrète*. As Rebstock and Heile note, it is a phenomenal experiment of *musique concrète* realized for the first time outside of Europe and in South America.⁷¹

Incidentally, an available primary source of *Música para la torre* is the first page of the score for the lighting, not for the musical part. Kagel composed various patterns of lighting for the individual pairs of pyramids, transforming into lights both the rudiments of compositional technique – such as “crescendo,” “diminuendo,” and “sustained” – and sophisticated elements of polyphony. For example, each cube has its own series of

⁶⁶ See Rebstock, 57; Schnebel, 9; and Heile, 14.

⁶⁷ See Rebstock, 59.

⁶⁸ Rebstock, 57: “1) für Orchester 2) Schlagzeugstudie 3) ostinato für Kammerensemble 4) Studie konkreter Musik.” See also Heile, 14.

⁶⁹ Rebstock, 58: “Diese Kompositionen sind aufgenommen worden mit der Beteiligung eines Ensembles aus 4 Klavieren, einem Orchester mit Blas- und Perkussionsinstrumenten und Geräuschen von laufenden Maschinen.”

⁷⁰ Schnebel, 9: “verschiedene Kombinationen von konkreten Geräuschen und denaturierten Instrumentalklängen.”

⁷¹ See Rebstock, 51 and Heile, 14. See also Béhague, 337-338.

lighting that includes a combination of red and white lights, as well as of a red or white light and no light. It is therefore a composition of “horizontal” lighting patterns. A change in the lighting pattern in the individual cubes is supposed to occur at a certain time point simultaneously. That is to say, the tower as a whole generates various “vertical” combinations of lighting patterns in the fixed time interval; hence, one could describe the structure of the piece as analogous to a five-part polyphony or a five-voice chorus of lighting, so to speak.

This distinct characteristic suggests that Kagel did not simply create the lighting *for* the architecture, but rather his composition of *Música para la torre* included lighting as a visual embodiment of his musical idea. This is indeed a noteworthy aspect of Kagel’s aesthetic. Whenever there were components from another discipline or extra-musical materials, regardless of their capability of generating a sound, Kagel treated them as part of the musical composition. For Kagel, music was always the main component, even if an extra-musical component had a stronger impact than the musical part due to the visual or theatrical spectacle. His use of varying degrees of illumination and polyphonic lighting patterns in *Música para la torre* demonstrates that already in his Argentine period, Kagel cultivated “musicalization” of extra-musical elements in his own manner. This musicalization is not intended to accompany or embellish the ‘real’ musical part, but rather to take the form of musical material, so that it can play a contrapuntal role to the musical part. In the case of *Antithese*, his musicalization of extra-musical components is conspicuous in the acting part but more sophisticated and complicated than in *Música para la torre*.

Path to Europe

Kagel’s interest in composition with the aid of electronic devices and his ambition to study it led ultimately to an important turning point in his career as a composer; the decision to go to Europe. A decisive factor here was his meetings with a gifted composer who had already established an international reputation: Pierre Boulez. Kagel’s first meeting with Boulez took place in Buenos Aires in 1953 during the South American Tour of the *Compagnie (Madeleine) Renaud- (Jean-Louis) Barrault*, which Boulez

accompanied as the musical director.⁷² Interested in Barrault's theater work, Kagel "took part in two of his theater productions (*Hamlet* and Kafka's *Der Prozeß*) as an extra,"⁷³ which Boulez later remembered.⁷⁴ Although the exact date and location is unclear, Kagel had an opportunity to show Boulez his compositions *Quarteto mixto* and *Sextet* (which was not yet completed).⁷⁵ As Kagel himself repeatedly asserted in interviews and conversations, Boulez suggested to him that he should move to Europe, since that would

⁷² The date is somewhat unclear. In the conversations with Renate Liesmann-Gümmer in 1986 and with Klüppelholz between 1998 and 2000, and in the interview with Rebstock in 2004, Kagel mentions the first meeting with Boulez was in 1952, see Mauricio Kagel, "Über Zusammenhänge – Neue Musik in Köln seit den fünfziger Jahren: Mauricio Kagel im Gespräch mit Renate Liesmann-Gümmer." in *Rheinisches Musikfest Köln 1987*, ed. Westdeutscher Rundfunk Köln (Köln: Westdeutscher Rundfunk, 1987), 38 and *Dialoge, Monologe*, 38, and Rebstock, 352, where he says he "got to know Pierre Boulez in 1954 in Buenos Aires" in a conversation with Max Nyffeler. See Mauricio Kagel and Max Nyffeler, "Mitteilbarkeit in der Musik" *Lettre* 51/4 (2000): 117; the English translation is available in Max Nyffeler, "There Will Always Be Question Enough: Mauricio Kagel in conversation with Max Nyffeler," trans. Richard Toop, *Beckmesser* [music criticism on-line]; available from <http://www.beckmesser.de/komponisten/kagel/int-e.html>; Internet; accessed 3 July 2009. In contrast, Heile describes that Boulez's presence in Buenos Aires for the Renaud-Barrault South American tour was in 1953, see Heile, 14-15. Jesús Aguila also asserts that Kagel and Boulez "got to know each other since the concert tour with the *Compagnie Renaud-Barrault* in 1953," see Jesús Aguila, *Le Domaine Musical: Pierre Boulez et vingt ans de création contemporaine* (Paris: Fayard, 1992), 247: "Mauricio Kagel et Pierre Boulez se connaissaient depuis la tournée que ce dernier fit avec la Compagnie Renaud-Barrault en 1953." It seems to me that their first meeting in 1953 is more credible than in 1952 for the following reasons: according to Jean-Jacques Nattiez, Boulez had a tour with the *Compagnie Renaud-Barrault* in 1952, but to Canada and the United States, see Jean-Jacques Nattiez, *The Boulez-Cage Correspondence*, ed. Jean-Jacques Nattiez and Robert Samuels, trans. Robert Samuels (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 7. This book, consisting of the author's thorough recollection of correspondence between Boulez and Cage and reexamination, in fact contains two letters from Boulez to Cage, dated 1952 from Canada (from Montreal and Ottawa, respectively), see Nattiez, 135-140. Furthermore, in the same literature, there is also a letter from Cage to Boulez, dated 1953 to Montevideo, Uruguay, with a description of "c/o Compagnie Mad. Renaud-J. L. Barrault" under the recipient's name (which is abbreviated to "P. B."), see *ibid.*, 142. These documents evidence that Boulez's presence in South America was 1953, in which Kagel met him for the first time. Incidentally, Boulez also gives an incorrect date of their first meeting in the conversation with Aguila: "I [Boulez] became acquainted with Kagel in Argentina in 1950," see Aguila, 247: "J'avais connu Kagel en Argentine, en 1950." 1950 is the year of Boulez's first visit in South America, accompanying the first tour of the *Compagnie Renaud-Barrault* as the musical director. Regarding these descriptions of Kagel and Boulez, one should bear in mind Richard Toop's statement: "A composer who has been so intensely engaged in changing the face of European music surely has not the time to become a musicologist," see Toop, "Stockhausen and the Sine-Wave: The Story of an Ambiguous Relationship," *The Musical Quarterly* 65/3 (1979): 380-381.

⁷³ Kagel, "Über Zusammenhänge," 38.

⁷⁴ What impressed Boulez on the occasion of Kagel's participation in the theater performance seems due to his appearance. An anecdote Boulez relates in the discussion with Aguila is humorous: "He [Kagel] was an extra in *Le Procès* [The Trial] of Kafka. When he came to Europe, he told me: 'I was the extra...' then I remembered that tall guy," see Aguila, 247: "Il avait été un figurant dans *Le Procès* de Kafka. Quand il est venu en Europe, il m'a dit : 'j'avais été figurant...' En effet, je me souviens d'un grand type comme ça."

⁷⁵ Kagel, *Dialoge*, 38.

be far more suitable for him if he wanted a career in musical composition.⁷⁶ As a result, Kagel put his wish to pursue composition in Europe into practice: in the same year he applied for a stipend from the *Groupe de Recherches de Musique Concrète* at the *Radiodiffusion-Télévision Française* organized by Pierre Schaeffer, Pierre Henry, and Jacques Poullin.⁷⁷

It was quite natural that Kagel chose the *musique concrète* studio in Paris. First, by reading Schaeffer's *A la recherche d'une musique concrète*, Kagel knew the studio was there and he had gained theoretical and aesthetic knowledge about *musique concrète*.⁷⁸ Second, as Heile assumes, Kagel's choice of the *concrète* studio was perhaps due to his familiarity with the French language, which must have been derived from "cultural ties between Argentina and France."⁷⁹ However, Kagel's decision to study at the *concrète* studio does not seem to have ever been suggested by Boulez, although Boulez had already produced his first electroacoustic pieces in the studio by the time of his first encounter with Kagel (at that time the relationship between Boulez and Schaeffer was already strained⁸⁰). Thus, it was probably Kagel's own choice. His application was, however, declined.

In the following year, Boulez visited Buenos Aires again for another tour with the same theater company, and this time Kagel had more and closer contacts with Boulez. Paz arranged for Boulez to give a short talk about his work for members of the

⁷⁶ It is unclear how explicit or implicit Boulez's suggestion was. For instance, in a conversation with Renate Liesmann-Gümmer in 1986, Kagel recalled that Boulez told him that he "should absolutely go to Europe, since the conditions for composers there would be essentially more beneficial," see Mauricio Kagel, "Über Zusammenhänge," 38: "Er [Boulez] . . . meinte, ich sollte unbedingt nach Europa gehen, weil die Bedingungen für Komponisten dort wesentlich günstiger seien," whereas in a later conversation with Werner Klüppelholz (sometime between September 1998 and December 2000), he explains what he read "between the lines" in Boulez's advice: "You can compose wonderful music in South America, but if the pieces do not become known, they will not exist," see Kagel, *Dialogue, Monologue*, 38: "Sie können in Südamerika schöne Musik komponieren, doch wenn die Stücke nicht bekannt werden, so existieren sie nicht." See also Wulf Herzogenrath und Gabriele Lueg, "Gespräch mit Mauricio Kagel," 175.

⁷⁷ Kagel calls it the *Club d'Essai* at the *Radiodiffusion Française*, see Kagel, *Dialogue*, 39. However, already in 1951 the group had the official status of *musique concrète* and their own studio that was offered by the *Radiodiffusion-Télévision Française*, see Carlos Palombini, "Pierre Schaeffer, 1953: Towards an Experimental Music," *Music & Letters* 74/4 (1993): 542.

⁷⁸ Kagel's description to Rebstock cited above suggests that at this point he seems to have had no knowledge of *elektronische Musik* in Cologne yet.

⁷⁹ Heile, 15.

⁸⁰ This resulted primarily from the irreconcilable differences between their aesthetics, as well as between their theoretical developments of musical composition. I will discuss these issues in detail later in this chapter.

Agrupación, including Kagel.⁸¹ This talk gave Kagel the opportunity to reconnect with Boulez and at subsequent meetings, according to Rebstock, he showed Boulez his 4 *Piezas para piano* of 1954, his *Sextet* (now completed), and part of *Música para la torre*. What Kagel and Boulez discussed in detail in their meetings is unknown, yet presumably these compositions (especially the *Sextet*, which employs complex serial applications, and metric changes and *Música*) convinced Boulez more firmly of Kagel's effort to establish his own approach to musical composition. Describing Cologne's *elektronische Musik* and Stockhausen (and not Parisian *musique concrète*) to Kagel,⁸² Boulez's suggestion for Kagel's relocation to Europe this time was specific and realizable.

Up to that year, Boulez already had developed significant contact with Stockhausen and Herbert Eimert (1897-1972) – figureheads of the *elektronische Musik* studio at the WDR in Cologne – while abandoning his work at the *Radiodiffusion-Télévision Française* (henceforth referred to as RTF) studio in Paris. Although it is unclear to what extent Boulez informed Kagel of the developmental state of *elektronische Musik* in Cologne, it is plausible to assume that he might have sounded Eimert out as to whether the studio would allow the talented Argentine composer to work on electroacoustic composition. In any case, Kagel arrived in Germany on a DAAD (Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst) stipend to work on electroacoustic composition at the WDR in 1957. As a result of Boulez's encouragement, Kagel now stood on the threshold of his career as a composer in Europe.

Issues in the Development of Electroacoustic Composition in Europe

Introduction

While Kagel was cultivating his early aesthetic of music in Buenos Aires, in 1950s Europe compositional style and technique were changing rapidly. In particular, the integration of technology into musical composition enabled composers to pioneer new methods and theories which later came to characterize them as postwar avant-garde. As M. J. Grant points out, for instance, the developmental link between electroacoustic composition and serialism was so reciprocally influential that it not only enabled but also

⁸¹ This significant information is given by Kröpfl in the interview with Rebstock, which is perhaps available only in Rebstock, 50-51.

⁸² See Rebstock, 353.

encouraged composers to establish individual, unique theorizations and aesthetics. It was in fact one of the noteworthy incidences of cross-fertilization in the history of music and of musical theory in the twentieth century. Aside from the serial/electroacoustic connection, the electronic devices for musical composition also played significant roles in producing a variety of unheard-of sounds. In any case, that the electronic equipment entered the sphere of musical composition broadened the musical palette (especially in relation to the idea of *Klangfarbe*) of the postwar avant-garde.

Meanwhile, the innovations of compositional method and theory in combination with technological media not only inspired new individual approaches but also engendered controversial issues. These issues were mostly attributable to aesthetic differences, which often led to mutual criticism among the composers. This situation in turn contributed to a curious politics among the postwar avant-garde, though there were other factors for it as well. In terms of technological contribution to musical composition, the innovations and disputes represented two sides of the same coin, so to speak.

Perhaps one of the most notorious cases is the controversy between Parisian *musique concrète* and Cologne *elektronische Musik* which emerged in the early 1950s and peaked at about mid-decade. As Carlos Palombini points out, the derivation of the *concrète-elektronisch* antagonism is often simplified into differences of “mutually exclusive temperaments: the intuitive and the rational,” respectively.⁸³ However, this disagreement was based on essential aesthetic distinctions regarding how to deal with electronic equipment – what to regard as the new “instrument” – and how to define the goal of composition that incorporated it. Closer observation reveals that the aesthetic distinctions are inseparable from the differences of the individual theorizations in electroacoustic composition between the Parisian and Cologne schools. Furthermore, it is worth noting that the very root of the controversy lay *within* the *musique concrète* studio but soon spread to Cologne as well.

Presumably, Kagel had little clue of the controversy at the time it was happening, and Boulez, who was a key person in the disputes, did not elaborate upon it on the occasions of their meetings in Buenos Aires. Thus, Kagel was able to focus on his own experiments in electroacoustic composition in Argentina without being distracted by the

⁸³ Palombini, “Pierre Schaeffer, 1953: Towards an Experimental Music,” 557.

ongoing *concrète-elektronisch* debate. This is an important aspect for examining Kagel's stance on the electroacoustic issues in Europe, as well as for structural, formal, and aesthetic characteristics of *Antithese*, which reflects his perception of the issues.

In order to discern Kagel's distinct viewpoint of the *concrète-elektronisch* dispute and its reflection in *Antithese*, the discussion below deals with aspects of the controversy from a specific angle. In parallel with Kagel's Argentine period discussed above, this discussion throws light on Boulez's involvement in electroacoustic composition in the early 1950s and its problematic consequences. First, Boulez was one of the first composers who applied a serial theory and its parameterization to an electroacoustic composition – at least earlier than Stockhausen. His ambition to explore the possibility of serial manipulation in electroacoustic composition (in the *musique concrète* studio!) consequently gave rise to a quarrel between Boulez and Schaeffer. Each composer insisted on the correctness of his own opinion concerning the theoretical development of electroacoustic composition, as well as his aesthetic direction. As a consequence, Boulez became “disillusioned with the situation” in the *concrète* studio.⁸⁴ A review, below, of the sequence of events related to Boulez's electroacoustic studies, and Schaeffer's irritation with them, highlights one significant origin of the *concrète-elektronisch* controversy. Understanding the details helps one appreciate why Boulez did not mention the *concrète* studio in the 1953 meeting with Kagel, even though Boulez then suggested Kagel compose in Europe.

Second, there is a common understanding that, although somewhat bizarre, Boulez is regarded as belonging to the Cologne School,⁸⁵ despite the fact that he composed no electroacoustic music in the WDR studio. In addition to his harsh criticism of the principles of *musique concrète*, his serial applications to the electroacoustic compositions, *Étude sérielle sur un son* (1951) and *Étude sérielle sur sept sons* (1952), produced in the *concrète* studio demonstrate that it is scarcely suitable to subsume Boulez under the category of *musique concrète*, as we shall see. Also, during his work on the two *Études*, Boulez made contact with Stockhausen and Eimert, the director of the *elektronische*

⁸⁴ M. J. Grant, *Serial Music, Serial Aesthetics*, 56.

⁸⁵ See Frank Hilberg, “Geräusche?: Über das Problem, der Klangwelt Lachenmanns gerecht zu werden,” in *Helmut Lachenmann*, ed., Ulrich Tadday (München: Edition Text + Kritik, 2009), 68.

Musik studio in Cologne, whom Boulez regarded as “very liberal.”⁸⁶ His excitement at the prospect of working with them at the *elektronische* studio can be seen, indeed, in a letter to John Cage which Boulez wrote during his stay in Buenos Aires 1954, exactly in the same period that Boulez spoke of Stockhausen and *elektronische Musik* to Kagel.

Although there is no direct connection between Boulez’s *Études* and Kagel’s *Antithese*, a brief analysis of the serialization of *Étude sur un son* helps to discern contrasting aspects of serial thought, an important aesthetic of composition.⁸⁷ Boulez’s serialization in the *Étude* is an example of the embodiment of this particular thought, a basic model crystallized by the straightforward connection between serial method and serial conception. The analysis thus contributes to illuminating the uniqueness of *Antithese*, a non-serial piece nevertheless composed with Kagel’s serial thought.⁸⁸

Also, an analysis of the *Étude* underscores the irreconcilable contrast between Boulez’s serial approach and Schaeffer’s *concrète* theory and aesthetic. The Boulez-Schaeffer dispute did not directly influence the early phase of Kagel’s electroacoustic composition in his Argentine period. However, Boulez may have expected Kagel as a potential ally to legitimize his serialization, as he realized a unique serial application in the *Sextet*. If this hypothesis is true, Kagel’s compositional and aesthetic direction thwarted Boulez’s expectation. When Kagel later became aware of the *concrète-elektronisch* debate, he recognized it as worthless to his own compositional and aesthetic development and thus never leaned toward either side. In the music of *Antithese*, Kagel integrated both principles into the piece but with a unique method and aesthetic compared to those of the two opposing parties, and without serial organization. Hence, Boulez’s attempt at serializing electroacoustic composition and the resultant dispute with Schaeffer, which soon became the debate between the Cologne and Parisian studios, are significant events to be examined as a preliminary stage for the theoretical and aesthetic analysis of *Antithese*.

⁸⁶ Jean-Jacques Nattiez, “Letter from Pierre Boulez to John Cage, July 1954,” in *The Boulez-Cage Correspondence*, 150.

⁸⁷ The details are discussed in Chapter Five.

⁸⁸ See Chapter Five.

Pierre Boulez: Serialization in the musique concrète Studio

According to Jean-Jacques Nattiez, between October and December 1951 Boulez took a course in *musique concrète*⁸⁹ offered by Pierre Schaeffer (1910-1995) and his colleagues (the studio engineer Jacques Poullin and the studio composer Pierre Henry) in the electroacoustic studio at the RTF in Paris. During this year, Boulez's exploration of musical composition was "focused on the expansion and homogeneity of the field of serialism, having attempted to generalize the notion of the series itself."⁹⁰ Already in the previous year, Boulez had begun composing *Polyphonie X* for eighteen instruments and *Structures* for two pianos, pieces that seek to construct mutually transformable serial structures. More specifically, Boulez "attempted to realize the serial organization at all levels: arrangement of the pitches, the dynamics, the attacks, and the durations" and to make all these parameters structurally interchangeable by transformations (it seems that the pitch structure is the prime series – i.e., the series the composer first organizes).⁹¹

That is to say, before becoming involved in composing electronic music in the *musique concrète* studio, Boulez had already exerted himself at attempts at serial theorization in *Polyphonie X* and *Structures*, both of which he later regarded as "documents rather than works."⁹² His principal reason for composing in the *concrète* studio stemmed from a firm belief that by means of electronic devices, one could concentrate exclusively on formulating the serial structure, without concern for the technical difficulty of the musical instrument. "In this way," Boulez enunciates his expectation, "each work will have its own universe, its own structure and its own methods of [serial] derivation on each level."⁹³ He sought to achieve "homogeneity of the field of serialism," in other words, "the serial organization of all planes by means of a single unifying principle."⁹⁴

⁸⁹ See Nattiez, "Letter from Pierre Boulez to John Cage, December 1951," in *The Boulez-Cage Correspondence*, 119, footnote.

⁹⁰ Ibid., "Letter from Pierre Boulez to John Cage, August 1951," 99.

⁹¹ Ibid., "Letter from Pierre Boulez to John Cage, between 7 and 21 May 1951," 90-91.

⁹² Pierre Boulez, "An Interview with Dominique Jameux," 200-201.

⁹³ Nattiez, "Letter from Pierre Boulez to John Cage, August 1951," 103.

⁹⁴ Palombini, 555.

The Compositional Method of Étude sérielle sur un son

In a letter to Cage dated December 1951, Boulez set forth the details of his work at the studio. His explanation there was axiomatic since the underlying parametric thought corresponded exactly to a serial theorization. Indeed, the description in the letter contained instructions on the serial scheme for Boulez's first electroacoustic piece *Étude sérielle sur un son*. As the title indicates, the *Étude* takes a single recorded sound, in this case from an African *sansa* (a musical instrument generally known as thumb piano), as its original sound material. The plan of serialization rested "solely on the transformations [*interventions*] of the time and pitch series,"⁹⁵ leaving aside timbre and dynamic parameters. This fact reveals that for the realization of the *Étude*, Boulez hardly paid attention to the generation of *Klangfarbe*, but instead concentrated his efforts on exploring the foundation of the serial method made possible only by electronic manipulation.

The *musique concrète* studio consisted at that time of "microphones, disc cutters, two ordinary tape recorders, a three-track tape recorder," and a "transposition machine called the *phonogène*," capable of generating twelve different speeds that correspond to the tempered twelve-tone chromatic scale.⁹⁶ In addition, this particular device was able to double the speeds; therefore, one could obtain twenty-four semitones in a range of two octaves based on recorded sound material. With regard to the *Étude*, with the aid of technology, Boulez not only enriched the recorded sound with the artificial reverberation, but also created a catalogue of seventy-two distinct sounds, each of which has its unique pitch and duration. He determined the pitch and duration of a sound by the point on which the twelve "semitone" pitch columns and six "octave" tape-speed rows intersect in the matrix Boulez tabularized (see Figure 2.1 below).

⁹⁵ Nattiez, "Letter from Pierre Boulez to John Cage, December 1951," 121.

⁹⁶ Pascal Decroupet, "Timbre Diversification in Serial Tape Music and Its Consequence on Form," *Contemporary Music Review* 10/2 (1994): 13. Also, see Pascal Decroupet and Elena Ungeheuer, "Karel Goeyvaerts und die serielle Tonbandmusik," *Revue belge de Musicologie/ Belgisch Tijdschrift voor Muziekwetenschap* 48 The Artistic Legacy of Karel Goeyvaerts. A Collection of Essays (1994): 99.

Figure 2.1. Matrix for Seventy-Two Pitches and Durations of Pierre Boulez's *Étude sérielle sur un son* (1951)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
4N	t1	t2	t3	t4	t5	t6	t7	t8	t9	t10	t11	t12
2N	2t1	2t2	2t3	2t4	2t5	2t6	2t7	2t8	2t9	2t10	2t11	2t12
N	4t1	4t2	4t3	4t4	4t5	4t6	4t7	4t8	4t9	4t10	4t11	4t12
M	8t1	8t2	8t3	8t4	8t5	8t6	8t7	8t8	8t9	8t10	8t11	8t12
M/2	16t1	16t2	16t3	16t4	16t5	16t6	16t7	16t8	16t9	16t10	16t11	16t12
M/4	32t1	32t2	32t3	32t4	32t5	32t6	32t7	32t8	32t9	32t10	32t11	32t12

In Figure 2.1, the Arabic numbers in the uppermost row represent twelve distinct pitches that are equivalent to the twelve semitones in an octave. In the second upper row (4N-row), t1, t2, t3, and so forth up to t12 indicate a series of durations; for instance, the relationship of durations between t1 and t3 is an approximate ratio of 9 to 8, which is equivalent to the ratio of a justly-tuned major second; likewise, the relationship between t1 and t5 is an approximate ratio of 81 to 64; or a major third.⁹⁷ The leftmost column in the table above represents six variant speeds of tape loop: the N represents “normal” speed and the 2N runs twice as fast speed as the N; the M represents “moitié” (half) and thus it runs the half speed of the N and the M/2 the half speed of M. Changes of tape speed here are therefore much wider than the half-step based changes (i.e., t-values). Based on the prime series of twelve “semitone” durations (t1 to t12), the application to other tape loop speeds (2N to M/4) generates a total of seventy-two distinct durations. The duration of pitch 3-2N is, for instance, indicated 2t3, i.e., the duration is twice as long as that of t3 (3-4N). Units of time are not calculated in seconds or minutes, but in centimeters of magnetic tape.⁹⁸

⁹⁷ In a letter to Cage in December 1951, Boulez describes the relations of t-row “obey the law 9/8, 81/64, 4/3 etc...,” which are the first three ratios of a diatonic scale in the Pythagorean system. If he had employed the simplest just intonation system, then the second ratio (major third) would have been 5/4. See Nattiez, 122. However, it is not clear if the *phonogène*'s pitch system exactly corresponded to the Pythagorean.

⁹⁸ According to Nattiez, the tape recorder would have a speed of 7.7cm to one second. The time value of t1 = 8cm (see Figure 2.2 below) would then be approximately 1.04 seconds. See Nattiez, 122, footnote.

Figure 2.2. Durations of the Seventy-Two Pitches – initial plan

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
4N	8	7,4915	7,1111	6,75	6,321	6	5,6187	5,333	4,994	4,7407	4,5	4,21
2N	16	14,983	14,222	13,5	12,642	12	11,237	10,67	9,989	9,4815	9	8,43
N	32	29,966	28,444	27	25,284	24	22,475	21,33	19,98	18,963	18	16,9
M	64	59,932	56,889	54	50,568	48	44,949	42,67	39,95	37,926	36	33,7
M/2	128	119,86	113,78	108	101,14	96	89,898	85,33	79,91	75,852	72	67,4
M/4	256	239,73	227,56	216	202,27	192	179,8	170,7	159,8	151,7	144	135

(values in centimeters)

Figure 2.2 illustrates a hypothetical reproduction of seventy-two distinct duration values in centimeters, based on the fundamental unit of tape length $t_1 = 8\text{cm}$, which Boulez specifies in the letter to Cage. Interestingly, according to the transcribed tables by Decroupet and Ungeheuer, in the final realization Boulez seems to have determined the tape length of $t_1 = 15\text{cm}$.⁹⁹ Since the *phonogène* produces different pitches by varying the tape speed, the greater the value of “t,” the shorter its duration; therefore, in this version, where $t_1 = 15\text{cm}$, $t_2 = 14\text{cm}$, $t_3 = 13.2\text{cm}$, and so forth.¹⁰⁰

Boulez’s serial operation for the *Étude* is both traditional and creative. Concerning the traditional aspect, Boulez’s choice of row forms preserves a consistency associated with twelve-tone serial tradition of the Second Viennese School.

Figure 2.3. Pitch and Duration Rows of the *Étude sérielle sur un son*¹⁰¹

Layer I:	Pitch	1 6 3 4 10 11 5 12 7 9 2 8
	Duration	7 1 8 6 11 4 10 9 3 2 5 12
Layer II:	Pitch	7 12 9 10 4 5 11 6 1 3 8 2
	Duration	1 7 2 12 5 10 4 3 9 8 11 6

As Figure 2.3 exhibits,¹⁰² the *Étude* contains two layers of pitch-duration series and each has its own combination of pitch series and duration rows. The pitch series of Layer I

⁹⁹ In other words, nearly 2 seconds (1.948 seconds).

¹⁰⁰ These values are gained by calculating other values presented in the duration tables in Decroupet and Ungeheuer, 100.

¹⁰¹ Decroupet and Ungeheuer, 100.

¹⁰² See “Beispiel 1a ‘Grundreihen’” in Decroupet and Ungeheuer, 100.

begins with number 1 (the prime form which can be indicated P0 in a pitch-class analysis whose integers are 0 to 11) and the initial number of the duration series is 7. In order to generate this specific “tritone” interval, so to speak, Boulez employs traditional serial operations: the duration series results from the retrograde of T11 of the pitch series. In Layer II, the 1 – 7 tritone interval between the pitch and duration series in Layer I is inverted. For the pitch series of Layer II, Boulez simply transposes the pitch series of Layer I by 6 semitones. The duration series of Layer II is produced in the same manner as that of Layer I: a retrograde form of the pitch series followed by an 11 semitone-transposition. As a consequence, the initial numbers of individual series in Layers I and II constitute a tritone-cyclic form. This explicitly illustrates the influence of Webernian internal symmetry.

For the creative aspect, Boulez obtained pitches that do not belong to the tempered scale. He calls them “micro-distances”¹⁰³ – i.e., non-tempered intervals – and regards their compatibility with traditionally tempered intervals as a significant enhancement in a serial operation.¹⁰⁴ More importantly, the structure of the combined pitch and time series allowed him to trace the distinct rhythmic structures that could be realized only by the utilization of electronic equipment. In his contribution to the *Première Décade de Musique Expérimentale* (First Decade of Experimental Music), a workshop Schaeffer organized in Paris 1953,¹⁰⁵ Boulez explains:

... with rhythm, one can envisage not only rational divisions of the unit, but also irrational fractions which would mainly be used within the basic unit. If we want to break the unit down into fractions . . . , when superimposing series of units and series of durations, which makes performance virtually impossible and notation unrealizable . . . if we want to introduce a concept of total rhythmic freedom, what can we do except turn to the machine?¹⁰⁶

As Boulez describes above, the rhythmic characteristic of the *Étude* can hardly be realized in conventional notation. The beginning sound of Layer I is, for instance, a

¹⁰³ Nattiez, 123.

¹⁰⁴ See Pierre Boulez, “Tendencies in Recent Music,” in *Stocktakings from an Apprenticeship*, ed. Paule Thévenin, trans. Stephen Walsh (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 177-178. The original article in French “Tendances de la musique récente” first appeared in publication in *La Revue musicale* 236 (1957).

¹⁰⁵ Schaeffer’s main purpose of the workshop was to bring “together the men of *musique concrète* and their German and American colleagues,” see Pierre Schaeffer, *Musique Concrète: Von den Pariser Anfängen um 1948 bis zu elektroakustischen Musik heute*, ed. Michel Chion, trans. (in German) Josef Häusler (Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag, 1974), 27. The German publication to which I refer is based on the second edition of Pierre Schaeffer, *La Musique concrète* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1973).

¹⁰⁶ Boulez, “Tendencies in Recent Music,” 178.

combination of a $1-M/2$ in pitch and a $2t7$ in duration. While the pitch $1-M/2$ remains, the original duration ($16t1$) is truncated into $2t7$. In contrast, the following sound gains a long silence (i.e., pause or rest) that results from the reserved pattern of the first sound: the original length of a $6-2N$ is $2t6$, while the $16t1$ in the time series has much longer duration; thus after the end of a $2t6$ duration, the rest of the $16t1$ duration remains silent.

Boulez further focused on formulating the interior structure of a sound event. In the *Étude* he creates “chords” by superimposing more than two different sounds. The longest duration among the sound materials determines the duration of a chord. Moreover, both a tape of a single sound or a “chord” can also be played in the reverse direction.¹⁰⁷ In this case, the silence precedes the sound – as the “retrograde” of a sound event. What Boulez calls “a total rhythmic freedom” therefore results from the structural concatenation of the single sounds, chord events, and normal and reversed directions of tape playback.

Finally, Boulez planned a further operation for the interior structure of a sound shape, which would be the most advanced and creative aspect in the serialization for the piece, although he seems not to have incorporated the technique into the *Étude*. In his December 1953 letter to Cage, Boulez in fact suggests forming a third row form applicable to the interior structure. Every two adjacent numbers in the series form a ratio; for instance, where the series is $6\ 4\ 3\ \dots$ etc., the value of the first ratio is $6:4 = 3:2$, according to Boulez.¹⁰⁸ One can apply this ratio to the interior structure of the first sound by dividing the sound shape into a $3/5$ and a $2/5$ part. Not only can the two parts be switched in order, but also the tape direction of the individual parts can be reversed. As a result, there are eight possible different patterns for the interior structure. This technique is highly creative, taking advantage of technology in musical composition. However, it is undeniable that there is an impractical aspect: the smaller the duration of a sound, the less effective the operation is, because the characteristic distinction between the sounds before and after the operation is hardly discernible. This could be a reason Boulez did not employ the concept of the third series in the *Étude*.

¹⁰⁷ In the 1953 letter to Cage, Boulez describes it “wrong way round” of the tape loop, see Nattiez, 121.

¹⁰⁸ Nattiez, 123.

In the following year, Boulez went a step further in his study project of serial electroacoustic music – *Étude sérielle sur sept sons*. Boulez’s focus in this piece shifted to the serial organization of timbre. What is intriguing in terms of sound preparation is not only that Boulez now employs a number of various recorded sound materials categorized into several groups, but also that the sources of these sounds are unusually heterogeneous. The list of the “timbre-categories” for the *Étude* reproduced by Decroupet includes noises taken from non-musical instruments such as two rattles, a rolling can, a “swarm,” “counterpoint-whirlwind”; sound materials produced by non-Western musical instruments such as a Japanese instrument and *sansa*; and those produced by Western musical instrument such as piano, bell, and some string instrument which the composer does not specify.¹⁰⁹ In addition, Boulez adds variety to the catalogue of timbre by combining different sounds, for instance, “compound sound of piano and bell,” “compound sounds of percussion and *sansa*,” and so forth, as well as “a compound sound of a low and a high sound” whose instrumentation is unspecified.¹¹⁰

Aside from establishing serial organization, the concept of timbre-categories reflects Boulez’s interest at that time in incorporating sounds or sound characteristics of non-Western musical instruments into his compositions. In an interview with Hans Oesch, Boulez admits his strong tie to the Western European tradition, and particularly to “the theoretical aspect of the Second Viennese School.” He described his interest in non-European musical cultures as a reaction to his devotion to and deep engagement with Western European culture:

For me, non-European culture was really a discovery. I sensed it immediately as a welcoming antidote to European culture. . . . The outside-European musical styles that I know first fascinated me in terms of the sound, since they are not based on the definite sound tradition of our musical instruments. Bali is, for instance, especially bound by metal instruments, Africa by wood instruments, Japan by brass instruments. It is too bad that there has yet to have been study that examines the specific relationship of sound and material between different musical cultures. The traditional West European instrumentation alienated me very much at that time; Mozart’s or Beethoven’s orchestra was acoustically not capable of fascinating me.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ See Decroupet, “Timbre Diversification in Serial Tape Music,” 14.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Hans Oesch, “Interview mit Pierre Boulez,” *Melos: Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 4 (1976): 293: “Für mich war die nichteuropäische Kultur wirklich eine Entdeckung. Ich empfand sie gleich als

Although Boulez made this striking remark about fifteen years after the composition of the two *Études*, his choice of sound sources clearly indicates his intention to integrate non-European acoustical sounds into his music.¹¹²

In his second *Étude*, Boulez adopts more sophisticated modification of these sounds than in the previous *Étude*. Moreover, by applying the serial principle to the combinations of timbres, the density of the sounds is far thicker and the variety of timbres far richer. These two *Études* are therefore complementary in that they literally implement Boulez's first "studies" of serial expansion and unification. Henri Pousseur regards these *Études* as outstanding electronic works, "for the thoroughness of their musical thought" which realizes "a process of perpetual self-renewal."¹¹³ Nevertheless, Boulez's goal in the *Études* was never to crystallize serial methods, but rather to develop "a perspective for understanding composition as a complex of formalization and mediation, knowledge and transmission."¹¹⁴

While composing the serial *Études* or perhaps shortly after completing them, Boulez seems to have already become skeptical about continuing work at the *concrète* studio. In his 1953 essay, Boulez's cynical view about the principles and aesthetic of Parisian *musique concrète* can be read between the lines. On the one hand, Boulez may seem to show a positive or even optimistic attitude towards the present circumstances of electroacoustic composition, though he does not specify the studio and exquisitely interpolates his serialist perspective:

willkommenes Gegengift zur europäischen Kultur. . . . Die außereuropäischen Musikstile, die ich kenne, haben mich erst einmal in klanglicher Hinsicht fasziniert, weil sie nicht auf den durch unsere Musikinstrumente bestimmten Klangtraditionen beruhen. Bali ist zum Beispiel besonders mit Metallinstrumenten verbunden, Afrika mit Holzinstrumenten, Japan mit Blasinstrumenten. Es ist schade, daß es noch keine Studie gibt, die das spezifische Verhältnis von Klang und Material in den verschiedenen Musikkulturen untersucht. Die traditionelle westeuropäische Instrumentation befremdete mich damals sehr; ein Mozart- oder Beethoven-Orchester vermochte mich klanglich nicht zu faszinieren."

¹¹² Ibid. In the interview, Oesch specifically points out that Boulez treats the guitar in *Le marteau sans maître* like the Japanese *Koto* and refers to Indian musical practices in connection with open form, a topic discussed in his essay *Alea*: "Herr Boulez, . . . Sie haben zum Beispiel im "Marteau sans Maître" die Gitarre wie ein japanisches Koto behandelt, oder Sie wiesen in "Alea" im Zusammenhang der offenen Form auf indische Praktiken hin."

¹¹³ Henri Pousseur, "Formal Elements in a New Compositional Material," in *Die Reihe 1: Electronic Music*, ed. Herbert Eimert and Karlheinz Stockhausen (Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania: Theodore Presser Co., 1958), 32. The original German edition was published in 1955.

¹¹⁴ Dominique M. Richard, "Holzwege on Mount Fuji: a doctrine of no-aesthetics for computer and electroacoustic music," *Organised Sound* 5/3 (2000): 130.

if we think of the domain of electronics, it is pretty obvious that we are dealing initially with a non-limitation of possibilities . . . ; we thus create the characteristics of each sound . . . , which depend on the overall structure; the sound is reciprocally linked to the work as the work is linked to the sound. The far end of the serial perspective, which was . . . solely from the point of view of serialized frequencies, thus brings us into the domain of sound itself, and the actual interior of the sound.¹¹⁵

In the essay, Boulez also uses the terms “sound-figure” and “sound-object,” inherent in the realm of *musique concrète* composition, as new discoveries that resulted from the disappearance of the distinction between tempered and non-tempered pitches, and between vertical and horizontal lines in electroacoustic composition.¹¹⁶

On the other hand, however, Boulez’s tone in the essay focuses more on the extension of the serial operations that give the sound-objects secondary importance in musical composition – they literally become objects to be manipulated by serial principles. Furthermore, he asserts: “[t]he crucial research into the intrinsic qualities of sound has yet to be undertaken,” although this was part of Schaeffer’s important research, but of course from a totally different perspective from that of Boulez. Boulez’s implicit irony in the following statement is unmistakable: “the perfected and manageable equipment necessary to the composition of such works has yet to be built.”¹¹⁷

Musique concrète: Pierre Schaeffer’s Theory and Aesthetic

Boulez’s study of serialization in the *musique concrète* studio was not congruent with the research and aesthetic direction of the *Groupe de Recherches de Musique Concrète* (Schaeffer, Poullin, and Henry), which was “research into sonority to discover musicality.”¹¹⁸ Except for the use of electronic media for composition, virtually everything about Boulez’s and Schaeffer’s approaches – including compositional purpose, vision, direction, aesthetic, and theorization – seems irreconcilably opposed. In Schaeffer’s research and theorization of *concrète* composition, a sound material is selected according to a premise that the material is manipulated – “deformed,

¹¹⁵ Boulez, “Tendencies,” 178-179.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 179.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ Palombini, 548.

transformed, and mixed”¹¹⁹ – in order to produce an unheard-of sound unit and identity. In this respect, a recorded sound of a musical instrument, for instance, becomes a sound object not by reproducing it, but by “denaturalizing”¹²⁰ it, thus characteristically “alienating” it from the original.¹²¹

In other words, while one can use any sound source materials, e.g., a train, knocking on a door, female voice, etc., the term *concrète* refers to the procedure of material composition, not to the presentation or representation of the original sound source. The material composition entails an empirical operation using technology, but the kernel of Schaeffer’s theoretical and aesthetic principle is a “listening analysis and classification of the observed characteristic traits.”¹²² It attaches, as the title of his group indicates, great importance to “research” into a sound itself, rather than to establishment of a systematic compositional method.

Thus, this principle places a strong emphasis on “the concreteness of music in opposition to the abstract models of the Viennese School of dodecaphonism”¹²³ and to the “compositional calculation process”¹²⁴ of serialism. That is, the *concrète* composition requires the composer to have a sensitive and searching ear capable of inventing a new acoustic material. The composer is supposed to conduct the listening analysis throughout the compositional process; selecting sound materials, denaturalizing or liberating them from the originals, manipulating them, and establishing the new contexts.¹²⁵ The listening analysis also includes the concrete characterization of the novel sound materials by naming them. Finally, the characterized sound objects are stored by classification, just as “prefabricated music from drawers”¹²⁶ is ready for use.

A significant aesthetic in the whole concept and process of concrete composition is to distinguish between real and unreal sounds. The searching ear of the composer has to

¹¹⁹ Karlheinz Stockhausen, “Arbeitsbericht 1952/53: Orientierung,” in *Texte zur elektronischen und instrumentalen Musik, Band 1, Aufsätze 1952-1962 zur Theorie des Komponierens* (Köln: Verlag M. DuMont Schauberg, 1963), 35: “zu deformieren, transformieren und . . . mischen.”

¹²⁰ Schaeffer, *Musique Concrète*, 22.

¹²¹ Hilberg, “Geräusche?”: 70.

¹²² Ibid., 73: “Das hörende Analysieren und das Klassifizieren der beobachteten Eigenschaften.”

¹²³ Dominique M. Richard, 130.

¹²⁴ Hilberg, 69: “kompositorischen Rechenvorgang.”

¹²⁵ See *ibid.*, 69.

¹²⁶ Rudolf Frisius, “Konkrete Musik: Ein Lehrpfad durch die Welt der Klänge,” *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 5 (1997): 15: “Musik . . . vorgefertigter Schubladen.”

be “capable of dealing with apparently self-evident and trivial aspects of the everyday hearing experience,” according to Rudolf Frisius, “to always discover the new from different perspectives.”¹²⁷ Once any sounds are recorded, the ear no longer deals with “the sensually cognizable reality in its perplexing variety and contradictions,”¹²⁸ but rather it has to be oriented towards the discovery of unknown sounds that do not exist in the reality. The new sounds discovered by means of electronic devices then become reality, but only *within* and *from* a piece in which they are used. In the concrete composition theory, therefore, the new reality can be created only by leaving one’s auditory cognition and perception of the “original” reality. As a result, a concrete composer should experience her/his auditory search and cognition in two separate realities.

Boulez versus Schaeffer

Schaeffer’s notion of a sound object produced as a result of a “sensuous” search had little in common with Boulez’s development of serial methods. Although Boulez actually undertook a process of cataloguing various timbres in the second *Étude*, as discussed above, the work of cataloguing was a precompositional stage for the “compositional calculation process” of serial organization. Boulez’s two *Études* were nevertheless presented at a concert of *musique concrète* on 21 May 1952, together with pieces of the *Groupe de Recherche*.¹²⁹ By this point, “a kind of symbiosis in which the concrete group would investigate sonority while the abstract group would create oeuvres,” according to Palombini, “might have appeared as a possible compromise.” However, by 1953 at the latest both Boulez and Schaeffer recognized themselves as uncompromising opponents in terms of theoretical and aesthetic development. More specifically, both became certain about the crucial disagreement between their compositional procedures in terms of the invention of a new sound material: for Boulez, it was more likely to be a by-product of serial operation; for Schaeffer, it resulted from a

¹²⁷ Ibid., 16: “Der konkrete Musiker sollte imstande sein, sich auch mit scheinbar selbstverständlichen und trivialen Aspekten der alltäglichen Hörerfahrung unter stets sich wandelnden Fragestellungen auseinanderzusetzen, sie unter veränderten Perspektiven immer wieder neu zu entdecken.”

¹²⁸ Ibid.: “[die] sinnlich erfäßbare Wirklichkeit in ihrer verwirrenden Vielfalt und Widersprüchlichkeit.”

¹²⁹ Also, Pierre Henry’s *Vocalises* and Olivier Messiaen’s *Timbres-Durées*, on which I will briefly touch later, were played. See Nattiez, 128.

thorough observation and modification of a recorded sound. Since Schaeffer set forth the basic principle of *musique concrète*, it is not difficult to imagine that both were becoming convinced that there was little point for Boulez to work in the *concrète* studio.

Initially, Schaeffer regarded Boulez as a talented musician who helped to realize two piano studies [*Étude au piano I (Étude violette)* and *Étude au piano II (Étude noire)*] in his first *musique concrète* piece, a suite of five *concrète* works, *Concert de bruits* in 1948.¹³⁰ Even when Schaeffer allowed Boulez to engage in electroacoustic composition at the *concrète* studio, he perhaps did not imagine being threatened in the near future by the serial composer's experimentation and its influence on his colleagues. Later, Schaeffer explicitly criticized and implicitly repudiated Boulez's serial-electroacoustic compositional approaches in an article "vers une musique expérimentale" that he wrote as a contribution to the *Décade*:

From among the thousand sounds in our cupboards, Pierre Boulez and his friends would choose the most unyielding ones, carve out their full mass, and show no consideration for anything other than the series they had calculated in advance.¹³¹

For Schaeffer, the sound itself was paramount; he believed that Boulez incorrectly subordinated the *concrète* sound material to serialization. However, Boulez's serial approach even inspired Pierre Henry, Schaeffer's important colleague of *musique concrète*, to integrate serialization into his composition. This irritated Schaeffer further, because for him, it was almost an act of defiance. Schaeffer admired Henry, arguing that "[w]ithout the presence of Pierre Henry, *musique concrète* would probably have lacked an essential experimenter" and thus "would have been no more than the . . . doubtless ephemeral continuation of either surrealism or atonal music."¹³² Thus, Schaeffer regretted that Henry "was nevertheless also tempted by serial construction."¹³³

It is undeniable that Henry was once fascinated by the integration of serial method into electroacoustic composition. This seems due to the presence of Boulez and Olivier Messiaen. In fact, in the same years that Boulez produced two *Études*, Henry composed the electroacoustic works *Antiphonie* (1951) and *Vocalises* (1952), using serial

¹³⁰ See Lowell Cross, "Electronic Music, 1948-1953," *Perspectives of New Music* 7/1 (1968): 43.

¹³¹ See Palombini, 547. This is from the first English translation of Schaeffer's "vers une musique expérimentale" by Palombini. The article first appeared in *La Revue Musicale* 236 (1957).

¹³² Ibid., Palombini's translation.

¹³³ Ibid.

construction, as well as helped with the realization of Messiaen's *Timbres-Durées* (1952). The *Timbres-Durées*' compositional principle is not exactly serial, but rather is reminiscent of the unique parameterization that Messiaen worked out in the *Mode de valeurs et d'intensités* (1949). For Henry, the encounter with Boulez's serial-electroacoustic methods and the assistance with Messiaen's composition must have been formative events in which he could probably capture a clear picture of the developmental process of serialism.

In *Antiphonie*, Henry set two contrasting groups of sound antiphonally; "one part contains short sound motives that form the basic unit of the group in the continuous renewal, while another part forms a strict series of twelve sound complexes of different timbre, duration, pitch, and dynamic."¹³⁴ Henry's compositional approach in *Vocalises* seems similar to Boulez's first *Étude*: Henry focuses specifically on the pitch and duration parameters and employs a single sound of female voice. Also, the composer utilizes the phonogène to generate various pitches and durations. As a result of the quasi-Boulezian compositional procedure, the entire form of the *Vocalises* is, according to Michel Chion, stylistically "frantic-Webernien."¹³⁵ Curiously, the ways Henry attempted to integrate serialism into *Antiphonie* and *Vocalises* are almost the reverse of Boulez's two *Études*.

It is unclear to what extent there was a mutual influence between Boulez and Henry, but it is clear that their serial organization in these compositions made Schaeffer sharpen his dislike of serialism and twelve-tone method in the territory of *musique concrète*.¹³⁶ In his later publication *La Musique Concrète* in 1967, while praising Henry as an "enchanter of disk record, tape recording, and magnetophon," Schaeffer describes Henry's *Vocalises* as a hardly convincing piece.¹³⁷ For Schaeffer, serial composition reflected an abstract mindset [*abstrakte Denkweise*], the polar opposite of *musique*

¹³⁴ Michel Chion, *Pierre Henry* (Paris: Fayard, 2003), 42: "d'une part des groupes formés de cellules – c'est-à-dire de courts motifs sonores – en renouvellement continu; d'autre part, une série rigide de douze sons complexes de timbre, de durée, hauteur et ampleur dissemblables."

¹³⁵ Ibid., 43.

¹³⁶ See Palombini's citation in English translated by the author in Palombini, 546: "Why twelve notes when electronic music has introduced so many more? Why series of notes when a series of sonic objects is so much more interesting? Why the anachronistic use of an orchestra whose instruments are handled with such obvious anti-naturalness by Webern and his imitators?"

¹³⁷ Schaeffer, *Musique Concrète*, 26.

concrète where “the music is made for listening.”¹³⁸ In addition to Boulez’s serial development, Henry’s involvement in serial composition further threatened Schaeffer’s *concrète* aesthetic and institution. Hence, Schaeffer had to explicitly reproach Boulez as one of his guests who little understood the research guidelines of *musique concrète*, saying that “what he (Boulez) seeks in the new sound agent is in essence a precision that proscribes the humane interpretation.”¹³⁹

Concerning Boulez’s frustration with Schaeffer, his letter to Cage, written in June 1953, implies that the tension between them was increasing more and more and that Schaeffer was perhaps pushing Boulez into a corner:

I shall tell you about the rows I have been having with Schaeffer: that would be enough to fill a huge folio! I shall tell you that the experimental studio is more and more crap, and that Schaeffer is a pain in the arse.¹⁴⁰

Furthermore, in the first volume of *Encyclopédie de la musique*, issued in 1958, Boulez’s contribution to the subject heading “concrete” acrimoniously criticizes Schaeffer’s aesthetic of *musique concrète*. Boulez insinuates that *musique concrète* can be regarded as compositional impotence, as it lacks the system to control any “pre-determined sound materials”¹⁴¹ and thus one can hardly conceive what the principle and procedure aim at. For this reason, Boulez also states that “the machines . . . and the comfortable slackness in the studio of *musique concrète* made itself into a sound junk store.”¹⁴²

Boulez recognized that the NWDR [*Nordwestdeutscher Rundfunk* (Northwest German Broadcasting)] (the former broadcast station of the WDR) studio was optimal for his interest in electroacoustic composition as a means to intensify serial formulation. Shortly after the completion of the second *Étude* in 1952, he first encountered sine-wave-based electroacoustic works by Eimert and Heinz Schütz in the studio.¹⁴³ Boulez then perceived that, according to Decroupet, “their manipulation of the inner composition of

¹³⁸ Ibid., 60.

¹³⁹ Schaeffer, 78. Despite his dissatisfaction with Boulez’s serial development at the *concrète* studio, Schaeffer does not seem to have asked Boulez to leave, where Boulez’s letter to Cage, written in July 1954, is concerned, see Nattiez, 150: “I refused to work with him [Schaeffer], although he asked me more than once,” underlined by the author.

¹⁴⁰ Nattiez, “Letter from Pierre Boulez to John Cage, after 18 June 1953,” 145.

¹⁴¹ See Schaeffer, 16-17. The original text in French is in *Encyclopédie de la musique*, vol.1, Paris: Fasquelle éditeurs, 1958, 577.

¹⁴² Schaeffer, 16: “Maschinen, . . . und ein angenehmer Schlendrian haben aus dem Studio der *Musique concrète* einen klingenden Trödelerladen gemacht.”

¹⁴³ See Decroupet, “Timbre Diversification in Serial Tape Music,” 15-16.

sound was obviously deeper than what had been done so far in Paris.”¹⁴⁴ This event was probably the crucial experience to firmly convince Boulez of the incompatibility of his compositional development with “Schaeffer’s unbending aesthetic with its dogmatic insistence on recorded source material.”¹⁴⁵ In any case, statements regarding the mutual criticism between Boulez and Schaeffer cited above confirm that by mid-1953, they had parted with each other over the *musique concrète* composition in an unpleasant manner. And now that Boulez had found suitable serial-electroacoustic associates (Eimert and Stockhausen) in Cologne, he no longer needed to work at the *concrète* studio in Paris.

The process of Schaeffer’s theorization and aestheticization of *concrète* composition is in fact incompatible with that of Boulez’s serialization. In Schaeffer’s development of *musique concrète*, as Hilberg asserts, the crystallization of the theory and aesthetic was “not solely a result of his research and theoretical formulation, production and composition,” but rather “achieved through examinations of psycho-acoustic, reception, and media theory.”¹⁴⁶ Listening was therefore an indispensable element in Schaeffer’s *concrète* theory throughout, but that does not mean that Boulez did not consider it important to his serial composition. Boulez in fact highly regarded Stockhausen’s first electroacoustic composition as one that was “successful from the auditory point of view.”¹⁴⁷ The compositional procedures and the underlying aesthetics of Boulez and Schaeffer were simply so different that they could not avoid becoming opponents.

After Boulez left the *concrète* studio, the antagonism between Boulez and Schaeffer expanded to one between the Parisian and Cologne studios, a more conspicuous “aesthetic controversy between concrete-empirical and abstract-constructive approaches.”¹⁴⁸ In this controversy, serial composers tended to evaluate *musique concrète*

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 16.

¹⁴⁵ Richard Steinitz, *György Ligeti: Music of the Imagination* (London: Faber and Faber, 2003), 77.

¹⁴⁶ Hilberg, 74: “In der Ausarbeitung durch Pierre Schaeffer, . . . ist sie nicht allein Resultat von Forschung und Theoriebildung, Produktion und Komposition. Es entstand aus Untersuchungen zur Psychoakustik, zur Rezeption und zur Medientheorie.”

¹⁴⁷ Nattiez, “Letter from Pierre Boulez to John Cage, July 1954,” 150. According to Nattiez, the piece of Stockhausen that Boulez mentions in the letter would be either *Konkrete Etüde* (1952) composed in Paris or *Elektronische Studie I* (1953) in Cologne. Boulez also admires the gifted traits of Stockhausen: “extremely sensitive to sonorous qualities, to the life of sounds,” see *ibid.*

¹⁴⁸ Frisius, “Konkrete Music,” 21: “Ästhetische Kontroversen, vor allem die zwischen konkret-empirischen und abstrakt-konstruktivistischen Ansätzen.”

as an amateur musical activity. For them, moreover, Schaeffer was not qualified as a composer; rather, he was a mere “sound-technician and an amateur musician.”¹⁴⁹ Stockhausen, whose first experimentation with electroacoustic composition was at the *concrète* studio, recognized the “tone archive of *musique concrète* as amateurish,” since the principle “has been up to now shipwrecked on the way to serious problems of the craft, due to the lack of compositional vision and consistency.”¹⁵⁰ Similar to Boulez’s stance on the issue, Stockhausen was largely skeptical about the theoretical principle of *musique concrète* during his work at the studio. In a 1952 letter to Karel Goeyvaerts, Stockhausen criticizes *musique concrète* as “nothing but capitulation before the undefined, a terribly dilettantish gamble, uncontrolled improvisation.”¹⁵¹ Although Stockhausen did not as publicly disapprove of *concrète*-compositional principles and aesthetics as Boulez did, his successful development of serial-electroacoustic composition at the WDR studio itself tacitly dismissed the *concrète* theory and aesthetic. The achievement of Stockhausen, together with that of his colleagues at the studio, thus served to intensify the antagonism between the Parisian and Cologne studios.

For Schaeffer, serial principles were the most powerful and influential threat to the development of his *concrète* theory and aesthetic. In Messiaen’s parameterization and calculative disposition of sound materials, Boulez’s studies of serialization, and their influence on Henry’s composition, Schaeffer could perceive the logical consistency of serial organization. Thus, Schaeffer could also envisage that serialism would attain a theoretical significance in the course of postwar compositional development. Serial

¹⁴⁹ Karl H. Wörner, “Current Chronicle,” *The Musical Quarterly* 40/1 (1954): 83. Wörner is a music scholar, critic, and writer, and his main area of research is New Music between Schoenberg and Stockhausen. Concerning the cited phrase, Wörner seems to have borrowed from Henry Cowell’s critical review on *musique concrète* issued in the previous year. See Henry Cowell, “Current Chronicle,” *The Musical Quarterly* 39/2 (1953): 254. Though Cowell was not a serialist, his criticism of *musique concrète* was very negative; e.g., Schaeffer’s *Symphonie pour un homme seul* and Henry’s *Antiphonie* “are unconvincing musically because they are both over-simplified in form and over-developed technically,” see *ibid.* Also, Cowell even attacks Messiaen’s *Timbres-Durées* by pointing out that “the form he employed was rather childish in its simplicity,” see *ibid.*, 255.

¹⁵⁰ Karlheinz Stockhausen, “Zur Situation des Metiers (Klangkomposition),” in *Texte zur elektronischen und instrumentalen Musik, Band I: Aufsätze 1952-1962 zur Theorie des Komponierens*, ed. Dieter Schnebel (Köln: Verlag M. DuMont Schauberg, 1963), 57: “amateurhaften Tonarchivaren der »musique concrète«, die bisher durch den Mangel an kompositorischer Vorstellung und Konsequenz Schiffbruch auf dem Wege zu ernsthaften Problemen des Handwerkes erlitten.” The article was written for a French journal *Domaine Musical* I, which first appeared in 1954.

¹⁵¹ Richard Toop, “Stockhausen and the Sine-Wave,” 388. The author reexamines Stockhausen’s early involvement in and development of electroacoustic composition, as well as the derivative issues in detail, based on copies of Stockhausen’s letters provided by Goeyvaerts.

procedure, which Schaeffer regarded as no more than “compositional calculation process,” could be so efficacious that he would have to protect his own theoretical and aesthetic establishment of concrete music from the influence of “abstract-constructive” serial method. In other words, even though Schaeffer perhaps acknowledged (although unwillingly) the potential of serial construction for electroacoustic composition, his aesthetic commitment to *musique concrète* allowed him to take no other course of action.

Since the controversy between *musique concrète* and *elektronische Musik* became realized nationwide in Europe, the prominent figures of both schools have been generalized to Schaeffer for the former and to Eimert and Stockhausen for the latter. For instance, Stockhausen’s two studies of sine-tone synthesis, *Studie I* (1953) and *Studie II* (1954), “with its greater mathematical precision”¹⁵² aptly represent an explicit contrast to Schaeffer’s *concrète* works in terms of compositional method. While the contrast between Parisian and Cologne schools’ electroacoustic compositional approaches was becoming known as a French versus German aesthetic conflict, Boulez became rather overshadowed with regard to the *concrète-elektronisch* controversy. In fact, after his two *Études*, Boulez composed no ‘pure’ electroacoustic piece. Yet, it is important to bear in mind the fact that the controversy originates from an aesthetic disagreement between two French composers – Boulez and Schaeffer. In our time, the *concrète-elektronisch* debates give us a basis to understand the history of postwar avant-garde music theory and aesthetics, rather than judge one as better than the other. It was presumably not so easy for composers and critics in Europe at that time to have such an objective viewpoint.

Kagel – Marching to the Beat of His Own Drum

When Kagel moved to Europe, the conflict between Boulez and Schaeffer was still heated. At the same time, however, there were composers who attempted to combine the “concrete-empirical and abstract-constructive approaches”; among those whom Frisius mentions, for instance, are Stockhausen, Bruno Maderna, Luciano Berio, Henri Pousseur, Luigi Nono, and Pierre Henry.¹⁵³ Kagel’s name could be included in the list, since *Antithese* technically embraces these two approaches as well. However, what

¹⁵² Steinitz, 78.

¹⁵³ See Frisius, “Konkrete Musik,” 21.

distinguishes him from the composers listed is that Kagel did not focus primarily on establishing a new compositional method and theory. Instead, the two approaches were merely necessary components of the composition to embody his musical ideas and sharp criticism of the politics of postwar avant-garde composers. Kagel was capable of having that distinct perspective due to his political, musical, and multimedia artistic experiences in Buenos Aires, as well as his engagement in musical and electroacoustic composition in Europe.

Kagel, whose official reason to be in Europe was to work on electroacoustic composition, only apprehended the details of the controversy after leaving Argentina. Even though Kagel's home studio was the Cologne *elektronische Musik* studio and his first electroacoustic project dealt with sine-tone based composition – *Transición I* (1958-60), his non-European perspective allowed him to contemplate objectively the series of disputes between the Parisian and Cologne schools. Kagel was a newcomer, late comer, or even “refugee outsider”¹⁵⁴ in the scrambled scene of postwar avant-garde music in Europe and thus it was politically feasible for him to remain critical of both sides. Still, Kagel was dismayed at the politics in the panorama of postwar musical composition in the late 1950s. In an interview with Renate Liesmann-Gümmer, Kagel mentions the *concrète-elektronisch* antagonism and gives a somewhat bitter, critical comment on it:

Cologne and Paris were the pioneers in the field of tape-manipulated music. Paris was a trend-setter of *musique concrète*, whereas Cologne became the puristic counterpart with its allegedly strictly logical, materialistically stringent compositional technique. It sparked a ridiculous rat-race that was stirred up not with arguments – as is often the case – but by the conceitedness of some participants.¹⁵⁵

Having experienced the constraint of musical and artistic activity under Perón's policies, Kagel perhaps expected artistic freedom in Europe. Instead of such political control of

¹⁵⁴ The term is used to describe Kagel as a newcomer in the postwar avant-garde scene of the late 1950s in Richard Toop, *György Ligeti* (London: Phaidon Press, 1999), 54. Unlike Ligeti or Xenakis, Kagel's arrival in Germany was not for a life-threatening political reason. Toop maintains that like Ligeti, “Kagel too would approach the Cologne group with a mixture of fascination and skepticism,” *ibid.*

¹⁵⁵ Mauricio Kagel, “Über Zusammenhänge,” 40: “Köln und Paris gehörten zu den Pionieren auf dem Gebiet der auf Tonband verarbeiteten Musik. Paris war zwar richtungsweisend mit der *Musique concrète*, aber Köln wurde das puristische Pendant mit seiner angeblich streng logischen, materialstringenten Kompositionstechnik. Es entfachte sich ein lächerlicher Konkurrenzkampf, der wie so oft nicht mit Argumenten, sondern durch die Eitelkeit einiger Beteiligten geschürt wurde.”

music and art, however, what Kagel faced was the politics among European composers which he regarded as laughable.

In a conversation with Max Nyffeler, Kagel recalls the hierarchical structure of the European musical scene at that time:

I am lucky to have been born in Argentina, because I was not confronted with the notion of cultural hegemony that was the justification in Europe for fatal hindrances and aggression. That was one of the realizations that first shocked me here.¹⁵⁶

Although Kagel never said so explicitly, it is possible he viewed the *concrète-elektronisch* dispute as inherent in the structure of “cultural hegemony.” When remembering Kagel’s discontent with restricted freedom of speech and art in his Buenos Aires period, his impression of the cultural hegemony in Europe sounds not only critical, but also even ironic.

Considering the material characteristic of *Antithese* and Kagel’s neutral – but critical – view of the *concrète-elektronisch* antagonism, one may speculate that the piece attempts to bridge the gap by consolidating concrete and abstract electroacoustic sounds. Upon closer observation, however, it is clear that such speculation can only result from a superficial judgment of the piece. It lacks an appreciation of the fact that Kagel’s use of these materials follows neither the aesthetic nor the theoretical tenets of either of these two parties exactly. At the same time, Kagel’s compositional approach in the music of *Antithese* should not be regarded as simply eclectic. Rather, the amalgamation of *concrète* and *elektronisch* sound materials in the piece is a unique reflection of his critical view of postwar avant-garde politics, including his satirical perception of the “ridiculous rat-race.” In this respect, Kagel is rightly characterized as a “social critic in music.”

¹⁵⁶ Mauricio Kagel and Max Nyffeler, “Mitteilsamkeit in der Musik,” 117. The citation is from the English text translated by Richard Toop in Max Nyffeler, “There Will Always Be Questions Enough: Mauricio Kagel in conversation with Max Nyffeler,” *Beckmesser* [music criticism on-line].

CHAPTER THREE

ELECTROACOUSTIC MUSIC AND *ANTITHESE*

Introduction

The structural uniqueness of *Antithese* resulted from Kagel's developmental transition and integration of various compositional approaches. In this process, the idea of musical continuity played a particularly important role. The conceptualization and theorization of musical continuity was not solely Kagel's concern, but a common interest among postwar avant-garde composers. This chapter examines specific pieces by Kagel and his contemporaries first, in order to introduce the musical and aesthetic spectrum of *Antithese*.

A merging of two streams – the accumulation of Kagel's Argentinian and early European experiences – occurred in 1957. Based in Cologne, Kagel became involved in several significant musical and artistic events. As a consequence, his early works sparked wide interest among contemporary composers and critics. Particularly remarkable were the *String Sextet* (1953/1957), *Anagrama* for vocal soloists, speaking choir, and chamber ensemble (1958), and *Transición II* for piano, percussion, and two magnetic tapes (1959).

String Sextet [*Sexteto de Cuerdas*] is the piece Kagel revised from *Sextet* for flute, clarinet, bass clarinet, violin, viola, and violoncello, and showed to Boulez in Buenos Aires. Although employing a serial technique, a line can be drawn between the *Sextet* and Boulezian or Stockhausenian serial works. According to Kagel's preface to the published score, while the composition was modeled on principles of twelve-tone theory, his extended application of them made "a theme . . . not actually audible at any moment."¹ His (pre-) composition of the prime row form focused, for instance, primarily on its rhythmic structure, which consisted of nineteen notes and two rests; in other words, "a series of twenty-one durations."² Based on the prime series laid out at the beginning of the first violin part (the whole section of rehearsal letter "A"), Kagel composed different rhythmic patterns for other parts, deriving them from a permutation of the rhythmic

¹ Mauricio Kagel, "Preface," in *Sexteto de cuerdas* (1953) (Wien: Universal Edition, 1992), IV.

² Ibid.

structure of the prime series. As a result, the section contains a complicated polymetrical formation (see Figure 3.1 below).

Figure 3.1. Polymetrical Formation in the Initial Section of *String Sextet*

Vn.I						6/8		5/8		4/8
Vn.II						5/16	3/16	4/8	4/8	3/8
Va.I	1	3	5	3	2	5/16	4/8	5/16	2/8	4/8
Va.II	8	8	16	16	16	3/8	5/8	3/8		4/8
Vc.I						2/8	2/8	2/8	5/16	5/16
Vc.II						5/16	3/8	5/16	3/16	5/16
										3/8

For the pitch content of the prime series, while D and E are tripled and E♭, A, B♭, and B are doubled, an F is missing. It is thus difficult to discern Kagel's plan of pitch structure for the series. In the middle sections, Kagel used unspecified pitches that are indicated in cross-head and quarter-tones "to make the harmony more chromatic, rather than to enrich the pitch series."³ The final section (rehearsal letter T) demonstrates Kagel's creative force more strikingly. Kagel set out a specific timbre, dynamic level, bowing technique, and rhythm or duration for each part; for instance, the first violin is supposed to produce a sound of *sul tasto* (timbre), *ppp* (dynamic), *tremolo veloce* (bowing), and a quarter note duration. Immediately after the initiation by the first violin, this sound appears in the first viola (but at a different pitch). In a similar manner, all other sound characteristics shift from their initial presentations in the original parts to others individually throughout the section. As a consequence, six different sounds, which Kagel described as "timbre lines,"⁴ intercross among the six instruments. The *Sextet* does employ the series as the fundamental structural unit, but examples of Kagel's approach illustrated above explicitly show that his idea of "series" and its practice were distinguishable from those of the abovementioned representative serialists.

³ Ibid., V.

⁴ Ibid.

The *Sextet* was Kagel's first piece that premiered in Europe when he conducted it at the concert of *Neue Musik Darmstadt* on 7 September 1958. In the same month it was performed in *Musik der Zeit* at the WDR in Cologne and later, on 8 October, at the "Journées internationales de musique expérimentale" in the *Exposition universelle et internationale de Bruxelles 1958*, generally known as Expo 58 (the event at which Kagel first met John Cage).

Anagrama demonstrates Kagel's distinct viewpoint on the linguistic aspect of music, through his serialization of a unique compositional component – a series of eleven letters. The piece consists of a flute, B-flat clarinet, bass clarinet, percussion instruments, one celesta, 2 harps, 2 pianos, 4 solo voices of soprano, alto, baritone, and bass, and a speaking choir. As the title indicates, the text is derived from variations of an anagram from a Latin palindrome text "in girum imus nocte et consumimur igni" (we circle in the night and are consumed by fire). Identifying the eleven letters that constitute the text – namely, i, n, g, r, u, m, s, o, c, t, and e – Kagel composes phonetically derivative texts in German, French, Italian, and Spanish by means of the extended interpretation of the phonetic sounds and reordering of these. Incidentally, the series of these letters "ingrumsocte," "a magical word representing the condensed form of the palindrome,"⁵ appears in the soprano of the choir at the beginning of the piece.

Kagel's method of extended linguistic arrangement is worth noting because it shows convincingly not only his multilingual facility, but also his sensibility to the relationship between language and sound. For instance, the letter 'c' is phonetically replaceable with a 'k' or 'q'; a combination of a 'u' and 'e' in order (i.e., 'ue') is equivalent to a German vowel 'ü'; a combination of a 'g' and 'n' in order (i.e., 'gn') corresponds to a 'ñ' in Spanish, and so forth. While Kagel added these phonetically alternative letters to compose the texts in four languages, the remaining letters, a, b, d, f, l, p, and w, were excluded in *Anagrama*.⁶ The idea of replaceable and permutable compositional elements is a salient concept in Kagel's compositional works, particularly those that involve application of a serial principle.

⁵ Juan Allende-Blin, "Mauricio Kagel und 'Anagrama'," in *Kagel..../1991*, ed. Werner Klüppelholz (Köln: DuMont Buchverlag, 1991), 70: "Das magische Wort »INGRUMSOCTE« stellt die konzentrierte Zusammenfassung des Palindroms dar."

⁶ See *ibid.*, 70.

In terms of the formal structure, *Anagrama* consists of five large sections: I. speaking choir and all instruments; II. speaking soli, speaking choir, and all instruments; III. voice soli, speaking choir, and percussion instruments; IV. voice soli, speaking choir, and all instruments; and V. voice soli and all instruments. Noticeably, the instrumentation of the individual sections invokes a quasi-palindromic structure; except for the difference between the first and last sections – speaking choir for the former and voice soli for the latter – the instrumental structure as a whole is symmetric. Kagel also applies the essential trait of a palindrome to the form, such that *Anagrama* can be performed either in the normal order (I to V) or in the reversed order (V to I).

The piece premiered in a chamber concert of the 34th World Music Festival (*Weltmusikfest*) organized by the IGNM – *Internationale Gesellschaft für Neue Musik* (International Society for New Music) – in Cologne on 11 June 1960. Ernst Thomas, a music critic, found that “the absolute unrecognizability” of the text, which derived from the superimposition of the four languages, to a large extent blurred a distinction between “speaking” and “sound,” since “‘the sound generators’ were human beings.”⁷ *Anagrama* was so unprecedented that it attracted more attention from the audience than the other pieces performed in the same program. According to Richard Toop, on the occasion of a reception given by Ernst Brücher after the concert, “everyone was talking about Kagel’s work” (*Anagrama*), whereas hardly anyone mentioned Stockhausen’s *Kontakte*, which also premiered that night.⁸

These breakthrough works aroused attention from composers and critics and contributed to Kagel’s reputation as a radical avant-garde. In contrast, Kagel’s first electroacoustic composition in Europe, *Transición I* (1958-1960), did not receive as much attention. First, whereas *Transición I* is a work that Kagel began after his arrival in Germany, the composition took him about two years to finish (Kagel started composing *Transición II* shortly after the commencement of *Transición I* but completed the former earlier than the latter).⁹ As a consequence, it did not appear until 1960, and by this point

⁷ See Ernst Thomas, “IGNM in Köln: Die »Avantgarde« trat hervor,” *Melos: Zeitschrift für Neue Musik* 7-8/27 (1960): 222-223.

⁸ Richard Toop, *György Ligeti*, 72. This incident is also mentioned in Heile, 21.

⁹ See the chronological diagram for Kagel’s early works in Dieter Schnebel, *Mauricio Kagel: Musik Theater Film*, 312. For the detailed information in English, see Björn Heile, “Chapter 2: Beginnings in Cologne: Serialism, Aleatory Technique and Electronics,” in *The Music of Mauricio Kagel*, 16-32.

not only had all his aforementioned works been completed and performed, but significant electroacoustic compositions had also been presented by his contemporaries. For instance, Stockhausen's monumental *Gesang der Jünglinge* (1956) immediately won widespread acknowledgement. *Gesang* integrates a sung voice and its text into the serial organization. The sound material of a boy's singing voice appears not to be a simple sound reproduction, but rather one dexterously modified and thoroughly pre-programmed. By this means, Stockhausen achieved the embodiment of the "integration of music and language" [*Integration von Musik und Sprache*]¹⁰, which was a common interest among postwar avant-garde composers as a resurrection of vocal sound in musical composition. For a similar reason, Boulez and Luigi Nono also attempted to feature voice and text in their serial compositions; *Le Marteau sans Maître* (1953-55) and *Il Canto Sospeso* (1956), respectively.

What is remarkable about *Gesang* and what distinguishes it from *Marteau* and *Il Canto* is that "to achieve a gradual transformation, [Stockhausen] inserted electronic tones approximating to the gaps in the vowel series."¹¹ While Stockhausen produced further electroacoustic music after *Gesang*, it has been frequently considered an epoch-making work in the course of the compositional development of the postwar avant-garde. As Grant asserts, it is "the serial piece *par excellence*" in which Stockhausen attempted "to incorporate the whole gamut of sounds from the most simple to the most complex."¹² It is possible that *Transición I* was overlooked because of the initial furor surrounding *Gesang* as well as scholars' later evaluation of its outstanding characteristics and reputation.¹³

Furthermore, an analytical difficulty lies in examining *Transición I* because it is a typical electroacoustic composition that has no musical notation, nor does need a musician at a concert. This is a common problem of analysis of electroacoustic compositions, unless the composer publishes a score of an electroacoustic piece afterwards, such as the graphic score of Stockhausen's *Studie II* (1954) or the verbal score

¹⁰ Rudolf Frisius, "Personalstil und Musiksprache," 90.

¹¹ Grant, *Serial Music*, 98.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Heile points out that it may be because *Transición I* "generally lacks . . . developing a sense of musical language," which is recognizable in *Gesang*. See Heile, 31.

of Gottfried Michael Koenig's *Essay* (1957-58). These scores exhibit details of their compositional procedures, together with their own descriptions of motivation for establishing specific methods in their electroacoustic works. Thus, by looking at the scores while listening to the recordings, one can examine the structural details and precise compositional schemes and systems of the individual pieces. Kagel actually did create a "photographic notation" for *Transición I* after completing the piece. However, this notation lies in a totally different idea of musical notation from that of *Studie II* and *Essay*; the photographic notation presents a visual image of the sound events of *Transición I* rather than a system of the acoustic composition. In other words, the photographic notation depicts the dynamic character of certain variable qualities of the sound, from moment to moment, such as intensity, frequency, timbre, attack envelope, and complexity. By "freezing" these constantly varying sound parameters into a durable image, the photographic notation allows the viewer-listener to contemplate relations among normally ephemeral events or multiple consecutive events whose succession adds up to a coherent pattern. It is a very complex idea of the relationship between the photographic image and the actual sound-composition. Indeed, one can regard this particular notational style as a phase of Kagel's early multimedia/interdisciplinary approach.¹⁴

Although *Transición I*'s impact was limited, it is worth examining the piece for the following reasons. First, of Kagel's early works, the piece concentrates perhaps the most on developing a theoretical framework, a new mode of musical presentation different from serialism. Second, the photographic notation of the piece is an important feature of the variety of multimedia and interdisciplinary approaches inherent in Kagel's composition. Finally, *Transición I* can be seen as the precursor of *Antithese* in terms of "pure" electroacoustic composition, i.e., musical composition only for a tape. Even though these works are different in many respects, an analysis of the distinctions ultimately highlights a salient leap from the compositional approach of *Transición I* to that of *Antithese*. At the same time, a contrast to *Transición I* illuminates distinctive features of *Antithese* in theoretical and aesthetic (including multimedia/interdisciplinary) terms.

¹⁴ The details are discussed below.

Musical Continuity and Electroacoustic Composition

In *Transición I*, Kagel's intention was to design structural continuity, not relying on serial organization, but rather contriving to establish his own original compositional theory. According to Kagel's definition of musical continuity, it

refers to the unbroken, logical connection of elements in time. Therefore, it is a term that concerns syntax. As for the words "continuous" and "continuousness," a sound succession, with or without pauses, means continuous music, but without musical continuity. The possibility of a permanent succession would have to be defined here as "continuousness."¹⁵

Kagel's focus thus was not necessarily on a continuous characteristic of compositional materials, but rather on the musical form constituted by a "logical connection of elements." Although he does not mention it, Kagel's notion of musical continuity possibly includes the idea of a sound continuum. The term continuum in general suggests an uninterrupted succession, but in the context of musical composition, it intimates an "idea of continuous metamorphosis of sound."¹⁶ This was a significant study of the Cologne *elektronische Musik* already in its early phase; namely, that of the "*Klangfarbenkontinuum*" – "a continuous change of timbre."¹⁷

In considering musical continuity in Kagel's terms, one needs to bear in mind that the idea of "logical connection," which can be rephrased as "developmental consistency," lies in two spheres. The first sphere is at the material level of a sound continuum in which a "logical connection" or developmental consistency must be formed *among* or *within* compositional materials. As a consequence, a metamorphosed sound continuum offers the capability of changing the sound shape of an original element [*Urelement*] via a gradual or abrupt change of the pitch, timbre, and dynamic. Another sphere is at the formal level, the formal-structural continuity with logical thought, which does not necessarily require "continuousness" – that is, "a permanent succession" of sound elements. Given the concepts of sound continuum and musical continuity, a composer can also integrate the former into the latter. In doing so, materials (sound continuum) and formal structure

¹⁵ Mauricio Kagel, "Transition 1" in *Slee Lecture Recitals*, page 1.

¹⁶ Elena Ungeheuer, "Musikalische Experimente in der musikwissenschaftlichen Forschung: Mayer-Eppel und die elektronische Musik," in *KlangForschung '98: Symposium zur elektronische Musik*, ed. Jörg Stelkens and Hans G. Tillmann (Saarbrücken: Pfau, 1999), 43.

¹⁷ Elena Ungeheuer, "From the Elements to the Continuum: Timbre Composition in Early Electronic music," *Contemporary Music Review* 10/2 (1994): 25.

(musical continuity) become interdependent, which contributes to increasing the coherence of the piece.

Musical continuity and sound continuum in *Transición I* become more comprehensible when compared to the characteristics and developmental processes of specific works by Kagel's contemporaries. These include Iannis Xenakis' *Metastaseis* (1953-54) – an orchestral piece – and *Diamorphoses* (1957) – an electroacoustic piece – and György Ligeti's electroacoustic *Glissandi* (1957) and orchestral *Atmosphères* (1961). Neither composer attempted to simulate orchestral sounds in his electroacoustic composition nor to simulate electroacoustic sounds in his orchestral composition. Rather, the goal in each piece was to compose a unique form of musical continuity regardless of the sound agent. In addition, as Kagel did in his *Transición I* (and in part in *Antithese*), Xenakis and Ligeti each paid special attention to a particular type of sound continuum: the glissando-sound. The developmental process evident in the works of the individual composers reveals their specific focuses upon creating musical continuity, with or without glissando-sounds and on the structural characteristics in the unities of individual works. Although it is unclear whether Kagel examined these works, some of their distinct features illuminate those in *Transición I*. Also, the particular examples of Xenakis and Ligeti are useful models for discussing the early phase of boundary crossing among or between art genres, a phenomenon that occurred in the mid-twentieth century, which Theodor W. Adorno included in his late aesthetic theory of arts and music.¹⁸

Iannis Xenakis: Metastaseis and Diamorphoses

Before engaging in electroacoustic composition, Xenakis realized musical continuity containing fluidity of gradational sound movements in his orchestral piece *Metastaseis*. *Metastaseis* is a useful starting point to consider Kagel's notion of musical continuity, since the piece appears to fit his idea that "[t]he influence of instrumental music on electronic composition was evident . . . in the borrowing of methods and organization principles."¹⁹ At the beginning of the piece, the individual tones of string instruments radiate out from a sustained single pitch, followed by glissando movements.

¹⁸ The pieces of Xenakis and Ligeti are thus discussed again, in consideration of Adorno's criticism, in Chapter Five.

¹⁹ Mauricio Kagel, "Transition 1" in *Slee Lecture Recitals*, 1.

While each string has its own glissando, different in register, pitch range, and duration from the others, the overall effect is one of fluidity and musical continuity. The sound space of the middle sections contrasts with the beginning section; nevertheless, glissando elements alternating with tone-cluster elements are present on a smaller scale. The piece concludes with syntheses of string glissandi but in the quasi-retrograde manner of the beginning.²⁰

Interestingly, Xenakis makes a clear distinction between continuous and discontinuous elements by means of specific techniques of musical composition: “a multitude of short glissandi on strings” for the former and “a multitude of pizzicati” for the latter.²¹ In effect, this characteristic contrast further reinforces the impact of the glissando sound in *Metastaseis*. For this particular piece, Xenakis in fact emphasizes the significance of glissando elements: “if glissandi are long and sufficiently interlaced, we obtain sonic spaces of continuous evolution.”²² In the compilation of Xenakis’s writings, *Formalized Music: Thought and Mathematics in Composition*, one can observe a continuous “glissandi” structure of the ending section by comparing the traditional musical notation (bars 309-16) for an orchestra to the sketch in graphic notation (bars 309-14).²³ In particular, the latter makes explicit that the precise structural formation of all glissando materials constitutes the musical continuity as a whole in the section. More specifically, a single glissando sound indicated by a straight line seems to be a very small-scale sound continuum whose duration, register, and pitch range are unique and distinct from all other lines of glissando sounds. In Xenakis’s well-designed compositional plan, an aggregation of the individual glissandi forms a macro shape of the sound space, the visual image of which illustrates the musical continuity.

²⁰ In a conversation with Bálint András Varga, Xenakis claims that “the conclusion (of *Metastaseis*) is not exactly retrograde (of the beginning), but the basic idea is the same,” see Bálint András Varga, *Gespräche mit Iannis Xenakis* (Zürich and Mainz: Atlantis Musikbuch-Verlag, 1995), 72. Due to the formal characteristic, one may call the entire form of *Metastaseis* ternary. However, the composer seems to have had no intention to model the particular form and thus to dislike such an interpretation: “A few foolish colleagues immediately began to speak of so-called ‘ABA’ form (about *Metastaseis*), so what?” Ibid.

²¹ Iannis Xenakis, *Formalized Music: Thought and Mathematics in Composition*, rev. ed., ed. Sharon Kanach (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1992), 9.

²² Ibid., 10.

²³ Ibid., 2-3. Bars 315-16 in page 2 (musical notation) are general pause.

Xenakis attributed his sound composition to “laws of the calculus of probabilities” that he named “stochastic laws” two years after composing *Metastaseis*.²⁴ Although his stochastic laws for musical composition may not relate directly to Kagel’s exploration of establishing a new formal design in *Transición I*, a few fundamental ideas underlying Xenakis’s laws recall Kagel’s notion of musical continuity. They in fact contribute to clarifying the “unbroken, logical connection of elements in time,” which Kagel defines as a principal aspect of musical continuity. In the first law of his stochastic theory, Xenakis asserts:

[w]e can control continuous transformations of large sets of granular and/or continuous sounds. In fact, densities, durations, registers, speeds, etc., can all be subjected to the law of large numbers with the necessary approximations. We can therefore with the aid of means and deviations shape these sets and make them evolve in different directions. The best known is that which goes from order to disorder, or vice versa, and which introduces the concept of entropy. We can conceive of other continuous transformations: for example, a set of plucked sounds transforming continuously into a set of arco sounds, or in electromagnetic music, the passage from one sonic substance to another, assuring thus an organic connection between the two substances.²⁵

Diamorphoses, Xenakis’s first electroacoustic composition, demonstrates the “organic connection between the two substances.” In addition, the piece as a whole is fashioned by transformations between “continuity and discontinuity”: in other words, “two aspects of being,” which is the meaning of the title in Greek.²⁶

Incidentally, Xenakis composed *Diamorphoses* at the *musique concrète* studio where he became a member of the *Groupe de recherches de musique concrète*.²⁷ Accordingly, the composer manipulates, modifies, and organizes distinct recorded sounds in the piece; “an earthquake, a jet engine, a train, and high-register bell sounds.”²⁸ With regard to the two substances continuously transformed, the spheres of interpretation in the piece are twofold: a merging of contrasting characteristics of sound materials such as “noisy, primarily low-frequency sounds with more sharply defined high-register sounds,”

²⁴ Ibid., 8.

²⁵ Ibid., 16.

²⁶ James Harley, “The Electroacoustic Music of Iannis Xenakis,” *Computer Music Journal* 26/1 In Memoriam Iannis Xenakis (2002): 35

²⁷ As Xenakis was accepted to become a member in 1954, neither Boulez nor Schaeffer was present in the *concrète* studio any longer. In *Musique Concrète*, Schaeffer writes that Xenakis is one of the significant *concrète* composers who “take a special position,” see Schaeffer, 79-80.

²⁸ Ibid.

or glissando sounds from different sound sources; and the formal structure that unifies continuity and discontinuity.²⁹ In *Diamorphoses*, the glissando sounds also play a prominent role, as is true of *Metastaseis*. However, the formal and structural designs of these sounds seem to be almost the reverse of those in *Metastaseis*.

Long and slowly ascending glissando sounds at the beginning of *Diamorphoses* shape a smooth slope as a sound unit, but they are located in the background of the sound space, rather than presenting themselves as a main sound character as in the beginning of *Metastaseis*. In the foreground, by contrast, distinctive sound and noise materials appear in much higher dynamics than the unit of glissandi. A glissando sound in the final section, on the other hand, no longer plays the “accompaniment” role, so to speak, like in the beginning section. Rather, the single, uninterrupted glissando sound, whose pitch contour can perhaps best be described as sinuous, virtually forms an implicit backbone of the section, while other sound units occur discontinuously. According to John Roeder’s analysis of the final section, each occurrence of the discontinuous sound unit follows immediately after the glissando stream reaches the highest register within the somewhat “narrow interval” of the sinuous pattern.³⁰ As a result, the structure of these heterogeneous sound characteristics generates a high degree of density and dynamic force in contrast to the beginning.

In terms of the formal structure of *Diamorphoses* as a whole, the quasi-symmetrical form of glissando structures in the beginning and ending of *Metastaseis* is absent. Instead, the structural contrast between the beginning and ending sections in *Diamorphoses* creates an accelerating momentum, which generates musical continuity in the piece. Based on his stochastic theory and the use of logarithmic interrelations, in his first electroacoustic (and *musique concrète*) work *Diamorphoses*, Xenakis demonstrates that “continuous sounds can be attained by increasing the sound density through reiterated

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ John Roeder, “A Calculus of Accent,” *Journal of Music Theory* 39/1 (1995): 33-35. The author’s graphic representation of the final section is helpful for recognizing the sound events and how Xenakis contrives to organize continuous and discontinuous sound units, see *ibid.*, 14.

intermingling from discontinuous sounds.”³¹ Kagel’s *Transición I* also contains a similar sound character, but the theoretical approach is completely different from Xenakis’s.³²

György Ligeti: Glissandi and Atmosphères

György Ligeti, a good friend of Kagel, also attempted to “produce continuous sound processes”³³ in the early phase of his career as a composer. However, unlike Xenakis and his developmental process of musical continuity, Ligeti explored a sound continuum in his first electroacoustic composition *Glissandi*, composed in the *elektronische Musik* Studio at the WDR in Cologne, before moving on to focus on musical continuity. As the title directly suggests, the piece consists of a number of different glissando sounds – different in duration, tone range, register, and timbre – which are distributed throughout. At first hearing, however, a question likely to arise is whether *Glissandi* constitutes musical continuity, or more specifically, if the piece actually fulfills the fundamental conditions of musical continuity that Kagel and Xenakis propose. Despite the variety of glissando sounds, the deficiency of structural cohesion is perceptible. Ligeti himself, too, was dissatisfied with the “technical and sound simplicity”³⁴ of *Glissandi*. He did produce a variety of sound continua, but recognized the deficiency of continuity. For this reason, it is worth examining the material organization of *Glissandi* and the context in which it was composed in order to understand the reason why Ligeti regarded the piece as unsuccessful; more specifically, why he failed to form musical continuity in the piece and what caused inadequate interdependency between the materials (glissando sounds) and structure (musical continuity).

A succinct review of the developmental background of theorizing sound continuum at the WDR studio is important, because this situation affected the way Ligeti composed *Glissandi*. Apart from Eimert, a founder and leading figure of the WDR electronic studio, one cannot talk about the tradition and aesthetic of Cologne *elektronische Musik* without referring to Werner Meyer-Eppeler. Meyer-Eppeler was an information theorist and phoneticist who contributed to establishing the studio and

³¹ Bálint András Varga, *Gespräche mit Iannis Xenakis*, 106.

³² The method Kagel developed in the course of composing *Transición I* (and *II*) and then applied to the piece is discussed below.

³³ Rudolf Frisius, “Personalstil und Musiksprache,” 186.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

lectures that Kagel attended to learn his acoustic research. One of Meyer-Eppler's significant contributions to the development of *elektronische Musik* was his theory of sound continua – continuous sound processes – which chiefly addressed developing “a system of sound modulations.”³⁵ In essence, a sound continuum results from a process of an electronically generated “raw sound material” [*Ausgangsmaterial*], in which one experiments with “transitions from tone to noise, from impulse to tone, from noise to sound.”³⁶

The realization of *Glissandi* to a large degree grew out of Ligeti's study of the *elektronische Musik* tradition and, in practice, the assistance of Koenig's electroacoustic composition in the studio. Besides Stockhausen and Eimert, Koenig was the only “permanent” studio composer at the WDR studio, while all the other postwar avant-garde composers who worked in the studio were “guest” composers, including Ligeti and Kagel. Ligeti's specific focus on sliding and glissando sounds and their timbre transformation reflects his involvement in the realization of Koenig's electroacoustic work, *Essay*. In reference to Koenig's theoretical formation of electronic musical composition, Ligeti recalls “what Koenig had in mind”

was not jumbles of sound formed from a large number of sine tones but sequences of forms balancing on the verge of becoming temporally blurred processes within the sounds themselves. Koenig had clung to the sine tone as his basic material in order to be able to keep the transformations of tone colour under control.³⁷

Apparently, Ligeti, despite his as yet inadequate knowledge of and skills in studio composition, could be inspired by a principle of inner structure composition within a sound or a sequence of sounds, which was one of Cologne *elektronische Musik* traditions. In this regard, the composer's intention of titling the piece *Glissandi*, a direct reference to the principal compositional element, posits his particular interest and study of microstructure of a sound, which deals more with a concept of sound continuum than with musical continuity.

³⁵ Elena Ungeheuer, “Musikalische Experimente in der musikwissenschaftlichen Forschung: Werner Meyer-Eppler und die elektronische Musik,” 42: “eine Systematik der Klangmodulationen.”

³⁶ Ungeheuer, “From the Elements to the Continuum,” 28.

³⁷ Marina Lobanova, *György Ligeti: Style, Ideas, Poetics*, trans. Mark Shuttleworth (Berlin: Verlag Ernst Kuhn, 2002), 38-39. The original German statement of the citation is in György Ligeti, “Musik und Technik: Eigene Erfahrungen und subjektive Betrachtungen,” in *Computermusik: Theoretische Grundlagen, kompositionsgeschichtliche Zusammenhänge, Musiklernprogramme*, ed. Günther Batel, Günter Kleinen, and Dieter Salbert (Laaber: Laaber-Verlag, 1987).

The occurrences of the individual glissando sounds in *Glissandi* are easily identifiable (that is not to say, of course, classifiable).³⁸ As Roberto Doati asserts, a glissando sound “has the advantage of being perceived as a single sound during the changing of register,”³⁹ regardless of the change of timbre or dynamic within the sound. Structurally, the glissando sounds are in part juxtaposed and in part superimposed. In parts of glissandi juxtaposition, above all, the individual glissandi occur almost independently and thus give an impression of a fragmentary sound event. This aspect suggests that Ligeti concentrated primarily on composing musical material, rather than on creating his own style of formal structure. In other words, his initial interest was in “the transformation of tone colour under control” that generates the “new sound quality,”⁴⁰ a specific domain inherent in composition of Cologne *elektronische Musik*.⁴¹

The formal structure of *Glissandi* as a whole is not as complex as the individual inner structures of glissandi that are attributed to “the idea of an ‘imaginary polyphonic fabric,’ the ‘illusory polyphony’ which is hidden inside what is in fact a monophonic structure.”⁴² At first encounter, *Glissandi* may seem to partially employ a formal design similar to that of *Metastaseis*, in that the presentation of an initial musical idea is reiterated in the ending. The ending of *Glissandi* is neither an exact repetition of the unit of collective glissando elements in the beginning nor is its form quasi-retrograde. And yet the beginning and the ending have an identifiable sort of mirrored formal structure, due to a long pause that occurs after the initial presentation of glissandi and about one minute before the end of the piece. These pauses, however, are the most perplexing parts in terms of formal structure as well as musical continuity. Even though the extraordinarily long duration of the pauses – about eight seconds in the beginning and six seconds in the ending – may seem to be an element that divides the work into separate sections, both the

³⁸ In Roberto Doati, “György Ligeti’s *Glissandi*: An Analysis,” *Interface* 20/2 (1991): 79-87, the author classifies the glissando sounds into several types. Although thoroughly observed, each category illustrates the characteristics not of the individual glissando material, but rather of several glissandi that occur either in a certain time point or period.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Lobanova, *György Ligeti*, 39.

⁴¹ This does not mean, however, that early *elektronische Musik* disregarded structural development in relation to musical continuity. Stockhausen’s *Studie II* and *Gesang der Jünglinge* are successful instances of “logical connection of elements in time” and of structure, in which he applied complex methods of extended serialization he invented.

⁴² Lobanova, 39.

beginning and ending parts can be too short to be reckoned as sections (the former lasts about forty seconds and the latter about sixty seconds). In Doati's formal analysis of *Glissandi*, in which he divides the piece into three parts, these long pauses are in fact included in the larger sections, respectively, as distinct musical events.⁴³

Regardless of whether these no-sound elements indicate sectional divisions or unique musical events, a problem lies in the fact that they deprive the listener of perceiving a "continual metamorphosis of the material, along with the continually renewing relationships."⁴⁴ However, this problem is perhaps derived essentially from the overall structural plan of the glissando materials. A metamorphic process is recognizable within a sound material or a "monophonic" sequence of materials with the aid of a change of dynamics, velocity, and register, but hardly in a sense of musical formal structure. This aspect chiefly brings the "technical and sound simplicity" caused by lack of the "logical connection of elements in time." Ligeti's focus on the inner structure and modification of sound continuum perhaps overlooked structural connections between these materials in terms of musical continuity, which ultimately resulted in the structural weakness. That is why the overall structure of *Glissandi* may seem confusing especially from that viewpoint. Perhaps Ligeti immediately sensed the flaws in formal structure, sound density, and musical continuity of *Glissandi* and thus he "did not let the work out into the public arena until decades later."⁴⁵

Ligeti attained sound density and musical continuity with much less use of glissando sound materials in his next electroacoustic work *Artikulation* (1958). The piece, which "is a distinct contrasting model to *Glissandi*,"⁴⁶ adopts "a vast number of tiny sounds, patched together from various sources."⁴⁷ More noteworthy is that *Artikulation* attains a continuous momentum not only between the heterogeneous sound characteristics, but throughout the entire structure of the piece. This results from Ligeti's thorough study of "mutual permeability" between the different types of internal

⁴³ See Roberto Doati, "György Ligeti's *Glissandi*: An Analysis."

⁴⁴ Kagel, "Transición 1" in *Slee Lecture Recital*, 1.

⁴⁵ Richard Toop, *György Ligeti*, 57.

⁴⁶ Frisius, "Personalstil und Musiksprache," 188: "*Artikulation*, . . . ist ein deutliches Kontrastmodell zu den *Glissandi*."

⁴⁷ Toop, *György Ligeti*, 59.

organization of sounds he chose, scrutinizing “which types were capable of merging and which repelled each other”: more specifically,

the contrasting of the types and of their mode of combining being worked out in the detail, and a gradual, irreversible progression of initially heterogeneous dispositions towards a blending and merging of their contrasting characters.⁴⁸

Since his investigation of sound continuum in *Artikulation* is undertaken on a much higher level than that in *Glissandi*, it in fact succeeds in creating growing tension in the sound space, which is virtually absent in the former work. In other words, Ligeti concatenates sound continuums on a large scale, which, as a solid backbone of the piece, gives it musical continuity.

His orchestral work *Atmosphères* is a piece whose musical continuity is strikingly explicit, although it no longer contains glissando sound material. Nevertheless, Frisius interprets the piece as consisting of “quasi-glissando structures,”⁴⁹ comparable to the structure of glissandi in “total divisi-technique of strings”⁵⁰ in Xenakis’ *Metastaseis*. It is intelligible in terms of the exclusion of identifiable intervals in a sound configuration; *Atmosphères*’ massive tone-clusters that no longer contain identifiable intervals can be seen as similar to *Metastaseis*’ glissando structure. This does not mean that the structural characteristic of *Atmosphères* is directly inherited from that of *Metastaseis*. Rather, it is important to bear in mind that Ligeti’s studies of electroacoustic composition to a large extent contribute to the developmental process of accomplishing the structure of sound masses.

After *Glissandi* and *Artikulation* Ligeti planned to compose a third electroacoustic piece, *Etude électronique nr. 3*, but this work was never realized. A graphic sketch⁵¹ suggests that Ligeti sought “an alternative to glissando structures.”⁵² At first glance, movements of multilayered sounds may still look sinuous in the sketch; however, a closer look at it reveals that there are no curving or diagonal lines (in the graphic score of *Metastaseis*, all glissando movements are represented by diagonal lines). That is to say,

⁴⁸ György Ligeti, “Wandlungen der musikalischen Form,” in *die Reihe* 7, 1960, 14.

⁴⁹ Frisius, “Personalstil,” 188: “Quasi-Glissando-Strukturen.”

⁵⁰ Ibid., 187: “die totale divisi-Technik der Streicher.”

⁵¹ It is available in Erhard Karkoschka, *Das Schriftbild der Neuen Musik: Bestandsaufnahme neuer Notationssymbole, Anleitung zu deren Deutung, Realisation und Kritik* (Celle: Hermann Moeck Verlag, 1966), 168.

⁵² Pascal Decroupet, “Komponieren mit analogen Studio – eine historisch-systematische Betrachtung,” in *Elektroakustische Musik*, ed. Elena Ungeheuer (Laaber: Laaber-Verlag, 2002), 50.

Ligeti effects a change of pitch in a stepwise motion of sine-tone frequency in *Etude électronique nr. 3*. Stratification of close frequency values constitutes a sound-cluster and it sinuates along the grid pattern thus creating a “quasi-glissando-structure.” The composition of sound clusters and their movements in the *Etude* confirms not only a clear distinction from *Metastaseis*’ glissando structure, but also a prototype of the structural program for *Atmosphères*.

Instead of realizing the microstructures of sound clusters in this planned electroacoustic composition, Ligeti embodied them in *Atmosphères*. The initial musical idea of sound clusters in this orchestral work continuously metamorphoses its external shape, inner structure, and timbre (i.e., instrumentation). Furthermore, none of the sound clusters derived from the metamorphic processes stands out throughout the piece. Every sound cluster structure merges itself into a fluid sound stream or a larger solid sound-cluster. Unlike in *Glissandi*, general pauses are neither confusing nor distracting in *Atmosphères*, due to the structural consistency that constitutes the musical continuity of the piece. The microstructure or “micro tonality” in *Atmosphères* cannot be contemplated without taking into account Ligeti’s study of Stockhausen’s *Gruppen* theory and method.⁵³ Nor can it be overlooked, however, that the establishment of micro tonal, tone-cluster structures and static form in *Atmosphères* have their roots in Ligeti’s experimental work in his first two electroacoustic compositions.⁵⁴

In a Slee Lecture Recital at the State University of New York at Buffalo, where he worked as a composition professor for one year, Kagel recalled:

[t]he influence of instrumental music on electronic composition was evident at this time in the borrowing of methods and organization principles. This resulted in new intermediate gradations between electronic and instrumental music to develop [*sic*] alongside other articulations/forms.⁵⁵

Kagel’s remark is curiously applicable to the development of Xenakis’s early compositional style particularly in light of *Metastaseis* and *Diamorphoses*, even though Kagel did not model it to fit this particular style, nor did Xenakis ever explain his formal-structural development to Kagel. More interestingly, Ligeti’s development of his own

⁵³ See Chapter Five for the details.

⁵⁴ This developmental process is also significant for examining Adorno’s reference to *Atmosphères* as a positive model of postwar new music in his late aesthetic theory. For details, see Chapter Five.

⁵⁵ Kagel, “Transición 1” in *Slee Lecture Recitals*, 1.

personal compositional style in the course of *Glissandi* to *Atmosphères* via *Artikulation* and *Etude électronique nr. 3* proves that the reverse process is also true; i.e., it was also possible to borrow “methods and organization principles” from electroacoustic composition for instrumental music. Both illuminate the “new intermediate gradations between electronic and instrumental music” that emerged in the pursuit of musical continuity. Furthermore, they show that musical continuity as Kagel defined it – “continual metamorphosis of the material, along with the continually renewing relationships” – reflected a common goal among postwar avant-garde composers at that time. The difference lay not in the desire to establish musical continuity in itself, but in the method and approach of the composer. For Kagel, the work in which he put his idea of musical continuity into practice was, indeed, *Transición I*, whose compositional approach is strikingly different from his contemporaries’ pieces discussed above.

Transición I (1958-60)

Influence of Cologne Elektronische Musik Tradition and Aesthetic

Of Kagel’s early works, *Transición I* was overshadowed by *Sextet*, *Anagrama*, and *Transición II*, which his contemporaries saw as emblematic breakthrough works of postwar avant-garde music. In fact, references to *Transición I* are rare in comparison to these pieces, although it took two years to complete. However, specific aspects of the piece show it to be an indispensable work in the course of Kagel’s compositional development and thus as significant as other works composed during the same period. Although the title directly indicates the theoretical and structural characteristics of the piece, and although Kagel seems to have had no other specific meaning in mind, it literally represents a “transition” in his career as a composer. As discussed in the previous chapter, Kagel had learned compositional principles of *musique concrète* through Schaeffer’s treatise and had experimented to produce electroacoustic sounds in a way similar to the *concrète* composition. However, Kagel encountered totally different principles of electroacoustic composition and aesthetic in Cologne.

Thus, during the period of composing *Transición I*, Kagel strove to comprehend the technical principles of the “Cologne tradition” of *elektronische Musik*. Especially in the early phase of composing *Transición I*, as Heile points out, Kagel had difficulty

understanding studio work.⁵⁶ Presumably, Kagel had to learn not only these principles, but also the basics of the technology from scratch, while he was composing other pieces such as *Transición II* and *Sur scène* as well as performing his own and contemporaries' works.

In the course of this cultivation, Kagel probably became immediately aware of the pronounced and systematic differences in electroacoustic composition between the Cologne and Parisian schools. In this respect Elena Ungeheuer's theoretical distinction between the fundamental compositional principles of *elektronische Musik* and *musique concrète* is helpful for imagining what Kagel absorbed. Ungeheuer asserts that a "sound object" defined in a Schaefferian theory already had a distinct shape at first as self-contained as well as self-evident. It was therefore capable of preserving its identity of the "beginning, body, and ending."⁵⁷ In other words, at the first stage of composition, the literally *concrete* sound object presented its own form before any technical operation took place (except for the recording process). The raw sound material of *elektronische Musik* was, by contrast, an inorganic and abstract element in the first place. Hence, the process of modifying the raw material as "sound metamorphosis" was indispensable in the Cologne tradition of electroacoustic composition.

As is true in Ligeti's *Glissandi*, Meyer-Eppler's theory of sound continuum was a basic principle of *elektronische Musik* composition. According to his theory, a composer is initially supposed to take a sound derived from a sine-wave as the *Urelement* (original element) and operate on it to attain the desired "idealization and objectification."⁵⁸ That is to say, since there is no pre-configured [*gestalteten*] sound material, the composer has to form [*gestalten*] the material through a metamorphic operation. Eimert asserts that such a process stands at the opposite pole to Schaeffer's *concrète* theory:

In contrast to *musique concrète* that works with real sound events recorded by a microphone, the *elektronische Musik* utilizes only electronically generated sounds. The tone is produced by a sound generator and recorded in a magnetic tape. Only

⁵⁶ According to Heile, Kagel asked his brother, who was an engineer at that time, to help with his technical problems; see Heile, 30.

⁵⁷ Ungeheuer, "Musikalische Experimente," 42: ". . . wahrnehmbar hat es einen Anfang, einen Körper und ein Ende."

⁵⁸ Ibid.: "Idealisierung und Objektivierung."

then does its processing begin by means of complicated and differentiated tape manipulations.⁵⁹

Meyer-Eppler characteristically classified the *Urelement* into tone, impulse, and noises. A composer managed a metamorphic operation by oscillating between two different materials, for instance, “from tone to noise, impulse to tone,” and so forth. In this way, composers individually explored the further development of structural formalization in electroacoustic composition. In this regard, Meyer-Eppler’s electroacoustic studies resulted in a prototype of the concept of sound continuum. Kagel’s conceptualization of sound continuum and musical continuity seems to have drawn on Meyer-Eppler’s ideas as well.

As a matter of fact, Koenig was more directly influential for the cultivation of Kagel’s electroacoustic composition and his notion of musical continuity. One can trace a significant link to Koenig’s theorization of electroacoustic composition. Koenig generalizes the operative procedures of the three *Urelemente*, deliberately emulating Meyer-Eppler’s theory of sound metamorphosis:

a noise can . . . be created from sine waves or from impulses; impulses can be derived from noise, sine waves can be transformed into impulse; finally sinusoidal processes can be achieved from impulse structures or noises.⁶⁰

Koenig incorporated a serial tenet, in which a certain row was mapped with its invertible forms onto various parameters, into these principles of timbre transformation.⁶¹ In his exploration of timbre continuum, Koenig’s approach represents not simply the audible continuity of a sound unit, but also a transformation of acoustic perception.

More specifically, Koenig’s research on timbre transformation aimed not only to organize the inner structure of a sound or sound unit, but also to discover the structural

⁵⁹ This is part of the citation from Eimert’s essay in Pierre Schaeffer, *Musique Concrète*, 13: “Im Gegensatz zur Musique concrète, die mit Mikrophonaufnahmen von realen Schallereignissen arbeitet, verwendet die elektronische Musik nur elektroakustisch erzeugte Klänge. Der Ton wird von einem Tongenerator erzeugt und auf Magnetband aufgezeichnet. Erst dann beginnt seine Bearbeitung mittels komplizierter und differenzierter Bandmanipulationen.” The essay first appeared in French in Herbert Eimert, “Musique électronique,” *La Revue Musicale: Vers une musique expérimentale*, n° 236 (1957) : 45-49.

⁶⁰ Gottfried Michael Koenig, “Stand der elektronischen Musik in Deutschland,” in *Ästhetische Praxis. Texte zur Musik*, vol. 1 (Saarbrücken: Pfau, 1991), 291. The citation in English translation is from Elena Ungeheuer, “From the Elements to the Continuum: Timbre Composition in Early Electronic music,” 28.

⁶¹ Koenig assisted Stockhausen’s composition of *Gesang der Jünglinge* in the WDR studio. See Ungeheuer, “From the Elements to the Continuum,” 30.

consistency of an entire musical piece. In other words, he extended the scope of sound continuum to “an unbroken continuum of all timbres; not only of all timbres, but the continuum between the timbre, stationary in itself, and the musical structure.”⁶² This seems to be almost a summary of the explanation of the sound continuum and musical continuity Kagel gave in the Slee Lecture. In this respect, therefore, it becomes evident that Kagel’s focus on these subjects for composing *Transición I* was to a large extent inspired by Koenig’s studies of timbre transformation and continuum.

Unlike Koenig, however, Kagel sought to theorize a compositional method for musical continuity, distancing himself from the serialist tradition. Kagel’s deliberate avoidance of serialism did not mean a total rejection of serial principles, but rather reflected his belief that serialism at that time would come to wield authority and win the most followers. As a nonconformist, Kagel rejected belonging to any schools, nor did he want to establish his own. For instance, in his *String Sextet* and *Anagrama*, Kagel applied serial principles to the compositions, but they never govern the entire structure of the piece. Instead they were integrated into his own creative methods. In any case, despite his status as a serial composer at that time, Koenig played an indispensable role as a model for considering Kagel’s studies of musical continuity in *Transición I* (as is also the case of aforementioned Ligeti’s electroacoustic works). Kagel states that “as an assistant and wailing wall for technical and psychological problems of every type, Koenig was accustomed to cooperating with foreign composers. I express my gratitude for his support.”⁶³

With the aid of Koenig, *Transición I* crystallized Kagel’s search for sound continuum, timbre and structural transformation, and musical continuity. In this regard, it is undeniable that Kagel’s earnest cultivation of electroacoustic composition started with his involvement in the Cologne tradition, leaving the principles and aesthetic of *musique concrète* composition aside. However, this does not mean that Kagel became an obedient follower of the tradition and aesthetic, but rather that by eagerly absorbing them, he

⁶² Gottfried Michael Koenig, “Bilthoven 1962/63,” in *Ästhetische Praxis. Texte zur Musik*, vol. 2 (Saarbrücken: Pfau, 1992), 78. The citation is translated by Ungeheuer in Ungeheuer, “From the Elements to the Continuum,” 30.

⁶³ Mauricio Kagel, “Über Zusammenhänge,” 38: “Koenig war gewohnt, als Hilfsdienst und Klagemauer für technische und seelische Probleme aller Art, mit ausländischen Komponisten zusammenzuarbeiten. Ihm gilt hier mein ausdrücklicher Dank.”

recognized the formation of his own compositional method in the realm of electroacoustic music as an essential task. As a consequence, Kagel created a striking compositional method called “Translation-Rotation” that did not entail conventional serial principles, but rather articulated his unique aesthetic of musical composition.

Musical Continuity and Translation-Rotation Theory

In *Transición I*, Kagel realized both sound continuum and musical continuity in a manner totally distinct from those his contemporaries had attempted. According to Björn Heile,

Transición I uses long sustained sounds that change in pitch, bandwidth and timbre over time: the first sound, for instance, lasts for more than a minute during which it develops gradually. Secondly, the piece contains unusually rich and complex sonorities.⁶⁴

Furthermore, together with Ligeti’s *Artikulation*, Frisius asserts that “possibly *Transición I* is compositionally and compositionally-historically more significant than many instrumental works of these composers [Ligeti and Kagel].”⁶⁵ This striking statement implies not only the distinct sound-complex and sound-scape like the one Heile depicts, but also Kagel’s establishment of an original compositional method – Translation-Rotation – in the course of composing *Transición I* (and *II*). This particular method primarily engaged “structural transformations or shifts in the organization of the material.”⁶⁶ With this principle (which reminds us of Koenig’s research on transformational continuum), *Transición I* “integrates continuous sound processes with discontinuous elements.”⁶⁷ As a result, theory and practice of the method contributed to embodying a unique musical continuity, in which a continuous transition occurs with “one moment flowing smoothly, the next moving forward dramatically.”⁶⁸

⁶⁴ Heile, 30-31.

⁶⁵ Frisius, “Personalstil und Musiksprache,” 197: “Ligeti’s *Artikulation* und Kagel’s *Transición I* sind womöglich kompositorisch und kompositionsgeschichtlich wichtiger als manche Instrumentalwerke dieser Komponisten.”

⁶⁶ Kagel, “Transition 1,” in *Slee Lecture Recitals*, 3.

⁶⁷ Frisius, “Personalstil,” 188: “In diesem Stück [*Transición I*] werden kontinuierliche Klangprozesse allerdings mit diskontinuierlichen Elementen kombiniert.”

⁶⁸ Werner Kaegi, “Mauricio Kagel” in accompanying booklet, *Zeitgenössische Musik in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 3* (1959-60), trans. Desmond Clayton, Bestellnummer DMR 1007-09, vinyl record.

The Translation-Rotation method first appeared in Kagel's second contribution to the publication series *Die Reihe: Form-Raum* in 1960. In contrast to his first contribution "Tone-Clusters, Attacks, Translations" published in 1959, the essay "Translation-Rotation" presented mathematical procedures for creating a formal framework for musical composition. A distinctive Kagelian aspect of the theorization of the method was that the mathematical procedure enabled him to create various visual representations of sound structure and its formation. Kagel focused specifically on establishing multiple developments of a simple musical material "by geometrical means"⁶⁹ that he categorized into two distinct approaches – translation and rotation of the basic "figure" formed by musical tones.

The fundamental principle of the translation technique is, according to Kagel, "a simple straight-line shift of two (or more) similar (or dissimilar) forms."⁷⁰ Kagel presents a few graphic examples of this technique, the contours of which are simply transcribed from musical examples in quasi-conventional notation (for example, four note heads are placed on individual edges of a quadrilateral on a staff. Since these notes are tied with vertices, there is no stem; thus, the figure as a sound unit is represented literally as a visual figure). In contrast, the principle and the theoretical procedure of rotation technique, in which certain pitches are digitized into individual frequencies, is constructed "as a circular shift around one centre of motion (axis) in the figure."⁷¹ Thus, all graphic examples of rotation technique Kagel presents in "Translation-Rotation" result from a formulation of these frequency values and its further applications.

Despite the elucidation of the methodological process in the essay, it is still difficult to see how Kagel applied Translation-Rotation method to *Transición I*, unlike *Transición II* whose "figures" are readable in the score. By contrast, the brief explanation of the physical procedure he gave in his Slee Lecture Recital for the piece offers a better means to grasp Kagel's application of the method in concrete terms. In the lecture, while Kagel presented translation and rotation as two main spheres of compositional organization, the former took the main role of determining the musical structure of

⁶⁹ Mauricio Kagel, "Translation-Rotation" in *Die Reihe 7: Form-Space*, ed. Herbert Eimert and Karlheinz Stockhausen (New York: Theodore Presser Co., 1965), 33.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid.

Transición I. The formulation in which two different sound sources on separate magnetic tapes were operated deals primarily with musical time and structure. Kagel used a four-track tape and a one-track tape, each of which contained “only one particular pitch movement, either rising or falling.”⁷² He then set out a time proportion between these two tapes and allows either one to “shift” over a certain time span determined by the other. According to an example Kagel gave, between a pattern of 50 seconds for the one-track tape and another pattern of 80 seconds for the four-track tape, “the remaining time of 30 seconds is the playing room for the shifting” of the former over the latter. Kagel called this principle “a movable or shiftable structure” and composed fourteen such structures in total.⁷³ This process retained both the formal structure and musical continuity.

[T]he work (*Transición I*) consists of forms capable of change, that in contact with the playing of the four-track tape can bring about acceleration or deceleration, as well as differentiation or similarity. The concept of movable or shiftable structures coming together, sets up its own formal and procedural conditions.⁷⁴

Werner Kaegi describes the formal procedure, “an abstract algorithm,”⁷⁵ as a remarkable feature of *Transición I* that can arbitrarily determine the final structure of the piece. An implication of the term “algorithm” here is that Kagel’s mathematical approach did not determine a fixed structural order and its inner details in the first place. Rather, the constructive flexibility of movable and shiftable operations allowed the composer to modify the step-by-step procedure – an algorithmic process – without altering the entire structure of the piece.

From a perspective of continuous structure as a whole, it is notable that while Xenakis’s and Ligeti’s pieces to some extent give an impression of sectional form, this impression is scarcely perceivable in *Transición I*. Kagel’s conception of musical continuity was an extended notion of sound composition of the Cologne *elektronische Musik* tradition. That is, a composed sound shape derived from a synthesis of sine-waves did not necessarily have to indicate its clear “beginning, body, and ending.” In other words, whether the form of the sound contained these characteristics depended totally on

⁷² Kagel, “Transition 1” in *Slee Lecture Recitals*, 2.

⁷³ Elena Ungeheuer also explains briefly this particular structural formation and the musical continuity in “Elektroakustische Musik: Ansätze zu einer Klassifikation” in *Elektroakustische Musik*, ed. Elena Ungeheuer (Laaber: Laaber-Verlag, 2002), 27-28.

⁷⁴ Kagel, “Transition 1” in *Slee Lecture Recitals*, 4.

⁷⁵ Werner Kaegi, “Mauricio Kagel,” in liner notes for the vinyl records DMR 1007-9, trans. Desmond Clayton.

the composer's intention. In *Transición I*, Kagel expanded the very characteristic of a raw sound material – an absence or obscurity of the beginning, body, and ending – to the entire form. Kagel enunciates his original theory of musical continuity in this respect.

A perfect continuity within the overall form would eliminate the concept of beginning and end. This would not require the creation of an unending or infinite piece, but the development an apparently contradictory handling of the material to create a [*sic*] continuity.⁷⁶

Together with the method of translation, the application of Kagel's concept of "perfect continuity" to *Transición I* distinguishes its continuous formal structure from that of *Metastaseis*, *Diamorphoses*, *Glissandi*, *Artikulation*, and *Atmosphères*.

An underlying structural principle of *Transición I* was polyphony, in which two tapes that had been produced independently of one another were superimposed. Moreover, the four-track tape consisted of four separate layers and thus the initial polyphonic structure contained five layers total. This unique framework was a point of departure for the compositional development in the piece. In this framework, movable or shiftable sound material, which was derived from the different time proportions between the two tapes, was capable of overlapping with other sounds. As a result of the accumulation of translative movements, *Transición I* achieved a sort of through-composition style in electroacoustic composition. Thus, the degree of musical continuity in *Transición I* is greater than any of the other works discussed above.

Kagel did not provide as much information about rotation as he did for translation technique. His concept of rotation technique in electroacoustic composition is twofold: first, it deals with an organization in materialistic domains such as pitch, tone colour, volume, and duration, rather than in a formal structural domain; second, it deals with a physical acoustic space. For the latter, in particular, it is a concept virtually outside the compositional work; that is to say, a reproductive concept that cannot be standardized due to a variety of states for a reproduction of tape-recorded music. "Continual rotation in space," according to Kagel, "is not realizable without perfect technical equipment":

As long as no suitable halls are available for the performance of an electronic . . . music based on movement of the sounds or sound-sources, sound movement will

⁷⁶ Kagel, "Transition 1," in *Slee Lecture Recitals*, 1-2.

remain frozen. Stationary loudspeakers create a space that encompasses in reality, not the total space available, but only a certain part of the original space.⁷⁷

However, it is unclear exactly what constellation of technical devices would, in Kagel's mind, be ideal for the rotation operation in sound space. One can only speculate that Kagel wanted to create "continual rotation in space" by means of physically rotatable loudspeakers but recognized the unavailability of the technology for such realization at that time.

In the essay "Translation-Rotation" in *Die Reihe*, Kagel sets forth a more detailed account of the Translation-Rotation method with various graphic presentations. However, these are perhaps more suitable to comprehending the formal structure of *Transición II*, as the visualized moves and shifts of musical materials which are based on conventional musical notation are put into practice in the instrumental piece. And yet it is worth stressing that in *Transición I*, the method allowed Kagel to embody the specific musical thought he derived from his "first encounter with electronic music, . . . at the same time an encounter with a new type of musical time":

The development of a new musical form without a prescribed travel route interested me. However, this would mean I would have to have another form, which is not determined in advance, where relationship, transformations of quantity and quality, and methods of treating electronic sound are less open. This form could only be required to answer to a general transition principle, and must present possibilities for the continual metamorphosis of the material, along with the continually renewing relationship.⁷⁸

Photographic Notation

Although *Transición I* neither requires a performer nor a musical score, Kagel created a graphic notation for the piece. It is an extraordinarily unique representation of electroacoustic music which he calls "photographic notation." Since it is an artistic visualization of the music of *Transición I* and not designed to realize the piece, the score gives an analyst little means to dissect, for instance, how Kagel allots movable translation structures or what ratios between two tapes individual structures have. Thus, the creation of photographic notation for *Transición I* is in a different domain from that of Translation-Rotation theorization. This difference becomes undoubtedly clear if

⁷⁷ Ibid., 5.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 1.

contrasting the photographic score to the musical score of *Transición II*, which one can also regard as graphic notation but which is “readable” as conventional musical notation.

It is notable, however, that Kagel drew inspiration for his notation system from visual art in both *Transición I* and *II*. In the latter, Paul Klee’s drawing technique inspired Kagel to integrate movable slides and rotation discs into otherwise traditional musical notation. The result was a spectacular synthesis of Kagel’s Translation-Rotation theory and Klee’s graphic technical principles from his book *Das Bildnerische Denken* (Pictorial Thinking).⁷⁹

This “pictorial thinking” embodied in the musical score of *Transición II* appears in a different form in *Transición I* with the aid of photography. Kagel “came from the point of view that every method of processing electronic sounds could find a mechanical – that is, immediate – analogy in photographic methods.”⁸⁰ This standpoint suggests that Kagel’s intention in *Transición I*’s notation was no longer associated with the Translation-Rotation theory, which focuses primarily on a formal structure. Unlike *Transición II*, the formal structure of *Transición I* as a whole is not changeable and no performer is necessary. In this regard, Kagel perhaps did not need to demonstrate the method of translation here. Rather, his “pictorial thinking” focused on technical aspects of sound production and the visual characterization of each parameter (register, duration, dynamic, and timbre) as the “sound description.”⁸¹ It is thus, in a sense, Kagel’s own analytical visualization of the piece without a “methodological purpose.”⁸² Kagel therefore called the realized “score” of *Transición I* “photographic musical notation.”

Kagel’s invention of photographic notation of *Transición I* resulted from his “intensive involvement in the investigation” of possible connections between music and visual art “in the reversed direction” in terms of compositional process. Werner Klüppelholz assumes that “Kagel’s physical sound synthesis of electronic music triggered

⁷⁹ See Mauricio Kagel, “Translation-Rotation,” 57. See also Werner Klüppelholz, “Scriptor musicae: Zu den Notationen von Mauricio Kagel,” in *Mauricio Kagel, Skizzen – Korrekturen – Partituren: eine Ausstellung der KölnMusik und der Stadt Gütersloh*, ed. Werner Klüppelholz (Köln: DuMont Buchverlag, 1991), 6-7.

⁸⁰ Klüppelholz, “Scriptor musicae,” 7: “Damals war ich [Kagel] von dem Standpunkt ausgegangen, daß alle Methoden der Bearbeitung elektroakustischer Klänge eine automatische – das heißt hier sofortige – Entsprechung in photographischen Methoden finden könnten.”

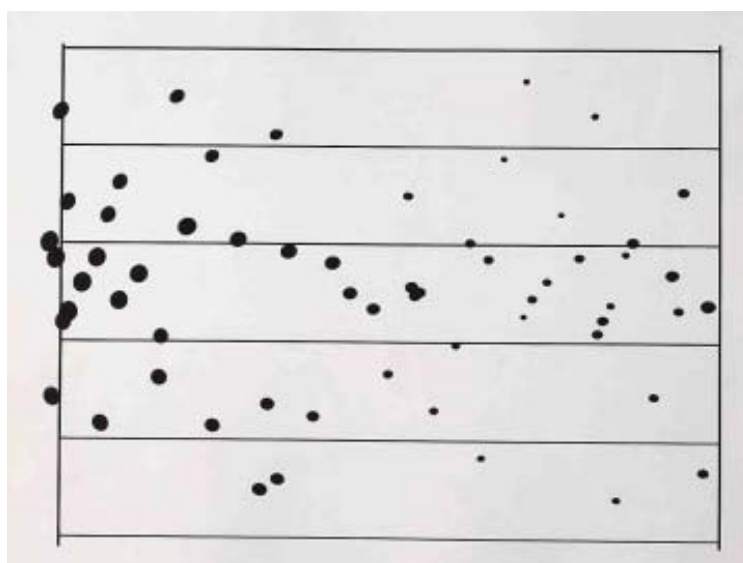
⁸¹ Mauricio Kagel, “Eine photographische Musiknotation?” *Magnum* 30 (1960): 50: “Klangbeschreibung.”

⁸² Wulf Herzogenrath and Gabriele Lueg, “Gespräche mit Mauricio Kagel,” 176.

the idea with photography . . . that is, with chemical processes.”⁸³ Kagel traced common denominators between electroacoustic composition and photography, taking the distinct characteristics of the process and consequence into consideration. Thus, a mechanical process of a sound modification in electroacoustic music might be comparable to a chemical process in photographic method. In his application of photographic method to the graphic notation of *Transición I*, parametric thought underlay the whole concept. That is, the photographic notation of the piece was not a collection of pictures simply captured from the music, but rather a synthesized image of parameterized musical elements. It was indeed the “reversed direction” of a compositional process – decomposition.

“With the aid of oscillographic display formats,”⁸⁴ the first phase of the decomposition of *Transición I* in the photographic notational process was the parameterization of sound elements. In his concise theoretical statement of photographic notation in the art journal *Magnum*, Kagel first presents four distinct illustrations that correspond to the individual parameters; namely, “linear system,” “tone points,” “flageolet points,” and “dynamic swells.”⁸⁵

Figure 3.2. Visualization of *Transición I* in Photographic Notation⁸⁶



⁸³ Klüppelholz, “Scriptor musicae,” 7.

⁸⁴ Ibid.: “Mit Hilfe oszillographischer Darstellungsformen.”

⁸⁵ See Kagel, “Eine photographische Musiknotation?” 50.

⁸⁶ Mauricio Kagel, Visualisierungen von *Transición I* als “photographische (Musik)Notation,” page c, 30.0 x 39.6cm, *Sammlung Mauricio Kagel*, Paul Sacher Stiftung, Basel, Switzerland. Reprinted with permission from the foundation.

The linear system is composed of four horizontal lines in a rectangle frame. Although similar to a traditional musical notation system in appearance, the uppermost and bottommost lines of the linear system are the border of register; i.e., all sound events are indicated within the frame. The sheet of tone points displays a number of dots which represent individual pitch positions.

The flageolet points represent a concept dealing with timbre. They are illustrated by several small circles. According to Kagel, they are tones gained “via a light touch on the strings.”⁸⁷ This explanation suggests a literal flageolet technique of string instruments. However, *Transición I*, all of whose raw sound materials are electronically generated sine waves, does not contain a recorded flageolet sound. It might therefore be postulated that a flageolet sound referred to a pseudo-overtone, artificially produced by technical equipment. Finally, the dynamic swells that are originally derived from tone points represent durations of the individual tones rather than their dynamics, though a swell could have a slight dynamic increase or decrease.

Transición I shows dynamic variations by means of “a gamut of gray values.”⁸⁸ It is the most striking and effective technique in the photographic notation of the piece. A degree of darkness corresponds to the degree of dynamics; e.g., the darker the gray-scale, the louder the dynamic. In effect, different dynamic values of overlapping tones in a quasi-cluster figure are recognizable due to the various degrees of gray-scale. The formation of different gray-scales can also illustrate itself as “forms of attack or courses of density.”⁸⁹

Kagel’s unique idea of “affiliating a photo laboratory with a studio of electronic music,” was not unrelated to his experiences restoring damaged films at the cinémathèque, as well as working as “a photography and film editor of Jorge Luis Borges’s journal *nueva visión*”⁹⁰ in his Buenos Aires period. Although it is unclear how much knowledge of photographic technique Kagel gained at that time, his involvement in that field could have led him to experiment in the photo laboratory while designing the

⁸⁷ Kagel, “Eine photographische Musiknotation?” 50: “bei leichter Berührung der Seiten.”

⁸⁸ Ibid.: “eine Skala von Grauwerten.”

⁸⁹ See examples (8) to (10) in *ibid.*

⁹⁰ Heile, 11. In addition, according to Klüppelholz, “Mauricio Kagel und die Literatur,” in *Über Mauricio Kagel*, 100, “Kagel wrote film and photo reviews, among others, for the journal *Cine*”: “Kagel verfasste Film- und Fotokritiken, unter anderem für die Zeitschrift *Cine*.”

notation system. In other words, without practical experience of study or work in photography, it could be difficult to trace the technical analogy between producing processes of electronic musical composition and photography.

In the photo laboratory of the publisher DuMont Schauberg in Cologne, where Kagel was allowed to experiment, he “could draw lines from points (impulses in the electronic music) by means of inducing negatives and simulating various similar operations, like in the electronic music.”⁹¹ It is worth noting that Kagel’s attempt to develop the new notation may have helped to solidify his idea of the visual element in music, which is an indispensable principle of Instrumental Theater, a genre he invented. Kagel himself claimed that the development of photographic notation “was a valuable acquisition” for him.⁹² The development of continuous structure together with the notion of visualization in music in *Transición I* both prefigure the more advanced, sophisticated, and aesthetically profound presentation of these ideas in *Antithese*.

Antithese: für elektronische und öffentliche Klänge (1962)

Siemens-Studio in Munich

Two years after the completion of *Transición I* and its photographic notation, Kagel started composing his second electroacoustic piece, *Antithese für elektronische und öffentliche Klänge*. *Antithese* contrasts sharply with *Transición I* in its composition studio, musical materials, structural design of electroacoustic composition, and underlying aesthetic. In other words, these contrasts demonstrate the evolution of Kagel’s aesthetics and compositional approaches.

The venue in which Kagel composed *Antithese* was the *Siemens-Studio für elektronische Musik* in Munich, not the *elektronische Studio* at the WDR in Cologne. There were significant distinctions between these studios in both mechanical-materialistic and theoretical terms. Not only was the Siemens-Studio better equipped technically, but the reasons for setting up the studio and its orientation in the ongoing heated debates about electroacoustic composition were different. The originality of the Siemens-Studio in terms of all these factors contributed to the distinguishing characteristics of *Antithese*.

⁹¹ Wulf Herzogenrath and Gabriele Lueg, “Gespräche mit Mauricio Kagel,” 176.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 177.

It is thus necessary to underscore the distinctive features inherent in the studio before examining the piece, in order to better understand how these affected the realization of Kagel's musical idea, as well as the formal and stylistic originality of *Antithese*.

In 1955, Siemens built the studio to produce its “jubilee and documentary film *Impuls unserer Zeit* (Impulse of our Time) with electronic music.”⁹³ This point of departure for founding this electronic studio was different from that of the *Studio für elektronische Musik* of the WDR, which was designed to serve Meyer-Eppler's scientific, phonetic, and communication research on electronic sound production and to enhance the theoretical development of *elektronische Musik*. In addition, due to its commercial purpose, the Siemens-Studio had no competing studios in terms of the theoretical and aesthetic establishment of electroacoustic composition, like the *concrète-elektronische* rivalry. In other words, the theory and method of electroacoustic composition initially played a secondary role in the Siemens-Studio in contrast to the WDR studio, whose developmental process cannot be explained without mentioning its founders' aesthetic commitments.

The impetus for producing *Impuls* and setting up a studio to do so is generally attributed to the Munich-born composer Carl Orff (1895-1982). Orff was not only an established composer, due to his successful *Carmina Burana* (1936), but had held a chair at the Hochschule für Musik in Munich since 1950. However, it is unclear how close the connection was between Orff and the administrators of Siemens at that time and whether he really had electroacoustic music, a genre he had never been involved in, in mind for the film. What is clear is that Orff suggested the project.

Initially, Siemens had a specific idea that the film music would be “a composition with orchestra and choir.” For this reason, it is no wonder that Siemens had Orff in mind for the musical director when the firm was ready to move ahead. However, Orff declined the offer, claiming that he was unsuitable for the project. Rather than drop the project altogether, Orff recommended the younger, Munich-born composer Josef Anton Riedl as the musical director. Presumably, Riedl, who was enthusiastically engaged in electroacoustic composition at that time, was unknown to Siemens and thus Orff's

⁹³ Josef Anton Riedl, “Siemens-Studio für elektronische Musik,” a contribution to *KlangForschung* 98 in the online resource *KlangForschung* [music criticism online] provided by Jörg Stelkens; available from <http://www.accsone.com/content/view/539/283/lang.english/>; Internet; accessed 6 February 2011.

recommendation was unexpected. Nevertheless, in “his sympathy and stubbornness,” according to Riedl himself, Orff kept recommending Riedl to the firm.⁹⁴ As a result of these events, Riedl became the musical director and composer of the *Impuls* project.

In 1956, the firm installed the studio and formed a team for the film’s production, which was directed by a technician, Alexander Schaaf. Aside from Riedl and Schaaf “who dealt with developing a loudspeaker system,”⁹⁵ the work group consisted of Helmut Klein, the first developer of an electroacoustic device called a vocoder with Siemens in Germany, and Hans Joachim Neumann, “a university graduate with experience in the analysis of sound spectra.”⁹⁶ Due to the business orientation of the project, no other composers were able to access the studio until the completion of the film.

According to Thom Holmes, “well acquainted with application of electronic technology for telecommunications applications,” the engineers, Schaaf, Klein, and Neumann, “were charged with assembling the components for the studio.”⁹⁷ The technical equipment of the Siemens-Studio was the most advanced in Europe at that time, even though “not all of the individual components were originally intended for music production.”⁹⁸ Particularly notable devices were a vocoder, an electronic Hohner-Organ known as Hohnerola, a generator wall consisting of twenty tone generators, and a paper tape puncher and a punched paper tape transmitter for programming a series of tones or sounds. The vocoder enabled a composer to separate a human voice into “three different aspects and then synthesize them.”⁹⁹ Moreover, one could add musical or noise sound elements in the synthesizing process. As a consequence, the vocoder could generate a variety of highly artificial vocal sounds. In the generator wall, each tone generator was capable of setting up “frequency, loudness, and waveform, as well as duration by operating controls.”¹⁰⁰

⁹⁴ Josef Anton Riedl, “Eine positive Symbiose: Josef Anton Riedl im Gespräch mit Reinhard Oehlschlägel,” *MusikTexte: Zeitschrift für neue Musik* 3 (1984): 44.

⁹⁵ Riedl, “Siemens-Studio für elektronische Musik.”

⁹⁶ Thom Holmes, *Electronic and Experimental Music: Technology, Music and Culture*, 3d ed. (New York and Abingdon: Routledge, 2008), 158.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 157.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ Hansjörg Wicha, “Das Siemens-Studio für elektronische Musik in München,” in *KlangForschung '98: Symposium zur elektronischen Musik*, ed. Jörg Stelkens and Hans G. Tillmann (Saarbrücken: Pfau, 1999), 24.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 22.

The most distinctive device in the studio was the equipment of punched paper tape recorder and the tape reader, which was “the heart of the studio unit, so to speak.”¹⁰¹ The punched paper tape transmitter operated four punched paper tapes simultaneously, each of which was first made by the paper tape puncher. Each paper tape contained six punch lines, but the third line already had a seamless series of punched holes, which functioned only to feed the tape forward. The individual tapes codified duration, pitch, loudness, and filter information (timbre), respectively. A disposition of punched holes in the other five lines determined a value of each parameter. Regarding the duration code, a successive series of sixty-four holes (per line) was equal to one second (thus, the smallest duration of one punched hole would be one sixty-fourth of a second). The pitch levels corresponded to twelve tones per octave and offered seven octaves in range. The loudness was available in thirty-two different values. For timbre, one could choose from fourteen different formant filters or opt for no filter.¹⁰² Finally, “one did not have to paste pieces of magnetic tapes together any longer” by hand.¹⁰³ Together with the vocoder, all these devices were aggregated with “an automatic control system.”¹⁰⁴

Utilizing these advanced technical devices, the electronic musical composition team for the Siemens’ documentary conducted various experiments and completed the composition in the spring of 1959.¹⁰⁵ The film *Impuls unserer Zeit* premiered in October 1959 and was then shown in various cities in Germany.¹⁰⁶ Due to the great success of the film, Riedl rose to fame as an electroacoustic composer. Meanwhile, the studio became a thriving research and development section for electroacoustic music in the firm, formally called *Studio für elektronische Musik der Siemens & Halske AG*, where Riedl served as an artistic director. Regarding the film, it is notable that Riedl’s aesthetic of multimedia musical composition was reflected in his approach to the music for *Impuls*. The

¹⁰¹ Stefan Schenk, “Klänge aus der Retorte,” in *Meisterwerke aus dem Deutschen Museum*, Band IV, ed. Deutsches Museum (München: Deutsches Museum), 30: “sozusagen das Herz der Studioautomatik.”

¹⁰² Regarding information about these four parameters in use of the punched paper tape transmitter, see Wicha, 19-21 and Holmes, 158-159.

¹⁰³ Schenk, 30: “dass man keine Bandstücke mehr zusammenkleben musste.”

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.: “mit einer automatischen Steuerung.”

¹⁰⁵ See Riedl, “Siemens-Studio für elektronische Musik.”

¹⁰⁶ See Alexandra Kinter, “News: October 16, 2009 “Impulse of our Time” premiere 50 years ago,” *Siemens History* [commercial on-line]; available from http://www.siemens.com/history/en/news/impulse_of_our_time.htm; Internet; accessed 8 February 2011.

electroacoustic music does not correspond to the visual imagery of the film, but rather is independent of the scenes; that is, the composer never subordinates the music to the film.¹⁰⁷

This latter aspect should not be overlooked, since Riedl's compositional aesthetic in the music of *Impuls* shares Kagel's view of multimedia/interdisciplinarity as embodied in *Antithese*. After the completion of the film, the studio was opened to composers outside Siemens, and a number of postwar avant-garde composers such as Ligeti, Boulez, Maderna, Pousseur, Cage, Stockhausen, Dieter Schnebel, Herbert Brün, and Kagel were invited. Interestingly, Meyer-Eppler was also invited and Theodor W. Adorno visited the studio as well.¹⁰⁸ Of these composers, however, only Kagel, Pousseur, and Brün actually produced electroacoustic compositions there.¹⁰⁹ Boulez, for instance, wished to examine "the whole process of exchanging sound characteristics . . . progressively discovered" in the studio, but his tight schedule at that time did not allow him to conduct the study.¹¹⁰ Boulez also assumed that the orientation toward film music at the studio would limit his compositional scope. In contrast to Boulez's assumption, Kagel's perspective on the features of the studio meshed with Riedl's interest in multimedia musical composition. In other words, not only did the studio's capabilities for multimedia composition fascinate Kagel, but also Riedl's aesthetic and experience of it more or less stimulated his ambition to try an interdisciplinary approach. Kagel was now on the threshold of *Antithese*.

Josef Anton Riedl – Kagel's Colleague at the Siemens-Studio

By the time Orff recommended Riedl for the music director of the *Impuls* project to the Siemens, they had had a fairly strong connection. While Orff was not present in the *Händel-Konservatorium* and *Hochschule für Musik* in Munich, where Riedl studied composition, Riedl often had personal contact with Orff and showed him his works. Orff enthusiastically encouraged Riedl to pursue his own way of musical composition, and

¹⁰⁷ See Anselm Reiner, "Technik provoziert Kunst," *Melos* 9 (1960): 275.

¹⁰⁸ See Schenk, 30.

¹⁰⁹ Holmes, 159.

¹¹⁰ Pierre Boulez, "Polyphonie X, Structures for Two Pianos and Poésie pour pouvoir," 202. Whereas Boulez finds "no really outstanding or interesting work" at the Siemens-Studio, he regrets not having been able to work in the studio. See *ibid.*

“their frequent meetings were important for Riedl’s musical development.”¹¹¹ In addition, after the war Riedl was eager to attend various concerts of new music; e.g., concerts of *Studio für Neue Musik* organized by another Munich-born composer Fritz Büchtger (1903-1978), *Musica Viva* concerts by Karl Amadeus Hartmann (1905-1963), and the international organization “Jeunesses Musicales” founded in Brussels, Belgium.¹¹²

In his compositions, Riedl aimed for a wider spectrum of voice and percussion instruments than conventional instrumental music offered. However, his attendance at the *Stage International Festival d’Aix en Provence* in 1951¹¹³ decisively turned his compositional orientation to electroacoustic music. There Riedl encountered a *musique concrète* piece *Symphonie pour l’homme seul* by Schaeffer, whom he “admired as a great inventor.”¹¹⁴ With his new found excitement about electroacoustic music, Riedl composed two *musique concrète* pieces: *Studie I* for electronic and concrete sounds and *Studie II* for voice and concrete sounds, immediately after coming back to Munich. In *Studie I* and *II*, Riedl worked with a new sound complex, in which he blended sounds of a percussion instrument and unpitched tones, as well as mixed pitched and unpitched tones.¹¹⁵ The technical equipment that Riedl used for these studies is unclear, but the basic compositional procedure, according to the composer, was that

noises of machines were recorded, in part changed through ring modulation, dynamized through volume control, additionally rhythmized through tape cutting.¹¹⁶

Not until 1956 were these experimental *concrète* pieces realized in the studio of Büchtger.

Inspired by the *Stage International Festival d’Aix en Provence*, Riedl organized a similar event “Stage International” in Munich, which took place in 1952 and 1953. During this period, Riedl corresponded with Schaeffer and in 1953 finally succeeded in bringing him to Munich to give a lecture about *musique concrète* at the second Stage

¹¹¹ Martin Supper, under Riedl, Josef Anton in *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 2d ed., volume 14, ed. Ludwig Finscher (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 2005), 51.

¹¹² See Josef Anton Riedl, “Eine positive Symbiose,” 41.

¹¹³ It was an event that Schaeffer organized to present a series of his electroacoustic productions since 1948 with the *Radiodiffusion Française*, see Hans Rudolf Zeller, “Experimentelle Klangerzeugung und Instrument: Versuch über Josef Anton Riedl,” in *MusikTexte: Zeitschrift für Neue Musik* 3 (1984): 47.

¹¹⁴ Josef Anton Riedl, Gisela Nauck, and Armin Köhler, “Avantgarde in einer postmodernen Situation: Josef Anton Riedl im Gespräch mit Gisela Nauck und Armin Köhler,” *Positionen* 6/7 (1991): 34.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Riedl, “Eine positive Symbiose,” 43: “Maschinengeräusche wurden aufgenommen, teilweise durch Ringmodulation verändert, durch Lautstärkeregelung dynamisiert, durch Bandschnitt zusätzlich rhythmisiert.”

International (interestingly, Meyer-Eppler was also invited to hold a presentation about sine-tone based *elektronische Musik*).¹¹⁷ After this event, Riedl was invited to participate in Schaeffer's *Groupe de Recherche Musical* at the Parisian *concrète* studio. It is unclear to what extent Riedl then became involved in (or was allowed to participate in) the *concrète* research of the group, but at least he could become familiar with *concrète* works composed by that time and the technical devices in the studio.¹¹⁸ Since Schaeffer's *concrète* compositions were so fascinating to Riedl – he seems to have adored them – he attended the premiere of Schaeffer and Henry's *Orphée* in the Donaueschingen Festival. By contrast, Schaeffer's reception of Riedl's work is not clear, since he never made any reference to Riedl's electroacoustic pieces. And yet he later claimed that “it is impossible to speak of the electroacoustic music in Germany without mentioning Josef Anton Riedl.”¹¹⁹ In addition, Riedl also visited the *Studio für elektronische Musik* of the WDR in 1955, before he was invited to the Siemens-Studio as the musical director. Although Riedl produced no electroacoustic piece during his study at the studio, it seems likely that he not only learned about *elektronische Musik* compositional principles, but also clearly perceived the theoretical and aesthetic differences from *musique concrète* and thus the underlying tension in the *concrète-elektronische* debate.

Riedl's engagement in electroacoustic composition in the Siemens-Studio was one of the most important phases in his development of electronic sound production. It does not mean, of course, that Riedl cultivated techniques of electroacoustic composition only in the three years of study and work for *Impuls* at the studio. Rather, his studies in both *concrète* and *elektronische* studios had formed a theoretical and aesthetic backbone and, in this sense, Riedl was perhaps the most appropriate composer and musical director for the politically neutral Siemens-Studio. Riedl's stance on the *concrète-elektronische* controversy was also neutral; in fact, he seems not even to have bothered to pay attention

¹¹⁷ Ibid. The program also included Antoine Goléa's lecture *Tendenzen der Musique concrète*, films with concrete music, the film *Visite à Picasso*, and a joint exhibition of Henry Moore and Franz Marc, see Josef Anton Riedl, “NEUE MUSIK München, Siemens-Studio für elektronische Musik und *musica viva* (1953-1963)” in *Eine Sprache der Gegenwart: musica viva 1945-1995*, ed. Renate Ulm (München: Piper, 1995), 70.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Schaeffer, *Musique Concrète*, 85. Presumably, Schaeffer's high opinion of Riedl could be because he was a non-serialist, unlike Boulez and Stockhausen. Schaeffer was inhospitable to Stockhausen, although the latter completed his first electroacoustic work *Konkrete Etüde* in the *concrète* studio in the late 1952.

to the debate, since his concern was to establish his own electroacoustic compositional style. Michael Lentz clarifies Riedl's compositional traits in this regard:

Riedl is a composer of *musique concrète* and *elektronische Musik* and an author of "sound poems" (*Lautgedichte*) at the same time. His "acoustic sound poems" (*Akustischen Lautgedichte*) are often allocations of specific segments, some of which are devoted to speech and others to concrete or electronic sounds/noises. These are realized in either successive or simultaneous (superimposed) combinations. [Still] they cannot be regarded as [poems] put to music or reciprocally mimetic harmonizations of speaking and musical sign- and communication systems in the traditional sense.¹²⁰

The characteristics and compositional procedure of Riedl's "acoustic sound poems" well represent that the concept resulted not from the idea of an eclectic mix of both schools' compositional techniques, but rather from his thorough studies of technology and musical composition based on his various electroacoustic experiences.

Riedl's aesthetic neutrality among postwar avant-garde composers enabled him to become involved in another significant electroacoustic enterprise. In 1959, the same year that *Impuls* was completed, Riedl often visited Herman Scherchen's experimental studio in Gravesano, Switzerland, where Scherchen initiated electroacoustic research and performed various experiments with electroacoustic music. Two characteristics of Scherchen's studio are especially remarkable: first, it "was supported by UNESCO and was therefore independent of any nationality"; second, while the studio focused primarily on exploring a variety of sound spaces by means of electronic equipment, the "activities in Gravesano were interdisciplinary," reflecting Scherchen's aesthetic of multimedia art.¹²¹

A basic principle of Scherchen's interdisciplinary aesthetic, according to Dennis C. Hutchison, was that the individual realms of "recording, radio, film, and television could only be understood by considering them all together in terms of electronic

¹²⁰ Michael Lentz, "Musik? Poesie? Eigentlich...", *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 2 (1996): 53: "Riedl ist zugleich Komponist von *musique concrète* und elektronischer Musik und Autor von Lautgedichten. Seine «Akustischen Lautgedichte» sind oftmals Zuordnungen von Abschnitten für Sprechen (Sprachlaute) und solchen für konkrete oder elektronische Klänge/Geräusche, die entweder in sukzessiven oder simultanen (Überlagerungen) Kombinationen realisiert werden, ohne daß hier im traditionellen Sinne von sogenannten «Vertonungen» oder gegenseitigen mimetischen Annäherungen sprachlicher und musikalischer Zeichen- und Kommunikationssysteme gesprochen werden kann."

¹²¹ Dennis C. Hutchison, "Performance, Technology, and Politics: Hermann Scherchen's Aesthetics of Modern Music" (Ph.D. diss., Florida State University, 2003), 105.

technology, acoustics, and artistic design.”¹²² Scherchen’s multimedia/interdisciplinary experiment is worth noting. In the summer of 1959, in Scherchen’s studio Xenakis realized *Analogique B*, his first electroacoustic piece “produced by the system of so-called granular synthesis.”¹²³ It is a specific procedure of “composing sound by innumerable overlapping elementary signals – sinusoidal sound grains,”¹²⁴ as well as “one of the most important procedures in electronic music today.”¹²⁵ Patrick Müller states that Scherchen’s striking multimedia experiment was inspired both by *Analogique B* and the principle and technique of granular synthesis.

Granular synthesis allowed each elemental parameter of music – rhythm, pitch, and timbre – to be able to develop entirely from a single, homogenous structure; it is a fundamental thought of all serial music. Moreover, by the parallel setting of light- and sound-quanta, there is a conceivable capability of executing homogenous transitions between tone and image as well. Scherchen himself put this into practice in the 1960s: by means of ultraviolet rays, he illuminated rotating spherical loudspeakers – a further development of the Gravesaner studio – filmed the reflections, and synchronized them as visual movement patterns with the music of Xenakis – an abstract film for an abstract musical piece, in a sense.¹²⁶

Although it is unclear how often Riedl happened to be present in the course of Scherchen’s multimedia experiment with *Analogique B*, his frequent visits to the studio could have enabled him to see the experiment, as well as apprehend Scherchen’s keen interest in the expansion of an interdisciplinary compositional approach. At any rate, regardless of whether Scherchen’s interdisciplinary aesthetic fitted in with that of Riedl, Scherchen encouraged him to perform his works in concert events that were part of

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Patrick Müller, “Ein Tessiner Dorf im Zentrum der Welt: Multimediale Arbeit in Hermann Scherchens elektroakustischem Experimentalstudio in Gravesano,” an article in *NZZ Online* [online newspaper] provided by Neue Zürcher Zeitung; available from <http://www.nzz.ch/2007/02/03/li/articleEV65J.html>; Internet; accessed 28 October 2011.

¹²⁴ Agostino Di Scipio, “Compositional Models in Xenakis’s Electroacoustic Music,” *Perspectives of New Music* 36/2 (1998): 214.

¹²⁵ Patrick Müller.

¹²⁶ Ibid.: “Die Granularsynthese nämlich lässt es zu, dass alle elementaren Parameter von Musik – Rhythmen, Tonhöhen, Klangfarben – ganz aus einer einzigen, homogenen Struktur herausentwickelt werden können; es ist dies ein Grundgedanke jeder seriellen Musik. Durch die Parallelsetzung von Licht- und Klangquanten allerdings gibt es darüber hinaus die denkbare Möglichkeit, auch homogene Übergänge zwischen Ton und Bild zu schaffen. Scherchen selbst hat dies in den sechziger Jahren in die Tat umgesetzt: Mittels Ultraviolettstrahlern beleuchtete er rotierende Kugellautsprecher – ihrerseits eine weitere Entwicklung aus dem Gravesaner Studio –, filmte die Reflexionen und synchronisierte die so entstandenen visuellen Bewegungsmuster mit der Musik von Xenakis – ein abstrakter Film gewissermaßen zu einer abstrakten Musik.”

conferences he organized at the studio. In addition, Riedl got to know Nono, Maderna, and Xenakis through Scherchen's work group.¹²⁷

With the financial support of Munich's Youth Culture Service, Riedl organized a series of new music concert events, *Neue Musik München*, in 1960. The main task of this series of events was to introduce

lesser or unknown music in Munich, new music that was ignored or hardly acknowledged by other Munich concert programmers and that included border-crossing genres (multimedia installations, new instruments, visual art, and literature) and represented international trends of more experimental directions.¹²⁸

By the time of Riedl's establishment of *Neue Musik München*, Kagel may have had already met him. In an interview, Riedl says that "there was a series of Kagel-performances" in the *Neue Musik München*, although he does not mention the exact date.¹²⁹ And yet it is certain that they struck up a friendship by the time Kagel began composing *Antithese* in the Siemens-Studio.

In a letter to John Cage, dated 12 January 1962, Kagel expressed his excitement at performing Cage's *7'7.614" for a Percussionist*¹³⁰ with a magnetic tape Kagel prepared in a concert in Munich. Six months later, Kagel wrote to Cage that he performed Cage's *Amores* (1943) and *7'7.614"* on 2 February 1962 in "Konzerte für Modern Musik, München."¹³¹ The concert that Kagel mentions in the letter seems to be that of the *Neue Musik München*.¹³² If this hypothesis is true, then Kagel and Riedl had met by November 1961, because in a letter to Cage, dated 12 November 1961, Kagel mentions that he would perform *Amores* in Bremen and Munich early in the year of 1962.

¹²⁷ Riedl, "Eine positive Symbiose," 43. Nevertheless, Riedl "distanced himself from Scherchen in later years for some reasons," which he "deeply regrets today": "Leider hielt ich aus irgendeinem Grund in den späteren Jahren zu ihm Abstand. Heute bedauere ich es tief," see *ibid.*

¹²⁸ Josef Anton Riedl, "NEUE MUSIK München," 71. The citation in English translation is from Amy C. Beal, "A Place to Ply Their Wares with Dignity: American Composer-Performers in West Germany, 1972," *The Musical Quarterly* 86/2 (2002): 340

¹²⁹ Riedl, "Eine positive Symbiose," 44. According to Riedl, he got to know Dieter Schnebel through Kagel, who strongly recommended Riedl to perform Schnebel's compositions in the series of *Neue Musik München*.

¹³⁰ It seems to be *27'10.554" for a Percussionist* (1956), which was previously titled *27'7.614" for a Percussionist*.

¹³¹ Mauricio Kagel to John Cage, 3 July 1962, original letter in typescript, John Cage Collection, Northwestern University Music Library, Evanston, Illinois.

¹³² Incidentally, there was an interesting description that Riedl "founded the concert series under the title of *Neue Musik München* at that time in collaboration with Mauricio Kagel" in online concert event information provided by the *Landeshauptstadt München Kulturreferat*. However, the author is unknown and the page has been no longer available.

At any rate, Kagel and Riedl could share their conceptions of multimedia or interdisciplinary musical composition, since Riedl's advocacy of "border-crossing genres" [*Grenzüberschreitendes*] (or transgressing art genres) for the *Neue Musik München* was exactly what Kagel was exploring with his musical aesthetic. Nicolaus A. Huber's characterization of Riedl as a multimedia composer reminds us of the *Grenzüberschreitendes* aspects of Kagel's musical composition:

All media, whether they activate the ear, eye, or sense of smell or touch [and] every interesting technical and artistic innovation, spurred Riedl's imagination and combinatorial ability to create new mixtures and striking structures of integration. He is unusually capable of taking inspirations from other artistic streams, using his sharp appreciation of art to sort and refine them, and impacting them both actively and creatively again. His versatility and sense for what was special . . . made Riedl an outsider at times.¹³³

Whereas it is not clear how close their friendship was and how long it lasted, Riedl as a composer of "sound poems" (*Lautgedichten*), organizer of the *Neue Musik*, and artistic director of the Siemens-Studio was a key person for Kagel's composition of *Antithese*. It is no surprise that *Antithese für elektronische und öffentliche Klänge* was premiered in a concert of the *Neue Musik München* on 20 March 1963.¹³⁴

Raw Concrete Materials as a Formal Yardstick

The title *Antithese for electronic and public sounds* connotes the integration of electronically generated sounds and recorded concrete sounds. Such integration had been already attempted in the Cologne *elektronische Musik* Studio, for example in Stockhausen's *Gesang der Jünglinge*. Eimert's *Epitaph für Aikichi Kuboyama* (1958-62) adopted a speaking voice that narrates an epitaph of the Japanese fisherman who died due to radioactivity from a nuclear bomb experiment in Bikini. The narration of the epitaph – the recorded concrete sound – is the main musical material of the piece. The clearly

¹³³ Nicolaus A. Huber, "Film- und Multi-Media-Komponist: Zu einigen Arbeiten von Josef Anton Riedl," in *MusikTexte: Zeitschrift für neue Musik* 3 (1984): 38: "Alle Medien, ob sie nun das Gehör, das Auge, den Geruchs- oder Tastsinn ansprechen, alle interessanten technischen und künstlerischen Neuerungen regten Riedls Phantasie und Kombinationskraft zu immer neuen Mischungen und frappierenden Integrationsgebilden an. Er ist in besonderem Maße fähig, Anregungen von anderen künstlerischen Strömungen aufzunehmen, sie mit seinem scharfen Kunstverstand zu filtern und aktiv schöpferisch auf sie wieder zurückzuwirken. Seine Vielseitigkeit und sein Sinn für das Besondere, . . . machten Riedl zeitweise zum Außenseiter."

¹³⁴ See Christiane Hillebrand, *Film als totale Komposition: Analyse und Vergleich der Filme Mauricio Kagels* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1996), 26.

identifiable quality of voice and words at the beginning is electronically distorted in phases. In terms of *sound source* in electroacoustic composition, Eimert's compositional approach in *Epitaph* may suggest that the boundary between *musique concrète* and *elektronische Musik* had become virtually meaningless in the late 1950s. However, *aesthetic* discord between these two schools still remained sharp.

With regard to this issue in relation to the composition of *Antithese*, it is worth recalling the compositional principle and procedure of Riedl's acoustic sound poems which to some extent culminated in Kagel's unique political and aesthetic standpoint. As discussed above, Kagel was severely critical of the electroacoustic debate between the two schools, rather than neutral; however, this does not mean that he abandoned all of their compositional principles. The principle and procedure of *Akustischen Lautgedichte* are in fact comparable to the structural aspect of *Antithese* since Kagel did utilize concrete and sine-tone-based sounds by juxtaposing and superimposing them in the piece, even though there is no underlying concept of "sound poems."

This material-structural aspect, which has been repeatedly mentioned by music scholars, as well as by the composer himself, is a characteristic hallmark of *Antithese*. A closer examination reveals, however, that the characteristics of *Antithese*'s sound materials and the formal structure distinguish the piece not only from contemporary electroacoustic works like *Gesang* and *Epitaph*, but also aesthetically from Riedl's *Akustischen Lautgedichte* concept. The most distinctive feature in this regard is that in *Antithese*, concrete materials appear virtually "raw," i.e., almost unmodified. This was not due to technical limitations, but rather to Kagel's specific intention to preserve the identifiability of individual sounds. In André Ruschkowski's classification of *musique concrète* works (which need not necessarily be composed in the *concrète* studio), *Antithese* belongs to a category of compositions "whose original sound recordings were used also in their initial form."¹³⁵

¹³⁵ André Ruschkowski, "Das Phantom lebt: Die Idee der Musique concrète zwischen Wunsch und Wirklichkeit," 58-62. Of three categories that the author defines, other two are "compositions whose original sound recordings are used in refined form but that are still perceivable as original recordings" and "compositions whose association-potential is operated with "abstract" sound objects in no recognizable connection with generally acknowledged situations." For the quantitative aspects of these, a number of compositions for the former is the largest, while the latter the smallest. See *ibid.*, 59-62.

Ruschkowski's statement of this "raw form" type of *concrète* composition is especially helpful to understand the distinct characteristic of concrete parts in *Antithese*:

handling of original sound recordings would be comparable, for instance, to the role of "Readymade" in the visual art of the 60s, and perhaps many pieces that fall into this category also not accidentally come from this epoch.¹³⁶

Two aspects of Ruschkowski's observation deserve special attention. First, he alleges the similarity of the "raw form" *concrète* compositional approach to a theoretical principle of surrealist work. This principle means that, by definition, *musique concrète* "had led to aesthetically crucial innovation; that is, the separation of the sound from the sound source. It was animated by the surrealist theory of 'objet trouvé'," according to Helga de la Motte-Haber.¹³⁷ A particularly significant approach in this respect is the montage technique. It underlies both *Antithese*, which contains raw form *concrète* parts, and surrealist art works, which contain "unmodified" Readymade materials. Second, "not accidentally" in Ruschkowski's statement can be reinterpreted as "intentionally," which exactly expresses Kagel's compositional scheme in *Antithese*.¹³⁸

These distinct musical features reveal that within his electroacoustic composition, Kagel's compositional intention shifted dramatically from *Transición I* to *Antithese*. As discussed above, in *Transición I* Kagel concentrated on the establishment of his own compositional theory and method, and specifically on a formal structure of musical continuity. In contrast, in *Antithese* the composer provided few details of structural method and its theoretical development. However, this does not mean that Kagel randomly mingled *concrète* and electronic sound materials without formulating a formal design in *Antithese*. The sonority as a whole gives a strong impression of musical continuity, in which Kagel's technique of sound operation comes across as more advanced and dexterous in *Antithese* than in *Transición I*. While all concrete "raw" materials of *Antithese* are immediately distinguishable from sine-wave-based sounds, the

¹³⁶ Ibid., 61.

¹³⁷ Helga de la Motte-Haber, "Von der Maschinen zur algorithmischen Struktur," in *Musik und Technik: Fünf Kongreßbeiträge und vier Seminarberichte*, ed. Helga de la Motte-Haber and Rudolf Frisius (Mainz: Schott Musik International, 1996), 83: "Die frühe Praxis der *musique concrète* . . . hatte zu ästhetisch entscheidenden Neurungen, nämlich der Trennung des Schalls von der Schallquelle geführt. Sie war angeregt durch die surrealistische Theorie des »objet trouvé«.

¹³⁸ Meanwhile, however, one has to be prudent when examining whether Kagel simply mimicked the surrealist approach in the visual art; or, whether it was a mere aiding concept to convey his musical idea in the piece.

composer smoothes transitions among them by means of an exquisite manipulation of timbre and dynamics. For instance, the concrete and electronic sounds in part resemble one another where they overlap. As a result, shifts from concrete to electronic sounds and vice versa do not create a sense of abruptness, so the transitions in *Antithese* maintain its unique sound continuum and musical continuity.

Nevertheless, different characteristics of the raw concrete sounds may seem to give a much clearer sense of “sections,” due to their remote appearances from one another. This is a big contrast to *Transición I*, in which sectional divisions are difficult to trace at first listening. In the piece, the translation theory helps to metamorphose somewhat monotonous sound materials and construct the continuous structure by overlapping or stratifying these processed sounds. On the contrary, such a translation theory seems absent in *Antithese*, suggesting that what Kagel wanted to convey through the piece no longer involved the earlier method. Rather, the composer attempted to resurrect an idea of expressiveness by which he can interweave his concrete musical idea. Materials, technical manipulation, and formal structure in *Antithese* thus aim to communicate with the audience, not to express rational theorization.¹³⁹

Because concrete meanings and situations are more perceptible than abstract electronic sounds, the unmodified concrete sounds and individual dispositions illuminate the formal structure of *Antithese*. All the recorded noises are those derived from people’s behavior, actions, and reactions – literally *public sounds* [*öffentliche Klänge*]. While dates and locations for the sampling of these sounds are unclear, Dieter Schnebel’s brief description of the piece well depicts the individual characteristics of the concrete sounds:

The public makes a noise there; one hears the audience at the beginning of a concert, in the break, also in fury; the yelling crowd in a soccer stadium; the uproar and enthusiasm at a party meeting; but also the muffled talk in a distinguished manner at a cocktail party.¹⁴⁰

Antithese places sounds of the audience at the concert hall and the muffled talk at the cocktail party at the beginning and ending of the piece, respectively. This not only

¹³⁹ In this respect Heile’s remark in this respect is indicative: “there is nothing abstract and ‘technical’ about the piece [*Antithese*]; on the contrary, it is unashamedly physical, exploiting the associative and narrative potential of everyday noise,” see Heile, 45.

¹⁴⁰ Schnebel, *Mauricio Kagel: Musik Theater Film*, 103: “Da rumort eine Öffentlichkeit: man hört das Publikum bei Beginn eines Konzertes, in der Pause, auch in Wut; die johlende Meute eines Fußballplatzes; dierandalierende Begeisterungeiner Parteiversammlung; aber auch die distinguiert gedämpfte Unterhaltung einer Cocktailparty.”

outlines the entire formal structure, but also frames a specific image; a musical event at the concert hall.

In a sketch of *Antithese*, Kagel itemizes six distinct public sounds: 1) applause, 2) yell, 3) whistle, 4) cough, 5) hall (atmosphere), and 6) blowing one's nose. Furthermore, each category contains two or three variations, except for 2), as follows:

Figure 3.3. Classification of public sounds and their variations¹⁴¹

- 1) Applause – half-hearted, normal, agitated
- 2) Yell
- 3) Whistle – single, a few, furious uproar
- 4) Cough – separated, fit of coughing
- 5) Hall atmosphere – little, big hall
- 6) Blowing one's nose – single, tumultuous

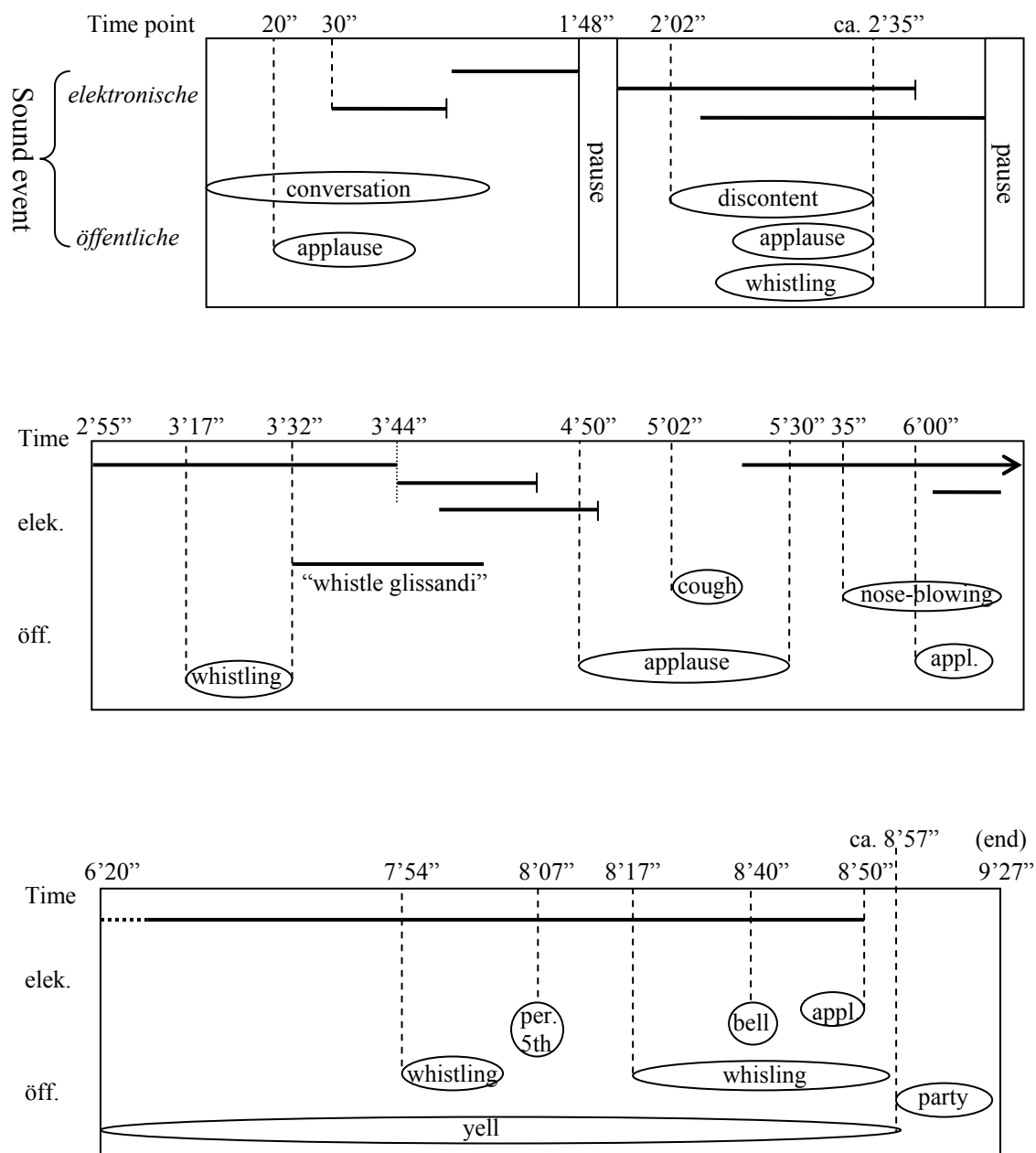
The selection of concrete materials and their variations ensure that Kagel had a specific compositional plan of staging scenes of the musical event within the music of *Antithese*. In order to realize the virtual staging, therefore, it was necessary to leave the concrete sounds unmodified, rather than to transform them as Schaeffer articulates in his *concrète* theory. Despite the intermingling of *concrète* and electronic sounds, which are overlapped and superimposed throughout the piece, the unmodified sounds preserve contextual cohesion in *Antithese*. This contextual cohesion was indeed necessary to enable Kagel's interrogation of the presentation and perception of new music from the perspective of a "social critic in music," rather than in terms of the methodological compositional procedures of the electroacoustic piece. It is a unique aspect of *Antithese* compared to electroacoustic works that consolidate *concrète* and electronic sound materials.

Disposition of Public Sounds and Sectionalization

In order to realize the consistency of the virtual event taking place at the concert hall, Kagel deliberately arranged a series of public sounds. Figure 3.4 below is a listening guide based on the recording *Antithese, 1962 Komposition für elektronische und öffentliche Klänge* compiled in the music CD *Siemens-Studio für elektronische Musik*.¹⁴²

¹⁴¹ See *Sammlung Mauricio Kagel*, Paul Sacher Stiftung, Basel. The original sketch is in German, see appendix D.

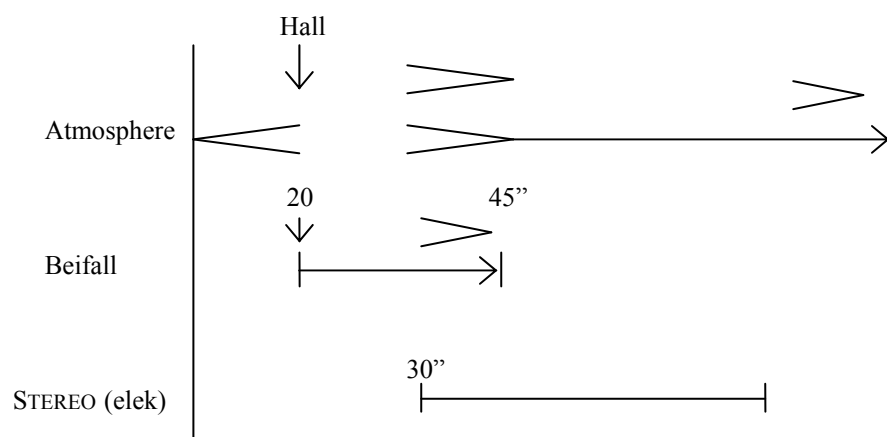
¹⁴² *Siemens Kultur Programm*, no serial number, 1998, compact disc.

Figure 3.4. Listening Guide indexed to *Antithese*

The aforementioned beginning part corresponds to an event that usually occurs before a musical performance starts: the sound of the audience's trivial chats followed by their applause. Kagel converts this public sound (prologue to the performance) into a musical part of *Antithese* as an introduction (beginning of the performance). Close listening reveals that the sounds of the chatting and applause emerge not in succession, but

overlap; thus, the former still remains after the latter fades away. This corresponds to Kagel's sketch for the formal structure (see Figure 3.5 below).

Figure 3.5. Reproduction of structural plan for *Antithese*, beginning, extracted from Kagel's graphic sketch¹⁴³



Shortly before the sound of applause fades out, an electronic sound begins in overlap with the “Atmosphere” (chatting noise) sounds at ca. 0’30” (see Figure 3.5). It is striking that the timbre of the electronic sound consists of plosive sounds that resemble the concrete clapping sounds. With the overlap, the “applause can mutate into the ‘technical,’ metallic crackling tone.”¹⁴⁴ It is an illustrative example of smooth transition from a concrete to electronic sound.

In the “introduction,” the initial sound of the audience’s conversation (atmosphere) lasts about one minute and twenty seconds. During the event, a few distinct electronic sounds occur and take over the sound event from the fading out confab sound. After approximately two seconds of a “general pause” (ca. 1’48” – 1’50”) a somewhat aggressive sound commences that consists of different types of electronic sounds. Together with the higher volume and sound density, it produces an abrupt tension in contrast to the serene introduction. As if reacting to the agitated sound space, public

¹⁴³ Mauricio Kagel, *Beifall*, D (formal sketch) by Kagel, *Sammlung Mauricio Kagel*, Paul Sacher Stiftung, Basel. The “Atmosphere” indicates chatting noise, “Beifall” applause, and “STEREO (elek)” electronically generated sound.

¹⁴⁴ Lothar Prox, “Musik und Regie: Mauricio Kagel ‘Antithese’,” 164: “Klatschen kann so zum ‘technischen,’ metallisch prasselnden Ton mutieren.”

sounds of discontent (2'02'') overlap with whistling (2'16''), and eventually with applause (2'18''). During this phase, a chaotic sound space results from the fusion of the complex of electronic sounds and the multilayered concrete sounds. It thus creates a high degree of sound density in the first half of the piece.

The sound of uproar calms with the diminuendo and then disappears (ca. 2'35''), while the electronic sound part continues, but with much less musical tension. The loudness of the remaining electronic sound diminishes gradually and fades away, followed by another short general pause (ca. 2'53'' – 2'54''). After the beginning of a new section that starts with electronic sound materials (from ca. 2'55''), mild concrete whistling sounds occur (ca. 3'17'' – 3'32''), immediately followed by another larger unit of artificial “whistle glissando” sounds, which Kagel produces electronically (from ca. 3'32''). As the artificial whistle glissandi take over the main musical line, another smooth transition from concrete to electronic sounds is effected. Like the initial transition, it is notable that Kagel's compositional technique of musical continuity allows him to manipulate the sound materials although they are heterogeneous in origin. Kagel forms musical continuity between different characters of electronic sounds as well. During the presence of the artificial whistle glissandi, another unit of electronic sound characters converges with them. Both units are distinguishable in timbre, but a sound metamorphosis of the latter shapes a grandiose glissando line and it seamlessly becomes the main tune, taking over from the artificial whistles.

After the complex of glissando sounds and other shapes of electronic sound in various timbres, an applause sound occurs in an intermittent fashion (4'50'' – 5'30''). During this *concrète* sound event, a small unit of cough sounds is superimposed (5'02'' – 5'09''). In the background of electronic glissando sounds, which form long, sustained ascending and descending movements, a somewhat harsh noise of nose-blowing intervenes and lasts about twenty seconds (5'35'' – 5'55''). After this sound event, electronic sounds increase in density (from ca. 5'55''), intermingled with a sound unit of concrete applause (6'00'' – 6'13'').

In the last three minutes, *Antithese* constructs the final climax with formidable musical tension. A long-lasting yell sound fades in at very low volume and gradually increases, such that it takes a few seconds before its sound character becomes

recognizable. This concrete sound lies in the background and a variety of electronic sounds unfolds over it. However, this balance of concrete and electronic sounds alternates at certain points. When Kagel adds an agitated whistling sound to the layered concrete and electronic sounds (7'53''), the concrete yell sound abruptly gains a higher volume. The discontented whistling sound remains until ca. 8'04'', but the yell sound reverts to the background. Then the electronic sounds become more audible again. Following a distinct sound unit of perfect-fifth tremolos reminiscent of a string instrument¹⁴⁵ (ca. 8'07''), an applause sound recurs (8'12''), along with an agitated whistling sound at high volume (8'17'') and a crescendo of the concrete yell sound. This multilayered structure of concrete sounds creates the highest degree of tension.

The massing of mixed public sounds, which initially seems to play the dominant role, is nevertheless interrupted again by a unit of electronic sounds in high volume (ca. 8'30''). The bell sound suddenly occurs (8'40'') in short duration, as if it were a signal of finalizing the electronic sound part. In fact, the volume and density of electronic sound start to diminish right after the signal and the electronic sound ends ten seconds later (8'50''). Finally, uproar and whistling sounds at the highest volume fill the sound space and form the final climax of the piece. This is followed by the muffled sounds of cocktail party conversation. Thus, in the last three minutes of *Antithese*, various characteristic materials of public sound play an important role, especially in the composition of the climactic part. At the same time, a variety of electronic sounds and their intermingling with these concrete sounds lead to the climax.

Even though the advanced technical equipment in the Siemens-Studio made Kagel's sound production of *Antithese* possible, the sophisticated musical tension would never have been created without his structural plan and studies of technical devices.¹⁴⁶ In his sketches of formal structure for *Antithese*, Kagel divides the piece into five sections. Kagel's graphic sketches of the formal design suggest that the sectionalization is determined by the disposition of electronic sounds. More specifically, the beginning of a section coincides with the beginning of an electronic sound unit; otherwise, the ending of

¹⁴⁵ It is unclear whether the sound was produced by recording or by electronic operation. In Kagel's sketch of structural scheme for *Antithese*, there is no note for it, while there is a note for the bell sound that is mentioned in the following paragraph.

¹⁴⁶ Also, richness of sound space in *Antithese* might not have been realized without having the experience of composing *Transición I*.

the same or another electronic sound unit can signal the end of a section. This is not true of the concrete sounds, which barely affect the formal structure of *Antithese*, especially in terms of the sectionalization. Based on the sketches, an approximate formal structure of the piece and contents of concrete public sounds in the individual sections are as follows:

- First section (or Introduction): duration 1'50"; atmosphere and applause
- Second section: duration 1'05"; yell, whistle, and applause
- Third section: duration 0'49"; whistle
- Fourth section: duration 1'26"; applause, atmosphere, and cough
- Fifth section: duration 4'17"; nose-blowing, yell, applause, whistle, muffled talk

The formal design – and especially the durations – above are provisional, since the total duration noted in the sketch, 7'50", does not correspond to that of the final realization of *Antithese*: 9'27". Hence, most items of the duration above are based on my listening analysis together with Kagel's formal sketch.

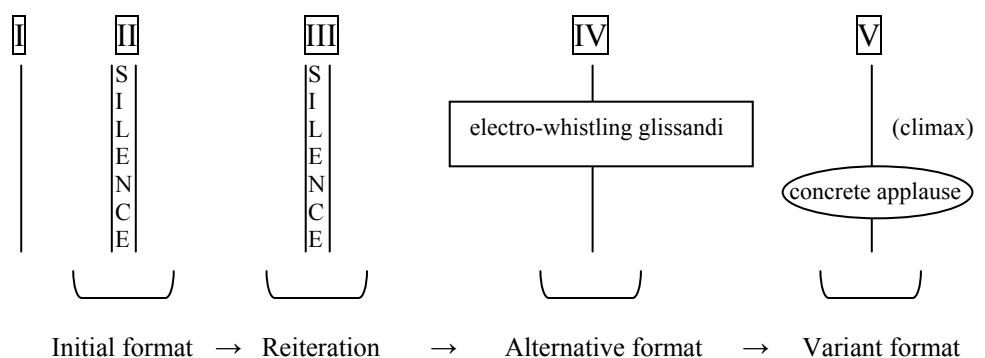
The division between the first two sections is not difficult to identify due to the "general pause" – silence – that is a distinct indicator. By contrast, identification of division indicators in the remaining sections – particularly between the third and fourth sections and the fourth and fifth sections – requires a closer observation of the musical structure and contents. According to Kagel's formal sketches, the third section ends shortly after the appearance of the artificial whistle glissandi generated by technical equipment. However, in the actual realization of *Antithese*, this electronic pseudo-whistling sound unit does not end at the end point of the section, but rather extends into the following section. During this particular sound event, a cluster of short electronic noise sounds, which contrast to the electronically simulated whistle glissandi, emerges in an unmistakably lower register. This new sound unit indeed indicates the beginning of the fourth section. It may be hard to pinpoint the division between the third and fourth sections at first hearing, since the structure of the sectional division is in part different from that of the first two sections; no silence indicates the division, thus defying the listener's expectation of sectional beginning and ending. Yet, careful listening reveals that the electro-whistling sound unit plays a transitional role between these sections and thus can obscure the beginning of the fourth section even as it leads into it.

The division between the fourth and final sections is similarly perplexing. The unit of concrete applause sounds, which occurs near the end of the fourth section, also extends over a division line that indicates the beginning of the final section in Kagel's formal

sketch. Like the electro-whistling sound at the end of the third section, the sound unit of recorded applause functions as a transitional bridge between these sections. Presumably, the final section thus begins with a wave-like electronic sound in low volume, which emerges right after the coughing sound disappears.

Throughout the music of *Antithese*, electronic sounds form the structural backbone – more specifically, the sectionalization – and correspond exactly to Kagel's sketch of the formal plan. In addition, the overall structure in terms of sectionalization shows his formal variation technique.

Figure 3.6. Formal variation in the sectionalization of *Antithese*



The sectional-formal variation illustrated in Figure 3.6 shows a process of building tension towards the final climactic point. It also shows contrasting formal characteristics: silence as an indicator the section's end for the initial format and its reiteration and no silence for the alternative and variant formats.

The first and second sections contrast in character. In the former, the structural design of sound materials is quite simple and thus the degree of sound density and musical tension is low. By contrast, the individual musical materials of the second section – both the concrete and electronic – already have a higher degree of musical tension. In addition, the multilayered structure of these materials not only heightens the tension, but also helps to reach the first climax of the piece.

Concerning the third and fourth sections, one can hear a similar contrast to that existing between the first and second. The third section seems to focus on establishing itself as a whistle section, where Kagel highlights the timbre transition between the concrete and electronic whistling sounds, as discussed above. Almost all the musical

materials in this section have less musical tension in themselves and the whole section is structurally uncomplicated as well. By contrast, the fourth section contains diverse materials and its structural design is not as simple as that of the previous section. It is noteworthy that in most of the fourth section, electronic sounds intensify the musical space and tension. Concrete sounds in the section, however, relax the musical tension: sparse applause, serene chatting (atmosphere), and a few cough sounds of a single person, all of which are of low volume.

The final section embraces nearly half the piece. It also exhibits the most complex structure and produces the highest degree of musical tension. Kagel deliberately designs the formal structures and material contents of the first four sections to lead up the final climactic section. It is also the climactic point where Kagel's musical thought based on his critical observation of new music from a socio-psychological perspective becomes most apparent. Particularly, the aggressive dynamic force of the final section forces the listener to consider that the series of public sounds throughout the piece never merely forms an elaborate patchwork with electronic sounds, but preserves the cohesion of the virtual event Kagel composed. This narrative cohesion encourages the listener to contemplate what Kagel wanted to convey through the distinct sound materials, structure, and soundscape. Nevertheless, one may ask why Kagel interweaves an audience's roar of rage – that is, a scandal – in the music of *Antithese* and what the underlying concept is. Kagel's motivation for and intention in the musical depiction of scandal becomes clear in examining his compositional technique of “montage” and psychologization.

Montage Technique and Psychologization in Antithese

In *Antithese*, Kagel achieves the representation of a scandalous musical concert by means of a montage technique. Kagel had already employed montage in earlier works, but with utterly different approaches from that of *Antithese*. *Sur scène*, Kagel's first work of Instrumental Theater, for instance, “rests on the montage of musicological and musico-critical texts that come from the time of the composition and in part the past (critical reviews of Beethoven, Chopin, or Reger).”¹⁴⁷ The montage strategy for the texts, which a

¹⁴⁷ Werner Klüppelholz, *Über Mauricio Kagel*, 67: “Es [*Sur scène*] beruht auf der Montage musikwissenschaftlicher und musikkritischer Texte, die der Zeit der Komposition, zum Teil auch der Vergangenheit entstammen (Verrisse der Musik Beethovens, Chopins oder Regers).”

narrator is supposed to read aloud, is in essence to “make these statements nonsense” with the “parody effect” yielded by changes in register, speed, dynamics, timbre and phonetic sound.¹⁴⁸ The juxtaposition to one another of unrelated texts eventually forms the entity of the speech part, but the contextual inconsistency throughout the piece results from the structure of the composite illustration. Kagel’s montage technique in *Sur scène* thus serves to incorporate his sarcastic humor into the piece: another significant feature in Kagel’s work.

While the montage principle is present in both *Antithese* and *Sur scène* as part of the compositional design, its features are clearly distinguishable in these works. Although neither work is serialist, the parameters to which Kagel applies montage technique in these pieces further clarifies their distinction; he montages the text of the narrator’s part in *Sur scène* and the concrete public sounds in *Antithese*. By means of montage, materials in *Sur scène* were, on the one hand, collected and decomposed – and partially deformed as well – and then recomposed. As a consequence, the final form, which one can describe as a musical caricature, enabled Kagel to satirize music critics. On the other hand, the collected materials for *Antithese* seem to have undergone little decomposition or deformation. Instead, public sounds are preserved as raw materials. Therefore, the compositional procedure of montaging public sounds in *Antithese* can be conceived as “composing-out” [*auskomponiert*],¹⁴⁹ rather than “recomposing.” These contrasting examples demonstrate that how Kagel applies montage technique to a given piece depends utterly on the concept and the underlying aesthetic inherent in it. This aspect reaffirms a significant trait of Kagel’s philosophy of composition: as scholars have admirably pointed out, Kagel never rigidly codified his compositional techniques. He employed montage principles in later works as well, but he never reused the approach he took in *Antithese*. Essentially, he defined the technique but preserved flexibility in terms of application. Flexibility – both theoretical and practical – is indeed Kagel’s compositional hallmark.

According to Kagel, “in general, acoustic ambience presents not a synthesis but a fragile continuum” and the music of *Antithese* was an “attempt to consider this continuum

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Dieter Schnebel, *Mauricio Kagel: Musik Theater Film*, 105.

itself as context.”¹⁵⁰ In light of this “contextual continuum,” Kagel’s use of montage technique for the public sounds in *Antithese* constitutes a narrative of the concert event. In the serene first section, the conversation of the audience and their applause exhibit an unequivocal image of the prologue to a concert. In the second section, however, the listeners in the music jeer at the mixture of electronic sounds offensive to their ears. During the commotion, some applaud. In the third “whistle” section, several listeners whistle to express their discontent with the music, but the jeering is much milder than before. A group of public sounds – applause, conversation, and coughing – at the end of the fourth section evokes in us (i.e., the real listeners) an image of an intermission in the concert. In this hypothetical image, sounds of nose-blowing and applause in the final section imply that the sound of the intermission extends over the division between the fourth and final sections. After the applause, the virtual audience starts to smolder with displeasure at the music. Some of them criticize the music with aggressive whistling while others mumble; those who clap their hands do so sarcastically. These sounds are an omen for the subsequent burst of scandal. Now that the people in the audience can no longer control their feelings of dissatisfaction with the music, the sound space in the concert hall is filled with their uproar. Finally, the sound of the tumult smoothly shifts into the noise of the post-concert conversation with some drinks.

In some ways Kagel’s choice and arrangement of heterogeneous sound sources in *Antithese* is reminiscent of a principle of montage structure in works by *musique concrète* composers. According to Rudolf Frisius, montage is an “interconnection of heterogeneous but, in individual characteristic traits, kindred sounds.”¹⁵¹ In the realm of *musique concrète*, Frisius further explains, “compositional coherence results from the incorporation of sounds into montage structure or from the polyphonic superimposition of various sound layers.”¹⁵² An application of montage structure to an electroacoustic

¹⁵⁰ Mauricio Kagel, “Antithese: Spiel für einen Darsteller mit elektronische + öffentlichen Klängen” in *Das filmische Werk I: 1965-1985*, 17: “Die akustische Umgebung stellt im allgemeinen keine Synthese sondern ein brüchiges Kontinuum dar. In ‘Antithese’ ging es in der musikalischen Komposition um den Versuch, dieses Kontinuum selbst als Kontext zu betrachten.”

¹⁵¹ Rudolf Frisius, “Musique concrète,” in *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, ed. Ludwig Finscher (Bärenreiter, 1997): 1838: “Verbindungen heterogener, aber in einzelnen Merkmalen verwandter Klänge.”

¹⁵² Ibid., 1841: “Kompositorische Zusammenhänge ergeben sich in der Musique concrète . . . aus der Vereinigung von Klängen zu Montagestrukturen oder aus der polyphonen Überlagerung verschiedener Klangsichten.”

composition, regardless of the extent to which the composer incorporates Schaeffer's *concrète* theory into the piece, aimed primarily to explore a new sound characteristic and its micro- and macro-structures. For this reason, even Boulez's compositional process in two *Études sérielles* can be regarded as "serially constructed micro-montage."¹⁵³ By contrast, the montage structure in *Antithese* had nothing to do with a serial organization (nor with the micro-structures of the concrete sound materials), but rather dealt with contextual consistency in the sense of narrative cohesion. In this respect, while the montage structure corresponded technically to the paradigmatic procedure presented by Frisius, it enabled Kagel to achieve virtual theatricalization in the realm of electroacoustic composition – a pioneering model.

The theatricalization with montage structure in *Antithese* represents his criticism of new music at that time, as does *Sur scène*. As discussed above, however, *Antithese* tends to unify the heterogeneous characteristics of concrete materials, whereas *Sur scène* attempts to deform the extant materials and then reform them within the structure as a whole. The montage structure in *Sur scène* thus expresses Kagel's view of critics who denounce new music, tacitly deriding them for attaching the greatest importance to traditional music. The textual inconsistency and unintelligibility as a result of montage composition of the deformed texts are indeed a distinctly sarcastic means for Kagel to criticize these critics. In other words, the montage technique in *Sur scène* functions compositionally as a reformation of the decomposed materials but aesthetically as a unique Kagelian satire of the critics of new music.

In *Antithese*, the concept of criticism represented by the montage structure goes further. Kagel's criticism is two-fold. First, it decries what had been lost or neglected in the course of the development of electroacoustic composition – specifically, the disappearance of the visual element, since no instrumentalist is needed in an electroacoustic musical concert. Second, and more importantly, it implicitly challenges social norms of musical taste which tend to exclude unheard-of new music with a clichéd question: is it still music? Kagel reacts to the question with a counter-question: what is music? He confronts critics and his audience with this question not by making them face it directly, but by simulating how they are likely to behave in the face of a particular kind

¹⁵³ Ibid., 1842: "seriell konstruierten Mikromontagen."

of new music – electroacoustic composition. That is, Kagel’s criticism and satire in *Antithese* do not merely criticize musico-sociological problems. Rather, they pose a meaningful (although unanswered) question about the definition of music – what music is – beyond the common question with the implicit negation of the postwar avant-garde’s unconventional music – whether it is still music. To address these issues, the montage composition plays a vital role not only in realizing the virtual theatricalization, but also in psychologizing the listener into thinking about Kagel’s counter-question in *Antithese*.

In this regard, public sounds are a crucial component of the piece. Notably, not all the public sounds were recorded in an auditorium or concert hall. As Kagel himself describes, and as Schnebel’s list indicates, the group of recorded sounds includes those of sports spectators and cocktail party visitors.¹⁵⁴ Moreover, sounds of coughing and nose-blowing did not necessarily have to be recorded in the auditorium; it was possible to record them in the studio. In the montage structure of *Antithese*, the harsh noises of the sports fans play a particular role: they stand for scandal in *Antithese*. While the sound characteristics share the emotional aspects of scandal in a musical performance, the sound source itself is far from a musical content. Nevertheless, one can conceive of the sound as the rage of an audience in a musical concert, due to the deliberate order of the concrete sound materials. In other words, Kagel’s montage technique crystallized the narrativity of a series of events in the performance.

Within the montage structure, Kagel succeeds in transforming the sounds of the sports enthusiasts seething with rage into that of scandal at a musical concert. In other words, in the well-planned series of distinct sounds, the *real* listener may hardly imagine that the original sounds were recorded at a soccer game. The chatting and applause sounds at the beginning of the piece suggest the concept of an imaginary musical concert, making it logical for the listener to assume that subsequent concrete sound materials derive from the same venue. What is likely to happen at the moment of musical climax in *Antithese* is therefore a transformation of cognitive content, in which the listener unconsciously makes or preserves a cohesive image of the concert event based on her/his own musical experience. For Kagel, montage in *Antithese* was thus a necessary

¹⁵⁴ Mauricio Kagel, “Über das Schauen des Zuhörers,” *Revista de Letras: Universidad de Puerto Rico en mayagüez* 3 (1969): 393.

compositional procedure for formulating a structural layout of the particular narrative, which to a large extent pinpoints a fictitious scandal.

Kagel's montage technique serves to create a psychological effect on the listener, in that it seeks to shape perceptions based on experiences and assumptions about music and musical performances. What is clear is that this psychologization does not intend to shock the audience. Rather, it induces the audience to re-examine those perceptions and assumptions about what music is. The montage composition in *Antithese* forms the constellation of recorded concrete sounds, which makes the individual materials – public noises – explicitly musical. In other words, with the montage technique, Kagel proves that a mere noise can become musical material through the way the sound is used and structured with others. The montage structure that consists in the concatenation of the sounds and the contextual consistency of the virtual electroacoustic concert are also crucial to the psychologization. Thus, the inseparable relationship among Kagel's materialization of public noises, montage composition, and psychologization is a remarkable tripartite aspect of *Antithese*.

Scandal as Compositional Material

Beneath the montage structure and the series of sound continua, in which the distinct concrete and electronic sounds “move back and forth,”¹⁵⁵ Kagel specifically thematized scandal in a new music concert with the aim of asking the what-is-music question for the listener. At the same time, this was also an important (and perpetual) question for Kagel, derived from what he observed and experienced in the rapid and diverse growth of postwar avant-garde compositional approaches. For this reason, he conceptualized scandal as a concrete musical material, not as an artificial sound effect, in composing *Antithese*. In other words, Kagel's intention of integration of scandal into *Antithese* was not to make the piece scandalous, nor to entertain the audience, but to satirize scandal and its social factors.

¹⁵⁵ Schnebel, *Mauricio Kagel: Musik Theater Film*, 104: “›Antithèse‹ bewegt sich hin und her zwischen der, . . . unveränderlichen ‘musique concrète’ der öffentlichen Klänge und den künstlichen, durchaus verfügbaren Klängen der elektronischer Musik.”

An essential and general definition of scandal by Timo Airaksinen – “a scandal is always a sensation”¹⁵⁶ – is a useful starting point for considering scandal in music. According to Airaksinen, the general definition of sensation is “something we perceive, what we have a sensation of, but which exceeds the limits which perception sets on its object.”¹⁵⁷ In the context of music, these brief but precise definitions of scandal and sensation, as well as their inseparability, can be represented in terms of cause and effect: the cause consists of various elements up to the moment a sensation occurs and the effect appears as a scandal. More specifically, a shock effect given by a musical presentation produces a sensation that the acoustic of the work exceeds one’s capability to identify it as music. The sensation giving rise to a scandal in avant-garde music was thus an unexpected and negative musical experience of the listener, who only expected to hear conventional – that is, tonally harmonious – music.

For this reason, scandal in music occurred as a particular phenomenon in the concert hall where the premiere of a radical new piece took place. When the extremely unconventional musical contents and acoustic space were unintelligible to people in the audience, they became insurgents and the concert of new music was interrupted by their negative, harsh, and vehement reactions. The commotion in the audience, created by their complaining, shouting, hissing, and whistling, no longer allowed the piece to preserve the form of musical acoustics that the composer originally intended. The underlying cause of such reactions was derived from the audience’s immediate conviction that “it is no longer music.” This is a basic sensation that triggers a physical reaction of the audience. The scandal was thus an offensive confirmation of the “scandalous” non-musical piece. In other words, the musical piece went far beyond the audience’s definition of music. Conversely, however, scandals in music that occurred in the twentieth century were also indicators of musical development. That is to say, a scandal signified the evolution of musical boundaries.

A well-known example of a scandalous premiere is Stravinsky’s *Le sacre du printemps*, in 1913 Paris, where a riot broke out due to the audience’s incapability of understanding “its rhythmic essence, hammered out by the orchestra with unrestrained

¹⁵⁶ Timo Airaksinen, “Scandal as Relic” in *Scandal and Its Theory*, ed. Manfred J. Holler (Munich: Accedo, 1999), 19.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 19.

percussive intensity.”¹⁵⁸ Shortly after the beginning of the concert, the people in the audience were no longer listeners; rather they became hysterical protesters who were “for and against shouting at one another in heated debate,” and the “noise level was so high that most of the music remained inaudible.”¹⁵⁹ This anecdote, which has been referred to repeatedly in discussions regarding compositional innovation in the twentieth century, made the piece the most typical of *succès de scandale*: the emergence of positive regard for a musical piece, despite the utterly uncomfortable situation for the composer and performer(s).¹⁶⁰

Scandal seems to have happened more frequently in the premieres of postwar avant-garde music due to the unprecedented acoustics created by the highly complex or experimental compositional approaches. At the German premiere of Edgar Varèse’s *Ionisation* in Darmstadt in 1950, for instance, “the audience booed and hissed during the performance,” according to Amy C. Beal’s interviews with Heinz-Klaus Metzger and Dieter Schnebel.¹⁶¹ In the first half of 1950s, Stockhausen faced several scandals, when his new compositions provoked audiences at their premieres. Karl H. Wörner briefly reports on a few that arose from Stockhausen’s first integral serialist works *Kreuzspiel* and *Klavierstück VI*. For the former, when the work was premiered at the Darmstadt Ferienkurs in 1951, the audience reacted with “a lively protest”; the performance of the latter at the same venue in 1955 “was drowned out by laughter and protect.”¹⁶²

¹⁵⁸ Robert P. Morgan, *A History of Music Style in Modern Europe and America* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1991), 95.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 95-96.

¹⁶⁰ One must, however, bear in mind that this scandal seems not to have emerged naturally, but rather to have been planned. According to Richard Taruskin, *Stravinsky and the Russian Traditions: A Biography of the Works Through Mavra*, vol. II (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 1006-1007, the scandal “is one of the most appallingly . . . overdocumented events in the history of music.” Taruskin’s careful research reveals two problematic points: “[f]irst, the role of Stravinsky’s music in bringing about the scandal has been systematically exaggerated” by many critical reviews of the premiere; “[s]econd, the stormy response had been manipulated and to a large extent provoked by Diaghilev; Cocteau was quite right to observe that “the audience played the role that had been written for it.” Despite this fact, I intentionally refer to the stereotypical side of the scandal of the *sacre*, because Kagel mentioned this scandal in comparison to his own on occasion of the premiere of his *Sonant*. . . (1960) in a letter to Tudor, to which is referred below, and seems not to have known the fact that the *sacre* scandal had been to some extent planned.

¹⁶¹ Amy C. Beal, “Negotiating Cultural Allies: American Music in Darmstadt, 1946-1956,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 53/1 (2000): 117, footnote.

¹⁶² Karl H. Wörner, “Current Chronicle,” *The Musical Quarterly* 46/2, Special Issue: Problems of Modern Music. The Princeton Seminar in Advanced Musical Studies (1960): 273.

Pierre Boulez's intricate serial piece *Polyphonie X* (1950-51) for 18 solo instruments experienced a disastrous premiere at the Donaueschingen Festival, the oldest festival for New Music, in 1951. Although not as violent as that of *Le sacre du printemps*, the premiere brought such a scandalous reaction that, according to Everett Helm, "part of the audience saw fit to hiss and cat-call."¹⁶³ Helm's critical review of *Polyphonie X* on this occasion reports what the "part of the audience" felt; more specifically, the cause of a sensation they had, which included the reviewer himself:

This work raises the question: how advanced can one be and still write music? There was no doubt in anyone's mind that this Frenchman was very advanced. . . . Compared to Boulez, Schoenberg is an old fuddy-duddy. . . . I regret to say that I cannot take this music seriously. It is very funny for a time; one hears the most remarkable, destructive sounds issuing from the small orchestra. But it soon becomes deadly boring, being ice-coldly cerebral. It seems as though it would be no trick at all to write this kind of "plink-plink, boom-boom" music.¹⁶⁴

After a while, Boulez withdrew *Polyphonie X* from his oeuvre due to his self-criticism on the piece, not due to the scandalous event at the premiere, from which he was absent. For Boulez, the most important matter was the establishment of a rational serial approach and thus the audience's reaction hardly mattered to him.

Admitting that *Polyphonie X* was "too exclusively governed by theoretical problems," Boulez later explained that "the principles and ideas of the work were well directed but their exploitation was too schematic to be effective."¹⁶⁵ The piece was perhaps not as sophisticated as another serial piece, *Structures Ia* for two pianos, which Boulez composed in almost the same period. *Structures Ia* was a milestone in the development of serialism, a piece of "generalized serialism" that served "the principle for all the elements of sound phenomenon, that is to unify and universalize the theoretical principle of the series."¹⁶⁶ Notwithstanding its inefficient generalization or rationalization of integral serialism, the "interesting failure"¹⁶⁷ of *Polyphonie X* was an indispensable

¹⁶³ Everett Helm, "Current Chronicle," *The Musical Quarterly* 38/1 (1952): 143.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid. In a recording of the premiere at the Donaueschingen Festival in 1951, the noise of the audience's commotion and confusion is audible, see *Boulez: Orchestral Works & Chamber Music*, Col Legno WWE 1CD 20509.

¹⁶⁵ Pierre Boulez, "An Interview with Dominique Jameux," 200.

¹⁶⁶ Boulez, "Series," in *Stocktakings*, 235. In M. J. Grant, review of *Wege zum musikalischen Strukturalismus: René Leibowitz, Pierre Boulez, John Cage und die Webern-Rezeption in Paris um 1950*, by Inge Kovács, *Music and Letters* 87/2 (2006): 347, she asserts that *Structures Ia* "certainly marked an incredibly important stage in [Boulez's] development."

¹⁶⁷ Paul Attinello, review of *Orchestral Music, Notes*, Second Series 55/4 (1999): 1015-1016.

stepping stone toward crystallizing the serial principle in *Structures Ia*. Josef Häusler evaluates the piece as a “key work” in Boulez’s compositional development and claims that “the Donaueschingen scandal [thus] proved itself as ‘*Succès scandaleux*’.”¹⁶⁸

Finally, the most arresting scandal at a musical concert in the 1950s is perhaps the European premiere of John Cage’s *Concert for Piano and Orchestra* (1957-58), his first musical composition for orchestra. The premiere took place in Cologne in 1958,¹⁶⁹ the same year of Cage’s first appearance at the *Darmstädter Ferienkurse* as a lecturer. Each instrumentalist had her/his own part written in quasi-graphic notation and had to decipher, interpret, and then perform it. In addition, there was no score, which was Cage’s conceptual framework for the piece. Thus, the role of the conductor for this particular piece was not to coordinate the individual parts, but only to indicate “the acceleration or slowing of the course of time with arm movements similar to those of the hands of a clock.”¹⁷⁰ These peculiar features resulted merely from Cage’s intention to represent his musical idea, not to aim at creating a shock for the audience.

The performance at the premiere yielded an unpleasant and chaotic sound effect and the audience was in a state of shock. Indeed, the piece was unbearable not only for the audience, but also for the performers. According to Ulrich Dibelius, “the orchestral musicians began to joke more and more and became engaged in tomfoolery”; as a result, “the performance ended unexpectedly in complete silliness and hilarity.”¹⁷¹ Such an insulting reaction of the audience and performers signified that similar to *Polyphonie X*’s case, Cage’s musical idea underlying the bizarre way of *Concert*’s presentation was not taken into consideration. Instead, the concept and the resultant sound and visual immediately provoked the sensation of refusal and aversion.

¹⁶⁸ Josef Häusler, “Schlüsselstationen, Schlüsselwerke – P. B. in Deutschland,” in *Pierre Boulez: Eine Festschrift zum 60. Geburtstag am 26. März 1985*, ed. Josef Häusler (Wien: Universal Edition, 1985), 55: “. . . der Donaueschinger Skandal erwies sich als ‘*Succès scandaleux*’.”

¹⁶⁹ The American premiere already took place in May in the same year by David Tudor, piano, and Merce Cunningham, conducting.

¹⁷⁰ Hans G. Helms and John Cage, “Reflections of a Progressive Composer on a Damaged Society,” *October* 82 (1997): 78.

¹⁷¹ Ulrich Dibelius, “John Cage oder gibt es kritische Musik?” *Melos* 35/10 (1968): 378-379. The citation in English translation is from Ian Pepper, “From the ‘Aesthetics of Indifference’ to ‘Negative Aesthetics’: John Cage and Germany 1958-1972,” *October* 82 (1997): 37, footnote. The rebellious behavior of the musicians and its detailed background are also found in Amy C. Beal, *New Music, New Allies*, 100.

Although the type and degree of tension of scandals illustrated above were different from one another, the common feature was that these composers' radically new, complex, and at times experimental compositional methods and the resultant musical sound spaces could be too progressive for the audiences. No matter how violent and notorious the scandal was, however, such works contributed to the compositional and aesthetic development of postwar avant-garde music. Yet, the phenomenon of scandal in music exposed an underlying problem in the musical scene of the mid-twentieth century. As the examples of scandal given above suggest, along with the fact that postwar avant-garde composers came to prominence as standard-bearers of contemporary music, the distance between them and their audience grew.

By the 1950s, it was no longer uncommon that the presentation of a new piece placed heavy demands on the audience. In the confusion and irritation such demands produced, however, it was not always easy for audiences to adjust their views and accept the new music as music. Karl H. Wörner's statement is suggestive in this respect:

In the 1920s, New Music made its way free with élan; today it attempts to promote and convince by the idea. The autogenic disposal of my generation saw the events after 1945 always in parallel to those after the First World War. We had to change our ideas. We now know that New Music cannot be compared to those changes around the 1920s.¹⁷²

Wörner's statement implies that the change in ideas – popular definitions of music – was necessarily more challenging after 1945 than it had been two decades previously. It was not the pace or number of changes but the nature of those changes that forced postwar audiences to change the way they listened to music. For postwar New Music, it was no longer possible to simply perceive and react solely to the sound of the new piece. Rather, it became necessary to discern and contemplate philosophical issues or problems in musical composition; evaluate in what specific aspect and to what extent the piece was actually involved with historical and social contexts; think about whether the composer attempted to correlate her/his own musical idea with the state of music in postwar society; and if so, consider how.

¹⁷² Karl H. Wörner, *Karlheinz Stockhausen: Werk + Wollen 1950-1962* (Rodenkirchen/Rhein: P. J. Tonger Musikverlag, 1963), 106: "1920 brach sich die Neue Musik mit Elan ihren Weg frei, heute versucht sie, durch die Idee zu werben und zu überzeugen. Die autogene Disposition meiner Generation sah die Ereignisse nach 1945 stets in Parallele zu jenen nach dem ersten Weltkrieg. Wir mußten umlernen. Heute wissen wir, daß die Neue Musik mit jener Wendung um 1920 nicht verglichen werden kann."

Such a demand was too heavy a burden for most listeners and virtually impossible at only one listening. However, unless the listeners rose to this challenge, their perception of postwar avant-garde music would perpetually remain merely as “plink-plink, boom-boom” music. Under the title “the path to the listener” (*Der Weg zum Hörer*), Wörner makes a provocative remark that can provide a key to tracing a simplified path to change the listener’s idea (and presumably to avoid inciting an impulse to rage against the shock effect created by a new piece):

If we are to read a very complicated mathematical development and another that is simpler, then the logic in each is equally strong, but we need more time for the complicated; one thought can be very much richer than the other, but it does not change anything about the logic of thought. Applied to [musical] compositions, this means qualitative differences. There are musical thoughts and procedural possibilities which are ambiguous by nature. If this ambiguity lies in the composition, then it is no longer possible to say that one executes the work solely and exclusively by listening, even if one knows the piece very well. Because the ambiguity is indissoluble; i.e., one can hear in various ways, it all depends on how one hears.¹⁷³

Despite this logical explanation and the clarity of this statement, it is nevertheless questionable whether one could change one’s style of listening to music or devise new ways of hearing. For Kagel, this also was not the heart of the problem. Rather, he saw this problem of comprehension as only one side of a larger issue.

As a composer, Kagel identified contrasting tendencies in avant-garde composers and listeners. The former searched for novel or even nonconformist ways to create music, while the latter wished to attend musical performances whose repertoire was familiar to them. As a result, Kagel articulated, the composers “inevitably leave the majority of those listeners” who he labeled “conventional music lovers” (*konventionelle Musikliebhaber*) behind.¹⁷⁴ These discordant states can be described as momentum and stagnation. Kagel

¹⁷³ Wörner, *Karlheinz Stockhausen*, 109: “Wenn wir eine sehr komplizierte mathematische Entwicklung lesen und eine, die einfacher ist, dann ist die Logik bei beiden gleich stark, aber wir brauchen für die komplizierte längere Zeit; ein Gedanke kann sehr viel reicher sein als ein anderer, aber das ändert nichts an der Logik des Gedanken. Auf die Komposition angewandt, bedeutet das qualitative Verschiedenheiten. Es gibt musikalische Gedanken und Verarbeitungsmöglichkeiten, die von Natur aus vieldeutig sind. Liegt diese Vieldeutigkeit in der Komposition, dann ist es nicht mehr möglich zu sagen, daß man beim Hören das Werk eindeutig und ausschließlich mitvollzieht; selbst wenn man es wirklich kennt. Denn die Vieldeutigkeit ist unauflösbar, d.h. man kann in verschiedenen Richtungen hören, je nachdem, wie man hört.”

¹⁷⁴ Mauricio Kagel, “Vom Selbstverständnis und von den Aufgaben des Künstlers,” in *Worte über Musik* (München: R. Piper, 1991), 154: “Somit entfernt er [Komponist] sich zwangsläufig von der Mehrzahl

further observed the state of stagnation in the way the conventional music lovers perceived music in terms of psychological and social contexts.

In Kagel's view, a causal agent of stagnation was a common cognitive process among conventional music lovers. Kagel claims that even if they do not have sufficient knowledge about musical elements, structures, forms, and aesthetics, such a lack does not factor into their own evaluation of a musical piece. Rather, their own experiences are the paradigm within which they subjectively define whether an individual piece counts as a musical work or not. Based strictly on their own paradigm of musical pieces as artwork, music lovers tend to evaluate "unknown pieces as logical or unintelligible, melodious or uncomfortable, or intensive or dull."¹⁷⁵ Thus it is an oversimplified cognitive pattern of musical perception which keeps the conventional listeners stagnant.

Furthermore, Kagel discerns the causal factor of this stagnation on a deeper level. In conversation with Werner Klüppelholz, Kagel explained that the listeners' inattentive and premature assessment of musical work was due to a standardizing idea of "cultural life" (*Kulturleben*) as a social norm. This cultural life was always concerned with "mannerism, isms, and propriety," according to Kagel, which were "a latent simplification in the assessment and position of aesthetic phenomenon."¹⁷⁶ In Kagel's view, the term and state of "cultural life" were a representation of stereotypical belief towards what was commonly (and perhaps in a sense blindly) believed to be "culture," which could be propagandized by authorities. In contrast to the controlled masses, "authors, painters, and composers are constantly preoccupied with incorporating their own experiences into an invention of something new, to enrich the procedure."¹⁷⁷

Kagel's critical stance was distinguishable from that of Wörner, who seems to have encouraged listeners to adjust to the musical scene of postwar avant-garde by attempting to cultivate ways of listening. Kagel's demonstration, by contrast, criticized

jener Hörer, die als konventionelle Musikliebhaber die Konzerte mit Musik des gängigen Repertoires besuchen."

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.: "unbekannten Stücke . . . als logisch oder unverständlich, wohlklingend oder unangenehm, intensiv oder spannungslos zu bezeichnen."

¹⁷⁶ Mauricio Kagel, "Komponieren in der Postmoderne: Gespräch mit Werner Klüppelholz," in *Worte über Musik*, 100: "Das Kulturleben liebt Manierismen, Ismen, Etiketten. Dies weist auf eine latente Vereinfachung in Einschätzung und Ortung des ästhetischen Phänomens." The article first appeared in *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 6 (1989). Kagel made the remark with reminiscences of music in the early 1960s.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.: "Dagegen sind Autoren, Maler, Komponisten ständig beschäftigt, ihre eigenen Erfahrungen in der Erfindung von Neuem einzuarbeiten, das Procedere anzureichen."

how the notion of cultural life as a social norm gave rise to a powerful potential to separate composers from listeners. At the same time, this norm was occasionally solidified by the society milieu of musicians and critics, as well as by society as a whole. His criticism thus posits that the norm of cultural life forms an essential part of the conventional listeners' paradigm, which tends to exclude "unintelligible, uncomfortable, and dull" new music. Kagel explicitly spoke of the cause:

Most people do not participate in the great decisions of culture; they delegate this to the hands of a few. Through this general impotence, . . . concert organizers feel confirmed in restricting themselves to a single repertoire, which one hears over and over again.¹⁷⁸

It is indeed a significant aspect; Toop maintains that "'criticism' is a key word for any discussion of Kagel's music," and hence he labels Kagel a "social critic in music."¹⁷⁹

The standardized cultural life guards the listeners from new musical works as "ugly ducklings," which do not fit their belief in pre-established social "harmony." Among postwar avant-garde composers, the expansion of compositional method and aesthetic was a tacit goal, but their aim was neither to astonish their audience, nor to create a scandal. Their avid exploration of original compositional approaches that reflected their views of present music resulted at times in cutting-edge musical pieces; meanwhile, these pieces often went beyond the listeners' paradigm. Although the composers might to some extent be conscious of this fact, neither they nor the listeners could predict the occurrence of a scandal at the premiere of their new works. If it were possible, few would have wished to be at the concert. In fact, the chance that a scandal would occur in a musical performance was unpredictable because it hinged on the characteristics of the piece, the venue, and attitude of the audience. This can be confirmed by a "preliminary definition of scandal" addressed by Manfred J. Holler: "Human beings learn by experience, communication and introspection. As a consequence, the properties, causes and effects of scandals will change along with their appearance and analysis."¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁸ Mauricio Kagel, "Wer von uns allen wird darüber berichten können?: Gespräch mit Dieter Rexroth," in *Worte über Musik* (München: R. Piper, 1991), 88: "Die meisten Menschen partizipieren nicht an den großen Entscheidungen der Kultur, sie delegieren das in die Hände weniger. Durch diese allgemeine Ohnmacht, . . . haben sich Konzertveranstalter bestätigt gefühlt in ihrer Beschränkung auf ein Repertoire, das man immer wieder hört."

¹⁷⁹ Richard Toop, "Social Critic in Music," 37.

¹⁸⁰ Manfred J. Holler, "The Raw Material of Scandal: An Introduction" in *Scandal and Its Theory*, ed. Manfred J. Holler (Munich: Accedo Verlagsgesellschaft, 1999), 3.

This theory fits the postwar avant-garde's musical pieces that elicited scandal, since they were extremely unconventional and had difficulty communicating immediately with the listeners. Listeners derived such perception from their beliefs not only in their own musical paradigm, but also in the notion of cultural life, a standardized idea of how music is supposed to be and sound.

Kagel saw through the system of scandal and thus his criticism perfectly corresponds to Holler's concise summary of "the constituent elements of a scandal," which are "the motives and objectives of the agents and the social constraints and pre-conditions."¹⁸¹ Kagel's musical materialization of scandal in the music of *Antithese* was therefore not intended to induce a shock effect, but rather was an embodiment of his critical thought in music. However, the composer's motivation for incorporating scandal as a musical element into the piece was derived not solely from his critical observation, but also from his own (presumably unexpected) experience of scandal at the premiere of one of his new pieces.

Sonant Scandal in 1961

The piece is *Sonant* (1960/....) for guitar (an electronic guitar included), harp, five-string double bass, and membranophones (two percussion instrumentalists), composed between February and December of 1960. *Sonant* consists of ten sections, but no printed score exists for three of them. An ensemble of performers is supposed to "choose at least five sections" arbitrarily in advance and then form an order under certain conditions.¹⁸² Each part of the printed sections contains conventional and graphic notations, as well as a number of symbols and signs Kagel invented, along with detailed instructions. The performers have to follow some notations and instructions precisely; unless otherwise instructed, they need to create their own interpretation.

Depending on the section, the degree of durational determinacy varies; either 1) in seconds and/or minutes (*Faites votre jeu I*, *Faites votre jeu II*, *Pièce touchée*, *pièce jouée*, *Fin I*, and *Fin II/ Invitation au jeu, voix*) or 2) in part in a conventional meter (*Marquez le jeu (à trois)*), or 3) in an approximate time frame (*(Rien) ne va plus*, *Fin III (Plein)*, and

¹⁸¹ Ibid., 2.

¹⁸² Mauricio Kagel, *Sonant* (1960/....) (Frankfurt: Henry Litolf's Verlag/C. F. Peters, 1964), 13.

Fin IV (Demiplein)). In *Pièce de résistance*, no specific framework for duration is given. In *Faites votre jeu I*, the “duration of each measure is given in seconds”¹⁸³ but some measures are indicated to be played F (free) instead of in seconds, in which the duration “is determined by the method of attack and/or the manner of articulating sound.”¹⁸⁴ *Fin II/ Invitation au jeu, voix* provides a verbal score with parameters of duration, dynamic, and tempo, which looks similar to that of *Sur scène*. Given that each part has its own detailed instructions on how to act and produce sounds, all instrumentalists individually realize the theatrical-musical section, following the series of specific durational units. By contrast, *Faites votre jeu II* indicates only the total duration, three minutes (3’), at the beginning of the section. Since each part consists of five systems, “the duration of each system takes 36 seconds; [h]owever, the time articulation is left up to each performer, making acceleration and deceleration possible.”¹⁸⁵ *Marquez le jeu (à trois)* allows performers to choose an arbitrary tempo and duration without any indication in seconds or minutes, except for the last six measures in which Kagel specifies the time signature of 3/4 with a tempo between 48 and 76 beats of quarter tone per minute. In *Fin III* and *Fin IV*, which have no scores, all performers can make a musical collage by combining fragments they arbitrarily extract from other sections, but the duration of both sections is restricted to three minutes. Also, there is no score for *(Rien) ne va plus*, in which the musician literally no longer [ne va plus] performs, and yet this particular section is not supposed to last more than 90 seconds.

There are also significant aspects of arbitrariness in *Sonant*. In the score, Kagel indicates spots where performers may speak, whisper, whistle, scream, murmur, and cough (omitting such a voice “embellishment” is also another option). Furthermore, the guitarist is allowed to substitute a singing voice or whistle for notes that are difficult or impossible to perform, for instance in *Pièce de Résistance*. These voice options not only expand the range of timbre, but also, more importantly, theatricalize the piece. Another indeterminate and theatrical aspect is what Kagel calls “virtual” interpretation.¹⁸⁶ In sections of *Marquez le jeu* and *Pièce touchée, pièce jouée*, the instrumentalists can mimic

¹⁸³ For example, 7”, 16”, or 3”, instead of a time signature. *Pièce touchée, pièce jouée* and *Fin I* are also in a similar manner.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 14.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.* in the instruction page of *Faites votre Jeu II*.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.* in instruction pages of *Marquez le jeu (à trois)* and *Pièce touchée, pièce jouée*.

the performance without actually producing sounds. This is an example of Kagel's unique theatricalization of music, an approach to "music as seeing" as a significant concept of Instrumental Theater.¹⁸⁷ Finally, in the theatricalization of *Sonant*, it is also notable that the *Fin II*'s vocal realization is a musical event, in which the individual performers are supposed to read the given texts, following instructions for the duration, dynamic, tempo change, and rhythm. The overall theatricalization of *Sonant* was markedly unconventional and thus to a large extent outside the musical paradigm of ordinary listeners.

The premiere of *Sonant* took place at the *Concerts du Domaine Musical* in Paris on 1 February 1961. Invited by Boulez, it was the second time Kagel presented his music at the *Domaine Musical*.¹⁸⁸ Before the premiere was held, a portent of scandal was already apparent. According to Kagel, two French percussionists refused to perform *Sonant* after a rehearsal for the premiere; as a consequence, Kagel and a Swiss composer Giuseppe Englert expeditiously substituted the membranophone parts.¹⁸⁹ Kagel had already admitted that the piece was "very strange, curious,"¹⁹⁰ and he characterized it as "non-heroic music" in "the heroic period of serial music."¹⁹¹ Hence to Kagel, a negative reaction to the piece might have been more or less predictable, as he was aware of its idiosyncratic nature and failure to conform to standards of the heroic music of that time. However, the audience's rage at the *Sonant* premiere was stronger than expected. Despite Kagel's gratitude for Englert's unexpected acceptance of the performance,¹⁹² he later informed David Tudor in a letter that the "creation of SONANT in the growling Domaine Musical was the most horrible scandal after 'sacre du printemps'" and "[t]he people make

¹⁸⁷ The details of this concept will be discussed in the following chapter.

¹⁸⁸ On 26 January in the previous year, Kagel's *Transición II* was performed in the same venue, which was, according to Jésus Aguila, "totally surrealistic," see Jésus Aguila, *Le Domaine Musica*, 248.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid. Other instrumentalists at the premiere were Cornelius Cardew, guitar; Francis Pierre, harp; and Jacques Cazauran, double bass, see Mauricio Kagel, "Qu'est-ce que le théâtre instrumental?" in *Tam-Tam: Monologue et dialogues sur la musique*, ed. Felix Schmidt and J. J. Nattiez (Paris: Christian Bourgois Éditeur, 1983), 111. The essay first appeared under the title "Le théâtre instrumental" in "La musique et ses problèmes contemporains (1953-1963)," *Cahiers Renaud-Barrault* 41 (1963).

¹⁹⁰ In a letter from Kagel to David Tudor, dated 28 February 1961, David Tudor papers, 1884-1998 (bulk 1940-1996), Getty Research Institute, Research Library, Accession no. 980039.

¹⁹¹ Kagel, "Jalons (1960-1979)" in *Tam-Tam: Monologue et dialogues sur la musique*, ed. Felix Schmidt and J. J. Nattiez (Paris: Christian Bourgois Éditeur, 1983), 139: "... cette musique non-héroïque. Venant de la période héroïque de la musique sérielle."

¹⁹² See Kagel's statement cited in Jésus Aguila, 248.

[sic] a civil war in the concert hall!!”¹⁹³ Although the letter barely refers to the details of scandal, nor to its primary cause from Kagel’s perspective, his language implies his great astonishment at the first scandal resulting from his own musical piece. A Japanese music journalist Kuniharu Akiyama, who attended the concert, reported the state of the civil-war-like scandal: “creating a sound world that seemed as if it went beyond the limit of a human being’s sense of hearing, *Sonant* had raised the audience’s hackles completely.”¹⁹⁴ Later, Kagel himself also remembered that the event “was a mild earthquake.”¹⁹⁵

Presumably, the premiere of *Sonant* produced unheard-of noises, which together with the bizarre actions of the performers on stage, incited the audience to react.¹⁹⁶ The audience seems to have become so irate that Boulez, the organizer of the concert, had to go “up on the stage to ask for silence”; nevertheless, they “flung coins and other objects on it.”¹⁹⁷ In Kagel’s interpretation of the *Sonant* scandal, he says that it “can be related to the musical education or non-education of the audience.”¹⁹⁸ It may seem that Kagel is criticizing the audience; however, what this criticism really insinuates is that the problem lies in the idea of cultural life as a force of musical standardization.

Regardless of whether the premiere of *Sonant* became a case of *succès de scandale* and to what extent it re-emblemized Kagel as a postwar avant-garde, the experience sharpened his critical thought concerning the relation between music and society. Besides, the composer incorporated the scandal experience into *Antithese*. Through such an approach, Kagel posed problems concerning not only the friction

¹⁹³ In the letter to Tudor, dated 28 February 1961, David Tudor papers, 1884-1998 (bulk 1940-1996), Getty Research Institute, Research Library.

¹⁹⁴ Kuniharu Akiyama, “Concerto of senses of hearing and vision appeared” (*Choukaku, Shikaku no Kyousoukyoku toujou*), *SAC: Sougetsu Art Center News* 12 (1961): no pagination, my translation. Incidentally, *Sonant* brought about another scandal at the Third Inter-American Music Festival in Washington D. C., May 1965. Three movements from the piece were simultaneously performed with Kagel’s piano pieces *Metapiece (Mimetics)* and *Mimetics (Metapiece)*. “After a few minutes of controlled musical chaos on stage,” according to the reviewer Irving Lowens, “the sound and sight of it got under the audience’s skin, and headshaking, muttering, and outright laughter commenced. The conclusion was hailed with a fine admixture of boos, hisses, and bravos.” While Lowens admits that the scandalous event “was the only occasion I [Lowens] can remember in nearly two decades of going to concerts in the nation’s capital,” he regards it as “Kagel’s *succès de scandale*” that “must be considered a notable achievement,” see Lowens, “Current Chronicle,” *The Musical Quarterly* 51/3 (1965): 546

¹⁹⁵ Mauricio Kagel, “Jalons (1960-1979),” 139. The note on *Sonant* first appeared in the program of the festival de la Rochelle, 1979.

¹⁹⁶ Jésus Aguila, 248.

¹⁹⁷ Kagel’s remark in *ibid.*

¹⁹⁸ Kagel, “Jalons,” 139.

between composers and listeners, but also the current musical scene, especially with regard to the issue of ways to present electroacoustic music.

Criticism of Electroacoustic Music in the Electroacoustic Piece

Kagel's thematization of scandal in *Antithese* has another significant aspect as social criticism in music. As is true of his contemporaries, Kagel became aware of the fact that, on the one hand, scandal in music is "still a normal occurrence in some concerts of instrumental music" but that, on the other hand, in a concert of electroacoustic music, scandal as the audience's "disapproval is not possible, during the [tape] playback of the work."¹⁹⁹ A one-way presentation of an electroacoustic piece from loudspeakers to the audience had in fact been a debated problem since the 1950s, as had Boulez claimed.²⁰⁰ A famous photograph of the premiere of Stockhausen's *Gesang der Jünglinge* in the auditorium of the WDR²⁰¹ is a useful document to recognize what Boulez meant. John Smally's description of the situation is helpful: "four of the channels were played back by a four-track tape machine over four groups of speakers surrounding the audience, while the fifth track was projected by a separate machine through a fifth loudspeaker set up on stage."²⁰²

Kagel gained insight into the problem from a more audience-leaning perspective.

Public performances of electronic music usually take place so that an appropriate hearing is impossible, because of the extreme volume of the sounds, which are produced through loudspeakers. It is not evident if the composer is seeking to have such a volume in order to compensate for the absence of players. The fact is that the physical strain of hearing electroacoustic music causes simple exhaustion, due to the completely saturated presence of the sounds. The listener is struck in his attention, so that his spontaneous reaction is mostly due to rejection.²⁰³

¹⁹⁹ Kagel, "Antithese" in *Slee Lecture Recitals*, 2.

²⁰⁰ See Boulez's statement cited in Chapter One, page 14.

²⁰¹ The picture has been reproduced in various literature on the music of Stockhausen and topics of electroacoustic music. The original is archived in the *Stockhausen-Stiftung für Musik* (Stockhausen Foundation for Music) in Kuerten, Germany. The picture is also available on a webpage provided by the Foundation, see "50 years GESANG DER JÜNGLINGE (SONG OF THE YOUTHS)," in *Karlheinz Stockhausen* [archive on-line] available from http://www.stockhausen.org/50_gesang.html; Internet; accessed 7 March 2011.

²⁰² John Smally, "Gesang der Jünglinge: History and Analysis," in *Masterpieces of 20th-Century Electronic Music: A Multimedia Perspective* [articles on-line] available from <http://www.music.columbia.edu/masterpieces/notes/stockhausen/GesangHistoryandAnalysis.pdf>; Internet; accessed 24 November 2011.

²⁰³ Kagel, "Antithese" in *Slee Lecture Recitals*, 2.

Kagel apprehended the frustrations of the audience as twofold. One was their exhaustion and discomfort because of the excessive volume that was mechanically reproduced. Another was that no matter how much the sound vexed their ears, they knew there was no point to shout out their grievances to the loudspeakers on stage. Unlike a presentation of instrumental music, the reproduction of the taped music proceeds, no matter how loud the audience yells, and it could even drown out their angry roar.

Kagel's stance on scandal in music in this respect is noteworthy because it is a different angle from his criticism of standardized cultural life. Although the composer in fact experienced "the most horrible scandal since Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du printemps*" in the *Sonant* premiere, he understood that a scandal in music was nevertheless a kind of natural human reaction to demonstrate one's disapproval. Kagel never, of course, endorsed scandal, but regarded the restraint of human nature – even though no composer hopes for disapproval – as more problematic. Hence, Kagel conceptualized the music of *Antithese* "as a kind of 'illusion music-theatre'" that illustrates a concert of electroacoustic music and events of the audience's reaction to it. The series of montaged public sounds in *Antithese* is a constitution of actions that a *real* listener of the piece could make on the occasion of electroacoustic concert.

In other words, the virtual audience in *Antithese* acts for the real listeners, who are unlikely to react to the music without instrumentalist. The real listeners are thus placed in a concurrence of reality and unreality: it is real that they listen to the music as the audience, but what they hear then is a fictitious concert and its scandal. This particular concept does not aim at entertaining the real listeners, but rather it questions "if electronic music would be at best only appropriate for the totally individual house concerts; there one can sit at one of the few spots where the stereophony is literally stereophonically perceived and where various readings – concert programs are so one-sided! – and other entertainment [*sic*] are easily accessible."²⁰⁴

The music of *Antithese* thus raises the question of how to present electroacoustic music but offers no clear solution. That is to say, Kagel did not seek an absolute answer

²⁰⁴ Kagel, "Über das Schauen des Zuhörers," 392: "ob elektronische Musik nicht am besten nur für ganz individuelle Hauskonzerte geeignet wäre; dort kann man an einem der wenigen Plätze sitzen, wo die Stereophonie wirklich stereophonisch wahrgenommen wird und wo abwechslungsreiche Lektüre – Konzertprogramme sind so einseitig! – und übriges Entertainment leicht erreichbar sind."

to the question, no matter how critical it is. Rather, his statement above is a significant reflection of his musico-critical thought on the musical piece; through the musical representation of this thought, he expected to evoke a reaction from the listener, critic, concert organizer, and his contemporaries. Perhaps Kagel believed that the reaction would help to illuminate the problem of presentation of electroacoustic music. Hence, the amalgamation of *musique concrète* and *elektronische Musik* principles in the piece was merely a necessary approach to embody this thought. It was not primarily an attempt of new compositional theorization, like that which Kagel undertook in *Transición I*. While the repercussions of the *concrète-elektronisch* debate, which peaked in the mid-1950s, were still present in the early 1960s, Kagel dismissed this with criticism of the “ridiculous rat-race” between Cologne and Paris (see Chapter Two). Leaving aside the controversy among the connoisseurs, Kagel emphasized the need to focus on the listener as one of his main intentions in *Antithese*. The piece thus has a particular dimension that attempts to convey the issues underlying the way electroacoustic music was presented and the way people listened to it. Kagel wanted to make people recognize and critically evaluate the standardization of cultural life, which encompassed problematic aspects of “conventional music lovers,” music education, and politics in postwar avant-garde music.

Kagel planned a second version of the music of *Antithese*, which would preserve all the electronic sounds unchanged but replace the concrete sounds with another series of public sounds. He seems to have wanted to create a new formal structure for the piece; however, this plan was not realized. Hence, it is unclear that what specific “human reaction sounds”²⁰⁵ Kagel had then in mind. Instead of realizing the second version, Kagel composed the stage version of *Antithese*, i.e., *real* theatricalization of the piece, so that it contains the twofold dimension of theatricalization; the virtual and real. *Antithese* then became Kagel’s first Instrumental Theater work for electroacoustic music.

²⁰⁵ Kagel, “Antithese” in *Slee Lecture Recitals*, 2.

CHAPTER FOUR

THEATRICALIZATION IN *ANTITHESE*

Introduction

The growth of electroacoustic composition resulted in antithetical situations. On the one hand, utilization of technical equipment vastly expanded the capability of generating and modifying sound material, as well as forming the micro- and macro-structure of a sound or sound unit. Composers involved in electroacoustic composition enjoyed an advantage in creating new sound materials and their formal-structural organization, which expanded upon the range offered by traditional musical instruments. In the presentation of electroacoustic music, the “spatial transmittance of sound” has been also realized, according to M. J. Grant, “by giving the effect of sounds approaching or retreating, being nearer or further away.”¹ On the other hand, mechanical reproduction as a common mode of electroacoustic musical presentation no longer requires live performances. Grant even contends that “concert halls are on the whole totally unsuited” to these types of performances as the audience experiences discomfort facing the loudspeakers in the absence of a performer.

The discomfort was felt not only by audiences, but also by composers. Boulez, for instance, attempted to solve the performer-absence problem at an electroacoustic musical concert in his presentation of *Poésie pour pouvoir* (1958), a piece composed of three ensemble groups – two divisions of an orchestra and a group of soloists – and electronically generated sounds recorded in a five-track tape. Each group was located on a platform at different heights, an arrangement that the composer called “a mounting spiral.”² The loudspeakers were set behind the audience and “into the room immediately above the upper orchestra,” so that the entire spiral was completed with instrumental ensemble groups on the three different platforms. Boulez’s specific aim with this stage setting was a “spatialization” of instrumental and electroacoustic sounds.

Although creative, Boulez’s spatial approach in *Poésie* did not deal with theatricalization of music at all. In the first place, the individual sound groups were purely

¹ M. J. Grant, *Serial Music, Serial Aesthetics*, 99.

² Pierre Boulez, “An Interview with Dominique Jameux,” 201.

musical and the physical-spatial arrangement of these components was pragmatically rather than artistically motivated. Thus, together with the purpose of realizing a spatial sound transmission, the setting of loudspeakers merely served to make them less visible or disturbing than the traditional concert style of electroacoustic music. Boulez specified not only the structure of the music, but also the structure of the physical dispositions, and thus the piece was delivered with a firm hand. No part of the *Poésie* was ever allowed to behave independently of other parts. It is exactly the reverse in musical theater, where the independence of individual compositional components is to a large extent guaranteed, regardless of whether a component belongs to the category of music or musical genre, or whether it is brought from different art genre.

As Heile points out, one can trace the early development of musical theater in works of the pre-war avant-garde, particularly those of Stravinsky and Schoenberg.

Distinct features of their development of theatrical approaches were, according to Heile,

new ways of combining theatrical and musical elements which steered clear of the established division between the two spheres in traditional opera on the one hand and the static text delivery of song cycles and oratorios on the other.³

Whereas these features lay at the heart of pre-war musical theater, postwar avant-gardists extended them. Their conceptual extension stemmed from the “re-conceptualization of the nature of performance” that comprised their procedure of deconstruction and reconstruction of the form.

Deconstruction did not necessarily mean complete destruction of the preconceived notion of musical theater. Instead, it entailed a clarification of what was heard and seen. A visual component, which might have been used to merely decorate and dramatize, regained its original identity as a genre independent of music. The reconstruction was therefore a reintegration of the rediscovered genre into musical composition. The visual component, despite being a compositional element in a musical piece, no longer had to function as a subordinate visual accompaniment to the music, nor did the musical component have to serve as a sound accompaniment to the visual. Inevitably, the new form of musical theater required the collaboration of a musician and an actor, dancer, or painter.

³ Heile, 33.

The work of John Cage was the first to exemplify this new concept of musical theatrical form. Strongly inspired by Antonin Artaud's *The Theater and Its Double*, Cage formed a concept and aesthetic of theatricalization where "each event is centered on its own experience."⁴ That is, in a form of theater that consists of heterogeneous components (i.e., different art genres), there is no "absolute center, rather a collection of phenomena that are each at the center of their own experience."⁵ A concrete example of this notion is that

rather than the dance expressing the music or the music expressing the dance, . . . the two could go together independently neither one controlling the other. And this was extended on this occasion not only to music and dance, but to poetry and painting, and so forth, and to the audience. So that the audience was not focused in one particular direction.⁶

In 1952, Cage attempted a bold interdisciplinary collaboration as an embodiment of the concept of theater at Black Mountain College, North Carolina. It was a one-time event to which Cage invited Charles Olson (1910-1970), modernist poet; Mary Caroline Richard (1916-1999), poet, essayist, translator, and painter; Robert Rauschenberg (1925-2008), artist; Merce Cunningham (1919-2009), dancer and choreographer; and David Tudor, pianist.

Aside from inviting such an array of avant-garde talent, what Cage "organized" was just a time frame for the event and an approximate place and space for each performer. A brief plan was provided, but there was no rehearsal. Consequently, the individual performers had virtually no idea of what the others would do. Cage described how the performance went:

At one end of a rectangular hall, . . . was a movie and at the other end were slides. I was up on a ladder delivering a lecture which included silences and there was another ladder which M. C. Richards and Charles Olson went up at different times. . . . Robert Rauschenberg was playing an old-fashioned phonograph that had a horn and a dog on the side listening, and David Tudor was playing a piano, and Merce Cunningham and other dancers were moving through the audience and

⁴ Richard Kostelanetz, *Conversing with Cage*, 2nd edition (New York and London: Faber and Faber, 2003), 199-200. The article first appeared in Jean-Yves Bosseur, "John Cage: 'Il faut forger un nouveau mode de communication orale'," *La Quinzaine Littéraire* 176 (December 1973).

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Richard Kostelanetz, 110. The primary source of this statement is Mary Emma Harris's 1974 interview with Cage.

around the audience. Rauschenberg's pictures were suspended about the audience.⁷

While this multimedia theatrical event later came to be regarded as an archetype of a "Happening," Cage focused more on theatricalization of music by simplifying the form as a whole and specifying visual elements.

In the same year of the Black Mountain event, Cage composed the quasi-theatrical piece *Water Music* (1952) for a pianist. The piece was his "immediate reaction to that event."⁸ Arguably, however, the piece can be subsumed under the category of musical theater, even though the performer "plays no role of singing and/or acting and there is no narratable action, whose individual stations are tied together."⁹ All "instruments" for the music are specified in the instructions and the pianist is expected to follow these and perform specifically according to the score. Aside from the piano, the instruments are a radio, three types of whistles, containers filled with water, a stopwatch, a wooden stick, a deck of cards, and four objects that are inserted between strings of the piano (prepared piano). The published score indicates specific time points at which the pianist produces sounds of individually indicated instruments.

Water Music does not require the pianist to act; nevertheless, a closer observation of the piece reveals its theatrical characteristics. Every movement the pianist makes producing a sound (e.g., pouring water, shuffling the cards, blowing the whistles, hitting the piano with the stick, plucking at the strings of the piano, and playing notes or broken chords on the piano), is a distinct scene. The audience is expected to hear the sound and see the action at the same time, which was exactly Cage's theatrical intention. In addition, in the performance of *Water Music*, a large sheet score hangs over the stage. By displaying the score in this manner, the audience can also look at the entire score consisting of graphic, verbal, and traditional notations. This prop becomes another aspect of the performance that the audience can attend to, while the pianist produces the sounds

⁷ John Cage, Michael Kirby, and Richard Schechner, "An Interview with John Cage," 52-53.

⁸ Ibid., 60.

⁹ *Pipers Enzyklopädie des Musiktheaters*, Band 1, 1986, s.v. "John Cage," by Hermann Danuser: "Keine Rolle wird von einer singenden und/oder handelnden Person gespielt, es gibt keine erzählbare Handlung, deren einzelne Stationen miteinander verknüpft sind."

and actions. In *Water Music*, the visual exposition of musical contents is a theatrical concept that Cage invented.¹⁰

The only electronic device that Cage employed in *Water Music* is a radio, which is placed on or beside the piano, where the pianist is able to reach to change the volume and frequency. In fact, the radio is an important object to draw the audience's visual attention, which is aesthetically antithetical to Boulez's solution in *Poésie* where he obscured the existence of loudspeakers by the spiral stage setting. After *Water Music*, Cage continued to use theatrics in *Music Walk* (1958) for pianos and radios and *Water Walk* (1959) for piano, radios, water, and water-related items such as a bath tub, a pressure cooker, a watering can, among other items.¹¹ In these pieces, Cage intensified theatrical features in which the actions of the performer were more vivid than in *Water Music*. Particularly notable was the enhancement of the theatrical characteristics by the placement of the radios and musical instruments. Unlike *Water Music*, the radios and instruments are separated in *Music Walk* and *Water Walk*, so that as the titles of these pieces imply the performer has to walk between them to produce their sounds. Although not dramatic, the action of the performer is unmistakably theatrical.

Cage was undoubtedly an innovator, if not a pioneer, of musical theater by his unique re-conceptualization of the genre. His works defined postwar avant-garde musical theater, distinguishing it from its pre-war existence. Heinz-Klaus Metzger interpreted Cage's "liberation of action" as a significant factor in his "new" musical theater work.¹² Metzger praised the "spectacular aspect of actions" in *Music Walk* and *Water Walk*, asserting that

[h]ere – after the downfall of opera, the failure of the epic music theater, and the necessary end of realism in theater itself – is the beginning of a new music theater, tentatively evident, responsible only to not betraying its own possibilities.¹³

¹⁰ Kagel used a similar approach in *Prima Vista* (1964) and *Diaphonie* (1964), where the graphic scores made on transparent sheets are projected on a screen.

¹¹ Incidentally, *Water Walk* was originally intended for solo television performance.

¹² Heinz-Klaus Metzger, "John Cage, or Liberated Music," translated by Ian Pepper, *October* 82 (1997): 61. The original text first appeared in Metzger, "John Cage o della liberazione," *Incontri Musicali* 3 (1959).

¹³ Ibid.

After establishing the new musical theater with the three pieces discussed above, Cage developed the idea of theatricalizing electroacoustic music. In an interview with Roger Reynolds, Cage explained the basic concept:

I think that the most important thing to do with electronic music now is to somehow make it theatrical, and not through such means as turning the lights out, but rather through introducing live performance elements. That is to say, people actually doing things. . . . the actual, visible manipulation of the machines.¹⁴

No application of this idea, however, appears to have been realized by Cage. Instead, for an event celebrating his 50th birthday, one of his friends dedicated a piece to Cage embodying theatricalization of electroacoustic music. This friend was Kagel and the piece was *Antithese für einen Darsteller mit elektronischen + öffentlichen Klängen*, which he intentionally characterized as an Instrumental Theater work, rather than as a musical theater piece.

Instrumental Theater as a Distinct Form of Musical Theater

Kagel's conceptualization of Instrumental Theater was based on his multimedia experiences and his ambition to establish his own interdisciplinary aesthetic. A review of these two imperatives reveals not only subtle and clear distinctions between Kagel's Instrumental Theater and Cage's musical theater, but also an extended application of the concept in *Antithese*, a piece without an instrumentalist. Cage's musical theater undoubtedly inspired Kagel's ambition to forge a new and original theatricalization of music. They shared the basic conviction that visual elements, which include movements or actions, are indispensable in the theatricalization of music. In her study of Kagel's Instrumental Theater, Inge Kovács identified significant similarities between the theatricalizations of Kagel and Cage. Kovács sees Cage's theatrical pieces in which he underscored the visual as "historical models for Kagel's conceptual design of Instrumental Theater,"¹⁵ especially in *Music Walk* and *Water Walk*, as described above, where actions on stage were an essential part of the visual. Indeterminacy pertains to their

¹⁴ John Cage, "Interview with Roger Reynolds, 1962" in *Contemporary Composers on Contemporary Music*, ed. Elliott Schwartz and Barney Childs (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967), 342.

¹⁵ Inge Kovács, "Instrumental Theater," in *Von Kranichstein zur Gegenwart: 50 Jahre Darmstädter Beiträge zur Neuen Musik*, ed. Rudolf Stephan, Lothar Kuesl, Otto Tomek, Klaus Trapp, and Christopher Fox (Stuttgart: DACO Verlag, 1996), 336: "historischen Vorbildern für Kagels Konzeption des Instrumentalen Theaters."

theatrical works, but the degree of indeterminacy depends on the individual pieces, as well as on the interpretation of a performer. Barbara Zuber also refers to Kagel's remark concerning the visual significance of his Instrumental Theater principle, which was characteristically similar to Cage's musical theater, stating that "[a]s a matter of principle, the visual always played a great role in music. . . . Where music is performed, theater takes places as well."¹⁶ Richard Toop also emphasized Cage's influence such that

one of Kagel's preoccupations, namely [is] that the production of music in the concert hall consists not only of sounds which are heard, but also of actions which are seen. Perhaps this fascination with "visible music" (to borrow an expression from Dieter Schnebel) had its source in the performances given by Cage and Tudor in Europe in the late fifties.¹⁷

Cage's theatrical compositions and their presentations more or less influenced the formation of Kagel's Instrumental Theater concept and aesthetic. However, Kagel was never an imitator of Cage's musical theater. Rather, he pioneered his own genre of theatrical work and crystallized it in a manner distinct from Cage's musical theater.

A clear aesthetic and philosophical difference between Kagel and Cage emerges from their different motivations to theatricalize music. *Antithese* highlights these distinctions and evinces the originality of Kagel's Instrumental Theater. In *Antithese*, Kagel specifies an actor for the stage version rather than an instrumentalist, while in previous pieces of Instrumental Theater, for example in *Sur scène* and *Sonant*, musicians performed their individual musical parts and theatrical actions. By placing an actor on stage with explicit acting instructions, the degree of theatrical characterization was greatly extended in *Antithese*. According to Toop, "in Kagel's work there is no longer any question of the players' visible actions being a subsidiary factor: sound and action are treated as two autonomous fields, sometimes working in harness together."¹⁸

In Instrumental Theater, the instrumentalist must be not simply an accomplished musical performer, but a skilled actor as well. In his lecture "About the musical theater"

¹⁶ Hansjörg Pauli, "Mauricio Kagel" in *Für wen komponieren Sie eigentlich?* (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer Verlag, 1971), 87: "Grundsätzlich hat das Visuelle in der Musik immer schon eine große Rolle gespielt. . . . Wo Musik aufgeführt wird, findet auch Theater statt." Zuber's citation of this statement is in Barbara Zuber, "Theatrale Aktionen in und mit Musik: Zum Handlungs- und Rollenbegriff in John Cages und Mauricio Kagels Musiktheater," in *Musiktheater als Herausforderung: interdisziplinäre Facetten von Theater- und Musikwissenschaft*, ed. Hans-Peter Bayerdörfer (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1999), 204.

¹⁷ Richard Toop, "Social Critic in Music," 37.

¹⁸ Ibid.

at the Slee Lecture Recitals in Buffalo, Kagel's clear statement was unmistakably different from Cage's concept of musical theater:

For instrumental theatre, you need musicians who are also actors, not only musicians. I criticize the fact that musicians are not actors. In general, they are bad actors, and they are not trained to make any kind of movement. . . . When I criticize the fact that musicians are not actors, I start staging. . . . The problem with acting musicians is not a matter of the stage director, but of training and education.¹⁹

A distinct element of Kagel's Instrumental Theater work, according to Zuber, is the great importance of "role playing" (*Rollenspiel*) that he assigned to individual musicians. This aspect differentiates Instrumental Theater from Cage's theater works. Zuber observes the varying degrees of indeterminacy in this respect:

Kagel seeks more or less to control all conditions of theatrical musical actions, so that he parameterizes (which varies, depending on a composition) elements of musico-theatrical instruments (also the actor) and newly composes. In contrast, Cage . . . radically dissociates components of theatrical instruments . . . , so that he gives its composition over to the chance and the choice over to the performance. His principle of theater or musical theater always deems a non-recurring realization of indeterminate possibilities of theatrical actions.²⁰

Instrumental Theater thus includes the composition of actions or movements, in contrast to Cage's principle of indeterminacy, which can be clarified in part by "his dictum that 'process should imitate nature in its manner of operation'; or, . . . 'everything is music'."²¹ In the link between music and theater, as well as between them and indeterminacy, both Kagel and Cage anticipated that an unexpected sound or artistic event would emerge. However, while Cage's idea of indeterminacy was derived from the idea of freedom without bounds, Kagel regarded indeterminacy as only one of the principles within the conceptual framework of an Instrumental Theater piece. In other words, indeterminacy itself was the framework (or even a goal) of Cage's theatrical

¹⁹ Kagel, "About the musical theater," 1.

²⁰ Zuber, 209: "Als Komponist sucht Kagel sämtliche Bedingungen des theatralen musikalischen Handelns mehr oder weniger zu kontrollieren, indem er die Elemente eines musiktheatralischen Apparates (auch den Schauspieler) parametrisiert (das ändert sich von Komposition zu Komposition) und neu komponiert. Cage hingegen trennt . . . radikal die Komponenten eines theatralischen Apparates . . . , indem er ihre Komposition dem Zufall und ihre Wahl der Aufführung überantwortet. Sein Prinzip von Theater bzw. Musiktheater meint eine stets einmalige Realisation von unbestimmten Möglichkeiten theatralen Handelns."

²¹ Morton Feldman, "The Anxiety of Art," in *Morton Feldman Essays*, ed. Walter Zimmermann (Kerpen: Beginner Press, 1985), 93. This essay first appeared in *Art in America* LXI/5 (1973). This statement is also an important key in discussion of *Anarchy in Music* below.

composition, but for Kagel, it was a means to an end, integrated into a compositional plan.²² Kagel's approach thus suggests as if he sought a middleground between Boulezian serialist strictness and Cagean unlimited freedom. This aspect is highlighted particularly in his Instrumental Theater work.

In his first Instrumental Theater piece, *Sur scène*, Kagel stages a narrator, a mime, a bass solo singer, and instrumentalists, each of whom has a specific role along with its own musical part. The composer also specifies the individual spatiality: for example, the appearance and disappearance of the performers, their stage position, and their actions or movements. In this context, Kagel also describes implicit and explicit interactions among the performers. In his reference to "chamber musical theater" (i.e., "musicalization of a chamber music theatrical situation"²³), Kagel defines *Sur scène* as a "total composition" (*totale Komposition*). According to Kagel, the work was "never a *Gesamtkunstwerk* (total work of art), nor total theater," but rather "a composition of all materials, both sounding and non-sounding, that are relevant to the piece."²⁴

In the total composition, "all elements are already driven to interconnect to the extreme,"²⁵ which becomes apparent upon analysis of the verbal score of *Sur scène*. Matthias Rebstock identifies the first section of *Sur scène* as the part in which "the scenic-musical relationships are most precisely composed and the network of interaction among the performers is the most dense."²⁶ Rebstock's detailed description of the speaker's movements captures this interaction by highlighting the

rhythm of gesture, whose accents and organization are supposed to be different as far as possible from the rhythm and accents of the spoken text. Here the significance of gesture stands in contrast to the speaker's deformed and ridiculous way of speaking at this spot, [since he] obviously suffers from a speech impediment. In addition, however, the gestures of the speaker correspond to those of the mime. As the speaker makes a gesture with his right hand, he leads his left

²² The difference between compositional ideas of Cage's limitless freedom and Kagel's freedom in a certain framework also reflects the different conceptions of anarchy between them, which is discussed below.

²³ Christa Brüstle, "Wandelszenen bei Kagel – Thesen zum Theater der Musik," 344: "Musikalisierung einer kammermusikalischen theatralen Situation."

²⁴ Hansjörg Pauli, 90: "kein Gesamtkunstwerk, auch kein totales Theater, . . . eine Komposition aller Materialien, die für das Stück irgend von Belang sind, sowohl der klingenden als auch der nicht-klingenden."

²⁵ Ibid: "(*Sur scène*, in dem) die Verzahnung aller Elemente bereits ins Extrem getrieben ist."

²⁶ Rebstock, 279. "Im ersten Teil sind die szenisch-musikalischen Verhältnisse am genauesten komponiert, und das Netz an Interaktionen zwischen den Spielern ist am dichtesten."

hand to his chin at the same time and takes the same action as the one the mime already took earlier, a kind of thinker's pose.²⁷

In the verbal score, Kagel indicates the precise timing of the mime's thinker's pose and related actions, and how the speaker reacts to the mime. More specifically, the mime takes its cue from the speaker's "*als*" ("as" in English) in that scene. After a long pause, the speaker glances at the mime's thinker's pose and then strikes a similar pose. Likewise, specific words are given as cues for individual actions of the instrumentalists and singer. In this way Kagel choreographed the performers of *Sur scène*.

Aside from this choreography, Kagel added another layer of control, parameterization, as Zuber claimed above with regard to his Instrumental Theater work. For the speaker's text, Kagel assembled texts relating to music from various eras, deformed words in some parts (decomposition), and then composed a series of these in a manner of montage (recomposition). Hence, the text is inconsistent and in some passages even unintelligible, which results in, as Rebstock claims above, "the speaker's deformed and ridiculous way of speaking." This was precisely Kagel's intention. Kagel provided further parameters for this text: dynamic (loud, normal, quiet, etc), pitch (high, normal, low, etc), and tempo (fast, normal, slow, etc). The speaker was to read each text segment aloud, observing the combination of three levels indicated by the respective parameters.

Kagel's application of parametric thought to *Sur scène*, however, consciously diverged from the control characteristic of serialism or electroacoustic composition. The levels of each parameter are verbally precise but never arithmetical nor algorithmic. This aspect suggests an implicit indeterminacy: even though the text and instructions are verbally determined, the musical result is not as precise as that determined by means of arithmetic or algorithm. Kagel's parameterization in *Sur scène* thus has hidden depths. It provides the performers a space for creating their own fashion of presenting the piece but allows the composer to express his critical message as well.

²⁷ Ibid., 243: "die Rhythmik der Gestik, deren Akzente und Gliederungen sollen möglichst anders sein als die Rhythmik und Akzente des gesprochenen Texts. Und das Bedeutungsvolle der Gestik steht in Kontrast zur deformierten und lächerlichen Sprache des Sprechers an dieser Stelle, der nämlich offenbar an einem Sprachfehler leidet. Darüber hinaus korrespondiert die Gestik des Sprechers aber auch mit der des Mimen. Während der Sprecher die Gesten mit der rechten Hand auszuführen hat, führt er gleichzeitig die linke Hand ans Kinn und nimmt damit die gleiche Haltung ein, die der Mime schon vorher eingenommen hat, eine Art Denkerpose."

Indeed, the parameterization of the speaker's part appears to be a satirical attempt to expose the authoritative or dogmatic air of serialism, which had been so influential in postwar avant-garde music of the 1950s. Different combinations of levels in the three parameters often contort the seriously written texts, which could be interpreted as Kagel's derision against "the academicism of Darmstadt . . . , bringing the piece into proximity with a satirical sketch."²⁸ This aspect underpins the characteristics of control in this particular Instrumental Theater piece, which subtly criticizes the tendency toward complete control in serialism. On this basis, *Sur scène* requires musical and theatrical creativity from the speaker within the detailed instructions and indications of each parameter, as opposed to simply reading the text aloud.

Creativity is an indispensable keyword not only for Kagel's theatrical compositions, but also for the musicians who enact them. In *Sur scène*, the instrumentalists and singer rely most upon their musical creativity to construct a form based on their interpretation of the piece's structure as well as Kagel's satire. In the published score, there is no conventional musical notation, only verbal instructions. For example, at the beginning an instrumentalist plays apparently arbitrary notes on a piano in practicing fashion and at times plays some chords *fortissimo*. After the following pause, two instrumentalists produce the sound of an arbitrary chord on the piano and a celesta, the dynamic range of which is soft to very loud (*p – ff*). According to Rebstock, Kagel's manuscript example of the instrumental score for the premiere of *Sur scène*, which is unpublished, is written in conventional notation. Although notes and their individual registers are determined, "the performer has musical freedom within exact limits (note/chord materials), by which a typical activity of musical life, i.e., practicing, is represented."²⁹ This reaffirms the direction of Kagel's parametric thought as different from that of the serialists. *Sur scène*'s parameterization provides exact limits, but only as a general framework within which musical freedom must be exercised.

²⁸ Heile, 40.

²⁹ Rebstock, 260: "Der Spieler bekommt innerhalb exakter Grenzen (Akkordmaterial) eine musikalische Freiheit, wodurch eine typische Tätigkeit des Musiklebens, nämlich das Üben, dargestellt wird." An extracted musical example from the manuscript is available in *ibid.*, 261. As Rebstock points out, the notation style of the manuscript is very similar to Kagel's piano work *Mimetics* (*Metapiece*) and also in part to Cage's *Concert for Piano and Orchestra*. See *ibid.*, 169-170.

The controlled indeterminacy of *Sur scène* is comparable to Cage's *Water Music*, for instance, in that its detailed time points, dynamics, and "instrumentations" are charted in the score. No doubt these are also parameters, but Cage composed the individual parameters of *Water Music* by chance operations; in other words, he used the indeterminate/aleatoric procedure for the *composition* of the piece.³⁰ Thus the way the pianist performs was fixed at this point and notated in the score in detail. Nevertheless, Cage anticipated hearing sounds and seeing actions that he did not expect in the course of a performance of *Water Music*. Such an expectation was also true of Kagel in *Sur scène*. However, a marked difference between Cage and Kagel concerning controlled indeterminacy in these pieces was that the latter never relied on any kind of chance operation like the former did. Furthermore, Kagel had a deterministic idea of his theatricalization that it must be realized by the "highest clarity to unify music and theater to a third dimension."³¹ In his conceptualization of Instrumental Theater, according to Kagel, clarity is a necessary factor

to activate a listener's visual sense, while he preserves a sight of *what* occurs and *how* it is made. That is to say, the less accessible the realization processes are kept, the less the active participation of the listeners can be aroused.³²

With regard to the idea of multimedia composition, Cage's *Water Music* may have inspired Kagel to conceptualize a space unifying acoustic and visual elements.³³ Hermann Danuser even regards the piece as paradigmatic for Kagel's – or avant-gardist – Instrumental Theater, in addition to "an early model of experimental action music," "scenic composition," and "musical theater of avant-garde."³⁴ Notwithstanding, the aesthetic directions underlying *Water Music* and *Sur scène* (and other Instrumental

³⁰ See Cage, Kirby, and Schechner, 60. Hermann Danuser claims that a chance operation Cage employed for *Water Music* is *I-Ching*, a compositional procedure before the formal structure is determined and thus the performer has "no freedom of decision/choice at all" (*keinerlei Entscheidungsfreiheit*), see Danuser, "John Cage: Water Music," in *Pipers Enzyklopädie des Musiktheaters*, Band 1, 1986, 490.

³¹ Mauricio Kagel, "Vom Selbstverständnis und von den Aufgaben des Künstlers," in Lexikonredaktion des Bibliographischen Institut, ed., *Meyers Neues Lexikon* (Mannheim: Bibliographisches Institut), Band 4: 599.

³² Ibid.: "Diese Deutlichkeit ist zugleich ein Mittel zur Aktivierung des schauenden Zuhörers, indem er einen Anblick davon erhält, *was* geschieht und *wie* es gemacht wird. Je mehr nämlich die Realisationsprozesse verschlossen bleiben, desto weniger kann die aktive Teilnahme des Zuhörers geweckt werden."

³³ Kagel was in fact present for the performance of *Water Music* by David Tudor at Mary Bauermeister's atelier in Cologne, a performing space offered to avant-garde composers, critics, and writers, that Kagel occasionally attended.

³⁴ Danuser, 489.

Theater works including *Antithese*) are different. Cage's use of water as an acoustic as well as a theatrical element derived from an aspect of his idealism, although his inclusion of water as a compositional material also had practical reasons. Cage recounts "the notion that the world is made up of water, earth, fire, etc. and . . . that water was a useful thing to concentrate on."³⁵ In contrast, even before *Antithese* the satirical contents of verbal, acoustic, and action presentations in *Sur scène* censured "a set of old problems of modern music: the increasing degree of specialization and distance between the contemporary musical work and the (non-professional) audience."³⁶ Thus, even if *Water Music* was a paradigm of Kagel's Instrumental Theater, Kagel pioneered his own musico-theatrical vocabulary in *Sur scène*.

Ulrich Dibelius's statement concerning Kagel's developmental process of theatricalization suffices to summarize characteristics of Instrumental Theater, as well as its aesthetic distinction from Cage's musical theater.

Kagel's attempts to question traditional aesthetic norms and to annul them as much as possible. . . . His ventures gradually moved in a wider radius and gained every new, compositionally usurped element – space, countenance, light, stage setting, film, artificial or real scenes, common or strangely invented objects – meanwhile, also a new foreign substance of catalytic potency.³⁷

The individuality of Kagel's theatrical approach must have given him confidence to be the inventor of Instrumental Theater.

Structure of Theatricalized *Antithese*

While Cage never set out to realize his idea of theatricalization of electronic music, which he addressed in the 1962 interview with Reynolds (see page 143), that same year Kagel undertook to compose the stage version of *Antithese*. Although the

³⁵ Cage, Kirby, and Schechner, 60.

³⁶ Inge Kovács, "Instrumentales Theater," 333: "eine alte Problematik der modernen Musik . . . : die zunehmende Spezialisierung und die zunehmende Distanz zwischen dem zeitgenössischen Musikschaffen und dem (nichtprofessionellen) Publikum." This was also true of Cage's idea, but his musical presentation of this idea was in general not as sharp, explicit, and critical as Kagel's.

³⁷ Ulrich Dibelius, "Szene und Technik: Zwei Aspekte einer Entwicklung," in *Die Musik der sechziger Jahre*, ed. Rudolf Stephan (Mainz: B. Schott's Söhne, 1972), 59: "Kagels Versuche, überlieferte ästhetische Normen in Frage zu stellen und möglichst auszuhebeln . . . Allmählich bewegten sich seine Unternehmungen in einen immer weiteren Umkreis von Musik und erwarben sich mit jedem neuen, kompositorisch usurpierten Element – Raum, Mimik, Licht, Bühnenbild, Film, gestellten oder realen Szenerien, alltäglichen oder kurios erfundenen Gegenständen – zugleich auch einen neuen Fremdkörper von katalytischer Kraft."

fundamental concept of Kagel's Instrumental Theater requires a musician to perform music and to act simultaneously on the stage, Kagel applied it differently to *Antithese*. Here an actor concentrates exclusively on the acting and does not perform a musical instrument. This concept was not simply a replacement for the absence of an instrumentalist, but an attempt to consolidate the electroacoustic music, action, and stage scenery.

Kagel's theatricalization of *Antithese* is in a sense more multimedia and more theatrical than Cage's conception of theatrical electronic music. Cage's idea, on the one hand, entails "the actual, visible manipulation of the machines"³⁸ and implies his expectation of seeing movements that a machine operator (or a musician who operates the machines) makes. The machine operator has nothing to do with acting, however, so Cage had no reason to plot out the course of performance. On the other hand, Kagel's installation of the actor in *Antithese* indicates a newly added dimension, a parameter in which he provides a "libretto" for the actor.

Furthermore, as Rebstock explains, the stage version of *Antithese* is in fact Kagel's "first piece that is directly conceptualized for a theater stage."³⁹ In *Sur scène*, for instance, the stage instructions specify only the positions where individual performers should stand. In contrast, *Antithese* prescribes the specific stage scenery consisting of various electronic devices for the reproduction of music; for example, loudspeakers, radios, turntables, magnetic tapes, and tape recorders. The instruction for the stage scenery in the published score gives further details:

The scenery is provided by a collection of electro-acoustical machines of various kinds and vintage on movable stands with tables. This scene should characterise a neglected, dusty laboratory and at the same time give the impression of a retrospective exhibition of the apparatus which has been used for relaying sound from the beginning of the century up to the present day.⁴⁰

This particular theatrical staging does not aim at entertaining the audience. It is rather a necessary component to which "the actor in silence is supposed to react."⁴¹

The predetermined stage design of *Antithese* has no parallel in Cage's musical theater. The detailed staging in *Antithese* is of the "highest clarity," an essential principle

³⁸ Cage, "Interview with Roger Reynolds, 1962," 342.

³⁹ Rebstock, 181: "*Antithese* ist das erste Stück, das direct für eine Theaterbühne konzipiert ist."

⁴⁰ Mauricio Kagel, *Antithese* (Frankfurt: Henry Litolff's Verlag/C. F. Peters, 1965), 19.

⁴¹ Kagel, "Über das Schauen des Zuhörers," 394: "... sollte ein stummer Darsteller agieren."

of Instrumental Theater, which was necessary for creating an interaction between the performer and a set of electronic devices. By contrast, Cage gives the performer of *Theatre Piece* (1960) “complete freedom for determining his original material”⁴² as well as actions, except for the time frame, which is the only “parameter” the composer fixes. Rebstock observes that in terms of “compositional control,” *Theatre Piece* and *Antithese* are at opposite poles, because in the latter “Kagel gives the performer limited creative freedom only for [determining] the series of actions.”⁴³ In short, while Cage “expected” the unexpected, Kagel “composed” a specific situation for an actor to interact with the electronic equipment.

The clarity of composition of the stage design for *Antithese* is also necessary for representing Kagel’s musical and critical thought, as previously discussed in the context of his thematization of scandal in an electroacoustic concert. The stage scenery is in essence a counterpart to the tape music, as both are preconditioned compositional components. Kagel’s intention with the stage scenery was to represent a concise but compendious history of music technical devices “from the beginning of the century up to the present day [the early 1960s].”⁴⁴ This “exhibition” makes concrete the ways that technology had increased accessibility to music both inside and outside the concert hall. Such progress likely had a positive connotation for the audience. The music itself, however, reflects issues of the time (presumably between the early 1950s and early 1960s), particularly the negative reception of electroacoustic music and its means of performance. Indeed, the virtual audience in *Antithese* is confused, agitated, irritated, and incited to turmoil by the electronic sound. The set of electronic and electronically related devices on the stage complements the set of fictitious events in the music. In other words, there is a dexterous combination of the visually real and the audibly conceivable, a pre-defined conceptual space in – and with – which the actor is supposed to act and interact.

Indeed, the interaction between the multimedia components in *Antithese* – in terms of the music and stage scenery – already “addresses the historicity of [compositional]

⁴² Rebstock, 181: “die volle Freiheit zur Bestimmung seines Ausgangsmaterials.”

⁴³ Ibid.: “Einzig für die Abfolge der Aktionen räumt Kagel dem Interpreten einen gewissen Spielraum ein.”

⁴⁴ Kagel, *Antithese*, 19.

technique.”⁴⁵ This particular concept is a salient aspect of Kagel’s work overall – thematization of one or more issues concerning musical composition. With the multidimensional presentation of his musical thought in *Instrumental Theater*, this aspect becomes more evident and observable.

The theme of historicity of compositional technique derived from Kagel’s socio-critical observation of electroacoustic composition and its public presentation at a concert hall, as discussed in Chapter Three. Kagel’s criticism in this respect prompted his unique satire of the fact that the rapid and unprecedented development of technology had confused both composers and listeners. Among the historical technical devices exhibited for the stage of *Antithese*, there are machines listeners could use to enjoy musical listening; for example, radio, turntable, loudspeakers and even television. Despite the listeners’ debt to such equipment, which could cultivate their musical knowledge, it was sometimes difficult to operate and thus occasionally resulted in displeasure or frustration. Electroacoustic music essentially intensified these feelings. Kagel sought to highlight the confusion in the way the real audience in a presentation of *Antithese* sees the abstruse looking, inhuman objects and hears the electronically generated music at the same time. In other words, Kagel wanted to stimulate sensual interaction between the visual historicity of technological development and the music derived from its advances. Furthermore, Kagel added another layer of interaction to these sensual impulses: the performer’s physical actions. That is, in the complete form of *Antithese*’s stage version, the audience is also to look at another listener – the actor on stage – who physically interacts with both the devices and the music.

As briefly touched upon in Chapter One the published score of *Antithese* lists twenty-three main actions. Each main action includes further detailed forms for its realization (except for “AD LIBITUM” whose realizations are literally ad-libs); e.g., for “GASTRONOMIC,” there are four choices, namely; “a) drink furtively from bottles concealed in various places, b) take sandwiches out of pockets, machines and attaché case; then . . . , c) chew gum, d) chew nails.”⁴⁶ Some main actions include realization forms that are associated with electronic devices and their accessories in the stage design.

⁴⁵ Kovács, 338: “die Historizität der Technik thematisiert (*Antithese*).”

⁴⁶ Kagel, *Antithese*, 17.

In “EXIT,” for instance, three out of six forms involve electronics; “c) holding a portable radio to the ear, d) backwards, unrolling wire (or tape, or cable),” and “e) pulling a table of apparatus.” The Figure 4.1 extracts electronic-apparatus-related forms of realization.

Figure 4.1. Main actions and their realization forms relating to electronic-apparatus⁴⁷

ATHLETIC:	a) - physical training (a voice calls directives through megaphone or loudspeaker)
	b) - weight-lifting (a radio or something similar in each hand)
CLEAN:	c) - blow dust (talcum!) from machines and valves, causing thick clouds of dust
	d) - pick up certain machines and polish them on overall sleeve
	f) - breathe on and polish, for instance, television screens.
COMMAND:	a) - cause several loudspeakers standing some distance away to stop by means of hand-given signals.
	b) - stand at the front of the stage, give a signal upwards with the right hand while pointing with the left to a loudspeaker
	d) - indicate television sets in working order, which should be switched off from backstage
CONNECT:	a) - several machines by means of hosepipe or vacuumcleaner pipe
	b) - pull long cables and tapes out of machines, wind them round a chair (at the front of the stage) and knot them round table-legs and apparatus [omitting the rest]
	c) - pull cables and tapes from tables and apparatus and wind them (cocoon fashion) round the body
DESTROY:	a) - drop a container of radio valves
	d) - let a heavy object fixed to a cord fall from above with great force onto the apparatus [omitting the rest]
	e) - have a number of iron objects, fixed to cords, let down onto the apparatus in the same tempo
DISTORT:	a) - place objects in the cone of one or more open loudspeakers
	c) - turn various knobs. At the same time, the technician in the control room performs distortions of the sound and feedbacks
EVASIVE:	a) - walk very quickly, almost at a run, towards a loudspeaker and jump aside at the last moment
	b) - move forwards on hands and knees, clearing cables and wires out of the way
EXIT:	c) - holding a portable radio to the ear
	d) - backwards, unrolling wire (or tape, or cable)
	e) - pulling a table of apparatus
FURIOUS:	a) - tear out several cables and other connections
	b) - hit loudspeaker or radio with the flat of the hand
	c) - place a small loudspeaker or radio on the ground and maltreat it with hands and feet (without touching it)
GENTLE:	a) - pick up a transistor radio, stroke it, sink slowly to the ground and embrace the radio
	b) - dismantle one or several loudspeakers or other machines
	d) - knealing [<i>sic</i>] near a loudspeaker [omitting the rest]
	e) - tenderly embrace a machine
PREVENT:	a) - turn radios and loudspeakers around or place them face-downwards on the table

⁴⁷ Items in the list are extracted from the instruction for “Realisation of the main actions” in *ibid.*, 15-19.

- b) - hold hand in front of loudspeakers
 - c) - hide radios and open loudspeakers with back and hands
 - d) - cover machines and tables with cloths
- SURPRISED:
 - a) - turn a radio or loudspeaker around and inspect it from the rear
 - d) - set an old gramophone going (if possible with horn); stop it after about 2 minutes
 - e) - play a tape (of TRANSICION I for electronic sounds by Mauricio Kagel); stop tape after about 4.5 minutes. A technician can start the tape and connect it to the other loudspeakers, or it can actually be played over the loudspeaker of the tape-recorder
- TEST:
 - a) - plug in a radio and twiddle all the knobs
 - b) - plug in radios, tape-recorders and gramophones, vary their timbre and volume
 - c) - turn on a television set and vary brightness, contrast and channels (turn the volume up high and operate it sporadically and staccato)
 - d) - turn on several television sets with different programmes
 - e) - poke head into radio or loudspeaker
 - f) - listening carefully, follow the sound at various loudspeakers and machines
- TIMID:
 - a) - look around in all directions, then crawl into an empty television set and make appropriate facial expressions behind the screen
 - b) - handle certain dismantled machines extremely carefully [omitting the rest]
 - c) - startled by the music, the performer tries to turn down the volume, which instead grows louder. There is a gradual crescendo until the loudspeakers' greatest power is reached. The performer winces and laughs embarrassedly; at this moment the volume starts to return to normal
- UNEASY:
 - b) - keep putting headphones on and taking them off again, getting more and more nervous. Put them on again

The action forms above do not necessarily represent negative aspects of electroacoustic music, but rather they are possible activities with electronic agents that transmit recorded music or visual images. In any case, these instructions tacitly permit the actor to create a unique interaction with the apparatus, so that the technical aspect of “historicity” is accentuated. *Antithese* also allows the performer to combine this interaction with another – an interaction between the performer and the music.

For realization of the stage performance, *Antithese* offers three different compositional procedures. That is, the process of structuring a form to perform the piece is determined, dependent upon which component from the music, actions, and stage scenery the performer first takes as the starting point of the composition. Theoretically, this concept allows the performer to produce at least three different versions. When taking the music as the point of departure, for example, the performer has to first understand the contents and formal structure of the music thoroughly, and then form a series of main actions that reflects an interpretation of the music. The performer is thus supposed to opt

for realization forms that can translate “the musical sections into dramatic activity.”⁴⁸ Consequently, the performer as a second listener (the first audience is “composed” into the music) interacts with the music and the machines (and their accessories) on stage.

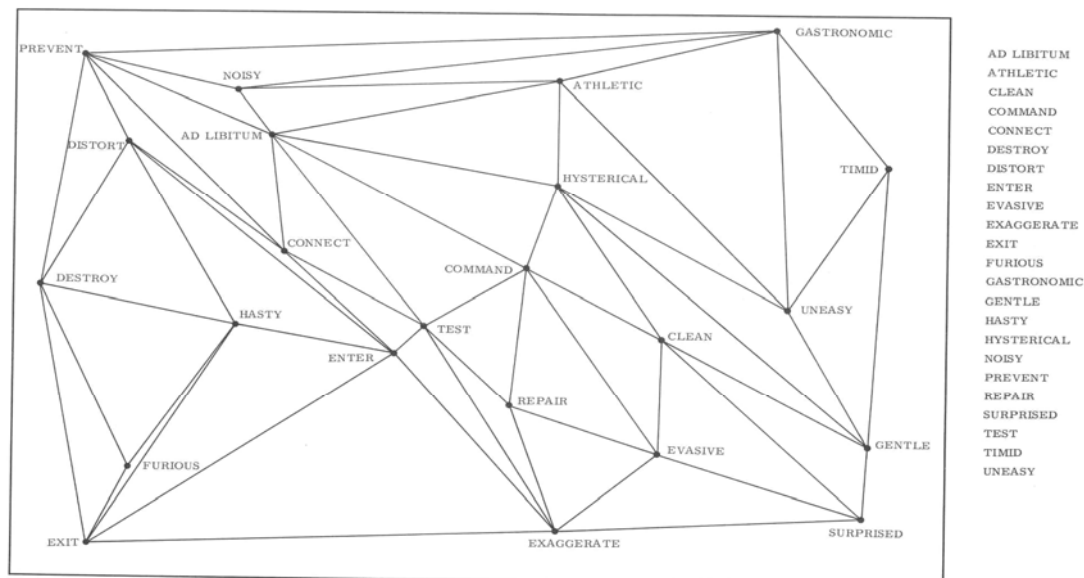
Due to the pre-programmed structure, Rebstock’s identification of the theatricalized *Antithese* as the opposite extreme to Cage’s musical theater becomes more convincing. Kagel himself stated, too, that *Antithese*’s “scenic event must not be improvised, but rather rehearsed in a highly precise manner for the respective performance.”⁴⁹ In comparison to the musical and stage setting parts, the action part holds a larger degree of indeterminism insofar as it consists of three layers of arbitrariness: the choice of main actions, their order, and the choice of a compositional procedure to combine the music, actions, and stage scenery. However, arbitrariness is limited by the framework of the graphic score, because the “performer should begin with one main action, and, by following one of the lines [indicated in the graphic score], make a selection among the next main actions.”⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Kagel, *Antithese*, 21.

⁴⁹ Kagel, “Über das Schauen des Zuhörers,” 394: “Der szenische Ablauf dürfte nicht improvisiert, sondern für die jeweilige Aufführung höchst präzise einstudiert werden.”

⁵⁰ Kagel, *Antithese*, 15.

Figure 4.2. Graphic score of *Antithese* (Henry Litolff's Verlag/C. F. Peters, 1965), English version⁵¹



If starting a series of actions from ENTER, for instance, then the following action could be TEST, EXAGGERATE, EXIT, HASTY, DISTORT, or CONNECT. In the course of forming a series of main actions, the performer can select an action more than once (but not simply repeat it), but the realization form must be different than before. While there are more detailed instructions for actions, Kagel did not aim to control the performer, but rather to stimulate the performer's creativity.

Antithese's high demands on the performer's creativity seems related also to the piece's unique concept, compared to Kagel's other Instrumental Theater pieces. Instead of requiring a musician who is capable of acting, Kagel reversed the basic concept of Instrumental Theater by requiring an actor who may or may not have an understanding of music. More specifically, *Antithese* requires an actor capable of "composing" a series of actions based on the understanding of the piece's concept. This particular variation of the Instrumental Theater concept suggests his enthusiasm for exploring interdisciplinarity

⁵¹ Ibid., 14. Reprinted, by permission, of Edition Peters, New York. The published libretto/score contains German, English, and French versions. Whereas the verbal instructions in English and French are translated from the original German version, the individual graphic scores are different from one another. Compare *ibid.*, 2 (German), 14 (English), and 26 (French). The German and French versions are reproduced in appendix B by kind permission of Edition Peters, New York.

beyond merely combining music and extra-musical elements from other disciplines. In *Antithese*, Kagel transformed a principle of the compositional structural process into the action part; this procedure was necessary to distinguish the interdisciplinarity of his work from a simple combination of heterogeneous compositional components. Especially noteworthy is that this transformational approach to the interdisciplinary aspect did not inherently reduce the practicality of both realization forms, nor of the procedure for making a series of these. The degree of practicality, however, relied on the skills and commitment of a gifted actor, whom Kagel found in Alfred Feussner.

Composition of Main Actions with Alfred Feussner

Published Version (1965)

Feussner was a significant figure not only in the formalization of *Antithese*'s stage version, but also in the development of Kagel's Instrumental Theater and film productions. It was Feussner who performed the speaker's part of *Sur scène*, the first piece on which Kagel and Feussner collaborated, at the premiere in Bremen on 6 May 1962 and at the following performance in Munich 1963. In an obituary for Feussner in 1969, Kagel wrote that he was one of the first to understand that Kagel "strove not for a total theater . . . , but rather for a totally anti-total theater."⁵² Kagel also admired the actor's "sovereign creativity" in the speaker's role.⁵³ Their collaboration on the staging of *Antithese* and the film version (1965) was much more intensive and engaged after they formed a deep friendship through performances of *Sur scène*. Not only did Feussner appear as the actor in performance events of *Antithese*, but he and Kagel also wrote the film script together. Furthermore, Feussner might have contributed to the realization of the film version; although the recipient is unclear, Feussner wrote a proposal to shoot the film of *Antithese*.⁵⁴ In any case, Feussner also appeared in Kagel's first film production,

⁵² See Mauricio Kagel, "Ein widerspenstiger Abschied," in *Tamtam: Dialoge und Monologe zur Musik*, ed. Felix Schmidt (München: R. Piper, 1975), 72: "Feussner verstand al seiner der ersten, daß ich kein totales Theater anstrebte . . . , sondern vielmehr ein antitotales totales Theater." The essay first appeared in a German newspaper *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* under the title "Ein widerspenstiger Abschied: Mauricio Kagel zum Tod der Regisseurs Alfred Feussner" on 5 September 1969.

⁵³ See *ibid.*

⁵⁴ Alfred Feussner presumably to the NDR Hamburg (no recipient is indicated), 12 August 1964, Filme *Antithese* [5/7] [1], Sammlung Mauricio Kagel, Paul Sacher Stiftung, Basel. At the end of the letter, Feussner maintains: "The result of this studio work – a film and television-compatible production – should subsequently represent the conclusion of the 'developmental history of a piece': "Das Ergebnis dieser

Antithese: Film für einen Darsteller mit elektronischen und öffentlichen Klängen, as the protagonist.⁵⁵ Kagel and Feussner further cooperated on scripts for Kagel's films, *Solo* (1957) and *Duo* (1967-68), and also produced these for television. Like *Antithese*, these films were directed by Kagel and acted by Feussner. Moreover, as an actor, Feussner premiered Kagel's *Tremens: Szenische Montage eines Tests für zwei Darsteller und elektrische Instrumente* (1963-65) in Bremen on 6 May 1966,⁵⁶ and *Kommentar und Extempore* and *Variationen* in Frankfurt on 5 June 1967.⁵⁷

The published score of *Antithese*, appeared in 1965, is the final form of the stage version as a result of several revisions. By the time of publication, Kagel had attended not only the premiere at the *Kölner Schauspielhaus* on 23 June 1963, but also at least one other performance at the *Settimana Internazionale di Nuova Musica* (International Week of New Music) in Palermo, Italy, in the same year.⁵⁸ Feussner was the actor at least in the Cologne premiere. Presumably, the published version of *Antithese* is based on the practices of these performances and thus gives not only instructions for a structural procedure, but also interpretive suggestions. For instance, in the instructions for the procedure that takes the music as the starting point, which is briefly discussed above, Kagel adds the following footnote:

Because of the permutable, preformed actions, it will be clear that the actor cannot give an interpretation of the musical processes, as, with the variable forming of the scenic order, the independence from music is determined beforehand. In any case, a "faithfully adapted" transference into adequate movement-sequences would be out of place.⁵⁹

At first glance, this note may seem perplexing, because it implies the impossibility of conveying the performer's interpretation.

However, one can understand Kagel's structural intention for the staging, if not overlook the important keywords "independence from music." Formulating main actions

Werkstattarbeit soll dann anschließend in einer eigenen Film und Fernsehgerechten Produktion den Abschluß dieser 'Entwicklungsgeschichte eines Stückes' geben," underlined by Feussner.

⁵⁵ The film was produced originally for a television program of NDR [*Norddeutscher Rundfunk*] (North German Broadcasting) in Hamburg. For the filmography, see Hillebrand, 26.

⁵⁶ See Schnebel, *Mauricio Kagel: Musik Theater Film*, 142.

⁵⁷ See Heile, *The Music of Mauricio Kagel*, 54.

⁵⁸ It was the fourth year of the musical festival, which took place on 2 to 9 October. For the details, see Mario Bortolotto, "Italy: New Music at Palermo," trans. David L. Burrows, *Perspectives of New Music* 2/2 (1964): 159-163, John S. Weissmann, "Current Chronicle," *The Musical Quarterly* 50/2 (1964): 243-250, and Helga Böhrer, "Palermo 1963," *Melos: Zeitschrift für Neue Musik* 12/30 (1963): 426-428.

⁵⁹ Kagel, *Antithese*, 23.

after listening to the music several times does not really mean that the action part is supposed to “accompany” the music. Rather, since the musical part is merely an initial motivation to construct the entire form of the performance, the actor is not supposed to physically mime images pictured when listening to the musical part.

The exclusive task of the performer remains, therefore, to find the superior reasons – analytical – psychological, frivolous, psychosomatic, senseless, peripatetic, tone-psychological, etc., etc. – , which justify his acting to himself. . . . One thing . . . , remains important: he must play his part extremely intensively [*sic*], and especially convincingly and realistically. A stylised performance – between pantomime and dance – would destroy the artificial character of the piece.⁶⁰

With this concept, Kagel characterized the stage version of *Antithese* as “anti-illusionistic,” which may give rise to a peculiar tension when the performance takes place with the “illusionistic” music.⁶¹ Presumably, Kagel encountered this tension in Feussner’s performance, which must have been “extremely intense, convincing, and realistic.” Hence, it is possible to assume that Feussner contributed to Kagel’s composition of detailed instructions for the action part. At the same time, Kagel perhaps became convinced of the necessity of a certain degree of indeterminacy, which he found in Feussner’s outstanding creativity.

Also, if Kagel already had the idea of excluding miming-like actions in the early conception of the action scheme, no doubt a decisive factor in solidifying this concept was his collaboration with Feussner. For the premiere of *Antithese*, it was indeed Feussner, who designed a series of main actions. Recalling their collaboration, Kagel wrote: “the more we became familiar with the mechanics of this mutative libretto, the clearer the necessity for performing all actions as realistically as possible became to us as well.”⁶² This anecdote suggests that Feussner was an important compositional partner of *Antithese*, and not just a mere actor. In other words, the final form and variegated contents of *Antithese* could have not been realized as published without Kagel’s intensive work on the performances with Feussner.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ See Kagel, “Über das Schauen des Zuhörers,” 397 and Pascal Decroupet and Inge Kovács, “Szenische Kompositionen,” in *Im Zenit der Moderne*, 330.

⁶² Kagel, “Über das Schauen des Zuhörers,” 397: “Je vertrauter wir mit der Mechanik dieses veränderlichen Librettos wurden, desto klarer wurde uns auch die Notwendigkeit, alle Aktionen möglichst realistisch zu spielen.”

Initial Sketch to First Version (1962/63)

Between the final published version and the previous versions there are significant differences. Especially worth reviewing are the revisions of main actions and a change in the total number of actions. For the former, the process of revisions can be divided into three phases: initial sketch – first version – final version. The latter change is closely related to the revision between the first and final versions (and a few minor changes in the course of the revision). The list below offers an overview of the revisions. Since Kagel completed the whole process of revisions in German – i.e., the template for the English and French versions he subsequently composed, presumably for the published version – the discussion here deals with the German version.

Figure 4.3. Variants of action schemes of *Antithese*

Initial sketch → First version (1962/63)		Published version (1965)	
1	ABTRETEN	ABTRETEN	1
2	AUFMERKSAM	AD LIBITUM	2
3	AUFTRETEN	ÄNGSTLICH	3
4	AUSWEICHEN	ATHLETISCH	4
5	BEEILEN	AUFTRETEN	5
6	BEFEHLEN	AUSWEICHEN	6
7	BEFREMDET	BEEILEN	7
8	BRÜLLEND	BEFEHLEN	8
9	DESPOTISCH	BEFREMDET	9
10	FROMM (EISERN BLEIBEN)	GASTRONOMISCH	10
11	HYSTERISCH	GERÄUSCHVOLL	11
12	LUSTLOS	HYSTERISCH	12
13	SANFT	PRÜFEN	13
14	SCHLUMMERND	PUTZEN	14
15	TEILNAHMSVOLL (SCHUATLEN)	REPARIEREN	15
16	TUSCHELN	SANFT	16
17	ÜBERLEGEN	ÜBERTREIBEN	17
18	ÜBERTREIBEN	UNRUHIG	18
19	UNRUHIG	VERBINDEN	19
20	VERBINDEN (VERFREMDEN)	VERHINDERN	20
21	VERHINDERN	VERZERREN	21
22	VERZERREN(VERNICHTEN)	WÜTEND	22
23	WÜTEND	ZERSTÖREN	23
24	ZUSAMMENBRECHEN (ZURÜCKBLEIBEN)		

Main actions in parentheses in the left column are those which Kagel initially sketched and then crossed out.⁶³ Kagel essentially fixed the first version, replacing these five crossed out actions with new actions. Also, main actions in bold in the left column were eliminated in the final version. According to Kagel's sketches, preserved in the Paul Sacher Stiftung in Basel, Kagel drafted at least two different graphic scores for the action scheme. While both are web-like in appearance, prototypical of the published graphic score, not only the shapes of the webs, but also connections among main actions are different.

Of the two sketches, Kagel settled on the one and revised it as the first version. Meanwhile, he made a list of realization forms for each main action, which looks similar to that of the published score. Based on the graphic score and list (and presumably, based on Feussner's "composition" of a series of main actions), Kagel created a concrete plan for performance, which displays main actions he selected, the individual realization forms, loudness of the taped music, degrees of lighting, and a specific timing for superimposing another taped piece of music, *Transición I*, and its duration.⁶⁴ This detailed plan confirms Kagel's remark that a performance of the stage version has to be rehearsed as precisely as possible.

While it is unclear if this plan was actually carried out at the premiere, Kagel and Feussner did use the first version of the main actions on that occasion. Decroupet and Kovács assume: "In an earlier version of the work (*Antithese*), on which apparently the premiere with Alfred Feussner was based, Kagel had still . . . specified 24 main actions."⁶⁵ The authors' attention to the number 24 reflects one of the most consequential principles of musical composition in the panorama of postwar avant-garde musical scene – serialism, as the number is a multiple of twelve. From this perspective, Decroupet and Kovács seem to presume that 24 actions in *Antithese* allude to the influence of serialism on Kagel's aesthetic and technique of musical composition. The authors contend that

⁶³ Kagel wrote the initial sketch of main actions in alphabetical order in a memo pad. *Sammlung Mauricio Kagel*, Paul Sacher Stiftung, Basel.

⁶⁴ It is a realization form in BEFREMDET in the first version and remains in the published version (under SURPRISED in the English version). Kagel and Feussner employed this form in the film version as well.

⁶⁵ See Decroupet and Kovács, "Musik und Szene" in *Im Zenit*, 328: "In einer frühen Fassung des Werkes, auf der offenbar die Uraufführung mit Alfred Feussner basierte, hatte Kagel . . . noch . . . 24 Hauptaktionen definiert."

“serial thought (*serielle Denken*) is nevertheless clearly present” in the piece.⁶⁶ Although Kagel had no intention of composing *Antithese* as a serialist piece, Decroupet and Kovács’s claim is persuasive when recalling that the performer is supposed to form a series of actions. However, their assumption of a direct relationship between the use of 24 in *Antithese* and serial thought may be debatable.

In the initial sketch, Kagel indicates numbers 1-24 on the left-hand side of each main action. This proves that Kagel adhered to the number 24 when he began composing the stage version of *Antithese*, and that the intention lasted at least until the premiere. Also, Kagel notes an Arabic numeral 24 in some drafts of the graphic score for the first version, as if it were a framework for composition of the action part, reconfirming the total number of main actions. It is nevertheless unclear whether Kagel consciously decided on the number of main actions, as a multiple of 12, and if not, whether 24 was vaguely set as the starting point of the composition.

Decroupet and Kovács also point out that the revised number of main actions in the final version, 23, represents Kagel’s deliberate avoidance of direct connection to a serialist principle, as he tended to regard himself as an objector to serialism at the time of the composition.⁶⁷ They therefore assume that Kagel meticulously bypassed numbers that were arithmetically related to twelve in the final version. In addition, Decroupet and Kovács suggest that “the actor is supposed to account for at least 11 realization forms [instead of 12], and has to perform 5 minutes and 30 seconds [instead of 6] at the least,”⁶⁸ as evidence of Kagel’s circumvention of any 12-related numbers. In this hypothesis, however, it is still unclear if the numbers 23, 11, and 5.30 really resulted from his conclusion to substitute them for 24, 12, and 6, respectively.

In any case, it does not seem that he mechanically subtracted one item from 24 actions. For instance, the Paul Sacher Stiftung holds an interesting draft of instructions for the outline of scenic realization. At the beginning of the description, Kagel writes that

⁶⁶ Ibid. Details of Kagel’s serial thought in *Antithese* will be discussed in the next chapter.

⁶⁷ See *ibid.*: “. . . Kagel sich in dieser Zeit gerne als Gegner des »Serialismus« darstellte.”

⁶⁸ Ibid.: “der Darsteller soll mindestens 11 Realisationsformen berücksichtigen, und vorgeschrieben ist eine Mindestdauer von 5 Minuten und 30 Sekunden.” Insertions in square brackets are mine.

“the libretto consists of 26 main actions.”⁶⁹ In another draft for realization forms of 24 main actions (for the first version), which is neatly typewritten, Kagel notes two additional main actions by hand; PUTZEN (CLEAN in the English version) and LAUFEN.⁷⁰ Hence, it is plausible to assume that Kagel temporarily intended 26 main actions. These materials prove that Kagel explored and attempted a variety of options for a final version,⁷¹ rather than simply seeking to avoid “serialist numbers.”

Regarding collaboration with Feussner on performance of *Antithese*’s stage version, Kagel designed other action schemes, noting “2. Fassung Feussner” (second version Feussner) and “3. Fassung A. Feussner” (third version A. Feussner), respectively.⁷² These manuscripts display main actions and the individual realization forms only briefly, but in both versions, all the items of main action correspond to those in the published version. Since there is no indication of dates, it is unclear when Kagel and Feussner organized these earlier versions and performed them. And yet these materials prove convincingly that by attempting various realizations with Kagel, Feussner played an indispensable role in the process of solidifying *Antithese*’s concept and compositional materials. It is therefore no exaggeration to say that realizations of the published version and the film version derived directly from the elaborate plans for the stage presentation and the performing practices of Kagel and Feussner. Feussner’s contribution to the developmental process not only of *Antithese*, but also of the Instrumental Theater concept, is enormous and worth further study.

Reviews of Antithese’s Premiere in Cologne

On the occasion of *Antithese*’s premiere in Cologne, Kagel intentionally did not provide a detailed introduction to the piece in the program pamphlet, “since the plot

⁶⁹ “Das Libretto besteht aus 26 Hauptaktionen,” see Verbalpartitur (1. Entwurf, Typoskript mit hss. Korrekturen von fremder Hand; fragment) [1 S., als Makulatur verwendet in: Sur scène, Skizzen [Mappe 1][3] in *Sammlung Mauricio Kagel*, Paul Sacher Stiftung, Basel.

⁷⁰ See Verbalpartitur (3. Entwurf, Typoskript mit hss. Eintragungen und maschinenschrift 1. Korrekturen) [3 S.][8] in *ibid.*

⁷¹ Incidentally, while there is no date on these sheets, they seem to have been drawn up after the first few stage performances of *Antithese*. Kagel addresses that “the stage version of *Antithese* consists of twenty-four actions” (Die szenische Fassung von ‘Antithese’ besteht aus vierundzwanzig Aktionen) in his essay “Über das Schauen des Zuhörers” that he originally wrote as a contribution to the Night Program of WDR in 1963, the same year of the Cologne premiere and Palermo performance.

⁷² The third version seems to have been created for the film. See “Antithese. 2. Fassung Feussner” and “Antithese 3. Fassung A. Feussner” in *Sammlung Mauricio Kagel*, Paul Sacher Stiftung, Basel.

exhibits no directional tendency, but can be demonstrated by permutable actions.”⁷³

Because so little information on the piece was known to most critics present in the premiere, reviews of the performance varied. Although critics had already experienced a new stylistic approach to musical theater in the performance of Stockhausen’s *Originale* in 1961 Cologne, *Antithese* seems to have been too radical for some to appreciate the significance of its theatricalization.

Following the instructions for the stage setting, the premiere of *Antithese* embodied various kinds of technical apparatus on the stage, which one reviewer described as a “radiophone museum.” According to the reviewer Christiane Engelbrecht of *Recklinghäuser Zeitung*, the “museum” ranged “from Edison’s phonograph cylinders to a Grundig transistor radio [one of the newest radios at that time], as well as from “Luigi Russolo’s ‘Intonarumori’ (Lärmtöner) [noise-generating devices], . . . Volksempfänger [a radio apparatus in the Nazi era] . . . to modern magnetic tape devices.”⁷⁴ Besides these reviews, H. Schäfer of *Neue Württembergische Zeitung* reported that there were “loudspeaker systems, magnetophon devices [reel-to-reel tape recorders], turntables, cables . . . , a stool, and a leather attaché case.”⁷⁵ Swaantje Cale of *Neue Presse* identified the overall view on the stage as “a seamless, antique exhibition of all transmission apparatuses.”⁷⁶

This highly idiosyncratic and unprecedented stage scenery might have astonished, bewildered, or even disgusted some critics. On the other hand, others were aware of the fact that “the performance already had begun before anything happened on the stage.”⁷⁷ It was indeed a prologue to the “anti-illusionistic” piece that contains the “illusionistic” electroacoustic music (the music of *Antithese* is illusionistic because it presents a

⁷³ Kagel, “Über das Schauen des Zuhörers,” 397: “da die Handlung keine gerichtete Tendenz aufweist, sondern durch permutierbare Aktionen ausgedrückt werden kann.”

⁷⁴ Christiane Engelbrecht, “Elektronikers Bastelstunde: Antithese und Sur Scène/Ur- und Erstaufführungen in Köln,” in *Recklinghäuser Zeitung*, 27 June 1963: “von der Edison-Walze bis zum Grundig-Transistor, von Luigi Russolos ‘Intonarumori’ (Lärmtöner) . . . den Volksempfänger . . . bis zum neuzeitlichen Tonbandgerät.” All resources of newspaper regarding *Antithese*’s premiere to which I refer in this study are held in Theaterwissenschaftliche Sammlung, Institut für Theater-, Film- und Fernsehwissenschaft zu Universität zu Köln.

⁷⁵ H. Schäfer, “Mauricio Kagels ‘Antithese’ in Köln uraufgeführt: Prostitution der Musik, Totalausverkauf der theatralischen Phantasie,” in *Neue Württembergische Zeitung, Göppingen*, 9 July 1963: “Lautsprecheranlagen, Magnetophongeräten, Plattenspielern, Kabeln . . . , ein Stuhl und eine Ledertasche.”

⁷⁶ Swaantje Cale, “Theater von übermorgen?: Kagel-Uraufführung mit museumsreifem Apparat,” in *Neue Presse*, 30 June 1963: “eine lückenlose, museumsreife Schau aller Übertragungsapparate.”

⁷⁷ Engelbrecht: “Das Spiel begann bereits, bevor auf der Bühne etwas passierte.”

fictitious audience; by contrast, the stage performance is anti-illusionistic because the performer's interaction with the music and props on the stage are a real presentation). In other words, the exposition of the idiosyncratic stage scenery prior to the performance was the tacit introduction of the piece. In front of the radiophone museum, according to Paul Müller of *Rheinische Post*,

a man in white lab coat sits on the console, turning his back on the audience. And then he, the actor Alfred Feussner, wordlessly bustles about the apparatus relief, turns and pushes the buttons, listens to and hears, turns and turns, and it sounds and tings "antithetically."⁷⁸

Another more concise portrayal of the actor's performance conveys a rough outline of the process: "First, he marveled, and then there was confusion. And what was initially a chair became, at the end, like a cocoon braided by magnetic tapes and colorful cords."⁷⁹

Interestingly, Feussner wound the tapes and cables around the stool, not around himself. This realization form was already present in the first version and remains in the final version as well under a main action VERBINDUNG (CONNECT in English). In the published score, however, Kagel added another realization form of CONNECT in a direction to "wind them (cocoon fashion) round the body,"⁸⁰ which Feussner in fact demonstrates in the film. One can thus postulate that Kagel obtained this idea through early performances of *Antithese* with Feussner and also that the word "cocoon" in the review probably inspired him. It is an important example that even a concert review provided a hint to constituting the final form of the piece.

Some reviewers, however, were severely critical not only of the stage presentation and composition itself, but of Kagel as a composer. For instance, Müller maintained that *Antithese* is so unnecessarily long that "boredom is quickly established."⁸¹ Likewise, Cale

⁷⁸ Paul Müller, "Im Tollhaus unserer Zeit: Kagels "öffentliche Klänge" ohne Klang im Kölner Schauspielhaus," in *Rheinische Post*, 26 June 1963: "... ein Mann im weißen Labormantel, zunächst am Pult sitzend, Rücken zum Publikum. Dann eilt er, der Schauspieler Alfred Feussner, wortlos am Relief der Apparate hin und her, dreht und drückt an Knöpfen, horcht und hört, dreht und dreht, und es tönt, tönt, 'antithetisch'." This part is included in Kagel's citation in "Über das Schauen des Zuhörers," 397, in order to compare several reviews of the premiere.

⁷⁹ Marion Rothärmel, "Der tönende Jux: Mauricio Kagel im Kölner Schauspielhaus," in *Köln Rundschau*, 25 June 1963: "Erst staunte er, dann gab es Konfusion, und was anfangs noch ein Sitzmöbel war, wurde zum Schluß, umspinnen von Tonbändern und bunten Kordeln wie ein Kokon." This part is also cited in Kagel, "Über das Schauen des Zuhörers," 398.

⁸⁰ Kagel, *Antithese*, 16.

⁸¹ Paul Müller: "Langeweile nämlich setzt schnell ein."

assumed that “one will not be fully pleased with the performance,”⁸² and she questioned whether Kagel’s intention in theatricalizing *Antithese* was a mere substitution for a real orchestra. Evaluating the whole presentation of *Antithese* at the premiere as a poor result, Engelbrecht sarcastically asked: “when will the electronics [electronic music] finally get out of the awkward age and grow up?”⁸³ Evidently, these reviewers were discontented not only with the performance, but also with the theatrical concept. Presumably, few were familiar with Kagel’s conceptualization of Instrumental Theater.

Above all, Schäfer’s review was perhaps the harshest. Even in the subtitle to his review article, Schäfer protested that the piece “denotes a prostitution of music; otherwise, a total bargain-sale of theatrical phantasy.” The reviewer further attacked Kagel:

After Stockhausen and Koenig composed in part very good electronic pieces in recent years, the Kagelian gimmicks appear doubly trivial. In addition, what poverty and lack of ideas for the theatrical realization! . . . What was offered here as an experiment – and was applauded – appeared quite miserable in its total lack of inspiration.⁸⁴

Although some whistled or laughed at Feussner’s performance and sound contents of the music during the performance, the premiere ended “in overall amused applause” (another unknown reviewer reported that “the audience reacted in part with ‘boo’ and in part with ‘Bravo Kagel!’,”⁸⁵ although it is unclear whether it happened during the performance or at the end). Perhaps for this reason, Schäfer speculated that “in any case, Kagel would be entitled to rejection or agreement.”⁸⁶

By contrast, the first presentation of the stage version of *Antithese* was not entirely unintelligible to reviewers. There was a reviewer whose commentary referred to the term “Instrumental Theater”: Marion Rothärmel of *Köln Rundschau*, who seems to have much

⁸² Swaantje Cale: “Man wird dieser Vorführung nicht ganz froh.”

⁸³ Christiane Engelbrecht: “Wann kommt die Elektronik endlich aus den Flegeljahren heraus und wird erwachsen?”

⁸⁴ H. Schäfer: “Nachdem Stockhausen und Koenig in den letzten Jahren zum Teil sehr gute elektronische Stücke komponiert haben, wirken die Kagelschen Spielereien doppelt trivial. Und dazu: welche Dürftigkeit, welcher Ideenmangel bei der theatralischen Realisation! . . . Was hier als Experiment angeboten – und beklatscht wurde, wirkte in seiner ganzen Einfallslosigkeit recht jämmerlich.”

⁸⁵ Reviewer unknown, “Kagel-Uraufführung in Köln,” in *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 26 June 1963: “. . . reagierte das Publikum teils mit ‘Buh,’ teils mit ‘Bravo Kagel!’”

⁸⁶ H. Schäfer: “Jedenfalls hätte Kagel Anspruch auf Ablehnung oder Zustimmung gehabt.”

better acknowledged the new style and concept of Kagel's musical theatricalization than others:

The inventive and humorous Argentine has now developed a synthesis of a concert piece and absurd theater from his already well-tried "Instrumental Theater" . . . Kagel discovered a convincing form for the synthesis of various forms of expression, and next to the destructive means, a vital zest holds its ground on the play, a play on multilayered domains.⁸⁷

From this remark, one can infer that Rothärmel had some knowledge of Instrumental Theater as well as of Kagel's compositions.⁸⁸ Thus, she seems aware of a necessary viewpoint to observe the conceptual invention and his aesthetic of the multimedia musical composition. In other words, Rothärmel was able to perceive the significance of this particular theatrical piece that featured the simultaneous occurrences of electroacoustic music and theatrical visual elements on the stage.

Conversely, without the cognizance which Rothärmel very likely possessed, it is not easy to discern the conceptual and aesthetic significance of the piece. In this regard, one may raise the question of how to analyze a piece of Instrumental Theater, especially for a piece like *Antithese* whose primary components – music, action, and stage scenery – are independent in the first place. If the state in which these independent constituents coexist to unify the piece as a whole characterizes "anarchic unity" or "omnipresent anarchies," it is necessary to clarify the objects or aspects to be analyzed in terms of the musical structure of *Antithese*.

Analysis of the Stage Version

In *Komposition zwischen Musik und Theater*, which thoroughly examines Kagel's early Instrumental Theater pieces, Matthias Rebstock claims that a conventional method of music analysis is unable to deal with various forms of theatricalized musical pieces.⁸⁹ It is not only because of their unconventional musical notations, but also because one has

⁸⁷ Marion Rothärmel: "Der einfallsreiche und humorvolle Argentinier hat aus seinem schon erprobten "Instrumentalen Theater" nun eine Synthese aus Konzertstück und absurdum Theater entwickelt . . . Kagel hat für die Synthese der verschiedenen Ausdrucksformen eine überzeugende Form gefunden, und neben den destruktiven Zügen behauptet sich eine vitale Freude am Spiel, am Spiel auf vielschichtigem Boden." This part is not included in Kagel's citation in "Über das Schauen des Zuhörers."

⁸⁸ Incidentally, Kagel read Rothärmel's treatise *Der musikalische Zeitbegriff seit Moritz Hauptmann* (Regensburg: Bosse, 1963) and articulated his interest in her study of time-related terminology in his essay "Analyse des Analysierens."

⁸⁹ See Rebstock, 237.

to take their instructions for action into consideration as indispensable parts of the analysis. Under the circumstances, Rebstock asks what the main object of such an analysis could be: that is to say, the score, performance, or an interaction between these.⁹⁰ In the face of this particular issue, it is necessary to reconsider what prerequisites are necessary to undertake an analysis of *Antithese*, and further, what analysis really is in the context of postwar avant-garde music.

Because the unity of *Antithese* consists in a consolidation of those heterogeneous compositional components with their specific concepts, it already defies conventional analysis. Indeed, any approach to analysis must be reassessed. Perhaps this was also Kagel's intent: to clarify the necessity of a new analytical approach. In this regard, Kagel's discussion of analysis with regard to postwar new music suggests the need to have a new perspective on musical analysis. This does not mean, however, that his idea of analysis is completely detached from the conventional, but that musical analysis needs to be rethought.

In his essay "Analyse des Analysierens" (Analysis of Analysis), Kagel offers a discourse on ideas about the meaning of analysis inherent in musical composition, or more specifically in compositional methods, from various angles. Especially interesting is how he represents the range of compositional characteristics of postwar new music.

When surveying the history of music from a perspective of information theory, then one can classify works of various epochs according to their particular degrees of order. At the present time, the utmost boundary could lie between the ordering degrees of 0 and 1, or between an ideal disorder and a perfect order.⁹¹

He thus implies a characteristic polarity of musical composition in the musical scene of the mid-twentieth century. That is, a twofold emblem of "new music" or "postwar avant-garde" resulted from the contrast between aleatoric or indeterminate music versus serialism. In this regard, Kagel's statement above suggests the underlying analytical problem for each compositional style. Kagel regards aleatory/indeterminacy as ideal

⁹⁰ See *ibid.*

⁹¹ Mauricio Kagel, "Analyse des Analysierens," in *Tamtam: Dialoge und Monologe zur Musik*, ed. Felix Schmidt (München: R. Piper, 1975), 55: "Überblickt man die Musikgeschichte informationstheoretisch, so kann man die Werke verschiedener Epochen bestimmten Ordnungsgraden zuordnen. In der gegenwärtigen Zeit dürfte die äußerste Grenze zwischen den Ordnungsgraden 0 und 1 bzw. zwischen idealer Unordnung und vollkommener Ordnung liegen." The essay was first delivered as a presentation at the *Internationale Ferienkurse für Neue Musik* in Darmstadt July 1964, and then broadcast in the *Musikalischen Nachtprogramm* of the WDR. The publication first appeared in *Collage: Dialighi di cultura* 3-4 (1964): 24-31.

disorder (degree of 0), which implies infinite possibilities of analysis due to its inherent randomness. In contrast, he recognizes serialism as perfect order (degree of 1), which implies only one possible conclusion due to the rigid framework.

However, this does not mean that these are the only principles of postwar new music. While contrasting compositional principles were coming to the forefront of postwar avant-garde music, attempts to integrate these emerged as well. Well aware of this tendency, Kagel argues: “If an information theorist is asked what type of music today most likely represents ideal disorder, then he will cite examples of stochastic music and twelve-tone row.”⁹² Here Kagel seems to refer to a serialist’s adoption of an indeterminacy principle; that is, a combination of indeterminacy and a complex serial method: Stockhausen’s *Klavierstück XI*, for instance. According to this hypothesis, Kagel implicitly claims that serialists’ perception of chance or indeterminate principles could be scientific rather than musical. That is to say, for Kagel, serialists potentially misunderstood the principles in musical-aesthetic terms.

If one hears stochastic music, then no audible happenstance is perceptible. We can here most easily ascertain how little the scientific definition of chance agrees with the recently practiced chance in composition. . . . If chance actually manifests itself during a performance, then it is not “pure” in the sense of probability laws but an obscure chance.⁹³

Between the lines, one can read Kagel’s dislike of excessive systematization (i.e., “scientific definition of chance”), which he regarded as an authoritarian trait of serialism that was influential in developing postwar new music.

In terms of analysis and compositional method, Kagel insinuates that every analysis of “totally determined serial music” (*total determinierte serielle Musik*) is likely to reach the same conclusion. For instance, he claims that a musical piece as the

⁹² Ibid.: “Wird ein Informationstheoretiker gefragt, welche Art von Musik heute am ehesten die ideale Unordnung repräsentiert, dann wird er die Beispiele von stochastischer Musik und Zwölftonreihe anführen.”

⁹³ Ibid.: “Hört man aber stochastische Musik, dann ist kein hörbarer Zufall spürbar. Wir können hier am leichtesten feststellen, wie wenig die wissenschaftliche Definition des Zufalls mit dem heute praktizierten Zufall in der Komposition übereinstimmt. . . . Wenn der Zufall sich tatsächlich während einer Aufführung kundtut, dann wird er kein “reiner” – im Sinne der Wahrscheinlichkeitsgesetze –, sondern eher ein undurchsichtiger Zufall sein.”

“substantiation of previous analysis” must not be analyzed, “since the dismantling of the composition already took place.”⁹⁴ In a strictly serialized musical piece, Kagel asserts

[a]nalysis and composition are inseparable from each other, as the compositional method is already analytical in nature: both complement each other. In this case, a question arises whether the analysis or the composition is unnecessary.⁹⁵

This statement presents Kagel’s stance against the kind of anesthetic, mechanical-manipulative, and dogmatic nature of serialism, although he does not completely dismiss serial compositional procedure and its inseparable principle – parameterization. As in his *String Sextet* (see Chapter Three), extended serial application can be traced in Kagel’s work, but in his unique fashion.⁹⁶ In *Antithese*, too, not only is serial thought reflected in the action part, but the action part itself is an independent “musical” parameter.

Kagel’s question in the proposition above derives from his conviction that for strictly serialized and controlled music, “no analysis is possible, but only a description.”⁹⁷ At the same time, he sees a lack of musical creativity due to a standardized tendency of serialist composers to be obsessed with “the sentimental slogan ‘following Anton Webern’”⁹⁸ (that is, taking Webern’s compositional style as a starting point of serial development). Such a direction is, Kagel continues, “identical to the doctrine of their own compositional procedures and to the way of analyzing their own works.”⁹⁹

Interestingly, Kagel also applies the same dictum – no analysis is possible, but only a description – to aleatoric or indeterminate music. His connotation of the term analysis, however, is different from that of serialists. In “compositions that include chance” (i.e., aleatory or indeterminacy), according to Kagel,

⁹⁴ Ibid., 56: “Die Verwirklichung der vorangegangenen Analyse,” “weil die Zerlegung der Komposition bereits stattgefunden hat.”

⁹⁵ Ibid.: “Analyse und Komposition sind voneinander untrennbar, indem die Kompositionsmethode bereits analytischer Natur ist: beide ergänzen einander. In diesem Fall ist zu fragen, ob sich die Analyse oder die Komposition erübrigt.”

⁹⁶ Heile’s statement in this regard is worth referring to. See Heile, 17: “In contrast to Ligeti, . . . Kagel has used aspects of serial technique ever since, and his early works often also appear to mimic the typical soundworld of integrally serial works of the late ’50s even where they are not actually serially constructed – or only in some of their parameters.”

⁹⁷ Kagel, “Analyse des Analysierens,” 56: “In diesem Falle ist keine Analyse, sondern nur eine Beschreibung möglich.”

⁹⁸ Mauricio Kagel, “Avant-garde und Akademie,” in *Tamtam: Dialoge und Monologe zur Musik*, ed. Felix Schmidt (München: R. Piper, 1975), 60: “in der Nachfolge Anton Weberns.” This essay was delivered as a lecture in the congress *Arte e Tecnologia*, Florence, June 1964.

⁹⁹ Ibid.: “Meistens ist diese Tätigkeit identisch mit dem Lehren eigener Kompositionsverfahren und dem Analysieren eigener Werke.”

[t]he image of the score does not correspond to the things heard. Therefore the instructions of performance and explanatory notes take the place which originally befitted the analysis as well: an interpretative help with the presentation.¹⁰⁰

Thus, his idea of analysis for chance or indeterminate music has nothing to do with systematic organization or technical manipulation, but rather with detailed contents in the original concept. Hence, even if there was conventional notation, it would be of secondary importance or merely subordinate to the concept. Without recourse to the elucidatory description, one could easily misinterpret these notes and misuse them. An analysis thus requires engagement with the underlying musical thought of the composer.

While the stage version of *Antithese* includes both serial and aleatoric principles, a focus mostly on the proposition of analysis for aleatoric or indeterminate music is necessary for the following reasons. First, Kagel's serial thought in the piece is in a sense included in the verbal instructions. In other words, it is a basic concept to form a series of main actions, in which the individual actions as discontinuous elements constitute a continuous series. The actor has therefore nothing to do with serialist mechanical-manipulative composition of the series, but rather needs to be attentive to the details of the instructions. Second, the graphic score provides a guideline to construct a series of actions, not requiring of the actor any "scientific" formulation. As a result, "one can arrange his own performance version by himself," unlike Kagel's other Instrumental Theater pieces, e.g., *Sur scène* or *Match*, whose courses of events are determined.¹⁰¹

For this reason, a description of a performance of *Antithese* can be a kind of analysis, as the reviewers actually observed the theatricalized musical event, the version of which took place only once in that particular venue. However, the description has to be based on their pre-analyses – that is, their preliminary understanding of the concept and structure. As the premiere of *Antithese* received extremely mixed reviews due to the mutable nature of the action and staging parts, it is virtually impossible to standardize an analytical approach to *Antithese*'s stage version. Indeed, this can be one reason for Rebstock's claim that multifaceted analytical angles are inevitable due to the

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 57: "Das Partiturbild entspricht nicht dem Gehörten. Deshalb nehmen hier die Spielanweisungen und Erläuterungsnotizen den Platz ein, welcher ursprünglich auch der Analyse zukam: eine Interpretationshilfe für den Ausführenden."

¹⁰¹ See Decroupet and Kovács, "Musik und Szene," in *Im Zenit*, 325: "Der Gesamt Ablauf des Stücks ist, anders als bei *Sur scène* oder *Match*, nicht geregelt. Vorgegeben sind lediglich die Grundkomponenten, aus denen der Ausführende seine Fassung selbst zusammenstellen kann."

heterogeneity of the compositional elements. The negative reviews of *Antithese*'s premiere discussed above can thus be analyses deriving from individual critics' observations based on their musical knowledge and experiences. Among them, many seem to have overlooked the interaction among the music, performance, and props set on the stage, which was a significant aspect perceptible only by observing the actual presentation. Still, it is worth noting that some reviewers presented their unique analytical points of view, as Müller perceived the antithetical characteristic in Feussner's performance, for instance. Also, despite his severe criticism, Schäfer's speculation about poles of rejection and agreement as a result of the mixed reception of *Antithese* is a useful description, because it suggests the necessity of further examination of the piece and its underlying aesthetic. Schäfer's explicit attack on the piece simply showed that he stood on the "rejection" side with no hesitation.

In the case of *Antithese*'s premiere, a collection of statements from various viewpoints may be considered to be an analysis of this single performance of the piece, not of the composition itself. Rothärmel's review stands out, since it was developed on the basis of her pre-analysis of the piece, but it does not seem to be the only interpretation Kagel may have wished. Rather, he expected a variety of analytical comments on the performance, arguing that "it is interesting to compare how the performance of the piece [*Antithese*] was described by different critics."¹⁰² For Kagel, the idea of analysis was thus not only to identify structural and aesthetic features within a piece, but also to observe the various aspects of a performance practice. His comments above suggest that this was a new approach to analysis that facilitated understanding of both the structure and aesthetic of a multimedia/interdisciplinary piece in a comprehensive manner. Conventional analysis is not applicable to *Antithese* due to the libretto-score, including the graphic notation. Nor could the piece be satisfactorily analyzed in the frame of "ideal disorder" and "perfect order" (that is, "degrees of 0 and 1"), due to the "musicalized" extra-musical elements. Only the combination of pre-analysis and multiple perspectives allows analysis of the piece in a new and fruitful way.

¹⁰² Kagel, "Über das Schauen des Zuhörers," 397: ". . . ist es interessant zu vergleichen, wie die Darbietung des Stückes von verschiedenen Rezensenten geschildert wurde."

Incidentally, Rothärmel also describes Kagel's Instrumental Theater work "to a certain extent a musico-dramatic Ionesco, or, . . . a new mode of John Cage with [Kagel's] independent method."¹⁰³ Here is a reference to Cage again, as if it were a common practice to study Kagel's theatricalization of music in Cagian terms, even though *Antithese* is one of the non-Cagian musical theater pieces. It is true that Cage's works and aesthetic of music influenced Kagel's composition, especially in the first few years after he moved to Germany. On the surface, one can find compositional approaches in Kagel's work similar to those of Cage; e.g., quasi-conventional-quasi-graphic notation of *Transición II* or *Mimetics (Metapiece)* to that of *Concert for Piano and Orchestra*, projection of graphic score onto a screen in *Prima Vista* or *Diaphonie* to *Fontana Mix* (1958), etc. However, such similarities do not necessarily mean that their aesthetics were similar. Especially in the light of Instrumental Theater or musical theater, the distinctions are evidently clear.

Regarding *Antithese* as "Kagel's composed commentary to Cage," one can further speculate that the piece has an implicit message of the composer's compositional and aesthetic independence from his contemporaries, including the dedicatee. Indeed, *Antithese* seems to have already proved the statement that Kagel's and Cage's aesthetics are "diametrically opposed" and thus their "basic compositional approaches are very different" as well.¹⁰⁴ Before *Antithese*, Kagel was an enthusiast of Cage and perhaps understood traits of Cage's aesthetic of music better than other postwar avant-garde. Presumably, both composers were at that point already well aware of their differences and simply shared a concern for exploration of unheard-of sounds and the consolidation of music and visual elements from a viewpoint of multimedia/interdisciplinary composition.

¹⁰³ Marion Rothärmel, "Der tönende Jux," in *Köln Rundschau* on 25 June 1963: "Gewissermaßen ein musikdramatischer Ionesco, oder, . . . ein mit selbständigen Mitteln neu aufgelegter John Cage." Eugène Ionesco (1909-1994) was a Romanian-born French playwright known as an important figure of French theater avant-garde. In his works as playwright and dramatist, "absurdity" is the most salient keyword. However, in English the term absurd means, according to Martin Esslin, "ridiculous," but in "French it means merely *contrary to reason*" (italicized by the author), see Martin Esslin, "Absurdity of the Absurd," *The Kenyon Review*, 22/4 (1960): 671. "Ionesco and Beckett are concerned with communicating to their audiences their sense of the *absurdity of the human condition*," see *ibid.* (italicized by the author).

¹⁰⁴ See Werner Klüppelholz, ".../1991: ein Gesträch zwischen Mauricio Kagel und Werner Klüppelholz," 48. Kagel says: "Die Ästhetik von Cage und meine eigene sind diametral entgegengesetzt. . . Gerade bei dem Aspekt, den Sie ansprechen – Zusammenhang – ist der kompositorische Ansatz bei uns beiden sehr unterschiedlich."

Relationship to Cage's Music

Involvement in Cage's Music

As touched upon in Chapter Three, Kagel first met Cage at the Expo in Brussels in October 1958, where his *Sextet* was performed in the program of *Musique de Chambre*. In the same program, Cage also performed his *Music for 3 Pianos* and *Winter Music* (for 3 pianos) (1957) with David Tudor and Marcelle Mercenier. In conversation with Werner Klüppelholz 1991, Kagel tells the following anecdote about Cage:

Promptly, Cage told me a nice story and we both burst into laughter. On the occasion of the premiere of one of his works on the West Coast (probably Seattle or Los Angeles) at the end of the 1930s, a critic wrote: "Cage's music contains even less substance than there is meat in a hamburger."¹⁰⁵

The anecdote probably pleased Kagel, with his sense of humor, such that he might have imagined it was his first encounter with Cage.

However, Kagel had already seen Cage and Tudor in the *Internationale Ferienkurse für Neue Musik*, in September 1958, about a month before the Brussels Expo.¹⁰⁶ In the Darmstadt event, Cage performed his *Music for two Pianos, Variations* (1958, later re-entitled *Variations I*), and *Winter Music* with Tudor, as well as pieces by the New York School composers – Earle Brown, Morton Feldman, and Christian Wolff.¹⁰⁷ In addition, Cage held lectures on "Changes," "Indeterminacy," and "Communication" separately, which were later all compiled in his first and highly influential book, *Silence*, published in 1961. Described as "Cage-shock," Cage's

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.: "Prompt erzählte mir Cage eine schöne Geschichte, die wir beide mit Lachsalven quittierten. Ende der 30er Jahre, anlässlich der Uraufführung eines seiner Stücke an der West Coast (vermutlich Seattle oder Los Angeles) schrieb ein Kritiker, »in der Musik von Cage wäre noch weniger Substanz als Fleisch in einem Hamburger«."

¹⁰⁶ In terms of the composer's inconsistent descriptions concerning his first meeting with Cage, one has to bear in mind Charles Wilson's statement that "composers' self-representations often serve a function that is as much performative as constative. . . , their assimilation by scholars as straightforward claims to truth often bespeaks a fundamental category mistake," see Charles Wilson, "György Ligeti and the Rhetoric of Autonomy," *Twentieth-Century Music* 1/1 (2004): 6. In this regard, there is another address of Kagel-Cage encounter by Kagel. According to Otto Tomek, in a contribution to the newspaper *Kölnische Rundschau* on the occasion of Cage's 60th birthday, Kagel relates that their first meeting was "in the lobby of the WDR at Wallrafplatz with Otto Tomek" in August 1958. See Otto Tomek, "Ein Brief," in *Kagel .../1991*, ed. Werner Klüppelholz (Köln: DuMont Buchverlag, 1991), 85. While this could be their first encounter, it seems that Kagel had yet to experience Cage's music directly, but rather that it was a brief self-introduction between them, followed by a quick conversation.

¹⁰⁷ They were Brown's *Four Systems for two Pianos*, Feldman's *Two Pianos – 1957*, and Wolff's *Duo for Pianists* and *Duo II*, see *Darmstädter Beiträge zur Neuen Musik* 2 (Mainz: B. Schott's Söhne, 1959), 70.

contribution to the event and its impact on his contemporaries were so enormous that his method and aesthetic of musical composition immediately became controversial.

Kagel, who was present at both concerts and lectures by Cage, immediately reported their extraordinary impact with his sharp insight in the short essay “John Cage en Darmstadt 1958” (John Cage in Darmstadt 1958) in *Buenos Aires Musical*, which appeared in October 1958. Cage’s music and lectures came to convince Kagel of the decline of European serialism.

Undoubtedly, the American composer John Cage has wisely swept away most of the concepts of compositional technique employed until now by European young composers. With a sense of almost “a-perspective,” he has contributed to the downfall of modern serial myths instituted by the academicians of dodecaphonism and the ignobly serious spirits of publicity.¹⁰⁸

The impact of Cage’s music on Kagel would soon be enhanced in a musical event in the concert series *Musik der Zeit* sponsored by the WDR Cologne, which took place on 19 September 1958, just ten days after Cage’s final lecture at the *Darmstädter Ferienkurse*. Besides the second performance of Kagel’s *Sextet*, the concert included the European premiere of Cage’s *Concert for Piano and Orchestra*, at which both Kagel and Cage were present. Kagel would then confront the aforementioned scandal of the *Concert*.

Kagel and Cage struck up a friendship during these encounters, and in the spring of 1959 at the latest correspondence between them began. At the same time, Kagel also formed an important friendship with Tudor, who performed Kagel’s *Transición II* with Christoph Caskel, the percussionist, in the following year. Kagel went into raptures about Tudor’s interest in the piece in his first letter to Tudor, dated 18 June 1959. Kagel also informed Tudor that he had already scheduled rehearsals of *Transición II* with Caskel and that Tudor would be welcome to perform the piece in concerts that were at that time being

¹⁰⁸ “Es indudable que el compositor Americano John Cage ha removido sensatamente la mayoría de los conceptos sobre la técnica de composición empleados hasta hoy por compositores jóvenes europeos. Ha contribuido así, con un sentido casi «aperspectivo», al desmoronamiento de los modernos mitos seriales instituidos por los académicos del dodecafonismo, y los espíritus innoblemente serios de la publicidad, see Mauricio Kagel, “John Cage en Darmstadt 1958,” in *Im Zenit der Moderne*, Band 3 (Freiburg: Rombach, 1997), 484. My English translation is based on the German translation by Heinz-Klaus Metzger: “Es duldet keinen Zweifel, daß der amerikanische Komponist John Cage mit Fug die meisten kompositionstechnischen Konzepte hinwegfegte, die bei den jungen europäischen Komponisten bis heute Verwendung fanden. So trug er vermöge eines gleichsam »aperspektivischen« Ansatzes zum Zusammenbruch jener modernen seriellen Mythen bei, die von den Akademikern der Zwölftonnachfolge und den würdelos ersthaften Geistern des Reklamewesens aufgerichtet worden waren,” see Mauricio Kagel, “John Cage in Darmstadt 1958,” trans. Heinz-Klaus Metzger, in *Darmstadt-Dokumente I*, ed. Heinz-Klaus Metzger and Rainer Riehn (München: text + kritik, 1999), 180.

planned. While Kagel himself premiered *Transición II* with Caskel on 4 September 1959 at the *Darmstädter Ferienkurse*, Tudor performed the piece in Cologne and Düsseldorf in November the same year.¹⁰⁹ Tudor's engagement in *Transición II*'s performance resulted in the recording of the piece in 1960 and the release of a vinyl record (1961).¹¹⁰

In 1960 and 1961, Kagel had more opportunities to experience Cage's music, as well as to meet Cage and Tudor at various concert events. For instance, at the premiere of his *Anagrama* at the IGNM – *Internationale Gesellschaft für Neue Musik* (International Society for New Music) – concert in Cologne 11 June 1960, Kagel may have met Tudor, who was premiering Stockhausen's *Kontakte*. In September, Kagel may have been present at the 23rd *Festival Internazionale di Musica Contemporanea* of *La Biennale die Venezia* (International Festival of Contemporary Music of the Venice Biennial), where Tudor and Caskel gave the Italian premiere of *Transición II* and Cage performed his *Suite for Two*, *Winter Music*, and *Variations* with Tudor, and *Music with Dancers* with Carolyn Brown and Merce Cunningham. More remarkable, however, was the participation of Kagel, Cage, and Tudor in a series of interdisciplinary artistic presentations between 1960 and 1962 at the Atelier Mary Bauermeister in Cologne.

It is not clear how often Kagel attended the concert and lecture events in this series. What is clear is that he attended the opening event, where two pages from the score of *Transición II* were exhibited and that he heard Tudor's performance of *Water Music* at the Bauermeister's studio, which took place on the first day (15 June 1960) of the *Contre-Festival zur IGNM* (Counter-Festival to the IGNM) Bauermeister organized.¹¹¹ In early October of the same year, Bauermeister also organized a

¹⁰⁹ See program leaflets of the Sonder-Konzert (Special Concert) of *Kammerkonzerte der Stadt Köln* and *Kammerkonzert of Konzerte der Stadt Düsseldorf* held in David Tudor papers, 1884-1998 (bulk 1940-1996), Getty Research Institute, Research Library, Accession no. 980039. In a letter to Tudor dated 18 June 1959, Kagel mentions a concert plan of *Transición II* in Amsterdam, Netherlands, which was realized in the following year, but Tudor seems to have been unavailable then. Instead, Aloys Kontarsky performed the piano part, Caskel the percussion part, see Daniel Ruyneman, "In Holland setzt sich die jüngste Musik durch," *Melos: Zeitschrift für Neue Musik* 9/27 (1960): 277.

¹¹⁰ Mauricio Kagel, *Transición II*. In *Karlheinz Stockhausen/ Mauricio Kagel: Zyklus, Refrain, Transición II* performed by David Tudor, Christoph Caskel, Aloys Kontarsky, and Bernhard Kontarsky, Time Record S 8001, 1961, vinyl recording.

¹¹¹ The Contre-Festival lasted until 19 June 1960, the same date of the final day of the IGNM concert series in Cologne, whereas the latter started on 10 June. It may seem inconsistent that pieces of Kagel and Stockhausen were in the program of the IGNM concert, while they had already been involved in the musical and artistic events at the Atelier Bauermeister from the opening. Bauermeister in fact regarded their musical works as an exception of "terrible music" that would be presented in the IGNM, according to

spectacular *Ballettabend* (Ballet Night) showcasing Cage's collaborative work with dancers – Carolyn Brown and Merce Cunningham – in the auditorium at the Friedrich-Wilhelm-Gymnasium in Cologne. Cage's remark in a 1965 interview with Lars Gunnar Bodin and Bengt Emil Johnson indicates that Kagel probably saw the performance.

... take the response of, ... Kagel in Cologne, who had seen the work of Carolyn and Merce together, and now sees the [entire dance] company. He was extremely impressed by the choreography and felt that something had changed, whereas all that changed were more people and the complexities that result from more people dancing together, to obscure the simpler aspects of dance and to introduce to the observer the more complex and seemingly more contemporary aspects.¹¹²

The collaboration of music and dance, which are independent of one another in the performance, may have stimulated Kagel to think out a new theatricalization of music. In this hypothesis, *Antithese*'s collaborative structure of music, action, and stage scenery could amount to a translation of these simple aspects into "more complex and contemporary aspects."¹¹³

On 20 May 1961, as the director of the Ensemble für Neue Musik Köln, Kagel organized a concert program at the *Muzički Biennale Zagreb: internacionalni festival suvremene muzike* (Music Biennale Zagreb: International Festival of Contemporary Music).¹¹⁴ In the concert, Tudor performed *Transición II* with Caskel after a tape playback of *Transición I* and Kagel conducted Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire* in which Tudor performed the piano part. To round out the program, Kagel conducted Cage's *Concert for Piano and Orchestra* for the first time. Presumably, this was a significant opportunity for him to study the concept and notation of this controversial piece, the influence of which one can trace in Kagel's pieces of the early 1960s.

In August 1961, Kagel, Cage, and Tudor met again in the International Week of Today's Music, part of the 26th annual season of the Montreal Music and Drama Festival

her letter to Tudor, see *intermedial, kontrovers, experimentell: Das Atelier Mary Bauermeisters in Köln 1960-1962*, ed. Historisches Archiv der Stadt Köln (Köln: Emons Verlag, 1993), 24.

¹¹² Richard Kostelanetz, 205. The publication of the interview first appeared under the title "Bandintervju med Cage" in a Swedish journal *Ord och Bild* 74 (1965).

¹¹³ If Cage's statement is true, Kagel was likely to have taken a hint to crystallize his Instrumental Theater concept. In this specific respect, one may speculate that Kagel was following Cage in interdisciplinary terms. Even if so, however, Kagel probably drew *theoretical* inspiration from Cage's dance collaboration, not *aesthetic* inspiration.

¹¹⁴ See Kagel's letter to Tudor, 28 February 1961, David Tudor Paper, Getty Research Institute. See also Wolfgang Steinecke, "Jugoslawien nützt die Chance seiner kulturellen Freiheit aus," *Melos: Zeitschrift für Neue Musik* 7-8/28 (1961): 248-249.

in Canada. On 3 August, Kagel conducted Earle Brown's *Pentathis* (1958) for nine solo instruments and a piece by Canadian composer Serge Garant (1929-1986). Kagel's *Sonant/...* also had its Canadian premiere.¹¹⁵ On the following day, Kagel gave a presentation "Traitement des mots et de la voix – sur l'Anagrama" (Treatment of words and voice – on *Anagrama*), and *Transición I* was played that evening. In the concert program on that night, Tudor performed Wolff's *Duet I* (1961) with another pianist Toshi Ichihyanagi, and Cage participated as a conductor for the musical part in the world premiere of *Aeon*, a work choreographed by Merce Cunningham. Kagel might have been interested in the multimedia art work: nine dancers including Cunningham and Carolyn Brown, Cage's music, and Robert Rauschenberg in charge of costumes, objects, and lighting. Finally, Kagel gave another lecture "Les Activités Récentes du Studio de Musique Electronique de Radio-Cologne; dir. : Dr. Eimert" (Recent Activities in the Studio of Electronic Music at Radio-Cologne directed by Dr. Eimert) on 7 August.

Kagel's letter to Cage dated 16 September 1961 indicates that they spent time together in the United States on the occasion of Kagel's first concert tour there, either before or after the Montreal Festival. In the letter, Kagel expresses his lingering excitement about his time with Cage:

The days we spent together were for me the most touching of the trip to America. What a memory! Also your friends and the mass of Americans who were dancing and chatting around the table at "Restaurant of ... artists." Oh well, the visit was unfortunately too short . . .¹¹⁶

At any rate, the establishment of musical, artistic, and private contacts between Kagel and Cage allowed them to exchange their ideas and aesthetics of musical composition, not just compositional techniques and methods. In the course of this exchange, they could recognize their theoretical and aesthetic differences. This may be a reason why they never collaborated musically. At the same time, however, both composers must have shared at

¹¹⁵ The program states "Montreal Version" and the sections performed include *Faites votre jeu I*, *Marquez le jeu*, *Fin I*, *Pièce touchée, pièce jounée*, and *Fin II, voix (Invitation au jeu)*. See the program leaflet held in David Tudor Papers at the Getty Research Institute.

¹¹⁶ Kagel to Cage 16 September 1961, John Cage Correspondence Collections, Special Collections, Northwestern University Music Library, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL: "Les jours que nous avons passés ensemble ont 'été pour moi la chose la plus émouvante de tout le voyage en Amérique. Quel souvenir! Aussi tes amis et cette foule américaine qui dansait et bavardait autour de la table au 'Restaurant des ... artistes.' Enfin, malheureusement la visite était trop courte . . ." It is also in 1961 that Kagel made the first concert tour in the United States, though the details are unclear. In any case, it may be possible to conjecture that they met on this occasion.

least one aesthetic conviction: that the reciprocal stimulus between music and thought gives further impetus to musical creation.

“Music = Thought”

Kagel took an intense interest in Cage’s musical thought in the late 1950s and this lasted at least until 1962, the year he finished composing the stage version of *Antithese*. Having read Cage’s book *Silence* and planned for its German publication with Brücher, Kagel offered to write a preface. Kagel was induced to make this offer not only by his enthusiasm for Cage’s work, but also, and more importantly, his strong desire to enlighten European (or German) intellectuals as to their misunderstanding (in Kagel’s view) of Cage. In a letter to Cage dated 6 October 1961, Kagel writes that Cage’s “thoughts are generally prostituted in Europe and degraded for demagogic purpose.”¹¹⁷

Kagel’s publication project of the German version of *Silence* was not realized and thus no text for the preface appeared.¹¹⁸ Nevertheless, one can conjecture that the content of his short essay “Über J. C.” (1968) may be what Kagel would have intended to address in the preface, even though he wrote it a few years after his last letter to Cage in 1965.¹¹⁹ Already in the first paragraph, Kagel expresses his dissatisfaction that

those organizers who ventured to include Cage’s music in concert programs always did so with a sense of sheepishness and foreboding that it could be a disaster. . . . One can only observe with schadenfreude how the prestigious music critics of the new moderate modernity today begin to put in a word for Cage’s work.¹²⁰

Kagel’s criticism of his contemporaries’ superficial reception of Cage seems to inquire to what extent it would have been possible to gain the “courage, strength, and impetus to

¹¹⁷ Kagel to Cage, 6 October 1961, Cage Correspondence Collections, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois.

¹¹⁸ See John Cage, *Silence*, ed. Helmut Heißenbüttel, trans. Ernst Jandl (Neuwied and Berlin: Luchterhand, 1969). This German version contains only Cage’s “Lecture on Nothing,” “Lecture on Something,” and “45’ for a Speaker.” Also, Cage’s preface to the original *Silence* is shown as a postscript translated in German.

¹¹⁹ The final letter to Cage is dated 15 November 1965 in the Cage Correspondence Collections at Northwestern University.

¹²⁰ Mauricio Kagel, “Über J. C.,” in *Tamtam: Monologe und Dialoge zur Musik*, ed. Felix Schmidt (München: R. Piper, 1975), 87. The essay first appeared in *Dissonanz* (1969). “. . . jene Veranstalter, die es wagten, Cages Musik in ihre Programmreihen aufzunehmen, taten es verlegen und immer mit dem Gedanken, daß dies böse enden würde. . . . Man kann nur mit Schadenfreude beobachten, wie die renommierten Musikkritiker der neuen gemäßigten Moderne heute schon anfangen, ein Wort für Cages Schaffen einzulegen.

their own inventions without Cage.”¹²¹ Kagel was capable of recognizing such a tendency due to his encounters with negative reactions to and misinterpretations of his music (see *Reviews of Antithese's Premiere in Cologne* as an example).

Knowing well that his music frequently led to confusion or misunderstanding, Kagel was not only tolerant of various interpretations and critiques, but more or less expected them. However, that does not mean that Kagel did not care if compositional aesthetic was degraded and as a consequence, his music was badly performed. For the latter, particularly, professionalism with regard to musical presentation was important to both Kagel and Cage. Talking about a performance of his *34'46.776" for 2 Pianists*, a piece of indeterminacy, Cage claimed that the freedom in the piece as such can produce “extraordinarily beautiful” music, if it is given to a disciplined “musician like David Tudor, while it does not mean much to an undisciplined musician.”¹²² This remark reflects Cage’s negative experiences with his aleatoric or indeterminate pieces when the performers failed to contemplate the concepts and underlying aesthetic in those pieces. Kagel’s criticism on the mistreatment of Cage’s music resulted from such a failure.

... the misunderstanding, ... already looms now on the horizon; one could reach for one of Cage’s scores every time one faces difficulties of casting or setting a meager recital program with limited rehearsal time. This practice mostly ends up making Cage’s music sound amateurish, watered-down, didactic, unprofessional and mainstream. The opposite of this has always been John Cage’s intention.¹²³

For Kagel, such thoughtless treatment of music evinced nothing but a contemptuous attitude towards the composer. Also, his frustration seems to have derived from a tendency to propagandize Cage’s music merely as a useful icon to represent postwar avant-garde music. Perhaps Kagel perceived that Cage’s music was being discussed only on a shallow level that gave rise to such misconceptions, leaving aside the depth of Cage’s aesthetic intention: i.e., his thought as the most significant origin of musical composition.

¹²¹ See *ibid.*: “daß ohne Cage alle jene Komponisten, ... kaum den Mut, die Kraft und den Zwang zur eigenen Erfindung gefunden hätten.”

¹²² John Cage and Hans G. Helms, “Reflection of a Progressive Composer on a Damaged Society,” *October* 82 (1997): 80-81.

¹²³ Kagel, “Über J. C.” 87-88: “. . . des Mißverständnisses, das sich schon jetzt anbahnt, man könne jedes Mal zu einer Partitur von Cage greifen, wenn man Schwierigkeiten mit der Besetzung oder der Aufstellung eines probenkargen Programms hat. Diese Bräuche enden meistens so, daß die Musik von Cage dilettantisch, gemildert, botschaftsschwanger, hausmusikalisch und etabliert klingt.”

Regarding “the West German reception of Cage’s work during the 1960s,” Beal relates that

[s]ome scholars, critics, and composers in Germany believed that Cage’s music carried a hidden political agenda, a belief that almost became a self-fulfilling prophecy Increasingly, the contemporary musical world split on its interpretation of Cage and definitions of a musical work. Many musicologists criticized indeterminate scores for not revealing the actual sound of the piece in the expected way.¹²⁴

The statement suggests that for some music intellectuals, a musical piece was supposed to exhibit stylistic, structural consistency and rationality, and its sound has to be realized as the way it is written. This idea did not agree with Kagel’s aesthetic of music. Rather than the rationality of correspondence between music written and music heard, that music cannot be realized without thought was the core of his aesthetic belief. In a conversation with Martin Geck, Kagel speaks of a formula “music = thought,” which, according to the composer, is “an essential part of ‘weapon’ in music”:

Among other things, music is a means to activate *thoughts* that are not just musico-acoustic sensations, but also articulable ideas. It is this double role of music that animates me over and over to continue composing: on the one hand, music is capable of triggering thoughts and on the other hand, it must be complemented by the thoughts. A piece of music that activates no thought is simply imperfect.¹²⁵

It is thus understandable why Kagel was so irritated that Cage’s thoughts were “prostituted and degraded” and that, as a result, his music was frequently ill-treated.

Kagel’s engagement with Cage’s works occasionally activated his own musical-compositional thought. In a letter to Cage dated 12 November 1961, Kagel discusses his successful presentation of Cage’s *Double Music* (1941) in Oldenburg, as well as other projects to perform Cage’s pieces (e.g., *Amores, 7’7.614”*, and *In a Landscape*). Kagel also asked for Cage’s permission to combine his piece (presumably, *In a Landscape*) with Kagel’s piano piece *Mimetics (Metapiece)* (1961), which is to be “performed with another

¹²⁴ Amy C. Beal, 127-128.

¹²⁵ Martin Geck, “Musik gegen “Wahnsinn”? : Gespräch zwischen Mauricio Kagel und Martin Geck,” in *Musiktherapie als Problem der Gesellschaft: Aus Anlaß der von Mauricio Kagel geleiteten Kölner Kurse für Neue Musik 1972* (Stuttgart: Ernst Klett, 1973), 53: “Musik ist neben anderem ein Mittel, um Gedanken zu aktivieren, die eben nicht bloß musikalisch-akustische Empfindungen sind, sondern artikulierbare Gedanken. Es ist diese doppelte Rolle von Musik, die mich immer wieder animiert, weiter zu komponieren: daß Musik einerseits imstande ist, Gedanken auszulösen und andererseits durch Gedanken ergänzt werden muß. Eine Musik, die keine Gedanken provoziert, ist einfach unvollkommen . . . die Formel “Musik = Denken.” Das ist ein wesentlicher Teil der “Waffe” Musik.”

piece together . . . to become a form.”¹²⁶ This distinct formal concept reminds us of, for instance, Cage’s *Fontana Mix* (1958), *Aria* (1958), and *Concert for Piano and Orchestra*, any two of which can be performed simultaneously.¹²⁷ However, the distinction of *Mimetics* (*Metapiece*) from these pieces of Cage is that one can combine it with instrumental or electroacoustic compositions of Kagel or other contemporary composers. Although a solo piano performance is also possible, *Mimetics* (*Metapiece*) is in itself “less a piece.”¹²⁸

In any case, in the early 1960s Kagel had tremendous opportunities to give premieres of his own compositions, lectures, and performances of Cage’s and his own pieces, often with Tudor. At the same time, Kagel was becoming dissatisfied with the Europeans’ formal-structural supremacy that tended to neglect the idea of reciprocal compositional process between music and thought. Kagel even considered, therefore, leaving Europe shortly before starting composing music of *Antithese*. At that time, Kagel received an invitation to conduct his *Anagrama* in the Ojai Music Festival 1963 northwest of Los Angeles from Lukas Foss (1922-2009), a Berlin-born American composer and the music director of the festival in that year. Kagel writes Cage: “I should like so much to go, because I am tired from this European perfume,”¹²⁹ despite the insufficient financial guarantee.

As noted earlier, *Antithese* was originally excoriated as “prostitution of music” and “a bargain-sale of theatrical phantasy,” because the reviewer did not grasp the underlying compositional idea. For the reviewer, virtually everything that happened on the stage was a mess of frivolous experiments without a formal structure in a traditional sense. For Kagel, by contrast, such a superficial perspective, which he evidently recognized in the severe criticism of Cage’s music and perhaps of his own as well, was nothing but an aesthetic deficit. In Kagel’s view, music activates a composer’s thought and the thought in turn provides momentum for the creation of new music. This creative chain was indispensable, especially in compositional activities of both Kagel and Cage.

¹²⁶ Kagel to Cage, 12 November 1961, Cage Correspondence Collections, Northwestern University.

¹²⁷ See Rebstock, 172, footnote.

¹²⁸ Heile, 71.

¹²⁹ Kagel to Cage, 3 July 1962, Cage Correspondence Collections, Northwestern University. Kagel was present in the festival as a guest composer/conductor, see “Milestones” in *65th Ojai Music Festival*, available from http://www.ojaifestival.org/?page_id=171; Internet; accessed 2 May 2011.

Anarchy in Music

In Cage's *Concert for Piano and Orchestra*, Heinz-Klaus Metzger, one of the first Cage enthusiasts in Europe, finds an anarchic state. Anarchy in Metzger's perception is a "socio-political concept where rule would be abolished and no power either held or practiced."¹³⁰ In this respect, Metzger applies the idea of abolition to the absence of the musical score in the *Concert*, which he recognizes as a breakthrough in the history of composition. Given total freedom to interpret their own parts, instrumentalists need not make ensemble with others in the performance, nor is anyone cued by the conductor, who functions only as a "clock" for the time span of the piece. Overall, Ian Pepper's characterization of the "musical anarchism" in *Concert* is apt, describing it as a "model of a non-authoritarian society of free individuals, and more specifically, of a non-hierarchical division of musical labor that would liberate the creative capacities of the musical proletariat, the orchestral musicians."¹³¹

Cage also had his own notion of anarchy in music, which is evident in other indeterminate compositions on a smaller scale than the *Concert*. In a 1972 interview with Nikša Gligo, Cage explains "a very simple example of anarchy" that he often demonstrated with Tudor:

two of us were working together, but independently. I was not telling David Tudor what to do, nor was he telling me what to do, and anything that either of us did worked with everything the other did. . . . When we have the facility to do and to work without constraint, or when we have the things that we need to use, I think we have all that we need. We do not need to have the laws that tell us not to do this but to do something else.¹³²

The last half of the citation above may give us, however, a sense of inconsistency, considering the fact that Cage does provide an individual concept in each piece. Every musical piece in fact needs to have at least a concept to be realized as *the* piece and this concept is also a necessary frame to characterize the piece. Cage seems to have made a vague distinction between the ideas of concept and law; a concept is a much looser

¹³⁰ Heinz-Klaus Metzger, "Anarchie als ästhetische Kategorie," 10: "Als gesellschaftlich-politisches Konzept . . . , bezeichnet Anarchismus die Auffassung, daß Herrschaft abzuschaffen sei und keine Gewalt innegehabt oder geübt werden dürfe."

¹³¹ Ian Pepper, "From the 'Aesthetics of Indifference' to 'Negative Aesthetics': John Cage and Germany 1958-1972," *October* 82 (1997): 37.

¹³² Kostelanetz, *Conversing with Cage*, 285. The original German text is found in Nikša Gligo, "Ich traf John Cage in Bremen," *Melos: Zeitschrift für Neue Musik* 40/1 (1973): 23-29. The citation is Kostelanetz's English translation.

constraint than a law. If so, such a conception can preserve its consistency; nevertheless, the vagueness makes Cage's aesthetic of music debatable and could thus lie at the root of his argument with Morton Feldman, who understood Cage's music well. Again, Feldman's only disagreement with Cage was, as cited above (see page 145), "his dictum 'process should imitate nature in its manner of operation' . . . or, '[e]verything is music'." Even if a concept contains the idea of "work without constraint," it simultaneously has to have at least a set of rules in order to individualize the piece. For Cage, the idea of law was perhaps all too negative, a cause to limit a composer's creativity, and thus he desired total liberation in musical composition. Feldman may have seen a lack of persuasive power in such a notion and it can also be associated with the weakness in Cage's idea of anarchy.

If Cage directly relates the notion of freedom, in which he elucidates the dictum Feldman argued with, to that of anarchy, the way of application probably is reflected in his somewhat naïve, utopian socio-political point of view. He thought that the failure of anarchy in the nineteenth century was due to its impracticability considering available methodological resources at the time. Based on this hypothesis, Cage proposed his original principle: "the necessary technology to put anarchy into practice and to live without being governed," and the "economy must become natural again, that is non-financial."¹³³ Although interesting, Cage's belief here seems questionable because in reality freedom and anarchy cannot be implemented without a framework, which does not necessarily govern *every* single detail, whether in musical composition or in human society.

Kagel's remark on the structural feature of the action part in *Antithese* as "an anarchic unity of life and art" may seem to suggest a connection to Cage's theory of anarchy. However, unlike Cage's principle of "work without constraint," Kagel emphasized the framework, being meticulous in his compositional design, performing procedure, and instructions in order to achieve unity in the entire piece. These were all necessary and positive constraints to guarantee the performer's freedom, not to govern her/his creativity. In addition, Kagel's serial thought coexists with his own idea of

¹³³ Kostelanetz, *Conversing with Cage*, 292. The original text first appeared in Jean-Jacques Lebel, "John Cage entoure de nus, vite," *La Quinzaine litteraire* (1966).

anarchy in *Antithese*. One may argue that such a state is a dichotomy resulting merely from the random mixture of various thoughts, especially if anarchy is simply regarded as uncontrollable chaos. Yet Kagel never aimed at shattering *Antithese*'s structure, but rather saw anarchy as a constructive characteristic of the piece. It is comparable to Borges's liberal anarchism, a notion that is "constructed on the idea of the strong individual" with "an ethics of self-restraint." That is to say, each compositional component of *Antithese* is self-contained and in the first place completely independent of others. In other words, each functions as a "strong individual" that results from its operational self-restraint by following the instructions to form its own component. This does not mean, of course, that everything is predetermined, although the contents and structure of the musical part are unchangeable.

The action part of *Antithese* best illustrates the concept of liberal anarchism, since in a stage performance the performer of *Antithese* is the only human being participating onstage. Given freedom to choose the main actions, the actor must take into consideration the time slot, available stage scenery and props, formation of an acting series, and musical content. The successful execution of the action part entails attributes of a liberal anarchist: a strong individual capable of self-discipline. Kagel does not intend to restrict or totally control the action pattern, but rather to make the performer create her/his "own version" under the given conditions. Only by grasping the concepts of *Antithese* both as a whole and in detail does the performer become capable of producing artistic interaction between her/his "composition" of a series of actions and the musical and stage scenery parts.

Cage would agree that in his piece the performer should be a strong individual capable of self-restraint and thus, in this respect, his idea of anarchism may include an aspect of the liberal anarchism inherent in Kagel's. But in fact Cage seems satisfied with his idealized anarchism in an indeterminate musical performance with Tudor, as the simultaneity of their independent music-making is the entire form of the piece. Cage's anarchism even excludes "pre-agreement" with his co-performer prior to the performance, which he would see as an unnecessary boundary. Indeed, this focus on spontaneity reveals a subtle difference between Cage and Kagel.

In Cage's anarchist notion, one is supposed to determine whether a boundary within and of a musical piece is removable, while Kagel attempts to go beyond or

penetrate the boundary that he leaves in place. Moreover, for Cage, the idea of “openness” is much more important than the concept of “wholeness” or unity, in which he sees boundaries.¹³⁴ What underlies Cage’s idea of openness versus wholeness is inconsistency, which he recognizes as an inevitable trait of anarchism: “being an anarchist automatically makes you inconsistent with what you do.”¹³⁵ Although it may seem to be a bold statement, this remark becomes “consistent” if observing what Cage insists upon and actually does in connection with openness, wholeness and boundaries.

Cage’s concept of openness can be demonstrated in, for instance, the piece 4’33”, in which all emergent sounds and noises become musical materials. Under this particular condition, the materials cannot be unified in the course of “performance” due to the total unpredictability of all the sounds. Nevertheless, while open with regard to the sound quality, the piece has the precisely fixed time frame. More specifically, the entire duration of the piece – namely, four minutes and thirty-three seconds – encompasses all the musical parameters in terms of the framework of the wholeness. The significance of openness is even more marked in his *Concert for Piano and Orchestra*. In fact, Cage himself states that “in order to ensure the audible and visible clarity, the performers are spatially separated from one another insofar as possible in a conventional concert hall.”¹³⁶ Cage would prefer temporal openness as well. However, the composer (or performers) has to determine the total duration of the piece, which is realistically necessary, even though it is not his real wish. This fact illustrates that perfect openness cannot be realized in Cage’s musical composition, and this is exactly an aspect of inconsistency between his concept – or better, his ideal – of openness and actual pieces. In other words, this inconsistency is an inescapable contradiction that Cage may even highlight in his work. In this respect, Cage’s definition of anarchism – “you can’t be consistent with anarchy in what you say”¹³⁷ – justifies not only itself, but also his “works.”

¹³⁴ Kostelanetz, 277. See also John Cage and Conrad Hal Waddington, *Biology and the History of the Future: an IUBS/Unesco Symposium* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1972), 29.

¹³⁵ Kostelanetz, 279. The primary source is Max Blechman, “Last Words on Anarchy. An Interview with John Cage by Max Blechman,” *Drunken Boat* 2 (1994): 221-225.

¹³⁶ John Cage, “‘Concert for Piano and Orchestra’ (1957-58),” *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 5 (1994): 23: “Um hörbare und sichtbare Klarheit zu gewährleisten, sind die Spieler, soweit dies in einem herkömmlichen Konzertsaal eben möglich ist, räumlich voneinander getrennt.”

¹³⁷ Kostelanetz, 279. See also Max Blechman.

Metzger's observation of Cage's *Concert* in terms of anarchic characteristics is, however, slightly different from the composer's. Drawing a connection between the anarchy in the piece and the political idea, Metzger claims that

If one applies what Adorno called social decipherment by art works to such a composition [*Concert*], it turns out to be precisely a political code; obviously, it concerns a model of individual anarchism with limited cooperation, the formulation is strictly inherent to the medium of music and suggests a more reasonable world order.¹³⁸

Metzger's specific characterization of anarchy in *Concert* as "individual anarchism with limited cooperation" is striking. This idea seems very close to Borges's liberal anarchism, since each part of the piece is independent of others and even the existence of each part is arbitrary.

Metzger's interpretation of *Concert*'s anarchist character goes further: not only can each of the individual parts be performed as "solo piece," but one could perform the *Concert for Piano and Orchestra* without the piano part, as a symphony. The idea of the solo piece in fact shares the fundamental concept of liberal anarchism – a self-sufficient individual – especially if it is performed by a "disciplined" musician. Intriguingly, the extreme case exemplified by Metzger approaches Cage's openness concept, perhaps more nearly than the 4'33". Even if all parts of *Concert* are omitted, according to Metzger, "the non-performance (*Nichtaufführung*) of the work is a possible version of its performance."¹³⁹ In this way, Cage's openness can be achieved conceptually, but not practically, as a musical piece. This is perhaps the point the "work" is refigured as concept rather than artifact. Since only nothingness (*Nichts*) is a perfect "figure" of openness, anarchy cannot be achieved; thus, the notions of anarchy and openness are virtually irreconcilable. This verifies the incompatibility of Cage's anarchism with the essentials of his aesthetic "everything is music."

By contrast, Kagel's principle of anarchy in music seems to retain consistency with his musical work. Unlike Cage, Kagel considers anarchy to be a promising means to form the "unity of life and art," especially in the action part of *Antithese*. For Kagel,

¹³⁸ Heinz-Klaus Metzger, "Zu Cages geschichtlichen eingriffen," *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 5 (1994): 13: "Wendet man auf eine derartige Komposition an, was Adorno die gesellschaftliche Entzifferung von Kunstwerken nannte, so erweist sie sich als präzise politische Chiffre; offensichtlich handelt es sich um ein Modell von Individualanarchismus mit beschränkter Kooperation, einen streng immanent im Medium der Musik formulierten Entwurf einer rationablen Einrichtung der irdischen Dinge."

¹³⁹ Ibid.: "... daß die Nichtaufführung des Werks eine mögliche Version seiner Aufführung ist."

anarchy means neither unlimited openness nor constant emergence of a revolution in mind and in society,¹⁴⁰ as it does for Cage. Instead, anarchy is the idea that the specific structure and organization of a given musical piece is intended to achieve. In the case of the entire structure of *Antithese*, the achievement is not possible without self-determination of the individual components and even the materials of each component. It is in principle equivalent to Borges's idea of liberal anarchism that "self-restraint makes a self-organized society possible."¹⁴¹ As is true of *Antithese*, anarchy in Kagel's music cannot be brought into existence without an operation of organization and an idea of unity. In addition, this operation does not eliminate any boundaries within the framework Kagel provides. Rather, the boundaries in this particular multimedia piece must remain to create a necessary tension, concealed or apparent, crucial to Kagel's idea of anarchy. Years after his composition of *Antithese*, in an interview with Anthony Coleman in 2004, Kagel described himself as a "soft anarchist," due to his belief that "without the need to organize your anarchy you never get any kind of deep discourse."¹⁴² This remark is precisely relevant to the formal structure of *Antithese*, a piece composed a half century before the interview. That is to say, in both theatrical and absolute music, Kagel's compositional work seems to have preserved the cohesion of his unique aesthetic of musical composition – anarchy as a specific way of organization.

Kagel hoped to encounter an unheard-of sound and unseen visual image in any performance, but within the given conceptual framework of a piece. More importantly, he expected such an unexpected musical or artistic event to come across as a result of a performer's creative force. A new sound event accidentally gained without the formal-structural framework was not really creation in Kagel's mind, but mere discovery (although he did not disregard this). In this respect, boundaries among the heterogeneous components in *Antithese* form the internal frame necessary not only to maintain the individual identities, but also make possible the performer's creativity. Due to the heterogeneity of elements, one may claim that the piece has a multilayered structure. The description "multilayered" or "stratified" does not imply a hierarchical structure, even

¹⁴⁰ Herve Vanel, "John Cage's Muzak-Plus: The Fu(rni)ture of Music," *Representations* 102 (2008): 116.

¹⁴¹ Salinas, "Political Philosophy in Borges," 302.

¹⁴² Anthony Coleman, "Mauricio Kagel."

though one then imagines the picture that one component lies beneath or above others. In reconsidering Kagel's conception of anarchy in the structural and aesthetic contexts of *Antithese*, the multilayered structure is the unique structure of a non-hierarchical type. Kagel kept existing boundaries among the multifarious components as they are, so that each intensifies its self-sufficiency and meanwhile coexists with others. It is quite natural that tensions between those "strong individuals," so to speak, appear conspicuously, especially as the interactions emerge. However, regardless of how violent or destructive the performance of the piece is, no single individual component can dominate, and the tensions derived from the interactions among them are an inevitable and *intentional* phenomenon in organizing the omnipresent anarchies. Even if a performance gives a strong impression of violence or destruction, it is merely one possible production, never the composer's aim. In other words, the stage version of *Antithese* necessarily generates tensions among the compositional components, regardless how the piece is produced.

These tensions reflect Kagel's realistic observation of anarchy that the tensions inevitably emerge where human beings construct or reconstruct their own society, no matter to what extent they enjoy freedom. Furthermore, another type of tension inherent in *Antithese* is the one between the realistic thought as such and the piece's fictitious presentation consisting of artificial audience in the music and seamless arrangement of electroacoustic equipment on the stage. For this reason, Kagel's remark "anarchy in the piece is omnipresent" can also be interpreted as the omnipresent tensions, and these remain unresolved. All these tensions are, again, not harmful or threatening, but rather natural as an instinct of human beings.

Anarchism is difficult to understand if you don't know about the deep idealism of radicality. It is a way of humanizing society.¹⁴³

While Kagel made this statement over four decades after composing *Antithese*, it still describes the key characteristic of the piece. The piece expresses one's struggle with and confusion by electroacoustic music at the time of the composition, rather than neglecting or excluding these facts. Such incorporation is thus reflected in the idea of "anarchic unity of life and art," which posits explicit and implicit tensions. More specifically they are

¹⁴³ Ibid.

physical tension visible or audible in the actual presentation and conceptual tension perceptible in the characteristic of unity comprised of omnipresent anarchies.

Finally, it is worth reconsidering the perceptual difference of anarchism between Kagel and Cage, which suggests that Kagel's idea of anarchy and its application in his composition are more realistic or practical than those of Cage. If a conception of anti-authority or non-conformity is regarded as an essential feature of anarchy in music, it is true that Kagel and Cage to some extent agree. However, a close observation of each composer's individual motivations for being conscious of anarchism reveals a sharp difference in their aesthetic and ideological views of anarchy.

In Cage's case, his interest in Oriental philosophy probably activated his consciousness of musical anarchy. In his remarks, Cage often stressed his discovery of Oriental thought, especially Zen-Buddhism, as a watershed in his career. This was significant liberation not only from his long discontent with the precepts and lessons in the Protestant Church and public schools he attended. Learning Oriental aesthetic and modes of thought, Cage attempted to liberate himself from tacit strictures on Western practice of musical composition. Particularly his two-year long attendance at classes of Zen-Buddhism taught by Daisetz Suzuki at Columbia University was, according to Cage, "a determining influence upon" his music and thinking.¹⁴⁴ The "effect it had was," Cage explains,

first to change what it was that I was trying to say in my work. And, second, to change how it was I was making my work. And what it was that I was saying was very much influenced by such Oriental notions as creation, preservation, destruction, and quiescence. . . . Then I began composing . . . [with] a spirit of acceptance, rather than a spirit of control.¹⁴⁵

This principle developed into his bolder aesthetic "letting sounds be themselves" and one can see this aesthetic conception in Cage's pieces from the early 1950s onward.

Although it is unclear to what extent the influence of Oriental philosophy propelled him towards an idea of "idealized social structures," Cage's compositions in the decade could, as David W. Bernstein suggests, "later provide us with models of

¹⁴⁴ Richard Kostelanetz, 29. See also Maureen Furman, "Zen Composition: An Interview with John Cage," *East West Journal* (May 1979).

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 17.

alternative forms of social and political organization.”¹⁴⁶ Bernstein considers these models as Cage’s “desirable political and social structures” and in music, as a representation of Cage’s “rejection of an organicist assumption that a musical work should be a unified whole”; musical anarchy.¹⁴⁷ Occasionally, Cage confuses the Zen-Buddhist thought with a socio-political structure of anarchism, due to the fact that they share a common principle of nonconstraint of others. This tendency became more and more conspicuous from the 1960s together with the fact that “Cage paid increasing attention to the relation between art and political and social structure.”¹⁴⁸

As an extraordinary innovator and inventor in the developmental course of postwar avant-garde musical composition, Cage had to engage opponents who blatantly denounced his music. For Cage, such opponents (who are not only critics and his contemporaries, but also instrumentalists) blindly followed musical-social conventions, behind which authority was likely to reign over the society of music. It is thus not inappropriate to postulate that in Cage’s view, the political pressure or interference in the realm of musical society overlaps or is derived from an authoritarian hierarchy immanent in the society as a whole. Due to his radical compositional approach (though he seems not to have considered it so), Cage occasionally faced a ban on performance of his music. For example, while making a sensational German debut in the Donaueschingen Music Festival in 1954, not until the 1970s was his music ever again performed in the historically significant international music festival.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁶ David W. Bernstein, “‘In Order to Thicken the Plot’: Toward a Critical Reception of Cage’s Music,” in *Writings through John Cage’s Music, Poetry, and Art*, ed. David W. Bernstein and Christopher Hatch (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2001), 16.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 40.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 15.

¹⁴⁹ See Pepper, 35. Pieces they performed at the Festival are those of so-called New York School: Christian Wolff’s *For Pianos II*, Earle Brown’s *4 Systems* and taped recorded *Octet*, Feldman’s *Intersection for Magnetic Tape*, and Cage’s *34’46.775” for 2 Pianists* in the shortened version and tape recorded *William Mix*. For the musico-historical and -aesthetic significance of Cage’s appearance in Donaueschingen, see Josef Häusler, *Spiegel der Neuen Musik: Donaueschingen: Chronik-Tendenzen-Werkbesprechungen* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1996), 157-161. Regarding details of the performance and the scandalous reaction of the audience, see Amy C. Beal, “The Army, the Airwaves, and the Avant-Garde: American Classical Music in Postwar West Germany,” *American Music* 31/4 (2003): 494-497 and Everett Helm, “Germany: Donaueschingen Festival 1954,” under “Notes from Abroad,” *The Musical Times* 95/1342 (1954): 671-672.

As a consequence of his experiences of this kind and elevation of his interest in the anarchist social structures, Cage sets forth more clearly an idealistic view of “art as social activity . . . [which] is communal, non-hierarchical.”¹⁵⁰

Less anarchic kinds of music give examples of less anarchic states of society. The masterpieces of Western music exemplify monarchies and dictatorships. Composer and conductor: king and prime minister. By making musical situations which are analogies to desirable social circumstances which we do not yet have, we make music suggestive and relevant to the serious questions which face Mankind.¹⁵¹

This statement in the late 1970s aptly demonstrates that in relation to musical composition, Cage at this point weights structure in social context more strongly than Oriental philosophy. At the same time, it also postulates that Cage’s idea of anarchy in music stemmed not exactly from his political concerns in the first place, but rather from his immersion in Zen-Buddhism philosophy.

By contrast, Kagel’s keen awareness of anarchism is attributed to primarily his own social and political experiences in his Buenos Aires era, while Borges’s liberal anarchist thought could be an influential factor as well. As discussed in Chapter Two, Kagel’s music for the film *Muetres de Buenos Aires* was immediately destined never to see the light of day due to the censorship of Perón regime. Restriction of freedom of speech and expression was a fact in his everyday life, and the proscription of the film was his first-hand experience. Political control of music and art was unmistakable reality and Kagel was constantly confronted with the authorities’ ill-minded perception of culture.

In consideration of his unpleasant experiences with the cultural control of the Perón government and the ideological inheritance from his family, Kagel’s idea of anarchy was never a simple desire. Rather, it was a particular notion one has to form wisely, keeping sort of skepticism about whether it is really possible to realize an anarchic society or if it is more a philosophical stance, as “a rich and fertile area of imaginative social perception.”¹⁵² Cultivating a “social critic” temperament in his Buenos Aires period, Kagel seems very careful of his statements about anarchism or anarchy in music (at least more careful than Cage with regard to this particular topic). At least, Kagel

¹⁵⁰ Natalie Crohn Schmitt, “John Cage in a New Key,” *Perspectives of New Music* 20/1-2 (1981/1982): 101

¹⁵¹ John Cage, *Empty Words* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1979), 183.

¹⁵² William O. Reichert, “Anarchism, Freedom, and Power,” 148.

never thought to change or influence society by musical composition, as Cage once did. Conversely, he knew well that it had always been social and political conditions that changed music, and thus he raised social issues – the politics of musical society as well – in his compositions. Kagel’s idea of the anarchic unity of life and art in *Antithese*, therefore, has nothing to do with an attempt to change society directly, but rather it is a representation of Kagel’s musical thought in connection with the current social context and, meanwhile, an intention to pose the question for others.

Kagel realistically differentiates anarchy in music from anarchy as politics, and thus he claims his musical compositions “manifestly have no political content.”¹⁵³ This, of course, does not mean that Kagel negates all existing political structures. Rather, while admitting that any form of artistic activity involves cultural policy as reality, Kagel never composed a musical piece as an overt political message. Kagel would nevertheless take a stance against cultural policy, if it “adopts totalitarian forms,” by “writing very uncompromising music independent of trends and expectations of any so-called society of music.”¹⁵⁴ The notion of independence within structures of society is indeed applicable to that of the independence of the individual compositional components and techniques in *Anithese* as well. In this respect, Rebstock’s claim that “there are perhaps no other pieces that show as clearly Kagel’s position in comparison to Cage’s music theatrical pieces as *Antithese* does”¹⁵⁵ is also true.

¹⁵³ Hansjörg Pauli, “Mauricio Kagel,” 97: “. . . meine Stücke keinen manifest politischen Inhalt haben.”

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.: “der Staat totalitäre Formen annimmt,” “Indem ich Musik schreibe, die sehr Kompromißlos ist, unabhängig von den Modeströmungen und von den Erwartungen der sogenannten Musikgesellschaft.”

¹⁵⁵ Rebstock, 180. See footnote 18 in Chapter One.

CHAPTER FIVE

SERIAL THOUGHT AND *VERFRANSUNG* IN *ANTITHESE*

Introduction

In its conceptual framework, *Antithese* embraces two controversial issues at the time of the composition: serial thought and multimedia or interdisciplinary composition. At first glance it may appear that the contrast between these spheres is irreconcilable, especially in terms of compositional method. However, serial thought does not necessarily refer to twelve-tone-based serial technique – a strict serialist approach of musical composition – but rather literally to the idea of ordering regardless of whether it is fixed or changeable. More specifically, the fundamental idea of serial thought was strongly connected with a serial principle that enabled a composer to form “an entire musical organization . . . from the tiniest component up to the complete structure”¹; however, this does not mean that serial thought can only derive from composing a musical piece by means of a strict serial concept and procedure. Nor does the thought necessarily deal exclusively with twelve notes, as Boulez claims.² For this reason, serial thought can underlie both serialist and non-serialist compositions and thus, as is true in the stage version of *Antithese*, it can be applied to a multimedia musical composition as well.

As discussed in the previous chapter, a striking aspect of *Antithese* in formal-structural terms is that Kagel’s serial thought is intrinsic not to the musical part, but solely to the acting part in which the actual serial procedure (that is, the formation of main actions) is executed by the performer. In this respect, the serial thought in the piece is an indispensable medium for shaping the musical and extra-musical materials and components that make up the whole structure. Whereas one can easily label the integration of these particular approaches as inventive, what is more important is that it pinpoints two of the most controversial issues in the compositional development of the mid-twentieth century.

¹ Pierre Boulez, “Tendencies in Recent Music,” 177.

² Ibid., 177-178.

In “totally determined serial music,” as Kagel’s observation that “the compositional method is already analytical in nature” posits,³ the serial method and its manipulation are traceable by analyzing the piece and definable as a result of the analysis. For serial thought, however, it is necessary to understand the aesthetic of the composer, which is not as immediately apparent or straightforward as the serial method and manipulation. Palombini’s brief definition of the distinctions between serial method, technique, and aesthetic aptly highlights the significance of serial thought within the realm of music:

Serial techniques . . . [are] procedures that can be identified in the music of Bach, Beethoven and Schaeffer for instance. [S]erial method . . . [is] the systematic application of such procedures, defined from the starting-point of Schoenberg’s dodecaphony. Serial aesthetics would be the personal uses diverse composers make of the serial method to express themselves. From the notion of serial aesthetics one may derive an abstraction, the serial aesthetic, encompassing all those personal aesthetics based on the use of a serial method.⁴

In this definition, the term “serial aesthetic” is virtually equivalent to the idea of serial thought. A salient point of the definition is the diversity of aesthetics that results in the individual approaches to serial composition. For example, Boulez’s *Études sérielle*, as a first breakthrough in the extended use of serial method, epitomizes his personal aesthetic at that time.⁵ His recognition of electronic equipment’s unprecedented possibilities stimulated the composer to form his original aesthetic, which viewed the machine as a significant medium for new sounds and rhythms of serial music.

Boulez’s brief definition of serial thought is illustrative: “serial thought is based on a universe in continuous expansion.”⁶ Whereas this definition is an essential and important characteristic of *serial thought*, the achievement of Boulez’s *Études* – non-tempered pitches and intervals and a complex of note values and rhythms – was made within the realm of *serialism*. In other words, his serial thought focused mainly on the “continuous expansion” of the serial method. Furthermore, although one could call these

³ See Chapter Four.

⁴ Palombini, “Pierre Schaeffer, 1953: Towards an Experimental Music,” 546.

⁵ See Chapter Two.

⁶ Boulez, “Series,” in *Stocktakings*, 236.

pieces multimedia due to their utilization of electronic devices,⁷ they did not interact with any non- or extra-musical component, but rather were compositions strictly within the genre of music. Together with his later pieces, Boulez's musical practice scarcely engaged the interdisciplinary integration as Kagel and Cage did. As a result, while Boulez was an exponent of serial thought, who maintained the "universe in continuous expansion" as the fundamental principle, there was a certain limit to it in his compositional aesthetic.

The series has become a polyvalent mode of thought and no longer simply a technique of vocabulary. Modern serial thought insists that the series must not only generate the actual vocabulary, but must expand into the very structure of the work. It is thus a complete reaction against classical thought, which wishes form to be, practically, something pre-existent.⁸

Kagel's *Antithese* realized the further expansion of Boulez's principle of serial thought in a non-serialist composition. For Kagel, "totally determined serial music" was already "something pre-existent" as he started his career as a composer in Europe. Just as Boulez was critical of "classical thought," so Kagel was critical of *serialist* thought, though not exactly of *serial* thought. Thus, when considering Kagel's serial thought and its realization in *Antithese*, Palombini's definition above has to be broadened to include non-serialist method. That is, a serial aesthetic neither always required nor necessarily generated a serialist method, but rather was able to spawn a new form of musical

⁷ Whether an electroacoustic composition is multimedia can be debated, if regarding the electronic equipment as a new type of musical instrument. This perspective is conspicuous particularly in Cage's pieces, for instance, that employ a radio, phonograph, and magnetic tape.

⁸ Boulez, "Series," 236. Here the "classical thought" may imply Boulez's criticism of Schoenberg as anachronistic, as he claimed in "Schoenberg is Dead." However, one must bear in mind that Boulez overlooked Schoenberg's innovations of phrase, harmonic, rhythmic, and metric structures in his exploration of twelve-tone technique, which was not discovered until early 1980 by Martha Hyde's thorough study and analyses of his works and sketches, published as, "The Roots of Form in Schoenberg's 'Sketches'," *Journal of Music Theory* 24/1 (1980): 1-36. Because Schoenberg's work on the further development of twelve-tone technique was also the "continuous expansion," Boulez's characterization of Schoenberg as "classical thought" can create an inconsistency or conflict in his principle of serial thought. In consideration of such a conflict, Edward Campbell's statement of Adorno's observation of Boulez's attitude towards Schoenberg is noteworthy: "in 'Vienna' (1960), Adorno still takes Boulez and his generation to task for failing to acknowledge their debt to Schoenberg. While Boulez's 'Schoenberg is Dead' is not named, there is no doubt that Adorno again has it in mind and he interprets the rejection of Schoenberg as a conflict between a father and his sons." See Edward Campbell, *Boulez, Music and Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 85. See also Theodor W. Adorno, "Vienna" in *Quasi una Fantasia: Essay on Modern Music*, trans. Rodney Livingstone (London and New York: Verso, 1998, reprint 2002), 218: "The musical textures of the Viennese [school] and the [new] Serialists are similar, not just in the tendency to aim for the greatest possible determinacy, in the desire to spin everything out of a common core, but also in the way the music manifests itself."

composition; therefore, the aesthetic origin of the serialist method can be attributed strictly to a *serialist* thought.

For further clarification of the distinction between *serial* thought and *serialist* thought, Umberto Eco's comparison of serial thought to structural thought is useful, though the author neither uses the term *serialist* thought nor mentions its concept. While there are indisputable shortcomings in Eco's theory of serial thought,⁹ its focus in relation to theory of "open work" is worth reviewing to illuminate an aesthetic aspect of Kagel's serial thought. This does not necessarily mean that the serial thought of *Antithese* completely fulfills the aesthetic definitions of Eco's theory or vice versa. Rather, it will help to make clear that Kagel's serial thought crystalized in *Antithese* is more advanced than Eco's aesthetic theoretical paradigm of serial thought.

Despite the presence of Kagel's serial thought that lies not only in *Antithese*'s parameterization – a conceptual-technical feature of serialism – but also in the application to the extra-musical part, the piece cannot be subsumed under the category of serial music. In short, the serial aspect in the piece is merely part of its structure, and not a primary structural principle. For this reason, it is not necessary to reevaluate serialism in detail. However, reconsideration of the essential aesthetic and its concept highlights how serial thought in *Antithese* plays an important role to realize a more extended case of "a universe in continuous expansion" than any serialist works at that time.

Serial Thought in Connection with Open Form

Serial Thought as a Vision of Structural Innovation

In this connection, a useful resource is Eco's theorization of serial thought in connection with his concept of "open work," developed on the basis of "the distinctive features of serial thought" that Boulez defined.¹⁰ Eco's attempt to theorize serial thought

⁹ See "Series and Structure" in Eco, *The Open Work*.

¹⁰ Eco, "Series and Structure," 217. With her assertion that "the theory of the open work is not only the poetics of serial thought but its aesthetics," M. J. Grant claims that "it is to be regretted that serial music's influence on thinkers such as Eco has rarely been accompanied by a reciprocal influence on musicology's study of serial music." See Grant, 212. A rare example in this regard is Gianmario Borio's "Seriell und Postseriell" in Borio, *Musikalische Avantgarde um 1960*, 23-33. This study was done years before Grant's but has never appeared in English. For another recent example which examines Eco's "Series and Structure" more thoroughly than Borio, see Edward Campbell, "Eco's response to Lévi-Strauss" in Boulez, *Music and Philosophy*, 128-132.

was primarily a response to Claude Lévi-Strauss's "unfavourable judgment on serialism,"¹¹ based on his conviction that "serial interest in structure has been superficially mistaken for the properly structuralist study of structures."¹² In Eco's discussion, one can trace a few conspicuous disagreements with Lévi-Strauss's anti-serialism and thus the predominance of structural thought over serialism. Comparing serial thought with structural thought as a point of departure for his discussion, however, Eco did not renounce all aspects of Lévi-Strauss's structuralist method. Rather, Eco acknowledged, for instance, the existence of an "*Ur-code*" that is at the core of "the real Structure of all communication, all language, all cultural manifestation, all acts of signification."¹³ A characteristic distinction Eco made in this regard is the rigidity inherent in structural thought and the generativity inherent in serial thought. In this distinction, the *Ur-code* – an archetypal structure and its quintessential paradigm – played different roles; in structural thought, the *Ur-code* was unchangeable and deductive to be ultimately traced, whereas in serial thought it was also unchangeable but inductive to explore a new structure.

This particular view of serial thought thus affirms that serial music (and inevitably other types of postwar avant-garde music) developed not as something completely new with no connection to musical styles and structures of the past (that is, modal, tonal, and atonal music). Instead, a new mode of musical expression or presentation created with serial thought resulted from the thorough research into these earlier forms. Eco's conception of expansion inherent in serial thought implies an idea of continuity in a specific way; historical and developmental continuity. Serial thought neither denies nor detaches itself from extant musical principles. Because one can regard musical composition as a unique language, renaming it as "musical language," the following statement by Eco is convincing, concerning the distinction between the language of structural thought and that of serial thought:

... after modern culture surrendered to the evidence that languages, along with other social systems, differ from population to population and from time to time, structuralism ... is today aiming at the discovery of constant structures, simple, universal articulations capable of generating all the various systems that they

¹¹ Edward Campbell, 128.

¹² Ibid., 126.

¹³ Eco, 220.

underlie. . . . [T]herefore . . . whereas structural thought tends to recognize “universals,” serial thought prefers to denounce them as “pseudo-universals.”¹⁴

Serial thought thus functioned as a significant vehicle for giving impetus to a composer’s distinct creativity, and its aesthetic had to do with “the construction of new structured realities.”¹⁵

Another significance of Eco’s theorization of serial thought is that the principles suit the concept of open work in terms of the structure of a musical piece and its underlying aesthetic. In fact, Eco’s theory attempted to justify that “the theory of open work is none other than a poetics of serial thought.”¹⁶ Eco’s conception of open work was based on his knowledge of musical pieces written in mobile form, although it was limited to Stockhausen’s *Klavierstück XI*, Boulez’s *Troisième Sonate*, and Pousseur’s *Scambi*.¹⁷ Identifying the structural and formal openness in these pieces, Eco saw serial thought as a positive and new mode of organization that liberates a composer from the reuse of a pre-existing code: that is, the recycling of *Ur-code* he defined as a distinctive principle of structural thought.¹⁸ By contrast, Eco maintained that serial thought challenges the “continuous restructuration”¹⁹ of the code.

The characteristic contrasts between serial and structural thought, however, do not necessarily mean that they are completely at odds and thus irreconcilable, especially in terms of musical composition. Rather, Eco claims that serial thought is capable of embracing the aesthetic and technical principles of structural thought. Notable in this regard is his succinct description of an essential feature of serial thought that it “aims at the production of a structure”²⁰; that is, impetus for the generativity of a new code or a new mode of thought. Perhaps Eco related the idea of the production of a new structure to open form and was convinced that only serial thought was capable of realizing the form.

¹⁴ Eco, 227.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid., 218.

¹⁷ See Grant, 177.

¹⁸ Furthermore, Eco related this structuralist principle directly to tonal music, which he characterized as conservative. Although his definition of tonal music is unclear, the notion of tonal music as conservative can be understood only in retrospect. Tonal music as a contrasting object to serial thought is thus not sufficiently logical and for this reason, this is a shortcoming in his theorization of serial thought. Details of this problem are discussed below.

¹⁹ Eco, 230.

²⁰ Ibid.

If open form was the outcome of Eco's notion of serial thought and resulted from his observation of the course of European serialist development, the concept of open form identifies itself as European and thus distinguishes itself from that of Cagean (American) indeterminacy. Concerning the relationship between serial thought and open form in music, Eco drew inspiration also from Pousseur's notion of serial-mobile form in addition to Boulez's statement describing serial thought. One can thus assume that Eco's idea of open form was related to Pousseur's assertion of "the very important difference of attitude between him [Cage] and the European composers of my [Pousseur's] generation regarding the questions of form, use of randomness, control of the results."²¹ By the same token, Cage did not acknowledge Stockhausen's *Klavierstück XI* as an indeterminate work.²² In any case, Eco's theorization of serial thought never focused on the developmental and conceptual difference between the European open work and American indeterminacy. Nevertheless, the theory represents itself as one derived from the European serial and structuralist tradition; in particular, Eco's European resources were the decisive elements for his views on serial thought, as well as the open work.

Inspired by the aforementioned pieces of Stockhausen, Boulez, and Pousseur, Eco attempted to prove the capability of serial thought for pioneering a new foundation for structure. Interestingly, his serial thought recognized the idea of "absent structure" (*struttura assente*) as the new foundation. For Eco, the embodiment of absent structure was only possible in an open work that abandoned the permanence of preexisting structure, a primary principle of structural thought. As a result, an open work derived from serial thought gained the permanence of a change of formal structure. This is exactly the case in a socio-historical and aesthetic context as well, as Eco asserts that a

[s]eries will no longer be a negation of structure; rather, it will be the expression of a structure that questions itself and sees itself as a historical phenomenon. . . . In other words, [a] series will be a structure that . . . is constantly looking for it within itself, in a state of continuous tension and permanent methodological doubt which alone can produce meaning.²³

²¹ Henri Pousseur, "Calculation and Imagination in Electronic Music," *Electronic Music Review* 5 (1968): 23. The article was originally presented by the author under the same title at the Slee Lecture Recitals of the State University of New York at Buffalo, 28 February 1966.

²² See John Cage, "Indeterminacy," in *Silence*, 35-36.

²³ Eco, 232.

In serial thought, therefore, the thought itself was primarily supposed to take a current condition in a prodigious stream of history into consideration. Serial thought had no purpose to deny any structures in the past, regardless of the degree to which it criticized them. And yet criticism was a necessary element of serial thought to renew the pre-existing structure, and its invented structure represented itself as a “historical phenomenon.” In this theory, it was thus inevitable that any new form created as a result of critical observation reflected the creator’s questioning, doubt, or skepticism derived from that critical observation. Thus, open form did not simply mean structural randomness.

Eco’s theorization of serial thought advocates a vision suitable for the time, rather than presenting itself as a pioneering avant-garde work. It is thus hardly bound up with technical details of the serial compositional methods that serialists individually employed. In fact, Eco uses the term “serial technique” from a philosophical point of view. Viewing serial thought as “an activity that involves the production of forms,” Eco’s definition of serial technique is one “that may imply a vision of the world, without being itself a philosophy.”²⁴ Thus, one can interpret Eco’s conception of the term “serial” as the reflection of a present zeitgeist that recognizes itself as a specific transitional phase. In this respect, music that we generally define as serial, to which adjectives such as “total” or “integral” have often been attached to represent its degree of control, is not necessarily the only mode of serial thought. Rather, Eco’s emphasis on the idea of serial seems to be more on a state of flux in the course of formal-structural reform.

From this viewpoint, the notion of open work is more suitable for Eco’s theory of serial thought and as such, in his writing the definition of the term “serialist” is highly idiosyncratic in the context of music history and music theory. In Eco’s sense a serialist was an artist or composer who attempted to implement “the organization and continuous restructuration of new codes, and the historical evolution of modes of communication.”²⁵ In other words, it was not necessarily a *serialist* who employed musical serial organization and formation. Instead, for Eco a serial composer was one who undertook these tasks with serial thought and who did not follow the model of a universal structure

²⁴ Ibid., 227.

²⁵ Ibid., 230.

(*Ur-code*), a fundamental structuralist principle. For this reason, one must distinguish the meaning of serialist in Eco's text from that in postwar avant-garde music. This distinction is indispensable for understanding Kagel's unique serial thought in *Antithese*.

In order to examine it as thoroughly as possible, however, a problematic point of Eco's theory of serial thought has to be clarified, because both the flaws as well as its broader implications help to better illustrate Kagel's serial thought and its characteristics. In part, the theorization relies heavily on Boulez's statement concerning the continuous expansion of compositional development. Presumably, Eco could recognize the consistency between Boulez's aesthetic characterization of serial thought and his mobile form piece *Troisième Sonate*. However, as Gianmario Borio points out, Eco "disregards . . . the early history and technical procedures of serialism"²⁶; moreover, "Eco's mental leap is . . . attributed to his fragmentary knowledge of the most recent history of composition at that time."²⁷ Hence, Eco's theory seems applicable only in a limited period and style of serial compositions: pieces that amalgamate serial method with open form. It is thus plausible that Eco would regard the piece of Stockhausen as another positive example in his theory of serial thought as well as open work.

In any case, as Borio identifies, the shortcomings of Eco's theory of serial thought are twofold: a lack of appreciation of both "the early history and technical procedures of serialism." For instance, Eco asserts that

[a]ll we need is to remember the correlations posited by Henri Pousseur between the universe of tonal music and an aesthetic of repetition, closure, and cyclicity that involves and reflects the conservative ideology and pedagogy characteristic of a particular political and social structure.²⁸

Pousseur's discussion, to which Eco refers, had in fact appeared already almost a decade before Eco's writing of "Series and Structure."²⁹ In the early phase of serialist development, serial composers perceived that tonality and traditional musical forms strongly represented their conservative nature as an antidote to new music. It is believable that such a nature symbolized a conservative aspect of political and social structure if

²⁶ Gianmario Borio, *Komponieren um 1960*, 30: "Eco . . . , läßt Frühgeschichte und technische Vorgehensweisen des Serialismus außer acht."

²⁷ Ibid., 31: "Ecos Gedankensprung ist . . . seinen lückenhaften Kenntnissen der damals jüngsten Kompositionsgeschichte zuzuschreiben."

²⁸ Eco, 230.

²⁹ Eco's reference is Henri Pousseur, "La nuova sensibilità musicale," *Incontri musicali* 2 (1958).

considering its long lasting tradition of a set of rules as *Ur-code* in a structuralist sense, which one discovers and uses as a template. In particular, the conservative will become more hostile to the idea of open form whose nature is to create the alternative to the *Ur-code*.

In music, however, a problematic aspect in this regard was the musical and formal characteristics of the Second Viennese School. Especially in the twelve-tone music of Schoenberg and Berg, one can easily recognize their presentation of traditional formal design. In his well-known essay “Schönberg is Dead” (1952), Boulez severely criticized Schoenberg’s “use of pre-classical and classical forms” in his twelve-tone works, regarding it as a result of his “lack of ambition”³⁰ (On the contrary, Boulez identifies the “perpetual variation, or non-repetition” in Schoenberg’s specific atonal works as “the most significant elements within Schoenberg’s development”³¹). It is unclear whether Eco failed to touch upon this particular issue out of ignorance or intentional neglect. In any case, Eco’s theory of serial thought neglects the point that Boulez made with regard to Schoenberg’s synthesis of the twelve-tone series and classical forms. Although harsh in character, it in fact played a vital role in the development of both serial and serialist thought among postwar avant-garde composers.

What Borio regards as “Eco’s mental leap” could thus contain this issue, together with his disregard of the fact that opposition to traditional forms was one reason Boulez and his contemporaries held Webern’s music in high esteem. Even if the idea of “serial technique” in Eco’s sense did not mean a serialist method of organization, the development of such a method was a connecting thread leading to *European* mobile form. In other words, even if Eco’s main focus on serial thought was to seek the conceptual rationality of open form, the developmental process from the twelve-tone method to serialism was an indispensable stepping-stone towards the theoretical and aesthetic formation of open form. Since, according to Eco, “serial thought aims at the production of history,”³² his theory could have included the postwar serialists’ negative

³⁰ Campbell, 72. See also Pierre Boulez, “Schönberg is Dead,” *The Score* 6 (1952): 18-22.

³¹ Campbell, 155.

³² Eco, 221. See also *ibid.*, “[t]he main goal of serial thought is to allow codes to evolve historically . . . , rather than to trace them back to the original generative Code (the Structure).”

responses to the compositional styles of Schoenberg and Berg. Pousseur's succinct explanation to some extent complements Eco's view in this respect.

[W]e were possessed by an implacable desire for strict organization, for rigorous and clear control of what we were doing. . . . [W]e had undertaken to apply, on all possible levels and in every perceptible dimension, methods of guiding and combining the musical elements which we had deduced from the Schoenbergian and above all Weberian system, stressing almost exclusively the rational, quantitative, and metrical aspects.³³

This may at first glance seem contradictory to the principle of open form due to the specific aim of structural and formal control. However, from a perspective of invention of a new code (serialist method) based on *Ur*-code (Schoenbergian or Weberian twelve-tone system), the particular goal and process of serialist development Pousseur claims unmistakably could have been included in Eco's theory of serial thought.

The shortcoming of the theoretical formation aside, a thought-provoking point in Eco's discourse on serial thought in "Series and Structure" was his suggestion that serial thought could be applied to art works other than music. Eco did not consider the possibility that serial thought might tie two or more different art genres together. This was perhaps due to his limited knowledge of multimedia art work. Eco found that the expandability of serial thought was an essential aesthetic principle of the open work and thus that it was "the basis of any theory of the 'open work' in music as well as in every other artistic genre."³⁴ This idea hints at Kagel's intention of making use of an idiosyncratic use of serialization in *Antithese*.

There seems, however, to have been neither direct contact nor mutual inspiration between Eco and Kagel, or more specifically, between Eco's notion of the expandability of serial thought and Kagel's application of serial thought to *Antithese*. To fill the gap, Pousseur's *Scambi* (1957) is a useful example to contrast with Kagel's serial thought underlying *Antithese*. *Scambi* is an intriguing piece distinguishable from other serial-mobile works in three ways. First, it is an electroacoustic piece in which Pousseur characterizes individual sound elements by setting four distinct parameters. Second, there is no musical score, which rules out a conventional analysis of musical structure and form. Finally, and most importantly, *Scambi* is the first serial electroacoustic work to

³³ Pousseur, "Calculation and Imagination in Electronic Music," 21.

³⁴ Eco, 218.

adopt a mobile form, so that almost an unlimited number of different presentations are possible. Presumably, Eco to some extent learned the serial-mobile theory of *Scambi*: the methodological principle and procedure that a recreator must grasp in order to construct a new form of the piece. This theory and its embodiment in *Scambi* may have influenced Eco in terms of the aesthetic of serial thought in relation to the idea of open work.

Pousseur's Serial Thought in the Open Work Scambi (1957)

As a possible source of Eco's theorization of serial thought, it is worth examining Pousseur's conception of serial-mobile theory in *Scambi*. It is plausible that Eco's familiarity with serial composition and serial thought relied to some extent on his personal contact with Pousseur. The Belgian composer produced the electroacoustic serial-mobile piece *Scambi* at the *Studio di Fonologia Musicale* (Studio of Musical Phonology) of RAI (*Radio Audizioni Italiane*) in Milan, where he was given a limited period of time³⁵ and where, according to Grant, "Eco was a frequent visitor."³⁶ Eco could to some extent learn aesthetic and theoretical principles of serial composition from Pousseur, but perhaps not the details of *Scambi*'s technical processes, except for the concept of mobile form. In fact, this formal concept was striking enough for Eco, regardless of his limited knowledge of and interest in electroacoustic music. Pousseur's serial-mobile compositional approach and the aesthetic intention may even have inspired Eco to theorize serial thought, due to the consistency between theory and practice in *Scambi*. Also, the developmental process of Pousseur's serial-mobile method in *Scambi* seems to underpin Eco's theorization of serial thought, while Eco's theory does not sufficiently explain the musico-theoretical and postwar musico-historical aspects.

³⁵ Pascal Decroupet, "The Studio di Fonologia Musicale della RAI Milano: Maderna and Pousseur," trans. Ralf Nuhn, September 2007, *The 'Scambi Project': Open Forms and Electroacoustic Music* [music criticism on-line]; available from http://www.scambi.mdx.ac.uk/Documents/Im%20Zenit%20text_2.pdf; Internet; accessed 11 August 2011. The text is an expanded version of "Studio di Fonologia Musicale della RAI Milano," in *Im Zenit der Moderne* vol. 2 (Freiburg: Rombach Verlag, 1997), 99-104. According to the author, Pousseur had "merely six weeks" for the realization of *Scambi*. See *ibid.*, 3.

³⁶ Grant, 177. More specifically, Eco first formed a friendship with Luciano Berio, who was at that time the musical director of the studio at RAI. And then, according to Edward Campbell, "through Berio, he got to know . . . Pousseur," see Campbell, *Boulez, Music and Philosophy*, 128, footnote.

Pousseur's serial compositional and serial aesthetic development stemmed from his keen interest in "the great strictness and economy"³⁷ of Webern's method. Being in attendance at Boulez's "class for questions about the Webernean harmonic concept,"³⁸ which was his first meeting with Boulez in 1951, Pousseur realized "Webern as the basis of his own compositional activity."³⁹ After his *Trois chants sacrés* (1951) for Soprano and String Trio, a twelve-tone work reflective of his analysis of Webern's tone row usage and the resultant harmonies, Pousseur composed his first "through-serialized"⁴⁰ piece *Prospection en deux phases* (1952/53) for three pianos tuned in sixth-tones. The series of the piece consists of six elements instead of twelve, and the composer set up parameters of pitch, duration, and dynamic on this basis. Of these parameters, Pousseur focused most on pitch organization, setting up a further three parameters: six tones an octave apart, six tones within an octave, and six sixth-tones within a semitone.⁴¹ Hence, one can call *Prospection* a microtonal-serial composition for musical instruments. In 1954 Pousseur composed his first electroacoustic piece *Seismogrammes* at the WDR studio, a piece modeled on Stockhausen's *Studie I* and *Studie II*, and based on the concept of "total organization"⁴² "with absolute precision of control."⁴³ In this sine-wave-based composition, Pousseur "focused on a higher sound density" by means of "continuous sound transitions" on the basis of a complex ratio of harmonic proportions (7:13:19).⁴⁴

³⁷ Henri Pousseur, "Theorie und Praxis in der neuesten Musik," in *Darmstädter Beiträge zur Neuen Musik* (Mainz: B. Schott's Söhne, 1959), 24: "die große Strenge und die Ökonomie." This essay first appeared in this issue in German translation (the translator is unknown) from the original French "Théorie et pratique dans la musique récente" (1959) which is compiled in Henri Pousseur, *Écrits théoriques 1954-1967*, ed. Pascal Decroupet (Sprimont: Mardaga, 2004), 279-294.

³⁸ Pascal Decroupet, "... wie die Redaktion zur Systemprämisse wurde ..." in *Musik-Konzepte* 69: *Henri Pousseur*, ed. Heinz-Klaus Metzger and Rainer Riehn (München: edition text + kritik, 1990), 3: "Unterrichtsstunde zu Fragen der Webernschen Harmonik."

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 5: "Webern als Ausgangspunkt für seine eigene kompositorische Tätigkeit."

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 7: "durchserialisierte."

⁴¹ For the details, see Decroupet's analysis of the *Prospection* in *ibid.*, 7-11. Despite his ambitious work to develop Pousseur's original serial method, the piece seems to have rarely been performed due to the difficulty of preparing three sixth-tone-tuned pianos. For this reason, presumably, *Prospection* remains still unpublished today. However, there is a record of *Prospection* performance by three pianists, Brigitte Focroulle, Isabelle Schmit, and Danielle Du Bosch, under the direction of Jean-Pierre Peuvion, on March 4 1985 in Liège, Belgium, see "Catalogue," *Henri Pousseur* [music criticism online]; available from <http://www.henripousseur.net/catalogue.php>; Internet; accessed 1 September 2011.

⁴² Henri Pousseur, "Calculation and Imagination in Electronic Music," 21.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 22.

⁴⁴ Decroupet, "Komponieren im analogen Studio – eine historisch-systematische Betrachtung," in *Elektroakustische Musik*, ed. Elena Ungeheuer (Laaber: Laaber, 2002), 44.

Pousseur's early compositions reflect not only the developmental process of his own serial methods, but also his eager search for "a new, fresh, and aggressive sound material."⁴⁵ During or shortly after the realization of *Seismogrammes*, Pousseur became aware of the somewhat monotonous character of sound material composed only of sine tone waves, no matter how complex the structure of the sound unit. Concerning the electronic study pieces of Stockhausen (*Studie I* and *Studie II*) and Pousseur (*Seismogrammes*), Pousseur admits to a discontent with the acoustic characteristics:

In these first attempts, we were still very far from the desired goal. Instead of a situation in which the sine tones came together to form more complex sounds, they remained basically discrete and identifiable; we had a situation in which the sine wave material was used like an easily recognizable instrument. Sometimes (with a decrease in volume) like a very sweet, attackless vibraharp, sometimes (with more sustained sounds) like the softest tones of a pipe organ.⁴⁶

Thus it is no surprise that Pousseur was deeply impressed by *Gesang der Jünglinge* and publicly praised Stockhausen for his epoch-making integration of the recorded boy's voice with sine-tone sound materials. Nevertheless, Pousseur did not adopt this technique for synthesizing heterogeneous sound sources, but rather sought a new style of form.

Indeed, *Scambi* was the crystallization of Pousseur's ambitious project on structural innovation, as well as the embodiment of his serial thought. However, it is necessary to bear in mind that Pousseur's accomplishment of the first open or mobile electronic music⁴⁷ could not have been realized without the influence of Cage as well as of the significant aleatoric pieces by Pousseur's European contemporaries. In his theoretical writings, Pousseur says that, on the one hand, the encounter between European serial composers and American composers of the "Cage-group (especially Cage himself)" triggered the momentum for further compositional development.⁴⁸ On the other hand, however, Pousseur underscores stylistic and aesthetic differences in aleatoric concepts between American and European composers. Insisting that "the concept of chance/aleatory must . . . be critically examined," Pousseur claims:

⁴⁵ Pousseur, "Calculation and Imagination in Electronic Music," 21.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 22.

⁴⁷ It is also Pousseur's recognition, which he describes in an interview, see Diana von Volborth-Danys and Henri Pousseur, "Interview d'Henri Pousseur," *Revue belge de Musicologie/Belgisch Tijdschrift voor Musiekwetenschap* 43 (1989): 42: "«Scambi» était la première musique électronique ouverte, si on veut, c'était un mobile de son électronique."

⁴⁸ See Pousseur, "Theorie und Praxis in der neuesten Musik," 24-25 and "Calculation and Imagination in Electronic Music," 23.

Everything foreign to musical intention is viewed as chance. It is already a substantial expansion of the other type of conception . . . [o]ne learned that properly understood (that is, defined in its boundaries and bases) chance is a condition for true freedom of choice (which is rare in American compositions: there chance provides precise, full statements about the procedure; chance itself, that is: no one is responsible for the decisions). These teachings also fertilized some other experiences of composers (for instance, the realization of controlling exchangeability in certain serial structures, the observation of its irrelevant inner variability for the global characters, or the discovery of possibility of a new, non-linear perception of time).⁴⁹

Stockhausen's *Klavierstück XI* and Boulez's *Troisième Sonate* were indeed the embodiment of these "experiences" which Pousseur admired as "the first works of a 'new instrumental style' [which] came to light in Europe."⁵⁰

Pousseur thus conceptualized a structural formation based not on the Cagean idea of chance, which expects an unforeseeable sound event, but rather on the idea of "the relationship between freedom of performance and the conditional chance, which is determined by the material nature of the score, and thus regulated by the composer."⁵¹ To make "conditional chance" possible, one has to compose sound units that are in principle independent of each other; only then does one provide freedom of choice to a performer. That is, in Pousseur's theorization of chance or aleatory, the composer is responsible for composing determined musical elements using a method of total control, and the performer for selecting them and thereby constructing the form. It is a fundamental principle of the open form, a specific formal characteristic capable of mobility, exchangeability, and variability, in which the musical elements are given and then chosen.

⁴⁹ Pousseur, "Theorie und Praxis," 25: "Als Zufall wird alles angesehen, was der musikalischen Intention fremd ist. Das ist schon eine beträchtliche Erweiterung der sonstigen Auffassung . . . Außerdem hat man gelernt, daß der richtig verstandene (das heißt in seinen Grenzen und Ausgangspunkten definierte) Zufall eine Bedingung für die wahre Wahlfreiheit ist (was er in den amerikanischen Kompositionen selten war: dort gibt der Zufall selbst die präzisen, vollständigen Angaben über das zu Tuende; er selbst, das heißt: niemand trägt die Verantwortung für die Entscheidungen). Diese Lehren befruchteten auch einige andere von den Komponisten gemachten Erfahrungen (wie z.B. die Feststellung der in gewissen seriellen Strukturen herrschenden Austauschbarkeit oder die Beobachtung ihrer für die globalen Charaktere irrelevanten inneren Variabilität oder die Entdeckung der Möglichkeit einer neuen, nichtlinearen Zeitwahrnehmung)."

⁵⁰ Ibid.: "die ersten Werke eines »neuen Instrumentalstils« traten in Europa ans Licht."

⁵¹ Ibid., 26: "die Bindung zwischen der Aufführungsfreiheit und dem diese Freiheit bedingenden Zufall, der selbst durch die materielle Beschaffenheit der Partitur bedingt und also vom Komponisten geregelt ist." Pousseur finds this particular relationship in Boulez's *Troisième Sonate*.

Although the establishment of Pousseur's open form theory relied heavily on the formal-structural principles of *Klavierstück XI* and *Troisième Sonate*, Pousseur realized *Scambi* in the realm of "pure" electroacoustic composition. Pousseur produced thirty-two sequences by electronic operations which dealt with "itches of the sound, the dynamic level and the mean speed of playing the material."⁵² Interestingly, Pousseur did not apply a serial method in this procedure, but "permanent control by ear was decisive."⁵³ Instead, the composer contrived a serial (and ultimately serial-mobile) method for the acoustic characterization of each sequence and for the structural organization by means of parameterization.

Scambi's four parameters and individual characteristics are: "the relative pitch (low '0' to high '1'), the statistical speed (slow '0' to fast '1'), the homogeneity of sound material (dry '0' to reverberated '1'), and continuity (inclusion of pauses '0' to continuous sound '1')."⁵⁴ Thus, one sequence can be distinguished from another numerically, by the pattern of sound characteristics. For instance, the characteristics of sequences 3 and 4 are: pitch 0/1, speed 1/1, homogeneity 0/1, and continuity 1/1, where the numerals on the left represent the characteristics of the beginning of the sequences, while those on the right represent the ending. These can be indicated in shorthand: '0101' as the beginning and '1111' as the ending.⁵⁵

The structural scheme of the sequences is designed so that the numerical pattern of the beginning of a sequence matches that of the ending of the previous sequence. Sequences that could follow sequence 3 or 4, for instance, are sequences 7-8 (pitch 1/0, speed 1/1, homogeneity 1/1, and continuity 1/0) and sequences 9-10 (pitch 1/1, speed 1/0,

⁵² Henri Pousseur, "Scambi – description of a work in progress (1959)," trans. Christine North, *The 'Scambi Project': Open Forms and Electroacoustic Music* [music criticism on-line]; available from <http://www.scambi.mdx.ac.uk/Documents/GravesanerTranslation.pdf>; Internet; accessed 7 September 2011. This English translation is based on Henri Pousseur, "Scambi – description d'un travail," in *Écrits Théoriques 1954-1967* (Sprimont: Magdaga, 2004), 147-159. The original text first appeared in Pousseur, "Scambi" in *Gravesaner Blätter* 13 (1959): 36-54.

⁵³ Decroupet, "The Studio di Fonologia Musicale della RAI Milano," 3. According to the author, "from the start he [Pousseur] did not want to measure, cut and paste, but realized everything in real-time, by immediately reacting to the equipment," *ibid.*

⁵⁴ John Dack, "Notes on potential realizations of *Scambi*," December 2004, *The 'Scambi Project': Open Forms and Electroacoustic Music* [music criticism on-line]; available from <http://www.scambi.mdx.ac.uk/Documents/Notes%20on%20the%20Realization%20of%20Scambi.pdf>; Internet; accessed 7 September 2011. Dack's discussion of the sound characteristics is based on the table of sequences presented in Pascal Decroupet, "Vers une théorie générale: Henri Pousseurs 'Allgemeine Periodik' in Theorie und Praxis," *MusikTexte: Zeitschrift für neue Musik* 98 (2003): 35

⁵⁵ See *ibid.*, 2-3.

homogeneity 1/0, and continuity 1/0), due to the identical pattern of '1111' which stands at the beginning of the 3-4 and the ending of the 7-8 and 9-10. In this manner, an interpreter can form a series of sequences. Moreover, it is possible to create a polyphonic structure, as Pousseur himself demonstrated in one realization of *Scambi*. Starting from sequence 3, for instance, sequences 7 and 9 can follow simultaneously. These sequences can in turn be followed by others in the same manner. In this case one can speak of a polyphonic texture in "two-voices" (John Dack demonstrates a complicated polyphonic structure of the piece by expanding it to the maximum in four-voices).⁵⁶

In *Scambi* ("Exchanges"), as the title represents, Pousseur's serial thought dealt with the virtually limitless exchangeability of the musical elements. Putting the theory into practice, the composer himself demonstrated the possibilities of the serial-mobile method by realizing two different versions of the piece. Shortly thereafter, Luciano Berio (who was the musical director of the studio RAI at that time) produced two realizations of *Scambi*, and Australian composer Marc Wilkinson realized yet another version. With regard to these realizations, Pousseur maintains that "it is remarkable to see how very different personalities can express themselves through the same single material – itself so characterful,"⁵⁷ even though these composers did not exactly follow Pousseur's method of serialization. Presumably, Pousseur was content with the variety of versions because he was convinced that it derived primarily from the concept of "freedom of choice" with the "conditional control."

Pousseur's substantiation of the theory and practice of serial-mobile form as a pioneering approach in the field of electroacoustic composition perfectly matches the principle of "modern serial thought" Boulez advocates. As Carl Dahlhaus points out, the only problematic point of the piece is the difficulty of recognizing "the sound structures and their differences and connections at a hearing,"⁵⁸ due to the somewhat homogeneous sound characters derived only from one sound source – white noise.⁵⁹ On the other hand,

⁵⁶ See *ibid.*, 5-6.

⁵⁷ Pousseur, "Scambi – description of a work in progress," 12.

⁵⁸ Carl Dahlhaus, "Ästhetische Probleme der elektronischen Musik," in *Experimentelle Musik: Raum Musik, Visuelle Musik, Medien Musik, Wort Musik, Elektronik Musik, Computer Musik*, ed. Fritz Winckel (Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag, 1970), 87: "Sich beim Hören auf die Klangstrukturen und deren Unterschiede und Beziehungen zu konzentrieren, ist manchmal schwierig." Nevertheless, a thorough examination of a version can reveal the structural pattern of the sequences, see Dack, 4.

⁵⁹ This is also the case for Stockhausen's *Studie I* and *II*, for instance.

Dahlhaus suggests that Pousseur's composition of *Scambi* embarks on a higher level of aleatory, asserting that "the idea of emancipation of a performer was utopian."⁶⁰ Based on the premise that "electronic music is the extreme form of an opposite tendency to aleatory," Dahlhaus claims:

If aleatory and electronic music, emancipation and exclusion of performer, are in principle incompatible, it seems . . . that a presentiment of the dilemma, . . . announces itself in Pousseur's practice [T]he performers felt the freedom of determination . . . , while they rehearsed various version of an aleatoric piece and fixed upon the most effective one before the performance. They composed the work to the end, instead of leaving an element of improvisation The faith in the resources of spontaneity was not even shared by the performers. If, however, the improvisational character is just an illusion, then Pousseur's realization with electronic means anticipates a destiny, so to speak.⁶¹

That Pousseur broke new ground with realization of *Scambi* resulted significantly from the structural innovation based on his serial thought. Aesthetically, this can indeed be explained by Eco's theory of serial thought. Concerning the expandability of serial thought in terms of open form "in music as well as in every other artistic genre," however, Kagel's *Antithese* was at the cutting edge.

Serial Thought in *Antithese*

Kagel had consistently refused to compose serialist musical pieces not because he was uninterested, but rather because he attributed a "rigid dogmatism"⁶² to the inner circle of serial composers.⁶³ Klüppelholz's succinct portrait of this bizarre group helps one understand what Kagel saw:

⁶⁰ Dahlhaus, 87: "Die Idee einer Emanzipation des Interpreten war utopisch."

⁶¹ Ibid., 87-88: ". . . die elektronische Musik ist die extreme Ausprägung einer der Aleatorik entgegengesetzten Tendenz Sind demnach Aleatorik und elektronische Musik, Emanzipation und Ausschließung des Interpreten, prinzipiell unvereinbar, so scheint es . . . , als kündige sich in Pousseurs Verfahren . . . , ein Vorgefühl des Dilemmas an [D]ie Interpreten . . . empfanden die Entscheidungsfreiheit . . . , indem sie vor der Aufführung verschiedene Versionen eines aleatorischen Stücks erprobten und die wirksamste fixierten. Sie komponierten das Werk zu Ende, statt sich der Improvisation zu überlassen Das Vertrauen auf die Ressourcen der Spontaneität wurde gerade von den Interpreten . . . , nicht geteilt. Ist aber der improvisatorische Charakter bloßer Schein, so nimmt Pousseurs Realisierung mit elektronischen Mitteln gleichsam ein Geschick voraus."

⁶² Werner Klüppelholz, "Mauricio Kagel und die Tradition," in *Die neue Musik und die Tradition*, ed. Reinhold Brinkmann (Mainz: B. Schott's Söhne, 1978), 103.

⁶³ For example, Ligeti calls this group "clique" or "mafia" whose central personages were Boulez, Stockhausen, Nono, Maderna, and to a lesser extent Berio and Pousseur. Meanwhile, Ligeti regarded himself as part of the outer layer of this group, together with Koenig and Kagel, see Ulrich Dibelius,

In Europe, he [Kagel] encountered a situation that was characterized by group leaning; for instance, they met . . . to read “Finnegan’s Wake” for a time together with author Hans G. Helms. In addition, composers and theorists of serial music were connected by the feeling they were supposed to work together on something totally new. . . . After all, strict group norms existed; Schoenberg would be moribund or the use of octave doublings would be forbidden. Everyone was supposed to submit to these proclaimed principles by the leaders of the school, Eimert and Boulez.⁶⁴

Kagel found this odd situation – a highly esoteric and closed society – incompatible with his ambition to pursue his career as a composer in Europe, and thus decided to remain an outsider.

But even though Kagel decided against serial composition, it does not necessarily mean he rejected serial compositional principles. In fact, as discussed in Chapter Two, Kagel’s studies of Schoenberg’s twelve-tone music and Messiaen’s *Mode* were indispensable elements of the foundation of his compositional skills. In addition, Kagel successfully established his unique applications of serial technique to *Sextet* and *Anagrama*, and thus there was no reason to abandon all serial-related principles and techniques. Hence, Kagel’s serial thought persisted even though he was critical of the total control latent in serialism, as well as of its aesthetic norms. In consideration of the concept of action-series in *Antithese*, Kagel’s serial thought seems to fulfill the conditions of Eco’s concept more than any of the composers Eco had in mind, and perhaps even exceeds it.

First, the idea that a performer is supposed to form a series of actions unconnected to each other is a basic principle of serial thought that, according to Eco, “aims at the production of a structure that is at once open and polyvalent.” Eco believed that this principle was applicable to “every other artistic genre,” but he did not foresee it being used to integrate elements from different genres altogether. Pousseur’s realization of open form in *Scambi*, for example, unmistakably fulfills Eco’s basic principle. More

“Gespräch über Ästhetik,” in *György Ligeti: Eine Monographie in Essays* (Mainz: B. Schott’s Söhne, 1994), 256.

⁶⁴ Klüppelholz, “Mauricio Kagel und die Tradition,” 103: “Er traf in Europa auf eine Situation, die gekennzeichnet war durch Gruppenbildung: man traf sich . . . zum Beispiel eine Zeitlang bei dem Schriftsteller Hans G Helms, um zusammen ‘Finnegan’s Wake’ zu lesen. Zudem waren die Komponisten und Theoretiker der seriellen Musik verbunden durch das Gefühl, gemeinsam etwas zu schaffen, das ganz neu war . . . Schließlich existierten strenge Gruppennormen: daß Schönberg tot oder der Gebrauch von Oktaven verboten sei, diesen von den Schulhäuption Eimert und Boulez proklamierten Gesetzen hatte sich jeder zu unterwerfen.”

specifically, *Scambi* demonstrates a significant expansion of technique and aesthetic of musical composition, as well as a dexterous embodiment of serial thought that is “to produce.”⁶⁵ And yet Kagel’s invention of serial construction for an actor in *Antithese* obviously goes further.

Moreover, given main actions and the instructions for each, the performer has to create the individual actions, because there are no “physically” predetermined materials. This aspect clearly distinguishes *Antithese* from *Scambi* and other open form works by Boulez and Stockhausen, whose individual material units are pre-formed. The composers of serial-open-work expect to hear exactly what they wrote (*Klavierstück XI* and *Troisième Sonate*) or produced (*Scambi*). In contrast, the verbal instructions for individual actions in *Antithese* connote Kagel’s wish for the performer to present something creative and even unexpected, regardless of whether it satisfies the composer. In other words, the uncertainty of the individual material units of the action part in *Antithese* allows the performer to invent the composition’s actual form in which a series is the expression of a structure. This even surpasses the principle of Eco’s theory of serial thought, assuming that his formation of it deals primarily with the external result of a serial operation. In *Antithese*, the internal structure of each main action reflects the entire form as the external operation, or vice versa. In other words, the piece has the potential of expandability – a significant principle of Eco’s theory of serial thought – more than the open form pieces of the serial composers.

Kagel’s intention to integrate uncertainty into the main actions of *Antithese* sought to represent not only the composer’s but also the performer’s perception of music today in social and historical contexts, and thus should not be confused with Cagean indeterminacy. In fact, Kagel composed *Antithese* not primarily for the purpose of an unanticipated musical and artistic presentation, but rather in the belief that the presentation should aim to mirror current issues of musical life that are never separable from their social and historical contexts. This belief may correspond to the serial perspective that Eco advanced – “a vision of the world” which he identified as the essence of serial thought.”⁶⁶ Given freedom of artistic expression on two levels (creation

⁶⁵ See page 19 in Chapter One.

⁶⁶ Eco, 230.

of a series of main actions and creation of an internal structure of the individual actions), the performer demonstrates a particular view of a musical world, as well as of current socio-historical issues, in musical terms. This conceptualization as a whole seems to illustrate his vision of the world in terms of the expandability of expression and its form. Worth noting is that Kagel was able to realize this distinct approach through his analysis and synthesis of the materials. Klüppelholz describes Kagel's analytical and synthetic process:

. . . Kagel analyzes the wide continuum of variants of a given material and creates an overarching framework, whose elements are synthetically composed by the interpreters in the performance.⁶⁷

Regarding *Antithese*, Kagel's several revisions of main actions attest to his thorough analysis in the way Klüppelholz describes. Although the analysis does not have to do with serial-mathematical or -mechanical operations, its process serves as a creative force for the realization of *Antithese*'s unique formal structure and content, which matches an important axiom of Eco's theory; serial thought is *to produce* new forms.⁶⁸ As a consequence, Kagel's serial thought helped to foster the amalgamation of electroacoustic composition and serial-theatrical visual elements as a distinct form of Instrumental Theater in *Antithese*. Although extraordinarily creative and original, this multimedia compositional approach gave rise to vexing questions of how to define music.

***Verfransung* – Infringement or Straying off Course**

Introduction

Apart from the development of serial music, often in tandem with that of electroacoustic composition, another controversial issue in the early 1960s was the blurring of the boundaries between the arts. Technically, each genre of art became capable of transforming or translating the materials, techniques, and ideas from other genres back into its own works. Aesthetically, however, this practice gave rise to questions about definition of art genre. Concerning this particular aesthetic problem, Theodor W. Adorno, thoroughly investigated the new musical aesthetic of the

⁶⁷ Werner Klüppelholz, "Scriptor musicae," 9: ". . . Kagel das weite Kontinuum von Varianten eines bestimmten Materials analysiert und in eine Vor-Ordnung bringt, deren Elemente von den Spielern für eine Aufführung synthetisch zusammensetzen sind."

⁶⁸ Eco, 221.

interpenetration between different genres of art. Adorno described this new phenomenon as *Verfransung* of art, which derived from the verb form *sich verfransen*: “to lose one’s way,” “to stray off course,” or “to infringe.”⁶⁹

As the meaning of the term insinuates, *Verfransung* theory represents Adorno’s misgivings about the phenomenon that composers (and artists) create a new structure and form of composition by means of the consolidation of art genres. A question most likely to arise, however, is whether composers who became engaged in multimedia or interdisciplinary compositions really did lose their way or stray off course. In consideration of this question, it is necessary to bear in mind that there is a deficiency in the *Verfransung* theory. This seems to have derived from Adorno’s insufficient familiarity with postwar avant-garde music. More importantly, one must not overlook the fact that Kagel’s aesthetic of musical composition is to some extent incompatible with Adorno’s theory of postwar avant-garde music, as well as of the *Verfransung* of art.

In the present study, it is nevertheless worth exploring Adorno’s theoretical account of *Verfransung* of art, not only because his keen criticism of multimedia/interdisciplinary works isolates the technical and aesthetic issues, but because it ultimately casts light on the originality of Kagel’s musical aesthetic by omission. This comparative examination also reveals that *Antithese* signals his later compositional directions in a very determined way.

Crossover among Art Genres

Focusing on the ongoing upheaval in musical composition, Adorno’s technical and material concepts have now been partly hybridized with those from other fields of art and given the catchword *Verfransung*. This eye-catching term appeared in an essay “Die Kunst und die Künste” (henceforth “Die Kunst”), published in 1966,⁷⁰ in which Adorno applied it to the analysis of the incongruous cultural and aesthetic phenomena that occurred in the 1960s. Christine Eichel, for instance, reformulates Adorno’s investigation of *Verfransungen* as “the phenomena of border crossing” [*die Phänomene der Grenzüberschreitung*]. More interestingly, she asserts that “the theme of *Verfransung* of

⁶⁹ Since there is no equivalent to *Verfransung* in English, I will use the German term throughout.

⁷⁰ Theodor W. Adorno, “Die Kunst und die Künste,” 168-192.

arts transforms an anarchic moment into its reflection.”⁷¹ The anarchic moment means, according to Eichel, a phenomenon that art works “no longer allow analysis without further knowledge and meanwhile, also transgress the historical concept of avant-garde”; thus, “the aesthetic reflection again must rely on perception more than before.”⁷² Eichel’s interpretation of the transgression of art genres – i.e., phenomena that straddle or exist between boundaries – between genres of arts as “artistic anarchy”⁷³ (that is, *Verfransungsphänomene* for Adorno) aptly conveys the complexity of “*Verfransung*’s theme.” The idea of *Verfransung* itself, according to Eichel, can still “outline the possibilities for interdisciplinary aesthetics today” and thus “be fertile for an engagement with the art situation today.”⁷⁴

Adorno once had great influence on postwar avant-garde composers by virtue of his extraordinary insight into “new music,” – in particular, his aesthetic position laid out in his epoch-making *Philosophie der neuen Musik* [Philosophy of New Music] (1949). In addition, his extraordinary “verbal virtuosity and the sharpness of his mind”⁷⁵ in the theorization of musical aesthetics was respected by postwar avant-garde composers. Regarding his idea of *Verfransung*, however, there are questionable statements that appear incomplete or misleading when applied to contemporary musical works, despite the intriguing theme and its conceptualization. A key problem in this regard is that Adorno failed to consider certain crucial aspects of postwar avant-garde music. Furthermore, his choice of contemporary musical works and the individual focal points – while to some extent they deserve to be seen as instances of *Verfransung* – are dubious

⁷¹ Christine Eichel, *Vom Ermatten der Avantgarde zur Vernetzung der Künste*, 43: “Mit der These einer Verfransung der Künste überträgt sich ein anarchisches Moment auf die Reflexion.”

⁷² Ibid.: “. . . Kunstwerke, die sich nicht mehr ohne weiteres kändig analysieren lassen und die auch den inzwischen historischen Avantgardebegriff überschreiten.” “Die ästhetische Reflexion muß sich – mehr als zuvor – wieder auf die Wahrnehmung verlassen.”

⁷³ Ibid., 76: “die künstlerische Anarchie.”

⁷⁴ See *ibid.*, 24: “Vor dem Hintergrund von Adornos überschreitender Reflexion lassen sich die Möglichkeiten heutiger interdisziplinärer Ästhetik skizzieren. Besonders die Gedanken, . . . lassen sich fruchtbar machen für eine Auseinandersetzung mit der Kunstsituation heute.”

⁷⁵ It is a characteristic of Adorno’s writing addressed by Kagel: “seine sprachliche Virtuosität und die Schärfe seines Geistes,” see Mauricio Kagel and Max Nyffeler, “Mitteilsamkeit in der Musik,” 119. The English translation is by Richard Toop, available in a web page provided by Nyffeler, <http://www.beckmesser.de/>. Kagel does not point out Adorno’s specific work, but seem to mean it as a general reception.

for reinforcing the credibility of the theme, at least from the perspective of the role that postwar avant-garde music played in the phenomenon.⁷⁶

In fact, the incompleteness of Adorno's theoretical construct of *Verfransung* may be useful as an analytical condition that paradoxically provides an opportunity to reassess the missing parts of the phenomenon. Omnipresent varieties of interdisciplinary works "in rapid musical development"⁷⁷ are especially significant in this regard. Many other aspects of *Verfransung* that Adorno neglected are in fact of as much importance as the foci in his essay. Indeed, they point to Kagel's compositional aesthetic, philosophy of music, observation of musico-historical and -sociological problems, and the technical schemes he provides that are capable of representing them. Therefore the dubious parts in Adorno's *Verfransung* theory have the potential to illuminate *Antithese*, an art work that consists of an aleatoric series of discontinuous main actions, autonomous music reproduced by electronic equipment, and a pseudo-museum stage setting. With the aid of the extant critical studies on Adorno's reception of postwar avant-garde music, such an investigation of *Verfransung* theory is useful for the present study.

First of all, Adorno's verbal choice *Verfransung/verfransen* (*verfransen* in his text), which appears most frequently in "Die Kunst," is interesting. From an etymological perspective, the word derived from a male first name, "Franz," used jokingly to refer to a co-pilot in an old two-seater plane who, in the absence of navigational technology, strays off course. The term became "airman's slang" [*Fliegersprache*].⁷⁸ For this reason, it can be conjectured that *verfransen* was at first used mostly in the field of aviation and then gradually spread to various contexts. The verb form *verfransen*, therefore, refers principally to the loss of orientation as a physical event with a geographical locus. In other words, the doer described by the term would, in most cases, be a human being and

⁷⁶ The fact that Adorno's comprehension of postwar avant-garde composers' works was limited weakens the theoretical basis of *Verfransung*. It would be possible to base a theory of *Verfransung* upon a review of the indispensable aspects he overlooked or misconceived of and then overhauling them. But since the establishment of that theory is not a main purpose of this project, an attempt to rework the theory of *Verfransung* by restoring the musical aspect is not made here.

⁷⁷ Gianmario Borio, *Musikalische Avantgarde um 1960*, 103.

⁷⁸ Under "verfransen" in *Duden: Das große Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache*, *verfransen*: vielleicht zu dem männlich Vorname Franz als scherzhaft Beziehung für den ohne technisches Gerät navigierenden Flugbeobachter in alten, zweisitzigen Flugzeugen. See also under "verfransen" in Friedrich Kluge, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache*, ed. Elmar Seebold, 23d ed., enl., Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1995, 856.

would be likely to encounter a situation that is unexpected. Adorno's use of *Verfransung/verfransen* is appropriate to the context of his observation, because the term implies that an accident (unforeseen event) occurs in the air (sphere of arts) where the plane is still flying (process), regardless of what the result is. In this respect, Eichel's phrasing *Grenzüberschreitung* (border crossing or transgression of boundaries) well represents the condition of *Verfransung* where the boundaries of distinct art genres become blurred and, by extension, distinguishes itself from the condition of being *grenzenlos* (borderless) which Adorno never meant. Gerhard Richter's definition of *Verfransung*, based on Adorno's writing up to "Die Kunst," presents a precise and concise summary of what Adorno senses to be the historically irreplaceable phenomenon of music as well as the other arts: "interpenetration of philosophy with modernist strategies of art, literature, and music characterized by a gradual dissolution of the generic and material boundaries that have been staples of the Western avant-garde at least since surrealism."⁷⁹

The reason for Adorno's verbal choice of *Verfransung* is unclear, although it is his typical rhetorical strategy to draw attention to a topic that he has a strong view about. Adorno could have chosen another term, such as *verirren*, *verfliegen*, or *verfahren*, all of which are capable of capturing the sense of "losing one's bearings" and applying to his text. But by virtue of the etymological uniqueness which originates from an inherited name and is distinct from the others presented above, one may speculate that *Verfransung* would be most suitable to his context, for Franz, who strayed from the area he could navigate, could now be put into analogy with someone who has lost their bearings in the arts. For Adorno, each field of arts now seemed to be straying in its categorical definition and so crossed boundaries of art genres as an inevitable consequence. If we accept the analogy between Franz's situation and the arts, it would allow us to assume further whether Adorno's position can be likened to that of Franz. In his *Verfransung* theory, Adorno was accurate about the blurring of boundaries, but he drew the wrong conclusion from this. Thus, Adorno's perception of postwar avant-garde music could, in fact, give us

⁷⁹ Gerhard Richter, "Aesthetic Theory and Nonpropositional Truth Content in Adorno," *New German Critique* 97/33, no. 1 (Winter 2008): 120.

the impression that he himself may have been baffled in the labyrinth of blurred frontiers of art genres.

This aspect, as a crucial weak point in Adorno's observation of postwar avant-garde music, is grounded in two crucial and inseparable problems. First, there is a tension between Adorno's perception of the "new music" he evaluated and the postwar avant-garde new music he was trying to evaluate. More specifically, on the one hand, Adorno's idealization (or even idolization) of Schoenberg's music – mainly of his earlier expressionist music – as a great part of his aesthetic in regard to "new music" appears to have a partial, latent survival in that "Adorno considered *Philosophie der neuen Musik* (henceforth *Philosophie*) as definitive for everything he subsequently wrote about music."⁸⁰ Then on the other hand, he "attempt[ed] to overcome his outmoded past and become more *aktuell*, more up to date."⁸¹ This apparent contradiction is likely to bewilder his reader. Secondly, and much more problematically, not only does he give too few examples of avant-garde work to illustrate the *Verfransung* phenomenon, but also there is a lack of balance in these few examples. These facts expose Adorno's continuing unfamiliarity with postwar avant-garde musical works that subsequently gave rise to the theoretical deficiency of his *Verfransung* theory (despite the fact that he already had, up to the time of "Die Kunst," many opportunities to listen to "new" musics in the Darmstädter Ferienkurse and at other major concerts or music festivals featuring contemporary musical works). By the same token, his unfamiliarity with electroacoustic music, as Adorno himself admits in his essay "Musik und Neue Musik" [Music and New Music],⁸² further weakens the theoretical applicability of *Verfransung* to the musical pieces that he discusses in "Die Kunst." Postwar avant-garde music was, at least for

⁸⁰ Marcus Zagorski, "'Nach dem Weltuntergang': Adorno's Engagement with Postwar Music" *The Journal of Musicology* 22 (October 2005): 685. This is applicable at least to Adorno's perception of postwar avant-garde music, while it seems debatable because he softened his critique of Stravinsky in later writings.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Theodor W. Adorno, "Music and New Music: In memory of Peter Suhrkamp," in *Quasi una Fantasia: Essays on Modern Music*, trans. Rodney Livingstone (London and New York: Verso, 1992), 266. The essay first appeared as a broadcast lecture in the NDR, February 1960, under the title "Musik und neue Musik," and as a publication in *Merkur* (May 1960). A part of the collected works, "Musik und neue Musik: Peter Suhrkamp zum Gedächtnis" was first published in *Quasi una fantasia* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1963) and is reprinted in *Musikalische Schriften I-III*, vol. 16 of *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. Rolf Tiedemann (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1978), 476-492.

Adorno, perhaps too different to apply his aesthetic theory of new music to and thus he seems to have focused more on its problematic nature.

Also in the aesthetic theory, centered upon Schoenberg's compositions and apparently indifferent to electroacoustic music, Adorno seems to have underestimated the fact that electroacoustic composition provided significant momentum not only for inventing a new structural design, but also for extending composers' ideas towards multimedia/interdisciplinary approaches. From this perspective, when reevaluating the aesthetic significance of Adorno's observation towards the *Verfransung* of arts, what becomes clear is the fact that certain aspects of electroacoustic music which he disregarded were what would be an indispensable contribution to the "crossover among art genres": the phenomenon of *Verfransung*.

Potential Origin of Adorno's Verfransung Perception of Avant-Garde Music

As a prerequisite to the investigation of issues of the *Verfransung* theory in "Die Kunst," it is necessary to touch upon Adorno's *Philosophie* as a possible source of the problems that may have given rise to the logical and theoretical inconsistency of *Verfransung*.⁸³ The *Philosophie* is Adorno's "foundation for writing on new music"⁸⁴ and a "comprehensive philosophical project [in music] for the first time" as well.⁸⁵ It is no exaggeration to say that it provided the most revolutionary and pioneering attempt to logically integrate philosophy and contemporary music, and that it heavily influenced postwar composers and music critics, particularly "as crucial to the development of German musical avant-garde,"⁸⁶ and so was "one of the most read treatises that provide philosophical information about the state of emergency in musical language."⁸⁷ Above

⁸³ See Theodor W. Adorno, *Philosophie der neuen Musik*, vol. 12 of *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. Rolf Tiedemann (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1975). The English translation I refer to is in Adorno, *Philosophy of New Music*, ed. and trans. Robert Hullot-Kentor (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 2006).

⁸⁴ Zagorski, 685.

⁸⁵ Heinz-Klaus Metzger, "Das Altern der Philosophie der Neuen Musik," in *Musik wozu: Literatur zu Noten*, ed. Rainer Riehn (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1980), 61. The essay first appeared in *Junge Komponisten: Die Reihe 4* (Wien: Universal Edition, 1958), 64-80. The real "comprehensive philosophical project" would thus be *Dialectic of Enlightenment* with Max Horkheimer or Adorno's incomplete *Aesthetic Theory*.

⁸⁶ Ian Pepper, "From the 'Aesthetics of Indifference'," 34-35.

⁸⁷ Gianmario Borio, "Material – Zur Krise einer musikalischen Kategorie," in *Ästhetik und Komposition: zur Aktualität der Darmstädter Ferienkursarbeit*, ed. Gianmario Borio, Ulrich Mosch, and

all, Adorno's predilection for Schoenberg was explicitly laid out with his claim of the composer's achievement by means of integrating "the twelve-tone technique" with "traditional elements of musical language," by his mediation of "the subjective and objective dimensions of materials."⁸⁸ With this basic tenet of dialectic, he expanded a sphere of scholarship: philosophy of music or aesthetic of music. At any rate, the strong impact of this treatise influenced not only postwar composers and critics, but also Adorno himself.⁸⁹

It may be remarked that the four musical treatises of the Princeton Project, together with the German one ["O]n the fetish character in music [and the Regression of Listening"], contained the embryo of *Philosophie der neuen Musik* which was not completed until 1948: the points of view I had put in the American musical texts as questions of reproduction and consumption should be applied to the sphere of production itself. Then again, the *Philosophie der neuen Musik*, finished in America, was binding upon everything I wrote about music after that, including the *Introduction of Music Sociology* [*Einleitung in die Musiksoziologie*].⁹⁰

This attribute is also noticeable in his later writings which deal with postwar avant-garde music. However, the aesthetic "embryo" crystallized in the *Philosophie*⁹¹ seems to have later become a cause of his negative perception of postwar avant-garde musical works.

the *Internationales Musikinstitut Darmstadt* (Mainz: B. Schott's Söhne, 1994), 109: "Die »Philosophie der neuen Musik« gehörte ohnehin zu den meistgelesenen Abhandlungen, die über den Ausnahmezustand der musikalischen Sprache philosophisch Aufschluß gaben." One may, however, argue that the treatise is the most cited and least carefully read.

⁸⁸ Zagorski, 693. The author's additional interpretation in this respect is also worth referring to, see footnote *ibid.*

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 687.

⁹⁰ Theodor W. Adorno, "Wissenschaftliche Erfahrungen in Amerika," in *Kulturkritik und Gesellschaft*, vol. 10.2 of *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. Rolf Tiedemann (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1977), 719: "Angemerkt mag werden, daß die vier musikalischen Abhandlungen des Princeton Project, zusammen mit der deutschen [»Ü]ber den Fetischcharakter in der Musik [und die Regression des Hörens"], den Keim der erst 1948 abgeschlossenen »Philosophie der neuen Musik« enthielten: die Gesichtspunkte, denen ich in den amerikanischen Musiktexten Fragen der Reproduktion und des Konsums unterworfen hatte, sollten auf die Sphäre der Produktion selbst angewandt werden. Die »Philosophie der neuen Musik« dann wieder, noch in Amerika beendet, war verbindlich für alles, was ich danach irgend über Musik schrieb, auch für die »Einleitung in die Musiksoziologie«."

⁹¹ See Hermann Danuser, *Die Musik des 20. Jahrhunderts, Neues Handbuch der Musikwissenschaft* Band 7, ed. Carl Dahlhaus (Laaber: Laaber Verlag), 1984, 300: "Adorno had drafted the concept of 'musical material' that would, by virtue of an inherent 'historical tendency' for composers, bring forth a growing 'canon of prohibition' and in particular forbid an application of tonality today in an article about Schoenberg already in his American exile 1940/41: Den Begriff des »musikalischen Materials«, das kraft einer ihm innewohnenden »geschichtlichen Tendenz« für den Komponisten einen wachsenden »Kanon des Verbotenen« zeitige und insbesondere eine Verwendung der Tonalität heute verbiete, hatte Adorno in einer Abhandlung über Schönberg bereits 1940/41 im amerikanischen Exil konzipiert."

From Marcus Zagorski's study on "Adorno's engagement with postwar music," which in part focuses on debatable ideas in Adorno's later writings, two essays are of special importance for the current project: namely, "Das Altern der Neuen Musik" [The Aging of New Music] (1955)⁹² and "Vers une musique informelle" (1961).⁹³ In these significant essays, Adorno's self-assertion concerning his writing on music cited above is present.⁹⁴ At the same time, however, these essays reflect his negative reaction to the postwar avant-garde music (especially in "Das Altern der Neuen Musik," henceforth "Das Altern") by emphasizing that Schoenberg's musical embodiment was crystallized by aptly sublating his compositional thought and theoretical procedure. For this reason, Adorno regards Schoenberg's composition as the *truth* of new music. In doing so, however, his reference to Schoenberg's music in these writings serves somehow as the best "tool" to criticize contemporary musical works. For example, despite more and closer references to avant-garde music "today" than in the *Philosophie*, "Das Altern" criticizes principles of serialism in which each musical material and element is parameterized causing those works to completely renounce subjective expressivity.⁹⁵ This was already a problem for Adorno in Schoenberg, asserting that "[t]he subject rules over the music by means of a rational system in order to succumb to this rational system

⁹² Theodor W. Adorno, "Das Altern der Neuen Musik," in *Dissonanzen: Einleitung in die Musiksoziologie*, vol. 14 of *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. Rolf Tiedemann, (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1973). The edition I refer to is a reprint, ed. Rolf Tiedemann, Gretel Adorno, Susan Buck-Morss, and Klaus Schultz, in 2003. The essay was first broadcasted in April 1954 and first published in *Der Monat* 80 (May 1955): 150-158. For more details, see footnote 94 in this chapter and Zakorski, 681, footnote.

⁹³ Theodor W. Adorno, "vers une musique informelle," in *Quasi una fantasia*, in *Musikalische Schriften I-III*, vol. 16 of *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. Rolf Tiedemann (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1978), 493-540. The prototype of this long essay was first lectured at the Darmstadt Ferienkurs in 1961, and was divided into two halves; 4th and 5th of September, respectively. The entire essay is first published as "vers une musique informelle: Nach einer Kranichsteiner Vorlesung: September 1961," in vol. 4 of *Darmstädter Beiträge zur neuen Musik* (Mainz: B. Schott's Söhne, 1962), 73-102. The English translation I refer to in this study is "vers une musique informelle," in *Quasi una Fantasia: Essays on Modern Music*, trans. Rodney Livingstone (London and New York: Verso, 1992), 269-322.

⁹⁴ Adorno himself briefly states that "Das 'Altern der neuen Musik' . . . was originally a lecture held in April 1954 at the Süddeutschen Rundfunk [South German Broadcasting] on the occasion of a festival of new music. It treats themes which were already exposed in the 'Philosophy of New Music,' and so before there was a serial school," see Theodor W. Adorno, "Vorrede zur dritte Ausgabe," in *Dissonanzen: Einleitung in die Musiksoziologie* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1973), 12: "Das 'Altern der neuen Musik' . . . war ursprünglich ein Vortrag, gehalten im April 1954 im Süddeutschen Rundfunk bei Gelegenheit einer Festwoche neuer Musik. Er führt Motive durch, die schon in der 'Philosophie der neuen Musik' exponiert waren, also ehe es eine serielle Schule gab."

⁹⁵ Adorno, "Das Altern," 151.

itself.”⁹⁶ Adorno regarded serialism as more problematic, because he was critical even of twelve-tone music’s “*streamlined aspect*”:

In reality, the technique should serve goals that lie beyond its own nexus. Here, where such goals are lacking, technique becomes an end in itself and substitutes for the substantial unity of the artwork an exactitude of calculation.⁹⁷

According to Hermann Danuser,

[a]s far as the construction appears detached from traditional principles of expression, the serial music is understood historically in those two positions, which still served as antitheses in Adorno’s *Philosophie der neuen Musik*: the constructivity of the row principle of the Schoenberg School where a completely different idea was granted by the generalization, and the objective anti-expressive aesthetic that is based on Stravinsky’s Neo-classicism.⁹⁸

This statement indeed suggests that the conceptual origin of Adorno’s criticism on serialism originates from the *Philosophie*.

Adorno once identified Boulez, for instance, as one who was “at the top” among the serial composers and as “an unquestionably thoroughly educated, extremely gifted musician of the highest level of form and craft.”⁹⁹ Meanwhile, Adorno criticized Boulez as a composer who relied on the sovereignty that resulted from “disowning all subjectivity,” “eliminating every single compositional freedom,” and “replacing composition altogether by an *objective-calculative arrangement* of intervals, pitches, durations, and dynamic levels – an integral rationalization.”¹⁰⁰ In short, in his understanding of serial music and its compositional procedure, Adorno “sees this tendency a fundamental logical flaw.”¹⁰¹

⁹⁶ Adorno, *Philosophy of New Music*, 54.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 56. The author’s italics.

⁹⁸ Danuser, *Die Musik des 20. Jahrhunderts*, 305-307 “Insofern die Konstruktion vom traditionellen Ausdrucksprinzip losgelöst erscheint, läßt sich die serielle Musik historisch aus der Verschränkung jener beiden Positionen verstehen, die in Adornos Philosophie der neuen Musik noch als Antithesen fungierten: der Konstruktivität des Reihenprinzips der Schönberg-Schule, dem durch die Verallgemeinerung ein gänzlich anderer Sinn verliehen wurde, und der objektivistisch-antiexpressiven Ästhetik, die dem Neoklassizismus Stravinskijs zugrunde lag.”

⁹⁹ See Adorno, “Das Altern,” 151: “An ihrer Spitze steht Pierre Boulez, . . . fraglos ein durch und durch gebildeter, überaus gebabter Musiker von höchstem Formniveau und einer Kraft.”

¹⁰⁰ Ibid. My italics. Zagorski reveals a more concrete description of Adorno’s negative view on Boulez’s music. See Zagorski, 695.

¹⁰¹ Wulf Konold, “Adorno – Metzger: Rückblick auf eine Kontroverse,” in *Nicht versöhnt: Musikästhetik nach Adorno*, ed. Hans-Klaus Jungheinrich (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1987), 96: “er [Adorno] sieht in der Tendenz, “das Komponieren überhaupt durch eine objektiv-kalkulatorische Anordnung von Intervallen, Tonhöhen, Längen und Kürzen und Stärkegraden zu ersetzen,” einen grundlegenden Denkfehler.”

Among his criticisms directed towards compositional development of the postwar avant-garde, both *musique concrète* and *elektronische Musik* seem as devalued as serialism in Adorno's aesthetics, despite the lack of thoroughgoing research of pieces of these types. In electroacoustic music, he found neither notable conceptions of "artistic idea[s]," nor the presence of the necessary theoretical significance in the process of sound generation, manipulation, and formal construction. Rather, for Adorno, the sound-colors [*Klangfarben*] in an electroacoustic work were merely "their chemical purity," which "monotonously resemble each other"; hence, "[i]t sounds as if one would perform Webern on Wurlitzer's organ."¹⁰² Furthermore, Adorno's views on electroacoustic composition remind us of his discourse on the degradation of the artistic value of music by its technical reproduction as a mass product. This was a central argument of Adorno's "Über den Fetischcharakter in der Musik und die Regression des Hörens" (1938) [On the Fetish Character in Music and the Regression of Listening].

The obligation to leveling down and quantification in electronic music seems to be stronger than the aim of qualitative unleashing. Of course, it remains to be seen whether, for that matter, the limited intelligence and one-sided-sensoriness of technical development in contemporary society is not more responsible than the technique itself.¹⁰³

For Adorno, it appeared as if composers engaged in electroacoustic composition were primarily preoccupied with both technical innovation and perpetually ongoing technological progress in society, without seeking any improvement of musical quality. "Das Altern" shows that Adorno scarcely admits much of serial music and electroacoustic music to be art works in the light of his aesthetic theory. Regarding those composers, Adorno argued that their excessive preoccupation with, or devotion to, progress in compositional technique had led them to lose the musical idea and its artistic momentum. In his theory of musical aesthetic, such momentum was an indispensable element yielded by the dialectic tension inherent in a piece. For the composers, in contrast, electronic media was an important instrument for generating and organizing sound materials and theorizing the entire process. In this regard, the aesthetic differences

¹⁰² Adorno, "Das Altern," 160. Wurlitzer is name of an instrument company in the United States. The organ Adorno refers to seems to be the firm's first electronic organ introduced in 1947. See under "Wurlitzer" in *The New Grove Dictionaries of Music and Musicians*, volume 20, edited by Stanley Sadie, London: Macmillan Publishers Limited, 1980. Reprint, 1995, 550.

¹⁰³ Adorno, "Das Altern," 160.

between the composers and Adorno were almost irreconcilable. Thus, no matter how much composers strived to pioneer a new realm of art music through electronic media, Adorno undervalued most pieces in the oeuvre of electroacoustic musical works right up to the moment he published “Das Altern.”¹⁰⁴ That is to say, he hardly regarded them as a flowering of the music that was supposed to play a significant part in the course of music history.

In considering Adorno’s negative assessment of postwar avant-garde music, which may at first sight appear unilateral, a work by Adorno’s younger contemporary Heinz-Klaus Metzger, “Das Altern der Philosophie der Neuen Musik” [The Aging of Philosophy of New Music] (henceforth “Das Altern der Philosophie”) written in response to Adorno’s “Das Altern,” is important for several reasons.¹⁰⁵ First, whereas the position of Metzger was that of a defending advance guard (literally *avant-garde*) for contemporary music and composers, that of Adorno “dropped back to the premise of material concept, which he himself had convincingly formulated, with his analysis of present times.”¹⁰⁶ In other words, the two essays exhibit an almost polar opposition. Furthermore, “Das Altern der Philosophie” triggered a debate about “new music” between the pioneering musical philosopher, whose treatise had already attained “authority,”¹⁰⁷ and the young radical spokesperson, who enthusiastically supported

¹⁰⁴ When the essay was first published in 1955, the composition of *Gesang der Jünglinge* was underway but had not yet been completed.

¹⁰⁵ For the bibliographic resource, see footnote 85 in this chapter. Incidentally, As Metzger himself says, the relationship between Adorno and Metzger was not that of teacher and student, but just friendship (he studied with Rudolf Kolisch). According to Metzger, he first met Adorno at the Darmstädter Internationale Ferienkurse in 1949, but the essay “Das Altern der Philosophie” triggered their “real friendship,” see Hans-Klaus Jungheinrich, “‘Ich halte jedenfalls an der Idee der Moderne Fest’: Von Adorno lernen. Ein Gespräch mit Heinz-Klaus Metzger,” in *Nicht Versöhnt: Musikästhetik nach Adorno*, ed. Hans-Klaus Jungheinrich (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1987), 69-70.

¹⁰⁶ Gianmario Borio, “Material – zur Krise einer musikästhetischen Kategorie,” 110. Adorno’s position cited here is, however, Metzger’s interpretation as Borio describes: “In seiner Replik »Das Altern der Philosophie der Neuen Musik« nahm Heinz-Klaus Metzger nicht nur bedeutende serielle Werke in Schutz. Er lenkte auch die Aufmerksamkeit auf die Tatsache, daß Adorno mit seiner Zeitdiagnose hinter die Prämissen des von ihm selbst so triftig formulierten Materialbegriffes zurückgefallen war.” See *ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ See Zagorski, 687. Relevantly, Paul Attinello points out how strong the influence of Adorno is, particularly in his homeland Germany, stating that “the last ‘great thought’ accepted by many German intellectuals is Adorno.” Moreover, he further explains that because of this fact, “most German writing on Cage and other postmodern music seems to miss the point.” What I read between these lines is a tacit suggestion that it is necessary to grasp Adorno’s misconception, especially of postwar avant-garde musical works, so that one could avoid being deluded by his “difficult brilliance” (Attinello), which is mostly applicable to study of Schoenberg’s works, and observe postwar avant-garde music accurately. See Attinello, “A Letter from Darmstadt,” *Repercussions* 14, no. 4 (Spring 1995): 85-101.

current music and was also supported by the composers. Metzger's severe criticism of Adorno's inadequate knowledge of postwar avant-garde music underscores the developmental processes and subsequent accomplishments by composers of the "young generation" as *now* or contemporary, rather than *new*. The gap of perception and interpretation about contemporary music between Adorno and Metzger anticipates the degradation of "old modern," and at the same time, the acceleration of progress in artistic development.

One of Metzger's most significant accusations concerning Adorno's avant-garde reception was that, as Zagorski explains in his article dealing with Adorno's observation of postwar avant-garde music, the decisive shortcomings of his avant-garde perception were "poor knowledge of postwar repertory" and "exclusion of musical examples"¹⁰⁸ (although these shortcomings were true, his observation was nevertheless brilliant and "prophetic" as Metzger later admitted¹⁰⁹). In "Das Altern der Philosophie," Metzger exposed Adorno's unfamiliarity with current composers' compositional principles, processes, and struggle to establish their own musical language.

Admittedly, the handed down musical texts now also show the general arrangements of intervals, pitches, durations, and dynamic range not as a substitute for composing, but as being composed. And one did not manage without calculation. Only with the producers of "objective calculative arrangement" are there cases where the traditional numeration is replaced either by estimation or by a time-oriented regulation that lies on the border of technical practicability, and likewise, where the traditional intervals and pitches of liberated intonation move within the defined field, where the constrained freedom there is set in the rigidly fixed numerical area. Apparently Adorno is not familiar with the new notations that express the like. . . . Adorno seems, however, to be taken in by the myth that predetermination of music is to a certain degree inherent in, for instance, twelve-tone technique. . . . For a long time, Adorno seemed hardly aware, if at all, that composers such as Boulez, Stockhausen, and Cage, who are becoming recognized as historically significant, have further advanced the extent to which form is unforeseeable [and thus cannot be completely anticipated], and whose unity is self-asserted.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸ Zagorski, 695-696. This sort of criticism was first made by Metzger. See the entire article.

¹⁰⁹ See Hans-Klaus Jungheinrich, 70. Recalling his polemic against Adorno in "Das Altern der Philosophie," Metzger says: "Adorno was certainly right. He recognized again processes in the newest music much earlier than I did . . . Adorno's observation proved to be as prophetic afterwards": "Adorno hatte natürlich recht. Er hat Alterungsprozesse in der neuesten Musik viel früher als ich . . . Adornos Beobachtung hat sich nachträglich als prophetisch erwiesen."

¹¹⁰ Heinz-Klaus Metzger, "Das Altern der Philosophie," 72-73: "Nun zeigen freilich auch die überlieferten Notentexte im allgemeinen Anordnungen von Intervallen, Tonhöhen, Längen und Kürzen und

Here Metzger insisted emphatically on historical significance from the perspective of each of those compositional theories or procedures sought out by the above-mentioned composers and others. Even though Adorno's logical construction and "verbal virtuosity" formed his own aesthetic theory, Metzger's keen observation of contemporary musical works, their compositional procedures, and orientations *as ongoing reality* was more reliable in theoretical-developmental terms.

Notable is that in "Das Altern der Philosophie," Metzger discussed many examples of postwar avant-garde works as well as their compositional principles. Having closer contact with the contemporary composers and access to their works than Adorno, Metzger offered some bitter advice.¹¹¹

However, perhaps Adorno should keep surveying everything as it becomes available today. There is a musical meaning even aside from every antecedent and consequent, and there is also a compulsory musical connection across all the thematic-motivic relationships, in which Adorno only catches sight of the "musical language." Does he know nothing about Stockhausen's group-concept?¹¹²

Moreover, while assuming that "Adorno would revise his opinion as soon as he heard electronic productions like Stockhausen's *Gesang der Jünglinge*, Koenig's *Klangfiguren II* or even a piece of *musique concrète* like Brown's *Octet I for 8 loudspeakers*," Metzger critically asked "which paradigm of electronic music he [Adorno] has experienced that

Stärkegraden, nicht als Ersatz des Komponierens, sondern als Komponiertes. Und ohne Kalkül kam man nicht aus. Erst bei den Produzenten der »objektiv-kalkulatorischen Anordnung« gibt es Fälle, wo das traditionelle Zählen sei's durch ein Schätzen, sei's durch eine an technischen Ausführbarkeitsgrenzen orientierte Zeitregulierung ersetzt wird, wo ebenso die traditionellen Intervalle und Tönehöhen einer Intonationsfreiheit innerhalb definierter Felder weichen, wo kurzum Freiheit in bis dahin starr numerisch fixierte Bereiche einzieht. Mit den neuen Notationen, die dergleichen ausdrücken, ist Adorno offenbar nicht vertraut. . . . Adorno scheint jedoch dem Mythos aufgesessen zu sein, mit der Prädetermination der Musik, wie sie der Zwölftontechnik bis zu einem gewissen Grade inhärent war Daß inzwischen längst von Boulez, Stockhausen, Cage und anderen Komponisten, die heute geschichtlich etwas bedeuten, gerade möglichst weit getriebene Unvorhersehbarkeit der gesamten Form angestrebt wird, an der sich deren Einheit freilich zu bewähren hat, scheint Adorno kaum geläufig zu sein."

¹¹¹ Incidentally, the postwar avant-garde composers Metzger refers to in the essay are Boulez, Stockhausen, Pousseur, Cage, Koenig, Brown, Feldman, and Goeyvaert.

¹¹² Metzger, "Das Altern der Philosophie," 72: "Worüber aber heute vollends verfügt wird, darin sollte Adorno wohl einmal Umschau halten. Es gibt musikalischen Sinn auch außer allem Vorder- und Nachsatz, und es gibt zwingenden musikalischen Zusammenhang auch jenseits aller thematisch-motivischen Beziehungen, worin allein Adorno das »Musiksprachliche« erblickt. Weiß er nichts von Stockhausens Gruppenbegriff?" This citation is also quoted in Wulf Konold, "Adorno – Metzger: Rückblick auf eine Kontroverse," 98.

sounds as if ‘one would perform Webern on Wurlitzer’s organ’.”¹¹³ Although he was aware of Adorno’s unfamiliarity with electroacoustic compositions, Metzger did not even stop criticizing it: “possibly his [Adorno’s] and my knowledge of works in this domain [of electroacoustic music] never overlap.”¹¹⁴ The gap between their knowledge of electroacoustic music was a useful aspect to represent Adorno as the aging critic, as well as to stress Metzger’s own greater suitability as a spokesperson of the postwar avant-garde composers.

Because unlike Adorno, he was familiar with the abovementioned pieces, Metzger as an enthusiastic, determined, and up-and-coming young critic was able to stand up for the composers. Metzger opines that

[n]ot only did the whole gamut become conceivable, but also the individual tone – or noise . . . has become available for composition of its inner structure. It need not be taken any longer as the fixed state of each given instrument, as its immutable “character.” The sound direction has itself become a variable parameter: in different degrees, Stockhausen, Koenig, and Brown composed for disbursed groups of loud speakers in the space and therewith exploited a dimension for the articulation of musical form that was already planned, to a rudimentary degree, by Berlioz and Mahler, and theorized for the first time by Varèse.¹¹⁵

This statement is significant in two aspects: musical material and form. For the former, the generation of a single sound material no longer necessarily depended on the traditional musical instruments that had enabled great composers in the past to create a musical art work. Instead, the production or invention of a new sound became possible by means of electronic devices that were able to manipulate “its inner structure.” That is to

¹¹³ Metzger, “Das Altern der Philosophie,” 81: “Vielleicht würde Adorno diese Ansicht revidieren, sobald er einmal elektronische Produktionen wie Stockhausens *Gesang der Jünglinge*, Koenigs *Klangfiguren II* oder gar auch ein Stück *Musique concrète* wie Browns *Octet I for 8 loudspeakers* hörte. . . . an welchem Paradigma elektronischer Musik ihm die Erfahrung ward, sie höre sich an, »als trüge man Webern auf einer Wurlitzerorgel vor.«” When Adorno wrote “Das Altern,” Stockhausen’s *Gesang* and Koenig’s *Klangfiguren II* were not composed yet.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.: “Womöglich überschneiden sich in dieser Domäne seine und meine Kenntnisse von Werken überhaupt nirgends.”

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 81-82: “Nicht allein wurden alle nur erdenklichen Skalen möglich, sondern auch der einzelne Ton – bzw. das Geräusch, . . . ist in seiner inneren Zusammensetzung komponierbar geworden, braucht nicht mehr als sture Beschaffenheit eines je gegebenen Instruments, als dessen fixer »Charakter«, hingenommen zu werden. Vollends wurde aus der Schallrichtung ein variabler Parameter gemacht: in unterschiedlichen Graden haben Stockhausen, Koenig und Brown für im Raum verteilte Lautsprechergruppen komponiert und damit eine Dimension für die Artikulation musikalischer Form erschlossen, die rudimentär bei Berlioz und Mahler wohl schon intendiert, theoretisch erstmals von Varèse entworfen worden war.”

say, the skill to create a timbre from a conventional musical instrument in the process of musical composition could be replaced with the aid of newly developed technologies that enabled the composer to literally “compose” it. Then the routine was situated in a space of, so to speak, microorganisms. In contrast, the idea for musical form was located in a larger conception that dealt primarily with transformations of sound as a spatial dimension of a piece. The aspect of controlling or instructing sound transformation within this space was a compositional element not contributing to shaping a frame of form, but, as Metzger describes, to articulating the form.

From a compositional-theoretical point of view, on the one hand, Metzger’s observation suggested advances of compositional scope that were accomplished by expanding the elements and methods of musical composition. On the other hand, he inferred a historical link with regard to a notion of sound transformation, which Adorno hardly took into consideration in his criticism of electroacoustic music. In fact, Adorno’s own phrases such as “chemical purity” and “monotonously resemble each other” represented his perception of electroacoustic sound characteristics. These phrases, however, commented at no deeper level than his aural subjectivity. In reality, the medium of electroacoustic music has become an important element that provides composers with potentials for their own compositional-theoretical development. Thus, there existed a potential for contributing to their artistic attempts at crossover of art genres. In any case, Adorno’s insight into electroacoustic music seems to have been a one-sided perception that ultimately led to the questionable idea he presented in “*musique informelle*” and then “*Die Kunst*.”

Another interesting aspect concerning Metzger’s argument against Adorno’s “*Das Altern*” is that this partly arose from a commission by the leading figures of European serial music; namely, Karlheinz Stockhausen and Pierre Boulez.¹¹⁶ As a consequence of hearing or reading “*Das Altern*,” “a younger school of serialism began to agitate, upon perceiving the betrayal of their senior, with whom they had believed to have been

¹¹⁶ Pepper, 36-37. The primary source is not cited in Pepper, but seems to be from his interview with Metzger. See the author’s acknowledgement in *ibid.*, 30, footnote.

allied.”¹¹⁷ This fact substantiates that, in the practical sense of musical composition, Adorno’s viewpoint on contemporary avant-garde music had already started to become obsolete by the middle of the 1950s. Hence, “Das Altern” represented the crucial point that separated Adorno’s aesthetics from those of avant-garde composers. And since the essay, according to Adorno, “faithfully carries through motives that were already exposed in the *Philosophie der neuen Musik*,”¹¹⁸ the incompatibility of his aesthetics and those of the avant-garde potentially existed already before “Das Altern.” Zagorski’s statement in this regard is very persuasive:

The further postwar music moved from the orbit of the Schoenberg school . . . , the more Adorno was perceived as, and felt himself to be, isolated. . . . [The d]ifference between Adorno and the younger generation can be traced back to their first encounter: in *Philosophie der neuen Musik*.¹¹⁹

Finally, Adorno himself already knew very well that his musical aesthetic in *Philosophie* remained the paradigm for understanding and explaining postwar new music. In an intriguing debate between Adorno and Metzger which was broadcast by WDR in 1958 under the title, “Jüngste Musik – Fortschritt oder Rückbildung” [The Most Recent Music – Progress or Regression],¹²⁰ Adorno implicitly admits the rigidity of his musico-aesthetic ideas in the *Philosophie*.

I think first that both you [Metzger] and I are convinced by the central character of technology, of technical issues for aesthetics and for music in general. I just mean though that the technical questions . . . are always at the same time something more-than-technique, too, that therefore the technical analysis is, by means of remaining a strict technical analysis, not allowed to cease by itself, but by virtue of the definitions of technical matter of facts and connections, should always at the same time come together with the spiritual matter of facts and connections. In this respect, my current position still fully stands by the *Philosophie der neuen Musik*, which you have in fact countered in my later works in a certain manner. At this point my thought has not deviated from the musical philosophy.¹²¹

¹¹⁷ Nagaharu Sankou, “Translators’ epilogue,” in *Fukyouwaon: Kanri Shakai ni okeru Ongaku: Dissonanzen*, trans. (in Japanese) Nagaharu Sankou and Tomoyoshi Takatsuji (Tokyo: Heibon-sha, 1998), 313.

¹¹⁸ Adorno, “Vorrede zur dritten Ausgabe” in *Dissonanzen: Einleitung in die Musiksoziologie*, 12. See footnote 94 in this chapter.

¹¹⁹ Zagorski, 688.

¹²⁰ This debate was also published as Heinz-Klaus Metzger, “Disput zwischen Theodor W. Adorno und Heinz-Klaus Metzger (1957),” in *Musik Wozu: Literatur zur Noten*, ed. Rainer Riehn (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1980).

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 91: “Ich denke dabei zunächst einmal daran, daß Sie sowohl wie ich überzeugt sind von dem Schlüsselcharakter der Technologie, der technischen Probleme für die ästhetischen und für die der

Adorno may have been aware that his adherence to the set of ideas in the *Philosophie* caused him to have difficulty in understanding postwar avant-garde music.

Path to the Verfransung

Metzger's accusation that Adorno had an inadequate appreciation of postwar avant-garde music made Adorno to some extent pay attention to wider repertoires and analyze them in a different manner from that which he used to examine Schoenberg's works. And yet, it is undeniable that Adorno's discussion of those musics in essays after "Das Altern" still reveals that, for him, Schoenberg holds a position of priority in the field of "modern" music. This tendency remains noticeable in "Vers une musique informelle" (henceforth "musique informelle"), where Adorno 'perceived postwar avant-garde music as bringing a specific conception of *informal* music into focus.¹²² Perhaps also due to Metzger's reproach of his inadequate references to the avant-garde musical repertoire in "Das Altern der Philosophie," Adorno mentioned more works and discussed the theoretical content of a few of them in "musique informelle." In this regard, it is plausible that the essay was supposed to remedy these lapses and reconstruct his aesthetic theory of postwar new music. However, the rigidity of Adorno's musical aesthetics hardly enabled him to embrace most of these works, since so few satisfied his basic principles.

Musik überhaupt. Nur meine ich allerdings, daß die technischen Fragen, . . . immer zugleich auch ein Mehr-als-Technik sind, daß also die technische Analyse, in dem sie strenge technische Analyse bleibt, doch nicht bei sich selber stehen bleiben darf, sondern vermöge der Bestimmung technischer Sachverhalte und Zusammenhänge immer zugleich auch geistige Sachverhalte und Zusammenhänge treffen sollte. Insofern ist meine Position heute mit der Philosophie der Neuen Musik, die Sie ja in gewissem Sinn meinen späteren Arbeiten entgegengehalten haben, noch vollkommen einig. Ich bin also an dieser Stelle von meinen Gedanken aus der Musikphilosophie nicht etwa abgewichen."

¹²² The definition of informal music in the essay is not easy to grasp, since Adorno deliberately avoids describing it, see Zagorski, 697. Zagorski also cites a key sentence to decipher Adorno's "ideal" rather than "the meaning of musique informelle," see *ibid.*, 698. While "the concept of 'informelle' is problematic," Martin Zenck, "Auswirkungen einer 'musique informelle' auf die neue Musik: Zu Theodor W. Adornos Formvorstellung," *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 10, no. 2 (December 1979): 139-140, posits that "neither does it denote something formless, nor is it the abstract negation of traditional closed-forms in the modern. *Informelle* and traditional form are not simply antithesis, but are confusingly mediated. . . . Form, not as pre-existing essence, but as subjective setting of individual elements that sometime produces first a form by affinity of them": "Zunächst einmal bereitet der Begriff des 'Informellen' Schwierigkeiten. Er bezeichnet weder etwas Formloses, noch ist er in der Moderne die abstrakte Negation der traditionell geschlossenen Form. Informelle und traditionelle Form stehen nicht schlicht in Antithese, sondern sind durcheinander vermittelt. . . . Form nicht als vorgängige Wesenheit, sondern als subjektive Setzung der Einzelmomente, die durch Affinität zueinander jeweils Form erst herstellen."

In “*musique informelle*,” no concrete *musique informelle* work appears except in those of Schoenberg’s pieces. More specifically, while the essay explores “new criteria for the composition, interpretation, and criticism of music in the post-tonal and post-serial era,”¹²³ nevertheless, “the ideal of ‘*musique informelle*’ stems from the approximate redemption in Schoenberg’s third piano piece from op. 11 and the monodrama *Erwartung*.”¹²⁴ For Adorno, Schoenberg’s early work was indeed an ideal prototype of *musique informelle*. Nevertheless, Adorno claimed that a composer today was no longer allowed to mimic the style that was “Schoenberg’s most productive one” for reasons of irreversibility that the “nature of history, the wheel of time . . . cannot be turned back.”¹²⁵ Because the ideal he identified was historically bound, no contemporary work of “real” *musique informelle* fulfilled the criteria Adorno presented. That is to say, it was an ideal style of new music that no composers have yet reached; thus, Adorno abstractly theorized about it in a manner not of practical compositional instruction, but of philosophical yearning for the past. Indeed, Adornian *informal music* was an unattainable ideal type or that it had already been attained.

For Adorno, an ideal configuration of musical composition was capable of procuring and then preserving all his ideals – such as new rationality, truth content, meaning, and dialectical solutions at multiple levels, rebellion against fetishism. The configuration seems even to have fallen into a realm of conceptualism. On the contrary, musical compositions around the time of the lecture on *musique informelle* were allowed a further attempt to engage with exploration of new musical expressivity. In addition, some of them were already associated with the idea of interdisciplinarity, especially in connection with visual arts. Therefore, the directions that actual contemporary musical composition took and Adorno’s presentation of what a *musique informelle* would be were conspicuously different.

¹²³ Zagorski, 697.

¹²⁴ Martin Zenck, “Auswirkungen einer “*musique informelle*” auf die neue Musik: Zu Theodor W. Adornos Formvorstellung,” 137: “Das Ideal der »*musique informelle*« rührt von der approximativen Einlösung in Schönbergs drittem Klavierstück aus op. 11 und dem Monodram *Erwartung* her.” These pieces were composed in 1909, the year Zenck regarded as “a quasi-pivotal point, through which the importance of formal problem shifts to the whole issue”: “Das Jahr 1909 ist gleichsam der neue Achsenpunkt, durch den sich das Gewicht des Formproblems um das Ganze verschiebt,” see *ibid*.

¹²⁵ Adorno, “*musique informelle*,” 275.

By expressing a sort of agreeable impression of contemporary compositions such as Stockhausen's *Zeitmaßen*, *Gruppen*, *Kontakten*, and *Carré*, Boulez's *Marteau sans maître*, *Deuxième* and *Troisième Sonate*, and *Sonatine pour flute et piano*, and Cage's *Piano Concert*, Adorno may at first glance seem to show some slight affinity for these works. However, his appreciation of these pieces was essentially different from works he regarded as having an ideal, high aesthetic value in "the whole tradition down to . . . Webern's last works."¹²⁶ In addition, that he was present in the *Darmstädter Ferienkurse* and festivals of new music does not necessarily mean that he had opportunities to hear these pieces and look at the scores. In the 1957 conversation with Metzger, Adorno recalled the inaccessibility to "the most important works of serial and electronic school" at the time he presented "Das Altern" as a lecture.¹²⁷ For this reason, presumably Adorno had few sources to examine these "contemporary musical works," given his ignorance of postwar avant-garde music – a deficit he presumably acknowledged but did not remedy. Kagel's short remark in this regard, however, implies that there were other reasons than the inaccessibility to postwar new music. "Already in 1960," Kagel claims, "Adorno's interest in the *new* music began to flag in the absence of experienced information," which he was already aware of, "but which was not allowed to be given away for many reasons."¹²⁸

With regard to electroacoustic composition, various attempts to explore new sound possibilities together with their theorizations had been made by the early 1960s. Not only did a musical sound generated by or through the electronic device become a possible sound element in musical composition, but also a composer was now able to use the equipment in live performance to replay the sound on stage. One of the best examples in this respect is Kagel's *Transición II*, where the sound produced by a pianist and a percussionist is recorded during their performance and then replayed alongside another tape of a pre-recorded performance. Kagel also allows these recorded sounds, if possible,

¹²⁶ Ibid., 271.

¹²⁷ Metzger, "Disput zwischen Theodor W. Adorno und Heinz-Klaus Metzger," 95: "die wichtigsten Werke der seriellen wie der elektronischen Schule."

¹²⁸ Mauricio Kagel, "J'accuse II," in *Tamtam: Dialoge und Monologe zur Musik* (München: R. Piper, 1975), 39: "Bereits 1960 begann Adornos Interesse an der neuen Musik mangels erlebter Information zu erlahmen. Er wußte dies, durfte es aber aus vielen Gründen nicht preisgeben."

to be electronically modified. Meanwhile, Adorno's insistence on rejecting the sonority of electroacoustic music in "musique informelle" is stronger than in "Das Altern."

Laxer methods, . . . for example, in electronic music, are recognizable by their liking for "attractive sonorities [*Klangreiz*]," to use an old-fashioned Impressionist word, and they are betrayed by their peculiarly ineffectual speculativeness, which seems both cunning and stupid at the same time.¹²⁹

It may be supposed that the generative procedures of electroacoustic composition, and as a consequence the sounds, are relocated in a trivial musico-aesthetic dimension far from Adorno's aesthetic theory. The author's footnote for the statement cited above confirms this presumption:

The false emphasis on the idea of sonority [*Klang*] in new music is the sign of the dilettante and of those people who place arbitrary interpretations on what they have failed to understand. The dimension of sonority is perhaps the most prominent element in new music, having been liberated by it and, though newly discovered, it is less in conflict with older listening habits than anything else. However, in the works which count, it is never an end in itself, but instead is both functional in the context of the work and also provides an element of fermentation.¹³⁰

One can recognize Adorno's skepticism about electroacoustic sound or music and so-called sound composition by contrasting to his reference to Schoenberg's aesthetic of musical sound. Adorno presents it clearly in the last half of the footnote.

Schoenberg always stressed that sonority [*Klang*] was a means to achieve the adequate representation of the musical idea. If the new music is at all incompatible with what preceded it, it is in the absence of sonic attractiveness [*Klangreiz*] as a categorical concept. This is still the most popular way into mishearing it. This has been confirmed by the most recent development, in which sonority has been integrated into the overall construction as one of its parameters.¹³¹

¹²⁹ Adorno, "musique informelle," 277.

¹³⁰ Ibid., footnote.

¹³¹ Ibid. The last sentence in the German original is: "Die jüngste Entwicklung, die den Klang als Parameter in die Konstruktion integriert, hat das *nochmals* bestätigt" (my italics), 500. This *nochmals* (once again) in the context clarifies that the dimension of sound or sonority which has to be the "representation of musical idea" [*Darstellung des musikalischen Gedankens*] is added in the serialist parameterization. By this, it may also be supposed that Adorno's distrust of the serial principle of total control together with a complete absence of subjective expressivity would be much greater than his of electroacoustic musical principles, or perhaps, that he was then still not as knowledgeable about those principles as he was in "das Altern."

This statement also seems not only to characterize the electronically generated sound as lack of musical idea, but also to claim that such aesthetic deficiency originated with parameterization: the primary principle of serialism.

Around the time of the lecture and publication of “*musique informelle*,” composers no longer relied so much on *serialist* parameterization; instead, many had become more and more skeptical about its conception and principles. On the other hand, Adorno seems unenthusiastic about the ongoing exploration and development of new music among postwar avant-garde composers, especially in the realm of electroacoustic composition. Adorno’s failure to appreciate contemporary attempts to seek new sound possibilities thus resulted from two related factors: lack of interest and lack of exposure. Justifying these deficiencies, Adorno was inclined to trivialize the “newness” of postwar new music and for electroacoustic composition, he overlooked the historical, theoretical, and aesthetic significance. Adorno’s stance toward postwar avant-garde music coupled with his desire to focus on unrealizable informal music led him to the idea of *Verfransung*.

“Die Kunst und die Künste”

In the essay “Die Kunst,” Adorno primarily scrutinizes transboundaries of art, places “blurring the neatly classified divisions of art” [*Verwischung der säuberlich geordneten Klassen der Kunst*] by presenting actual musical, literary, and visual art works that he believed suitable to be examples. One useful illustration is, for instance, the “de-representationality” [*Entgegenständlichung*] of Fritz Wotruba’s sculptures “towards quasi architectonic forms.”¹³² Adorno contends that some pieces of Wotruba blurred the boundary between sculpture and architecture. Although it is unclear to what specific pieces Adorno refers, one can trace the tendency of de-representationality (in Adorno’s terms) by observing the process of Wotruba’s stylistic change.¹³³

¹³² Adorno, “Die Kunst,” 168: “zu quasi architektonischen Gebilden.”

¹³³ To see this process, compare, for example, the following “*Stehende*” [standing] pieces of Wotruba in chronological order: (1) *Stehende* (“*Weibliche Kathedrale*”), sandstone, 1946; (2) *Stehende Figur*, bronze, 1950; (3) *Stehende Figur mit erhobenen Armen*, bronze, 1958; and (4) *Grosse stehende Figur* (“*Junger König*”), limestone Veselje Unit, 1961/62. For (1) and (4), see “Skulptur,” in *Fritz Wotruba Privatstiftung* [Archive on-line] available from <http://www.wotruba.at/Katalog/Katalogd.asp?Art=1>; Internet accessed 25 November 2012 and for (2) and (3), see “Fritz Wotruba” under “Katalog,” in *Stiftung Sammlung Kamm, Zug* [Archive on-line] available

In contrast, Adorno's choice of musical works and statements for them from the viewpoint of a "frontier-crossing" [*Grenzüberschreitung*] phenomenon are as problematic and disputable as his deficient perception of postwar avant-garde music in "Das Altern" and "musique informelle." For this, despite the stimulating theme and discourse, there is an underlying irony: while Adorno aptly illuminates the significant characteristic of "de-representationality" in the field of visual art, the statements about musical *Verfransung* or *Grenzüberschreitung* made by the "new music" connoisseur are in part questionable.¹³⁴ For the latter, the state of *Verfransung* was not only a phenomenon that concurrently emerged among various genres of art, but also may have represented the perplexity and skepticism Adorno had in the face of further diversification of compositional style than those he had seen just a few years before. According to this implication, one hypothesis is that the exponent (Adorno) of the *Verfransung* phenomenon was the *Verfranzer* or *Verfranzer* (Franz) in the phenomenon.

Adorno, in the first place, presents Italian composer Sylvano Bussotti as an example of the interrelation of music and visual in which conventional musical notation is completely taken away: graphic notation. At the time that Adorno worked on this essay, there had already been various approaches to graphic notation; nevertheless, he selected only Bussotti because, according to Adorno, he "was a graphic designer before he turned to music."¹³⁵ Although unclear whether his remark below is meant in reference to Bussotti's work or a piece written in graphic notation in general, Adorno's interpretive insight elucidates the essential characteristic of the notation:

from http://www.stiftungsammlungkamm.ch/katalog_w.html#Wotruba; Internet accessed 25 November 2012.

¹³⁴ Carl Dahlhaus, "New Music and the Problem of musical genre," in *Schoenberg and the New Music: Essays by Carl Dahlhaus*, trans. Derrick Puffett and Alfred Clayton (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987) apparently seems to be inspired by Adorno's idea of crossing over art genres, but as the title indicates, he focuses specifically on genres within music in terms of their structure and form. From this perspective, Dahlhaus claims that "[t]hat the New Music has a tendency to abolish genres and make works wholly individual first becomes clearly apparent in the case of Anton Webern, who dissolved the genre-determining connections between formal models, movement structure, and types of scoring." Interestingly, he explores the origin of "the disintegration of genres . . . far back into the nineteenth century," see 33. For the original German text, see Dahlhaus, "Die Neue Musik und das Problem der musikalischen Gattungen," in *Gestaltungsgeschichte und Gesellschaftsgeschichte: Festschrift für Fritz Martini*, ed. Helmut Kreuzer (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1969). Reprint in *Schoenberg und andere: Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Neuen Musik* (Mainz: Schott's Söhne, 1978).

¹³⁵ Adorno, "Die Kunst," 168: ". . . der [Bussotti] Graphiker war, ehe er zur Musik übergang."

the graphic notations, to the invention of which playfulness makes an entirely legitimate contribution, corresponds to the need for holding musical events more flexibly and more precisely than the traditional, standardized signs in the tonality; conversely, sometimes they will also provide some space for improvisatory response. Everything here becomes obedient to purely musical desiderata. Hardly might it overly have difficulty to recognize similar immanent motivations in the most *Verfransung* phenomena.¹³⁶

While what this statement posits seems somewhat abstract, somewhat unclear, it aptly illuminates the striking fact that current art works, virtually of necessity, possess heterogeneous elements, which may in some cases consist in polarity. Here Adorno points out the conflicting characteristics inherent in most graphically notated musical pieces, which he describes by presenting the antonyms: flexible versus precise. This pair of contradictory musical characters immediately recalls another coupling of contrary principles in music that brought about an immense controversy right after the appearance of John Cage at the *Darmstädter Ferienkurse* in 1958, namely that of indeterminacy versus determinacy. In any case, Adorno need not any longer present a specific work in graphic notation with its details, since however much the purpose and design of graphic presentation differed from one another, the distinct contextual flexibility and preciseness coexisted in the piece. The degree of balance between the changeability and unchangeability thus depended on the specificity of the composer's theoretical and aesthetic intention.

In contrast to his keen insight with regard to the structural nature of musical works in graphic notation, Adorno's perception of electroacoustic music is still debatable. In "Die Kunst," Adorno implies that electroacoustic music is a problematic "genre" that can give rise to the *Verfransung*'s phenomenon. However, such an interpretation seems equally problematic. Adorno refers to electronics in musical composition in a curious way in explaining the analogy of the phenomenon in art to that in music.

An orchestra is intrinsically not an integral whole, nor a continuum of all possible tone-colors, but fragile between these yawning gaps. Certainly, the electronics were originally intended to produce the non-homogeneous nature of orchestra to

¹³⁶ Ibid., 170: "die graphischen Notationen, an deren Erfindung Verspieltheit ihren keineswegs illegitimen Anteil hat, entsprechen dem Bedürfnis, musikalische Ereignisse flexibler, dadurch genauer festzuhalten als mit den üblichen, auf die Tonalität geeichten Zeichen; umgekehrt wollen sie manchmal auch improvisatorischer Wiedergabe einigen Raum verschaffen. Überall hier wird also rein musikalischen Desideraten gehorcht. Kaum dürfte es allzu schwer fallen, an den meisten Verfransungsphänomenen ähnliche immanente Motivationen zu erkennen."

this day, although it immediately came to itself and could not help accepting its difference from all traditional sound production and it [therefore] sacrificed to be a model of the integrated orchestra. With this force lost, the relationship of art to arts can be compared to that of historically formed orchestra to its instruments.¹³⁷

What is debatable is Adorno's insistence on the intention of electronics "to produce the non-homogeneous nature of orchestra." It seems reasonable to assume that Adorno possibly thought that the original intent of electroacoustic devices and techniques was to mimic or reproduce the *Klangfarbe* of the orchestra. To confront this idea, the works of Xenakis (*Metastaseis* and *Diamorphoses*) and Ligeti (*Glissandi* and *Atmosphères*) discussed in Chapter Three are worth reconsidering.

As discussed in that chapter, their attempts in the course of composing these pieces were to transform the idea and technique from orchestral work to electroacoustic work and vice versa, not precisely to restore or complement what the orchestra and all traditional musical instruments were incapable of. More specifically, these composers' explorative focus was on a new musical structure, which is constituted from glissando-sounds [*Glissandoklänge*] and continuous sound movements [*kontinuierliche Klangbewegungen*] that constitute a formal unity. The individual developmental attempts and achievements in this specific respect could have enhanced the *Verfransung* phenomenon in musical composition as a positive model and thus been logically more convincing as well.

Taking over the studies of his predecessor, Pierre Henry,¹³⁸ and succeeding in incorporating the structures of sliding sound motions with static notes *Metastaseis*, Xenakis further developed the glissando-structural principle in the electroacoustic work *Diamorphoses*. In a reverse manner, Ligeti embodies the glissando sounds first in the electronic work *Glissandi*, a piece consisting literally of various types of sliding sound materials. And then, scarcely satisfied with the "technical and sound simplicity of his first studio production," the composer presents an orchestral work of a "quasi glissando

¹³⁷ Adorno, "Die Kunst," 186: "Das Orchester ist kein in sich vollständiges Ganzes, kein Kontinuum aller möglichen Klangfarben, sondern zwischen diesen klaffen empfindliche Lücken. Die Elektronik wollte gewiß ursprünglich die bis heute mangelnde Homogenität des Orchesters herstellen, obgleich sie rasch das Bewußtsein ihres Unterschieds von allen traditionellen Klangerzeugern erlangte und das Vorbild des integralen Orchesters opferte. Ohne Gewalt ist das Verhältnis der Kunst zu den Künsten dem des geschichtlich formierten Orchesters zu seinen Instrumenten zu vergleichen."

¹³⁸ Rudolf Frisius, "Personalstil und Musiksprache: Anmerkungen zur Positionsbestimmung György Ligetis," 187.

structure,” *Atmosphères*.¹³⁹ Regardless of this difference in their developmental processes, it is obvious that the electronic medium played an indispensable role in establishing individual compositional styles at that time.

In the case of Xenakis, there seems to be a morphological similarity between *Metastaseis* and *Diamorphoses*. Segments of the beginning and end conspicuously emphasize glissando-sound elements, and throughout the pieces they oscillate between background and foreground of the entire sound structure. Based on this principle, *Diamorphoses* takes the opportunity to expand the character and structure of glissando-elements by means of electronic composition. Glissando-elements that only string instruments are capable of in *Metastaseis* are now no longer homogeneous in *Diamorphoses*, but vary in quality. That is to say, the sound of the electroacoustic work as a whole is composed of glissando-materials and -structure with different sound colors which neither invoke the sound of a Wurlitzer, nor any longer “monotonously resemble each other.” Furthermore, the superimposition of glissando-materials not only reinforces the trait of “continuous sound movement” [*kontinuierliche Klangbewegung*],¹⁴⁰ but also yields a stereoscopic sound space.

By contrast, although Ligeti engaged the notion of sound continuity and adopted various figures and colors of glissando materials in *Glissandi* (as the plural form of the title indicates), he was not satisfied with the first electronic composition “due to technical and sound simplicity.”¹⁴¹ In fact, despite having a richer variety of electronic sound material than Xenakis’ *Diamorphoses*, the sound texture of *Glissandi* as a whole appears thinner. In terms of sound characteristic, the simplicity the composer himself sensed may to some extent correspond to what Adorno meant by “monotonous” in electroacoustic music. Nevertheless, a gap between the perceptions of Ligeti and Adorno is clear; the former recognized and acknowledged a lack of sound density and structural profundity despite the variety of timbre, while the latter relied essentially on his sensory detection

¹³⁹ Ibid., 187-188. In *Atmosphères*, an actual glissando structure is barely present, but a sense of sound continuity is more strongly perceptible than in *Glissandi*, due to the seamlessness achieved by layering various kinds of gradational tone cluster groups of conventional orchestral instruments. Incidentally, Ligeti’s later work *Harmonies in Etüden für Orgel* (1967) seems to be the most successful and sophisticated in terms of the concept of glissando structure and sound continuity, despite the absence of rapid sliding lines and curves heard in *Glissandi*.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 187.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 186.

without taking the compositional concepts and processes of electroacoustic composition into consideration. At any rate, regardless of his dissatisfaction with the piece, Ligeti's compositional experience through the electronic medium was a necessary stepping stone on his way to establishing his own structural approach, and with it, to crystallizing a most successful work, *Atmosphères*.

Instead of further exploring glissando-structure as well as electroacoustic musical presentation, Ligeti obtained an extraordinary intensity and density of sound structure in compositions for conventional instrumentation. In *Atmosphères*, the immediately identifiable glissando figures, such as a clear curve with unstable sound motions and ascending and descending sound swells, which are to be heard in *Glissandi*, almost disappear and in their place we find the multilayered sound cluster structure, individual substructures of which metamorphose into other figures and appear not always simultaneously, but rather as if engaged in a chase. Adorno identifies the work as "very significant, highly designed" and characteristic of tone-cluster structure in that "no individual notes are distinguishable in a conventional sense."¹⁴² While he provides no further details, Adorno's description aptly grasps the essential character of *Atmosphères*. However, in the following short discussion of Edgard Varèse's *Ionisation*, where he sees the connection to *Atmosphères* through an unidentifiable organization of pitch, Adorno appears to miss the point, due to "the absence of experienced information" for postwar avant-garde music.¹⁴³

First, the "unidentifiable" pitch structure in *Ionisation* derives from the instrumentation for a percussion ensemble, while that in *Atmosphères* results from multilayered tone clusters and the formation of continuous structure in orchestral instrumentation. For this reason, Adorno's characterization of *Ionisation* as a "prototype" [*Vorform*] of works like *Atmosphères* is highly doubtful. The idea of a connection between *Ionisation* and *Atmosphères* could be intelligible only if he meant that the loss of perceptibility of traditional pitch structure in musical composition was a representation of *Verfransung* at a very local level. In terms of inventing a new musical structure and form,

¹⁴² Adorno, "Die Kunst," 171.

¹⁴³ Incidentally, Adorno's knowledge of Varèse's works is suspect due to the misspelling of the title "Jonization" in "Die Kunst," although this may have been just a typesetting error. It is also succinctly pointed out in Helga de la Motte-Haber's *Die Musik von Edgard Varèse* (Hofheim: Wolke Verlag, 1993), 261.

however, *Ionisation* is hardly comparable to *Atmosphères*, even if the main purpose of this connection made by Adorno was merely to spotlight a potential cause of the *Verfransung*. Perhaps Adorno failed to observe the theoretical and structural course of *Atmosphères* and thus simply chose *Ionisation* as the prototype of *Atmosphères*.

Ligeti's reference to Stockhausen's *Gruppen für drei Orchester* in his essay "Metamorphoses of Musical Form" illuminates the particular formal, structural, and material-composing procedures that would become important theoretical sources for *Atmosphères*' continuous structure (although the work was not completed at the time he wrote the essay): static form and micropolyphony. In *Gruppen*, Ligeti paid special attention to a case where a unit of twelve-tone series as a group of sounds was compressed to a narrower range than an octave. In this operation, the prefigured contour and interval relationships in ratio within the contour were preserved. The breakthrough Ligeti made in this theory led him to a basic principle of "static form":

Sequences of notes and vertical complexes of notes are for the most part indifferent in respect of the intervals of which they are composed. Concepts of "consonance" and "dissonance" can be no longer applied: tension and relaxation are surrendered to the statistical properties of form, i.e., relationships of register, density, and weave of the structure.¹⁴⁴

In connection with this theoretical construction, he focused also on the density gained from a "complex pile-up" that gives rise to undistinguishable intervals so that "octaves cannot be recognized as an individual shape."¹⁴⁵ This insightful, inventive study by Ligeti of a new compositional method aptly explains the theory and procedure for constituting a structure and form consisting of tone cluster groups. That is, the achievement and characteristic of *Atmosphères*'s tone-cluster structure resulted from Ligeti's thorough study of Stockhausen's *Gruppen* and its advanced application of the formal-structural principle to his work. Thus, *Ionisation* was hardly a predecessor or pre-form for *Atmosphères*.

Secondly, Ligeti's theoretical development of static form or micropolyphony might not have been realized in the way it was without his studies and experience of electroacoustic musical composition. The principle of a compressed tone group that can "fit into a span of less than an octave" suggests an origin of his realization of

¹⁴⁴ György Ligeti, "Metamorphoses of Musical Form," 7.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 8.

micropolyphony which Ligeti initially described as “micro-relationships” and “micro-structure.” What is noteworthy is that Ligeti recognized the capability of technical equipment to systematically embody this principle. “The original series can,” Ligeti states, “have its proportions retained if electronic means of sound-production are employed.”¹⁴⁶ Another important methodological concept for Ligeti was “permeability” that different structural materials reciprocally interpenetrate and ultimately synthesize themselves. Ligeti asserts that it is a “necessary procedure for producing individual contexts first and later synthesizing them” in electroacoustic composition.¹⁴⁷ Even if, in Ligeti’s own view, his first electronic work, *Glissandi*, had been a failure, what he gained through his engagement with the electronic medium played an enormous role in establishing his own structural, formal method and sound space. Although Adorno’s reference to *Atmosphères* in “Die Kunst” appears to express his admiration for the work, he merely touches upon the most superficial aspects of the sound itself and thus seems hardly interested in the theoretical profundity.¹⁴⁸

Finally, a statement near the end of his “Metamorphoses” essay makes the impression that Ligeti tacitly points out Adorno’s misconception about electroacoustic music in relation to developmental processes of postwar avant-garde music. Regarding those uneasy processes, Ligeti claims that

one is forced to design every particular differently from all the others, to write every little bit of music as if one had to think everything out right from the start, as if there were not even any sounds, but one had to create them first so as to be

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 7. For the variant of the term micropolyphony, see *ibid.*, 18.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 9.

¹⁴⁸ As for a brief backdrop of the connection between Adorno and Ligeti’s *Atmosphères*, where, according to Ralph Paldani, “[i]n any case, Adorno seemingly first got to know Ligeti’s *Atmosphères* in 1966, which had, after all, already premiered in Donaueschingen 1961 and in general was immediately valued to be an epoch-making orchestral piece,” see Paldani, “...eine sehr große Konvergenz?”: Theodor W. Adorno und György Ligeti’s Darmstädter Formdiskurs,” in *Kompositorische Stationen des 20. Jahrhunderts: Debussy, Webern, Messiaen, Boulez, Cage, Ligeti, Stockhausen, Höller, Bayle*, ed. Christoph von Blumröder (Münster: Lit Verlag, 2004), 88: “Jedenfalls lernte Adorno anscheinend Ligeti’s immerhin bereits 1961 in Donaueschingen unaufgeführtes und sogleich allgemein als bahnbrechend eingeschätztes Orchesterstück *Atmosphères* erst 1966 kennen.” It is plausible, therefore, that Adorno might have little time to closely examine the piece, because the first lecture of *Die Kunst und die Künste* was given in June of the same year as his first encounter with the performance, and the publication occurred in the following year. Nevertheless, Ligeti’s article “Metamorphose...” had been published in 1960 in the seventh issue of *die Reihe*, which would have given Adorno adequate time to interpret Ligeti’s development of formal, structural concepts. Ligeti, on the other hand, admits that he had studied many writings of Adorno, although he “never taken a positive stand regarding the unbroken Adornian theorems.” See *ibid.*, 87: “. . . auch wenn Ligeti den Adornoschen Theoremen niemals ungebrochen positive gegenüberstand.”

able to manipulate them, “like a writer who has to provide himself with a special vocabulary and syntax for every sentence he writes.”¹⁴⁹

And Ligeti’s argumentative footnote for his citation from Adorno’s *Philosophie*¹⁵⁰ exhibits the exact point that “[s]urely it was this realization that drove composers into the realm of electronic sound-production.”

Verfransung as a Result of Diversified Compositional Approaches

Adorno’s argument for the *Verfransung* phenomenon of art does not focus primarily on the developmental processes and musical characteristics of electroacoustic music, nor on their contribution to the *Verfransung* tendency. Rather, it attempts to exhibit multi-combinatorial oscillations between art genres in “the constellation of art and arts” which is “inherent in art itself.”¹⁵¹ However, as discussed above, the inadequacy of Adorno’s appreciation of postwar avant-garde music led him to form a questionable aesthetic theory, especially with regard to the contribution of electroacoustic composition to the *Verfransung* phenomenon. Curiously, Adorno himself conceded that he was unacquainted with electroacoustic music in “Musik und neue Musik” published six years earlier than “Die Kunst.” In fact, his straightforward admission that he had not “worked in the realm of electronic music” and thus was “not qualified . . . to pronounce on the relationship between electronic music and musical meaning” illustrates a contrasting attitude to his dismissive perception of electroacoustic composition in “Das Altern.” Adorno even seems sympathetic to this particular medium.

Given the fact that composers have only seriously experimented with it over the last few years, no blame can attach to them for failing to go beyond the initial stages The criticism that many electronic pieces lack consistency and modernity is much too convenient a pretext for those who want to nip the modern movement in the bud. There is no call to fall into ecstasy over the products of electronic music like jazz fans.¹⁵²

This statement implies Adorno’s effort to understand and accept electroacoustic composition as a new genre of avant-garde music, a significant “modern movement.”

¹⁴⁹ György Ligeti, “Metamorphoses of Musical Form,” 18.

¹⁵⁰ In the edition I refer to, it is translated differently: “They [avant-garde composers] find themselves facing as insoluble a task as would a writer who, for each sentence, was obliged to provide his own vocabulary and syntax.” See Adorno, *Philosophy of New Music*, 81.

¹⁵¹ Adorno, “Die Kunst,” 187.

¹⁵² Theodor W. Adorno, “Music and New Music,” 267.

In this regard, Adorno's comparison of the distinctive characteristic of electroacoustic music to the traditional orchestra in terms of *Klangfarben* might have merely aimed to explain that the former's compositional procedure and underlying aesthetic of tone-colors were very different from those of the latter.

As the first lecture of "Die Kunst" was delivered, various interdisciplinary approaches to musical composition using electronics were already established. Adorno could have illustrated some suitable to the theme and content of his *Verfransung* discourse. But, presumably, either most such works were still unknown to him, or his perception of electroacoustic music remained virtually unchanged from that presented in "Musik und neue Musik." Whereas Adorno was already aware that "electronics and internal musical developments are converging with each other," he seems to have associated these exclusively with serialist principles. This is perhaps because they shared a common feature that "[t]he composer has at his disposal – at least in theory – a continuum consisting of pitch, dynamics and duration."¹⁵³

Already in "Musik und neue Musik," Adorno distinguished timbre as an uncontrollable sphere from other musical elements. It seems that for Adorno, timbre was the last and only realm left beyond the reach of control and parameterization, and so he believed that its nature – originating from the orchestra – would remain.

As far as timbres are concerned, even in their most comprehensive array, in the orchestra, they tend to occur independently of each other and sporadically. Their anarchic origins continue to have their effect. Even today there is no scale of timbres comparable to those of intervals or dynamics. Electronic music promises to make good this defect which is familiar to every musician. It is an aspect of the tendency in the new music to integrate all the dimensions of music in one continuum.¹⁵⁴

This remark suggests Adorno's preoccupation with timbre and understanding of the noteworthy role in manipulating tone-colors that only electroacoustic music plays. The principle of the integration of "all the dimensions of music in one continuum"¹⁵⁵ was in fact applicable to many works of electroacoustic composition existing at the time of writing "Musik und neue Musik." In this respect, Adorno seems at first glance to have been more familiar with electroacoustic pieces than his self-assessment. But by the time

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ But Adorno was critical of this tendency especially in his criticism of serialism.

of the first lecture for “Die Kunst,” the continuum was no longer to be simply grasped from such a point of view because electroacoustic composition was by then already engaging in interdisciplinary compositional approaches. In other words, the *Verfransung* phenomenon of musical composition was then more diversified and complicated than Adorno perceived, in terms of both structure and aesthetic of composition. Indeed, Kagel’s *Antithese* is the best example in this regard.

Antithese* as Work of *Grenzüberschreitung

In consideration of aesthetic aspects of the multimedia piece, the concept of *Grenzüberschreitung*¹⁵⁶ is more suitable than that of *Verfransung*, due to the positive connotation of exploring a new form of structure and aesthetic in musical composition. An examination of *Grenzüberschreitung* aspects in *Antithese* reveals that they result not from a mere experimental attempt to combine heterogeneous components, but rather from Kagel’s profound insight into the situation of postwar avant-garde musical composition. It also highlights Kagel’s non-conformist trait as a composer, underlying the fact that he established the unique compositional approach with a critical eye.

Among Rudolf Frisius’s characterizations of Kagel’s music, his definitions of “paradoxes” and “*Grenz-Überschreitungen*” are particularly useful. For the former, Frisius asserts that “Kagel is a composer of paradoxes and unresolved contradictions”¹⁵⁷ which precipitate musical characteristic of multiplicity and ambiguity. In this distinct state, the contradictory nature remains as a significant characteristic in his composition as well. A paradox, as a state in which irreconcilable elements, components, or even musical ideas coexist, plays an important role in realizing a *Grenzüberschreitung* approach. According to Frisius, Kagel’s use of the paradox as *Grenzüberschreitung* makes his “music become Instrumental Theater or experimental opera,” in doing so, “it alienates traditional material.”¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁶ Rather than the English translation “border crossing” or “transgression of boundaries,” I will use the German term *Grenzüberschreitung*.

¹⁵⁷ Rudolf Frisius, “Musik des unaufgelösten Widerspruchs: Anmerkungen zu Werken Mauricio Kagels,” *MusikTexte: Zeitschrift für Neue Musik* 2 (1983): 51: “Kagel ist ein Komponist der Paradoxien, der unaufgelösten Widersprüche.”

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., see the original text: “Die Paradoxien in Kagels Musik erscheinen häufig als Grenz-Überschreitungen: Die Musik wird zum instrumentalen Theater oder zur experimentellen Oper; sie verfremdet traditionelles Material.”

Frisius points out specific characteristics of the paradox as “almost ‘classic’ stylistic features of his [Kagel’s] music”: “predictability of the unpredictable and tradition of anti-traditionalism.”¹⁵⁹ These paradoxical characteristics can be reversible as well: namely, his music may also incorporate the unpredictability of the predictable and the anti-tradition of traditionalism, especially from a listener’s perspective. Curiously, the thesis of this paradox seems similar to the aesthetic principle of Eco’s serial thought especially in terms of the open work: i.e., an idea that an operation of antithetical elements or ideas enables a composer to create a new form of musical work. In this regard, Kagel’s aesthetic of musical composition can be virtually an all-embracing vision of both *Grenzüberschreitung* and serial thought.

My intention was always to associate as large a number of situations as possible with each other in my pieces. I want an art work to bring infinitely many dimensions into play. I do not like pedagogical works, since I distrust the sheer practical application. I prefer to make things which are so complex that everyone can find a totally personal relationship to them, and that I myself still see them with fresh eyes after years have passed. I do not want completion, and most of all, I need no model. . . . I especially make a case against the general opinion that one must formulate everything one wants to say with an end in mind.¹⁶⁰

This suggests thus that the *Grenzüberschreitung* characteristic in Kagel’s musical composition results in part from his unique conception of serial thought and in part from his non-conformist traits.

However, Kagel’s non-conformist traits neither led purposelessly to creating an unconventional – more specifically, anti-academic and paradigmatic – piece, nor was his compositional approach of *Grenzüberschreitung* derived from an offhand collection of contradictory components. Rather, the impulse to expand the frame of musical composition and to invent a new form of musical expression came from Kagel’s distinct aesthetic of musical composition. The multidimensionality of Kagel’s music culminated thus in his deliberate observation and choice of musical elements as well as in the

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 56: “Die Vorhersehbarkeit des Unvorhersehbaren, die Tradition des Anti-Traditionellen sind fast schon zu ‘klassischen’ Stilmerkmalen seiner Musik geworden.”

¹⁶⁰ Hansjörg Pauli, “Mauricio Kagel,” 95: “Meine Absicht war es immer, in meinen Stücken eine möglichst große Zahl von Situationen miteinander zu verknüpfen. Ich verlange von einem Kunstwerk, daß es unendlich viele Dimensionen ins Spiel bringt. Ich mag keine pädagogischen Werke, denn ich mißtraue der blanken Nutzenanwendung. Ich ziehe es vor, Dinge zu machen, die so komplex sind, daß jeder zu ihnen ein ganz persönliches Verhältnis finden kann, und daß ich selber sie noch nach Jahren mit frischen Augen sehe. Ich will nichts Abgeschlossenes, und ich will vor allem keine Modelle.”

specific way he composed “ambiguous pieces from unambiguously formulated details.”¹⁶¹

Interestingly, Adorno’s vision of the *Verfransung* tendency of art seems to match Kagel’s original development of *Grenzüberschreitung* composition with open form in *Antithese* (and his other pieces). Defining “‘openness’ or ‘dissolution of boundaries’ of work . . . as a correlate of increasing capability for the aesthetic *integration* of something diffuse and schismatic,” based on Adorno’s aesthetic theory, Albrecht Wellmer asserts that

Adorno himself saw invigoration of aesthetic subjectivity as a precondition of such openness of art as the “leftover scum of phenomenal world.” In this respect, for Adorno the open forms of modern art are already set into relation to a form of subjectivity which no longer corresponds to the rigid unity of the bourgeois subject, but exhibits the more flexible organization form of a “communicatively fluid” identity of the self.¹⁶²

Antithese particularly expresses the “form of aesthetic subjectivity” as a “flexible organization” of the interactive identity. What distinguishes *Antithese* from other musical compositions of open form is indeed its fundamental principle of interactive identity. In fact, the piece requires the performer to engage in multiple interactions with the music, objects on stage, and the *real* audience (since the performer is supposed to act a *fictitious* audience as a representation of the *real*). The necessity of these interactions flowed from Kagel’s deliberation of musical materials and structures not only in the form of a musical piece, but also in the form of society at that time in which he centered music.

This practice remedies a deficit in Adorno’s aesthetic-theoretical development of open form and *Grenzüberschreitung* of art genres. Wellmer points out that “[w]hat hindered Adorno from considering these thoughts a step further is that he no longer

¹⁶¹ Ibid., 96: “Ich baue aus eindeutig formulierten Details vieldeutige Stücke auf.”

¹⁶² Albrecht Wellmer, “Wahrheit, Schein, Versöhnung. Adornos ästhetische Rettung der Modernität,” in *Adorno-Konferenz 1983*, ed. Ludwig von Friedeburg and Jürgen Habermas (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1999), 156-157: “Die ‘Öffnung’ oder ‘Entgrenzung’ des Werkes ist gedacht als Korrelat einer ansteigenden Fähigkeit zur ästhetischen *Integration* des Diffusen und Abgespaltenen. Adorno selbst hat eine Kräftigung der ästhetischen Subjektivität als Voraussetzung solcher Öffnung der Kunst zum ‘Abhub der Erscheinungswelt’ gesehen. Insofern sind schon bei Adorno die offenen Formen der modernen Kunst in Relation gesetzt zu einer Form der Subjektivität, die nicht mehr der rigiden Einheit des bürgerlichen Subjekts entspricht, sondern die die flexibleren Organisationsform einer ‘kommunikativ verflüssigten’ Ich-Identität aufweist.”

conceded to modern society what he had conceded to modern art.”¹⁶³ Kagel’s formulation of the compositional plan – not by his “verbal brilliance” – allowed *Antithese* to achieve what Adorno could not concede. In fact, the distinct characteristics of *Antithese* seem to match Wellmer’s aesthetic theorization of modern art from a viewpoint of “dissolution of boundaries” – *Grenzüberschreitung* of art:

new forms of aesthetic synthesis in the modern art refer to a new form of psychological and social “synthesis.” This is the *emancipatory* potential of the modern: a new type of “synthesis” becomes conceivable aesthetically, psychological-morally and socially, in the boundary-less forms of art, as well as in the open structures of a no longer rigid individuation- and socialization-type. With this type, the diffuse, non-integrable, non-sense, and schismatic would be overhauled in a space of unfettered communication.¹⁶⁴

The term “unfettered” connotes a harmonious amalgamation of heterogeneous components in the course of the composition without the exclusion of an incompatibility that might create a destructive state if they were to exist together. The possibility of a physically destructive action is neither required nor excluded, because the structure of *Antithese* depends upon the performer’s choice of the main actions and interpretation. The structural concept of *Antithese* for the stage version itself is indeed a form that consists in the dissolution of boundaries and “open structures.” Importantly, the concept was formed by Kagel’s deliberate compositional plan and process, not by an overhaul or recollection of materials that were once regarded as non-integrable or schismatic. At least in Kagel’s aesthetic of music, extra-musical materials, elements, and components did not have any negative connotation per se; all could be musical. Therefore, Kagel’s theatricalization of music never aimed to compose music for theater; instead, he regarded theater as a *musical* component.

In his theatricalization of music, Kagel’s aesthetic requires that every action or expression of a performer has clarity and intelligibility, since they are the decisive factors

¹⁶³ Ibid., 157: “Was Adorno daran gehindert hat, diesen Gedanken noch einen Schritt weiterzudenken, ist, daß er, was er der modernen Kunst zugestanden hat, der modernen Gesellschaft nicht mehr zugestanden.”

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.: “(daß) neue Formen der ästhetischen Synthesis in der modernen Kunst auf neue Formen der psychischen und der sozialen ‘Synthesis’ verweisen. Dies ist das *emanzipatorische* Potential der Moderne: ein neuer Typus von ‘Synthesis’ wird absehbar – ästhetische, psychologisch-moralisch und gesellschaftlich – bei dem das Diffuse, Nicht-Integrierte, das Sinnlose und Abgespaltene eingeholt würde in einen Raum gewaltloser Kommunikation – in den entgrenzten Formen der Kunst ebenso wie in den offenen Strukturen eines nicht mehr starren Individuations- und Vergesellschaftungstypus,” italicized by the author.

capable of preserving the musical (and artistic) tension in the performance.¹⁶⁵ However, what Kagel expected as a result of the aggregation of all the presentations is not necessarily a higher degree of tension, but rather a state of ambiguity, “which appears totally improvised.”¹⁶⁶ Kagel’s compositional aesthetic consistently reflected the pattern of creating “ambiguous pieces from unambiguously formulated details.” For this reason, his choice and use of extra-musical elements had to be both careful and elaborate, even though the performance as a whole could give an impression of a series of improvisations to the audience. *Antithese* embodies this idea and shows its potential for suggesting a new way to unite structure and freedom.

Such a deliberate compositional plan, which resulted in the *Grenzüberschreitung* approach, thus aimed neither at shock value, nor at an experimental integration of extra-musical materials into the piece. Instead, his sharp observation of music in its social context induced Kagel to outline his plan and underpinned the distinct theory and method he developed. Kagel claims:

It is undeniable that in this century, composition is no longer conceivable without an approach to the most difficult and complex problems in our world. And it is undeniable that this process, which I would like to name the ideologization of composing, emerged as the actual engine [of composition]. When I speak of ideologization, what I mean is, . . . not artificial politicization or superficial connection to everyday political questions, but a very concrete form of examination of music, art, aesthetic, and life par excellence.¹⁶⁷

That is, Kagel’s ideologization of composing did not deal with anything utopian or unrealistically ideal, but it was supposed to engage ongoing problems in the realm of musical composition from a social point of view. Indeed, *Antithese* is a piece that explicitly represents the specific form of Kagel’s observation, as a “social critic in music,” of music, art, and aesthetic in musical life. For the *real* audience, *Antithese* may seem to create a conflict between illusion and reality due to the sound of the fictitious audience, the performer as a representation of the real audience, and the multilayered

¹⁶⁵ See Pauli, 95.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 96: “der ganz improvisiert erscheint.”

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 104: “Es ist nicht zu leugnen, daß in diesem Jahrhundert Komposition nicht mehr denkbar ist ohne Stellungnahme zu den diffizilsten und komplexesten Problemen unserer Welt. Und es ist nicht leugnen, daß dieser Prozeß, den ich die Ideologisierung des Komponierens nennen möchte, sich zum eigentlichen Motor entwickelt hat – wenn ich sage Ideologisierung, so meine ich, . . . nicht aufgesetzte Politisierung, nicht oberflächlichen Bezug auf tagespolitische Fragen, sondern eine sehr konkrete Form der Auseinandersetzung mit Musik, mit Kunst, mit Ästhetik und dem Leben schlechthin.”

compositional components with their complicated structures. Even though Kagel knew that such a conflict would easily occur, he conceptualized the piece as one capable of illustrating the messiness of reality and thus disillusioning the listener. In *Antithese*, therefore, the distinct ideologization of Kagel's composing would have not been realized without the *Grenzüberschreitung* composition.

In contrast to theories of Eco's serial thought and Adorno's *Verfransung* of art, Kagel's *Grenzüberschreitung* approach in *Antithese* and the underlying aesthetic illustrate a cutting-edge philosophy of music at that time in a practical way. That is to say, they are the musical embodiment of his questions and arguments for music, not of an answer to the frequently asked question of whether so-called postwar avant-garde musical pieces are still music, or even what music is. Attinello's summary of Kagel's standpoint, which Bussotti and Schnebel shared, illuminates his aesthetic inclination:

[I]f we look . . . at works and polemics by Bussotti, Kagel and Schnebel among others, we cannot avoid an acute awareness of their radical political positions. . . . [I]t is possible that such music could be seen as vastly more important than it now is, partially because it seeks to make radical and necessary statements about the traps and limitations of the administered society; but even more because the processes and embedded concepts of the music suggest an alternative way of seeing, and of being in the world, outside the concert hall.¹⁶⁸

Although *Antithese* primarily dealt with a musical event that was likely to occur *in* the concert hall, the conception of the piece was precisely "an alternative way of seeing," or in today's parlance of "thinking outside the box."

In addition to such a distinct standpoint, Kagel's work of theatricalization was not simply the visualization, but rather the musicalization of his thought. Even though the theatrical part of *Antithese*, for instance, hardly produces musical sound, Kagel believed it was an indispensable *musical* component to present his aesthetic and for this reason, he musicalized it with his serial thought. Perhaps Bussotti, Schnebel, and Cage, for instance, whose works were engaged in integration of visual art into music, could share Kagel's conceptualization. However, their *Grenzüberschreitung* approaches were not always acknowledged as significant, or otherwise controversial. Even contemporary composers at times showed their skepticism about "visual music" (*Sichtbare Musik*), new musical theater, and Instrumental Theater works. For instance, while Boulez understood these

¹⁶⁸ Attinello, "The Interpretation of Chaos," 227-228.

works as a “source for a vision of new musical theater,” he once criticized “lack of theater knowledge in Kagel and Ligeti” and the thinness of the musical aspect in their theatrical pieces.¹⁶⁹ This remark, made in 1967, suggests that Kagel’s basic concept of theatricalization (or Instrumental Theater) – that theater is a component to be musicalized – was not comprehensible to Boulez, who was not as eager to compose theatrical music as Kagel was.¹⁷⁰

In a 1978 interview with Zoltán Peskó, Boulez seems to have acquired a better understanding of Kagel’s theatricalization. Concerning an application of “musical form to an extramusical material,” Boulez claims that Kagel

tries to organize in a musical sense . . . elements which are not necessarily musical, for instance, experiences taken from real life. Of course we might ask ourselves whether there is not a split between method and materials. Kagel’s recourse is humour, irony. I am convinced that irony is absolutely necessary in order to make this split functional.¹⁷¹

Nevertheless, Boulez still sees the necessity of a further solution in Kagel’s use of irony in his *Grenzüberschreitung* approaches, “because irony is sublimation as well as solution of this split” and it is “a dialectic which . . . still needs a solution: how to establish a relationship between the new theatrical material and musical form.”¹⁷² Yet Kagel already established his own compositional style inherent in his Instrumental theater pieces, although the method and materials varied. Furthermore, *Antithese* seems to have implicitly challenged Kagel’s contemporaries to reconsider whether method and materials or materials and form have to be dialectically synthesized to be true art music. As far as *Antithese* is concerned, what was important to Kagel was to convey his musical thought that includes ongoing or unresolved problems in music in a social context, rather than to form a dialectic synthesis of method, materials, and formal structure.

In order to realize such an intention, it was necessary for Kagel to create tensions not only in the piece, but also between the performance and the audience. More specifically, they were musical tensions in the former and aesthetic tensions in the latter.

¹⁶⁹ Felix Schmidt and Jürgen Hohmeyer, “Sprengt die Opernhäuser in die Luft!: Spiegel-Gespräch mit dem französischen Komponisten und Dirigenten Pierre Boulez,” *Spiegel*, 25 September 1967, Kultur section.

¹⁷⁰ None of his stage works has been published.

¹⁷¹ Pierre Boulez and Zoltán Peskó, “Musical Aspects in Today’s Musical Theatre: A Conversation between Pierre Boulez and Zoltán Peskó,” *Tempo* 127 (1978): 5.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*

These tensions were indeed an invisible component necessary for *Antithese*, and from this point of view Kagel's *Grenzüberschreitung* approach played an auxiliary role in the piece. Therefore, although significant, serial thought and the *Verfransung* of art genres in *Antithese* only partially highlight specific aspects and are, so to speak, secondary aesthetic to the concealed "fourth" component: musical and aesthetic tension.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS

Kagel's remark that "anarchy is omnipresent" in *Antithese* never referred to a political context. Rather, by anarchy he meant to delineate a peculiar state deriving from the concurrence of compositional elements of different kinds, qualities, and natures. In this particular context, however, the state has as its distinguishing characteristic not perfection, but tension. Adorno's discourse on issues of dialectics in a musical piece, although Adorno himself did not think it was possible, influenced postwar avant-garde composers. Some of them may have even explored their individual theories and methods capable of a dialectic solution in music. In contrast, Kagel already seems to be intentionally adversarial in entitling the piece, *Antithese*, which one can interpret as meaning "dialectics at a standstill" in Benjamin's and Adorno's terms. What *Antithese* – and Kagel himself – desired is not a harmonious synthesis of heterogeneous compositional materials, components, and ideas, but rather an anarchic state of tensions among these materials that are regarded as "self-sufficient individuals." But these tensions were meant to be neither harmful nor destructive but instead, they were to be essential components in an interdisciplinary piece. At the same time, the idea of preserving these tensions is an example of Kagelian sarcastic humor, where there is neither an 'anti' nor, a 'thesis' – as he explains to Cage – and thus synthesis is not necessarily required. Or, from a slightly different angle, all the elements could be held in antithetic tension, with synthesis denied.

If the various tensions discussed in the preceding chapters are the hidden element that emerges in different phases of *Antithese*'s realization, the title makes more sense. For Kagel, these tensions were irreducible and bound to remain at each moment as essential characteristics of the piece. In this sense, antithesis was situated not against thesis, but rather against the idea of synthesis. Thus, if paradoxical aspects in *Antithese* were mitigated or removed by a synthetic operation, the piece would lose its identity. It is worth recalling that, for instance, Kagel's composition of a fictitious audience and conceptualization of a fictitious listener were not meant to lead the real audience in the concert hall to an unrealistic, illusionistic world. Rather, his aim was to make that

audience notice a reality that they might not otherwise be aware of. For this reason, the paradoxes in *Antithese* can be understood as intentional conflict or inconsistency Kagel planned.

In musical terms even Kagel's idea of anarchy in the piece is paradoxical, since while it offers creative freedom to the performer, as well as formal freedom (open form) in itself, Kagel is the composer who outlined the concept and specified the materials, components, and ways of structuring these in detail. However, this paradox is realistic if one understands anarchy as a deliberate type of organizing process with a resultant state. This is different from Cagean anarchy in which all happenstances are regarded as musical material and the structural organization results merely from how and in what order they appear and disappear. In this regard, if *Antithese* was a response to a thesis, that thesis might be the Cagean concept of freedom, especially in the realm of theatrical musical composition. Aesthetically, this hypothesis also supports Rebstock's view that *Antithese* is the piece that explicitly illustrates Kagel's opposite position to that of Cage. Even though Cage may have acknowledged paradoxes that occurred accidentally in the course of his piece, he did not *create* them intentionally. Such a distinction between Kagel and Cage confirms Kagel's remark that their basic compositional approaches are very different and their aesthetics are "diametrically opposed."

These distinctions also illuminate the compositional and aesthetic tensions within *Antithese* that create Kagel's vision of anarchy in unity. Representation of such a vision is a way of raising philosophical questions about music in society while expressing Kagel's love of music through the structural and aesthetic complex of the piece. Despite Kagel's anecdote that he took the idea of anarchy from an encounter with the Spanish anarchists, the piece contains neither a political message nor any political aims at all. Through his experiences in Argentina, Kagel had already learned that music was not capable of changing society, but was very easily controlled, oppressed, and misused by society. Thus, the representation of political-ideological thought had no place in Kagel's aesthetics; he abhorred such compositions. Of course, Kagel's conception of anarchy cannot be understood without considering Borges's liberal-anarchist thought and the left-leaning orientation of his family in his Buenos Aires period. Still, his own use of the term has a distinctive aesthetic sense based on his multifaceted views on music. Kagel's

reference to the idea of anarchy is thus primarily within the context of *Antithese*, which critiques how performed music was affected by musical-social norms at that time.

Attinello discerned “a crucial philosophical and cultural message”¹ in Kagel’s music. Specifying humor as a distinctive characteristic of Kagel’s musical style, Attinello claims that his music rephrases

our human limitations in ways that do not point to some new illusion to raise our hopes, but instead present us with our own existing, concrete perceptions and realities in a densely complex, richly exciting way, a way whose endless distortion reflects the real and constant distortion of physical living.²

Indeed, *Antithese* is a striking representation of specific realities, putting Kagel’s idea of anarchy into the piece as a “philosophical and cultural message.” The way public sounds are incorporated and the resultant complexity of Kagel’s representation of the fictitious audience, for instance, clearly show the “real and constant distortion.” That the published score of *Antithese* deals primarily with the main actions, including their interactions with music and stage setting, reveals Kagel’s desire to make the action part predominate in presenting “an anarchic unity of life and art.”

In a broader sense, the idea of an anarchic unity of life and art can be understood as a statement that multitudinous musical/artistic styles exist. *Antithese* spotlights a distinct phenomenon of musical life at a specific point in the developmental course of postwar new music. It is the reality that technology has become not only a medium of musical composition but also a musical instrument derived from the accumulation of compositional development up to that point. No matter how different may be the way performance of technologically involved pieces, compared to that of conventional instrumental ones, no matter how much one insists the former is no longer music in comparison to the latter, pieces came into being in reference to and even in conflict with traditional ways of musical composition. Kagel knew that despite the composers’ hard work in this process, the realization of a new musical piece with an unprecedented sound (and visual presentation) was likely to trigger confusion, irritation, and discontent simply because it was unfamiliar. *Antithese* casts light on the friction between composers and listeners from both groups’ perspectives. The tension derived from this friction does not

¹ Attinello, “The interpretation of chaos,” 231.

² Ibid.

function as a destructive force, but rather as a psychological factor, a necessary and inevitable element in the anarchic unity of life and art.

Regardless of whether Kagel recalled the Borgesian idea of liberal anarchism when he referred to the characteristic of anarchy in *Antithese*, its fundamental principles are traceable: “the strong and self-restrained individual” who is capable of “a law-abiding ethos and the respect for impartiality.”³ In using *concrète* and *elektronische* sound materials in *Antithese*, Kagel’s intent was not to ascribe equal value to them, but to illustrate their individual functions. The *concrète* sounds give narrative consistency to the scandalous concert event. Furthermore, they play a role not only in creating formal continuity, but also the psychological effect on the real listener, invoking a scene of concert event with scandal. The *elektronische* sounds, on the other hand, articulate the formal sectionalization; in other words, the formal framework of the piece. Neither attempts to exert priority over the other; instead, they exist cooperatively to form the musical unity, while preserving their individual musical identities. In the main actions, each action is supposed to preserve its own identity as clearly as possible, regardless of its place in the arbitrarily “serialized” series of actions. Thus, no “transitional” action is necessary; the fact that adjacent actions have no logical connection with one another highlights their uniqueness. Finally, various audio devices and accessories on stage succinctly display the short history of technological advances in listening, reproduction, and composition. This stage setting unifies the different periods in which the devices were invented and used, and denies any hierarchy among them; they all exist as what they are without the idea of superiority and inferiority.

Thus, in *Antithese* the unavoidable occurrence of tensions results from the coexistence of different types of “self-sufficient individual” – a fundamental concept of Borgesian liberal anarchism. As we have seen, this aesthetic involves concepts such as theatricalization of the electroacoustic music, ideologization of musical and critical thought, and materialization of public or social phenomenon. And yet, this distinct compositional approach cannot be characterized as an all-embracing vision of the postwar avant-garde musical panorama. Rather, the conceptual themes that Kagel wove into the

³ Salinas, 321-322.

composition of *Antithese* were related to more specific issues in historical, social, and psychological contexts, which he could not put aside.

Although Kagel explained that the main actions “appeal to an anarchic unity of life and art,” this particular unity is only realized when a full articulation of music, action, stage setting, and tension is complete. Kagel already knew that “anarchy in the classical sense is certainly one of the noblest equations for utopia,” but he was enough of a realist to know that such a “classical sense” was no longer applicable to any real situations, including musical composition. For this reason, *Antithese* includes the tension which is absent in a utopia as an implicit and necessary component to realize the practical and omnipresent (but not socio-political) anarchy within the piece. However, the tension in *Antithese* is not a physically pre-composed component, but conceptually planned in the framework of compositional and performing concepts. It is a consequence of the performer’s freedom to choose main actions and whether or not they are related to the music. This sort of unpredictability is also included in the idea of anarchic unity.

This unpredictability differs aesthetically from Cagean indeterminacy. From this perspective, it is notable that *Antithese*’s open form is correlated with the serialization of main actions: that is, serial thought. This approach is thus not random eclecticism. In fact, Kagel insists that compositional eclecticism does not belong to his musical aesthetic.

If I mixed up all possible influences and argots, throwing them into a pot, that would be an eclectic, but no one dares to say that, because I am not.⁴

Kagel’s “harmonization” of open form and serial thought results rather from his critical view of both indeterminacy and serialism, his sense that they had gained a dominating or dogmatic characteristic. In his 2000 conversation with Klüppelholz, Kagel remembered that

[a]s one began to regard chance as the sole coherent alternative to serial music in the 60s, the danger became clear to me that this singularity could be just as dogmatically implemented, as happened with the ideologically tainted serial thought. A new theology would then replace the old. We can glorify neither the

⁴ Christiane Hillebrand, “Kagel im Gespräch: Interview mit Mauricio Kagel im Inter City zwischen Mainz und Köln am 25. Juli 1994,” in *Film als totale Komposition*, 233: “Würde ich alle möglichen Einflüsse und Slangs mischen und in einen Topf werfen, das ist ein Eklektiker, aber niemand wagt das zu sagen, weil ich es nicht bin.”

perfect chance nor the most accurate determination of all compositional elements as a definitive solution.⁵

If this idea was already present in *Antithese*, the “harmonization” was perhaps Kagel’s sharp sarcasm that could imply the cultural-political singularity he experienced under Perón’s regime. In Kagel’s eyes, this might also have overlapped with his perception of a negative aspect of European institutionalism or academism that tended to codify certain compositional practices: a tendency to build authoritative statues one after another. Kagel’s reaction to this tendency was conspicuously antagonistic, for he asserted that the “only one thing I am interested in is my freedom to do what I think necessary [a]nd I proscribe ideological barriers and confinements.”⁶ Together with this remark, which explicitly stresses freedom of choice, the amalgamation of aleatory and serial thought in *Antithese* represents a clear difference from Cage’s indeterminate compositional principles. At least here, Cage had no intention to compose or create tension.

Though Kagel stated in a letter to Cage that there is neither ‘anti’ nor ‘thèse’ in *Antithese*, the compositional concepts and underlying aesthetics examined in this dissertation suggest that most of these are antithetical to those fostered by Cage at that time. This does not mean, however, that Kagel had a critical view of or did not understand Cage’s aesthetic of musical composition. On the contrary, Kagel was very sympathetic and could not hide his frustration that Cage’s “thoughts are generally prostituted in Europe and degraded for demagogic purposes.” This remark reveals Kagel’s sharp insight into the misconception or even complete misunderstanding of Cage’s compositional aesthetic. As a non-European outsider, Kagel probably had a perspective in common with Cage. From this viewpoint, he was able to discern the cause-and-effect situation concerning the misapprehension of Cage’s music. His contemporaries attempted to integrate Cage’s methods and musical ideas into their own compositions with the intent of developing European principles and systems of aleatoric/indeterminate operation (see pages 208-209 in Chapter Five). However, some of them highlighted and

⁵ Kagel, *Dialoge, Monologe*, 176: “Als man in den 60er Jahren begann, den Zufall als einzig kohärente Alternative zur seriellen Musik zu betrachten, wurde mir die Gefahr klar, daß diese Einzigartigkeit genauso dogmatisch gehandhabt werden konnte, wie es mit dem ideologisch gefärbten Reihendenken geschah. Eine neue Theologie sollte die alte ersetzen. Wir können weder den perfekten Zufall noch die genaueste Festlegung aller Kompositionselemente als endgültige Lösung verherrlichen.”

⁶ Hillebrand, 233: “Das einzige, was mich interessiert, ist meine Freiheit, das zu machen, was ich für notwendig halte. Und ideologische Barrieren und Engen verpöne ich.”

propagandized such a developmental direction as if it were a new mainstream alternative to serialism. As a result, Cage's aesthetic intention was frequently misunderstood, exaggerated, criticized, and distorted. Kagel never followed this trend, but rather concentrated on his own stylistic development, which mirrored his musical thoughts, including his keen observation of the musical scene. The idea of tension embodied in *Antithese* was not for or against Cage's musical aesthetic, but merely Kagel's distinct creation. His dedication of *Antithese* to Cage was, in a sense, the manifestation of the distinction.

From a broader perspective, *Antithese*'s prismatic character can be described as anarchy in a unity in which compositional and aesthetic tensions are also intermingled. The multifarious structure that resulted from Kagel's multimedia/interdisciplinary compositional plan was necessary for him, not to solve underlying issues of postwar avant-garde music, but rather to share and reconsider the problems with the performer and audience.

I wish to have no listeners who just seek diversion in the concert. Not under any circumstances at all. I require the listeners to work. However, this is not meant in an authoritarian sense, but with greater beneficence, because they work not for me, but for themselves. If the listeners struggle, think, and contemplate, then they will gain something.⁷

Anarchy, like Kagel's description of *Antithese*, thus connotes not only the listeners' freedom to interpret, but also Kagel's expectation that the resulting interpretation include their evaluation of new music in the social context – a context that was inseparable from the technology involved. This interpretation forms the listeners' vision and standpoint about the piece as their original thought. It is in essence the crystallization of a "decision-making process"⁸ undertaken without a preconception or prejudice given by critics and media. Indeed, this conceptualization of the listener's role and freedom reflects a fundamental principle of Borgesian liberal anarchism – "constructed on the idea of the strong individual."

⁷ Pauli, 91-92: "Ich will keine Hörer, die im Konzert bloß Zerstreuung suchen. Unter gar keinen Umständen. Ich verlange, daß der Hörer arbeitet. Aber das ist nicht autoritär gemeint, sondern mit größter Güte. Denn er arbeitet nicht für mich, sondern für sich. Wenn er, der Hörer, sich anstrengt, wenn er denkt, mitdenkt, dann gewinnt er etwas."

⁸ Salinas, 310.

This principle is omnipresent within the complex structure of *Antithese* as well; from this point of view, “anarchy in the piece is omnipresent.” The conception is not to force unity on the heterogeneous elements, but to highlight them individually within that unity, a skeletal framework of the structure. Already in 1957 Kagel wrote that “the best hierarchy is anarchy” in his congratulatory text on the occasion of Koenig’s birthday.⁹ Kagel’s idea of anarchy here urges the listener to avoid defining what music is and instead reconsider it as a proposition. For Kagel, it was also a perpetual question, a driving theme throughout his career as a composer.

⁹ Stefan Fricke, “Prämodernist: Gottfried Michael Koenig wird siebzig,” *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 5 (1996): 44: “Die beste Hierarchie ist die Anarchie.”

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APPENDIX A

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Musical examples and the extraction of libretto from the score of *Antithese* are reproduced by kind permission of Edition Peters, New York. Figure 4.2 in Chapter Four and Figures B.1 and B.2 in appendix B are photographic reproduction. The extracted items of main actions from the libretto in Figure 4.1 are edited by me.

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APPENDIX B

GRAPHIC SCORES OF *ANTITHESE*

Figure B.1. German Version

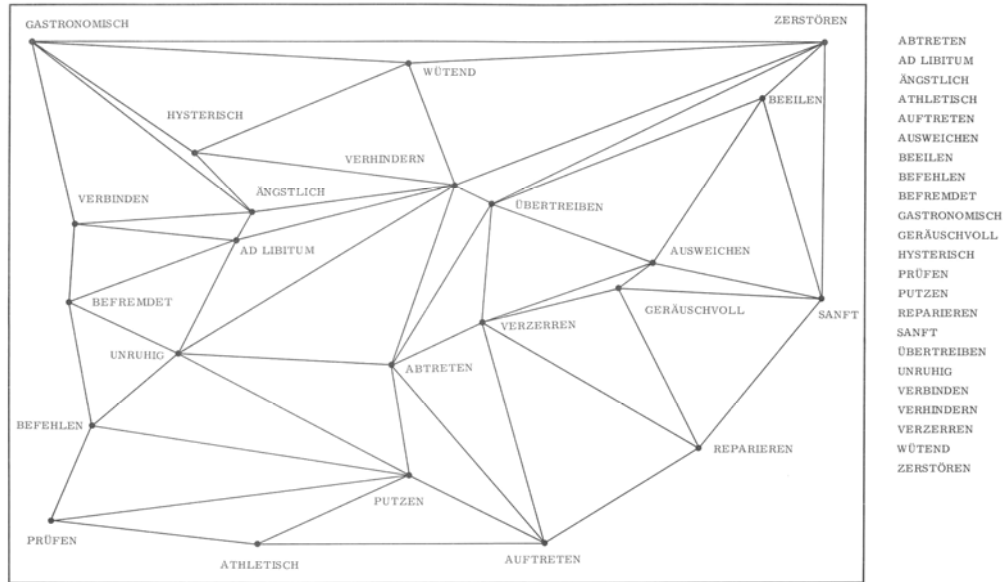
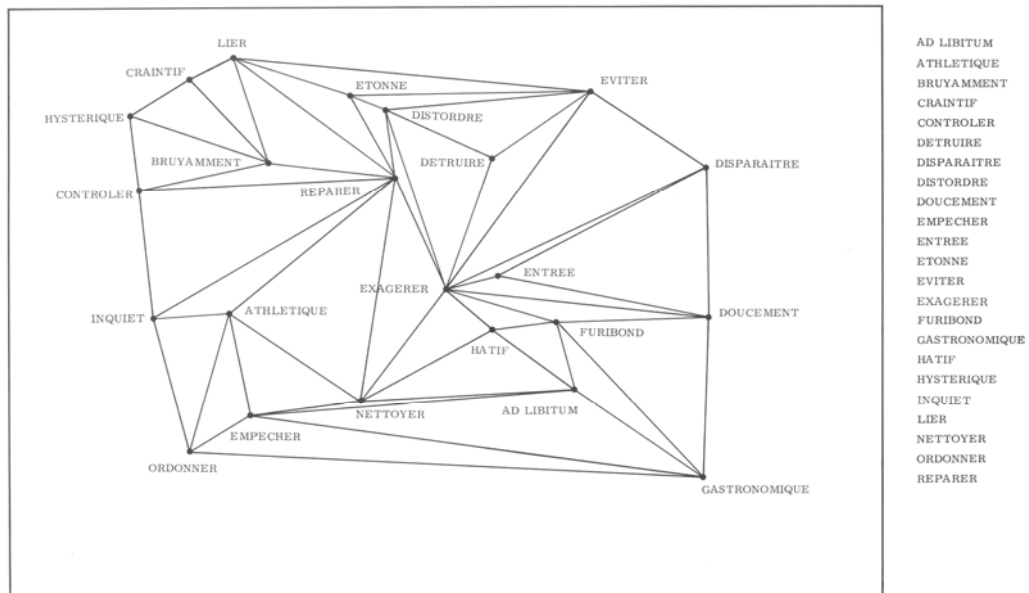


Figure B.2. French Version



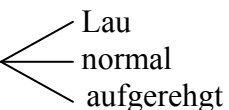
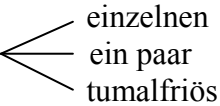

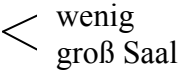
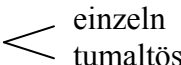
APPENDIX C
KAGEL'S PERFORMING ACTIVITY OF WORKS BY JOHN CAGE
AND MORTON FELDMAN

Date	Venue/Event	Piece	Instrument Kagel performed	Co-performer
October 6 1960	Atelier Mary Bauermeister, Cologne	Cage: <i>Cartridge Music</i> (1960)	?	John Cage, Cornelius Cardew, Hans G. Helms, Christian Wolff, Benjamin Patterson, Kurt Schwertsik, David Tudor
May 20 1961	Zagreb, Muzički Biennale	Cage: <i>Concert for Piano and Orchestra</i> (1957/58) ¹	Conducting	Kölner Ensemble für Neue Musik
November 1961	Schloss Theater, Oldenburg	Cage: <i>Double Music</i> (1941)	Conducting	Kölner Ensemble für Neue Musik
January 4 1962	Radio Bremen	Cage: <i>Amores</i> (1943)	Piano	Siegfried Rockstroh, Karlheinz Böttner
February 2 1962	Munich (Konzerte für Moderne Musik)	Cage: <i>Amores</i> , 7'7. 614" (1960)	Piano (<i>Amores</i>), preparation for magnetic tape (7'7. 614")	Siegfried Rockstroh, Karlheinz Böttner
March 5 1962	Brussels	Feldman: <i>The swallows of Salangan</i> (premiere)	conducting	?
August 1962 (?)	Siemens Studio for Electronic Music, München	Cage: <i>Imaginary Landscape No. 3</i> (1942) ²	Electronic realization	Kölner Ensemble für Neue Musik

¹ According to a review of the music festival, Kagel and the *Kölner Ensemble für Neue Musik* also performed works of him, Cornelius Cardew, and Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*. See Wolfgang Steinecke, "Jugoslawien nützt die Chance seiner kulturellen Freiheit aus," *Melos: Zeitschrift für neue Musik* (June-August 1961): 248-249.

² This recording is compiled in a compact disc *Siemens-Studio für elektronische Musik*, Siemens Kultur Programm, recordings compiled by Josef Anton Riedl. Nevertheless, as Heile suggests in *The music of Mauricio Kagel*, 45, "[t]he realization of Cage's *Imaginary Landscape No. 3* which Kagel carried out at the Munich studio is . . . virtually unknown." A booklet of the music CD does not indicate the date of recording. Incidentally, the disc also contains Kagel's *Antithèse: Komposition für elektronische und öffentliche Klänge* (1962).

APPENDIX D**REPRODUCTION OF KAGEL'S SKETCH FOR PUBLIC SOUNDS**

- 1) Applaus 
 - Lau
 - normal
 - aufgerehgt
- 2) Schreie
- 3) Pfiffe 
 - einzelnen
 - ein paar
 - tumalfrös
- 4) Husten 
 - vereinzeln
 - Hustenanfall
- 5) Saal (atmosphere) 
 - wenig
 - groß Saal
- 6) Nase Putzen 
 - einzeln
 - tumaltös

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