

**An Aesthetics of Past-Present
Relations in the Experience of
Late 20th - and Early 21st -
Century Art Music**

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Declaration of Authorship

I, Samuel John Wilson, hereby declare that this thesis and the work presented in it is entirely my own. Where I have consulted the work of others, this is always clearly stated.

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Abstract

Focusing on a selection of musical works from within three genres – symphony, string quartet, and the piano repertoire – I argue that the experience of music from the late 20th and early 21st centuries must be understood in terms of its mediation by the continued presence of the past, not simply through reference to past musical formal materials, but also to the history of experience as musically mediated. Following this logic, I explore a discursive strategy based around philosophical tensions central to the aesthetics of post-Enlightenment musical experience – in particular, the dialectics of nature and culture, and of mind and body. This allows me to interweave closely strands of musicological and philosophical thought, exploring and developing the latter as they have been taken into, exhibited, and played with in a range of late modernist works. I focus on works that draw attention to their historical situatedness, music by Wolfgang Rihm, Helmut Lachenmann, Giya Kancheli, Valentin Silvestrov, Alfred Schnittke, Thomas Adès, Morton Feldman, and Jukka Tiensuu. I draw on, though outline the need to take forward, Theodor Adorno’s understanding of the historical qualities of musical material, yet also foster an understanding of musical experience situated between past and present without recourse to explicitly postmodern quotation or “intertextuality”, something I implicitly critique. Through illustrating points of affinity and convergence between musical works and experiential issues, I pull together seemingly disparate methodological approaches. These include musical semiotics, Critical Theory, embodied phenomenology, and psychoanalytic theory.

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Theoretical Introductions

Meaning is history that has migrated into music.

– Theodor Adorno, *Sound Figures*¹

Experience of the present is always mediated by the past. But the processes of mediation are not self-evident: musical artefacts from the past (quotations, instruments, pedagogical practices) might be held at arm's length as objects of contemplation; historically significant forms, genres, and even the characteristic styles of past composers, might be alluded to; or the past might not even be audibly made present, rather providing a hidden frame as a necessary condition through which the present may be intelligible at all. It is this mediation of experience that is the core focus of this study, as it is explored critically in art music of the late 20th and early 21st centuries. This is demonstrated in a range of musical works, in a diverse number of ways, in works by Alfred Schnittke, Giya Kancheli, Valentin Silvestrov, Wolfgang Rihm, Helmut Lachenmann, Jukka Tiensuu, Thomas Adès, and Morton Feldman. And, whilst these composers (or, more accurately, the works of theirs focussed on here) cannot be said to share some single determining quality, they do share, in the manner of family resemblances, points of overlap. Whilst differences in the outward (sonic) appearances of their works cannot be ignored, these should not conceal significant points of contact in their critical approaches to the experience of the present as this relates to the past – to deeper questions of mediation – and the historicity of categories mediative of experience (mind and body, for example) as these have been (and still are) “performed” musically.

It is not just difference and diversity that characterise treatments of the relationships between past and present in the works of these composers. I focus on musical works from the mid-1970s onwards, a time in which, despite a great variety of compositional approaches, there were moves toward more direct modes of expression.² As

¹ ADORNO, THEODOR 1999: *Sound Figures* (trans. Rodney Livingstone), Stanford: Stanford University Press, 160

² METZER, DAVID 2009: *Musical Modernism at the Turn of the Twenty-First Century*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 15. This turn towards past expressive models in the 1970s and 80s is also discussed in WILLIAMS, ALASTAIR 2010: ‘Postlude: Helmut Lachenmann, Wolfgang Rihm, and the Austro-German Tradition’ in *Contemporary Music: Theoretical and Philosophical Perspectives* (ed. Max Paddison & Irène Deliège), Farnham: Ashgate

David Metzger points out, this directness of expression is difficult to define – it is ‘a broad concept that resists encapsulation’ – however it is something that is perceived as immediate.³ It is through this apparent *immediacy* that I hope to highlight the *implicit* – rather than only explicit (for example, quotational) – role that the past plays in its mediation of the present. Furthermore, in these works, to various degrees and through divergent strategies, we hear “critical”, modernist reactions to the interpenetration of past and present. Past musical material is drawn on as a source of significance, whilst at the same time the significance of these materials in the present goes beyond their past usage. Hence this move is “dialectical” in that the past is both preserved and simultaneously surpassed in the present.

The selection of composers and works focussed on in this study might at first seem to be very particular. In this sense, I should not give the impression that this study is a cross-section, a representational map, of musical modernism as it has been since the mid-1970s. What it is, though, is a set of suggestions for ways to start going about mapping this terrain. I make the case that the conditions that mediate experience, and historicity, should be favoured as this map’s legend. Through taking this perspective, and in my focusing on some less “mainstream” composers (i.e. Silvestrov and Tiensuu, in conjunction with a focus on Schnittke and Rihm), I also show how new points of connection can be opened up between established modernist centres, and its repertory’s peripheries. Below, I discuss these issues further, as well as their relationships to the methodological viewpoints that I draw on.

This study comes at a time of resurgent interest in questions surrounding modernism. Debate concerning music of this period has suggested that postmodernism has been problematised by the ‘obstinacy of modernism’⁴, that modernism has not been killed-off and superseded by something ‘post-’. The question has recently been explored by David Metzger⁵, Alastair Williams⁶, Eduardo De La Fuente⁷, in a volume of essays edited by Björn Heile⁸, and another by Irène Deliège & Max Paddison⁹. In philosophy and literary

³ METZER 2009: 16

⁴ METZER 2009: 1

⁵ METZER 2009

⁶ WILLIAMS, ALASTAIR 1997: *New Music and the Claims of Modernity*, Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Company and WILLIAMS, ALASTAIR 2004: ‘Ageing of the New: The Museum of Musical Modernism’ in *Cambridge History of Twentieth-Century Music* (ed. Nicholas Cook & Anthony Pople), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

⁷ DE LA FUENTE, EDUARDO 2011: *Twentieth Century Music and the Question of Modernity*, New York: Routledge

⁸ HEILE, BJÖRN (ed.) 2009: *The Modernist Legacy: Essays on New Music*, Farnham: Ashgate

⁹ DELIÈGE, IRÈNE & PADDISON, MAX (ed.) 2010: *Contemporary Music: Theoretical and Philosophical Perspectives*, Farnham: Ashgate

studies, this view can be seen in the recent work of Fredric Jameson¹⁰ and Majorie Perloff¹¹. Furthermore, Metzger and Williams, despite differing aesthetic and methodological concerns, both stress that the modern/postmodern distinction in music is far from being a clear, exclusive dichotomy.

However, whilst the idea that modernism draws upon past styles and formal fragments is well-established, a study focussing on the actual processes by which present material bears traces of the past has been strangely lacking. Modernism has been understood as a process of ‘deviation’ from established forms – Adorno went so far as to suggest that ‘new music... is absolute deviance. As such it poses the problem that it can scarcely be comprehended truthfully without some relation to the thing from which it deviates’¹². Indeed, studies of connections between past and present have been explicit, for example focusing on quotations and uses of past forms¹³. In contrast, I suggest that it is not only “the musical material” that is important (in terms of reference and intertext), but also that, due to the pervasiveness of the past in shaping the present, inherent “within” this material are philosophical concerns. Formal (textual) materials always conceal within them *inherited philosophical-historical legacies*.

This last phrase – inherited philosophical-historical legacies – returns us to the central topic of investigation, musical experience. Musical experience – and the conceptualisation of experience – is shaped by categories of thought and feeling (like mind and body, and culture and nature) that are themselves articulated musically. A focus on the mediation of experience in/by this music thus means attending to the dialectical processes whereby *the philosophical categories by which experience has been historically mediated musically are both attended to and developed*. These are “legacies” – “where we come from” – yet they do not simply determine our present or future capacities for musical and aesthetic experiences. This dialectical mind-set means focussing not only on the conceptualisation of experience but also on music’s oft-cited ability to slip between concepts, and hence the inherent failure involved in any attempted conceptualisation of musical experience. This is explored in Part II, which pursues potentially productive directions for understanding the dialectics of concept and experience, identity and non-identity.

The multiplicity of reactions and relationships to the past charted by recent musics precludes singular, linear interpretations. Instead, I investigate constellations of musical

¹⁰ JAMESON, FREDRIC 2003: ‘The End of Temporality’ in *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 29, No. 4 (pp. 695-718)

¹¹ PERLOFF, MAJORIE 2002: *21st-Century Modernism: The “New” Poetics*, Oxford: Blackwell

¹² ADORNO, THEODOR 2002: ‘Difficulties’ [orig. 1964, 1966] in *Essays on Music* (ed. Leppert, Richard, trans. Gillespie, S.H.), Berkeley: University of California Press, 671

¹³ METZGER, DAVID 2003: *Quotation and Cultural Meaning in Twentieth-Century Music*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, and STRAUS, JOSEPH N. 1990: *Remaking the Past: Musical Modernism and the Influence of the Tonal Tradition*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press

works and interconnected philosophical-historical themes, always overlapping the boundaries of one another. Rather than taking one composer or “school” as my object of focus, I opt instead to tease-out intersecting reactions to the implicit historicity of musical material in a patchwork of composers’ works. This can be read as an attempt to reflect listening and thought under late modernity: as an always-plural act. This is to do so, however, whilst suggesting that these multiple threads find common points of contact. There may be many reactions to this philosophical and historical condition but, even without synthesis between them, even without these critical directions running side by side, it is possible to find moments at which these different threads are knotted together. “The body” in music – the historicity of the body’s roles in music and its construction in music – provides one point of such conceptual knotting together, a tying together of apparently diverse critical threads. In Part III, I discuss inherited musical mediations of the body and the body’s immanent musical development in piano works by Lachenmann, Schnittke, and Adès. In addition, through outlining (in chapter 3) how philosophical-historical ideas operate in partial complicity with one another – how notions of culture and nature relate to those of mind and body, with both being constructed and connected immanently within music – it is shown that the project that I am developing here, which might appear manifestly as highly diverse, in fact conceals a latent core of inner consistencies (that are, nonetheless, expressed multiply).¹⁴ Discussing these works together emphasises a constellation of philosophical ideas mediative of experience.

How does the “critical” dimension of these works develop and/or follow on from the criticality of earlier modernisms? The critical and conscious use of past forms could be said to be a defining feature of modernism – a strategy seen famously in Beethoven’s Late music, for example. Here, a fragmentation of stylistic conventions occurs, with these conventions being the origin by which difference and divergence are developed. As Lawrence Kramer puts it, ‘the problem of modernity is not that signification ceases to function, but that it ceases to be fixed and assured, so that nothing can be read without irony, or at least the possibility of irony.’¹⁵ This legacy continues, though a little differently, in our more recent modernism. Whilst in Beethoven’s critical music it is possible to speak of a critical reaction to conventions, in our late(r) modernism it is harder to locate these hermeneutic jumping off points, the conventional (normative) conditions by which critical reactions may be differentially conceived. Notions of normative styles and centres are now

¹⁴ The reasons for which I selected the works/composers under discussion would not exclude other possibilities (some of Ligeti’s or Sciarrino’s works could be included, for instance). The works that are discussed – placed in constellation – help to illustrate wider issues about critical music in the late 20th- and early 21st-centuries without effacing the differences between them.

¹⁵ KRAMER, LAWRENCE 2011: *Interpreting Music*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 231

themselves suspect; ‘nothing concerning art is self-evident anymore’ (as Adorno famously proclaimed at the very opening of his posthumously published *Aesthetic Theory*¹⁶). As the sociologist Zygmunt Bauman puts it, late modernity (for him ‘liquid modernity’) proceeds under conditions typified by ‘the unclarity of norms – anomie’¹⁷. He quotes Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, who summarise this condition as follows:

We no longer believe in the myth of the existence of fragments that, like pieces of an antique statue, are merely waiting for the last one to be turned up, so that they may all be glued back together to create a unity that is precisely the same as the original unity. We no longer believe in a primordial totality that once existed, or in a final totality that awaits us at some future date.¹⁸

Conventions are no longer given regulative conditions. In many ways, “the convention” is now itself a historical category, something markedly of the past.

Despite a late 20th-century suspicion over any consistent normativities (something also expressed in postmodernists’ ‘incredulity towards metanarratives’¹⁹), I would like to suggest that hermeneutic centres may still be evoked, but this is, in the most part, done so *provisionally* – grasped by aspects of works, and experiences enabled through them, and then released. The universalities of earlier modernisms – the sublime transcendence of Beethoven’s modernism, the new compositional languages pursued under Viennese modernism, and the autonomous quality of post-war parametric compositions – are eschewed in place of provisionally exploring centres, musical objects, and musico-historical practices in all their particularities (be these musical, social, or historical). This, in accordance with the scepticism of any given normativity, is foregrounded in a diverse number of critical approaches. Schnittke multiplies centres “polystylistically”, to give a ready example. In addition, the field of conventions to be provisionally explored itself becomes expanded so as to now encompass not only “purely musical” (formal) conventions but also the conventions of practice beyond the formal (for example, instrumental practice, as in much of Lachenmann’s music). This, I argue below, accords with a sensitivity to the *materiality* of past conventions as these mediate the present.

However, we must keep in mind that a clear, chronologically exacting division between “later” and “earlier” modernisms – between late 20th- and early 21st-century works

¹⁶ ADORNO, THEODOR 1997 [orig. 1970]: *Aesthetic Theory* (ed. Gretel Adorno & Rolf Tiedemann, trans. Robert Hullot-Kentor), London: The Athlone Press, 1

¹⁷ BAUMAN, ZYGMUNT 2012: *Liquid Modernity*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 20-21

¹⁸ Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari cited in BAUMAN 2012: 21

¹⁹ LYOTARD, JEAN-FRANÇOIS 1984 [orig. 1979]: *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (trans. George Bennington and Brian Massumi), Manchester: Manchester University Press, xxiv

and earlier ones – is problematic. “Both” negotiate modernity’s multiple problematics at any given synchronic moment, as many dimensions contribute to an image of “modernism” at a given time. (Hence the scare quotes on “*both*” – “later” and “earlier” stages are not truly distinct.) But, diachronically, each of these constituent dimensions (advances in instrumental technique, new treatments of temporality, and so on) also develops in their own right. Put another way, the constituent threads that make up “modernism” do not shift from “earlier” to “later” at the same time. We are not simply handed a new bundle of threads with modernist music of the late 20th- and early 21st-centuries. The move towards the modernist character of the works explored here, the developments from that which preceded them, is one consisting of many overlapping tendencies, each of which develops both independently and with regard to many others. Considered in isolation, new sensitivities to the social and pedagogical particularities of instrumental practices might be considered as a tendency that develops “independently” from other factors, and hence as a diachronic object of study. Another dimension might be the changing relationships found between present compositional practices and the historical canon of great works. However, a more accurate (and necessarily more complex image) is advanced when these threads are *also* taken together. In the case of these examples, this means paying critical attention to instrumental practices, in a way that takes into account these practices as they are historically established through the instrumental repertoire, the canon of works. This is not confuse one dimension with any other, or in general to let one dissolve into its others, but rather to maintain a dialectic between the relative autonomy of one thread and its interpenetration by multiple others. As a result of this multidimensionality is that there is no individual factor that determines some singular condition common to all the works, composers, and ideas that make up this study. There are instead multiple points of contact and shifting intersections between many strands of musical, historical, and philosophical thought, some of which make links back to earlier modernist experiences, though these are now intersected by other dimensions that contribute to uniquely late modernist *formulations* of musical experience and relationships with the past. Paradoxically, this very lack of any common single determining quality is the shared quality of these works, that without some stable determining feature external to them (e.g. standardised conventions, normativity) these works demand that we enter into playful constellations within them.

The positioning of such provisional centres in these musical works is itself suggestive of the role of past-present relations. We may ask why and how one is positioned over another and, following this, how philosophical-historical significances are brought to differential and divergent aspects of a work in relation to these provisional

centres. To pre-empt discussions found in the ensuing chapters, two examples of how “centres” are evoked can be briefly cited. Past musical materials – treated as “objects” within the work’s discourse (as outlined in chapter 2 and developed in 3 and 4) – may help to articulate such centres or provide centres around which other materials may be articulated. Or, as explored in the first chapter, the canon of Western art music, whilst still operative in mediating the philosophical-historical significance of “musical works”, may become a centre related to in new ways; Silvestrov’s Symphony No. 5 is to the canonic monumental symphonies of the past as ruins are to historical architectural monuments. Indeed, these two tendencies also bear traces of a specifically late modern sensitivity, in the former, to the materiality of objects and, in the latter, to the experience of space.

I explore a handful of works from late 20th- and early 21st-century symphonic, string quartet, and piano repertoires as they are productive in highlighting different musical and philosophical-historical themes: the dialectics of culture and nature as foregrounded in two late 20th-century symphonies; the role (and articulation) of subjectivity in a range of string quartets; and, dances as referenced by or sedimented into the language of recent piano music (the Waltz, the Mazurka), as highlighting questions of embodied experience in music. This is neither to claim that recent piano music never encompasses dialectical issues of culture and nature nor that symphonies do not embrace somatic issues. It is rather to reflect that dances and symphonies (and indeed, pianos, string quartet writing, and so on) have particular legacies and associations that “prejudice” (in the Gadamerian sense²⁰) modes of interpretation or, at least, our first experiential points of reference. These places are hence not only where these issues reside (bodily issues in dance forms, dialectical concerns in the symphony); they are, however, nodal points through which particular philosophical-historical legacies might, through the precedents set by these musical forms’ pasts, be foregrounded.

Another point of distinction should also be made. This is not to suggest that inquiries into the philosophical and historical significances of, for example, dance forms are *limited* to questions of embodiment, and into those of the symphony to specific modes of dialectical process (the culture/nature dialectic as mediated musically). To note that philosophical-historical legacies are operative does not limit the boundaries of experience and interpretation to play within them. The historicity of these legacies, by contrast, can be seen to provide ready frames of reference that – immanently critiqued within – may sublate towards something beyond simple historical and interpretative determinism (beyond “dances are ultimately bodily, and only bodily”). Indeed, through drawing on

²⁰ WARNKE, GEORGIA 1987: *Gadamer: Hermeneutics, Tradition, and Reason*, Stanford: Stanford University Press: 75-78

various interdisciplinary critical literatures (chapter 3) I argue that, what may at first seem distinct historical-philosophical domains of meaning (nature and culture, body and mind, and so on) in fact function in complicity and correspondence with each other. This enables dialogues between issues raised in what could have been, previously and erroneously, regarded as separable musical and philosophical domains. Fluidity and slippage – core aspects of (the) experience (of music) – take us beyond the rigidity of the limits of those philosophical and historical legacies that are foregrounded. Indeed, the fluidity found in dimensions of these musical works – a fluidity which nonetheless relies dialectically on the rigidity of boundaries that enables articulation of these works and their constituent discourses (see chapter 4) – grants them an exemplary status as sites in which relationships within musical, philosophical, and historical thought might be modified, transgressed and/or negated. Put another way, the characteristic “decentring” that can be observed in much late 20th- and early 21st-century art music asks of us that our interpretative approach similarly reflects the fluidity with which centres of meaning are alluded to, passed over, and brought into new relation.

Constellations

This project falls into three main parts. Each explores one aspect of relationships between past and present. Each also builds upon the findings of the last whilst additionally contributing to the multiple threads that run throughout the project as a whole. Responding to different aspects of musical experience means drawing upon a range of philosophical and methodological perspectives. For instance, in discussing issues of “discourse” and subjectivity I borrow from poststructuralism and psychoanalytic theory, and from phenomenology in approaching questions of embodiment. I argue that this crossing over of disciplinary and methodological boundaries elucidates this music’s critical capacity as a mode of thought facilitating the transgression of reified boundaries. This same characteristic positions these works as sites in which, for example, discourse and embodiment might be brought together anew or be shown to act complicitly, challenging the idea that these things can be conceived apart from one another.

Part I is principally centred around the dialectics of culture and nature as taken immanently into inherited musical materials, and two symphonic reactions to these legacies – firstly, in Silvestrov’s Symphony No. 5 (1980-82) and, secondly, in Giya Kancheli’s Fifth Symphony (1976). Between these two case studies, there is a brief “Interlude”, in which I explore a notion of musical “objects” that, I argue, aids critical investigations into musical experience, particularly with regard to these objects’ mediation by (and of) the past. This responds both to specific treatments of musical materials in the

works that I explore and to the increasing interest in ‘objects’ in musicology’s sister disciplines.

Drawing on longstanding links between the aesthetics of music and of architecture, I argue that experiencing Silvestrov’s Symphony No. 5 parallels a dimension of the experience of the ruins of past monuments. I take as my theoretical starting point Georg Simmel’s analysis of architectural ruins.²¹ Simmel claimed that the aesthetic significance of ruins stemmed from their embodying a breakdown in the dialectic of culture and nature, or that of human spirit and of nature’s laws. I suggest that, in exploring musical material’s mediative shaping of the concepts of culture and nature, Silvestrov’s symphony performs a parallel reformulation of Simmel’s dialectic of culture and nature. Furthermore, through outlining how “musical space” – principally in its articulation as musical structure – relates to architectural space conceptually, I illustrate that this symphony executes the ruination of inherited symphonic architectures, of monumental symphonies of the past. The work thus becomes seen as a “ruin-symphony”, something complementing Silvestrov’s own notion of his Fifth as “post-symphony”²². The symphony is posited in relation to the symphonic monuments of the past, as well as in relation to the “inscribed” meanings of these monuments’ materials, as these have been passed down through the canon of Western art music. Symphonic monuments fall into ruin under the locus of Silvestrov’s symphony, leading to new and significant experiences of this symphony and the monumental symphonic repertoire.

Having investigated the “objects” of contemporary musical experience in a short theoretical interlude, I turn towards Kancheli’s Fifth Symphony. I propose the theorising of discursive objects of focus *within* musical works as holding potential for a critical hermeneutic outlook, whereby moments in musical discourses foreground, and perform, latent qualities of larger philosophical-historical contexts. I explore how such objects may take on wider relevance, before affirming my stated position that such ties to history do not *determine* objects’ significances – that despite their historicity these objects still retain a virtual quality of fluidity. This forms the basis for discussing distance and nostalgia in the symphony. Specifically, these qualities come through in the treatment of a solo harpsichord’s musical material as an object that is both held close, identified as an image of (child-like) innocence, and made distant, as a hazy object of nostalgia.

²¹ As formulated in SIMMEL, GEORG 1959: ‘The Ruin’ [orig. 1911] (trans David Kettler) in *Georg Simmel, 1858-1918: A Collection of Essays, With Translations and a Bibliography* (ed. Kurt H. Wolff), Columbus: The Ohio State University Press

²² Silvestrov cited in SAVENKO, SVETLANA 1998: ‘Valentin Silvestrov’s Lyrical Universe’ in *Underground Music from the Former USSR* (ed. Valeria Tsenova), Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 75

Having explored in Part I the role of philosophical-historical legacies of nature and culture, and Silvestrov and Kancheli's immanent musical treatments thereof, I move towards exploring other categories central to the mediation of musical experience – principally the dialectics of mind (Part II) and body (Part III). In Part II, I focus upon the string quartet as a genre in which notions of subjectivity have historically been foregrounded. In the first chapter, I explore how music has historically performed non-conceptual modes of self-knowing, self-understanding, and articulations of Self and Other. These legacies I outline before considering discursive constructions of subjectivity in recent quartets, and composers' confrontations of these immanent legacies. This is achieved principally through a critical reading of Julia Kristeva's notion of the *thetic*, the organisational and articulatory threshold at which discourse, and the fixity of the subject, is constructed/breaks down. Leading from Kristeva's assessment of the thetic as having a dual character – as 'rupture and/or boundary'²³ – I explore two works through which discourse and subjectivity are organised around these principles. Firstly, I explore how in Wolfgang Rihm's String Quartet No. 10 (1993/97) large-scale ("macroscopic") "intertextual" objects rupture both into and from the discourse, affirming its threshold. In the second sense, that of 'boundary', I outline how microscopic details of texture and pitch help to constitute discourse, chiefly through a case study of Jukka Tiensuu's (1990) *Arsenic and Old Lace* (for microtonally tuned harpsichord and string quartet). In Tiensuu's work the string quartet acts both to bound and then outwardly expand discursive materials charted by the harpsichord. These analyses, through the lens of Kristeva's *thetic*, help also to supplement my already established concept of "objects" in discourse – specifically, it helps show how objects are posited and positioned in these recent works.

This enables me to analyse how musical notions of subjective selfhood are focused on in aspects of Alfred Schnittke's String Quartet No. 4 (1989). This is placed in the philosophical-historical context of selfhood, as an idea (or a practice) that has been articulated musically (as is often illustrated with regard to the 'Heroic' works of Beethoven, and in the relationship between Beethoven's music and Hegel's philosophy²⁴). As I illustrate, in the second movement of Schnittke's quartet, figures of musical closure, as metonymic symbols of musical and subjective self-coherence, are taken as a discursive starting point, as images of an objectified self. Contradictions within this symbolic presentation of selfhood are then opened up dialectically. In so doing, a critical exploration

²³ KRISTEVA, JULIA 1984 [orig. 1974]: *Revolution in Poetic Language* (trans. Margaret Waller), New York: Columbia University Press, 43

²⁴ See SCHMALFELDT, JANET 2011: *In the Process of Becoming: Analytic and Philosophical Perspectives on Form in Early Nineteenth-Century Music*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, or BURNHAM, SCOTT 1995: *Beethoven Hero*, Princeton: Princeton University Press

of self-understanding – of its processes, reifications, and paradoxes – is performed musically.

In chapter 5, I develop a psychoanalytic mode of exploring past-present relations in the musical mind.²⁵ Responding to Silvestrov's String Quartet No. 1 (1974, revised 1990), I propose the bringing together of musical analysis with dream analysis from the psychoanalytic tradition. Positioning semiotics as the theoretical meeting point between the analysis of music and of dream, I discuss how "residues" of the musical past are taken into this quartet and invested with new meanings and significances in the present. I also carefully outline how a critical, psychoanalytically-inclined approach may avoid merely analysing the "composer behind the work". I argue that a psychoanalytically-disposed reading of musical semiotics caters for the modernist context of Silvestrov's music – where established musical meaning/expression is problematised. The concepts of *displacement* and *condensation* – the undercurrents to the dynamics of dreaming – hold analytic potential in musical contexts. Specifically, they may help us to explore how musical materials become experienced as freshly significant in their present immediacy, something nonetheless mediated by the musical past.

This is put in the context of the historicity of desiring in/through music, as the dream-like processes of the critical work (like the dream itself) draw on both knowing and desiring. Firstly, I outline how the mediation of desire has been taken into inherited musical materials. I outline musicological characterisations of desire and also ways in which desire has, as such, been sublimated within musical materials. I suggest that recent modernist music's problematisation (or reformulation) of the discursive frameworks within which desire operates may be best understood through an appeal to psychoanalytic thinking, one that values memories and traces of past desires – inscribed within musical materials – as these shape present experience, without determining experience through the codifiable reification of these materials. This is illustrated through revisiting the quartets discussed in Part II in their dimensions of desiring.

Having outlined the historicity of desire as inscribed into musical language, I explore an alternative strategy as heard in Feldman's String Quartet No. 2 (1983): the negating of the musical articulation of desire. This I put in the context of Fredric Jameson's essay on the postmodern 'End of Temporality'²⁶, suggesting that Feldman

²⁵ This appeal to psychoanalytic theory responds to and builds upon recent research into musical structure and psychoanalysis – for example, REICHARDT, SARAH 2008: *Composing the Modern Subject: Four String Quartets by Dmitri Shostakovich*, Aldershot: Ashgate. However, my approach differs markedly from Reichardt's Lacanian framework in that I put the dialectical interrelationship of past and present at the centre of my study, rather than psychoanalytic schemata.

²⁶ JAMESON 2003

confronts this philosophical-historical situation through inverting late-capitalism's reduction of experience to the moment. Experience, instead, looks outwards *from* the moment.

The web of relationships between inherited notions of the body, technology, and pedagogy forms the core discussion of Part III. In chapter 7, the piano is considered as an object of history passed down, an object with pedagogical and technological conventions that gives it a particular relationship to the body. I show how Helmut Lachenmann's *Serynade* (1998-2000) explores and modifies these pedagogical and technological aspects. As such, the somatic dimension of the past-present dialectic is brought under scrutiny. Maurice Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of embodiment is called upon in theorising the body's role in pedagogy and its relationship with the piano as technology²⁷, and in enhancing Shklovksian interpretations of Lachenmann's music.²⁸

Historically resonant musical mediations of the body in piano music remain the focus in the last chapter. Two dances are the objects of investigation. Through considering the historicity of the waltz in musical constructions of the body – as mediating particular modes of bodily self-comportment – the waltz from Schnittke's Piano Quintet (1972-76) is seen as a musically immanent exploration of issues surrounding the body. Having laid out the connections between dance forms, the body, and the philosophical-historical issues entangled with them, aspects of Thomas Adès's Mazurkas, op. 27 (2009) are analysed in their indebtedness to this dance form as shaped specifically through the piano music of Fryderyk Chopin, in which the dance form is removed from its literally danced function.

This sectional construction represents a move from the general to the particular to the general again: in orchestral music, from the dialectics of nature and culture, and the absolute monumentalism of the symphony, to provisional, discursively constituted objects of experience; from these particularised objects to their places in the structures and forms in string quartets, insofar as they articulate subjective concerns embroiled in these processes; and, finally, from these discursive structures back to issues of the natural immediacy with which we seem to experience music – as something visceral, going beyond categories of the mind and so *felt* by the body. Therefore, this approach will be seen to arch around, seeming to return to where it began, but in this elliptical movement modifying the basic categories through which the discussion arose, ultimately how the

²⁷ MERLEAU-PONTY, MAURICE 2002 [orig. 1945]: *The Phenomenology of Perception* (trans. Colin Smith), London: Routledge

²⁸ For example, FELLER, ROSS 2002: 'Resistant Strains of Postmodernism: The Music of Helmut Lachenmann and Brian Ferneyhough' in *Postmodern Music/Postmodern Thought* (eds. Judy Lochhead & Joseph Auner), New York: Routledge

experience of this music through relationships between past and present might be critically interpreted.

This processual movement – naturalism and monumentalism, to psychical object, to bodily experience – engages with, at a basic level, two sets of binaries key to aesthetics after the Enlightenment: firstly, that between mind (psychical objects) and body (the visceral dimension of musical experience), and secondly, the opposition between culture and nature. What is meant here by ‘nature’ is the *naturalisation* of processes of mediation, as well as the idea that there is some realm or dimension of experience which is transcendental, elementary, amorphous, and ahistorical and, as such, outside of mediation (to be discussed in Part I). Culture, in contrast with the idea of nature, can be seen as something historical and defined – it is a structuration of thought and action. This is something that will be shown to be borne-out in the musical discourses of individual works. Following this, a second binary emerges, that between nature (apparently ahistorical objectivity beyond thought) and culture (discourse, structure, and definition). These concepts – mind and body, and culture and nature – will be shown to be in constant interaction, as we move through our constellation of musicological and philosophical themes. Through this elliptical argumentative structure I attempt to escape the concretisation of thought or an exact systematisation of musical meaning. This accords with Jameson’s definition of ‘theory’ when he suggests ‘that theory is to be grasped as the perpetual and impossible attempt to dereify the language of thought, and to preempt all the systems and ideologies which inevitably result from the establishment of this or that fixed terminology’²⁹.

This movement from the discussions of nature and culture in symphonies towards the particularisms of piano music also alludes to something else – how these repertoires have been historically thought and talked about. This can be conceived of as the relation between Part and Whole. The symphony – given its scale, range of material, and weight of sound – has tended to be characterised as touching something sublime, total, even Absolute (at least under its Romantic conception). We scarcely need reminding of Gustav Mahler’s comment that ‘the symphony must be like the world. It must be all embracing’³⁰, a comment suggesting a totalising tendency. In this conception of the symphony the Part (the composition or experience of the individual work) tended towards the mimesis of the Whole (the world, all reality, the Absolute). The symphony functions as a starting point for our discussion of the immanent historicity of contemporary music; to write a symphony in

²⁹ JAMESON, FREDRIC 2010: *Valences of the Dialectic*, London: Verso, 9

³⁰ Mahler cited in DE LA GRANGE, HENRY-LOUIS 1999: *Gustav Mahler: Triumph and Disillusion (1904-1907)*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 753

the late 20th-century begs an inescapable relation to the totalising tendency of this genre's past.³¹

As noted above, 'the piano' will be discussed in Part III. It is approached as both a physical object and an inherited set of interrelationships (between the instrument, the instrumentalist, its repertoire, and as a medium of expression). In contrast to the symphony, the Piano's repertoire can be characterised as a soloistic, even individualistic, medium, as focused around a particular rather than the expression of a universal.³² However, this particularism will be shown to rely on wider cultural practices, such as a naturalised pedagogy and canon of works. One can see relationships of part and whole in the development of this discussion, of particular and universal, running in contrary directions: the universalism of the symphony is focused down through a particularism of historical and philosophical contingency, whilst, going the other way, the particularism of the soloistic piano is expanded out across the realm of intersubjective, collectively inhabited practices and knowledge. This is not to say that the piano is now the expression of the universal, or the symphony of the particular. Neither symphonic music nor piano music exclude issues of 'the Whole' (intersubjective knowledge, historically inherited ideas of the transcendent) or issues of 'the Part' (particularism, a given historical circumstance). But the symphony is generally situated in the context of the former and the piano in that of the latter (for instance, in focussing on the 'individualism' of the solo performer). Hence, following my argumentative manoeuvre of coming to reverse the frameworks by which musical works are themselves understood, the works focussed on are seen to immanently critique the means by which they have philosophical-historically been conceptualised.

This music draws upon – or even *confronts* – a wide set of issues that are inscribed into its inherited past materials. My aim is to show how these are brought into and played-out in this repertoire. Furthermore, I suggest that in thinking about these processes, we may better come to understand how these features mediate the experience of this music.

³¹ It should be noted that Mahler's comment appeared in the context of a debate with Sibelius, with the latter arguing that the symphony should – in contrast with Mahler's position – tend towards self-coherent formalism. Whilst this means an 'absolutism' or 'totalising tendency' in symphonic writing is not a given (there are other ways, following Sibelius for example, to write symphonies), in the works on which I focus (principally Silvestrov and Kancheli's), formalism is eschewed in place of worldly materials, historical connections, and culturally evocative allusions. Furthermore, beyond the (broadly defined) "post-Romantic" works focused on here, one should note that a very different reaction to the aesthetic legacies of the Symphony can be found in the first half of the 20th century – Stravinsky's reaction to this legacy was to revert to a *pre-Romantic* model, to circumvent totalising Romantic notions altogether through an appeal to Neo-Classicism.

³² This stems perhaps from the piano's historically domestic setting, with symphonic music in contrast being received collectively, almost ritually. The piano of course also has a tradition of individualism through improvisation and virtuosity.

To point out that the mind and the body play a role in mediating experience is simple enough. Illustrating how the dialectics of mind and body are inherited and immanently critiqued in this problematising (and problematic) repertoire is something quite different.

Present experience thus puts itself forward as a fluid site where theory may be modified – where, in the confrontation with the new and unknown, what is known may come to change. As much as an appeal to semiotics or psychoanalysis may tell us something about our primary object of study – past-present relations in the experience of late 20th- and early 21st-century art music – so too can this music tell us something about the inner lives of these theoretical apparitions. Whilst the various theoretical and philosophical ideas drawn upon may find themselves institutionally divided from the musicological tradition, they may still strike chords within musical praxes, suggesting that the artificial walls set-up between theories and praxes, erected in the institutional divisions of labour, are in fact thinner than they may at first seem. Musical resonances are heard to pass through them. Indeed, this draws upon Theodor Adorno's notion that music is a form of "conceptless cognition"³³ – here this cognition's fluidity is visible in its ability to cross reified boundaries articulated at conceptual, institutional and methodological levels. This is why experience is so central to past-present relations; knowledge and understanding are never static, but always shifting, channelled within institutional(ised) guidelines yet never reducible to determination by them.

Alongside this idea that music may be seen as reflexive, and may cross that liminal space found between institutional and theoretical divides, comes a critical conception of musicology. This is a musicology that posits music as a transgressive medium that, in its ability to cross theoretical divides via its "unspeakable" dimension, pushes at the boundaries of that which is conceptualisable. It is therefore my hope that not only will new aspects and connections be uncovered in the music discussed, but also in Theory, and in the manner of our own questioning.

Contemporary Music(ologic)al Dialectics

The "spirit of the law" is often appealed to over the letter of the law itself. I make an analogous appeal to Adornian thinking, to the ways in which I go about selecting works and composers for discussion, and to conceptions of modernism. Rather than taking modernism as a set of signifiers or demonstrable conditions – as laws to be recognisably worked within, or transgressed, by the composers in question – I take it, in an avant-gardist sense, as a point of beginning. It is taken as something embracing a self-reflexive

³³ Adorno cited in PADDISON, MAX 1991: 'The Language-Character of Music: Some Motifs in Adorno' in *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, Vol. 116, No. 2 (pp. 267-279), 278

spirit that pushes against the boundaries of reification and of codification in signifiers or demonstrable conditions (the “letter of the law”). This is not to say, however, that this pushing forwards means forgetting that modernism has its hallmarks and characteristic qualities; just as the spirit of the law does not forget the law itself.

This appeal to the “spirit” of modernism is reflected in my choice of repertoire. Instead of taking only established, canonic, modernist composers or works as the objects of study – the music of Lachenmann, Boulez, Rihm, Ligeti, Nono, or Berio, for instance – I choose to focus on some works and composers that are less “mainstream”, whilst nonetheless critical in their approaches to historicity and experience. In chapter 4, for example, I discuss issues of subjectivity and musical discourse in a work from a less-well-known composer (Tiensuu), right beside a work from a better-known one (Rihm). This helps each work to draw out features from the other, as well as allowing both to contribute to a necessarily plural image of the treatment of subjectivities and discourses in modernist musical works. This, it is hoped, avoids merely delineating a new law, a new, singular conception of what constitutes recent modernism. Put another way, late modernist music’s multifarious nature is highlighted as a source of its forward-pushing spirit – that it eludes a singular conception – which also fuels new ways of thinking about it. This accords with the self-reflexive spirit of modernism, that it can (attempt to) undermine, or at least disturb, reification, including the potential reification of its own conceptualisation. Reacting to this idea, I have chosen works for inclusion in this project that elucidate certain formulations of musical and philosophical issues pertinent to the historicity of experience. These issues cut across the various works, so that, taken together, they make visible new points of affinity (without, at the same time, synthesising so that these works’ differences are effaced). Indeed, these issues traverse wider questions surrounding modernist music from the late 20th century onward. Through my choice of repertoire I hope to contribute to modernism’s forward-pushing spirit, and to reflect late modernism’s multifarious character, whilst always also counterbalancing these goals with reference to the more law-like dimensions that give it its distinct personality.

My selection of particular works for discussion also can be seen in part as a strategic move, as a means for making this contribution. Ways in which one might receive and understand modernism, in light of Silvestrov’s and Tiensuu’s music, have not yet crystallised, as they have with more “established” modernist composers; nor have ways in which we might understand these composers’ works, in so far as we can, on “their own” terms. To have focused on Boulez’s music, to entertain a counterexample, would have necessitated a very different project. As much as Boulez is established, there are established ways of receiving and understanding his music, his thought, and the character

of his modernism. Whilst this concretisation of knowledge is helpful in granting us better ways of understanding these things, the law-like quality of this concretisation poses problems if we are appealing to the spirit of the law. Musicological discourses concerning some of the composers that I focus on have not yet undergone a comparable ossification. They provide fertile grounds for new contributions to discourses on modernism. They also allow us to revisit afresh more established qualities of modernism, and to remember that whilst the law is important – that concretised discourses on modernism and its established proponents are valuable – with this law also comes modernism’s critical spirit.

This outlook also applies to the ways that I draw on philosophical and interpretative perspectives. Theodor Adorno’s writings have been significant in shaping dialectical thinking in the English speaking musicological world – especially conceptions of modernism³⁴. In due course I will repeatedly draw on Adornian ideas. However, there is an institutional tension within Adorno scholarship that must be confronted, one that is evoked through engaging with the musical works that concern me here. This regards what is often characterised as the “dialectical” nature of Adorno’s thought. As Fredric Jameson notes in his *Valences of the Dialectic* there is something inherently problematic about seeing dialectics as a mode of thinking³⁵. For him, the strength of dialectical thinking is not that it becomes a system; instead it highlights that systematisation regards a finite set of possibilities and is always unable to fully grasp the objects of thought and the thoughts themselves. Adorno seems to concur with this point, suggesting that, following Hegel, dialectics is not ‘a particular philosophical standpoint, but the sustained attempt to follow the movement of the object under discussion and to help it find expression’³⁶. On this statement of Adorno’s a further point can be made, that of the connection between dialectical philosophy and musical expression. This description accords almost directly with my characterisation of how many recent musical discourses function: they work around some object of investigation through exploring potential expressive directions and its immanent contradictions.

If we are to understand his contributions to thinking, care must be taken not to ossify Adorno-influenced dialectics into an undialectical method – an Adornian *system* of dialectics. This is because Adorno’s writings – as suggested by Jameson’s comments on Theory in general (see above) – attempt constantly to undercut their own fixity and the reification of thought. Recent studies on Adorno (notably *Apparitions: New Perspectives on*

³⁴ An excellent overview of Adorno’s work can be found in PADDISON, MAX 1997: *Adorno’s Aesthetics of Music*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

³⁵ JAMESON 2010: 13

³⁶ ADORNO 1999: 145

Adorno and Twentieth-Century Music) have reminded us of this fact,³⁷ breathing new life and perspectives into the “established” ways in which Adorno’s thinking is conceived.³⁸ Reflecting on this, we could say that there is an inherent tension in the idea of an established Adorno scholarship; that between (1) the letter-of-the-law-like need to understand, set-out, and explicate Adorno’s ideas and their interrelationships, and (2) following the spirit of critical thought through problematising the systematisation and reification of thought. As Jameson points out, however, the constant undercutting and dereification of language is ‘easier said than done’³⁹.

The spirit of Adorno’s work seems to suggest a constant need to cut through the solidity of its own knowledge, to find renewal and life only in its *confrontation* with new and difficult musics, rather than yet again be suggested as an (admittedly enigmatic) key for the interpretation of a few composers’ works predominantly located in the first half of the last century. Whilst new things are yet to be said about Adorno and Schoenberg, and even Adorno and Late Beethoven, to repeatedly designate the receptions of these musics as “Adornian” is problematic in its undialectical freezing of an Adornian essence. It even establishes, as a kind of repetitive-performative act, Critical Theory as a specialism.⁴⁰

Asserting Theory as specialism confines it to a certain methodological and institutional role – as “radical” alternative. In accepting its place as specialism – as something exotic and outside the norm of “standard” thought to which it is supposedly opposed – established Critical Theory neutralises its own critical power. It accepts a position of alterity rather than constantly reacting to and undercutting hegemonic and dominant modes of thought. Thus, whilst I will draw greatly upon Adorno’s thinking throughout, it should be underlined from the very start that this by no means constitutes an “Adornian method”. To the contrary, Theory and the music will find themselves to be ever changing in the eyes of one another. Indeed, there is an inherent paradox in undialectically setting out dialectical thinking as a *kind* of thinking. To put dialectics in a box – labelled “Herein lies the dialectical (open at your own risk)” – is to neutralise it, to

³⁷ As Berthold Hoeckner puts it in the preface to *Apparitions*, the essays that make up the book are ‘torn between defusing Adorno’s explosive potential and rekindling it’ (HOECKNER, BERTHOLD 2006: ‘Preface: On Apparition’ in *Apparitions: New Perspectives on Adorno and Twentieth-Century Music* (ed. Berthold Hoeckner), Oxon: Routledge, xii)

³⁸ In his *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, Peter Bürger argued that the avant-garde’s radicalism became institutionalised, and hence later become the subject of further critical artistic reactions (what he called the “neo-avant-garde”) – BÜRGER, PETER 1984 [orig. 1974]: *Theory of the Avant-Garde* (trans. Michael Shaw), Manchester: Manchester University Press. The question could be asked if Adornian radicalism now requires a maneuver analogous to that found between the neo-avant-garde and the avant-garde – one of reaction and/or distancing.

³⁹ JAMESON 2010: 37 (footnote)

⁴⁰ And this specialism is something often listed as a commodity on universities’/departments’ websites.

say that it is tool which may be called upon in order to enact some conceptual function, rather than as an awareness of the inherent problematic of reducing all to the conceptualisable, of the impossibility of finding everything and everythought a place in which to sit beside one another with neither tension nor contradiction. Musicological discourse of this nature is an expression of what Julia Kristeva has more generally characterised as ‘academic discourse’, established institutionalised thinking which ‘possesses an extraordinary ability to absorb, digest, and neutralize all of the key, radical, or dramatic moments of thought’⁴¹.

Jameson suggests that ‘the dialectic proceeds by standing outside a specific thought... in order to show that the alleged conclusions in fact harbor the workings of unstable categorical oppositions’⁴². This means for instance, to take an example already discussed above, exploring the paradoxical historicity of immediacy. The dialectic moves by taking on and exploring interrelated contradictions in what were considered to be preeminent dualities:

This deconcealment of the antinomies at the root of practical and theoretical dilemmas can serve as a powerful instrument of ideological analysis (as in deconstruction), but it should not be confused with that more dynamic and productive act of setting the antinomy itself in motion, that is to say, revealing it to have in reality been the form of a contradiction: for it is the unmasking of antinomy as contradiction which constitutes truly dialectical thinking as such.⁴³

This means that, as I argue in Part II, the work/world, interior/exterior, text/context divide may not simply, through deconstructive method, be shown to be problematic, but may become understood as a contradictory and tensional source for the *evocation of significant aesthetic experiences through critical musics*. Rather than doing away with contradictions, these musics – and philosophies – may induce their motion.

I outline these dialectical, methodological issues in-so-far as they are pertinent to the dialectic interpenetration of past and present in the works explored below. As illustrated, Adorno’s philosophical legacy is something that must be engaged with, but taken beyond itself, into the difficult territory of the unknown. This is contrasted with the instrumental use of Adorno’s oeuvre as functioning as “alterity”, as some kind of institutional specialism, though one which is paradoxically used again and again as the

⁴¹ KRISTEVA, JULIA 1982: ‘Psychoanalysis and the Polis’ (trans. Margaret Waller) in *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (pp. 77-92), 77

⁴² JAMESON 2010: 26

⁴³ JAMESON 2010: 43

enigmatic key to the music of Schoenberg and Beethoven; of ‘identifying points on a stable map of the always already known’⁴⁴. This is something I address practically in part through my choice to focus on some composers and works outside of the “mainstream” of modernist musicological discourses on music – works by Silvestrov and Tiensuu, for instance. This means that this “aesthetics of music” must not be regarded as *the* aesthetics of this music – not a systematisable philosophy of music – but an *entering into play* with ideas and expressions brought into motion, problematised, yet rarely synthesised, and experienced in the moments of an ever-changing present.

⁴⁴ Here I borrow a phrase which has been used to summarise the frustration of Brian Massumi, who sees similar institutional paradoxes in the work of critical theorists who do not push at the unknown gaps in knowledge, but rather walk safe and well-trodden grounds (see HEMMINGS, CLARE 2005: ‘Invoking Affect: Cultural theory and the Ontological Turn’ in *Cultural Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 5 (pp. 548-567), 554)

I) Material Past, Material Passed: the Symphony

The work of art is not an object that stands over against a subject for itself. Instead the work of art has its true being in the fact that it becomes an experience that changes the person who experiences it.

– Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*⁴⁵

Music is world-disclosive: the world itself can take on new aspects because of it, and an adequate approach to music must be able to respond to this.

– Andrew Bowie, *Music, Philosophy, and Modernity*⁴⁶

⁴⁵ GADAMER, HANS-GEORG 1989 [orig. 1960]: *Truth and Method* (trans. Joel Weinsheimer & Donald G. Marshall), New York: Crossroad, 102

⁴⁶ BOWIE, ANDREW 2007: *Music, Philosophy, and Modernity*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 27

1. Symphonic Architecture, Monumental Ruins, Silvestrov's Symphony No. 5

It is the site of life from which life has departed.

– Georg Simmel⁴⁷

The object of philosophical criticism is to show that the function of artistic form is as follows: to make historical content, such as provides the basis of every important work of art, into a philosophical truth. This transformation of material content into truth content makes the decrease in effectiveness, whereby the attraction of earlier charms diminishes decade by decade, into the basis for a rebirth, in which all ephemeral beauty is completely stripped off, and the work stands as a ruin.

– Walter Benjamin⁴⁸

The Symphony, as genre, is often a site of monumentality in art music, in two interrelated dimensions. Firstly, with its gigantic formal architecture and associations with an ungraspable sublime (particularly after Beethoven) it is said to go beyond the experience of the individual, towards the collective, and even so far as the Absolute. This is connected with monumentality in a second, distinct sense: the Symphony – in constructing and performing values and associations – *is* a monument of art music. It is a (secular) space, an institution, and a public meeting place inscribed with cultural values. Not only is this true for the genre as a whole, but for individual works, whose enduring place is assured via canon formation – Beethoven's Fifth as a monument to Heroic self-determination, a place at which this past legacy might be collectively remembered and also presently reaffirmed. Yet this second dimension – symphony *as* monument – does not necessarily lead to the conclusion that such monumental works enact the blind worship of ideological principles; monuments might still be self-critically contemplative. With the canonisation of masterworks also comes certain ways of conceiving of them, yet they can still transcend this reification. Monuments, both architectural and musical, help us to remember, transmit, and discipline values passed down from the past.

⁴⁷ SIMMEL 1959: 265

⁴⁸ BENJAMIN, WALTER 2003 [orig. 1963]: *The Origin of the German Tragic Drama* (trans. John Osborne), London: Verso, 182

Valentin Silvestrov described his Symphony No. 5 (1982) as a “post-symphony”.⁴⁹ This symphony is monumental but not unproblematically so. I will suggest that his symphony, as “post-” to the genre as a whole⁵⁰, elicits experience and creates meaning analogously to similar experiential processes in facing the ruins of great former monuments. Therefore, his “post-” is neither a rejection nor a “comment on” the symphonic tradition, but instead a remembering of what was, particularly of the former ways of living values through music and experiencing wider implications of (philosophical) meaning. Silvestrov’s musical language in this single-movement symphony evokes traces of the past, particularly of a late-Romantic soundworld, and of past symphonic structures. As I will argue, this is done in part through attending to inherited notions of symphonic-structural space. Questions of temporality, as temporality relates to the articulation and transgression of normative space, also play their part: frequent metric changes occur, as well as fluctuations of tempo (fuller examples later). As Levon Hakobian puts it, in the Fifth Symphony Silvestrov provides us a ‘game of infinitesimal details that make the texture more diversified’.⁵¹ Whilst retaining a sense of monumentality, the orchestration nonetheless, in the manner of some of Mahler’s works, ‘approach[es] chamber-music procedures’ (to borrow a phrase from Adorno on Mahler⁵²). There is a frequent splitting of orchestral sections and a passing and colouration of melodic lines. The fragmented, expressionistic character at the opening of the Silvestrov’s Fifth Symphony leads to a sweeping melody in the first violins at fig. 10 in the score (bar 73, Ex. 1). Two harps accompany this, contributing to a texture reminiscent of the Adagietto from Mahler’s Fifth Symphony, to a melody that, in repeatedly reaching upward before descending, is itself evocative of the opening theme from the last movement of Mahler’s Ninth.

Despite the late 20th-century context of Silvestrov’s symphony, its ruinous dimensions resonate with aspects of a still-present Romantic imagining of the ruin.⁵³ This aesthetic legacy remains pertinent to Silvestrov’s neo-Romanticism, and indeed comes through also in the theoretical accounts (principally, Georg Simmel’s) that I draw upon in

⁴⁹ Silvestrov cited in SAVENKO 1998: 75

⁵⁰ Peter Schmelz notes that the theme of “ending” is one of Silvestrov’s preoccupations. His Third Symphony (1966), for example, ‘carried the subtitle “Eschatophony” [*Eskhatofoniya*]’. SCHMELZ, PETER J. 2007: ‘What Was “Shostakovich,” and What Came Next?’ in *The Journal of Musicology*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (pp. 297-338), 329-330. Paul Griffiths writes of the Fifth that it ‘seems to begin where a slow movement by Bruckner, Tchaikovsky or Mahler might have ended, and then to go on ending’. GRIFFITHS, PAUL 2006: *A Concise History of Western Music*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 312.

⁵¹ HAKOBIAN, LEVON 1998: *Music of the Soviet Age 1917-1987*, Stockholm: Melos Music Literature, 311

⁵² ADORNO, THEODOR 1996 [orig. 1960]: *Mahler: a Musical Physiognomy* (trans. Edmund Jethcott), Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 53

⁵³ Makarius, looking at architecture and representational art, goes even further, suggesting that the modern-day imagining of the ruin is closely indebted to its 18th-century conception (MAKARIUS, MICHEL 2004: *Ruins* (trans. David Radzinowicz), Paris: Farnham, 7-8).

exploring the significance of and processes behind this ruin-symphony. Charles Rosen suggests that the Romantic concept of the fragment ‘is clearly influenced by the contemporary taste for ruins’.⁵⁴ However, as Michel Makarius writes of architecture, the ‘ruin conjures up absence. And yet in the same breath one might say that the presence of a ruin creates a world with colors, atmosphere, and ghosts of its own, tearing itself off the past like a page ripped from a calendar. Hence the ruin is more than a fragment.’⁵⁵ But this still-present legacy, whilst highly relevant, does not determine the limits of the ruin-aesthetic or bound the particularities of ruination in Silvestrov’s work. The link that Rosen identified, that between the fragment and the ruin, is called upon. However, it is not only through the presentation of musical fragments that the ruin is evoked. Fragments of former objects are evoked but, crucially, the *processes* of ruination play a role too – ‘ruins are processes as much as objects’⁵⁶ – something that can be principally heard in a foregrounding of the dialectics of nature and culture that are embodied within these, as well as in the construction and ruination of the musical space.

Furthermore, in the modernist sense, I argue that the work explores a critical sensitivity to history and memory, and to the *institutional dimension* of art. Regarding history and memory, the symphony, as a genre or idea, is taken as a space of memory, one where older modes of its habitation, through which expression was situated, are now abandoned. The treatment of the spatial dimension (explored in detail below) is also highly particularised historically, defining the treatment of the ruin away from a purely Romantic conception and towards one of the late 20th century. Institutionally, as “post-symphony”, the work sits in critical relation to the roles played by the symphony as canonic form, as an institutionalised site of Western art music.

⁵⁴ ROSEN, CHARLES 1995: *The Romantic Generation*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 92

⁵⁵ MAKARIUS 2004: 147

⁵⁶ SCHÖNLE, ANDREAS 2011: *Architecture of Oblivion: Ruins and Historical Consciousness in Modern Russia*, DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 8

Ex. 1, Silvestrov: Symphony No. 5, bars 70-79 (continued on the next page)

(rall.) acc. → più mosso (♩ = 104)

70 4/8 3 8 rit. 4 10 8

Cel.

Arpa I

Arpa II

VI. I tutti

VI. II

1. pt.

2. pt.

3. pt.

1.-4. pt.

5. pt.

Cb. tutti

pp, mp, ppp, con sord. tutti, con sord. espress., solo, sul tasto, ord., (sul tasto), tutti

Vc.

Va.

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Andreas Huyssen has suggested that the ruin is something immanent to the character of modernity. For Huyssen, to speak of the ‘authentic ruin’ is not to talk about its ontological essence but ‘as a significant conceptual and architectural constellation that points to moments of decay, falling apart, and ruination already present in the beginning of modernity in the eighteenth century.’⁵⁷ Georg Simmel’s perspective on the ruin is also highly relevant here (I discuss his perspective on ruins more fully below). He saw the ruin as a provocative reminder of the immanence of the decay of things, as apart from any externally imposed forces. He wrote that, ‘the ruin strikes us so often as tragic – but not as sad – because here is not something senselessly coming from outside but rather the realization of a tendency inherent in the deepest layer of existence of the destroyed’.⁵⁸ Hence, I am not merely applying ruin aesthetics to music. Instead, I am exploring the idea that the ruinous stems from deeper historical-philosophical conditions, conditions shared by monumental music and architecture, and hence that this may be brought to the fore in conceptual points of contact between the two arts.

Before exploring the post-symphonic, “ruined” characteristics of Silvestrov’s symphony, I start by outlining more fully how the ‘The Symphony’ has been conceived of historically as a monumental genre. This centres on two philosophical-historical pillars: firstly, that music’s internal structure has been, and can still be, conceived of in spatial, and even architectural. terms; and, secondly, that ‘The Symphony’, in “extramusical” terms (as genre, as institution) has a monumental status. These legacies’ evocation and ultimate decay in Silvestrov’s symphony enable a hearing of this work as a ruin of The Symphony as monument. This means outlining the music’s conception as monument (both in its internal “spatial” structure and its external, institutional characterisation) before showing how such monuments are inscribed with values that go beyond the musical, here transgressed or negated in the processes of ruination. This provides the foundation for the analysis that follows, in which some key passages from Silvestrov’s Symphony are examined.

Music as Monument

Silvestrov’s work is a ruin or, rather, it elicits aesthetic experiences in processes analogous to those elicited by ruins. However, the adoption of this view requires a historical-philosophical foundation: an examination of musical monuments, which themselves have close relationships to the canon, in which Silvestrov’s work appears as a

⁵⁷ HUYSSSEN, ANDREAS 2006: ‘Nostalgia for Ruins’ in *Grey Room*, Vol. 2 (pp. 6-21), 9

⁵⁸ SIMMEL 1959: 263

ruin. Studies of the musical canon cite examples of musical monuments, notably Johann Nicolas Forkel's 1802 biography of J.S. Bach, including his call for public performances of Bach's works, something which would, in Forkel's words, "raise a worthy monument to German art"⁵⁹. Alexander Rehding, in his recent *Music and Monumentality*, also notes the complete Bach edition, launched in 1850 by the Leipzig Bach Gesellschaft to mark the Bach centenary, as a musical and national monument.⁶⁰

However, these are not the types of monuments that I focus on here. Instead, I explore points of philosophical and historical significance as they have drifted into, and are performatively constituted by, musical works. In preparation for my latter argument concerning ruins, the foundation I lay here comprises of two central points: first, that music might itself be considered a monument (as well as drawing on "monumentality" in achieving this status), and that this is exemplified in the canon of musical works; and, second, that canonic musical works and monuments both serve to discipline concepts mediative of experience. It is after laying this groundwork that Silvestrov's symphony might be understood as a ruin of musical monuments as these have been canonically constituted, as well as the significance of this process in terms of ruination of the inscribed values by which experience is mediated.

Monuments, writes Marita Sturken, 'have been constructed throughout history to signify a sense of permanence.'⁶¹ This is one of their central features: their highlighting of something past as somehow relevant to the present, and their ability to make us remember, in a certain way, events or values – indeed to help select what is worth collectively remembering. Since Alois Riegl's highly influential 1928 essay on 'The Modern Cult of Monuments'⁶², it has been the historical dimension that has been key to thinking about monuments. Riegl's argument was that, in contrast with monuments that were intentionally constructed, some monuments garnered monumental status over time: 'the traditional, intentional monument could be distinguished from the historical monument, which acquired its monumental status specifically through the passage of time.'⁶³

⁵⁹ Forkel cited in GOEHR, LYDIA 2007 [orig. 2002]: *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works: an Essay in the Philosophy of Music* (Revised Edition), Oxford: Oxford University Press, 205. See also REHDING 2009: 19

⁶⁰ REHDING, ALEXANDER 2009: *Music and Monumentality: Commemoration and Wonderment in Nineteenth-Century Germany*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 144

⁶¹ STURKEN, MARITA [online]: 'Monuments – Historical Overview' in *Encyclopedia of Aesthetics* (ed. Michael Kelly). *Oxford Art Online*. [website: <http://0-www.oxfordartonline.com.catalogue.oxford.ac.uk/subscriber/article/opr/t234/e0362>, accessed: September 4th, 2012]

⁶² RIEGL, ALOIS 1982: 'The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Character and Its Origin' [orig. 1928] (trans. Kurt W. Forster and Diane Ghirardo) in *Oppositions*, No. 25 (pp. 21-51)

⁶³ STURKEN [online] summarising Riegl. This is related also to what Riegl called the "age-value" of monuments, that is, their traces of age and decay. This conflicts with "newness value", the keeping of the

This is highly relevant to a musical context and to the enduring influence of some musical works as monuments to values and ideas beyond the “purely musical”. As Rehding points out, Riegl denied that musical works could be monuments.⁶⁴ However, I concur with Rehding’s argument that Riegl’s thoughts on the monument do have a direct bearing on music.⁶⁵ What the monument and the musical work-concept share, as Sturken puts it above, in reference to the former, is a reaching for a ‘sense of permanence’. In musical terms, we call this supposedly permanent⁶⁶ (imaginary museum⁶⁷) collection of musical works ‘The Canon’. With the ontological change and emergence of the work-concept around 1800, ‘a musical work became something which, because of its special transcendental nature, could be repeated without becoming out-dated’⁶⁸. As Giles Hooper has argued, despite postmodern assertions to the contrary, a canon of classics is still operative within the world of art music. He notes that, ‘an analysis of research interests, undergraduate taught modules and research grant recipients across the Anglo-American sector would most likely reveal that the “hegemony” of Western “high-art” canonic repertoire remains rather more resilient in practice than reports of its imminent or actual collapse tend to suggest in theory’.⁶⁹

In the crystallisation of their permanence, musical works, like monuments, serve to embody values, helping us to preserve and practice them. Philip Bohlman suggests that, due to complicities between ideologies and musical canons musical works are ‘the manifestations of political and ideological principles, such as greatness, genius, importance

old as pristine (as pursued by those who wished to preserve the old). See REHDING 2009: 155. In a musical context, it is perhaps fitting that someone key in bringing newness value to old forms and styles – Igor Stravinsky – spoke famously of one of the monuments of the Western canon, Beethoven’s *Grosse Fuge*, as “contemporary forever” (cited in KERMAN, JOSEPH 1994: ‘Beethoven Quartet Audiences: Actual, Potential, Ideal’ in *The Beethoven Quartet Companion* (ed. Robert Winter & Robert Martin), Berkeley: University of California Press, 21).

⁶⁴ RIEGL 1982: 21

⁶⁵ REHDING 2009: 155. However, I differ from his approach in my focuses explicitly on the role of the canon. In addition, as will become apparent, employing architectural thinking immanently to the processes of musical form allows me to explore the processes within music insofar as these pertain to symphonic music’s status as monument – crucially, monuments falling into ruin.

⁶⁶ Of course, this sense of permanence does not mean that canons do not change.

⁶⁷ GOEHR 2007

⁶⁸ ERAUW, WILLEM 1998: ‘Canon Formation: Some More Reflections on Lydia Goehr’s Imaginary Museum of Musical Works’ in *Acta Musicologica*, Vol. 70, Fasc. 2 (pp. 109-115), 109. It is also noteworthy, following my citation of Beethoven’s Fifth as an exemplar of a musical monument, that Erauw suggests that ‘the paradigmatic example of these immortal works of music were Beethoven’s symphonies, which now form the nucleus of the canon of classical music’ (ERAUW 1998: 109)

⁶⁹ HOOPER, GILES 2006: *The Discourse of Musicology*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 26

to a social group or class of society, etc.’⁷⁰ Monumental works, which present this in giant proportions, have this in common with monuments, which are, as Sturken writes,

a form of pedagogy; they instruct on historical values, persons, and events, designating those that should be passed on, returned to, and learned from. Some monuments speak the language of celebration, while others indicate codes of nobility, valor, sacrifice, and heroism. Monuments can serve a variety of purposes—as tombs for the dead, signs of triumph, honor, or hatred, and as memorials.⁷¹

Potentially, with the ruination of the musical work and the decay of the structures by which musical monument(ality) is constructed, also comes a reformulation of the values, and philosophical-historical legacies mediative of musical experience, that these things embodied. However, as this is something pertinent to this study as a whole, before illustrating this more fully it would first be valuable to outline how, as exemplified in canonic works, music carries within it the “extramusical”, with regard to past-present relations and experience. This I label “inscription”.

Inscription

Musical monuments are perhaps places that make most visible that musical works – even absolute and autonomous musical works – are sites of value. Of course, the comportment of the extramusical in music – or rather, *music’s performative enacting of things that go beyond what is explicitly designated as “musical” (sociality, philosophy, ideology, history...)* – is not limited to musical monuments. However, this is one place in which this might be foregrounded, and hence a place in which reactive critique is made audible. *Inscription* would be an adequate metaphor for this process; cultural, philosophical, economic, somatic values, beyond the “purely musical”, are written into inherited musical materials, and into the faculties by which music is conceived and discussed in an “extra-musical” world.

Adorno writes in *Aesthetic Theory* that, “[h]istory is the content of artworks. To analyze artworks means no less than to become conscious of the history immanently sedimented in them.”⁷² “Inscription” has clear similarities to Adorno’s concept of ‘sedimentation’; that musical material, music’s form, is always ‘pre-formed’⁷³. However,

⁷⁰ BOHLMAN, PHILIP 1992: ‘Epilogue: Musics and Canons’ in *Disciplining Music: Musicology and its Canons* (ed. Katherine Bergeron and Philip Bohlman), Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 201

⁷¹ STURKEN [online]

⁷² ADORNO 1997: 85

⁷³ PADDISON 1997: 93 and 149

whilst Adorno's concept captures the epochal accruing of history ("the extramusical") into music, inscription relies on the always-problematic presence of contemporary subjectivities, differently understood from Adorno's concept. By "problematic" I mean that a dialectic of two extremes occurs: on one side of this dialectic we see that inscriptions might be "read" by the subject, mediating *for* the subject its world, granting the subject of which it is mediative "terms" for the articulation of experience (musical mediations of mind and body, and the relationships between the two, for example). To give a historical example, piano music in the 19th century mediated bourgeois modes of being in the world, of domesticity and education.⁷⁴ However, on the other side of this dialectic, the inscription might not be read but rather the materiality of its form made apparent *to* the subject. For example, in the piano music of Helmut Lachenmann, through processes of distancing, the piano might *itself* become visible as a material object, contrasting with its earlier role as a transparent medium through which subjective concerns were, and musical expression was, mediated. This example forms the basis of chapter 7. In the second conception it is an object that is displayed and contemplated.⁷⁵

This historical role of mediation also underlines another development from Adorno's 'sedimentation'. In addition to the sedimentation of past historical modes of subjectivity into musical material, the concept of inscription underlines the still-present mediation of subjectivity by music. There is a dialectic at play between the limits of "for the subject" and "to the subject" that were given in the piano example above. Whilst musical material is inscribed with historicity (in Adorno's terms, it is 'pre-formed'), because it is always philosophically and social productive it also *inscribes the subject*. This is to take lessons from Adorno's thinking, but in a post-Foucauldian era, and one after Judith Butler's 'performativity'⁷⁶, in which the social world of objects and practices disciplines subjectivity (and disciplines it as recognisable in certain objects and practices). This productive bidirectionality of subject and object is not captured by Adorno's concept, yet it nonetheless finds its kernel in Adorno's valuable concept of sedimentation.

"Inscription", as an image, confers a tangibility onto music's ephemeral material. This material becomes *material* in the sense of being threaded within the materiality of culture, into its relationships with technology, political economies, and our own bodies,

⁷⁴ See LEPPERT, RICHARD 1992: 'Sexual Identity, Death, and the Family Piano' in *19th-Century Music*, Vol. 16, No. 2 (pp. 105-128), 122

⁷⁵ This duality is echoed in the Heideggerian distinction between an object as 'ready-to-hand' (the hammer that is used) and 'present-at-hand' (the hammer that is regarded in its "objectness", perhaps because it is broken or its use is disrupted).

⁷⁶ BUTLER, JUDITH 1988: 'Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory' in *Theatre Journal*, Vol. 40, No. 4 (pp. 519-531)

which may come to be understood through music. Music's materials are so in two senses: firstly, they affectively mediate our experience of the material conditions of existence (most perceptibly, in our own bodies); and, secondly, they may themselves be conceived in terms of a materiality that extends from, and feeds into, wider experiences of the world (for instance, spatial conceptions of form, or in delineating the 'objects' of musical experience).⁷⁷

Through using the term "inscription" I do not wish to suggest that this is a question of authorial intention – of hidden meanings implanted compositionally into modernist music. Generally speaking, it is *not* the case that composers choose to write explicit philosophical content into their music, encoding articulated conceptual thoughts into the text ("script") of the work. It is also not the case that it is then the role of the listener, musical analyst, or philosopher to decode the "real" meaning of what has been "inscribed". This would be closer to an old-fashioned hermeneutics than what I am advocating. Instead, my point is that, to continue the metaphor, there is never a "blank slate" on which the composer may write. The materials handled by composers are always already marked by past musical and social functions, bygone (meta)narratives and associations, and the aging of these through the passing of time. Structures of knowledge mediate experience, and an "excavation of the present" – within inherited sites of knowledge and experience (musical works, musical language) – allows us to critically assess the structures and conditions of contemporary musical experience.⁷⁸

Music's relationship with the body provides an exceptional example: in dance forms of the past (and indeed of the popular present too) one can readily see the structuration of bodies by which one's own body is experienced as well as this body's social relations to the bodies of others. These forms structure time and space, as well as class and custom. These things are not only inscribed "within" the music, but the music inscribes these values into their encultured listener, into the very manner in which they dance, move, relate to one another and to themselves. Technology provides another ready example of inscription, where musical instruments are sites of memory implicitly written

⁷⁷ The materiality of inscription seems particularly apposite for examining musical meaning in a time obsessed with both meaning and materiality. Critical inquiry must be sensitive to this materialism, but with this sensitivity not unreflectively falling prey to it. Yet again, to fail to see musical material's contemporary setting, to fail to cast it in a material light, is to cast it as negative relation to materiality – as transcendental. It is only through mimesis of the dominant, material logic, and the activation of the possibilities of immanent critique therein held as potential, that resistance to the passivity of this logic is maintained. In other words, it is only through thinking materially – through pushing this mode of thought to its limit – that a framework of materiality can be shown to be lacking.

⁷⁸ On this, see Daniel Chua's brief sketch of the archaeology of knowledge on the subject of absolute music, in the preface to CHUA, DANIEL 1999: *Absolute Music and the Construction of Meaning*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

into it. Viewed in this light, notions of how instruments “should” be played, expression elicited from them – as well as questions concerning their relationships with and affiliations to players’ bodies – take on particular historical and aesthetic resonances (focused on in Part III). Even notions of self and society are written into musical material. The “Heroic” dialectical becoming of some of Beethoven’s works is a central example.⁷⁹ The symphony in the 19th century was a space for an imagined reconciling of the dialectic between subject and state, ‘of reconciling personal autonomy with social order’.⁸⁰ Notions of subjectivity – and the historical-philosophical conditions by which musical experiences are mediated (in categories including “the body”, “the mind”, “self and other”, “space”, and “time”) – are written into, passed-down, and related to in recent critical art musics.

As I argue below, in Silvestrov’s symphony, this appears in terms of the structuring of symphonic space, as well as in the dialectics of nature and culture as these are musically articulated. In his work, these become subject to immanent modification through a “ruin aesthetic” that draws both on issues of space, and on the dialectics of nature and culture. It is this work that is now discussed.

SILVESTROV’S “RUIN-SYMPHONY”

Music – (Architectural) Space – Ruins

Musical works have historically performed – that is, brought to life and enabled us to habituate – values that go beyond the musical. I have suggested this above through the related images of *monuments* and *inscription*. The relationship of some late twentieth-century music to the past is one in which our distance from the past, and from the former ways of living through music, is brought to the fore. This, I suggest, reverberates with the processes behind the aesthetics of ruins. Following the epigram from Simmel at the opening of this chapter, I would suggest that in these works, in these terms, we see (hear) past ways of living through music as remote and now departed. Crucially, though, this does not mean that expression and meaning is lost, just as, in the ruin, the departing of previous inhabitants and crumbling of architectural forms does not make these forms meaningless in the present. Ruination is a process that may instead lead to new and

⁷⁹ See BURNHAM 1995 for a classic characterisation, SCHMALFELDT 2011 for a more recent discussion.

⁸⁰ BONDS, MARK EVAN 2006: *Music as Thought: Listening to the Symphony in the Age of Beethoven*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 63. This legacy of finding personal-social harmony through musical harmony still lives on; Edward W. Said, a close supporter from the outset of Daniel Barenboim’s East-West Divan orchestra, suggested recently that contrapuntal music ‘could be a model for post-imperialist thought, because it allowed for the coexistence of different voices without coercing a synthesis between them’ (E.W. Said summarised by BECKLES WILLSON, RACHEL 2009: ‘The Parallax Worlds of the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra’ in *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, Vol. 134, No. 2 (pp. 319-347), 320).

significant aesthetic possibilities, new relationships to the material that stands as ruin. Silvestrov's Symphony No. 5 – as “post-symphony”, as “ruin-symphony” – is one such work in which this aesthetic of ruination is operative.

In its common usage, “ruins” are often enchanted, desolate spaces, large-scale monumental structures abandoned and grown over. Ruins provide a quintessential image of what has vanished from the past and has long decayed’, Ann Laura Stoler writes in summarising how ruins are generally conceived.⁸¹ Silvestrov's ruin-symphony achieves its particular character firstly through the ruination of the large-scale monumental *symphonic structures*, which themselves allude to inscribed traces and degradations of their former selves. Drawing on architectural thinking, this conceptualisation is possible because of long-standing philosophical and historical links found between concepts of musical structure and (architectural) space. Having argued this, I go on to show that ruination (following Georg Simmel's influential model) revolves around a specific relationship between nature and culture. Lastly, I note that this works through a dialectic of what is absent and what is present – present both in terms of what is physically “present” or absent, and also being experienced in the temporal “present” as this relates to the past.

Thinking of music in spatial, even explicitly architectural, terms is a longstanding conceptual framework in the western art music tradition.⁸² This I will quickly outline as a starting point for thinking through monumental space, because it is only through understanding monumental spaces that their ruination, and the significance of this, can be appreciated. Put another way, identifying features leading to this kind of monumental thinking will allow us to assess their decay, modification, and ruination in musical works that are monuments. Spatiality's relationship with temporality is important here (given that music is an explicitly temporal art), as it is also later, though very differently, in theories of ruin.

Three tropes of musical “space” will recur throughout the remaining discussion, each pertaining to an element or elements from Silvestrov's symphony. The first is the *structuring of music as conceived in spatial terms*.⁸³ Hegel drew connections between music and

⁸¹ STOLER, ANN LAURA 2008: ‘Imperial Debris: Reflections on Ruins and Ruination’ in *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 23, Issue 2 (pp. 191-219), 194

⁸² Bonds locates this tendency as becoming widespread in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. See BONDS, MARK EVAN 2010: ‘The Spatial Representation of Musical Form’ in *The Journal of Musicology*, Vol. 27, No. 3 (pp. 265-303), 268.

⁸³ Architecture's connection with music is deep-seated and shapes how we think and talk about music. Intellectual disciplines, musicology included, find sustenance in one another. As Eleanor Selfridge-Field puts it, ‘studies of musical form (e.g., arch) and formal devices (e.g., bridges) are metaphorically indebted to architecture, even as studies of timbre (“instrumental color” and the more generic “sound color”) are metaphorically indebted to painting’. See SELFRIDGE-FIELD, ELEANOR 1990: ‘Reflections on Technology and Musicology’ in *Acta Musicologica*, Vol. 62, Fasc. 2/3 (pp. 302-314), 302.

architecture in regard to structure, proportion, and balance.⁸⁴ In his *Philosophy of Fine Art*, he identified a shared dialectic of the natural and human as immanent to architecture and to music, a dialectic which also plays its role in Simmel's conception of ruins, as examined below:

...music may be ... compared with architecture, which does not accept its forms from what is actually presented, but as the creation of human invention, in order to inform them, partly according to the laws of gravity, and in part according to the rules of symmetry and harmonious coordination. Music does the same thing in its own sphere, in so far as it from one point of view follows the harmonious laws of tone which depend on qualitative relations independently of the expression of emotion, and in another aspect of it, in the recurrence of time and rhythm no less than in the further development of the tones themselves, in many respects is subject to the forms of regularity and symmetry.⁸⁵

Johann Mattheson used architectural imagery to articulate the structuring of music, in suggesting that a composer properly orders "all the sections and elements in the melody, or in an entire musical work, almost in the manner in which one arranges a building and sketches out a draft or an outline, a ground-plan, in order to show where, for example, a hall, a room, chamber, etc."⁸⁶ These connections between music and architecture, and the interrelationships between time and space, are complemented by the widespread Romantic notion of architecture as "frozen music".⁸⁷ Furthermore, spatial and temporal models often work in conjunction, drawing on one another. As Bonds puts it, 'Form is both a [temporal] process and a [spatial] structure, and accounts of form routinely acknowledge this dual nature'.⁸⁸

In both the ruin and the ruin-symphony previous architectural and musical functions are visible/audible yet are decayed, their inscribed significances being degraded. This can be seen in Silvestrov's deploying of materials. Legacies of symphonic, formal space are evoked. Svetlana Savenko's observation that 'one can easily discern in his

⁸⁴ HEGEL, GEORG WILHELM FRIEDRICH 1920: *The Philosophy of Fine Art* (trans F.P.B. Osmaston), Vol. III, London: Bells and Sons, 346-347

⁸⁵ HEGEL 1920: 346

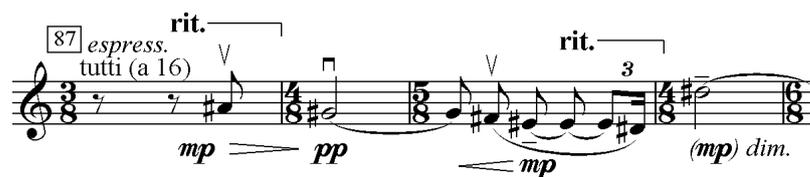
⁸⁶ Mattheson cited in BONDS 2010: 268-269

⁸⁷ See BONDS 2010: 269 and MENIN, SARAH 1996: 'Spatial Soundings: Aalto and Sibelius' in *Musical Semiotics in Growth* (ed. Eero Tarasti), Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 372. The origin of this famous phrase has been attributed to various writers, including Schelling, Novalis, and Goethe.

⁸⁸ BONDS 2010: 266. Note that this process/structure model echoes the generative/conformational model of musical form found in Bonds's earlier *Wordless Rhetoric* (BONDS, MARK EVAN 1991: *Wordless Rhetoric: Musical Form and the Metaphor of the Oration*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press).

symphony the contours of sonata form⁸⁹ is of importance here, as these ‘contours’ can be seen as more of a tendency rather than as an affirmed/affirming structuring of normative musical space (and, by extension, temporality too⁹⁰). However, points of structural reference are not taken as concrete boundaries so much as evocations defined by semipermeability. Notably, the appearance of melodic material in the strings at bar 727 (fig. 87, Ex. 2), which was outlined originally (albeit in a slightly different form) at bar 73 (fig. 10, Ex. 1), can be heard as a moment of sonata-like recapitulatory return. However, this is a return that is announced dramatically rather than emerging teleologically, as the result of an unproblematic tonal framework. This markedly “subjective” material returns, but through neither triumph nor overcoming. Past archetypes show through, though without the concurrent inhabiting of these spaces as they were. This characteristic problematisation of structure is explored more fully below.

Ex. 2, Silvestrov: Symphony No. 5, returning melody, first violins, bar 727 (fig. 87)



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As well as at the level of structure, this historicity of material can also be observed – as decayed trace – at the micro-level, at the level of tropes or topics that are situated *within* the spaces of Silvestrov’s decaying symphonic structures, as heard in the present. Fragments of allusive materials enter, return, and dissipate. This can be heard, for example, in moments of “subjective” intervention, when markedly soloistic, often melodic, material enters that bears traces of past ways of “doing” musical subjectivity (a prime example of what Adorno calls ‘sedimentation’). An entry of the first clarinet, starting at the upbeat to bar 612, provides an excellent example. Here, Mozartian embellishments appear in descending phrases reminiscent of classical cadential approaches, but which never resolve in terms of classical syntax. These return again and again, interspersed with smudged dissonant clusters in the strings, which modify themselves in response to the soloist, but never achieve consonance with it. Indeed, these interactions make up a significant portion of the work, about one hundred bars, from bars 607 (fig. 75) to approximately bar 700. In

⁸⁹ SAVENKO 1998: 76

⁹⁰ Savenko goes on to note that, despite sonata form being evoked, and despite sonata form being a processually driven form, temporal development is eschewed in the name of stasis. See SAVENKO 1998: 76

addition, a performance note instructs that the soloist ‘should sound as if from afar, now approaching, now moving away (with careful observance of dynamic nuances)’, further distancing the embellished material from being situated unproblematically within the musical space. As such, traces of past subjectivities show through the musical material, but their inscription – what is philosophical-historically “written into” this material – is degraded, “written over”. This takes a literal form where orchestral timbres appear in superimposition over the clear articulation of individually expressive, soloistic moments, and a figurative one where the deploying of subjective materials as fragmented suggests they cannot be heard as the expression of a synthesised subjective whole.

Ex. 3, Silvestrov: Symphony No. 5, first clarinet’s solo line, bars 611-615

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A trace of a Romantic functioning of instrumentation, as an articulation of subjectivity within the musical space, is called on at bar 703. This is the point in the work when the melodic material that appeared in the strings (mentioned above, originally found at bar 73) returns for its “recapitulation”. This return is pre-empted by the entry of fragments of this melody by a solo violin, this material being explored across far-reaching leaps upward in a high tessitura. This recalls a Romantically idiomatic use of a solo violin, acting first as an expression of individuated agency, one whose material is then taken into the orchestral texture wholesale. This subsumption of the soloist’s material occurs principally at bar 727, and is confirmed in being echoed by soloistic entries in the brass from 743 onwards.⁹¹ Inscribed into the symphony’s orchestration are philosophical-historical legacies going beyond the immediate, yet dialectically entangled with it. It is in both the drawing upon these inherited habitations of the musical space, and in their transgression, that the ruination of symphonic architecture becomes audible. The ruin aesthetic that stems dually from alluded-to-but-never-fully-present structures, and reference to past ways in which these structures were inhabited, becomes clearer in the musically immanent, dialectic treatment of culture and nature that is inscribed into them.

⁹¹ This instrumental treatment recalls Luciano Berio’s words, that the violin ‘has an imposing legacy, and for this reason, whichever way it is played, it expresses that history and heritage’ (BERIO 2006: 27).

Spirit and Gravity

Georg Simmel's 1911 essay, 'The Ruin', is a far-reaching and, as Huyssen has pointed out⁹², overtly Romantic analysis of what makes ruins evocative: ruins play between the categories of man and nature, foregrounding the return of the one into the other.⁹³ However, I suggest that, even if we do not fully accept this formulation, Simmel's analysis is highly relevant to the ruin aesthetics of Silvestrov's Symphony. This is a symphony in which we not only find reference to past cultural forms – to the human – but also to the natural, something most readily recognisable in the appearance of symbols of the natural (via pastoral-allusive topical devices such as drones and horn calls) and in some “non-musical” techniques (like audible breath sounds produced by some of the winds and brass). Simmel discusses architectural ruins specifically, but – given my outlining above of music's spatial dimensions – I hope that it is clear that some of his reflections on the aesthetics of ruins are applicable to a discussion of Silvestrov's musical work.

Simmel saw architecture as a dialectical art drawing together man and nature. It was, for him, a counterbalancing of the 'will of the spirit' and 'the necessity of nature', 'in which the soul in its upward striving and nature in its gravity are held in balance'.⁹⁴ This, he claimed, distinguished it from the other arts, in which natural laws are 'made dumbly submissive' to the human side – composition, invention – the result of which, if achieved correctly, would absorb and hide the natural within it.⁹⁵ Architecture, in contrast with the other arts (Simmel cites poetry, painting, and music), uses nature's laws to win over and determine itself, leading to 'the most sublime victory of the spirit over nature'.⁹⁶

This is potentially also the case in musical contexts: what of Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*? Its opening motif provides surely the most prototypical image of the will of the spirit reaching upwards, a rise in tension against the force of gravity, a desiring for resolution, and hence a victory of the spirit over nature, one which dialectically draws on the laws of Reality, beyond mere representation, in achieving this goal.⁹⁷ The prelude to *Rheingold*, built over a monumental E-flat overtone series, provides another excellent example of the upward striving of the spirit as determining itself both over and through nature. It seems a Romantic aesthetic of music may not be so far from Simmel's

⁹² HUYSSSEN 2006: 16

⁹³ SIMMEL 1959

⁹⁴ SIMMEL 1959: 259

⁹⁵ SIMMEL 1959: 259

⁹⁶ SIMMEL 1959: 259

⁹⁷ Schopenhauer's philosophy and its impact upon Wagner rightly springs to mind here.

architectural Romanticism, and may be helpful in coming to terms with Silvestrov's "neoromanticism".⁹⁸

For Simmel, nature connoted an inescapable gravity – a return to the earth – as opposed to the upward spirit of the will: 'What has led the building upward is human will', whereas what gives the ruin 'its present appearance is the brute, downward dragging, corroding, crumbling power of nature.'⁹⁹ The upward and the downward are terms with immediate musical resonances, although it would be mistaken to map this relationship in directly musical terms, where "up is spirit" and "down is gravity". The connection with the Romanticism of Wagner's age has already been cited as an example. Another is provided by the musical thought of Paul Hindemith, for whom tonal pitch space – for him, tonality explicitly – "is a natural force, like gravity".¹⁰⁰ It is a law to be respected by composers, just as the 'carpenter would not think of disregarding the natural properties of his wood and putting it together any old way without regard to its grain'.¹⁰¹ These words supplement, albeit in an explicitly musical context, Simmel's reasoning behind his awe of architecture: that nature is overcome only through a dialectic that draws on its laws with nature's other, higher culture, as its end. Importantly, these references do not mean that I advocate an acceptance of Hindemith or Wagner's musical or Simmel or Hegel's philosophical accounts of nature. Rather, it is to highlight that the traditions of music and philosophy draw on each other, and that issues of nature and culture have been taken immanently into musical material. Music and architecture's dialectics of gravity and spirit – and these relations of culture and nature to processes of monumentality and ruination – may be found to be evocative of aesthetic significance in one another.

The neo-Romantic character of Silvestrov's melodic material carries with it potential associations of the will of the spirit; other materials, drones, horn calls, and breath-like phrasing, inscriptions of the natural. I will illustrate that the gravity of nature in particular – as Simmel's 'brute, downward dragging, corroding, crumbling power' (see above) – has a part to play in bringing ruination to those expressive structures built up through the dialectical constructions of spirit and nature that are immanent to both music and architecture.

⁹⁸ Silvestrov has himself referred to his music with this term (see SAVENKO 1998: 70).

⁹⁹ SIMMEL 1959: 261

¹⁰⁰ Hindemith cited in WHITESELL, LLOYD 2004: 'Twentieth-Century Tonality, or Breaking Up is Hard to Do' in *The Pleasure of Modern Music* (ed. Arved Ashby), Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 107

¹⁰¹ Hindemith cited in WHITESELL 2004: 108

Ex. 4, Silvestrov: Symphony No. 5, figs. 10-12 (upbeat to bar 73-88), reduction

The melody that appears in the strings from fig. 10 (bar 73), onwards is, as has been discussed above, thematic material of expressive and structural importance, appearing later in something akin to a moment of recapitulation (Ex. 4 shows a reduction of the passage from fig. 10 onwards). It revolves around a series of small descents and greater leaps upwards, a continual rise towards an apex. Once this is achieved (bar 85) cluster material almost immediately intervenes into the texture (bar 86, fig. 12) and, as an apparent result of this, fragments of the melody material appear across the orchestra (and are no longer limited to the strings). A tritone movement in the bass (A to E-flat), dissonant to the third-related sequential movement established so far, parallels this interjection, and affirms its otherness. The melody then returns (bar 94) but without the impassioned strength it had before.

This rising movement – especially when considered as dramatically “at odds” with another force (the cluster material’s intervention) – can be understood as drawing on a late-Romantic musical palette, and alluding to a soundworld evoking a notion of “spirit”. It is a focal (vocal?) point, an image of a subjective, expressive voice.¹⁰² The string writing, and the harps’ accompanimental figures too, evoke, in the manner of the Adagietto from Mahler’s Fifth, the ‘presentation of an overtly “authentic” voice’¹⁰³. But a dialectic is at work here: the melody also emphasises the “naturalness” of this expression; growing and overcoming gravity through balance, proportion, and structuring through sequence.¹⁰⁴ However, despite these potentially “natural” qualities, melodic materials’ spirited, expressive qualities are foregrounded – especially that of the prominent melody from figure 10 onwards, given its character of continually reaching upwards. The laws of nature

¹⁰² Julian Johnson’s concept of “voice”, as subjective presence in music, is relevant here. See JOHNSON, JULIAN 2009: *Mahler’s Voices: Expression and Irony in the Songs and Symphonies*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 3-17. Furthermore, as I go on to discuss (in chapter 3), the identification of such moments or materials of “subjective presence” is an experiential act itself located in and reliant upon a larger web of philosophical-historically inherited ideas.

¹⁰³ JOHNSON 2009: 115

¹⁰⁴ Recall Hegel’s words quoted at length above, on both music and architecture as calling on the dialectics of nature – both on its gravitational and stabilising effects, and on its laws of proportion and balance.

– of a nature that, it must be remembered, is culturally mediated – enable an expressive subject to speak through and over it.

This dialectic of spirit and nature inverts as the movement ends. Rather than affirmation, we hear negation, comparable to that which Adorno proposed as occurring at the end of Mahler's Sixth Symphony.¹⁰⁵ More precisely, in terms of ruination, and in a manner akin to Simmel's dialectics of ruin, nature's gravity reclaims the symphonic architecture built above and through it. This can be seen in three complementary processes. Firstly, sonic imagery calls upon symbols of the natural, or traces thereof, as taken within the musical language. This first dimension is the most readily perceptible. Crucially, immanent *structural* processes supplement these semantics of the natural, themselves situated within the symphonic space. A second process is hence at play. This concerns a large-scale collapse in the structural background. Lastly, a descent via a series of fifth motives (themselves evocative of horn calls which allude to the natural/the pastoral) brings together the semantic surface's first device and the musical structure's second, reconfirming both. These three dimensions together act towards a dual character of the ending's material: as both imagistically representing and processually embodying the ruination of symphonic architecture.

This first semantic dimension draws on elements introduced earlier in the work, now brought together, elements complicit in foregrounding temporal stasis. Importantly, an ahistorical, atemporal character is often considered a hallmark of musical constructions of nature, evoking a kind of mythic time that goes beyond that which might be humanly experienced. As Julian Johnson puts it,

Nature music, in its apparent self-containment and avoidance of linear motion, seems to suspend time. In this it seems to offer an analogy for our experience of spaciousness in which there is little or no movement. Space without perceived directed movement appears timeless.¹⁰⁶

Elements of this "eternal time" are present at the opening of the work, as well at its close, suggesting an idea of nature and timelessness that continues beyond human activity and expression as it occurs within the work. This strategy – essentially a positing of culture and humans' relation to nature or the "beyond human" – has its own musical-historical legacy, finding precedents in works like Charles Ives's *Central Park in the Dark*, which opens and closes with material connoting eternal timelessness. Material tropes of timelessness also

¹⁰⁵ ADORNO 1996: 138

¹⁰⁶ JOHNSON, JULIAN 1999: *Webern and the Transformation of Nature*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 232

enter intermittently throughout the work and often coexist simultaneously with other materials. Most prominently, pauses in melodic phrasing, in which phrases stand still, “outside” of time, become particularly prominent in a passage starting at figure 34, but are not limited to this section.¹⁰⁷

Ex. 5, Silvestrov, Symphony No. 5: first harp, bar 300



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Stasis is explored in Silvestrov’s symphony, which, as suggested above, may highlight the spatial dimension of musical experience. Indeed, the lack of development generally heard in the work has led Savenko to call this a ‘static composition’.¹⁰⁸ This can be heard prominently in the passage from figs. 34-44, in which static bars of “inserts” – filled with sustained pitches in the strings and downward flourishes in the first harp (Ex. 5) – prolong moments that are unfolding temporally.

¹⁰⁷ Moments like this have led Savenko to comment that the ‘natural and the cultivated in this symphony are not confronted at all but closely blended, with one growing out of the other and dissolving in it. The unity of two fundamental principles, former often conflicting, carries a profound philosophical message: two facets of the resplendent being appearing as if for the last time in the resigned tension of a parting’. SAVENKO 1998: 75

¹⁰⁸ SAVENKO 1998: 75-76

Ex. 6, Silvestrov: Symphony No. 5: chromatic saturation in the strings (only the strings shown), bars 802-805

The musical score is organized into five sections:

- VI. I (Violin I):** Staves 1, 7, 9-10, 11, 13, 15. Features 'sul tasto solo' passages with triplets and dynamics *pp* and *ppp*.
- VI. II (Violin II):** Staves 1-4, 5-8, 9-12, 13-14. Shows dense chromatic textures with various articulations.
- Va. (Viola):** Staves 1-4, 5-8, 9-12. Includes 'solo (1) (sul tasto)', 'solo (5) (sul tasto)', and 'solo (9) (sul tasto)' passages.
- Vc. (Violoncello):** Staves 1-6, 7-8, 9-10. Includes 'solo (7) (sul tasto)' and 'solo (9) (sul tasto)' passages.
- Cb. (div.) (Contrabasso):** Staff 9-10. Includes 'solo (9) (sul tasto)' passage.

Tempo markings: Moderato (♩) 3/8, rit. → (Adagio) 4/4, Andante (♩) 4/4.

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The second of the three musical tropes of space is important here: the foregrounding of the spatial through the apparent cessation of the temporal. Indeed, this second conceptualisation has a distinctly modernist, twentieth-century flavour, as encapsulated in Adorno's famous essay 'On Some Relationships Between Music and Painting'¹⁰⁹. The dialectic of time and space was also of importance here, and at the very

¹⁰⁹ ADORNO, THEODOR 1995 [orig. 1965]: 'On Some Relationships between Music and Painting' (trans. Susan Gillespie) in *The Musical Quarterly*, Vol. 79, No. 1 (pp. 66-79)

opening of his essay Adorno summarises this dialectic through one of his characteristic paradoxes:

The self-evident, that music is a temporal art, that it unfolds in time, means, in the dual sense, that time is not self-evident for it, that it has time as its problem. It must create temporal relationships as among its constituent parts, justify their temporal relationships, synthesize them through time.¹¹⁰

Adorno suggests that in some music time is conceived spatially, in an acute sense, where time remains as time but becomes something conceived as organised in a painterly fashion. It is ‘planned, disposed of, organized from the top down as a whole, as only visual surfaces once where’.¹¹¹ Adorno says of this music that it is typified in music that is, ‘as people like to say nowadays, composed of “blocks”’.¹¹² Prominent musical examples would include some of Igor Stravinsky and Morton Feldman’s works which connote being static, rather than temporal becoming.¹¹³ Indeed, as Johnson suggests, ‘[p]erhaps the single most important difference between the music of the twentieth century and the music that preceded it is its different construction of musical time.’¹¹⁴ He goes on to underline that this changing conception of time may also modify our relation with space: ‘with that different construction of musical time often comes a heightened sense of the spatial.’¹¹⁵

This stasis becomes exceptional towards the end of the symphony. Echoes of the past appear in traces of past symphonic spaces throughout the symphony as a whole, but it is in the closing passages that stasis, and a collapse of spirit into nature, becomes foregrounded. Alongside temporal stasis in the form of “inserts”, one hears harmonic stasis. This is achieved, firstly, in terms of a suspension of harmonic movement and, secondly, through the chromatic saturation of the pitch space; a focus on the amorphous over the articulated. This fall into suspended temporality is rhetorically confirmed by downwards sweeping gestures carried across the strings, triggered at bars 797 (fig. 94) and bar 802 (see Ex. 6). This is supplemented by a rhetorical device bringing with it associations of the natural: the sounds of wind and brass players blowing air (without producing pitch) through their instruments (for example, in bars 810-812). These features come together to mediate a construction of nature – although, given the use of timbre and

¹¹⁰ ADORNO 1995: 66

¹¹¹ ADORNO 1995: 68

¹¹² ADORNO 1995: 68

¹¹³ I explore the relationship between Feldman’s music, the cessation of temporality, and desire in chapter 6, below.

¹¹⁴ JOHNSON 1999: 233

¹¹⁵ JOHNSON 1999: 233

clusters, a distinctly modernist nature – that then itself decays into silence. Through stasis, space is highlighted. Indeed, this stasis highlights a specifically modern space, one in which inherited symphonic structurings of musical space are brought into ruin.

Ex. 7, Silvestrov: Symphony No. 5, Figs. 90-92 (upbeat to bar 758-777), reduction

A large-scale structural descent precedes this final array of sonic imagery; the gravity of nature drags downwards before it is made audibly present on the semantic surface. From fig. 90 onwards we hear the returning melody characterised by descent. Its leaps upward do not contradict this – they are octave displacements which descend again, thus reconfirming downwards motion. As can be seen from the reduction (Ex. 7), this line in the violins and violas revolves around an A-flat/G-sharp centre. This is important for two reasons. Firstly, it stabilises the descent, giving it a centre of “gravitational pull”. Secondly, the relation of the bass to the instants at which the A-flat/G-sharp centre is momentarily set upon is important, as it suggests a harmonic coherence to this extended passage which is itself constitutive of a descent, a huge structural exhalation. This can be observed in the semitone movement embedded in the line of those instruments given the role of the bass, the double basses and the cellos (players 8-10): E-flat, at fig. 90; D-natural, in the bass below the G-sharp just before fig. 91; and, finally, D-flat, beneath the high A-flat preceding fig. 92. It should also be noted that this bass line is related to that heard originally supporting the melody at fig. 10, but now that movement by minor-thirds in the bass is favoured over that of major-thirds as before (these collections are shown bracketed in the background diagrams).

Ex. 8, Silvestrov: Symphony No. 5, bar 772 to end, reduction

Arriving at fig. 92, the ear is led by a descent at a surface rather than the background level. A series of fifths, so important to the rising contour of the original melody at fig. 10 (Ex. 1), becomes the basis of a sequence of motifs that fall away. The instrumentation of these is spread across the orchestra, and is generally doubled in the strings, as illustrated in Ex. 8. Indeed, the rising fifth motif is pre-echoed earlier in the movement, prominently in the cor anglais and first clarinet at bar 346. Despite the foregrounding of the fifth motif's descent, harmonic processes play a role too, with this movement being echoed at a larger level in the bass: a D-flat moves to an F-sharp, and then a C-natural to an F-natural, which brings the symphony to a close.

However, this should not be seen as a moment of resolution, instead it further illustrates the ruination of symphonic architecture at work in the symphony, its process of self-negation. The long-range bass movement D-flat (C-sharp) to F-sharp, whilst reminiscent of a large-scale structural resolution, does not affirm any real closure. This is surprising as this contradicts F-sharp major's earlier establishment as a centre with strong tonal tendencies. Indeed, an extended passage appears (from fig. 20 onwards) that, for the most part, appears in this key. A key signature even appears for the first time, of six sharps. However, at the end of the movement, this return to material reminiscent of F-sharp is quickly undercut by the re-emergence of cluster material. In addition, a movement by a fifth in the bass – C-natural to F-natural – mirrors the D-flat (C-sharp) to F-sharp movement but a semitone "out". This large-scale gesture is also submerged in a chromatically saturated texture and, furthermore, is unmoored from the string's material still connotative of F-sharp that sits above it. Both "cadences" show through, but lose their functionality, written over as palimpsests of structures of closure. And, as has already been outlined above, the material that envelops this problematic articulation of the musical space connotes imagery of a myriad, natural timelessness.

Georg Simmel insisted that, for the ruin to be evocative, enough must remain of the original form for there to be a visible relation between spirit and nature – forms endangered by the dialectic of spirit and nature must still remain perceptible. In his architectural terms he wrote that, for this reason, the 'stumps of the pillars of the Forum Romanum are simply ugly and nothing else, while a pillar crumbled – say, halfway down – can generate a maximum of charm'¹¹⁶. In Silvestrov's Symphony No. 5 one can hear an audible equivalent to the visibility of the architectural ruin. The connection is even stronger than this: many of the same aesthetic processes are at work in both, with music and architecture sharing both historically established points of contact as well as immanent

¹¹⁶ SIMMEL 1959: 265

dialectics of culture and nature. Sonic imagery of the natural, growing over inscribed symphonic structures, alongside the gravitational collapse of these same structures, confirms Silvestrov's work as "ruin-symphony".

Past as Absent/Present

Alongside these immanent musical ("interior") features can be added another dimension of ruination (concerning "exteriority"), this work's relationship to others, as "post" to "The Symphony". I spoke of this at the opening as the work's "institutional" dimension. However, this relationship first requires the conception of the work as some kind of object to which exterior relation might be posited (i.e., to other works, to the canon). This brings us to the last of the three spatial conceptualisations of music. Mark Evan Bonds has recently outlined this third spatial idea in detail: *that of the grasping of music – "the work itself" – as outside of time*. Stepping outside of time – abstracting – allows the work to be considered as *a* work rather than a fleeting series of sonic temporal moments.¹¹⁷ The work is posited, positioned, as an object. This enables us to ask what the relation of this symphony is as an object set against, beside, or complementary to the practice of "The Symphony" as it has been established historically and philosophically through the canon.

Some illumination of this dimension of Silvestrov's "post-symphony" comes from the composer's words on another one of his "post-" forms, the postlude:

[The] "Postlude" is conceived of as the act of gathering resonances, as it were – or else as the form which supposes the existence of some text which, without being included into the given text, is in some way connected with it. Thus, the form is open – though not, as would be more usual, at the end, but at the beginning.¹¹⁸

The form of the postlude, in other words, suggests a relation to something outside of itself, with the absence of this thing from the work itself being one of its defining characteristics. This same thinking, I suggest, impacts not only the postlude but the post-symphony, with the reverberation of the musical canon filling the symphonic space whilst not being made present as such. Silvestrov said that his Fifth Symphony was "something not so much beginning, as responding to something already uttered"¹¹⁹. Past forms – like the "cadences" at the end of the work – are remembered within the space, but are not (unproblematically) operative in articulating the musical space of the work. At the same

¹¹⁷ BONDS 2010: 265-266

¹¹⁸ Silvestrov cited in HAKOBIAN 1998: 310

¹¹⁹ Silvestrov cited in SCHMELZ, PETER 2009: *Such Freedom, If Only Musical: Unofficial Soviet Music during the Thaw*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 261

time, of course, elements from the past *are* drawn on in articulating the musical space, but the boundaries of these are often transgressed. ‘In the ruin’, as Walter Benjamin famously put it, ‘history has physically merged into the setting. And in this guise history does not assume the form of the process of eternal life so much as that of irresistible decay’.¹²⁰ In this symphony, musical materials are grown over, sitting in that liminal space between being and not, although always carrying in them traces of their pasts.

Ex. 9, Silvestrov: Symphony No. 5, bars 479-483, beginning of the piano's solo material

This is observable both in the temporal flow, moment to moment, and in the structuring of symphonic space at a larger, abstracted level. At the local level, historically allusive fragments appear. The “Mozartian” embellishments found in the clarinet’s solo starting at bar 612 (as discussed above) provides one example of this at its smallest level. This moment suggests the potential presence of classical expression, but a problematic one owing to the absence of a complicit classical syntax unpinning this – a failure to structure the musical space, for this expressive figure, such as it should be. A more sustained episode of the “problematic” presence of expression appears in a passage revolving around fragments of melody in the solo piano, starting at bar 479 (Ex. 9). In addition to being marked *lontanato*, a performance instruction accompanies the piano part at this point – ‘Piano: very gentle and delicately, as if from afar’ – something immediately suggesting questions of presence and absence in a very literal sense. The background to this solo is relatively scarce and static. Clusters appear in the strings, breath sounds in the winds and brass, and fragments of previously heard harmonic colours in the pitched percussion. The piano’s phrases appear homeless amongst the orchestral textures, which themselves intercede and discolour the piano’s line through dissonance, or sit beside it oblivious of it. The resonance at the end of the piano’s final melodic fragment (which begins on the upbeat to bar 494) is followed by these three orchestral materials heard simultaneously; a kind of dissonant reverberation as all that remains of it in a now empty (static) space (fig. 64).

¹²⁰ BENJAMIN 2003: 177-178

This dialectic of presence and absence also appears at the level of structure. As already observed, principles of sonata form are recalled but not enacted. This dialectic also arises in Silvestrov's repeated evasion of clear objects of experiential focus. In particular, a swirling (often descending) figure is present throughout much of the work. It is given particular prominence in the first harp from fig. 34 onwards, as cited in Ex. 5. However, it appears in a constellation of multiple variants, without an archetypal identity – recalling Adorno's view on Mahler that he conceived of 'theme as gestalt'¹²¹. Its presence is never affirmed and as such it avoids being arrested through immediate experience. It is given an aura of being out of reach; 'Aura, from the Hebrew word for light, was defined by Benjamin as an experience of distance, a mist of nostalgia that does not allow for possession of the object of desire'.¹²² This distance is a quality echoed in many other materials; many of the melodies in the work appear and dissipate such as to never guarantee their ontological firmness.¹²³

Silvestrov's Symphony No. 5 performs a ruination of structured symphonic spaces. This principally comes through a specific treatment of the dialectics of nature and culture as has been inscribed into inherited musical materials. As such, I have illustrated that Simmel's dialectics of culture and nature, insofar as these have a role to play in the aesthetics of ruins, are also pertinent to the aesthetics of this symphony. This aesthetic of ruination is also enabled through longstanding conceptual links shared between conceptions of music and architecture. With this ruination inscriptions are modified through decay and transgression.

This symphony is itself monumental – drawing on the Romantic symphonic tradition – whilst at same time the ruination of symphonic monuments of the past is made audible. But, this ruination, based in decay, does not sanction a view that the traditions on which it draws are somehow negated, no longer relevant, or concealed in an inaccessible past. Rather, the ruin is reminiscent of the permanent transience of these objects of experience – or, as Svetlana Boym puts it, the 'ruin is not merely something that reminds us of the past; it is also a reminder of the future, when our present becomes history'¹²⁴. This is not the end of a legacy – or even a comment on the "end of history" – but rather an immanently musical reconfiguration of the entangled dialectics of culture and nature, the spatial and the temporal, and past, present, and future.

¹²¹ ADORNO 1996: 88

¹²² Boym summarising Benjamin on *aura* in BOYM, SVETLANA 2001: *The Future of Nostalgia*, New York: Basic Books, 45

¹²³ I focus in detail on the idea of distance in chapter 3 on Kancheli's Fifth Symphony

¹²⁴ BOYM 2001: 79

2. Interlude: Contemporary Musical Discourse and the “Objects” of Experience



– Arman, *Fagot de clarinettes* (1976)¹²⁵

If time is the medium that, as flowing, seems to resist every reification, nevertheless music’s temporality is the very aspect through which it actually congeals into something that survives independently – an object, a thing, so to speak.

– Theodor Adorno,
‘On the Relationship Between Music and Painting’¹²⁶

In music from the late 20th century onwards, one often hears a critical investigation of distinct “musical objects”, objects *on which* critical focus may be brought to bear or *from which* – and from their entanglement with temporal unfolding – significant aesthetic experiences are elicited. As in the contemporary plastic arts of this period, we are often confronted with *something*, or some constellation of objects. This begs us to ask, “what is this before us?” This comes through in multiple, interrelated dimensions: a destabilising of the historicity of the work-concept as reified object, an attending to objectified historical materials within musical works, or to the literal instrumental objects that facilitate musical performance (and extramusical performativities), to give just three examples. But these are

¹²⁵ [website: http://0-www.oxfordartonline.com.catalogue.urls.lon.ac.uk/subscriber/popup_fig/img/grove/art/F018137, accessed 30th March, 2012] © 2007 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York, photo credit: CNAC/MNAM/Dist. Réunion des Musées Nationaux / Art Resource, NY

¹²⁶ ADORNO 1995: 66

all also a concentrating on these objects as they have historically mediated musical experience, and a negotiation of these relationships as entailed in the present.

To this end, I hope to formulate the term *object* as a useful category for coming to terms with the experiencing of late 20th- and early 21st-century critical musics. This word carries much weight already, resonating with phenomenology (the object of perception), critiques of commodity exchange (objectification), German Idealism (subject-object), psychoanalytic theories (“love object”), and many other perspectives besides. It also exists, informally at least, in the musicological parlance when talking about how a composer handles a certain musical idea of the musical material. The term “object” is occasionally used in discussions of (20th- and early 21st-century) music, often informally. For instance, Alastair Williams writes that

music may allude to subjectivities and meanings by referencing particular “objects.” Such objects may include the sound worlds brought into music by the sampler, while film music provides a vocabulary of established semiotic associations. A convention linking triadic horn themes with heroic subjectivity, for example, extends from the Austro-German symphonic tradition to the film scores of John Williams.¹²⁷

Brian Ferneyhough contemplates, in his thicket-like writing style, the role in composition of ‘objects considered as free-floatingly mobile structural radicals possessing the potential to unfold and reproduce themselves in independently meaningful linear trajectories’¹²⁸. Luciano Berio, in his Norton Lectures¹²⁹, made reference to ‘[t]he embittered, jostling expressive “objects” that populate Mahler’s world’¹³⁰. Indeed, this very informality – that the concept lacks the need for stable formalisation – is telling as to how deep-rooted “the object” is as a conceptual device. My suggestion is that musical objects may be taken seriously as material elements dialectically related to the situations constitutive of them and are themselves mediative of musical experiences affected through them. They therefore may come to help us focus upon questions of historicity and mediation in this music.

This conceptualisation of these objects becomes important in so far as it helps articulate a distinct relationship between part and whole in musical works of the era in question – that is, the ways in which an object might sit in a larger context. How, for example, objectified moments of historical musical material are articulated within a musical

¹²⁷ WILLIAMS, ALASTAIR 1999: ‘Adorno and the Semantics of Modernism’ in *Perspectives of New Music*, Vol. 37, No. 2 (pp. 29-50), 39

¹²⁸ FERNEYHOUGH, BRIAN 1995: *Collected Writings* (ed. James Boros and Richard Toop, foreword by Jonathan Harvey), Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 34-35

¹²⁹ published as BERIO 2006

¹³⁰ BERIO 2006: 39

work, and what impact this has on its significance.¹³¹ Following this, it also becomes valuable as a basic concept (one developed in later chapters) that enables a focus on individual moments – on objects of musical and experiential focus – as these themselves are inscribed with historical and philosophical content, acting as nodal points around which multifarious experiential issues coalesce. In addition, the relative positioning of these objects – how discourse is organised – bespeaks significances beyond mere formal relations; the significance of an objectified “Otherness” is defined differentially with and/or against the articulation of Self, for example. My attending to this ‘object-like’ treatment of musical materials is by extension to suggest that this treatment becomes a significant dimension by which aesthetic experiences are elicited in music of the late 20th and early 21st centuries (even whilst kernels of these ‘object-like’ processes might be found in earlier musics).

Thus, “the object” is not merely an explanatory tool – a conceptual filter through which music is understood – rather, it comes to be through the music. This is something dependent both on history (on what are prejudiced to be points of focus in art music – as articulated through pitch relationships, dramatic oppositions, and so on) and on the immediate, local context of the work being experienced (how the work focuses upon historical material for us, eliciting new meanings from past materials, or articulates identities through affinities and differences intramusically). The object can thus be anything expressing *identity*, anything that has a provisional divisibility from, and gives shape to, the continuum of subjective experience. (I focus upon the processes by which this division takes place in Part II, through developing Julia Kristeva’s concept of the *thetic*.) Intramusical examples of objects, in addition to more “literal” objects like musical instruments, would range from pitch identities, motifs, to quotations, musical phrases, and beyond. These are examples with readily divisible identities and, as I will argue, this quasi-linguistic dimension within music is not itself neutral to philosophical critique. Expression and meaning are invested in these objects, or, rather, a concept of the object helps to articulate concepts of expression and meaning. I have referred to this dimension as their *inscription*, a bidirectional process that also inscribes subjectivity.

Objects are what we talk about when we talk about music and those things that we argue we should be talking about in music. They are strategic points that are both material and abstract, built, attacked, and defended in struggles for meaning. To this end, before going on to consider musical objects in detail, it is first useful to briefly outline some

¹³¹ I concur with Kofi Agawu that that the ‘issue of music’s physical segmentability is less interesting than what might be called its “cultural” or “psychological” segmentability’ (AWAGU, KOFI 2009: *Music as Discourse: Semiotic Adventures in Romantic Music*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 24).

already established notions of objects, which may be in part drawn upon, developed, and/or critiqued.¹³²

It is notable that there was a move towards focus on the material, and on objects generally, in scholarly work contemporary to the music focused on in this study. As Sherry Turkle puts it, from the 1980s onwards there developed ‘an increasing commitment to the study of the concrete in a range of scholarly communities’¹³³. Arjun Appadurai’s *The Social Life of Things*¹³⁴ was particularly influential in anthropology and beyond. More recently, as Pels, Hetherington, and Vandenberghe have pointed out, objects have come

back in strength in contemporary social theory. Whether in the shape of commodities, machines, communication, technologies, foodstuffs, artworks, urban spaces, or risk phenomena in a thoroughly socialized nature, a new world of materialities and objectivities has emerged with an urgency which has turned them into new sites of perplexity and controversy.¹³⁵

Whilst I do not draw on specific cultural-theoretical work on objects in this chapter¹³⁶, it should be said that my study reverberates sympathetically with issues of reification and objecthood in other, non-musicological disciplinary arenas.

In musical aesthetics and philosophy, notions of ontology are particularly significant in prejudicing notions of musical objects. In the ontological usage of the word (as found prominently in analytic philosophical aesthetics), the musical object – *the* musical object, in its singular usage – is the result (or ideal) of attempts to define what a musical work, what music in general, or what the object of musical experience *is* (‘what exactly *is* a work of music?’¹³⁷). Indeed, as Matthew Butterfield notes, following Lydia Goehr, the ‘musical object’ is often tied in closely with notions of the musical ‘work-concept’¹³⁸, with

¹³² Crucially, this by no means purports to be a complete summary of the place of “objects” in music and philosophy; I would not embark on an undertaking of such magnitude, one that – given objects’ ubiquity in all aspects of life – cannot escape from questions about the fundamental ontological conditions of existence. Instead, I highlight recent useful and problematic cases as these help to characterise various tendencies in thinking about objects, especially the *materiality* of objects within the context of music’s *ephemerality*.

¹³³ TURKLE, SHERRY 2007: ‘Introduction: the Things that Matter’ in *Evocative Objects: Things We Think With* (ed. Sherry Turkle), Cambridge: MIT Press, 7

¹³⁴ APPADURAI, ARJUN (ed.) 1986: *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

¹³⁵ PELS, DICK & HETHERINGTON, KEVIN & VANDENBERGHE, FRÉDÉRIC 2002: ‘The Status of the Object: Performances, Mediations, and Techniques’ in *Theory, Culture, Society*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (pp. 1-21), 1

¹³⁶ In Parts II and III cultural-theoretical concepts of object are drawn on – for example, in coming to understand instruments and pedagogical techniques as technological objects.

¹³⁷ SCRUTON, ROGER 1997: *The Aesthetics of Music*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 97, emphasis in original

¹³⁸ BUTTERFIELD, MATTHEW 2002: ‘The Musical Object Revisited’ in *Musical Analysis*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (pp. 327-380), 330. Butterfield explores a cognitive psychological model of what musical objects might be.

its longstanding connotations of permanence. Patricia Carpenter's formulation of 'The Musical Object', in a 1967 article of the same name, mirrors some of these distinctly ontological qualities. She contrasts 'objects' and 'processes'. A musical "piece" (i.e. a work of music) is, for her, the principal manifestation of a musical object. She gives a fugue as an example of an "object"; it is experienced from moment-to-moment but is nonetheless 'intended for contemplation by someone who is removed and listening, someone who grasps more far-reaching relations of structure in his confrontation of the piece as a whole'¹³⁹. In contrast, in 'process' we cannot grasp a whole. Carpenter cites John Cage's music by example.¹⁴⁰ Hers is an "object" construed through structural listening¹⁴¹, derived from part-whole relationships, as abstracted, defining the 'organism'¹⁴² that is the "piece" as a whole. Form is crucial for Carpenter's object. Indeed, she starts by taking, '[i]n the narrow sense, [...the concept of] "a piece" to represent a particular way of conceiving musical form, which has been characteristic in the mainstream of the modern Western tradition'¹⁴³. This part-whole, formal outlook allows her to extend the notion of "objects" to include smaller formal units, within pieces. She provides melody as a prime example – 'A melody is an object in the sense of pure form (it can be moved from place to place within the pitch-space, and yet remain constantly itself)¹⁴⁴. This formal perspective makes the ontological basis of her position explicit when she writes that 'the condition for Art [i.e. a work of art] is the articulation of form through a specific medium... a form imposed upon the substance from without by its maker, whose mark the object bears'¹⁴⁵. Carpenter's suggestion that objects might exist *within* works is a valuable one that I pursue; however, I do so in a musical context that is often defined by fragmentation, and by the eschewing of part-whole, formal relationships, at least as these are defined by Carpenter.

As will become apparent, my "object" differs greatly from Carpenter's, as well as ontological inquiries that attempt to grasp essentially fixed qualities of "musical objects" "beyond" the realm of experience. Mine is a conceptualisation of musical objects that

Nevertheless, the outlook and method in this insightful article differs from my own, with my focus being on historicity (and philosophical identity).

¹³⁹ CARPENTER, PATRICIA 1967: 'The Musical Object' in *Current Musicology*, No. 5, (pp. 56-87), 58

¹⁴⁰ CARPENTER 1967: 56-57

¹⁴¹ In her piece of highly influential writing on structural listening, Rose Subotnik wrote that '[t]he general principle of structural listening has become so well established as a norm in the advanced study and teaching of music, at least in this country, that it is all too easy for us to assume its value as self-evident and universal', in her essay entitled 'Toward a Deconstruction of Structural Listening: a Critique of Schoenberg, Adorno, and Stravinsky' (in SUBOTNIK, ROSE ROSENGARD 1996: *Deconstructive Variations: Music and Reason in Western Society*, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 148).

¹⁴² CARPENTER 1967: 60

¹⁴³ CARPENTER 1967: 56

¹⁴⁴ CARPENTER 1967: 60

¹⁴⁵ CARPENTER 1967: 65-66

allows me to suggest that it is often the immediacy of these musical objects' "objecthood" that spurs contemplation or critical elaboration. This contrasts with the objects of ontological and structural listening perspectives, where contemplation is the means to abstract objects from the immediacy of experience.

Another "musical object" has been outlined by Judy Lochhead who, following a phenomenological method, evades the ahistoricism of some ontologically-inclined concepts of "objects" – as beyond experience, and beyond history – by suggesting that the musical object changes in line with attention. She writes that

by the term musical object I simply mean some "thing" of a sounding musical instance, which may become the focus of experience. This sense of "object" is based in principles of phenomenological philosophy that hold that "things" arise as a result of intentional acts within experience.¹⁴⁶

I welcome the transience of her object – that the object may rise up and then disappear, mediated by perception, rather than exist ahistorically – but think what also need be considered are aspects of objects' fixity as these are rooted in history and ideology. Phenomenological flux may be welcomed, but only when dialectically counterbalanced with an understanding that objects also have closed and fixed characteristics, with reified and discernible limits.¹⁴⁷ As Lochhead puts it above, "things" may arise... within experience' (although I reject her caveat that this is 'the result of intentional acts'). The question I confront is: on what basis does the bounding of these objects – their reified delineation¹⁴⁸ – stem from logics derived from still-significant historical and philosophical categories of mediation (for instance, the still-influential, often evoked, yet also often problematised, "work-concept")?

I argue that 'musical objects' have both an immediate givenness, some apparently concrete and fixed existence, whilst also opening up to "dynamic" possibilities. (Indeed, this "givenness" is false in the sense that its apparent immediacy is the result of mediation.) This position stands in contrast with, say, Carpenter's object, and, as we will

¹⁴⁶ LOCHHEAD, JUDY 2006: 'Visualizing the Musical Object' in *Postphenomenology: A Critical Companion to Ihde* (ed. Evan Selinger), Albany: State University of New York Press, 68

¹⁴⁷ An expression of this capacity at its extreme can be found in my discussion of 'understanding', reification, and Alfred Schnittke's String Quartet No. 4 below.

¹⁴⁸ To cite a further example of how my concept of objects differs from Carpenter's, Carpenter considers the boundaries of objects to arise from a distance between subject and object, facilitating contemplation and reflection. In order to grasp the object, it 'must not only be made whole, but also given body, located at a distance and kept there'. (CARPENTER 1967: 65) In the next chapter, I suggest that musical objects might oscillate between positions close to (in proximity with) and far from (apart from) the subject. The former I explore in terms of the psychoanalytically-described act of *identification* with the object by the subject.

see, Lawrence Kramer's object, where fixity and dynamism (openness, potentiality, "virtuality") are separated out into dual typologies. For Carpenter, this is a separation of "object" (form, Wholeness, e.g. a Sonata) and "process" (formlessness, non-integration, e.g. Cage's chance pieces). As I discuss below, for Kramer, this is one of "object" and "thing"¹⁴⁹. In both Carpenter's and Kramer's formulations, the broadly "dynamic" aspects of musical experience are taken as concepts external to "the object". In contrast, in recent critical musics we are often faced with objects that, in a dialectical sense, incorporate elements of fixity and dynamism, perhaps by both stemming from the past yet also pursuing new ways of becoming significant in the present. The "object" becomes the foregrounded element of experience, what we are faced with, and in which we see (hear) both fixity and dynamism, closedness and openness. I start addressing this dialectical concern below in my critique of Kramer's recent essay on musical objects and musical "things", an essay which itself takes its theoretical impetus from the above-cited move, across disciplines, to reconsider the status of objects and materialities.¹⁵⁰

Sound(ing)-objects

In the experience of recent critical music we are often confronted with some sound(ing)-object or constellation of objects. The character of these is problematic given their eschewing of stabilising interpretative frames as givens, doubly so: the characters of the objects themselves are not givens, nor are these objects' (discursive) relationships to one another. This tends towards the literal in the case of the "sounding object": in a use of a musical instrument that denies the "naturalised" methods of sound production and hearing. Its expressive character, located through the object, is no longer a given, nor are the relationships between this object and its others (i.e., other instruments of the ensemble, the repertoire and pedagogy which forms part of the identity of the instrument). Through a focus on the media of music making, rather than the communication of expression through them, the materiality and historicity of the sounding-objects are foregrounded as points of critical intrigue themselves.

This tends towards the figurative (which is by no-means less significant experientially than the literal) in cases of "sound-objects" within works; for example, quotations of material sitting outside of their stylistic frames, invoking a sound-world but betraying the relationships of form and syntax in which this material would "naturally" find its place (Alfred Schnittke's polystylism provides many examples of this strategy). At

¹⁴⁹ This essay is found in KRAMER 2011, and published in an earlier form (2004) as 'Odradek Analysis: Reflections on Musical Ontology' in *Music Analysis*, Vol. 23 (pp. 287-309).

¹⁵⁰ See also MILLER, DANIEL 2005: 'Materiality: An Introduction' in *Materiality* (ed. Daniel Miller), Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press.

this point it should become clear that there are explicit differences between my “objects” and Pierre Schaeffer’s musical objects¹⁵¹, as well as between my concept and the “objects” of Carpenter and Lochhead discussed above. In contrast with Schaeffer’s objects I stress the objects’ materiality and historicity, as well as that they are produced/producing – that they may suggest a certain mode of subjectivity objectified in musical material, and may, contrarily, articulate and define aspects of subjectivity, in addition to the relationships between subjectivity and the world around it. As experience is articulated both through and with reference to them, objects’ problematic status – and critical attention to them – simultaneously concerns the subject. Importantly, this is not to say that in art musics prior to those focused on here experience is never problematised, nor that objects of experience are never treated critically. It is rather to point out that this is often underlined in late 20th- and early 21st-century “critical” musics. In addition, this is to recognise that what objects are considered to be, how they are experienced musically, and the ways in which they relate to worlds and subjectivities changes over time.

So what are these objects? I would suggest that, at risk of explicitly limiting this concept, it is problematic to ask what they are without reference to the processes they constitute them. The answer to this question is reliant on the changing conditions in the mutually mediating relationship found between subject and object, not only on “the object itself”. Sound(ing) objects are never a given and there are always some elements brought to the forefront of experience and some that recede into the background. Nonetheless, they do exert some provisional existence – some dimension of fixity – in that they arise through musical discourses, articulate these discourses, and in that we are able to discourse (musicologically) about them. However, as a point of departure this encapsulation is appropriate: *Objects are elements on which experience focuses, through which experience is articulated, and from which interpretation may begin.* And, as present experience, and its objects, finds itself as a product of its relations – for example, as mediated by history, and inherited philosophical and material legacies – a dialectic of past and present plays a crucial role. A study of objects, and a study of the aesthetics of musical experience, is a study of relations rather than of an inherent essence of either. This will be seen to be a particularly important point regarding distinctions between discourse (or music’s language-like dimensions¹⁵²) and that outside discourse (or the “pre-linguistic”), divisions that are not themselves neutral in

¹⁵¹ See DYSON, FRANCES 2009: *Sounding New Media: Immersion and Embodiment in the Arts and Culture*, Berkeley: University of California, 55-58

¹⁵² As Michael Spitzer writes, ‘Music does, in fact, mimic grammar and thought patterns of the world: a musical “phrase,” like a phrase in language, has lexicon, syntax, punctuation, semantics, even affective inflection’ (SPITZER, MICHAEL 2006: *Music as Philosophy: Adorno and Beethoven’s Late Style*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 16). See also Agawu’s chapter on ‘Music as Language’ in AGAWU 2009.

their complicity with particular political-philosophical perspectives. Most notably this becomes key in the mapping of the discursive/pre-discursive distinction to matrixes including concepts of culture/nature, mind/body, action/passivity, and masculinity/femininity. Discourse is not self-evident. What we privilege in the musical discourse, and what is foregrounded by the discourse, coincides with the privileging of other ideas that are “extramusical”.

The critical perspective I am developing here is not only concerned with the objects themselves (as there is no essential “themselves”) – they are not merely provisionally articulated elements of discourse – but also with the mediative philosophical-historical conditions by which the object is experienced (as being/coming into being and in being significant). This opens the objects up beyond the finitude of their provisional existence, something that comes through in questions such as: is the object a metonymy (or synecdochic fragment) of past musical styles? Is it markedly “cultural” as opposed to, or superimposed on, a backdrop of the “natural”? Is it an object of nostalgia? Is it productive of a certain image of a subject with which it is in dialectic? Objects go beyond themselves, tying in with and drawing significances from wider philosophical-historical concerns (more on this in the next chapter).

In this sense, objects make visible (or “actual”) hidden potentials within the philosophical-historical conditions in which they exist. However, the object is not simply an exemplar or token of the “objective” conditions from which they arise; something comparable to the fact that in psychoanalytic discourse objects attended to consciously are not merely reproductions of underlying unconscious processes yet are still related to them. The sounding object of the piano is not only constituted through the objective processes of its production – as defined by its raw materials and divisions of labour that produced it – but serves cultural purposes for, and is invested with meanings and significances by, subjectivities always in mediative relation to it. A sound-object that connotes “Otherness” (e.g. a “foreign” stylistic fragment within a musical work) arises not only from a specific set of material conditions, but enables the experiencing subject to articulate its own psychological fears concerning its own Selfhood determinately against an Other.

This can be put in the terms of a dialectic of part (object) and whole (objective conditions), something alluded to already. However, given that the part does not exemplarily reproduce “part of” the whole this occurs in service of some always implicit third term – that of subjectivity experiencing this dialectic of part and whole. So, whilst not denying the dialectic of part and whole, it should nonetheless be supplemented with the caveat that subjectivity is implicit as a third term to this dialectic. If the object makes visible hidden potentials of the objective conditions, if it arises from and through these

objective conditions, this is always as related to subjectivity, with which it is in dialectic. Hence, the object – in its provisional existence – can be seen as a provisional meeting point between objective conditions and an experiencing subject. Heuristically, this can be imagined as a triangulation of relations between the contextual frame, the provisional “text” of experience, and that which is understood as experiencing.

This inscription of music with significances and histories is related to, yet different from, Adorno’s conception of artwork as monad, where artworks are autonomous yet also ‘derive their material from the “outside world” of functional empirical reality’.¹⁵³ Three key differences must be underlined. Firstly, rather than focusing on “the work” as a whole, I focus on the transience of the objects of experience. As Adorno argues, musical works take in the “outside world”. This, I suggest, is not only a characteristic of the work as a whole; its constituent elements do this also. Connected with this idea, the object is seen as a provisional sign, symbol, image, (or commodity,) one produced materially, historically, and ideologically.¹⁵⁴ The object is grounded in conceptions of a world “as it (objectively) is”, just as this world is performed – manifested – in objectifications. Indeed, this is a process foregrounded in the object-like treatment of musical materials in many late 20th- and early 21st-century critical works.

Secondly, connected with this, starting with the object at the centre of the investigation leads to the potential for a semiotic interpreting of a musical work, as a text: objects, in being shown to arise from objective conditions, are shown to take on meaning. But this is a semiology altered from its normal functioning: objects are *relationally* rather than representatively connected with the world – they relate to but do not represent or reproduce it (as signifiers of a signified). Whilst meanings are rooted philosophically-historically, they are also mobile – that is, they hold the potential for transformation.

Thirdly, and most fundamentally, Adorno’s thinking is founded on a subject-object dialectic. Whilst I explore the experience of this music dialectically, I also take a “discursive” approach, and in this sense posit *three* terms in constant play: the textuality of the object of focus, its (historical and immanently musical) contextual framing, and an experiencing subject. The object becomes a meeting point between both subjectivity and its world, mediating between the two as a materialisation in which both are partially and provisionally negotiated. As such, it is also accorded status as a potential site for immanent musical critique of subjectivity and its world, as well as the interrelation between the two.

¹⁵³ PADDISON 1997: 55

¹⁵⁴ Lawrence Kramer has described certain moments of music as ‘hermeneutic windows’, i.e. they are focal points by which we enter an understanding of musical works, where interpretation begins (see KRAMER 2011: 68-69). My concept of object is similar in this respect, but differs in its foundations being based on material-philosophical histories (i.e. in the setting in which the object can be said to exist).

Confronting the object, in its mediation of the other two, entails also a confronting of subject and world.

Critiquing Musical “Thing Theory”

This question of how we conceive of musical meaning, and of how we approach musical ‘objects’, has most recently been taken up by Lawrence Kramer. He formulates this issue as a question of ontology. I will outline his position on the subject, which, as I hope to show, fails to acknowledge that musical objects are inherently dialectical and that they suggest existence only through their interrelationships with one another and through the heterogeneous processes of performativity. My position will be set out in contradistinction to his. In addition, this discussion will allow me to illustrate why I have decided to construct my study of the musical aesthetics of late 20th- and early 21st-century art music around the central issue of past-present relations.

In his essay ‘Things’ in *Interpreting Music* Kramer approaches music’s ontology from recent developments in philosophy (Bill Brown’s ‘Thing Theory’¹⁵⁵). In effect, he introduces a new category – that of ‘*thing*’ – to distinguish his conception of music from thinking about music and musical entities as ‘*objects*’. For Kramer, *objects* are fixed and hold onto stable meanings, and *things* are open and indeterminate; ‘objects exemplify categories; things acquire histories.’¹⁵⁶

This distinction between ‘thing’ and ‘object’ – defining the issue as one of ontology or typology – is the central problem with Kramer’s framework. To characterise this as an ontological question, rather than attending to the processes by which aesthetic experiences are elicited, is to shut down the very open-endedness which Kramer claims he wants to pursue. In much critical music, and in much other music besides, we hear a dialectical problematisation of the object/thing’s own ontology, in which we cannot distinguish distinct qualities of fixity (Kramer’s “object”) from openness (his “thing”). This is most clear in what can be labelled this music’s “self-reflexive” aspect. This quality stems from the problematic moment of our confrontation (“what is this before us?”) by music that creates moments of significance, is evocative of meaning, yet that also, at the same time, makes us unsure of what “it is”. Put another way, here we are aware that it (the object of experience, “the music”) – whatever this “it” is – is doing something. However, at the same time, this process of “doing” – which relies on *something*, some object to “do the doing” – disturbs the stable conditions and qualities by which that “thing/object” might

¹⁵⁵ BROWN, BILL 2001: ‘Thing Theory’ in *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (pp. 1-22)

¹⁵⁶ KRAMER 2011: 186

come to be known, that which is “doing the doing”. This critique will be explored a little further, and in doing so also reflect on what this means for past-present relations.

Firstly, there is a problem in distinguishing object from thing. Kramer claims that, in contrast to the fixity of the object, ‘things are open-ended, semi-animate, intimate forms that become what they are as we become what we are. Their consistency is neither objective nor subjective but an unstable blend of both.’¹⁵⁷ However, a clear distinction cannot be made between these terms. Objects, whilst they suggest reified boundaries, might also suggest an exceeding of these boundaries. Musical objects – be they quotations, entities of musical structure, or even works themselves – are significant and meaningful in their openness to wider affinities and differences with other objects and histories. This is observed in their opposition to, synthesis of, or investment with certain programmatic or cultural values, for example. They take on wider significance than their own hermetic, bounded worlds in order to create meaning. Whilst they derive from what is known, from the world of established ‘objectivity’, they may go beyond this to create new meanings and experiences, with our experience of them not being reducible to objective fact. Note that, importantly, I am not arguing (following Kramer) that music is in fact an ‘object’ as opposed to a ‘thing’. Rather I hope to illustrate that the very act of trying to distinguish object from thing is problematic – the object contains openness and closedness, with the relationship between the two being dialectical rather one of ontological exclusivity between that which is open and that closed.

Take for example something that would no-doubt, under the terms of (Kramer’s interpretation of) ‘Thing Theory’, be considered an “object”: the piano. I choose this example partially because I will go on to explore the contemporary piano in Part III. I also choose this example as it seems, at first, to have a clearly finite being, given its physical dimensions as an object. The piano can be viewed as stemming from objective tradition, a tradition which (simply put) shaped us in learning how to play, write for, and hear the piano. But this set of relations is neither fixed nor the totality of the piano’s available meaning. Instead, its significance comes about in the presentness of performativity, in the fact that established notions of what the piano “is”, and pianistic expression “is”, may change in the performance of new works and in new interpretations of the old. So, the distinction is not one between the ontologies of “object” and “thing”, but the dialectic of closedness of objectivity and openness inherent as potential that is held within the object itself. There is an important methodological lesson to be learnt from this, and this is why the method suggested here is, in some ways, anti-methodological. I will not suggest that

¹⁵⁷ KRAMER 2011: 186

musical meaning can be reduced to a typology of relationships with a past which is ‘out there’ and somehow separate from the present (“quotation”, “allusion”, “aversion to the past”...) but instead opt to explore the ways in which past and present interpenetrate one another.

Secondly, Kramer’s formulation of object and thing, and music’s relation to them, is over-generalised – it does not acknowledge the role of history and the aesthetic lineage of ideas passed-down in material in the characterisation of ‘music’. I am in agreement with Kramer that musical entities are ‘liminal forms between the animate and the inanimate’ and that ‘the technical terms that name them are always, only, and necessarily provisional, however much normative value of many widely applied terms may encourage us to forget the fact.’¹⁵⁸ However, Kramer’s ‘music’ seems to be a catch-all term. I want to suggest that it is more fruitful to understand music in the sense of something emerging from particular aesthetic traditions. In the case of this study, it is to investigate music since the mid-1970s as related to the traditions and objectivities of Western art music, and as engaging with longstanding metaphysical motifs: the dialectics of autonomy, of culture and nature, and of mind and body, for example. The investigation of what constitutes the inanimate and animate in music – the concrete and the virtual if you will – must be seen as a process set in motion in relation to the histories from which the entities of investigation spring. To fail to do this either ends in making transcendent the virtual, open dimension of musical objects/things (as something above culture and removed from it) or the stifling of its processual movement (through reduction to a static, ahistorical notion of what music is).

Thirdly, musical objects are more than their fixity. I concur with Kramer that objects tend towards reification. However, this is not their only dimension. If this were so then the “objective” world from which objects are brought forth would be reduced simply to a synchronic set of object-formulations to be deployed and modified at the will of an autonomous subject – a kind of supermarket one can walk in to of musical entities, choosing which to acquire and make use of – rather than a realm that is *mediative* of the interrelationships of object and subject.

A subsidiary point can be briefly made here, one that follows on from my second critical point as much as the third: Historical situation is effaced by Kramer’s analysis in terms of ontology, in respect to the modes by which reification occurs of his objects in question – specifically, the situation of late-capitalism. It could very well be argued that this situation has changed the way in which we think about and experience objects (with the most obvious example of this being seen in the processes of commodification). Not

¹⁵⁸ KRAMER 2011: 187

only does this historical situation unconsciously shape how we conceive of entities and their interrelationships, it also is something consciously reacted against in certain contemporary works. Think of Helmut Lachenmann's *Accanto* (1975-76) for example (scored for solo clarinet, orchestra, and tape), in which a tape recording of Mozart's Clarinet Concerto breaks through the acoustic orchestral material, suggesting a meditation on the Concerto not as sublime work of art, but as an object in the sense of being a reified commodity; 'Basically, [Lachenmann] destroyed it [Mozart's Clarinet Concerto] in the way in which we destroy it every day – i.e. he turned it into a fetish, a lifeless object and a fossil. Precisely, he made a 'Mozart-thing' out of it'¹⁵⁹. The Concerto's conscious presentation as dead, static object is what gives it meaning in this context, rather than closing down its meaning. Philosophical-historical circumstance, over Kramer's ontological certainty, is what allows Lachenmann to reflect upon Mozart's Concerto as commodity-object.¹⁶⁰

Lastly, and leading on from this, *it would fruitful to see the play of objects as an exploration of heterogeneous relationships* – and the gaps in these relationships – instead of reducing play to a duality of ontologically distinct entities, of 'object' and 'thing'. Again, I share with Kramer a question that needs to be asked of music – 'What if music were best conceived, not as an ideal object, but as a worldly thing?'¹⁶¹. I concur that music is best considered as a 'worldly thing' rather than as something singularly transcendental and God-given. However this worldliness cannot be illustrated at the cost of circumscribing particular musical features as either ontologically open things or closed objects. To formulate a thing/object as 'being' a certain thing/object without reference to the relationships that surround, penetrate, and frame it is to make it autonomous in its being, and beyond the mediative conditions through which any meaning is made possible, or which could be problematised by the instability of the thing/object. To settle the ontology of the thing/object as something beyond relations is to autonomise their being. It is to fail to acknowledge the multifaceted nature inherent in the object; that, for example, it may take on multiple meanings, associations, and resonances (beyond the objectively codifiable) through exploring new relationships with other objects in contact with it. It is also to cover over the gaps in these relationships – observed in language, in jokes and Freudian

¹⁵⁹ MOHAMMAD, IYAD 2004b: 'What Has Lachenmann Done With My Mozart?! A Note on Whatever is Recorded on the Tape in *Accanto*' in *Contemporary Music Review*, Vol. 23, Issue 3/4 (pp. 145-147), 145

¹⁶⁰ Alastair Williams notes that 'Lachenmann argues that he is concerned in *Accanto* less with Mozart's Clarinet Concerto itself than with what it stands for in contemporary society. One of the things the score stands for, in his estimation, is a commodity fetish predicated on beautiful sounds, a view that is indebted to the concept of commodity fetishism found in Western Marxism, whereby the appearance of the object obscures the social conditions of its production.' WILLIAMS, ALASTAIR 2012: 'Mixing with Mozart: Aesthetics and Tradition in Helmut Lachenmann's *Accanto*' in *Twentieth-Century Music*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (pp. 71-97), 82

¹⁶¹ KRAMER 2011: 190

slips, for example – that suggest that there may be something that is not captured in the unified symbolic level of the codifiable. To reduce music to either ‘thing’ (open) or ‘object’ (closed) posits meaning as a case of ‘either/or’, instead of an exploration of a dialectical relationship between two positions and the gaps between these positions that they fail to arrest in total.

Critical reflection has allowed me in this interlude to develop the musical, philosophical motif of “objects”. These objects supplement already established musicological, aesthetic, and philosophical ideas (for example, “found objects”). Given my following of a broadly “discursive” method, they can also be said to bear some similarity with the ‘topics’¹⁶² and ‘tropes’¹⁶³ of musical-semiotic approaches. However, the “topical” quality of these objects should not be thought of only in semantic or semiotic terms. They could instead, in respect to this difference, be compared to the *topoi* as explored by the rhetoricians of the ancient Classical world, in which topics stood not simply as points of semantic allusion, but as a placing in memory – an arranging of things such that aspects of the past could be recalled, and drawn upon, in the present.¹⁶⁴ Considered in this way, inherited musical language becomes both a repository and an enlivening of social, historical, and philosophical memories. This enables immanent critiques to be located through this same material, something that in many musical works from the late 20th century onwards can be conceived through this historicity’s “object-like” treatment.

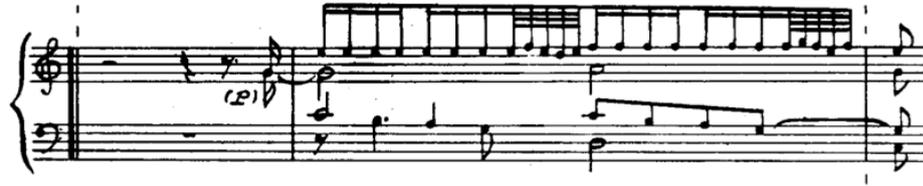
¹⁶² Topics were first outlined extensively in Leonard Ratner’s (1980) *Classic Music: Expression, Form, and Style*, New York: Schirmer Books.

¹⁶³ As developed in HATTEN, ROBERT 2004: *Interpreting Musical Gestures, Topics, and Tropes: Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

¹⁶⁴ YATES, FRANCES A. 2008 [orig. 1966]: *The Art of Memory*, London: Pimlico Edition. See, in particular, chapter two on ‘The Art of Memory in Greece: Memory and the Soul’

3. Legacies of Proximity and Distance in Kancheli's Symphony No. 5

Ex. 10, Kancheli: Symphony No. 5, opening harpsichord melody



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Giya Kancheli's Symphony No. 5 (1976) is a work that circulates around a distinct musical object – a key point of focus in terms of shaping experience, a moment of identity, one inscribed with historical resonances – opening with a harpsichord melody, cut short by an accented orchestral tutti. This provides a case-in-point as to how the treatment of an object *within* the musical discourse relates to, and draws and impacts upon, philosophical-historical significances that go beyond the apparent immediacy of the object “itself”. Around and through the object, multiple aspects mediative of experience coalesce – in the ways, for example, that the object is foregrounded over and against the discursive, historical, and contextual frameworks that supply its status as an object.

Kancheli's Symphony No. 5 is, like Silvestrov's Symphony No. 5, a single movement work. It also evokes musically mediated constructions of nature and culture, often drawing on a pseudo-tonal palette in doing so. The harpsichord material recurs, often fragmented, throughout the symphony, returning at its very end. Its quietly insistent tone contrasts strongly with accented tutti material that often cuts it short. This tutti material becomes an important thematic element its own right, with later triple-*forte* extended passages deriving from it. The extreme contrasts of texture means that expressive, even pointillistic, moments sit beside monumental, violent stabbing gestures in what the philosopher Dylan Trigg has characterised as Kancheli's music's ‘struggle of silence and violence’¹⁶⁵ – the abrasion of extremes between which there is little middle ground. In his Fifth Symphony, Kancheli provides a soundworld of sudden contrasts, veering between expressive moments of quiet contemplation, ferocious stabbing gestures,

¹⁶⁵ TRIGG, DYLAN 2006: *The Aesthetics of Decay: Nothingness, Nostalgia, and the Absence of Reason*, New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 16

and churning, continuous semiquavers in the strings and winds (performed in octaves), often supported by colossal walls of sound arising from the brass and percussion.

It is the role of the harpsichord in this constellation of events that I focus on here. Given that, as I explored in the previous chapter, objects provide spaces through which subject and world might be seen to be mediated, the treatment of the object may also be seen to help structure the relationships within both subject and world, and between them too. This interwoven set of concerns, when posed as a central question becomes: What is the treatment – indeed, what is the process of becoming – of the objects of focus in the discourse of this symphony, and how do these mediate/how are these mediated by the inherited philosophical-historical legacies to which they relate and which they perform?

A simple singular answer cannot be given to this necessarily complex question; more fruitful is a putting into motion of the dialectical tensions within it. In practical terms, this means, firstly, looking into *how the object of experience is foregrounded* (here, principally the opening harpsichord material) and *on what philosophical-historical bases this is reliant*. How is the object then treated in relation to other materials? This leads to a second step that makes explicit the relationship of subjectivity to this object, asking: is a large distance, a close proximity, or a mix of the two, put between subject and object? Furthermore, given the distance/proximity between subject and object, how does the treatment of the object – with regard to other materials – impact upon subjectivity? As material connotative of past (sedimented) subjectivities – being explicitly of the past, yet still present – the opening harpsichord melody evokes these dialectical questions of distance and objectified subjectivity. This concludes with a discussion of nostalgia. Much of Kancheli's music is nostalgic – 'In almost every symphony by Kancheli, there is some "nostalgia leitmotif".'¹⁶⁶ However, I argue that, in his Fifth, nostalgia is evoked as this leads on from an idea of distance, and the location of the object as simultaneously near and far, positioned both as a place of home and longing – 'Nostalgia (from *nostos* – return home, and *algia* – longing).'¹⁶⁷

An Object in Constellation

I take as a starting point for my analysis the harpsichord melody that opens the symphony as an object of focus (Ex. 10). A dialectic between the discursive (immanent, introversive, textural) framing and the inherited philosophical-historical (exterior, extroversive, contextual) inscriptions of this object performatively constitutes it as such, and gives it its particular identity.

¹⁶⁶ HAKOBIAN 1998: 301

¹⁶⁷ BOYM 2001: xiii

Questions concerning the discursive frame, insofar as this gives objects identity, are focused upon extensively in Part II. However, I will briefly prefigure this later discussion by saying that objects' identities are firmed up through their *articulation* in the discourse: through objects' differences and affinities with other material, through repetition, deviation, and so on. It is in this articulation of the boundaries of objects that the distinction between (framed) object and framing setting, and between object and subject – the identity of each as related to its others – can be said to be determinable.

Ex. 11, Kancheli: Symphony No. 5, first tutti gesture, bar 3 (winds only)

The image shows a musical score for the first tutti gesture in bar 3 of Kancheli's Symphony No. 5, focusing on the wind instruments. The score is written for Flute I (Fl. I), Piccolo I (Picc. I), Piccolo II (Picc. II), Piccolo III (Picc. III), Oboe (Ob.), and Clarinet (Cl.). The time signature is 3/4, and the tempo/mood is marked 'marcato, con fuoco'. The dynamic marking is 'ff' (fortissimo). The Piccolo parts have specific instructions: 'Picc I mute in Fl. II', 'Picc II mute in Fl. III', and 'Picc III mute in Fl. alto'. The Flute I part has an 'a2' marking. The Oboe and Clarinet parts have 'a1' markings. The score shows a complex rhythmic pattern with many beamed notes and rests.

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The discursive context of Kancheli's harpsichord materials articulates it as an object with identity; it is set apart from the orchestra's tutti outbursts, which occupy different spaces in terms of pitch content, tone, and gesture. This contrast – this articulation of differing identities – is hardened as the harpsichord material attempts multiple returns only to be cut short again and again (see bar three, Ex. 11, one bar before fig. 1, and one bar before fig. 2). The divisibility of these materials is rhetorically underlined. Besides this main object of focus at the opening, the harpsichord material, and the tutti material, a third “state” is outlined – smudged pseudo-tonal harmonies. Putting aside, for now at least, the issue of how the musical discourse articulates this object, I will restrict my comments on discursive framing to these seemingly basic characteristics. However, it will become apparent below that, even at this seemingly basic level of description of the music, once the inscribed presence of the past in the present is considered, the significance of this simple outline rapidly unfurls.

Objects, as I have argued in the preceding chapter, are inscribed with significances and relationships which go beyond themselves, yet are formative in giving rise to their apparent immediacy (that they are “pre-given” to us). The harpsichord that opens

Kancheli's symphony provides an exceptional example of this; it is both an (instrumental) sounding object and a (musically immanent) sound-object. The harpsichord – the material instrument, its ephemeral canon, what it “stands for” – bears a history, coming to both embody and connote certain values¹⁶⁸: Reason (later, Sensibility under the *Empfindsamer Stil*), virtuosity (individualism), intimacy (through its habitualised chamber setting), and – now – a potential articulation of nostalgia.¹⁶⁹ Just as “objective” values (Reason, Justice, Freedom, and so on) may be abstracted from objects, so objects help concretise the abstract, making it tangible. Thus, in shaping objects within the musical discourse, philosophical-historical legacies are inherently engaged (with) performatively.

In objects we hear artifice. By this, I mean that – as heard in the case of the harpsichord material – objects' “cultural” dimension is often underlined such that they appear above or foregrounded over the “natural” background. As focal (vocal) points, they may appear as materials of craft, subjectivity, and agency, shaped by human hands and human minds. However, their very perception as objects is telling of a particular phenomenological framework that is primed as such to comprehend the world through its objects. The very notion of what constitutes the “objects” to be perceived, and their mode of perception, is contingent on philosophical-historical contexts. Put another way, this supposedly simple act is not value free or neutral of philosophical and ideological concerns. In outlining the connection of the object in/of discourse with a constellation of philosophical-historical legacies, it is hoped that the groundwork is also laid for the discussion of mind, body, and the experience of critical art music that form the core of the later chapters.

In Kancheli's Symphony No. 5, these issues can be best conceived as coalescing around the themes of “nature” and “culture”. The status of harpsichord-material-as-object – put simply – as something markedly cultural, is contrasted and finds significance in relation to a background of material connotative of the natural. Ex. 12 provides one example of this. Here, the harpsichord's opening gesture appears above the single pitch of

¹⁶⁸ As Kevin Dawe notes, ‘musical instruments reveal[...] through their shape, decoration, and iconography features of the body politic, as embodiments of the values, politics, and aesthetics of the community of musicians that they serve. They are at once physical and metaphorical, social constructions and material objects’. DAWE, KEVIN 2003: ‘The Cultural Study of Musical Instruments’ in *The Cultural Study of Music: A Critical Introduction* (eds. Martin Clayton, Trevor Herbert, and Richard Middleton), New York: Routledge, 275-276.

¹⁶⁹ Many harpsichords, virginals, and clavichords were quite literally inscribed with values; mottos of moral messages or evocative lines of verse, e.g. *Acta virum probant* (Deeds prove the man), *Audi vide et face si vis vivere in pace* (Listen, look and keep quiet if you want to live in peace), *Amoris vulnus idem qui sanat fecit* (The same which causes the wound of Love, heals it). See HUNT, EDGAR 1977 [online]: ‘Inscriptions on Harpsichords’ in *English Harpsichord Magazine*, Vol. 1, No. 8 [website: <http://www.harpsichord.org.uk/EH/Vol1/No8/inscriptions.pdf>, accessed 3rd May, 2012]

the first horn, before near-static pseudo-tonal material in the woodwinds emerges from the background. This I describe as “coalescence” in that the nature-culture dialectic is operative in making connection to and drawing significance from other related philosophical-historical ideas in situ around it. In our thinking about nature and culture – and in their articulation in this symphony – significance is also drawn from related ideas. To this end, I will illustrate how engaging with the dialectics of nature and culture advances a discussion as to the role of the harpsichord-material-as-object in Kancheli’s Symphony, insofar as this object draws upon, and modifies, other philosophical-historical legacies that go beyond musical constructions of nature and culture.

Ex. 12, Kancheli: Symphony No. 5, bars 4-6

The musical score for Ex. 12, Kancheli: Symphony No. 5, bars 4-6, is presented in a 4/4 time signature. The score includes parts for Flute I, Flute II, Flute III, Flute Alto, Clarinet, Bass Clarinet, Bassoon, Contrabassoon, Cor I, Arpa, and Cembalo. The woodwinds (Flutes I, II, III, Alto, Clarinet, Bass Clarinet, Bassoon, and Contrabassoon) play a melodic line starting in bar 4, with dynamics ranging from *pp* to *p*. The Arpa and Cembalo provide a harmonic accompaniment. The score is divided into two systems, with a 4/4 time signature at the beginning and a 3/4 time signature at the end of the second system.

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It has become almost axiomatic that the nature-culture binary is a central trope in constructions of the Western minds and subjectivities (and indeed in their own self-conceptions). In the writings of many we are shown ‘how we passed from a state of nature

to become beings with language and culture'.¹⁷⁰ Nature, as we already saw in chapter 1, was often conceived of as a pre-existent state – an origin, a static expanse of timelessness. On this background, or from this background, the cultural would appear.

These relations of nature and culture also served to support and interplay with other, related concepts, ideas with which they are bound-up or “cooked”, to borrow a term from Robin James. This metaphor of the “cooked” connotes that conceptual categories (for James, categories of cultural identity) ‘*always exist in combination*’.¹⁷¹ Exploring this metaphor, James writes that: ‘When we taste a cookie, we note the presence and interplay of what were formally separate ingredients... We can only taste these ingredients together, in their mutually-constitutive interplay’, and also that, ‘You can’t, however, unbake a cookie’.¹⁷² By extension, concepts of nature and culture cannot exist in a pure state outside of other conceptual categories with which they are coincident in the world. (Judith Butler touches on this same issue when she discusses the politics of oppression; ‘listing the varieties of oppression [that exist in society]... *assumes their discrete, sequential coexistence* along a horizontal axis that does not describe their *convergences* within the social field’¹⁷³.) This can be translated into aesthetic/musical terms: musicological debates that surround, as well as music that plays with, materials within the sphere designated “culture-nature” always already slip into wider issues (and questions of power) that are entangled, bound-up, coincident, convergent, or “cooked” within these conceptions of culture and nature.¹⁷⁴

Playing with the nature and culture distinction – and Kancheli’s harpsichord has a crucial role in mediating this play – simultaneously draws on and helps to perform other categories of thought and feeling. My focus above on how objects are perceived/conceived in subjective experience implies that the structure of the nature-culture conceptualisation may be interrelated with the conceptualisation of subjectivity itself. Put another way, if the object helps articulate subjectivity in some respect, the relation between this object and its mutually constitutive context may help articulate the

¹⁷⁰ MACCORMACK, CAROL & STRATHERN, MARILYN 1980: ‘Nature, Culture and Gender: a Critique’ in *Nature, Culture and Gender* (eds. Carol MacCormack & Marilyn Strathern), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1. Here, Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s thought was being described as token of this kind of thinking.

¹⁷¹ JAMES, ROBIN 2010: *The Conjectural Body: Gender, Race, and the Philosophy of Music*, New York: Lexington Books, 21, emphasis in original. See 19-22 for a discussion of “cooked” coincidence’.

¹⁷² JAMES 2010: 21

¹⁷³ BUTLER, JUDITH 2007: *Gender Trouble*, London: Routledge, 19, my emphasis

¹⁷⁴ As Elizabeth Tolbert has pointed out, binaries such as nature and culture, and many others related to it, were crystallised in an Enlightenment movement attempting to locate “man”; e.g. as defined apart from nature, non-Western ‘Others’, femininity, and so on (see TOLBERT, ELIZABETH 2002: ‘Untying the Music/Language Knot’ in *Music, Sensation, and Sensuality* (ed. Linda Phyllis Austern), London: Routledge, especially 79).

relation between subjectivity and some mutually constitutive Other (without reproducing this structure homologically). Specifically, *the nature-culture divide may help to externalise and affirm some perceived or imagined divide “interior” to subjectivity* – principally, the split between, firstly, the timeless and primal nature of the Unconscious and, secondly, the activity of consciousness.¹⁷⁵ Hence, the phenomenology of the object performs not only conceptual relations between nature and culture, but can also be seen to impact inherently upon relationships to and within conceptions of subjectivity. In addition, this may draw on philosophical-historical legacies – the existence of past ways of doing so as traces, both conceptual and material, in the present – as does a harpsichord material connoting particular historical and philosophical resonances.

As primarily “cultural”, sound-objects may help articulate a notion of active agency over and above the passivity of a natural(ised) backdrop that recedes out of view. The “found object” – a conceptual mainstay of philosophical aesthetics – is an extreme case in point, as is quotation in general. This is something David Metzger underlines in his *Quotation and Cultural Meaning in Twentieth-Century Music*, in concluding that ‘over the course of the century, the modes and scope of quotation may have changed but one thing remained the same: its role as a *cultural agent*.’¹⁷⁶ The harpsichord material – practicing cultural agency – is, in the most part, set apart from the drones, pseudo-tonal passages, and expansive and gigantic tuttis that make up much of the rest of the movement. This object, heard as inscribed with a legacy of subjectivity, contrasts with and enters into this larger world. In purely discursive (structural) terms, the harpsichord material is constituted as a musical object through affirming its difference from other materials. However, this engages with inherited philosophical-historical legacies: it is privileged as such as it is something graspable and of the human world, unlike the pseudo-tonal harmonies and static drones that suggest permeable boundaries and a character of natural timelessness, which themselves drift in and out of perceptibility, or the tutti material connotative of an unknowable monumentality going beyond the graspable.¹⁷⁷ This object is a cultural agent

¹⁷⁵ Conceived in psychoanalytic (post-Freudian) terms this could be conceived of as a “projection” of some aspect of the mental structure outwards into the world. However, my point is that this conceptualisation of mental structuring does not exist “prior to” its externalisation. This conceptualisation is ‘a doing’ that might not be said to ‘preexist the deed’, constituted performatively (to borrow a phrase from Judith Butler). The concept of nature, like culture, helps articulate subjective concerns, especially in social products in which such knowledge is both produced and reconfirmed.

¹⁷⁶ METZGER 2003: 217, my emphasis. Of course, quotation and found objects are also used in ways hidden from view – for example, in determining the backdrop structure of music works – but this is not my focus here as such occasions do not give rise to immediately perceivable phenomenological objects of focus as I discuss them.

¹⁷⁷ The latter group of materials suggests a monumentality of the type explored by Alexander Rehding (2009) in his *Music and Monumentality*.

of individuality, intimacy, and, as I explore below, nostalgia, set within, and on the background of, a larger sonic world.

A stimulating comparison can be made between Kancheli's study of singular objects with music that overwhelms the listener through its sheer plurality of materials as heard in Alfred Schnittke's Symphony No. 3 (1981). In the second movement in particular – a movement that Gavin Dixon has interpreted in terms of a Bakhtinian carnival¹⁷⁸ – it is notable that a clear stating of material allusive of a musical subject(ivity) is enunciated, as in Kancheli's Symphony, by a solo keyboardist, this time a pianist. The theme, which is outlined at the opening of the movement in the violins, is prototypically Mozartian.¹⁷⁹ Its soloistic statement appears at the very end of the movement where, in a nature-culture positioning comparable to Kancheli's, its status as markedly cultural object is foregrounded above a background of inarticulate “naturalistic” material in the strings.¹⁸⁰

The activity of subjectivity is set within a larger frame, “hidden” in that it provides the naturalised staging of the discourse. Adorno's concept of “second nature” is highly relevant here as, taking it further, it may be suggested that objects of discourse relate to (though they are themselves differentiated from) the naturalised “objective” backdrop of reality as it “simply is”, considered (or imagined) “outside of” mediation. This critically reflects a still-active trope in post-Enlightenment thought, the protonarrative of man (or society) appearing from and through, though differentiating himself over, nature. MacCormack & Strathern outline what could be called the “common sense” European attitude as follows: ‘Our European ideas about nature and culture are fundamentally about our origins and evolution. The “natural” is that which is innate in our primate heritage and the “cultural” is that which is arbitrary and artificial.’¹⁸¹ Julian Johnson summarises Adorno's second nature as follows, citing the naturalisation of the tonal idiom in Western music's history as an exceptional example:

“Second nature” is, quite simply, a socially constructed image of reality passed off as if it were natural and timeless rather than cultural and thoroughly historical. Music presents a powerful example of this process because in most cases it is not the object of critical thought. The degree to which the language of tonal music is internalised as “natural” is swiftly

¹⁷⁸ DIXON, GAVIN THOMAS 2007: *Polystylism as Dialogue: A Bakhtinian Interpretation of Schnittke's Symphonies 3, 4, and His Concerto Grosso No.4/Symphony No.5*, PhD diss., Goldsmiths College, University of London

¹⁷⁹ Whilst this is not a quotation from Mozart's music, Dixon (2007: 94) cites Kirsten Peterson's illustration of the close similarities between this theme and the first subject of Mozart's A Major Piano Concerto K. 414.

¹⁸⁰ Dixon reads this as a carnivalesque celebration of ‘death and rebirth’ (DIXON 2007: 101)

¹⁸¹ MACCORMACK & STRATHERN 1980: 6

demonstrated by considering the popular response to atonal music: common epithets are “chaotic”, “irrational”, and “unnatural” or “inhuman”.¹⁸²

‘The second nature of the tonal system is an illusion originating in history’, Adorno argues in his *Philosophy of New Music*, underlining the historically contingent aspect of tonality as a supposedly natural phenomenon.¹⁸³

Tonality as a “natural” gravitational centre or background, as illustrated in the chapter on Silvestrov’s Symphony No. 5, still provides a point of semantic and philosophical meaning for some composers in the late twentieth century. In Kancheli’s symphony this legacy is again drawn upon. Expressive pseudo-tonal textures, static “timeless” drones, and resonances connotative of a quiet transcendence, help provide the frame, in which a cultural, tangible, worldly object – the harpsichord material – is set.¹⁸⁴ Their quiet, subtle entries bring them in and out of focus, as if always present, yet not always audible, failing to articulate their own clear discursive boundaries as if emerging from some other “pre-discursive” sphere.

In a passage from figs. 14 to 21, Kancheli reminds us how easily the cultural might collapse back into the natural. After an intensely violent passage exploring the tutti material outlined at the opening (see Ex. 11), we hear an almost regressive withdrawal into material connotative of naturalistic purity (I discuss this concept of purity, and its link with innocence and nostalgia, below). At fig. 14, at this moment towards the middle of the work, instead of an increase in dramatic and developmental tension, tension is suspended to the point that discursive identities begin to dissolve into one another. We are returned to the space of a timeless, eternal continuum. The pseudo-tonal material, and the harpsichord’s material, cross over and mix into one another. The harpsichord material is fragmented, whilst the “smudged” pseudo-tonal harmonies make an appearance, with both being shared across the sparse orchestral texture. Neither is affirmed as a point of focus. The subject’s articulate, discursive, cultural object is dissolved into a timeless (“pre-discursive”) world of the natural.

¹⁸² JOHNSON 1999: 229

¹⁸³ ADORNO, THEODOR 2006 [orig. 1949]: *Philosophy of New Music* (trans. Robert Hullot-Kentor), Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 13

¹⁸⁴ Of course, the harpsichord material is tonal and “unproblematic” in itself, and thus, in this dimension, also employs a naturalised, unproblematised notion of subjectivity. This naturalisation of a particular image of “the cultural” helps to firm-up an idea of “nature” too, to which it stands in opposition.

Ex. 13, Kancheli: Symphony No. 5, mixing of discursive identities, three bars after fig. 14

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This not only functions to position an object (the harpsichord material) in a larger, “natural” world in which it is set, but also helps to articulate dimensions supposedly interior to subjectivity, performing this musically.¹⁸⁵ I will illustrate here that in facing legacies of a world “exterior” to the subject – of nature and culture – as sedimented into musical material, Kancheli also evokes aspects of a world “interior” to subjectivity. The timelessness of the Unconscious – which is “not ordered temporally” as Freud put it¹⁸⁶ – here coincides with articulation of the “natural” material. Indeed, the Unconscious’s unmediated state, “prior to” conscious articulation, coincides with the imagined, unmediated quality of nature – the animal prior to the human, the natural to the cultural.¹⁸⁷ Both the Unconscious and Nature are unknowable wholes that cannot be grasped directly or entirely. It is pertinent to mention here that the Unconscious is not a concept without

¹⁸⁵ This follows on from my argument in the ‘Interlude’ section that the dialectic of text and context, object and “objective” conditions, always encompasses a third term, broadly regarded as subjective processes or an experiencing subject.

¹⁸⁶ Freud cited in SANDLER, JOSEPH et al. (DARE, CHRISTOPHER & DREHER, ANNA URSULU, & HOLDER, ALEX) 2005: *Freud’s Models of the Mind: an Introduction*, London: H. Karnac (Books) Ltd., 80

¹⁸⁷ As part of this apparent immediacy, the Unconscious appeals to a notion of ‘*Psychic reality*’, in which ‘abstract symbols are not recognized as abstract but are treated as if they represented concrete reality’, SANDLER (et al.) 2005: 80. The natural is conceived of as what is “really” real, speaking free from mediation and abstraction.

its own intellectual history. Regarding the Freudian Unconscious, it can be noted that Freud's admiration of Schopenhauer's philosophy is well documented (for instance, the influence of Schopenhauer's *Will* on Freud's *id*).¹⁸⁸ It is therefore unsurprising that theories of the mind cannot be taken apart from theories of the world, and that philosophies of both may find expressions of aesthetic coincidence in music (and the arts more widely), domains in which mind, world, and the relationship between the two are explored and articulated.

As alluded to already, the object as phenomenologically focal is object as vocal – able to foreground and enunciate cultural and subjective agency and visibility (audibility) over and through a naturalised staging that may itself pull in and out of focus. This is entangled with one final set of conceptual distinctions important to our discussion: nature and culture – and the object's place in this framework – as this relates to language and its “pre-discursive” other. Specifically, this regards subjectivity, and its object of perception, as comprehended through a dominant cultural context of *logocentrism* – that is, the centrality of the language, enunciation, and articulation in identifying and making sense of experience. Following feminist and poststructuralist critiques of language, it is argued that a subjectivity articulated linguistically is a particular conception of subjectivity serving particular unspoken ends: language is aligned with mind and culture, constituting through mutual relation, and positing an inherent dominance over, these things' Others (i.e., the body, and nature).¹⁸⁹ As Butler puts it,

In the philosophical tradition that begins with Plato and continues through Descartes, Husserl, and Sartre, the ontological distinction between the soul (consciousness, mind) and the body invariably supports relations of political and psychic subordination and hierarchy.¹⁹⁰

Elizabeth Tolbert cites a range of logocentric discourses in which language is privileged over (a feminised) music – where music is positioned as ‘the subordinate term in oppositions such as culture/nature, human/animal, mind/body, or reason/emotion’¹⁹¹ – for example, in the work of Roland Barthes, Julia Kristeva, and Lacanian perspectives in which music is relegated to a (pre-Oedipal) somatic realm, one undifferentiated before its

¹⁸⁸ See GUPTA, R.K. 1975: ‘Freud and Schopenhauer’ in *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 36, No. 4 (pp. 721-728)

¹⁸⁹ As Tolbert puts it: ‘Logocentric concepts of music... uphold the hegemony of language, at least in part, by maintaining the hegemony of musics that disavow their emotional and sensual qualities.’ (TOLBERT 2002: 78)

¹⁹⁰ BUTLER 2007: 17 As Butler underlines, the mind-body distinction serves to articulate a coincident dominance of a “universal” masculinity over a gendered femininity.

¹⁹¹ TOLBERT 2002: 77

entrance into ‘The Symbolic’.¹⁹² Importantly, this same structure of privileging exists within musical perception (rather than just *of* music per se); the pseudo-linguistic within music is often privileged over those characteristics designated as “pre-discursive” or “pre-linguistic”, in terms of what constitutes the articulation of agency, significance, and meaning.¹⁹³

The nature-culture distinction also naturalises – posits as universal (yet hidden) – a certain type of subjectivity, a “mindful”, active, conscious, speaking (linguistic) subject performed and comprehended musically.¹⁹⁴ Indeed, the very act of dividing the world into subjective and objective elements itself draws on particular philosophical and ideological ideas. This not to say that this distinction has “no basis in reality”, just that reality cannot be said to exist independently of experience mediated through these terms. This is important for our discussion of objects and experience as it suggests that experience through objects – in their discursive (cultural, linguistic, etc.) dimension – is not phenomenologically given but is itself contingent on various interrelated philosophical-historical legacies. These are legacies which cannot be removed from this apparently simple act of perception, but which may be brought into dialectic, play, and modified in experiences of “critical” musics. This is something that I will now explore by turning toward specific passages from Kancheli’s symphony.

Proximity

One dimension of the double act of experiencing objects/experiencing through objects is that subjectivity, to varying degrees, is drawn into proximity with its object of perception or articulated as apart, or distant, from it (for example, through evocations of longing). This is a dialectical question of subject and object as they mediate one another. To confront this issue is to ask how “internal” subjective processes and “external” processes of the “objective” world (for instance, those of the nature-culture distinction) coincide in Kancheli’s symphony, and how these speak to, and draw on, legacies of subjectivity and its relation to the world. To say that object and subject are in proximity is

¹⁹² TOLBERT 2002: 77. John Shepherd and Peter Wicke summarise this: ‘In its nascent state music can... stand for the “nothingness and being” taken by poststructuralists to be characteristic of the subject before entry into language’ (SHEPHERD, JOHN & WICKE, PETER 1997: *Music and Cultural Theory*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 21). It should be noted that, in Part II, I critically assess the potential of poststructuralist thinking in going beyond this problematic conception of music, as a means to understand the problematic *discourses* of late 20th- and early 21th-century art musics.

¹⁹³ Further examples of the designation of the “pre-linguistic” and (pseudo-)“linguistic”, physicality and abstraction, within music are provided by Karen Painter, who focuses on the role of timbre in this determination, and the ultimate attribution of value to timbre on these bases. See PAINTER, KAREN 1995: ‘The Sensuality of Timbre: Responses to Mahler and Modernity at the “Fin de Siècle”’ in *Nineteenth-Century Music*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (pp. 236-256).

¹⁹⁴ This is what Derrida and others after him have termed “phallogocentrism”.

not to say that they are identical or interchangeable. It is rather to posit the object as merely provisional in articulating (always incompletely) processes of/for the subject, and as a meeting point between the interiority of subjectivity and the exteriority of the world. Proximity can also be distinguished from synthesis, in which subject and object sublimate into something higher through their Others. To this end, I will now focus on how proximity and distance play out in Kancheli's symphony, and their entanglement with questions of subjectivity as this itself is located through the musically immanent dialectics of culture and nature (and other coincident ideas, as explored above).

My discussion of a *proximity, a closeness, and an identification of subjectivity with its object* is borne of a well-established idea, at least at the level of the musical work *as a whole* – that subjectivity identifies itself with aspects of the musical work *in its status as an object*. This comes to the fore, historically, in the autonomous work that performs (self-coherence and self-determination) as a surrogate of/for the subject. The (post-)Enlightenment subject was developed through a manoeuvre of identification with its musical object, something Susan McClary has articulated with regard to the Classical sonata:

Over the course of a [Sonata] movement, we witness – as in the contemporaneous *Bildungsroman* – the narrative formation of an autonomous musical self as it ventures into other terrains, strengthens its innate resources through motivic development, and finally consolidates the secure identity that confirms the viability of the centered subject.¹⁹⁵

The external object (the work) could be experienced as a model for an ideal, internalised autonomy. Others have explored this idea too. Notably Scott Burnham writes of this phenomenon in Beethoven's "Heroic" music¹⁹⁶. Kevin Korsyn, borrowing terms from Terry Eagleton, notes that music may act via a "cryptosubjectivity", insofar as the aesthetic of unity in musical works 'become[s] a "surrogate discourse" in which our hopes for the autonomy and freedom of the individual [are] surreptitiously transferred to the aesthetic object.'¹⁹⁷ 'Modern musical subjectivity', Lawrence Kramer writes, 'arises in a process of address and reply in which music acts as the ideal or authoritative subject in whose place I

¹⁹⁵ MCCLARY, SUSAN 2000: *Conventional Wisdom: The Content of Musical Form*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 102

¹⁹⁶ BURNHAM 1995: 66

¹⁹⁷ KORSYN, KEVIN 2001: 'Beyond Privileged Contexts' in *Rethinking Music* (ed. Nicholas Cook & Mark Everist), Oxford: Oxford University Press, 60

come to be, whose subjective character I reenact as my own.¹⁹⁸ What these writers all have in common, and what I draw from them musicologically, is that they establish ways of speaking about music that transverse a clear subject/object divide. The object, the musical work, may act for the subject. Again, this is not to say that they are identical or without boundaries, just to say that their boundaries are semipermeable. (The inheritance of notions of subjectivity and selfhood are of primary focus in Part II.)

Holding the object close – identifying with aspects of it – enables, for the subject, a living of those ephemeral values that the object embodies. Objects – be these musical works and/or, as I have advocated, inscribed elements of their discourses – make material the immaterial. A close proximity between the subject and its object allows the subject to live objective values through these values’ vehicle of compartment. Autonomy, Sensibility, and Freedom (to give just a few examples) become lived through music. It is in Kancheli’s harpsichord-material-as-object’s dual character, as both markedly of the past yet still present, that this idea is critically engaged with in his Symphony No. 5.

Before examining how this plays out in Kancheli’s symphony in particular, it is fruitful to formulate a general framework by which closeness between subject and object might be understood. The psychoanalytic concept of *identification* is useful here. This concept entails that the subject identifies not only with the object, but also with aspects perceived to be of it, and with the relationships found within it and in which it is embedded.¹⁹⁹ As noted above, music has the power to traverse clear subject-object relations in its moment of experience – a dimension that can readily be related to identification, with identification operating across these boundaries also. Identification is a process which Elin Diamond has characterised as a ‘pure act – an unconscious doing that only afterwards can be described and understood’.²⁰⁰ Whilst mediated, and later capable of being rationalised, its operation moment-to-moment relies on a perceived immediacy of relation between subject and object. Furthermore, I suggested above that objects’ constitution through discourse articulated both aspects of a world “exterior” to the subject (principally, relationships between culture and nature) as well as relationships between (unconscious and conscious) elements that designated as “interior” to the subject. The

¹⁹⁸ The essay ‘Subjectivity’ in KRAMER 2011: 48. Portions of this chapter were published in an earlier form (2002) as ‘Subjectivity Rampant! Music, Hermeneutics, and History’ in *The Cultural Study of Music* (eds. Martin Clayton, Trevor Herbert, and Richard Middleton), New York: Routledge

¹⁹⁹ I take my formulation of identification in the most part from Freud and from Joseph Sandler’s commentaries on Freud and post-Freudian thinking – in particular from Sandler (et al.) 2005 and Sandler, Joseph & Perlow, Meir 1987: ‘Internalization and Externalization’ in *Projection, Identification, Projective Identification* (ed. Joseph Sandler), Madison: International Universities Press, Madison: International Universities Press. Of course, it should be said that I am not orthodoxly applying this formulation.

²⁰⁰ DIAMOND 1993: 86

concept of identification, which centres on this very point of crossover between “exterior” and “interior” worlds, is valuable in framing complicities and interrelationships between object and subject.

My aim here is to couch this process in ideological and social(ising), rather than personal, terms. When I suggest that subjectivity finds itself in objects, and in their discursive constitution, I do not mean that single individuals choose objects in discourse to articulate their own psychological functions. This can be contrasted with, for example, Benedict Taylor’s psychoanalytic response to Samuel Barber’s *Knoxville: Summer of 1915*. Whilst Taylor does privilege cultural memory and cultural history over personal memory and personal history, he also suggests that, in engaging with Barber’s work (which deals with themes of childhood and loss), listeners may map ‘their own childhood, loss, or unfulfilled wishes onto the piece.’²⁰¹ I do not want to dispute the validity of such a claim, but merely want to stress that my focus is different. It is not my aim here to psychoanalyse the audience, just as it is also not to read into composers’ authorial intentions “psychobiographically”.²⁰²

Through identification, subjectivity – or, at least, explicitly “subjective” content as now objectified – is aligned with particular objects in the discourse.²⁰³ Following the psychoanalytic idea that the ego may enact a self-representation, subjectivity becomes represented as an object, a process that parallels the representation of objects in the mind (although this is not the only role subjectivity plays in experience). Joseph Sandler and Meir Perlow summarise this idea very effectively. They write that in such contexts, “self” is analogous to “object,” and “self-representation” parallels the mental representation of the object.’²⁰⁴ In discursive terms, the subject is given, in this reified dimension at least, a *visibility* in the discourse, and a *viability* in undergoing processes undergone by its object of identification.²⁰⁵

In Kancheli’s Symphony, this identification of an image of subjectivity with its object appears explicitly in a passage leading up to fig. 7. Furthermore, the making visible of processes of subjective “interiority” expresses coincidence with philosophical-historical processes of the “exterior” world; specifically, the identificatory act of making proximate

²⁰¹ TAYLOR 2008: 220

²⁰² I discuss the problems with “psychobiography” in greater depth in Part II.

²⁰³ This is potentially at its clearest when there are specific protagonists, as for example in opera, that are aligned with specific musical materials. This has been explored by Richard Rusbridger, a musician and psychoanalyst, in, for example, his paper on ‘Projective Identification in *Othello* and Verdi’s *Otello*’ (delivered on 30 March 2012 at the Tavistock Centre as part of a lecture series on ‘Meaning and Mindedness: Encounters Between Philosophy and Psychoanalysis’). However, my concern here is instrumental music – music without explicit protagonists.

²⁰⁴ SANDLER & PERLOW 1987: 1

²⁰⁵ For an overview of the development of this concept in Freud’s writing, see DIAMOND 1993

subject and its object finds expression in a movement from tropes of nature to those of culture.

A primary, “natural” state is evoked through the repeated resurfacing of the pseudo-tonal material that, as noted above, connotes timelessness, transcendence, and unmediated expression (as shown in Ex. 14). The tonal idiom, as a paradigm of the naturalisation of a certain mode of expression, as an example of Adorno’s “second nature” in action, implies the ‘apparently unmediated presence’²⁰⁶ of expression within this aspect of the musical discourse in particular. As well as employing a pseudo-tonal framework, “the natural” is also alluded to – as a presence “prior to” culture, language, and order – through stasis, drones, and in an appeal to a “pre-linguistic” realm. The lack of any clearly articulated musical syntax emphasises this “pre-linguistic” status; entries overlap and pitches are held onto over the boundaries of chordal identities.

Ex. 14, Kancheli: Symphony No. 5, three bars before fig. 5

The musical score for Kancheli's Symphony No. 5, three bars before figure 5, features the following instruments and parts:

- Flutes:** Fl. I, Fl. II, III, and Fl. alto. Dynamics range from *ppp* to *pp*.
- Clarinets:** Cl. and Cl. b.
- Bassoon:** Fag.
- Horn:** Cor. I.
- Trumpets and Tubas:** Trni e Tuba.
- Cymbals:** Cassa.
- Arpa:** Arpa.

A box with the number 5 is located above the flute parts. Dynamics include *ppp*, *pp*, and *mf*.

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²⁰⁶ To borrow a phrase from ECHARD 2006b: 81

Notably, this ideological-philosophical proto-narrative (the move from nature to culture) is echoed in terms of the development of identification: in a move from *primary* to *secondary* modes of identification. In the music, this move from nature to culture is echoed in the move from one kind of identification to the next. The music constitutes, and is constituted by, both a world and subjectivity, with which it is entangled. Sandler and Perlow write that primary identification, in representational terms,

could be said to relate to the state which exists before a firm boundary between self and object (or self- and object representations) has been established... In relation to pathology, the state of primary identification has been described as a regressive one in which “de-differentiation” of self and object occurs and so-called “ego boundaries” (“self-boundaries”) have been lost or put out of action.²⁰⁷

The directness of expression of the “natural” material, as well as the fact that it plunges the subject into a soundworld where distinct identities are dissolved, means that a subject-object distinction is not articulated. This dissolving of these boundaries – that expression is located in a raw, natural world of immediacy, of “pre-linguistic” continuity – is resonant with a primary mode of identification. This perception of immediate expression is made possible, and, at the same time, performs the distinction of, this aspect of musical experience as “prior to” or “outside of” its cultural, linguistic, mediated, and explicitly “historical” dimensions.

²⁰⁷ SANDLER & PERLOW 1987: 9

Ex. 15, Kancheli: Symphony No. 5, reintroduction of harpsichord melody (at fig. 6)

19

The musical score is in 4/4 time. It features several staves: Fl. alto (marked 'Solo' and 'trufe in Picc. III' with 'ppp'), Cor. I (marked 'ppp'), Arpa (marked 'Solo' and 'ppp'), Cemb. (marked 'p'), Vni I and Vni II (marked 'ppp'), and Vle (marked 'ppp' and 'H (2 sole)'). A box with the number '6' is located in the upper right corner of the score area.

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Once this natural “ground” has been set by the pseudo-tonal materials, fragments of the harpsichord material begin to re-enter (Ex. 15). Subjective expression moves from an identification with the natural, something “prior to” the articulation of subjectivity as explicitly objectified (as in the harpsichord material), to being located in a distinct object. This latter move towards a cultural, objectified image of the subject is aligned with a move to a different kind of identification, *secondary* identification.

Sandler and Perlow write that secondary identification

is probably the most common meaning of the term identification. During this process the representational boundary between self and object is not lost [as in primary identification], but the subject embodies in the self-representation attributes of the object, real or fantasised.²⁰⁸

Secondary identification can be observed with the reintroduction of a distinct object through which subjectivity is articulated and aspects of it represented. In this sense, at the

²⁰⁸ SANDLER & PERLOW 1987: 10

same time as proximity, the object here is defined by some degree of Otherness, “not-Selfness”. (I explore concepts of Self and Other – and the musical philosophical-historical legacies thereof – in Part II.) This object is something tangible, something “cultural” – the harpsichord material – and one which articulates its own boundaries and thus also those of a subject identifying with it. Here the subject is spoken and made visible (is focal/vocal), unlike the dissolution of boundaries as in the “natural” directness of the earlier pseudo-tonal material. Subjectivity is at this point, through proximity to an object of focus, given a hard edge, a boundary.²⁰⁹ This is an entry of subjectivity prepared for by material connotative of nature, which preceded it.

The articulation of dimensions interior and exterior to subjectivity – through acts of identification that transgress clear boundaries of subject and object in proximity with one another – constitute and are constituted by coincident concepts; in particular, those of the relations between nature and culture as these echo aspects perceived to be “within” subjectivity itself. Elements of musical works, and constructions of subjectivities therein, may be identified with in ways that go beyond the individual – for example, slipping into more “social” phenomena like idealised constructions of the post-Enlightenment mind, of masculinity and femininity, culture and nature, and so on.²¹⁰ Put another way, these cultural constructions – as performed and conceived musically, a phenomenon of the “exterior” world – help articulate and organise a world of subjective interiority.

Distance

I have argued so far that the nature-culture dialectic, taken immanently within musical material as an inscribed philosophical-musical legacy, constitutes, and is constituted by, coincident dialectics of subjectivity. That is, “interior” dimensions of subjectivity are shaped by, and find expression in, the characteristics of an “exterior” musical world. However, something more supplements this relationship. In addition to the *proximity* of subjectivity and the object of/through which it perceives, the interrelated legacies of *distance* and *nostalgia* can be observed. Whilst an object of perception may be seen as a vehicle of/for subjectivity, it may simultaneously be experienced as deriving from a distant past to which return is impossible. Indeed, both the harpsichord and the “naturalistic” pseudo-tonal materials, whilst immediately expressive (and identifiable with,

²⁰⁹ The construction of such a “boundary”, and the connection of subjectivity and discourse, is also focussed on in Part II.

²¹⁰ Drawing conclusions from modernist theatre, Elin Diamond points out that ‘identification is not only a private psychic act: identifications have histories and thus permit access to subjective, cultural, and political readings’ (DIAMOND, ELIN 1993: ‘Rethinking Identification: Kennedy, Freud, Brecht’ in *The Kenyon Review*, Vol. 15, No. 2 (pp. 86-99), 87).

in their different ways), allude to bygone, naturalised expressions that reach beyond the knowable present to “a past” that is ungraspable – mythic, even – a timeless past of nostalgia. Nostalgia, I argue, functions through the very complication of near and far; a nostalgic object is something that may be identified with yet also admired as a trace of a distant past to which return is impossible.²¹¹

This notion of distance sits in constellation with many “distances”. Robert Hatten points out that critical distance is an established aesthetic trope: ‘*critical distance*... [a] critical reflection by the listener (or composer) on the artwork.’²¹² Connected with this, Brechtian theatre explored “distanciation”, an “alienation effect”, “*Verfremdungseffekt*”, whereby ‘the actor of the character prevented the complete transformation of an actor into the role, creating instead a portrayal that included both emotional empathy and analytical distance.’²¹³ In addition, Freud recognised that painful memories are repeated at a distance; actions in the present often repeat, in disguised and distanced forms, repressed memories of the past.²¹⁴

Whilst these distances may play a role here, in Kancheli’s symphony distance and nostalgia can be seen to have roots in Romantic aesthetics in particular. As Berthold Hoeckner has shown, distance was an important trope in Romantic music making.²¹⁵ He explicates this with particular reference to the writings of Novalis and Jean Paul. Hoeckner summarises three examples of distance given by Novalis, for whom distance was central to the Romantic perspective: ‘spatial distance in landscape, temporal distance in recollection of the past, and personal distance in separation from the distant beloved.’²¹⁶ For Novalis, distance was fundamental to the Romantic perspective itself; “in the distance everything

²¹¹ In this second sense, my description of nostalgia chimes with David Metzger’s, for whom nostalgia looks back to something unreclaimable – childhood is a paradigmatic example – and the inability of return to this. (METZER 2003: 19)

²¹² HATTEN, ROBERT 2005 [online]: ‘Review of Berthold Hoeckner, *Programming the Absolute: Nineteenth-Century German Music and the Hermeneutics of the Moment*’ in *Music Theory Online*, Volume 11, Number 1 [website: <http://www.mtosmt.org/issues/mto.05.11.1/mto.05.11.1.hatten.html>, accessed 21st December, 2011]. Hatten supplements Berthold Hoeckner’s excellent discussion of Romantic conceptualisations of distance as they play out in Schumann’s music (as found in Hoeckner’s 1997 article which later formed the basis of an analogous chapter in his book *Programming the Absolute: Nineteenth-Century German Music and the Hermeneutics of the Moment*) by suggesting a few more ‘tropes of distance’ in this context. See HOECKNER, BERTHOLD 1997: ‘Schumann and Romantic Distance’ in *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, Vol. 50, No. 1 (pp. 55-132).

²¹³ MARTIN, CAROL & BIAL, HENRY 2005: ‘Introduction’ in *Brecht Sourcebook* (ed. Carol Martin & Henry Bial), London: Routledge, 3

²¹⁴ See Freud’s essay, ‘Remembering, Repeating, and Working Through’ [orig. 1914] (in FREUD, SIGMUND 2006: *The Freud Penguin Reader* (ed. Adam Philips), London: Penguin Books Ltd). Also see SILVERMAN, KAJA 1983: *The Subject of Semiotics*, New York: Oxford University Press, 75, for a discussion of this.

²¹⁵ HOECKNER 1997

²¹⁶ HOECKNER 1997: 56

becomes... romantic”, he wrote.²¹⁷ For Jean Paul, it is was fading into the distance – a return to distant silence and inner sounding – that was Romantic:

The Romantic is beauty without limit, or *beautiful* infinity, just as there is a *sublime* infinity... It is more than an analogy to call the Romantic the undulating hum of a vibrating string or bell, whose sound waves fade away into ever greater distances and finally are lost in ourselves, and which, although outwardly silent, still sound within. In the same way moonlight is both image and instance of the Romantic.²¹⁸

Whilst Hoeckner discusses Romantic distance and Schumann’s music, distance seems to be a trope that still holds currency for the later Romantics. For Wagner, the power of myth was both a universal and stemmed from the temporal distance of mythic origins.²¹⁹ In a symphonic context, Mahler’s Sixth Symphony fades into the distance (before the final strike), recalling Jean Paul’s struck bell and, in the first *Nachtmusick* of the Seventh Symphony, Novalis’s spatial distance – horns call across the mountains, and distant cowbells can be heard.

These features indicate that evocations of distance may be mediated within music. Distant ideas of silence, transcendence, and mythic natural origins still figure in more recent music, like Kancheli’s. This is something recognised by Chiara Bertoglio in her discussion of another of Kancheli’s works, his song cycle *Exil* (1994), in which he makes use of a distant, ‘almost mythical past’, meditating on textual material that is a ‘contemplation from afar of a now impossible faith’, something lost to a previous epoch.²²⁰

Schnittke’s Symphony No. 3 again provides a notable point of comparison regarding Kancheli’s engaging with aesthetic legacies. Kancheli’s treatment of distance can be contrasted with that in Schnittke’s symphony, a symphony that explicitly explores the traditions, history, and inherited legacies of Austro-German symphonic writing.²²¹ The opening material of the symphony, which expands outwards an upward motif based on the overtone series, is a clear evocation of “the natural”. (Taruskin famously described this

²¹⁷ Novalis cited in HOECKNER 1997: 55

²¹⁸ Jean Paul cited in HOECKNER 1997: 60

²¹⁹ See, on this point, and in particular its relationship with nature, GOEHR, LYDIA 2011: “– wie ihn uns Meister Dürer gemalt! ”: Contest, Myth, and Prophecy in Wagner's Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg’ in *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, Vol. 64, No. 1 (pp. 51-118), 93-97

²²⁰ BERTOGLIO, CHIARA 2008 [online]: ‘Giya Kancheli’s *Exil*: the Spirituality of Motifs’ in *British Postgraduate Musicology*, Vol. 9 [website: <http://www.bpmonline.org.uk/bpm9/bertoglio.html>, accessed 23rd October, 2012]

²²¹ See IVASHKIN, ALEXANDER 1996: *Alfred Schnittke*, London: Phaidon Books Ltd., 163-164

opening as ‘like Wagner’s *Rheingold* prelude cubed and cubed again’²²².) The evocation of a natural timelessness, and the (Austro-German musical²²³) world’s emergence therefrom, draws on established tropes by which images of distant origins are constructed musically. However, Schnittke’s relationship to immanent legacies of distance in music is different from Kancheli’s. Not only does Schnittke draw on musical characterisations of distance and mythic origins but, at the same time, he does so self-consciously, distancing the musical language through which distance is constructed. Distance is “doubled”. In explicitly playing with aspects of Austro-German music making, Schnittke’s characterisation of distant origins – of a nature “prior to” culture – underlines the historicity of the alleged ahistoricity of such constructions of nature. The treatment of distance is different in Kancheli’s music. This is something that comes through in what Trigg cited above dubbed the ‘struggle of silence and violence’ inherent within Kancheli’s music. This struggle emphasises the irreconcilability of the pseudo-tonal, naturalistic material and the ferocious tutti outbursts. But it also asserts the contrast between the transcendent, mythic aspects of the former and the sheer violent presence of the latter. In this music of extremes, an unbridgeable distance appears between the two.

I concur with Ivan Moody’s observation that whilst ‘the harpsichord returns periodically throughout the piece, and in fact is chosen to finish it, it is difficult to conclude that one kind of music here triumphs over another’²²⁴. However, this should be followed with supplementary questions: What does this mean for subjectivity, for which the drama of struggle and triumph have often been conceived as central to its affirmation, and for which the harpsichord material may be markedly identified with? In presentation through distant extremes, bearing little mark of temporally developing dialectic, subjectivity does not *emerge* through struggle, as prototypically stated symphonically in Beethoven’s Heroic works; reappearance or repetition characterises the entries of the harpsichord. Taking the place of subjective unfolding – the musical temporalising of entangled aspects of subjective experience (desire, the cultural, embodiment, and so on) – is a reified image of subjectivity, of a “time stopped”.

²²² TARUSKIN, RICHARD 1997: *Defining Russia Musically: Historical and Hermeneutical Essays*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 102

²²³ See DIXON 2007: 82-83. Dixon explores how Schnittke reacts to a specifically Austro-German musical legacy, within which ideas of, and relationships between nature and culture, have a particular character.

²²⁴ MOODY, IVAN 1990: ‘Kancheli: An Introduction to His Music’ in *Tempo*, No. 173 (pp. 49-50 + 52), 50

Complicating Proximity and Distance – Nostalgia

This concept of “time stopped” moves the discussion from *distance* to *nostalgia*, making visible a point of connection between the two, forged Romantically. Indeed, in Svetlana Boym’s terms, Kancheli’s nostalgia is distinctly Romantic. She writes that the

object of romantic nostalgia must be beyond the present space of experience, somewhere in the twilight of the past or on the island of utopia where time happily stopped, as on an antique clock.²²⁵

The antique clock – time happily stopped – is a wonderful image of/for the nostalgic. Rather than finding its use across time, it is locked into one given, past time. Yet it also bears a trace of its previous function as marking time passing. The musical material played on Kancheli’s harpsichord, analogously, does not unfold across time; it is rather locked into a past time, and an anachronistic image of subjectivity. Despite this, it bears a trace of this previous being, its previous function, being inscribed with associations. Instead of the material instrumentally articulating the subject within temporal unfolding, we are referred to a past subjectivity inhabiting a time outside of temporal unfolding. The harpsichord no longer marks, measures, and colours subjective temporal experience, instead articulating a single, nostalgic image thereof.

Distance – this time a reflective, critical distance – may operate in conjunction with this nostalgic act.²²⁶ Without unfolding in time, objects like the antique clock and harpsichord bear traces of their previous functions without enacting these temporally. The inability to adapt to or adopt an ever-changing present distances them and affords new experiential relations with them. Trigg has gone so far as to suggest that the failure of previous instrumentalities/productive functions of things – as this critiques a singular, rational “progress” – forms the basis of a critical nostalgia, particularly in its contemporary, post-industrial form. For him, a rusting factory that no longer produces objects materially may become a space of recollection, nostalgia, and contestation of the myth of rational “progress”.²²⁷ I suggest that a harpsichord that no longer unproblematically produces the subject symbolically may likewise do the same. In the act of distant repetition – in the

²²⁵ BOYM 2001: 13

²²⁶ Boym’s conception of nostalgia is highly valuable in making an explicit distinction between what she calls *restorative nostalgia* – which aims for return (e.g. to an earlier Golden Age, or some nationalist or ethnic origin, etc.) – and *reflective nostalgia* that ‘cherishes shattered fragments of memory’. As she puts it, ‘[the latter] reveals that longing and critical thinking are not opposed to one another, as affective memories do not absolve one from compassion, judgement, or critical reflection’ (BOYM 2001: 49).

²²⁷ TRIGG 2006: 218-221, 212, and 132

abnegation of a (Heroic) dialectical becoming – it becomes a nostalgic object of critical reflection.

Nostalgia is not identical to repetition, however, having been better described as drawing on “repetition that mourns the inauthenticity of all repetition.”²²⁸ The object of nostalgia – the harpsichord, the clock, their particular temporalities of experience and the lost worlds for which they stand in-part – cannot be truly uncovered or reacquired as they had been known. Given distance, ‘the object of desire is not only out of reach but also vague’.²²⁹ This elusive haziness positions the nostalgic object as a potential nodal point by which slippage between many related – that is, “cooked” or coincident – lost ideals might occur. Key tropes of nostalgia – examples include the ‘notion of a Golden Age and a subsequent Fall, the story of the Homecoming, and the Pastoral’²³⁰ – may find coextensive expressions musically. Immanent musical characterisations of the natural (and the pastoral), for example, may be seen to be instrumental in helping to construct nostalgia for distant, mythic origins, or some past situation inhabited by a (no-longer innocent) subject.

Turning away from Kancheli’s music for a moment, an exceptional example of such coincidences is provided in another symphony, that of the Russian-Tatar composer Sofia Gubaidulina. In her Symphony in 12 movements, *Stimmen... Verstummen...* (1986) an untroubled D-major chord returns many times. Not only does its re-emergence suggest its “pure” existence beyond the other active, dramatic materials of the symphony (which tend towards the dissonant), in its stasis it also connotes a state of mythic timelessness.²³¹ Furthermore, as tonal touchstone it functions as a naturalised, naturalistic background on which human activity takes place, as well as a place of refuge to which the troubled may return.²³²

Returning to Kancheli’s music, we see that fragments of that by which subjectivity found a markedly “cultural” articulation (i.e. the harpsichord material) may facilitate critical reflection on/through these materials as a nostalgic cultural object. Musically immanent characterisations of culture, nature, and their relationship to one another, may help define the subject, its world, and the terms of its nostalgic longing. Furthermore, as traces of a

²²⁸ Susan Stewart cited in HUTCHEON, LINDA [online]: ‘Irony, Nostalgia, and the Postmodern’ [website: <http://www.library.utoronto.ca/utel/criticism/hutchinp.html>, accessed 19th December, 2011]

²²⁹ METZER 2003: 22

²³⁰ TANNOCK, STUART 1995: ‘Nostalgia Critique’ in *Cultural Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 3 (pp. 453-464), 454

²³¹ Hakobian notes: ‘The principle of binary oppositions, reducible in the final account to the fundamental opposition of the “heavenly” and the “earthly” elements, is crucial for the majority of Gubaydulina’s conceptions’. He provides this symphony as an example. The symphony is given as an example, in which the heavenly material is provided by the untroubled chord. HAKOBIAN 1998: 288

²³² Another excellent but much older example in which one see such an articulation – of the relationship of the cultural (the human) to myth, nature, and timelessness – is provided by Charles Ives’s *The Unanswered Question* (1906).

former world always on the edge of audibility/visibility, these nostalgic materials become potential loci for coincident and simultaneously imagined values, investments, and a purity of ideals held to exist “beyond” immediate perceptibility or representation.

Common to this nostalgic “beyond” is the trope of a purity or innocence now lost. The childlike simplicity of the harpsichord material attests to this purity, contrasting strongly with the violent impositions, the corruptive forces, that cut it short. Indeed, the themes of loss and innocence appear to be recurring motifs in Kancheli’s compositional output. Consider, for example, his *Sweet Sadness*, for boys’ choir, two boy soloists, and orchestra (1985), a work in which Kancheli intended for the “voices of children to remind us of the voices of angels we have never heard.”²³³ Here the association of innocence and childhood stem directly from this work’s dedication – “The piece is dedicated to the memory of children killed in World War II.”²³⁴ Furthermore, as David Metzger has pointed out (in focusing on some of the works of Charles Ives), conceptions of nostalgia and extinct innocence intermingle with themes of distance; ‘Children almost always populate the distant past, not the near present’.²³⁵

I suggest that, as with *Sweet Sadness*, the nostalgia of the harpsichord melody in the Symphony No. 5 is also tied in with its dedication, this time to the memory of Kancheli’s parents. Whilst I am not advocating that the work should be read purely in terms of biography – read in terms of Kancheli’s personal history and childhood experiences – this dedication opens the work up to interpretations friendly to the culturally established tropes of childlike innocence, and might supplement our more wide-reaching philosophical-historical perspective. As is often the case with nostalgia, here the personal and the cultural intermingle. Benedict Taylor has written of this in the context of Samuel Barber’s music, noting that Barber’s *Knoxville: the Summer of 1915* ‘is both personal and national, at once a private memorial to Barber’s own childhood and a collective monument to the age it attempts to preserve.’²³⁶ The harpsichord can similarly be heard doubly as a nostalgic expression of childlike innocence and also, in its historicity, as the image of philosophical-historically bygone subjectivity.

In Kancheli’s Fifth Symphony, we return repeatedly to this image of subjective purity – to this *fixed* image that fails to develop, become experientially reappraised, or follow new, processual directions. Nostalgia – which, as Trigg points out, ‘structurally

²³³ Kancheli cited in POLIN, CLAIRE 1989: ‘Conversations in Leningrad, 1988’ in *Tempo*, No. 168 (pp. 15-20), 16

²³⁴ Kancheli cited in POLIN 1989: 16

²³⁵ METZGER 2003: 18. For another example, more recent than Ives’s music, also consider George Crumb’s *The Voices of Ancient Children* (1970).

²³⁶ TAYLOR, BENEDICT 2008: ‘Nostalgia and Cultural Memory in Barber’s *Knoxville: Summer of 1915*’ in *Journal of Musicology*, Vol. 25, Issue 3 (pp. 211-229), 228

depends on an image of the past that is fixed in the present²³⁷ – functions through a particular mode of drawing on the past by which to experience or make sense of the present. This fixity functions as a point of continuity, through which in returning one ‘may be able to replenish a sense of self’²³⁸.

However, given that, as discussed above, repetition is not identical to nostalgia, this return is not a “sincere” return. Whilst particular musical material may bear traces of past subjectivities, their repetition does not guarantee a genuine reinhabiting of those subjective spaces; whilst the return to a childhood house may remind us that nostalgia is, as Gaston Bachelard put it, “physically inscribed in us”²³⁹, a return to this space does not mean a return to and reliving of the habits and experiences that once were. Comparably to the Freudian “compulsion to repeat”,²⁴⁰ previous models of behaviour reoccur but, in so doing, fail to adapt to present needs and circumstances and to develop from what was. Importantly, there is no contradiction between the “proximity” explored above, and this nostalgic distance; one may still identify with images of the past, objects taken to be from the past, or with the ideal of a now-departed purity, even if these are distant. Indeed, comparing Kancheli’s symphony again with Schnittke’s Symphony No. 3, it should be noted that in Schnittke’s “doubling” of distance – in distancing the musical language by which distance is immanently constructed – Schnittke’s distance, unlike Kancheli’s, is not one of nostalgia. In contrast with Kancheli’s music, in Schnittke’s symphony distance and proximity are not entangled with one another.

Ivan Moody, in passing, calls the repeated melody “neo-classical”.²⁴¹ However, what this description misses is its nostalgic function. With reference only to its outward appearance, this characterisation smoothes over the experiential differences of this melody to other neo-classical musics. As in (for instance) Stravinsky’s *Oedipus Rex*, an image of a past subjectivity is frozen in the music. However, an important difference arises. Whilst the former used classical forms as the basis for balance and order – tropes of universals²⁴² – Kancheli’s is highly particularised; he marks the past out as a recollection that is always fragmentary and incomplete. ‘[I]nstead of aspiring for the universal and the progressive [the nostalgic] looks backward and yearns for the particular’²⁴³; what is pursued is not so

²³⁷ TRIGG 2006: 56

²³⁸ TANNOCK 1995: 456

²³⁹ Bachelard cited in TRIGG 2006: 56

²⁴⁰ Again, see Freud’s essay, ‘Remembering, Repeating, and Working Through’ [orig. 1914] in FREUD 2006.

²⁴¹ MOODY 1990: 50

²⁴² Stravinsky’s use of Latin in *Oedipus Rex* is also notable in this regard. Narration in the (particular) vernacular, by a figure external to the drama, elevated the drama to a mythic status.

²⁴³ BOYM 2001: 11

much an inevitable return to the purity of the past, but a celebration of its loss – the very inability of return.

This melody that opens the work – as an object of focus – is given identity through both its discursive, textual treatment (its repetition, and contrast with other materials) and with reference to philosophical-historical, contextual legacies. Indeed, as I have argued, its status as an object of experience inherently brings into play legacies of philosophy and history, legacies that coalesce in constellation around it. These are themselves entangled with an inherited dialectics of culture and nature.

Furthermore, as a moment articulating identity, it may become also a moment of subjective *identification*. This process has been shown to coincide with philosophical-historical ideas. Specifically, the framed articulation of a proximate subject-object, as appearing from and through a “pre-discursive” framework, coincides with “the cultural” emerging from “the natural”. Characterisations of nature, taken immanently into musical material, express the concerns of subjectivity, not only of the subject’s place in and against nature (or a world) exterior to it, but also of the Unconscious and “unmediated” aspects interior to the subject itself.

In addition to the role of proximity, the harpsichord melody suggests a quality of distance; its repetition makes this more so, and so do its continued efforts to play out before being cut short. Time does not pass for it; temporality is neither marked nor shaped by it. This complication of proximity and distance constitutes the basis of a nostalgic musical experience. Here, past and present find relation in the image of a subject *passed* and in the *persistent presence* of its object.

II) Music in Mind, Mind in Music: the String Quartet

The separation of society and psyche is false consciousness; it perpetuates conceptually the split between the living subject and the objectivity that governs the subjects and yet derives from them.

– Theodor Adorno, ‘Sociology and Psychology’²⁴⁴

Music, because it intersects with ideologies and experiences of race, class, gender, and sexuality, is a technology of the self – that is, it educates our desires, physiological and psychological.

– Robin James, *The Conjectural Body*²⁴⁵

Modern musical transcendentalism [starting with Beethoven] no longer dwarfs the human subject, standing somewhere outside and above it, like so many earlier Western transcendentalisms. Instead it is now lodged deep within the recesses of the psyche, there to lurk as an unreachable, uncanny, but always almost-broached form of knowledge.

– Gary Tomlinson, ‘Finding Ground to Stand On’²⁴⁶

Signifying systems alone allow us to deduce that the subject is a fixed point.

– Julia Kristeva, *Revolution in Poetic Language*²⁴⁷

²⁴⁴ ADORNO, THEODOR 1967: ‘Sociology and Psychology’ [orig. 1955] in *New Left Review*, Vol. 1, No. 46 (pp.67-97), 69

²⁴⁵ JAMES 2010: 25

²⁴⁶ TOMLINSON, GARY 2007: ‘Finding Ground to Stand On’ [orig. 1997] in *Music and Historical Critique: Selected Essays*, Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 187. This originally appeared at the conference “Grounding Music” (Berlin, May 1996), and subsequently was published online by Forschungszentrum Populäre Musik (Berlin). It is available online at [website: http://www2.hu-berlin.de/fpm/textpool/texte/tomlinson_finding-ground-to-stand-on.htm, accessed 11th April, 2013].

²⁴⁷ KRISTEVA 1984: 94-95

INTRODUCING THE MUSICAL MIND

The string quartet, as a genre and institution, is often conceived of as a space for articulating the subjective. Many have identified it as a vehicle of intimacy, a markedly ‘subjective’ trope. Take for instance three different contributors to the same recent essay collection: Robin Stowell writes that the quartet affords composers a vehicle for (among other things) ‘the most intimate compositional thought’²⁴⁸; Christina Bashford that, as a genre, ‘[in the 20th century] the quartet retained its hold over composers as a repository of their most intimate thoughts and close working-out’²⁴⁹; and, Kenneth Gloag, ‘that many twentieth-century composers from many different cultural backgrounds and stylistic positions looked to the genre as a context suitable for their most intimate thoughts’.²⁵⁰ Another essay collection, focusing specifically on twentieth-century quartets, is even entitled *Intimate Voices*.²⁵¹ I do not contest that the quartet enables musical explorations of intimacy. Instead, I suggest that this characteristic reminds us that the quartet (still) allows for articulating markedly subjective concerns, and that this is an articulation of subjectivities based on, though not limited to, historically sedimented ways of doing so. The quartet genre, perhaps more readily than others, resonates with legacies of inherited, discoursed/discoursing subjects.

The interrelated ideas of subject, self, and mind – conceptual slippage often occurs between these terms – are generally positioned in contrast with objects, others, and bodies. Recent interest in the musical mind has blossomed in the cognitive and psychological sciences²⁵². Valuable as scientific perspectives are, modernist critical music, as with critical art and the avant-garde more generally, in these arts’ “self-reflexive” dimension, disturb the established categories by which they themselves are experienced and/or contemplated, ideas of mind and body as these have been sedimented into musical language and practices. I will now briefly outline how the musical mind can be understood in semiotic terms, whilst noting what this means for the experience of late 20th - and early 21st-century critical

²⁴⁸ STOWELL, ROBIN 2003: ‘Traditional and Progressive Nineteenth-Century Trends: France, Italy, Great Britain and America’ in *The Cambridge Companion to the String Quartet* (ed. Robin Stowell), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 250

²⁴⁹ BASHFORD, CHRISTINA 2003: ‘The String Quartet and Society’ in *The Cambridge Companion to the String Quartet* (ed. Robin Stowell), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 15

²⁵⁰ GLOAG, KENNETH 2003: ‘The String Quartet in the Twentieth Century’ in *The Cambridge Companion to the String Quartet* (ed. Robin Stowell), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 288

²⁵¹ JONES, EVAN (ed.) 2009: *Intimate Voices: The Twentieth-Century String Quartet* (Two Vols.), Rochester: Rochester University Press

²⁵² A cross-section of this field is provided in DELIÈGE, IRÈNE & DAVIDSON, JANE W. (eds.) 2011: *Music and the Mind: Essays in Honour of John Sloboda*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

works – works that explore subjectivity, minds, and selves as historical and philosophical products, and which themselves are historically and philosophically productive. This “self-reflexive” perspective – in which musical works both articulate subjectivity, and enable reflection *on* subjectivity – contrasts with a scientific conception of the musical mind.

Semiotics of the Musical Mind

Scholarly interest in the role of semiotic and linguistic processes in musical experience has burgeoned over the last twenty-five years or so²⁵³. This approach takes the mind’s conceptualisation of music as structured, in some dimension at least, through symbols and structures akin to (aspects of) those in found in spoken language. Probably one of the most influential books in this revolution was George Lakoff and Mark Johnson’s *Metaphors We Live By*, in which the authors argued that metaphors play a deep role in the comprehension of the world – essentially that the human mind is wired via linguistic structures based around metaphor.²⁵⁴ As such, cognitive psychology, semiotics, and linguistics were drawn together. These metaphorical mappings were taken up in musical contexts in developments like Michael Spitzer’s *Metaphor and Musical Thought*²⁵⁵ and Lawrence Zbikowski’s *Conceptualizing Music*²⁵⁶. It was argued that, similar to other domains of human experience, musical experience is permeated by deep-seated metaphors and assumptions based in “extramusical” socio-historical circumstances – the point being that these dimensions are never purely “extramusical” in that they are built into our comprehension of the music. These were schemes that went beyond what was immediately presented on a semantic surface level of music, seeing the present as mediated by past collective habits. Habits such as “musical style”, for example, or certain conceptions of language as this related to embodiment, would provide inherited schemes by which experience of musical events was mediated – like UP IS MORE (“this sequence RISES in pitch and tension”).

My effort here is not to negate the valuable insights suggested by cognitive-psychological influenced musicological work but to augment them, doing so through accounting for the liminal elements that stand outside of representation and which make positive ‘mappings’ unstable (mappings such as: UP IS MORE, where RISE IN PITCH maps to INCREASE IN TENSION). Socio-historical circumstances are key in making possible musical

²⁵³ See ECHARD, WILLIAM 1999 [online]: ‘Musical Semiotics in the 1990s: The state of the art’ [website: <http://projects.chass.utoronto.ca/semiotics/srb/musisem.html>], accessed 15th November, 2012]

²⁵⁴ LAKOFF, GEORGE & JOHNSON, MARK 1981: *Metaphors We Live By*, Chicago: Chicago University Press

²⁵⁵ SPITZER, MICHAEL 2003: *Metaphor and Musical Thought*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press

²⁵⁶ ZBIKOWSKI, LAWRENCE 2002: *Conceptualizing Music: Cognitive Structure, Theory, and Analysis*, New York: Oxford University Press

experience, even if one is never reducible to the other; a present (experience) to its past (conditioning) or vice versa. It is this irreducibility that is my concern here, something that goes beyond affirming the ‘mapping’ of terms. The mapping of terms becomes problematic in recent critical musics, especially in that which is, in the modernist sense, sensitive to self-reflexivity – aware as to both its place in history (relation to the past) and to the materiality of the medium by which meaning is constructed and communicated in the present. Mappings are very much concerned with identity (in the philosophical use of the word). Such mappings help to align the object perceived and the manner by which it is perceived (and hence object and subject). However, this critical music explores the transgression of positive positional mappings through undermining the mapping of stable identities (and hence, flowing through non-identity).

Musical ‘play’ suggests a way around this problem, as play draws on established meanings whilst eliciting something new from them. Musical play – as Kofi Agawu²⁵⁷, Raymond Monelle²⁵⁸, Robert Hatten²⁵⁹, and others have illustrated – can be understood semiotically; put simply, musical symbols take on meanings, associations, and significances which can later be drawn upon and/or undermined. To give one example, in his musical-semiotics investigations, Agawu focused predominantly upon music of the Classical²⁶⁰ and Romantic²⁶¹ eras. Developing the early topic theory work pursued by Leonard Ratner²⁶², Agawu explored the pseudo-representational aspects within absolute music through the idea of conventionalised ‘topics’ that brought associations and meanings from outside works into them. These conventionalised associations were learnt and recognised (not necessarily consciously) by those within the art music world. Put in explicitly semiotic terms, it would be said that musical signifiers – like the drones of a pastoral topic, for example – became recognisable as carriers of extramusical meaning; links were forged between signifiers and signifieds within conventionalised stylistic contexts. These signifiers could then be brought into and combined within a given work, suggesting connotations and associations beyond the formal qualities of the work in question.

A “playful” semiotics might provide a starting point for the recent critical music’s playing with conventionalised signifiers. However, something must be added where, in the spirit of criticality, this music problematises the semiotic conditions by which it itself comes to be understood. Indeed, as I suggested in the introduction, the convention might

²⁵⁷ AGAWU, KOFI 1991: *Playing with Signs: A Semiotic Interpretation of Classic Music*, Princeton: Princeton University Press

²⁵⁸ MONELLE, RAYMOND 1992: *Linguistics and Semiotics in Music*, Reading: Harwood Academic Publishers

²⁵⁹ HATTEN 2004

²⁶⁰ AGAWU 1991

²⁶¹ AGAWU 2009

²⁶² RATNER 1980

itself come to be seen as a historical category, as well as being a hermeneutic framing device for the understanding and experience of musical events. This “problematic” is evident at three levels – levels which necessarily cannot be fully disentangled from one another if they are to be understood together as a semiotic process constituting musical experience and meaning: (1.) the breakdown of the signifier, that the topics and tropes of earlier eras are drawn upon, though in modified, fragmentary, or originally combinatorial forms; (2.) the instability of the signified, that the links by which signifiers and signifieds are connected – how the former are understood or affectively experienced – are broken; and (3.) the contemporary relation of signifiers to one another, that signifiers – finding themselves in a decentred context – may suggest gaps or potentially original connections between them.²⁶³

It is in exploring these gaps within materials, and in the transgression of established relationships between materials, that critical musical works subvert (whilst also drawing upon) the required stability that forms the basis of semiotic processes. Below, I suggest that this is in some ways akin to processes exemplified in dreaming, to the destabilisation and recombination of traces of memory that take on new significance in the present. This move also springs from accounting for a contemporary subject that is plural and contradictory; the dream attends to multiple tensions within the Unconscious at any given time.

Insights from Psychoanalytic Theory?

Insight into the meaningfulness of critical music can be drawn from psychoanalytic thinking that is open to the fluid dimensions of meaning and self-reflexion. As I will argue, the non-identical component of dialectical thought may be taken as an (always absent) index of gaps in the processes of codification and signification that are crucial to critical music. The role non-identity has in desiring process, one aspect of this, also enters this constellation. Julia Kristeva’s work is drawn on in helping to formulate these ideas, her work being particularly pertinent in that it brings together Hegel’s non-identity and psychoanalytic notions of desire. Lastly, psychoanalytic thinking is productive in enabling the object of experience to be regarded as articulating some function *for* subjectivity whilst,

²⁶³ Thus, my discourse-centred approach can be contrasted with previous psychoanalytically-inclined musicological perspective – take for instance, Joseph Straus’s (1990) *Remaking the Past: Musical Modernism and the Influence of the Tonal Tradition*, which focuses on an Oedipal struggle between recent composers and the compositional authorities of the past. My focus, by contrast, is on the slipperiness of signification as experienced in the present, as is similarly found in psychical processes (but epitomised in dreaming).

at the same time, also shaping concepts *of* subjectivity. However, my appeal to Kristeva's work is far from orthodox; it is itself "playful".²⁶⁴

As Kristeva points out, Freud's writings have the advantage of both looking to meaning as created through interpretational connections whilst, simultaneously, questioning the subjective and theoretical stability of the foundations upon which interpretation takes place²⁶⁵. This self-reflexive, processual quality can be contrasted with a postmodern interpretation of fragments and symbols of the past: instead of seeing the meaningfulness of moments in the work as deriving from *being in an intertextual network* – a set of distinct discourses engaging and rubbing up against one another – this is to see subjectivity as always *becoming multiply* (arising from multifarious conflicts), never fully stable in its being, and incapable of fully discharging the tensions arising from its shaky foundations in the psychical energies and social contradictions exerted on and through it. In theoretically approaching these qualities of multiplicity and process, as well as the place of the past in the present in the experience of critical modernist works, I draw on psychoanalytic concepts as epitomised in processes of dreaming.

The *idea* of the dream has been related to music before. The idea of the dream can be seen, for example, where it is referred to as some kind of untapped refuge to save the "subjective" dimension of musical experience from the perceived "objectivity" of scholarly methods. Michael P. Steinberg, for example, in writing about Gustav Mahler, claims that Mahler's 'false cadences work like dream structures, disappearing as they seem about to resolve'²⁶⁶, without illustrating how this is achieved or how the music analogously relates to dream-structures. Here, the dream is reduced to a whimsical symbol rather than physical process; it becomes a signifier of the unreachable outside of process or explanation, rather than being a concept that can tell us something new about the inner workings of the music (and of the mind). By contrast, I want to focus on something different: the structural *processes* by which dreams create meaning and are experienced meaningfully insofar as these processes can tell us something about recent critical works.

Processes in dreaming tell us about waking life, just as music might tell us about social and psychic life outside of it. Both do so in ways that are – similarly – transmuted from the day-to-day "outside" of dreams and music. To this end, I move to show how

²⁶⁴ A crucial point of difference – what defines my work as apart from Kristeva's – is the role of "*chora*", and the designation of "pre-linguistic" realms (the role of the body and of "geno-text", for example). For a more "orthodox" application of Kristeva's ideas in a modernist musical context, see DAME, JOKE 1998: 'Voices within the Voice: Geno-text and Pheno-text in Berio's *Sequenza III*' in *Music/Ideology: Resisting the Aesthetic* (ed. Adam Krims), Amsterdam: Gordan & Breach.

²⁶⁵ KRISTEVA 1982: 81

²⁶⁶ STEINBERG, MICHAEL P. 2006: *Listening to Reason: Culture, Subjectivity, and Nineteenth-Century Music*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 232

subjective concerns are embroiled in musical processes. This is to position an experiencing subjectivity *in* the music, just as it is *in* dream or phantasy, and also to extend semiotic accounts of music to music that problematises the conditions by which musical meaning, and expressive significance, arise.

4. Knowing Through Contemporary Music

ARTICULATING (SUBJECTIVITY) IN THE QUARTET

Discourse: Ruptures & Boundaries

The problematic dialectics of contemporary subjectivities play out in a range of late 20th- and 21st-century string quartets – here they find their *articulation*. It should be immediately acknowledged that the word “articulation” has linguistic overtones. Articulation concerns syntax and a clarity of ideas. But the articulation of subjectivity in music is more than articulately “getting the point across”, rhetorically *presenting* subject-formation or a thing’s identity and communicating it effectively. In contrast, it becomes visible *through* musical process – the process is constitutive of it (but not identical to it).

As it has recently been shown, to draw an impassable line between language and music is highly problematic. Elizabeth Tolbert, for example, has highlighted that the music-language divide often conceals deep-seated ideological concerns – notably, positing language as assertive and masculine and music as passive and feminine, with a reaffirmation of the dominance of the one over the other²⁶⁷. For this reason, my discussion of the articulation of subjectivity in music should not be confused with an argument that music is a language. Indeed, my point here is exactly that any binary division between music and language is mistaken.

I am going to develop the notion of “articulation” borrowing (for the most part) from the Bulgarian-French poststructuralist theorist Julia Kristeva. The reason for choosing her theoretical apparatus will become evident as my argument unfolds, but relies on the necessary (though not sufficient) condition of seeing music as discourse²⁶⁸. In choosing Kristeva’s work to develop the idea of “articulation” I should pre-empt criticism here by saying that Kristeva has herself been accused of essentialising binaries echoing the language-music dualism – in particular, the masculine as identity and the feminine as non-identity²⁶⁹. My reading of Kristeva bears this critique in mind. In fact, it is for this reason that I will not focus on the element of Kristeva’s writing most often taken up by

²⁶⁷ See TOLBERT, ELIZABETH 2002: ‘Untying the Music/Language Knot’ in *Music, Sensation, and Sensuality* (ed. Linda Phyllis Austern), London: Routledge, 77-83

²⁶⁸ This idea has been implicit throughout the thesis so far and underlies many musicological-semiotic approaches of the last decade. Kofi Agawu puts this in historical perspective, in light of legacies of conceiving of ‘Music as Language’ (whilst he maintains that music is not identical to language), in the first chapter of his *Music as Discourse* (AGAWU 2009).

²⁶⁹ A prominent example being BUTLER, JUDITH 1989: ‘The Body Politics of Julia Kristeva’ in *Hypatia*, Vol. 3, No. 3 (pp. 104-118)

musicologists, the concept of *chora* – *chora* being maternally ordered (drive) energies outside of affirmed/affirming symbolic being²⁷⁰. The “essence” of music – what sets it apart from language – is again seen, problematically, in this “feminine” dimension. (However, it also must be recognised that subject formation, and articulation, occurs within the context of dominant thought modes, including patriarchy.) It is also worth noting that Kristeva’s reliance on and development of both Hegel’s and Freud’s thinking makes her work highly relevant to the theoretical position that has been fostered so far, especially in terms of highlighting what post-Hegelian philosophy can tell us about (what I will characterise as) post-Beethovenian-Hegelian musical subjectivities.

What challenges do the string quartets I am to discuss present in terms of theorising (1.) “articulation” in musical discourse and (2.) the “articulation of subjectivity” in music? In unproblematised terms, articulation works in the most part around syntax and formal relations. In the most basic musical terms these relationships are organised through rhythm (and hyperrhythm), formal structures, stylistic paradigms, scale and pitch relationships, orchestration and timbre, changes in register, and so on. This may be obvious, but recognising this fact serves to highlight a situation in recent critical music, in which these parameters are still operative whilst, at the same time, their individual significances and relationships to one another have been transformed. It follows that the question that needs asking is one of how this music creates syntax and formal relationships in relation to inherited materials from the past, and what this suggests about the articulation of contemporary subjectivities.

Kristeva, in her theorisation of modern poetry, described this kind of affirmed division of components in discourse – that elements arise in discourse and take part in its structural organisation – as *thetic*.²⁷¹ However, Kristeva’s *thetic* should not be seen simply as something occurring only within discourse – subjectivity is bound up with this process and is observed through discourse. If “musical language” can be seen as having an articulatory role (given that music is not a language), the *thetic* may have much to tell us about how subjectivity is articulated within music; firstly, how identities within discourse form, and secondly, at the same time, how this process of separation and understanding is constituted by and constitutive of subjectivity. Furthermore, music – always at the boundary, threatening to rupture conceptions of “language” as taken apart from it – is exceptionally placed to be understood in light of the *thetic*, and indeed to disturb and

²⁷⁰ See KRISTEVA 1984, in particular 25-30, for a discussion of *chora*. The role of *chora* in music has been notably explored in SCHWARZ, DAVID 1993: ‘Listening Subjects: Semiotics, Psychoanalysis, and the Music of John Adams and Steve Reich’ in *Perspectives of New Music*, Vol. 31, No. 2 (pp. 24-56), and in SHEPHERD & WICKE 1997: 74-80.

²⁷¹ KRISTEVA 1984: 43-45

modify it. Critical music is perhaps particularly well placed to underline this dialectic, when it pushes and pulls between past and present, often simultaneously traversing organisation and disorganisation.

In thetic articulation there is an inseparable relation between subject and object, such that whilst the latter can never *encapsulate* the former it does *organise it* discursively, positioning each in relation to the other. This is consciousness in so far as it is syntactically and discursively organised, thetic in that 'it simultaneously posits the thesis (position) of both Being and ego.'²⁷² This means that whilst subjectivity is not reducible to the objects around which it positions and organises itself, a discourse understood as developing processually should be thought as not simply as a recombination of objects apart from subjectivity, but as a shifting of positions, with a processual subjectivity mutually wrapped-up in this. The thetic 'constitutes the subject without being reduced to this process precisely because it is the threshold of language'²⁷³.

The thetic is, as Juliana De Nooy puts it, a 'paradoxically constructive disruption'²⁷⁴ of the continuum of experience. In being divided, ordered, and understood, the fluidity of experience is given hard edges; contrarily, it is also the means by which subjectivity can be recognised as experiencing, that subjectivity can be talked about insofar as it is tied to and lives through graspable objects. Kristeva characterises the thetic dually as '*rupture and/or boundary*'²⁷⁵. It is the 'boundary' at which both subjectivity and discourse are given form, insofar as they mutually mediate one another. It is as articulatory boundary, as organiser, as 'constructive disruption', and as mutual relation between subjectivity and objects of discourse, that the thetic becomes a valuable concept in exploring critical music's relationship with subjectivity. This understanding of the thetic allows for a syntactic understanding of modernist musical discourses without the need for a codified normative syntax (whilst it still alludes to past musical syntax in that it is part of a larger discourse giving meaning to a work in the present).

I discuss the thetic as 'rupture and/or boundary' as this dual character allows for something more than speaking only of the articulation of/in discourse – it is to underline the articulation of subjectivity that is bound up in thetic processes. This is summed up by Kristeva when she said of spoken language that

²⁷² KRISTEVA, JULIA 2002: 'Desire in Language' [orig. 1980] in *The Portable Kristeva: Updated Edition* (ed. Kelly Oliver), New York: Columbia University Press, 98

²⁷³ KRISTEVA 1984: 45

²⁷⁴ DE NOOY, JULIANA 1998: *Derrida, Kristeva, and the Dividing Line: An Articulation of Two Theories of Difference*, London: Taylor and Francis, 37

²⁷⁵ KRISTEVA 1984: 43, my emphasis

all enunciation, whether of word or of a sentence, is thetic. It requires an identification; in other words, the subject must separate from and through his image, from and through his objects.²⁷⁶

Kristeva's mention of 'identification' here should be read psychoanalytically: subjectivity finds shape through the world around it and in self-objectification as means to observe itself. But, I want to multiply this reading (for reasons that will become apparent). As well as seeing 'identification' psychoanalytically, it can be read philosophically, following on from Hegel – to see identification as related closely to the concept of 'identity'²⁷⁷. Such a reading allows us to see the 'identification' of elements of musical discourse as an affirming philosophical identity through musical discourse. Therefore, this is not simply an 'identifying' of important structural elements (upon which a structural analysis could then be based), nor simply a Freudian identification (a process of internalisation) of these elements from the music into the mind (as explored in chapter 3), but goes a step further, to a stage through which subjectivity is itself affirmed in relation to the affirmation of the objects of discourse (with which it is embroiled through process).

Macroscopic Ruptures

I begin by investigating a work that revolves around rupture, one that is paradoxically constructive, Wolfgang Rihm's String Quartet No. 10 (1993/1997). In addition to any immediate findings, this analysing of rupture will also serve to lay the groundwork for a better understanding of musical objects with regard to their embeddedness within wider constellations of meaning; their rupturing into a discourse may be telling of both how they are conceived and the significance they may have, but also that this significance may be modified in the moment of rupture. The crucial factor in the idea of rupture as constructive is that, in something seemingly "coming from outside" – breaking into the discourse – its nature as discourse is contrarily affirmed; "breaking into" requires a boundary or level of *discursive consistency* in the first place, which is thereby crossed over and/or negated. This is rupture as a constitutive principle akin to De Nooy's (above cited) characterisation of the thetic as 'a paradoxically constructive disruption'.

Importantly, Kristeva stresses the organisational principles of the thetic – it is, for example, the place where oppositions begin to be mapped out. This is central to constructive disruption in my first example, Rihm's Quartet No. 10. This quartet, its second movement in particular, is organised around rupture. Two musical objects become

²⁷⁶ KRISTEVA 1984: 43

²⁷⁷ Kristeva's thinking is highly indebted to Hegel's, but here I explore a specifically Hegelian reading of the Freudian notion of identification (rather than reread Kristeva as Hegel).

the foci of the second movement of Rihm's Quartet. Both of these suggest themselves as possible "found objects". Rihm always 'imprints a core identity on any [historically allusive] material he encounters', writes Alastair Williams²⁷⁸, and this rings true in his Tenth Quartet. The first found object alludes to heteronomous materials through quoting a nursery rhyme (*Taler, Taler, musst wandern, von der einen Hand zur andern*). A historically established musical topic – specifically, the soundworld of the hurdy-gurdy – is also evoked timbrally in this first object. Crucially, these materials enter in such a way as to rupture over the edge of the musical discourse established thus far. They enter "from outside" as points around which discursive constructions may coalesce. However, at the same time, these entries also allow for the retrospective reappraisal of material heard so far, so as to be heard through these objects – as if these objects always existed as potential in the earlier materials. Slippage and fluidity between discursive elements, and between history and autonomous processes, play a role, in addition to that of articulation (divisibility, segmentation of elements).

Ex. 16 Rihm: String Quartet No. 10, opening of the third movement

Sehr langsam

The musical score shows four staves. The first staff (Violin I) has a long note with 'con sord.' and 'non vibr.' above it. The second staff (Violin II) has dynamics 'ppp', 'f (poss.)', and '<pp> ppp'. The third staff (Viola) has 'ppp' and 'con sord. non vibr.'. The fourth staff (Cello/Double Bass) has 'ppp' and 'con sord. non vibr.'. The bottom of the score is marked 'ppp'. The tempo is 'Sehr langsam'.

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I focus on the second movement not only as it underlines these questions of discourse and subjectivity in a late 20th-century work but also as this movement constitutes the body of the Tenth Quartet. Of the quartet's three movements, the outer ones are slow and stand in balance with one another around this central movement: the first (subtitled

²⁷⁸ WILLIAMS, ALASTAIR 2006b: 'Swaying with Schumann: Subjectivity and Tradition in Wolfgang Rihm's *Fremde Szenen I-III* and Related Scores' in *Music & Letters*, Vol. 87, No. 3 (pp. 379-397), 382. Williams also notes the wide-ranging historical allusions found in Rihm's chamber music – references to Beethoven's late quartets, evocations of Janáček, and the soundworld of Berg (WILLIAMS 2006b: 380).

‘Vorform’) acts as a short introduction of 36 bars, about three minutes of music, the third (‘Strophe’) is 35 bars of understated music (Ex. 16), whereas the central movement of 363 bars is where pyrotechnic discursive dramatics, and questions of historicity, are marked as the basis of the music’s discursive playfulness.

Rihm: String Quartet No. 10

In the most part the materials that make up the second movement can be seen to exert or contrast two tendencies. The first brings forward timbre and discontinuity of pitch content – it is accented and mechanistic – and the second suggests linearity, being defined by a connectivity of pitch (and timbre, as the bowing here is ordinary). These often find themselves in superimposition.

Ex. 17, Rihm: String Quartet No. 10, (ii) *Battaglia/Follia*, bars 40-45

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The former tendency can be effectively described as a “sound state”, at least early on in the movement. By this I mean a perceptible overriding articulatory principle is lacking – there is a little horizontal motion forwards and an entangling of lines vertically

(voices consistently cross over, blurring the distinction between them). The visceral, mechanistic material employs *col legno battuto saltando* bowing (the wood of the bow is bounced back and forth from string to string) marked '*fffz sempre*'. From the very beginning of the movement, a dislocated texture is created, one defined by a series of accented strikes. It is only later that this state finds articulation, at points of constructive rupture. This state of discontinuity contrasts with the occasional fragments of linear material in which a connectivity of pitch, rather than stop-starting timbre, is central. A prominent instance of this occurs in the violins from bar 42 onwards (Ex. 17). Here, "sound state" material continues in the viola and cello parts.

These two contrasting materials should not be seen as absolute entities – there is no paradigmatic example set out by which deviations may be defined. These contrasts should instead be seen as two tendencies: one being a state of timbre and discontinuity, the other fragments focusing on pitch and linearity. This is not to say that the timbre material does not draw on aspects of pitch, or that the pitch material does not on aspects of timbre. Both do, and, as I hope to illustrate, it is in these points of connection that a dialectic is opened up between the two tendencies, one brought to the fore through the media of the two found objects that rupture the discourse: firstly, the children's song (the "hurdy-gurdy material"), and secondly, the famous melody/model of *La Follia*.

The nursery rhyme episode begins at bar 255 (Ex. 18). It is articulated clearly, intoned by the cello after the rhetorical "full stop" of two *marcato* unison pitches in all four instruments (played at the same octave), in bar 254. This material imposes sudden rhythmic regularity and, rather than discrete accented events as before, we hear a connectivity of line and a shaping into melodic phrases – a syntactic hierarchy. The cello's first four bars fall clearly into two two-bar phrases, of which smaller components are then echoed into the first violin (from the upbeat to bar 259) in which we hear a sequence evoking a return to the "tonic" of the episode (G, A, F, G, E, F, D, C). Articulation then disintegrates before returning *fff* in all four instruments (bar 267) in a "consequent" phrase to the original intonation as "antecedent" (and thus, syntax is suggested at a higher level).

Ex. 18, Rihm: String Quartet No. 10, (ii) Battaglia/Follia, bars 253-268

253

255

257

261

264

267

253

255

257

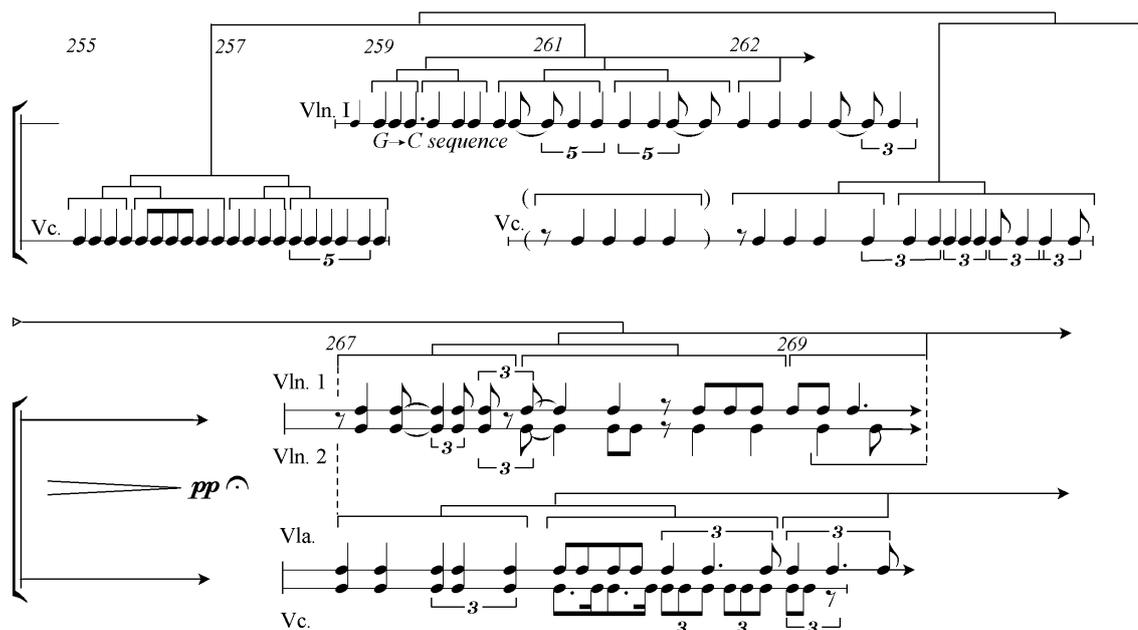
261

264

267

Phrase groups in this passage are summarised in Ex. 19. For clarity, much has been omitted from this diagram. I have selected for inclusion only those groupings that are foregrounded as organised/organisational. Indeed, what is *not* included often coincides with aspects of the phrasing that I have included – suggesting a deeper syntactical scheme (echoed by my “higher level” groupings). At points of breakdown, however, (shown by the arrows of continuation) it is notable that the foregrounded material (which had an organisational role) recedes into an emerging texture characterised by a proliferation of material and articulatory degradation; single instruments lose their identities as they increasingly cross into the range of and confuse the rhythmic/pitch content of the others. Black-headed arrows at the end of lines suggest that they continue in a similar but degrading manner, and recede from the foreground. The black-headed arrows at the beginning of the second system indicate the continuation/degradation of material following the cello’s second large group.

Ex. 19, Rihm: String Quartet No. 10 (ii), phrase analysis bars 255-269



It should be said that whilst a hierarchy is evoked it is not followed unproblematically. The phrase analysis diagram shows these rhythmic/phrase groupings and their relation to groupings at higher levels. It also indicates moments of continuation or degradation (shown as black-headed arrows), when groupings begin to break down and phrases continue beyond the syntax established thus far. (The white-headed arrow on the top group indicates the largest phrase group continuing over onto the next system). Put another way, the black-headed arrows show moments when the beginning of a new grouping is articulated but its ending is not, and hence is indeterminate. This often

coincides with a breakdown in the articulation of pitch identities. This can be seen to happen at the end of the first violin's material in bar 259-264, where the established descending sequence (from G to C, mentioned above) begins to "degrade" – consecutive minor 2^{nds} are introduced. In addition, this breakdown aligns with a thickening of the pitch space in all four instruments' parts and their increased crossing into one another's ranges (i.e. a loss of their own articulatory identities). With the degradation/continuation of the phrase from around 269 onwards also comes a breakdown in pitch identity. Thus, a hierarchical syntax is repeatedly drawn upon as an articulatory principle but is always unstable, collapsing. This is crystallised in the re-entry of the last phrase of second-highest structural level (at bar 267); it re-enters through a *rupturing reassertion* of syntactic organisation after the continuation/degradation of the phrase preceding it – organisation is reimposed.

A dual nature is apparent in moments of organised/organising rupture, and this duality's limits are evocative of philosophical legacies inscribed into the musical materials. Firstly, the rupture can be heard as *extraneous*, that is *as coming from outside*. An object ruptures *into* the discourse established thus far. I have given this first dimension some attention already – but I want now to outline this process in more detail. Secondly, rupture can be seen as *emergent*: previously held as potential in earlier material, later a rupturing moment *issues forth from within*. Put differently, the object leads on from, but ultimately ruptures and differentiates itself from, that which came before. I will argue below that this dialectic of rupture as extraneous and emergent draws immanently upon wider philosophical-historical ideas – principally, it resonates sympathetically with the dialectic of autonomy (the artwork) and heteronomy (the "extramusical" history that surrounds/penetrates the artwork).

Extraneous rupture is achieved through the imposition of difference – a sudden turning to material evocative of regularity and hierarchy. This is affirmed through a "break" in the texture immediately preceding this material's entry (bar 254). A hierarchy of pitch, in addition to that of rhythm/phrase, is also evoked, with the cello's material in particular pulling towards a C-major tonality (contrasting with the atonal material heard so far).

The idea of material entering from "outside" is not particular to contemporary art music, of course. It has been identified in Mahler's symphonies for example, be this in terms of connoting extraterritorial otherworldliness²⁷⁹ or the 'rupture' of a work by something external to it. The latter case is epitomised in Adorno's comment on the First

²⁷⁹ See JOHNSON, JULIAN 2005: 'Mahler and the Idea of Nature' in *Perspectives on Gustav Mahler* (ed. Jeremy Barham), Aldershot: Ashgate, 28

Symphony, that ‘rupture originates from beyond the music’s intrinsic movement, intervening from outside’²⁸⁰. Importantly, the hurdy-gurdy, of which this material is evocative (as illustrated below), is itself an established trope of the alien and is, as such, latent with potential to perform extraterritorial functions. To mention Mahler again, it is worthy of comment that Vera Micznik highlights his use of

a hurdy-gurdy or barrel-organ type of music, which at least since Schubert’s *Der Leiermann*, is conventionally associated with a semantic world of alienation, of strangeness, or even of desolation or emptiness.²⁸¹

The evocation of hurdy-gurdy performance in Rihm’s String Quartet No. 10 draws on this legacy. Furthermore, as connotative of the pastoral, the hurdy-gurdy-like rendition of the nursery rhyme draws parallels between the raw pastoral world and the rawness of childhood. At the same time, one hears a move from the natural (the immediacy of the sound-state at the movement’s opening) to the cultural (historically-allusive material) – an unstructured, timbral texture that later forms into something organised/organising. This coincidence of terms draws on another aesthetically significant legacy: positing a relationship between ontogeny (from the pre-linguistic to the singing (speaking) child, the “rawness” of childhood before adulthood) and phylogeny (from the undifferentiated to the structured, the “rawness” of nature before culture). However, through marking these materials as externalised, this legacy is observed from a distance.

Counterbalancing extraneous rupture coming from outside, the rupturing-organising moment can also be heard as emerging from within the work. It is prefigured in earlier materials, retrospectively understood to hold what comes later as previously held, latent potential. Fragments of linear material, played with ordinary bowing, are heard throughout much of the earlier section of the movement, often being foregrounded over the *battuto* material that surrounds them – in the viola from bar 74-76 (which returns at bar 126) or later in the cello from bar 225 onwards (a fragment repeated from bar 244), for example. Both these examples also include grace notes formed by stacks of 5^{ths} and slowly drawn-out single pitches, connotative of the grace notes, 5^{ths}, and drawn-out drones often associated with the hurdy-gurdy trope (think of Schubert’s last *Winterreise* song again, the opening in particular).

²⁸⁰ ADORNO 1996: 5

²⁸¹ MICZNIK, VERA 2001: ‘Music and Narrative Revisited: Degrees of Narrativity in Beethoven and Mahler’ in *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, Vol. 126 (pp. 193-249), 232

Ex. 20, Rihm: String Quartet No. 10 (ii), bars 74-76

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Timbre, in addition to pitch and established semantic associations, has a role to play in the emergent dimension of rupture. Methodologically speaking, this is to ascribe timbre an organisational and articulatory role, to make it a feature with its own connections to history and the historicity of subjectivity, rather than reduce it to a realm of “chora” or some “pre-linguistic” realm. The extensive use of the *battuto saltando* bowing, found throughout the majority of the movement, takes on a new role in articulating the timbral identity of the nursery rhyme material. Specifically, it is reinterpreted as alluding to the rhythmic “buzzing” sound that can be produced by a hurdy-gurdy (by quickly turning the crank so as to cause the bridge of the *trompette* drone to audibly vibrate against the instrument’s soundboard²⁸²). As a result, what were immediate and visceral before – the dislocated *battuto* attacks – take on historical resonances. This timbral relocation combines with other elements prefigured earlier in the movement (pitch, semantic allusions, and so on), so as to enable a moment of rupture that emerges from the latent potential of these materials, yet one, which in its ability to organise these elements differently, is also differentiated from them.

These extraneous and emergent aspects of rupture operate in light of one another. It is also important to note that this entanglement coincides with interrelated dialectical conceptions of musical material: firstly, with the dialectic of autonomy and heteronomy and, secondly, with that of nature and culture. The emergent aspect tends towards a notion of *autonomy*, whereby the generative (“autopoietic”) processes within the material *organically* spawn a breakthrough of something new. The latter, extraneous dimension tends

²⁸² BAINES, FRANCIS & BOWLES, EDMUND A. & GREEN, ROBERT A. [online]: ‘Hurdy-gurdy’ in *Grove Music Online*. *Oxford Music Online*, [website: <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/13583>, accessed 14th March, 2012]

towards the other sides of these dialectics, whereby, through the imposition of *heteronomous* material, markedly *cultural* tropes are underlined (in particular, the pseudo-linguistic, historical, quotational status of the children's tune). This connects with the idea of "coincidences" between, for example, dualities in different cultural domains, as explored in chapter 3. This is not to say that the autonomous side is identical to generative-organic processes connotative of "the natural" (that "autonomous = natural"), nor is this to posit that the heteronomous side is identical to pseudo-linguistic or quotational characteristics connotative of "the cultural" (that "heteronomous" = cultural"). Rather than to make such universal claims, it is to point out that provisional points of contact are drawn between or elicited through these characteristics via the reconfiguration of elements (and their correspondences/differences) of a (thetic) network in light of one another. These are concepts and relations constituted by and constitutive of experiencing this particular work of music.

This also goes for the rupture of a second material into/from the quartet, the twisted appearance of a famous melody, *La Follia*. Having outlined the first instance of rupture in detail, I will now briefly outline this second one, with a view to supplementing the discussion of articulation, and its connection with 'constructive disruption'. This material appears most prominently from bar 304 onwards, in the viola and the cello. Whilst a duality appears again, between emergent relationships and extraneous assertion, the appearance of *La Follia* tends towards the emergent. This occurs near the end of the movement. It is pre-echoed by earlier motivic and rhythm fragments – fragments which *only later* are retrospectively confirmed to "belong" to this *La Follia* as a guiding model. This later moment of recognition, when the *La Follia* is seized perceptually as a concrete object, enables previous fragments to coalesce around it. It is, as such, a rupturing point of organisation. This is a musical material whose emergent character can be heard through an act of retrospective reinterpretation, whereby this concrete moment may later be heard as potential held within these earlier fragmentary ones.

An episode exemplifying fragmented pre-echoes appears at around bar 40. Here, prominence is given to a motivic cell that appears throughout much of the movement: a given pitch that moves up a whole-tone and then down a minor 3rd. Played with and combined with other materials early on (such in this episode), it is later given structural significance in helping to articulate the beginning of *La Follia's* material proper. (The role of such "microscopic" materials in constituting the boundaries of the discourse – remember the thetic's dual character, *as rupture and/or boundary* – is focussed on in the next section.) As can be observed in the first viola in bars 304-305, this cell beckons *La Follia's* later entry (the pitches D, E, C-sharp). It is a distinctive cell, one giving the material a

discernible discursive identity, and one that is mirrored and confirmed as key to the identity of this material in the third phrase of *La Follia* (bars 308-309, pitches F, G, E).

Looking back to the episode that began from about bar 40 (Ex. 17, above), it can be noted that this cell appears in various forms (often detached from its syntactic place in *La Follia* proper, as it appears later). To take a few pitches from the second violin's line by way of illustrating this: in bar 40 one hears first D, E, C-sharp, then an inversion of these intervals (D, C-natural, E), and next a cell related closely to these (G, B-flat, A). The first violin prominently endorses this cell an octave above a bar later with the pitches F, G, E. These moments lead into a passage of high, sustained pitches in the first and second violins. Indeed, the second violin plays the pitches of almost the entire *La Follia* melody (centred on C-sharp rather than D-natural as later), from the last quaver of bar 42 onwards. However, its identity as *La Follia* – as an object of focus – is betrayed: it diverges from the rhythmic pattern that contributes to giving this famous material its identity, it is not supported as “*La Follia* melody” by the other instruments, it is embedded within the texture rather than audibly organising it, and it is broken off before completion. It exists “within” the material as latent potential to later become emergently manifest.

Larger sections of distorted *La Follia*-like material appear before and after the point when this melody ruptures the surface (bar 304 onwards). These are sections that, in reappearing *after La Follia* model proper, are retrospectively reheard afresh, as variations on or deviations from it. For example, the dislocated material that appears in bars 277-281 is identical (note-for-note) with four bars after the *La Follia* episode (bars 313-316). However, given that the second set of four bars follow the episode immediately, the likeness of *La Follia* to this dislocated material is underlined through proximity. Because the dislocated material is repeated *after La Follia* model, it is now heard to echo the organisational principles that also underpin this model. This new coherence is supported by the addition of a bar preceding the four that re-occur (i.e. those starting at bar 312). This bar emphasises the beginning of – the articulation of – the “variation” on the melody, of which the four bars are an integral part. It is notable also that *La Follia* is associated with improvised variations on its basic model. This historical legacy perhaps predisposes the hearing of the “variation” episode as such. These bars are not highlighted explicitly as part of a variation until this point; this is a *becoming* of variation through the reinterpretation of earlier material within a new discursive context, a context ordered around an organised/organising moment of rupture.²⁸³

²⁸³ This chimes with Janet Schmalfeldt's characterisation of *becoming* as encompassing reinterpretation. See SCHMALFELDT 2011, especially p. 9.

Ex. 21, Rihm: String Quartet No. 10 (ii), foregrounded “*La Follia*” material – viola and cello, bars 304-312

The image shows a musical score for viola and cello, bars 304-312. The score is in 3/4 time and features complex rhythmic patterns with many slurs and accents. Performance markings include 'batt. salt.', 'arco ord.', and 'ord.'.

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Alongside these (dominantly) “emergent” characteristics, the *La Follia* material also suggests a dimension of extraneous rupture. It enters in juxtaposition with, and hence as differentiated from, other musical materials. The occasion of its foregrounded entry (in the viola and cello from bar 304, see Ex. 21), for example, appears simultaneously beside material dissimilar and unsupportive of it in the two violins. Thus, whilst this entry helps to organise a crucial aspect of the discourse at this point, it is still somewhat separated from the temporal flow established thus far. It is only later – in the “variation” from bar 312 onwards (Ex. 22) – that it organises all four voices towards a single coherent end. As extraneous it also enters as a found object following the conclusion of an instantiation of the nursery rhyme material in the viola. As such, they are objects set differentially beside one another. It is important that the very status of the *La Follia* material as quotation – as found object – lends it the significance of being a cultural “intertext” – that is, of being something which is markedly historical, existing “outside” of the work “prior to” entering into it or being commented on by it.

Ex. 22, Rihm: String Quartet No. 10 (ii.), bars 311-315

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I have outlined two tendencies in conceptualising and articulating rupture: the first emerges autonomously from the work, rupturing it from “inside”; the second concerns the rupture of extraneous materials into the work ‘as if from outside’ (to cite Adorno’s phrase again²⁸⁴). These two tendencies of rupture are in dialectic; discourse requires an imposed divisibility into elements (heteronomy) but these elements are also produced through the discourse itself (autonomy). This can be conceived of as a dialectic of the pre-existence of *being* and a self-determination through *becoming*. (As I argue below, categories of being and becoming are still important to the experience of the recent modernist quartets and to the inscription of these works with notions of subjectivity as related to the philosophical-historical concepts of being and becoming.) Objects that come from “outside the work” rely on the idea that they exist prior to the work, an “ontological steadiness” if you like. However, they are of course also given definition – articulated – through their mediation in the work, their constitution through its discourse. In Rihm’s String Quartet No. 10 an articulation of discourse is achieved, in one dimension at least, through an act of rupture

²⁸⁴ ADORNO 1996: 5

of organising/organised materials (*extraneously*) into and (*emergently*) from the processual flow of the work. This comes forth in moments of rupture centred on large-scale elements of material, which imply their own object-like consistency, and thus a character of stability around which more processually inclined material may coalesce (and, as such, become seen to be organised).

Organised/organising rupture plays an important role in terms of the philosophical-historical legacies inscribed into those materials that rupture. As I go on to argue below, in Alfred Schnittke's String Quartet No. 4 (1989) this centres around a moment of rupture that calls on notions of subjectivity as articulated musically – principally in the treatment of moments of “cadential closure” as these indexically connote the self-determination of autonomous music and an autonomous self. This discussion of rupture has also laid a foundation for my later exploration of “extraterritorial” material as it “enters” the discourse of Valentin Silvestrov's String Quartet No. 1 (1974/1990), becoming structurally significant.

Before these developments, however, I should again highlight the dual nature of the thetic, as rupture and/or boundary. Discursive boundaries are set up and organised through ‘constructive disruption’ yet, at the same time, the character of these boundaries is affirmed/negated through their rupturing (rupture calls attention to the quality and location of the boundary). My discussion of the thetic has rupture at a macroscopic level, focussing on the role of large-scale musical elements – objects – in the discourse, as found in Rihm's quartet. This I will now supplement by discussing the macroscopic's dialectical counterpart: how boundaries are set up at a “microscopic” level, constituting a discourse which might then come to be ruptured.

Microscopic Boundaries

The counterpart of the rupture discussed above is boundary. Whilst rupture is not exclusively found at a macroscopic level, it is readily visible there – at moments of large-scale intertextual intervention. Whilst this is intrinsically related to boundaries at a macroscopic level, I will explore the articulation of discursive boundaries as this happens at a “microscopic” level – where discourse is given its shape and becomes comprehensible as *a* discourse. This is to explore the concept of a foundational degree of textual autonomy, something which may be transgressed by, or brought into dialectic with, the heteronomous (and often intertextual) character of rupture.

The concept of “autonomy” of course has an intellectual history of its own. Whilst I will not go into the detailed discussion about this here, it should be said that the idea of a “boundary” suggests a boundary “of” something, within the bounds of which textual

relationships are set up or held in constellation with one another. This connects with many pre-established analytic and aesthetic concepts – to cite a few examples: analytic concepts like Kofi Agawu’s ‘introversive semiosis’²⁸⁵ and Mark Evan Bond’s notion of the ‘generative’ process of form²⁸⁶; aesthetic ones such as Romantic legacies of organicism, modernist notions of structural self-determination (notably, Adorno’s *musique informelle*)²⁸⁷. However, what concerns us is the *level of consistency* at which a discourse, or discourses, may be said to operate. This is something provisionally organised through the work.

“Discourse”, however, is not identical to the concept “work”. A work may or may not be aligned with a notion of discourse. Where it is, where the work can be idealised as a unified discourse, it is something – here, the work is an object – that the listener may “enter into”. Its beginning – its “opening” – grants us access to its immanence. When it ends – importantly, when it ends such that all is well (e.g. through synthesis) – the work “closes”. Works and discourses may also *not* be coincident, being multiply, fragmentally, or even negatively discursive. A level of consistency is not a sufficient condition of an artwork. However, the very notion of autonomy, as tied in with consistency, suggests that nonetheless this textuality *is* a pertinent and significant category in the mediation of experience through/by/of the artwork. The mutual constitution of musical discourses by boundaries, and boundaries through discourses, is itself inherently related, though not identical, to handed-down philosophical-historical notions of the autonomy of musical works.

In this sense, autonomy begets heteronomy; inscribed into its practice are wider concerns and complexities mediative of experience. However, in the cases of both autonomy and heteronomy, which both play a role simultaneously, we find ourselves focusing on one side or the other of the text’s “boundary”. We are either “inside” or “outside” of it: thinking either *intratextually* (about links within a work’s discourse) or *intertextually* (moving between or across discourses). These boundaries are, as such, things constructed both from “within” the work and from “outside” of it. And, as suggested above, in this very notion of the “within” is an appeal to legacies already “outside”.

A ready example of “levels of consistency” is provided by Helmut Lachenmann’s String Quartet No. 1, *Gran Torso* (1971/76/88)²⁸⁸. The preface to the score outlines the relevant extended techniques for interpreting it. The score combines elements of staff and graphic notations, as well as a host of special symbols. Eight different types of extended

²⁸⁵ AGAWU 1991, chapter 3: ‘Introversive Semiosis: The Beginning-Middle-End Paradigm’.

²⁸⁶ BONDS 1991: 14

²⁸⁷ ADORNO, THEODOR 1992 [orig. 1963]: ‘Vers une Musique Informelle’ [orig. 1960] in *Quasi una Fantasia: Essays on Modern Music* (trans. Rodney Livingstone), London: Verso Classics

²⁸⁸ The score is published Breitkopf & Härtel (Wiesbaden).

pizzicato are outlined: pizzicato of harmonics, pizzicato with fingernails, Bartók pizzicato with completely choked strings, pizzicato by pulling the string with the tension-screw end of the bow, pressing the tension-screw down onto the string from above, striking the screw on the wood of the fingerboard, pizzicato with the left hand, and a last type of pizzicato that produces a distinct form of glissando²⁸⁹. This conception of “pizzicato”, as with many features in much of Lachenmann’s music, helps to produce a framework of consistency within which structural relationships – affinities, overlaps, and differences – are produced. Employing diverse but interrelated forms of pizzicato enables for new interrelationships to be drawn between materials, or aspects to be brought out from one another. Put differently, categories of composition are reorganised and brought into new arrangements. As Lachenmann himself put it, this compositional strategy enables him to conceive of “graded scales” of sound, which, for example, “consist... of qualitative jumps that make a pizzicato to an arco and a pianissimo to a fortissimo.”²⁹⁰ This relates to, and develops on from, more “traditional” composition parameters (rhythm, pitch, and so on) and established compositional resources (instrumental techniques).²⁹¹ Heteronomous materials, with their own historical significances, are drawn on in the articulation of an autonomous work, a work that produces from this heteronomy the discursive consistencies that grant its autonomy.²⁹² Furthermore, a level of consistency that is set up – suggesting something autonomous, with its own boundaries – that might then come to be ruptured by something extraneous to it. In the case of Rihm’s quartet this occurred when the “sound-state” heard at the beginning of the movement was ruptured by two found objects. This issue of what is considered outside/inside, bounded/ruptured, is important to subsequent discussions of other works below; Schnittke’s String Quartet No. 4 and

²⁸⁹ In this last type, which Lachenmann calls *pizzicato fluido*, the string is plucked by the left hand whilst the bow’s tension-screw (or sometimes the wood of the bow) is slid along the string. David Alberman compares the resulting sound with a Hawaiian guitar or a pedal slide guitar. (ALBERMAN, DAVID 2005: ‘Abnormal Playing Techniques in the String Quartets of Helmut Lachenmann’ in *Contemporary Music Review*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (pp. 39-51), 46.

²⁹⁰ Lachenmann cited in HOCKINGS, ELKE 1995: ‘Helmut Lachenmann’s Concept of Rejection’ in *Tempo*, No. 193 (pp. 4-10 + 12-14), 12

²⁹¹ In Lachenmann’s particular case these dimensions of consistency – these “graded scales” of sound – show traces of the serial parametric thinking of the 1950s and 60s.

²⁹² The idea that the (critical, Modernist) work creates its own boundary finds its most polemical expression in Adorno’s writing, in a passage in which he laments polystylistic approaches: ‘The diversity in the Schoenberg school, extending from Schoenberg, Berg, and Webern through the second generation and down to the *responsible* serial composers of the present, appears more securely established than the chaotic variety of music festival composers, who simultaneously embody historically diverse positions and whose syncretism merely perpetuates the stylistic confusions of the nineteenth century which these days are such an easy target for derision. *Variety exists only in unity* not as an agglomeration of “styles”; what is true of each composition applies with equal force to the relationships between compositions. The expansive gesture that embraces everything and finds good everywhere belongs in the realm of assiduous information collecting, *not that of critical consciousness.*’ ADORNO 1999: 151-152, my emphasis.

Silvestrov's String Quartet No. 1 are both works that, though through different strategies, create discursive boundaries before rupturing them.

This issue should be put in historical context. Naturalised frameworks of consistency from earlier musical eras – notably, tonal idioms – provided the normative organisational principles by which musical material found its place and became significant. A simple example can be given: the consistency provided by the tonal frameworks of much eighteenth- and early-nineteenth century music enabled the opposition of major and minor keys to be felt as a source of experiential significance. Furthermore, the “second nature” of this framework meant that anything falling outside of it, or critical play with it, could be recognised as derivation from this norm (consider, for example, the tonally ambiguous opening of Beethoven's String Quartet in F major, Op. 135, experientially pertinent in that it both draws on and deviates from the codified openings and cadential formulae of the time). The “second nature” of tonality (as paradigmatic example of something wider) provides a framework of consistency within which *elements of discourses may be experienced as “being” or “having identity”*.

In musical works self-reflexive of naturalised frameworks, however, this problematisation of frames makes it difficult to pin-down being/identity, stabilities generally seen to be constituted as “framed” within the consistency of the frame. Investigating that the principles by which boundaries of discourses are constituted – as these are related implicitly to notions of subjectivity, to past ways of articulating works and discourses – is hence a fundamental issue to studies of recent critical musical discourses. These boundaries provide a self-constituting framework within which being and identity come to be articulated – their “relative autonomy”²⁹³. Hence, even without naturalised frameworks, “boundaries” can be said to be evoked in contemporary musical discourses. These are boundaries within/outside which elements may be said to belong/be out of place. Indeed, these naturalised frameworks, whilst not enacted, may still be made reference to as fragments and still-present traces.

Rihm's String Quartet No. 10 provides examples of this. Consistencies of material provide the boundaries within which elements “have” identity and “are” experientially significant. The *col legno battuto saltando* is one element constitutive of/constituted by a framework within which textual affinities and differences play out. Furthermore, in terms of the inside/out distinction, this processual material also sets out a discursive boundary into which (as I have argued above) other, markedly heteronomous (intertextual) materials may rupture. This constellation of issues – concerning discourse, frameworks of

²⁹³ PADDISON 1997: 233

consistency, autonomy/heteronomy, and so on – may have implications for a wide variety of recent critical musical works. However, in focusing on a single work in more detail – *Arsenic and Old Lace* (1990) by Jukka Tiensuu (b. 1948) – it should become apparent that these issues (and the way they interrelate) express particular tendencies and characteristics in specific works.

Tiensuu: Arsenic and Old Lace

The Finnish composer Jukka Tiensuu²⁹⁴ has experience in free improvisation and has led courses on baroque harpsichord performance. These experiences bear their mark on *Arsenic and Old Lace*, with its improvisatory tone and allusions to the historical sound world of the harpsichord. Whilst my discussion of Tiensuu’s music concerns boundaries and ruptures in musical discourses (i.e. within musical works), my discussion of Tiensuu’s music itself can be seen as an attempt to expand the “boundaries” of the critical discourses that surround modernist music. This composer is in many ways unfamiliar to (at least English-speaking) musicological discourses (when compared to Schnittke, Rihm, and Adès). However, this “marginality”, I hope, will help to disturb preconceptions of an institutionalised repertoire of critical, modernist musical works – leading to new imaginative and critical possibilities.

Ex. 23, Tiensuu: *Arsenic and Old Lace*, opening

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In *Arsenic and Old Lace*, a single movement work for microtonally tuned harpsichord and string quartet, the quartet acts to both bound and then expand outwards

²⁹⁴ A short biography of Tiensuu can be found on the Finnish Music Information Centre’s website

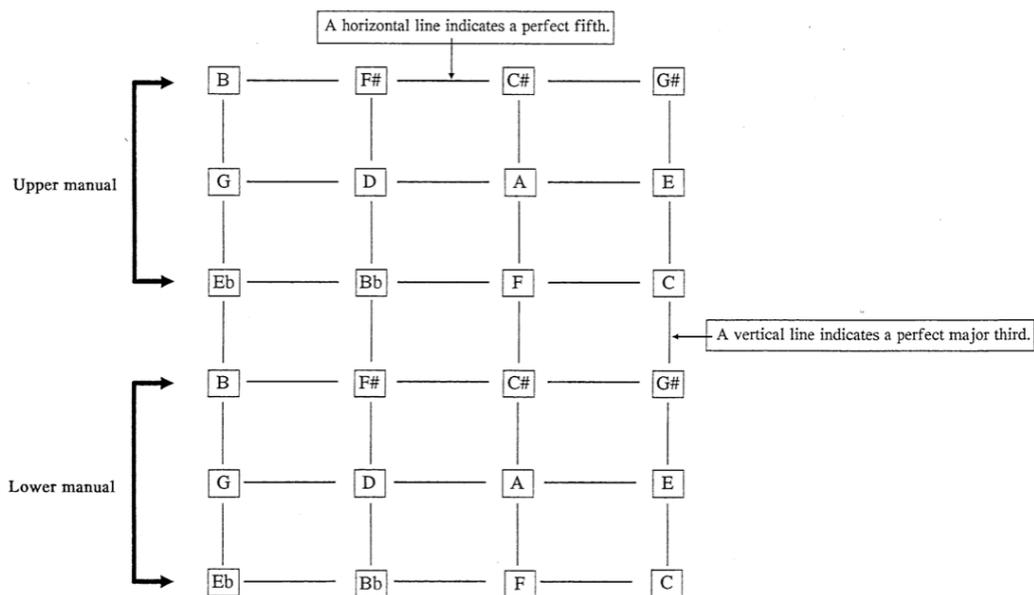
[website:

http://www.fimic.fi/fimic/fimic.nsf/WCIP/Tiensuu,%20Jukka?opendocument&cat=contemporary_-_classical, accessed 3rd October, 2012]

discursive materials charted by the harpsichord. This proliferation of articulatory boundaries does not, however, suggest a singular “Whole” – rather, many multiple directions. These proliferations in the present also relate dialectically to the past. The quartet, instead of determining its own boundaries, follows and plays off the harpsichord. The harpsichordist, in this soloistic role, is reminiscently placed in an analogous position to a chamber concerto soloist, a former context that is, however, distorted and presented in miniature; only a string quartet accompanies the harpsichord, an accompaniment that is itself, in discursive terms, at risk of sheering away from that of principle focus.

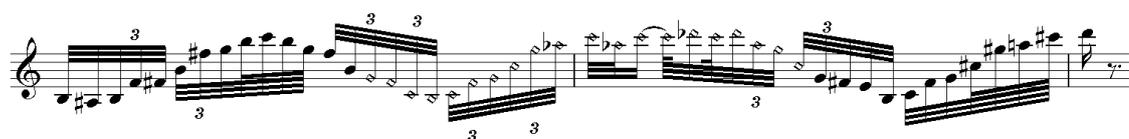
Before exploring this in greater detail, let me first outline general points of historicity regarding the musical material of the work, both those of structure and on its (semantic) surface. At a structural level, “uncanny” moments of historical reference are rhetorically encompassed within (the boundaries of) the discourse. Tonal reminiscences are heard, though contorted through a tuning of the harpsichord based on perfect intervals.²⁹⁵ (In the score, diamond-headed notes indicate playing on the upper manual.) This is underlined from the start of the harpsichord’s entry (bar 8, see Ex. 23), which expands the boundary of well-tempered pitch whilst at the same time transgressing it. Indeed, the “B-flats/A-sharps” played here become of structural significance later – alluded to as a “pitch centre” which is nonetheless hazy itself. In addition to these points

²⁹⁵ Tiensuu writes in the preface to the score: ‘Starting with the lower manual and tuning the A to the A used by the string quartet, one should then proceed to tune the other strings as indicated below. The 4’ stop on the lower manual is tuned to octave with the 8’ (as usual). All octaves within a stop are perfect. As a result both manuals have identical tuning but the upper manual (8’) sounds 41 cents (ca. 1/5-tone) lower than the lower manual.’ The diagram below, reproduced from the score, outlines the manner of tuning the manuals.



of historical reminiscence at the structural large-scale, smaller-scale allusions are made: moments reminiscent of historically-passed (Baroque-like) musical rhetoric are audible under the surface – the progression of three chords at the very opening, for example – but not unproblematically so. The first four motives in the harpsichord part (bars 8-16) clearly suggest a hierarchical phrase structure (of two phrases, opening and closing, themselves constructed from two motives, preceded by an opening “cadence” in the strings in bars 1-7).

Ex. 24, Tiensuu: *Arsenic and Old Lace*, harpsichord, bars 326-327



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Alongside these uncanny “structural” points of reference, historical allusions are made on the surface. This is epitomised in a passage of sweeping arpeggio-like figures (starting approximately at bar 325, see Ex. 24) in which – drawing on the repertoire associated with the harpsichord – one hears a fantasia- or toccata-like line sketched out. Turn figures are similarly deployed (e.g., bars 57-58). However, these references are never explicit, instead being worked into the fabric of the discourse. They do no rupturing from/into it, as was heard in the case of Wolfgang Rihm’s String Quartet No. 10. Indeed, the word “reference” might be inappropriate, connoting that moments of historicity are enunciated as focal points of the discourse. A better term would perhaps be “relation”; inscribed within the harpsichord’s use is the history of its operation – its repertoire, associations, conceptions of subjectivities of which it is productive, its pedagogy²⁹⁶ – elements that are related to one another, and dimensions which may again be embraced in new musics. As Tiensuu himself puts it, ‘Music is not so much about notes as about the mutual relationships between ideas. True, sound has proved to be an unparalleled medium for expressing these relations.’²⁹⁷

Exploring these relationships leads to a proliferation of discursive terms, and an expansion of the discourse (of its “boundaries”, what is encompassed within it) from within. Often the quartet’s material expands outward the course charted by the

²⁹⁶ These issues, as they explored in Lachenmann’s *Serynade* for solo piano, constitute the central object of investigation in chapter 7.

²⁹⁷ Jukka Tiensuu in interview with NIEMINEN, RISTO 2007 [online]: ‘Notes from the Borderland – an interview with Tiensuu’ (trans. Susan Sinisalo) in *Finnish Music Quarterly Magazine*, Issue 3 [website: http://www.fmq.fi/articles/ar_2007_3_rn.html], accessed 8th March, 2012]

harpsichord. The harpsichord, as a centre of focus (as focal/vocal), articulates many of the central materials from which this proliferation proceeds. This is especially evident at a miniature, microscopic level, where single motives of the harpsichord are shadowed by the quartet, as derivations from provisional discursive moments. Inaccurate attempts by the quartet to qualify what was said by the harpsichord lead to an expansion of terms encompassed by the discourse, but nevertheless leaves its organising/organised articulatory core – in most part, the harpsichord material – intact.

Ex. 25, Tiensuu: *Arsenic and Old Lace*, bars 20-29

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A “proliferation of terms” is in abundance near the beginning of the work, functioning to set up (organised/organising) discursive relationships, where discursive boundaries, and hierarchies between harpsichord and quartet, are drawn out. See, for example, the harpsichord’s material in bar 23 (Ex. 25), imitated inexactly by the first violin in bar 24. This violin line then slides downwards, before a further derivation (bar 27). Sliding to a B above the treble clef, this pitch is then taken back by the harpsichord, which rearticulates divisible pitch steps (and a momentary centre), in the face of the slip-sliding continuum of the violin’s portamento. In addition to these textual proliferations in the score, the inherent difficulty of the string players’ attempts to accommodate for the harpsichord’s microtonal tuning suggests that a level of inexactitude is written into the music’s performance. Similar instances of imitation and proliferation can be heard near the

opening – at bars 29-30, 34-35, or at bar 48, for instance. The motivic materials instantiated by the harpsichord, and often imitated by the quartet, plot concrete discursive shapes, as opposed to, and proliferating into, the multiplicity of colourations, derivations, and continuations explored by the strings.

Proliferations of discursive elements also occur within the quartet’s material, and the harpsichord’s, as distinct from one another. The “staggering” moment in the strings in bar 10, for instance (Ex. 23), coming after an exact repetition of the first chord, can clearly be heard as a derivation of the second chord of the opening pizzicato material. And, at other times, the articulatory centre – the harpsichord material – itself proliferates. Decorative materials inscribed with associations of the harpsichord’s “conventional” repertoire – turn figures, mordents – are themselves expanded into the musical material proper (see bars 57-60, Ex. 26).²⁹⁸

Ex. 26, Tiensuu: *Arsenic and Old Lace*, bars 57-60, harpsichord (turn figures bracketed)



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Inherent to these proliferations – with these boundaries of the musical palette constantly extending – comes a dialectical notion of discourse: the improvisatory “self-generation” of discursive materials suggests the autonomy of the harpsichord’s music; however, in becoming multiply, autonomy becomes heteronomy. (Whilst very different from the music Adorno had in mind, this seems to accord with Adorno’s dictum that ‘[v]ariety exists only in unity’.²⁹⁹) This comes to the fore in a section in which the quartet is “locked in” to the harpsichord’s material (starting midway through bar 86); the harpsichord’s pitches and rhythms are simultaneously spread throughout quartet. The quartet doubles the harpsichord’s material and then continues it, becoming self-sufficient (e.g. bars 93-96, 163-169 even more so). “Depth” is given to the harpsichord’s central line through timbral colouring in the strings, the use of pizzicato and harmonics.

²⁹⁸ Of course, Tiensuu is by no means the first or only composer to “compose out” and expand the boundaries of musical materials so as to encompass and develop material previously held as “decorative” – the turn figure at the opening of the last movement of Mahler’s Ninth Symphony becomes a fundamental basis of the movement, to give one example.

²⁹⁹ ADORNO 1999: 152. The source of this quotation is cited at length in a footnote above.

Ex. 27, Tiensuu: *Arsenic and Old Lace*, harpsichord re-entry, bars 167-171

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A similar passage returns (with a section of the string’s material repeated exactly – compare the strings’ parts in bars 86-101 and 159-174). This second time, pitches have been deducted from the harpsichord’s part, which, nonetheless, remain in the quartet’s material just as played before. This results in pointillistic material in the harpsichord part, given direction and unified through connective fragments in the quartet. The quartet, for the first time, *becomes* a central force of articulation. This new centrality of the quartet is echoed through the harpsichord’s complete withdrawal for a few bars (for longer than in the corresponding passage found earlier). Indeed, when it re-enters, it could be said to “re-enter” in the sense of *coming back into* an unfolding discourse. In expressing its own discursive consistency it moves towards self-sufficiency. (Whilst this “entry” is related to a notion of rupture, this does not approach the forcefulness of the gesture of “entry”, of rupture, of extraneous material into/from Rihm’s Tenth Quartet.) In addition, whilst the string material appears identically as before, the harpsichord fails to remain exactly “locked in” as in the previous, corresponding passage. Pitches are picked out from the strings’ texture, but inexactly in terms of their rhythmic placement – compare the pitches and the rhythms of the harpsichord’s triplet figure and strings material in bar 169 (Ex. 27), for example.

A lengthy passage in which discourse proliferates to a point of a *breakdown* of the discourse’s consistency (bars 175 to 225) follows. In the first section of this passage (bars 175-193), an increasingly chromatic and densely voiced part grows from the pointillistic and fragmentary texture of the harpsichord’s part. The string textures increasingly thicken, the duration of many pitches increases. Articulation then breaks down even further. After a few bars without the harpsichord, it returns (bar 200) with tremolos and then hefty cluster chords. Discursive stability is further undermined through slip-sliding materials in

the strings that seem to go outside of the framework of pitch identities outlined thus far (see the quartet’s material, bars 200-220).

Ex. 28, Tiensuu: *Arsenic and Old Lace*, bars 224-232

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As this slip-sliding moves downwards it slows, ultimately settling on a single pitch (bar 221), a B-flat (at first with microtonal inflections, and then without (225)). The end of this contraction onto B-flat can be seen in Ex. 28. This provides a return, in terms of pitch at least, to gravitational centre of B-flat. It may be recalled that the harpsichord prominently and microtonally intoned this same pitch at the very opening of the work. Indeed, here this same pitch prepares the frame for the harpsichord’s re-entry, this time for a cadenza (which is not given in the score).³⁰⁰ This pitch centre is important as, following Tiensuu’s direction at the opening of the score, this cadenza is ‘(a free improvisation) on B^b’. Instead of an affirmative tutti, after the cadenza discourse is “rebuilt” slowly, but incompletely. (He also writes: “The cadenza should finish with thirds D-F/D-F[#] (with possible microtonal variations) and preferably overlap (ad lib.) with the entrance of the violins in bars 227-228[?].) The pitch B-flat, and then D, F and F-sharp, form a core out of which the music expands, employing traces of earlier proliferations in doing so.

The role the cadenza plays is central in highlighting past-present relations – specifically, these relations regarding discursive boundaries in this work. The cadenza is included as a historically prescient mode of “proliferation” of discursive terms and an

³⁰⁰ Tiensuu’s own performance, including his rendition of the cadenza, can be heard on the CD: ‘From Scandinavia – Arditti Quartet Vol. 28’, Naïve Sa (MO782141). Released December, 2008.

expanding of the boundaries of discourse, a central characteristic in *Arsenic and Old Lace*. Indeed, the whole work, even before the cadenza, takes an “improvisatory” tone. Dialectically, this is something retrospectively affirmed with reference to an explicitly improvisatory cadenza. The autonomy of the work finds itself based in the heteronomy of history, as well as, through proliferating multiplicities, begetting heteronomy of the present. The cadenza – historically a structural prolongation in which the soloist explores virtuosic superfluities – is relocated as a central (if necessarily multiple) core of the discourse. Like the turn figures, expanded out on the surface, the cadenza is heard as a mode of expanding outwards, one retrospectively imbuing the entire work’s material with this sense. The boundaries of, and ruptures to, musical works’ constituent discourses are thus constructed both with reference to processes within the works and in an appeal to histories “external” to the works – a dialectic of autonomy and heteronomy.

THE LEGACY OF THE SELF IN SCHNITTKE'S STRING
QUARTET NO. 4 (SECOND MOVEMENT)

String Quartets provide a space for the exploration, articulation, and even the performative 'doing', of subjectivity; '[t]he music calls me to rehearse the subjectivity it performs, and commonly I do', as Lawrence Kramer puts it³⁰¹. Kenneth Gloag argues that, in the twentieth century, 'the string quartet continued to provide a generic framework which reflected the inherited traditions and conventions as accumulated through history and stylistic developments of the genre, even if in some cases it was only to construct a point for new departure'.³⁰² Taking this suggestion in mind, I propose that in Alfred Schnittke's String Quartet No. 4 (1989) one of these points of departure is the historicity of the subject and of subjective understanding of the self. This is a quality that is evocated both semantically, through allusion to ("heteronomous") historical musical materials, as well as through connections that develop within the work ("autonomously").

Richard Taruskin writes that, in Schnittke's music, 'the pot frequently boils over in violent extremes of dissonance: tone clusters (a Schnittke specialty), dense polytonal counterpoint (often in the form of close canons), "verticalized" melodies whereby the notes of a tune are sounded simultaneously as a chord'³⁰³. The Fourth Quartet bears all these stylistic hallmarks. It also accords with Schnittke's move, in the last decade of his life, towards 'less frequently [relying] on quotation; stylistic pluralism is still present, but manifest by way of allusion rather than literal borrowing.'³⁰⁴ Indeed, this typifies the dialectic of historical allusion and self-determined development, of heteronomy and autonomy, cited above.

Kramer discusses Schnittke's Third Quartet (1983) in his *Interpreting Music*. Similarly to my focus on the Fourth, Kramer focuses on the use of past signifiers in problematic, "modern" context. 'The piece', he states, 'is above all a study of when, if, and whether a – musical – message from the past can arrive safely in the present.'³⁰⁵ In the context of the Third Quartet, these messages take the form of explicit quotations. They are even labelled in the score (Ex. 29). These are textual fragments now distanced from their historical contexts; 'these distanced forms of meaning [the quoted materials, as these allude to wider associations] are like phantoms or specters. Initially, at least, the citations that recall them

³⁰¹ KRAMER 2011: 48

³⁰² GLOAG 2003: 288.

³⁰³ TARUSKIN 1997: 101

³⁰⁴ DURRANI, AAMINAH 2005: *Chorale and Canon in Alfred Schnittke's Fourth String Quartet*, PhD Diss., Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College, 150

³⁰⁵ KRAMER 2011: 232. The essay in which Kramer makes these remarks is entitled simply 'Modern'.

are empty husks betokening a historical condition that renders the meanings, perhaps any meanings, no longer accessible except as cancelled³⁰⁶. Whilst this is similar to processes of “distancing” that occur in the Fourth, there are also important differences, due to the dialectic of heteronomy and autonomy that arises in Schnittke’s late music (this is explored in more detail below). In this way I draw on Kramer’s discussion of the Third but take it further.

Ex. 29, Schnittke: String Quartet No. 3, opening

The image displays two musical excerpts. The top excerpt, titled "Orlando di Lasso - Stabat Mater", is marked "Andante" and is in 4/4 time. It features four staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The music is characterized by a slow, contemplative mood with dynamic markings of *pp* and *p*. The bottom excerpt, titled "Ludwig v. Beethoven - Op. 135", is in 4/4 time and features four staves. It includes dynamic markings of *p*, *mp*, *mf*, and *f*, along with performance instructions like "pizz." and "arco". A specific section of the Beethoven excerpt is highlighted with a box and labeled "D-S-C-H".

3. Streichquartett | für Streichquartett © Copyright 1984 by Universal Edition A.G., Wien/PH522

The Fourth Quartet consists of five movements, the first three of which are played without a break. The first movement acts as a kind of slow introduction to the second. There is a focus on glissandi and textures are bare, gradually changing, and chromatic, sometimes with microtonal fluctuations. The *Allegro* second movement juxtaposes material heard in embryonic forms in the first. A central point of focus is a recurring entry of material marked with historical connotations – a stylistic breakthrough that interjects into the flow of the movement. This stylistic intervention bears an acute relationship with

³⁰⁶ KRAMER 2011: 234

historically established mediations of the self in music. Hence, much of the following discussion focuses on this “intervention” and its relationship to other materials in the quartet. The third movement mirrors the *Lento* of the first, but is infused with some of the *Allegro*’s features. The fourth is quick, and leads into a final *Lento*, which echoes the mood of the first. A feature that occurs across these movements, that gives the discourse a “boundary” through consistency (although this is at the same time “ruptured”³⁰⁷), in one dimension at least, is a gesture of movement up and down between semitones.³⁰⁸ This becomes a central feature of the musical discourse (an object of focus), which I explore below. It is a feature that arises from autonomous processes yet gives form to an object inscribed with heteronomous associations (that concern subjective selfhood, as these have been historically articulated in music).

I start by briefly outlining notions of selfhood as they relate to Schnittke’s Quartet. The understanding of a coherent, centred self, and its relationship with musical closure, is of importance here. An examination of the objectification of self – as a symbol, as an object of understanding – and Schnittke’s musically discursive treatment of it, follows. Last, I note how this objectification is reacted to in the Fourth Quartet, how new lines of connection and mediation are drawn from and through it.

Understanding the Music(al Self)

Selfhood is a site of ideology, of materiality, and of identity. As such it is also a point of contestation, one at which something is at stake in these terms. It has become a concept of musicological interest in recent years. Susan McClary writes of how, in the Classical sonata, through internal synthesis of contradictory materials, the ideal of an autonomous and centred self was negotiated musically.³⁰⁹ Mark Evan Bonds (following Scott Burnham) writes similarly of the music of Beethoven (and his enduring influence) that, ‘[i]n the unfolding of a central musical idea, in the close integration of contrasting gestures, and in a trajectory that traces a path from struggle to triumph, we hear what

³⁰⁷ Even at a “microscopic” level (as I use the term in the section on Tiensuu’s *Arsenic and Old Lace*, above) discursive boundaries are tested. The twelve semitones, for instance, which form the basic framework of consistency in/by which Schnittke develops his material (i.e., transforms and transposes motives), are sometimes transgressed in favour of quartertones and glissandi. As Aaminah Durrani puts it: ‘In the Fourth Quartet, Schnittke’s microtonic passages intensify the semitone and introduce into the texture an element of harmonic uncertainty; microtones are not components of scalar structures’ (DURRANI 2005: 46). Note that in chapter 5 I further explore the twelve semitones, and established chromatic scale steps, as they permit historically inherited frameworks of consistency – as they provide “boundaries” – through which musical discourses are often articulated in recent music.

³⁰⁸ In examining processes “within” the musical discourse, I draw on Aaminah Durrani’s (2005) analysis of the work. She employs Set Theory in her analysis. My aim, however, is to draw on her findings so as to illustrate wider philosophical-historical ideas.

³⁰⁹ MCCLARY 2000: 102

amounts to an idealized progression of life itself³¹⁰. Most recently, Daniel Chua has written of the articulation of self through the concept of ‘iPodic selves’.³¹¹ Despite the differences between the music focused upon, and what they consider as being at stake, what these authors have in common is a taking of selfhood as something that is articulated musically in order to be experienced. Indeed, in Part I, it was shown that elements of musical material might provide points suggestive of proximities between subject and object, acting so as to enable subjective identification with these materials (and, furthermore, the inscribed legacies and philosophical-historical ideas with which these materials are coincident). Our worlds and our Selves are mediated and understood musically.

Commenters have often characterised Schnittke’s music as displaying polystylistic³¹² or polyglossic³¹³ tendencies. Building on this, I suggest that collisions of differing musical styles make visible collisions of past selves, past ways of being musically in the world.³¹⁴ Hence, Schnittke’s music does not merely juxtapose musical genres, forms, and materials, but worlds with worlds, and selves with selves. His String Quartet No. 4 provides a case in point.

One moment of stylistic intervention (and historical allusion) stands out in particular, speaking to the historicity of the articulation of subjectivity and (self) understanding as these are sedimented musically. This returns, in slightly adapted forms, as a position around which much of the rest of the movement’s materials revolve. The first entry of the material occurs towards the opening of the second movement (Ex. 30, fig. 2)³¹⁵. This returning figure suggests unity in a sound world of otherwise complex polyphony and, contrary to the music preceding it, strongly articulates a cohesive discursive identity.³¹⁶ It can be grasped on to, a sturdy, floating object of focus in the otherwise continuous and stormy polyphonic sea in which subjectivity is set adrift. This

³¹⁰ BONDS 2006: 57

³¹¹ CHUA, DANIEL 2011: ‘Listening to the Self: The Shawshank Redemption and the Technology of Music’ in *19th-Century Music*, Vol. 34, No. 3 (pp. 341-355), 355. See also CHUA, DANIEL 2010: ‘Listening to the Other: A Counter-Cultural Ear in iPodic Times’ in *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, Vol. 135, Supplement 1 (pp. 103-108).

³¹² IVASHKIN 1996: 88. See also SCHNITTKE, ALFRED 2002a: ‘Polystylistic Tendencies in Modern Music’ [orig. c. 1971] in *A Schnittke Reader* (ed. Alexander Ivashkin), Bloomington: Indiana University Press, and Richard Taruskin’s essay, ‘After Everything’ (in TARUSKIN 1997).

³¹³ DIXON 2007

³¹⁴ I explore a social, rather than personal, concept of style, thus contrasting with Naomi Cumming’s writings on selfhood and style. See CUMMINGS, NAOMI 2000: *The Sonic Self: Musical Subjectivity and Signification*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 10.

³¹⁵ Note that there seems to be a B-flat missing in the score in the cello’s line in the second bar of fig. 2.

³¹⁶ This is not to say polyphony and unity are exclusive phenomena in general (a polyphonic work, like a fugue, can suggest a larger unity). It is instead to suggest that an opposition of these things is presented in the discourse of *this* work, as particular means by which expressive and dramatic results are produced.

object articulates a discursive identity, situated amongst other polyphonic materials that often undermine distinctive, centred identities. The latter (polyphonic) materials, set in contrast with these objects, arise from close canons and contrapuntal lines that regularly trespass into the other players' registers. As Aminah Durrani summarises, 'traditional canons of the common practice period are typically composed so that the lines are heard as independent entities.'³¹⁷ However, '[Schnittke's] canons, like Ligeti's micropolyphony, create – by virtue of their brevity, short durations between entrances, or uniform rhythmic patterns – a texture continuously in motion.'³¹⁸

Ex. 30, Schnittke: String Quartet No. 4 (ii), five bars before Fig. 2

4. Streichquartett | für Streichquartett © Copyright 1989 by Universal Edition A.G. Wien/PH 532

This object, standing in bold contrast with other materials (yet also arising from them, as I illustrate below), speaks to legacies of the self directly, reminiscent of mannerisms of musical concordance – of synthesis and resolution – as heard in earlier art musics. It is a reference point for understanding, one readily heard thanks to the material's markedness both immanently to the work (as formally unprepared juxtaposition) and

³¹⁷ DURRANI 2005: 56

³¹⁸ DURRANI 2005: 80. Durrani also notes that Schnittke was familiar with Ligeti's micropolyphony; 'Schnittke wrote an analysis of Ligeti's *Lontano* during the 1970s' (DURRANI 2005: 58).

historically (because, as I show below, it is a moment reminiscent of past discourses of musical selves at odds with what is around it).³¹⁹ However, it does not provide synthesis or resolution, rather acting as a *symbol* of a unity, of integration of subject and object.

It would at this point be wise to examine the concept of “understanding” itself, something central to any “self-understanding”. This concept has its own historical-philosophical legacy. I will start by outlining the concept of understanding – in particular as a notion after Hegel³²⁰ – before exploring how this shapes the dialectics of experiencing musical form, expression, and meaning in moments from the second movement. Drawing on stable understanding, I argue that Schnittke then goes on to problematise it – not so as to obscure the music’s meaning – but, paradoxically, to form the basis by which musical moments are meaningful. So, whilst I consider my outlook to be discursive (i.e. through taking the music as a discourse), I do not take an unproblematically semiotic line (one in which messages are sent from sender to receiver via objectified semiotic codes).³²¹ In contrast to the sender-receiver model, “understanding”, as it is pursued here, is very much entangled with an on-going experience in the present, mediated by the past.

I principally follow a Hegelian inspired notion of subjectivity and understanding – heterodox contemporary subjectivities do exist, after all – due to the impact still left on experiencing and thinking about music by what Janet Schmalfeldt calls the ‘Beethoven-Hegelian tradition’.³²² This is a dialectical conception of experience tied in closely with the well-established perspective that Beethoven’s ‘Heroic’ works offer up the articulation of a particular kind of self in music; that is, that the substance of Beethoven’s music, like Hegel’s self, emerges through the process of becoming rather than simply *being*. Gary Tomlinson, commenting on Scott Burnham’s now classic *Beethoven Hero*, notes that

the processes of integral teleological development constructed into this music were assimilated to a modern model of subjectivity just then taking shape. The music came to concretise an elite European self just as it wished itself to be. Thus the music’s sense of self-sufficiency answered to the post-Enlightenment ideology of individual freedom and self determination.³²³

³¹⁹ For a discussion of markedness see HATTEN, ROBERT 1994: *Musical Meaning in Beethoven: Markedness, Correlation, and Interpretation*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

³²⁰ The theoretical framework of my discussion is primarily structured around Fredric Jameson’s recent work on Hegelian ‘understanding’ as found in his *Valences of the Dialectic* (JAMESON 2010).

³²¹ See, for example, TARASTI, EERO 2009: ‘Understanding, Misunderstanding, and Self-Understanding’ in *Le Sens Langagier du Musical: Sémiosis et Herménéia actes du 1er symposium d’Aix-en-Provence* (eds. Bernard Vecchione & Christian Hauer), Paris: Institut d’Esthétique des Arts et Technologies.

³²² SCHMALFELDT 2011: 23

³²³ ‘Finding Ground to Stand On’ in TOMLINSON 2007: 184

This is a synthesised self in which subject and object express unification through musical works. ‘The influence of the Beethoven-Hegelian tradition remains very much part of our musicological heritage’, writes Schmalfeldt in her discussion of the writings of A.B. Marx, E.T.A Hoffman, and others.³²⁴ The self – and this point concerns conceptions of selfhood beyond a Beethoven-Hegelian self – *has historically been something conceived of as centred, with boundaries*, a unitary ideal. It is this legacy of self and subjectivity that I will argue that Schnittke takes as an important yet historically distant point of reference.

What Carl Dahlhaus has called the ‘overpowering legacy of Beethoven’³²⁵ is important here too. He writes that, not

until the modern music of our century was the history of the string quartet, which virtually seeped away in the nineteenth century, resumed in representative bodies of works by Schönberg, Bartók, and Hindemith. And in spite of the radically new musical idiom, or perhaps under its protection, these works unmistakably took Beethoven as their starting point.³²⁶

For Schnittke, even if we are to say that in his musical language he draws on the developments of Schoenberg (twelve-tone writing), Bartók (juxtaposition of pan-tonal materials), or even Shostakovich, this Beethovenian legacy still resonates. Furthermore, Beethoven’s music provides a prototypical way in which the *understanding* of music is significant:

The thought that music can be destined to be “understood” had probably arisen a few decades earlier [than Beethoven’s Late, “difficult” works], around 1800; but only in connection with the reception of Beethoven did it have a significant impact on music history – significance which then grew steadily throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.³²⁷

Schnittke’s facing of these legacies principally concerns the connections between the self-sufficiency of musical forms and the self-sufficiency of the self, with musical closure being perhaps the most visible point of contact between both. Closure is important to a centred subject, in giving form to its self-sufficiency. Cadential figures have a crucial role in achieving this, whether this is in accomplishing Classical balance in the eighteenth century, or in bringing completion to the synthesis of musical developmental processes in the nineteenth century. A question might be asked here: why, given that in the

³²⁴ SCHMALFELDT 2011: 25

³²⁵ DAHLHAUS, CARL 1989 [orig. 1980]: *Nineteenth-Century Music* (trans. J. Bradford Robinson), Berkeley: University of California Press, 78

³²⁶ DAHLHAUS 1989: 78

³²⁷ DAHLHAUS 1989: 10-11

Third Quartet Schnittke explicitly quotes a cadential figure (from Orlando di Lasso's *Stabat Mater*), should we focus on allusions to such figures in the Fourth? The answer is twofold. Firstly, this quotation in the Third alludes to a figure of pre-Classical closure, a figure that has very different functions and resonances than the closure alluded to in the Fourth. Secondly, and more importantly, in the Fourth the figure arises through a dialectic of autonomy and heteronomy, rather than appearing as an explicit quotation. The Fourth's allusion appeals to both "extraneous" and "emergent" rupture. It thus engages with wider, philosophically resonant issues of the development and determination of musical works and musical selves.

Notably audible in codas and codettas, repeating cadences provide clear structural markers of closure. They rhetorically confirm the synthesis of a work's resolution and the viability of the form as an affirmatory ideal of subjectivity. In Beethoven-Hegelian terms, the legacy of closure is closely related (though by no means identical) to the legacy of the self. In Beethoven's music, the coda's cementing of the work's processually driven unification 'contributes to the perception of the closed and self-consuming work', the completion of a self-generated process.³²⁸ The coda to Beethoven's Symphony No. 5 provides what is perhaps the most famous (and overstated) example of this. Gigantic in size, the coda triumphantly resolves not only the movement of which it is part, but the symphony as a whole.

Schnittke's stylistic intervention is a figure of historically established closure, though one acting outside of both its historical time and the temporal flow of the immediate musical context. This connection with the past is doubly achieved. Firstly, this is accomplished through its taking on a clear form: to take its original statement by way of example (fig. 2, Ex. 30), through establishing a firm homophony, falling into regular phrasing, and anchoring itself around a pitch centre. All these features demonstrate ready contrast with the shifting polyphonic textures that appear before and after it (an arrangement that is later complicated). Secondly, this is achieved through this figure's rhetorical likenesses with previous paradigms of closure.

This second quality – allusion – can be illustrated with reference to figures of closure found in Beethoven's codas. As seen in the coda of the Fifth Symphony, the reiteration of a motion between tonic and dominant affirms a pitch centre, with repetitive cadential figures, through localised surface movement, affirming the finality of tonal immobility. In a comparable recurring gesture, Schnittke's stylistic intervention affirms a static, steady position, oscillating between two chords, with the top voice semitonally

³²⁸ BURNHAM 1995: 121-122

moving back and forth as akin to a leading note repeatedly finding its tonic. These chords themselves recall tonality, without providing it. They make connections within the work, to tonal triads already introduced as ‘independent elements throughout the Quartet’³²⁹, as well as to a history “outside” of it. For example, in the first two bars of both figs. 2 and 6 (Exs. 30 and 32), forgiving the ‘grace notes’ – the quavers and crotchets in the first bars of each – A major and B-flat minor chords are spelt out.³³⁰

Ex. 31, Beethoven: *Egmont* Overture, bb. 293-296

The musical score for Ex. 31, Beethoven's *Egmont* Overture, measures 293-296, is presented in a standard orchestral layout. The score is in 4/4 time and B-flat major. The instruments included are Flute I, Flute II, Piccolo, Oboes, Clarinets in Bb, Bassoons, Horns in F and Eb, Trumpets in F, Timpani, Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Double Bass. The score shows dynamics such as *p*, *cresc.*, *ff*, and *sf*, and includes performance markings like 'tr.' and '3'. The score is divided into four measures, with the first two measures showing the initial entry of the woodwinds and strings, and the last two measures showing a full orchestral texture.

Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel (1862 edition)

³²⁹ DURRANI 2005: 47

³³⁰ Durrani cites Schnittke's comments regarding the use of such (pseudo-tonal) harmonic relationships: "At the end of the 1950s, after [Russian musicologist and professor at the Moscow Conservatory] Lev Mazel described the harmonic phenomenon of 'common mediants' (for example between B major and C minor), many composers, myself included, made use of it." (Schnittke cited in DURRANI 2005: footnote to 112)

Ex. 32, Schnittke: String Quartet No. 4 (ii), five bars before fig. 6

4. Streichquartett | für Streichquartett © Copyright 1989 by Universal Edition A.G. Wien/PH 532

The rhetorical scheme of Schnittke’s material supplements this; Schnittke plays with a figurative paradigm of closing. Whilst I do not wish to suggest a direct connection, a paradigmatic example of such a figure can be observed in Beethoven’s *Egmont* Overture.³³¹ The Overture provides an illustrative token of this type of closing figure. (Oscillating repeated cadential figures of closing can also be heard in many other works, his Third and Fifth symphonies, for example.) Indeed, there can be observed an immediate gestural affinity between the climactic moment of the return to the tonic in Beethoven’s Overture (Ex. 31) and the stylistic intervention as seen in the Schnittke quartet (Exs. 30 and 32), which, as I have noted above, also alludes to the circling around of a central, if problematic, tonal identity (A or B-flat). What is also of importance here is the rhythmic organisation of Beethoven’s figure (bars 295-296) – an emphatically held chord, followed by shorter (quaver) movement up and down – and Schnittke’s echoing of this rhetorical paradigm.

As I note above, Schnittke’s oscillating figure – which makes heteronomous, historical connections, as well seemingly rupturing “into” the discourse – also arises “emergently” from within the work. Step-wise semitonal figures appear throughout all the

³³¹ The coda to the *Egmont* is a particular treatment of closure in itself. Burnham notes that, beyond providing organic unity, the coda to the *Egmont* both enacts closure whilst simultaneously ‘commenting on the act of closing’ (BURNHAM 1995: 143).

movements, though they formulate into this emphatic rhetorical figure in the second. Durrani labels this material the ‘Rhythmic Theme’, which is defined by ‘oscillating semitones driven by pounding rhythms’.³³² I concur with Durrani’s analysis, that the ‘semitone oscillation, double stops, and homorhythmic texture introduced in m. 37 [in the first movement] grow to become a principal motive in the second movement of the Quartet.’³³³ This is also pre-figured in the viola’s microtonal oscillation in the first movement, from bars 29-35. The principal figure of the second movement – as an object – thus *develops*, “becoming” rather than rupturing only from “outside” (something which distinguishes its character from the quotation of di Lasso’s cadential figure in the Third Quartet). In becoming as such, in articulating a discernable identity, they become ‘clearly recognizable objects, they serve as points of arrival within the movement’³³⁴. However – and this point takes us towards aesthetic concerns beyond the valuable analytic observations made by Durrani – this object, its restatement, is not only “formally” significant. These restatements *are* a formal concern, but this “formal character” also holds relationships with the *historicity of form*; form is inscribed with extra-formal functions that pertain to subjectivity. Schnittke makes connection with the past, to a figure of closure recalling, through associative proximity with it, the determination of a synthesised subjectivity. This is a metonymic relationship because, even if such figures of closure cannot be said to represent a coherent self (i.e. metaphorically), they may still be taken as symbolic indices of it (related to it, found beside it). The past here gives value to the present, if only in an objectified, partial form.

So what of understanding after Hegel, and of the musical self in particular after Beethoven? The philosopher Fredric Jameson writes that understanding is based in ‘the law of non-contradiction.’³³⁵ This means that understanding requires the division of one’s world into separable elements – for example: self and other, or into a series of divisible objects, concepts, and ideas. Jameson continues: ‘...[it] is what Hegel called *Verstand*... and what Marx called reification’.³³⁶ Understanding tends towards order, concrete knowledge, and systematisation, rationalisation and conceptualisation. In addition, as Jameson’s reference to Karl Marx may remind us, reification (and, by extension, understanding) is not a neutral process, but may find itself complicit or reconciled with dominant logics. Hence, understanding is not guided merely by naïve perception – it is not a phenomenological given – but by historical, material, and ideological forces. Indeed, this

³³² DURRANI 2005: 110

³³³ DURRANI 2005: 85

³³⁴ DURRANI 2005: 113

³³⁵ JAMESON 2010: 50

³³⁶ JAMESON 2010: 50

understanding of the world through music is closely related to *self*-understanding – imagining the world encompasses a situating of the self in relation to that world.

In order to understand the self – to order it, and to have knowledge of it – subjectivity must be *objectified*.³³⁷ As Julia Kristeva put it above, ‘the subject must separate from and through his image, from and through his objects.’³³⁸ Subjectivity is articulated through objects, be this in the assigning of meaning to physical objects, linguistic concepts, musical works, and so on. It becomes visible through them. Objectification of the subject allows for an act of identification of subject with object (as explored in chapter 3), and so the object may act for the subject, with the internalised self taking strength from the world outside. Furthermore, thinking of the understanding of selfhood in terms of subject-object relations allows for explicit links to be drawn between contemporary subjectivities and their relationships with earlier subjectivities, principally that of the Beethoven-Hegelian tradition. It also permits for, as will be seen later, a gauging of shifts in the level of discourse between subject and object, when comparing such relations in earlier and more contemporary musics.

At an extreme, in capturing subjectivity in objects, selfhood is *frozen in place – reified*. This is where a paradox arises, a contradiction of selfhood in music that Schnittke capitalises upon. In freezing subjective processes into images and objects, the continuous, slipperiness of experience that characterises subjective experience in general, and the experience of music in particular, is lost. Through objectification, the subjective dimension of selfhood is alienated from itself. The material of the stylistic intervention acts similarly. Nominating itself as a moment that may act to visibly articulate an image of subjective selfhood, it simultaneously betrays this through eschewing the expressivity required of it. Consequently, a dialectical chasm opens between subjectivity’s objectification in historical musical material, and the inability of this same material to be constitutive of subjective experience – the fact that any construction of subjectivity is itself alienating.

As noted above, whilst emerging from properties of material already introduced (centrally, movement via semitones), this material also seems to intrude into the work from “outside”. This can be put in thetic terms: stepping across – “rupturing” – the edge of the discourse (but, in so doing, affirming its boundary at the same time). Whilst these entries, in their reified historical character, suggest a means of understanding, their intrusion into the flow of the musical discourse potentially highlights the “inauthentic”

³³⁷ This idea takes on an explicitly historical role if considered in Adornian terms, that musical material (in Giles Hooper’s words) bears ‘the sedimented traces of previous compositional activity – it is objectified subjectivity’ (HOOPER 2006: 100).

³³⁸ KRISTEVA 1984: 43

character of this understanding. That is, as they are *so* fixed, they become evacuated of their expressive content, and ‘in its zeal severs the bonds between subject and object’.³³⁹

This dialectical gulf is echoed in discursive terms. Rather than subject and object synthesising in the ‘ideal’ Beethoven-Hegelian manner, subject-object synthesis is merely presented as another object of focus of the discourse. The material, reminiscent of a repeatedly cadential, unifying figure, fails to bring closure, and fails to unify. Synthesis is represented as a symbol, divided from the temporal and processual dimension that facilitates the basis of its former character. It is merely asserted: being, rather than becoming, dead, rather than dynamically lived. In its objectified character, it is not the figure of an expressive subject being worked-through in the present, but the disfigurement of a past self. The subject is divided from this object, no longer proximally close to it (as it was in the former synthesis). Despite this, the former, ideal synthetic self is remembered, even if this dialectical process is no-longer inhabited. This I call a *shift in the level of discourse*, one by which on-going dialectical process is recalled, but not processually. It is objectified as a metonymic symbol of its former self.

‘Meaningful music is not necessarily expressive’, a dictum from Adorno, rings true for this material.³⁴⁰ These chords are not expressive but they are meaningful, in that they refer to the idea of subjective expression whilst pointing to the fact that they fail in providing it. In fact, their very evacuation of expression in the present – their estrangement from it as an idea of a bygone historical past – is what makes them meaningful. Like the first entry, the entries that immediately follow it remain fixed and expressionless, as arbitrary *symbols* of expression. Their significance arises from this paradoxical, dual status. Crucially, whilst this chordal material is historically connotative of an expressive figure, it fails to provide the expression that this figure seems to promise. As a result, this objectified symbol of subjectivity may no longer to be *identified as* a vehicle of subjective expression, and is no longer to be *identified with* by a subject striving for expression. The notion of constructing and understanding selfhood through objectification is looked on, and heard, sceptically.

The quartet is historically primed as a space for engaging with concerns of selfhood, a concept whose own self-sufficiency has been intertwined with issues of musical closure. Schnittke engages with this tradition through attending to figures of closure as symbolic, metonymic markers of a certain kind of selfhood. In doing this, these figures are removed from their imagined processual contexts that allowed them to bring

³³⁹ I borrow this phrase from Adorno’s discussion of Stravinsky’s music (under the heading ‘Alienation as Objectivity’, see ADORNO 2006: 127).

³⁴⁰ ADORNO 1999: 161

about closure to discourses, and are instead treated as objects of discourse. This is not simply an objectification by Schnittke, but rather a critical engagement with the paradoxical idea that the subjective interiority of the self finds articulation in exterior objects; selfhood is always, to some degree, made possible through objectification. The next question, then, becomes one of how these objects function in the present discourse of the String Quartet No. 4 so as to modify, react to, and play with legacies of selfhood inscribed immanently into musical materials inherited from the past.

Contradiction – Repression – Opposition

In his discussion of understanding, Jameson develops his characterisation of it (as ‘the law of non-contradiction’, quoted above) through showing that contradictions are not overcome but are instead repressed.

We may here therefore in some virtually proto-Freudian movement *avant le lettre* identify a repression of contradiction as one of the driving impulses of *Verstand*, along with the displacement of the contradiction onto the positing of some single stable determination or quality.³⁴¹

Jameson’s account of understanding can help us come to terms with Schnittke’s distant treatment of symbols of subjectivity and selfhood; in particular, the requirements that contradictions are not faced, not overcome, but are instead repressed. Jameson’s statement can be read in discursive terms: through understanding, experience is divided up; instead of instabilities existing within the continuum of experience, differences are seen to exist between separable elements of that experience, or between isolatable concepts.

Potentially the clearest case of this new, ‘understood’ stability is that of oppositions, in which the heterogeneity of experience becomes understood as a case of ‘either/or’. Two stable positions are set up, with the instability of experience understood through reference to them. Hence, in general terms, the world and the self are understood with reference to the cultural and natural, the masculine and the feminine, the historical and the immediate, and so on. ‘[K]nowledge, to establish itself, will proceed through a supplementary reversal of meaning, by repressing meaning’s heterogeneity and by ordering it into concepts or structures based on the divided unity of the subject’, Kristeva claims in *Revolution in Poetic Language*.³⁴² Oppositions facilitate understanding, an understanding not only of the world but also of a self in relation to that world, or defined oppositionally against an ‘Other’. In

³⁴¹ JAMESON 2010: 88. This also leads to the conclusion that understanding is not completely about what needs to become known, be made visible, but also about what needs to be repressed, made hidden.

³⁴² KRISTEVA 1984: 188

this respect, Schnittke's treatment of the objectified symbols of self – as these correspond or oppose other musical materials – becomes of great importance to how understanding is constructed in the discourse.

Schnittke sets up various oppositions in the second movement of the quartet: the stylistic intervention, connotative of tonally cadential mannerisms, opposes chromatic saturation (see the bars preceding fig. 2, in which we are plunged from one into the contrasting other); the historically resonant (the intervention) opposes bodily, criss-crossing polyphony, characterised by gestural immediacy (see the bars preceding fig. 6, Ex. 32); and, the tangible (the cadential figure, as a comparatively stable object of experience), opposes the amorphic character of the fluctuating atonal lines that surround it. This supplements oppositions explored throughout all five movements (for example, triads as historical elements, as these oppose chromatic textures). These binaries correlate to some degree:³⁴³ chords suggesting tonally cadential mannerisms (even if they are not literally tonal or functional) can be understood as historical and tangible; their atonal 'other' is cast as bodily and amorphic, even intangible.³⁴⁴

The articulation of difference within the discourse of the second movement, principally in terms of these sets of contrasts, echoes deep-seated conceptual oppositions between the historical and the immediate, the amorphic and the tangible, and so on, with these materials performatively playing out these philosophical-historical ideas and so enabling a starting point for the discourse's understanding. Indeed, these ideas are engaged with in such a way as to give form to this object of the discourse. The immediate context of the markedly historical figure allows for its reification – its understanding – as opposite, or as counterposition, to much of the rest of the material which makes up the movement. This material is a raft of symbolic meaning, one given shape through its tangible historical resonance. It is a recognisable object foregrounded in the context of otherwise ever-changing material. In light of understanding, materials are positioned differentially with the musical movement pushing and pulling between divisible positions. Indeed, and paradoxically, differential positioning also enables understanding, and for correlations to be made with larger significances 'outside' of the music (the cultural and the natural, the historical and the immediate, and so on).

³⁴³ In musical-semiotic terms, sets of correlation such as these give rise to what Robert Hatten has identified as 'markedness assimilation'. See HATTEN, 1994: 64.

³⁴⁴ As such, a larger binary can be seen to be at play, that of culture (historical, tangible, mindful, and knowing) and nature (ahistorical, amorphic, bodily, and feeling). Such series of correspondences, Kristeva suggests, point to processes behind signification and understanding; the place 'where positions and their syntheses (i.e., their relations) are set up' (KRISTEVA 1984: 72). This is her "*thetic*" at work.

(Notably, this opposition is retained, but inverted, in the final movement. Towards the very end of the work, a cluster (C, C-sharp, D, and D-sharp/E-flat) enters (at fig. 24, movement five) “from outside”, triple-*forte*. What this gestural, amorphous entity enters “into” is not a polyphonic storm like that of the second movement. Instead, it is a foreign object that disturbs a reflective and historically evocative pseudo-tonal chorale; the immediate enters the historical. This triggers the return of the twelve-tone row that opened the first movement, microtonal fluctuations, and a final fade into nothingness.)

The self is identified symbolically with figures of (self) closure. This contrasts with the Beethovenian Heroic self, which is not defined differentially but rather through the work in its entirety. Self-sufficiency, self-creation, self-determination are its ideals; ‘one does not hear a world order against which a hero defines himself – one hears only the hero, the self, fighting against its own element’, Burnham writes.³⁴⁵ In Schnittke’s quartet, due to the shift in the level of discourse, the determination of self is not something done – something to be worked out through synthesis – but rather something uncovered as alien, as an objectified self, an object of understanding. As with ‘either/or’ it is defined differentially against what is outside it, the ‘not-self’ (other).

Seeing (the signification of) selfhood as an object goes hand-in-hand with self-understanding – ‘I identify myself in language, but only by losing myself in it like an object,’ Jacques Lacan famously said.³⁴⁶ In giving the signification of self a discursive position, selfhood is given an image that sets it apart from the subjective flow of time. This contrasts strongly with the Beethoven-Hegelian self, a dialectic of temporal becoming par excellence. However, given that Schnittke engages with figures of closing, as metonymic of self, another dialectical contradiction emerges: closing requires temporal processes as a fundamental basis of its function.

To say that closure comes at the end seems tautological; it is the *result* of a process, after all. However, Schnittke’s figures of closure intersperse this movement. This is not to say that Schnittke was the first to take cadences outside of their function of finality. It has been noted that, in Classical music, ‘cadence formations became so standardized that they could be used, for rhetorical effect, even in positions other than endings’³⁴⁷. An excellent example of this is provided at the very opening of Haydn’s String Quartet in C op. 74, No. 1. Schnittke can be seen as drawing on this tradition, but he also goes much further,

³⁴⁵ BURNHAM 1995: 121

³⁴⁶ In the essay ‘The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis’ in LACAN, JACQUES 2006 [orig. 1966]: *Écrits: The First Complete Edition in English* (trans. Bruce Fink in collaboration with Héroïse Fink and Russell Grigg), London: W.W. Norton & Company, 247

³⁴⁷ See ROCKSTRO, W.S. & DYSON, GEORGE & DRABKIN, WILLIAM & POWERS, HAROLD S. & RUSTON, JULIAN 2001. ‘Cadence, §2: History’, in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (ed. Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell), 2nd edn, London: Macmillan, Vol. 4, 781

something that can be illustrated through comparison. Such cadences in Haydn's quartets are formal dissonances, playing with the expectations of how temporality is musically structured within the framework of Classical conventions. Those in Schnittke's quartet are stylistically and historically, rather than formally, out of place. They no longer perform their previous closing function. Rather, they are objectified as markedly "historical" through contrast with other musical materials. Whilst their use is rhetorical, a quality shared with Haydn's playful use of cadential rhetoric, their dissonance with time is with the time of history.

Subjectivity grasped merely through understanding is a kind of nondialectical Being, 'a reified thought which must reify itself in order to grasp its reified objects'³⁴⁸. Understanding thus reifies subjectivity itself so that it may become a thing to be perceived. Indeed, understanding's inability to capture the continuum of experience – the slipperiness of subjectivity – is symptomatic of subjectivity's self-alienation. This recognition of alienation is important as it suggests that objectification is always incomplete in objectifying subjectivity.

As Philip Kain notes, the estrangement of the objectified, external world – its apparent independence outside of ourselves – can be overcome through recognising its alien character:

Because alienation is an objectification – because the alienation of individuals constructs the monarch, the state, or God – this very same alienation can also allow us eventually to recognize the estranged reality as our own creation, our own selves objectified, our own alienation, and thus alienation can allow us to see through, and thus overcome, the estrangement.³⁴⁹

Hence, in a dialectical manoeuvre of inversion, this closing through objectification might open the way for immanent critical reactions to these existential conditions, beginning from the inherent paradoxes of objectification held therein, a process partaken of through dialectical reaction.

Dialectic as Reaction

This process may only take place in light of reification. Firstly, there is no "pure" language that is outside of mediation by understanding. Secondly, as Jameson notes, dialectics are *reactive* to understanding. As he puts it: '[dialectics] is parasitic on *Verstand* itself, on the externalized thinking of a material world of objects, for its own operation of

³⁴⁸ JAMESON 2010: 76

³⁴⁹ KAIN, PHILIP 2005: *Hegel and the Other: A Study of the Phenomenology of Spirit*, Albany: State University of New York, 158

correction and subversion, of negation and critique³⁵⁰. So, Schnittke's musical dialectic is not a presentation of the "opposite" of the reified, but instead a playing with the incompleteness of the object of understanding, and looking at it in terms of its incompleteness³⁵¹. This means that whilst at first, through an expository strategy, Schnittke presents the chordal material as a reified, if alien, entity, he later constructs the music as reactive to this.

Importantly, his musical dialectic does not provide synthesis. Instead, it attends to the unlocking of potential connections and affectivities in the materials, without affirming a new, higher understanding through achieving synthesis. His dialectic therefore is one of heteronomy over synthesis and multiplication over unification, where understanding is not satisfied through realising a unitary, teleological "Whole."

As Jameson notes, a particular treatment of mediation is a central function of understanding: 'It may be said that... the primary vice of Understanding consists in its effacement of mediation'.³⁵² This follows the Hegelian idea that "in the very act of mediation the mediation itself vanishes"³⁵³. After the differential positioning of materials – an *expository* tactic – Schnittke moves towards exploring the inherent tensions between these positions, the possibilities of affects repressed through their understanding. In reaction to the expository, differentially understood discourse, the focus later moves to one of audibly exploring the mediation of musical ideas by one another. In other words, there is a movement from overstating the restrictions of positions, of their divisibility, to transgressing the semi-permeability of positional boundaries.

The scepticism with which Schnittke treats reified material in the Fourth Quartet can be thought of as a repositioning of subjectivity in relation to mediation, or at least, a marking of the alienating effect of reification in the mediation of subjectivity. In dialectical, musically developmental terms, this is accomplished through expounding mediative relationships with other materials in the work, rather than letting these features "stand" for

³⁵⁰ JAMESON 2010: 61

³⁵¹ In Hegelian terms, negation is not the "opposite" of a concept but rather the seeing that the concept is not complete. See KAIN 2005: 14 for a discussion of determinate negation. Indeed, here I am also implicitly critiquing poststructuralist positions which see music as other to language, as part of a "pre-linguistic" realm (as advocated, for example, in SCHWARZ 1993).

³⁵² JAMESON 2010: 98

³⁵³ Hegel cited in PADDISON, MAX 2010b: 'Music and Social Relations: Towards a Theory of Mediation' in *Contemporary Music: Theoretical and Philosophical Perspectives* (ed. Max Paddison & Irène Deliège), Farnham: Ashgate, 261

themselves – for under*standing* on their own, differentially divisible terms – as they did expositionally.³⁵⁴

This is accomplished through dialectically exploring positions previously held as separable through their mutual differentiation. Three examples of this will be given. Firstly, the homophonic, stylistic material, connotative of a rhetorical device under tonality, is audibly mediated through the chromatic saturation of the clusters and atonal polyphony found elsewhere in the work. Secondly, “historically” encultured past associations are rediscovered as immediate, bodily, and gestural. Thirdly, the object of focus (the intervention figure), something divisible and graspable from the discursive flow, becomes experienced fluidly as part of an on-going process, rather than as an object situated outside of this process. Importantly, one aspect does not win over the other – this would only affirm differential discursive positioning – rather the one side of the opposition is shown to be inherent in the other, relationships previously repressed through what Jameson called above the ‘effacement of mediation’.

The first example is readily perceivable: the rhetorical character of the stylistic intervention becomes infused with the pitch content of the saturated atonality that was held previously in counterposition to it. Intervention figures lose their ‘tonal’ associations (with A major and B-flat minor, as at figs. 2 and 6) and find themselves becoming chromatically saturated. For example, in contrast with the tonal associations of the figure’s first entry, an octatonic pitch collection forms corresponding material at fig. 21 (B, C, D, E-flat, F, F-sharp). At fig. 22, such saturation increases even more so.

Ex. 33, Clusters

The image shows a musical score for three sections: Rehearsal Mark 22, Three bars after Rehearsal Mark 22, and Rehearsal Mark 23. Each section consists of a piano staff (treble clef) and a bass staff (bass clef). The piano staff includes markings for *pizz.* and *arco.*. The bass staff includes markings for *pizz.* and *arco.*. Annotations with arrows point to specific clusters in the piano staff: 'Two minor 3rd clusters' in the first section and 'Tritone cluster' in the second section. A dashed line connects the bottom of the piano staff in the first section to the bottom of the piano staff in the second section. The third section, Rehearsal Mark 23, shows further development of the material.

³⁵⁴ In Lacanian terms, this could be characterised as a critical play on the subject’s misrecognition (*méconnaissance*) of itself in the images and objects through which it finds imagistic or objective articulation.

However, this does not result in a synthesis of the identities of the “pseudo-tonal” and the chromatic materials; rather, discursive terms proliferate. Take, for instance, the fact that these clusters are not presented merely as clusters – they no longer conform to their established position in the discourse – but are refracted through the range and voicings found in an Other, the stylistic figures. In examining the content of the widely ranged chords at fig. 22, and three bars after 22 (Ex. 33), it can be observed that they relate to chromatic clusters in terms of pitch as much as they do to the homophonic figures rhetorically. This means that, despite the expositionally fixed character of the chordal figures towards the beginning of the movement, later these fixed positions – and this understanding – are brought into disarray.

What is reified as historical and stylistic enters into dialectical play with the bodily and gestural, tropes of immediacy. This can be put in semiotic terms. The stylistic intervention, in its reified dimension, acts symbolically, representationally, almost linguistically. The chromatically saturated materials set in counterposition to this (at least at its first moment of intervention, fig. 2) suggest the opposite – the immediacy of a “pre-linguistic” continuum in which gesture is favoured over representation, texture over (inter)textual meaning. Schnittke organises these as somewhat separable positions before drawing the historical through the immediate, the symbolic through the gestural.

Ex. 34, Schnittke: String Quartet No. 4 (ii), fig. 23

4. Streichquartett | für Streichquartett © Copyright 1989 by Universal Edition A.G. Wien/PH 532

At fig. 23 (Ex. 34) the rhetorical content of what was historically evocative material is taken to an extreme, being pushed towards gestural violence. What began as a reasonably self-contained symbol loses its articulatory identity. Its boundaries become smudged, ensconced by the textures that surround it. Indeed, a similar maneuver has been identified by Alistair Williams in Wolfgang Rihm’s *Klavierstück No. 7* – where historical material becomes seen through the lens of the gestural. He notes how in the work

obsessively repeated E-flat major chords lose their historical connotations, failing to provide ‘security and respite’, and, through ‘the sheer violence of the gestures’, move to suggest the contrary – purely somatic content.³⁵⁵ In both these cases, immediacy over history – the *sound* of symbolic utterances rather than their representational signification or historical connection – is brought to the fore.

Without an overarching Whole, an affirmed, singular character of the movement (of the work too), and of the self, is denied. There is no synthesis between subject and object as in the ideal Hegelian synthesis of Beethoven’s Heroics. The object of understanding fails to articulate a singular self, and subjectivity and its object are put at odds. A similar situation is often recognised in Late Beethoven.³⁵⁶ However, Schnittke goes further than this. He marks the alienating effect of reifying subjectivity into objects and symbols in the first place. The chordal figures, as connotative of subjective expression without providing it, encapsulate this in microcosm. As objects of this musical world, through which, it is remembered, selfhood is constituted and articulated, they are sceptically perceived at a distance. These symbols are presented as inherently alien before they are reacted to dialectically. In this subsequent dialectic, Schnittke makes apparent connections between musical materials, allowing for ideas that were previously separable, solid, and “understood”, to interconnect fluidly.

This brings us to the third and final example, implicit in the first two, namely the move from the divisible object of focus to the fluidity of discursive process. This dialectic can be observed in a series of “false returns” to the chordal material in the second half of the movement, each of which processually refigures the relationships between this figure and its surroundings. The original, expository presentation of this material was assured positionally through its purported fixity. It expressed homophonic rhythmic stability, was connotative of a closing figure in the tonal tradition, and was a moment in which all instruments found themselves in unity. The “returns” of this material (figs. 21, 22, 23, and 28) bring this fixity into question, as it is increasingly disturbed by, but not synthesised with, the movement’s other materials.

These false returns keep entering but never actually return us to a point of fixed stability. With no such true return, the falseness of these moments becomes problematic; when no true return is found, they retrospectively become progressive stages in dissolving this figure’s fixity, rather than deviations from a final goal. The dissolution of this material

³⁵⁵ WILLIAMS, ALASTAIR 2006a: ‘Wolfgang Rihm and the Adorno Legacy’ in *Apparitions: New Perspectives on Adorno and Twentieth-Century Music*, Oxon: Routledge, 94-95

³⁵⁶ Adorno took this view. See ‘Adorno’s Diagnosis of Beethoven’s Late Style: Early Symptom of a Fatal Condition’ in SUBOTNIK, ROSE ROSENGARD 1991: *Developing Variations: Style and Ideology in Western Music*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

– this object of understanding – means that no true return, no final understanding is affirmed. In Schmalfeldt’s terms, these returns are unable to *become* part of a larger formal scheme, as, given their eschewal of formal function, their ‘retrospective formal reinterpretation’ is not affirmed.³⁵⁷ Said differently, there is no final stable point by which they may retrospectively be understood as parts of a larger Whole. Each attempt at return, or each attempt at finding stable closure in the fixity of this material, is thwarted. Rather than clarifying understanding, these returns suggest a dissolving of the fixity of objectification. The reified object is lost to a proliferation of connections between previously divisible, segmentable positions.

Ex. 35, Schnittke: String Quartet No. 4 (ii), six bars before figs. 28-29

The image displays a musical score for Schnittke's String Quartet No. 4 (ii). It consists of three systems of four staves each, representing the four strings. The first system shows the beginning of the passage, with dynamic markings of *f* and *sf*. The second system is marked with a box containing the number 28 and features a *ff* dynamic. The third system is marked with a box containing the number 29 and includes dynamics of *mf*, *fff*, and *sf*. The score is characterized by intricate rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth-note runs, and a complex harmonic structure with frequent chromaticism.

4. Streichquartett | für Streichquartett © Copyright 1989 by Universal Edition A.G. Wien/PH 532

³⁵⁷ SCHMALFELDT 2011: 9

The changing role of the chordal material throughout the movement – from *being* external and opposed to other materials of the movement, to *becoming* mediated by them – is encapsulated in this passage of returns. At fig. 28 (see Ex. 35), the previously intrusive stylistic material is brought into the processual flow of the movement (rather than being counterpoised externally to it). This moment is climactic, being led into through increasing dynamic levels and register, and a quickening of rhythmic values. This climatic moment captures the dialectical contradiction of the figures that form the tensional basis of the movement – the static, historically connotative homophony against the moving, chromatic, and gestural polyphony. This moment is particularly important, as, in contrast with much of the rest of the movement, here this tension is expressed processually. One aspect (the polyphonic and gestural) quite literally leads into the other. This contrasts with the differential understanding heard previously, an understanding based around reference to two different, and seemingly pre-existent, positions. Nevertheless, this processual moment does not suggest synthesis as, despite this climax (fig. 28) being the goal of the process, no sense of resolution is provided. If anything, here the tension is at its highest.

Through taking a discursive approach, it has been illustrated that, in a shift in the level of discourse, Schnittke's Fourth Quartet plays critically with historically established indices of selfhood. Subject-object synthesis has been abandoned, replaced by a semiotics of self. Or, taken another way, the signification of self, which has always played a role, has now been brought audibly to the forefront of experience. Figures of closure, as metonymically marking a past, coherent self, have been crucial here. This music draws on complex, subtle relationships to the intertwined pasts of music and philosophy, pasts whose features are both still current and active (activated) in the musical present. Former contexts – ways of understanding the self and the world, for example – are inscribed textually into musical materials. Whilst not identical, musical processes and subjective processes bear close relations. And, in this sense, experiencing, identifying, and understanding music, in some dimension at least, performs our striving to do these things of ourselves (our Selves).

5. Dreaming Through Contemporary Music

“...we are in it as we are in dream.”

The dispute whether music can portray anything definite, or is only a play of sound-patterns in motion, no doubt misses the point. A far closer parallel is with dream, to the form of which, as Romanticism well knew, music is in many ways so close... While the music lasts we are in it as we are in dream.

– Theodor Adorno³⁵⁸

Music encompasses issues of both knowledge (discussed in the previous chapter) and desire (in the next), facilitating their articulation. It also provides spaces in which their intersection and mutual mediation may be critically reassessed, one in which, for example, moments from the past might find themselves invested with new significances in the present. This is a process that is prominently explored in Valentin Silvestrov’s String Quartet No. 1 (1974, revised 1990). Silvestrov himself pronounced this work to belong to his “weak style”³⁵⁹. But, as Levon Hakobian notes, ‘though simplistic on the surface, the “weak style” by Silvestrov, as every “retro” procedure, is in essence strongly “sentimental”, not “naïve”’.³⁶⁰

Before turning to this work in detail I should first outline some points of contact between the critical, philosophical approach pursued so far and the psychoanalytic-theoretical themes that are to be developed throughout this chapter. This discussion can begin from one of Adorno’s weighty suggestions – that musical works entertain a form of conceptless cognition. Max Paddison summarises this idea: ‘musical works are themselves highly structured and thus constitute a mode of cognition, albeit – and importantly, in case we mistake music for language in any literal sense – non-conceptual’.³⁶¹ Extending this idea, one might, in Silvestrov’s First Quartet – as a space in which legacies of subjectivity and interiority are faced – see the *evocation of psychological processes* as bringing about points of musical and aesthetic significance. I develop this idea through appealing to a psychoanalytically-

³⁵⁸ ADORNO, THEODOR 1998: *Beethoven: The Philosophy of Music* (ed. Rolf Tiedemann, trans. Edmund Jephcott), Stanford: Stanford University Press, 7-8

³⁵⁹ Silvestrov cited in HAKOBIAN 1998: 309

³⁶⁰ HAKOBIAN 1998: 309

³⁶¹ PADDISON, MAX 2010a: ‘Contemporary Music: Theory, Aesthetics, Critical Theory’ in *Contemporary Music: Theoretical and Philosophical Perspectives* (ed. Max Paddison & Irène Deliège), Farnham: Ashgate, 7

inclined understanding of discourse – as these processes are epitomised in theories of dreaming.

A well-established tenet of musical modernism is its confrontation of, or reaction to, the traditions that preceded it – established styles, past musical languages, and ways of creating aesthetic experience. This presents a particular challenge for semiotics, which – in the tradition that follows on from the semiology of Ferdinand de Saussure at least – has been concerned with finding the ways in which symbols establish themselves and communicate messages or concrete meanings. Modernist music, as well as relating to preceding traditions, disturbs the codes that enable messages and meanings. Frameworks of normativity become suspect, with conventions and fragments of historical allusion often finding themselves brought into new relationships, as well as providing regulative frameworks for the mediation of meaning. My appeal to psychoanalytic thinking responds to this situation. It can be read as an attempt to infuse musical semiotics with the fluid dynamism that is heard in critical, modernist musics.

As I have argued above, Beethoven-Hegelian dialectics, and post-Hegelian developments (Adorno, Kristeva), are still pertinent to questions surrounding subjectivity in late modern musical works. This view is now to be supplemented with some explicitly psychoanalytic-theoretical observations regarding subjectivity. Noting Hegel and Freud's impact upon both Adorno and Kristeva – and that my readings of the former have generally been mediated by the latter – this move should not be seen as much as a change of direction but as a development of a potential direction only touched upon earlier.

Part II has so far revolved around the idea that subject and object are in mutual relation. I have already discussed at length how this is characterised in post-Hegelian terms. The question now is how this is to be formulated in psychoanalytic terms. Two umbrella terms for various mental processes are important here: *internalisation* (which includes and overlaps with the processes of identification, introjection, and incorporation) and *externalisation* (as seen in projection). Following Joseph Sandler and Meir Perlow's interpretation, internalisation can be summarised as the "taking in" of features of external objects or relationships between objects into oneself.³⁶² (I discussed aspects of this – under the guise of identification – in chapter 3, with regard to its coincidence with philosophical-historical legacies such as the culture-nature duality.) Externalisation works in the opposite direction: perceiving aspects of the self, or relationships internal to the self, as playing out into the external world³⁶³. Even without explicating the full complexities of these two

³⁶² SANDLER & PERLOW 1987: 5-8

³⁶³ In the word's recent usage, this often especially regards the the external playing out of internal psychical conflicts (SANDLER & PERLOW 1987: 5).

processes, it should be immediately clear that the mind is not something static, and is situated within, shaped by, and incorporates within it a world of objects and, furthermore, that the boundary between these internal and external worlds is without self-evident demarcation.

As will become apparent, the psychoanalytically-inclined ideas pursued here differ markedly from earlier psychoanalytic readings of music. Firstly, my discursive method treats works as provisional texts (or intertexts) to be analysed. It is the slippage of text into intertext, inside to outside – the coincidences and correspondences at a thetic level, identity and non-identity – that are important to meaning. This “dynamic” method contrasts with seeing works through the lenses of psychoanalytic *schemata*: for example, of the Oedipal phantasy of overturning the fathers of tradition, the past masters, as seen in the now classic case of Harold Bloom’s *Anxiety of Influence*³⁶⁴, which has left its mark within musicology, most notably in Joseph Straus’s *Remaking the Past*³⁶⁵; or through Lacanian scaffolds of meaning, around which dimensions of subjectivity are constructed, as in Sarah Reichardt’s recent *Composing the Modern Subject*³⁶⁶.

Secondly, my methodology – being set on the intersubjective stage of semiotics, of discourses inscribed philosophical-historically – tends towards the broad level of “the societal” rather than of the individual, with these philosophical-historical conditions being performed “within” the musical text. Crucially, the text provisionally under discussion (the discourse, the work, the object) is examined as mediative of knowledge and desire. This contrasts with seeing it as a product of the sublimation of an individual’s drives and libidinal energies.

This latter view, labelled “psychobiography” by some, attempts to understand the artist behind the artwork.³⁶⁷ Freud’s own position on art reflected an early attempt at such an approach, as can be seen in his 1910 essay on ‘Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of His Childhood’ in which ‘Freud leads us from the enigmatic smiles of his *Mona Lisa* and Virgin Marys to posit in the artist a memory regarding his long-lost mother’³⁶⁸. Heinz Kohut, writing in 1957, expressed this position when he wrote that ‘the weaker the aesthetic disguise of... rhythmic experiences, the less artistic becomes the music, as for example, in

³⁶⁴ BLOOM, HAROLD 1997 [orig. 1973]: *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

³⁶⁵ STRAUS 1990

³⁶⁶ REICHARDT 2008

³⁶⁷ Some psychobiographical studies are still produced, notably the (2005) *Handbook of Psychobiography* (ed. William Todd Schultz), Oxford: Oxford University Press.

³⁶⁸ FOSTER, HAL et al. (KRAUSS, ROSALIND & BOIS, YVE-ALAIN & BUCHLOCH, BENJAMIN H.D.) 2004: *Art Since 1900: Modernism, Antimodernism, Postmodernism*, London: Thames and Hudson, 19

some forms of jazz³⁶⁹. Rhythmic energy, for Kohut, connoted the unmediated instinctual drive energies of the Unconscious.³⁷⁰ This earlier view was orthodoxly Freudian. In Kohut's view, the aesthetic disguising of unconscious drives *is* the social; through it the individual's energies must be articulated. Here, the individual is filtered by, rather than constructed through, the social. For this reason, for Kohut, the more energies that show through, the weaker (and, by implication, less developed) that social filtering is. Of course, this also speaks to the political end of denigrating jazz (it is a less developed, less artistic filter, as it fails to disguise the rawness of the Unconscious, unlike more "developed" music which sublimates it effectively). In contrast, I focus upon mediations of desire and knowledge on the intersubjective, musical stage.

However, something further must be underlined: desires never fully stand in for that which they are meant to – instead they defer to other socially mediated desires, just as in language a word takes on meaning through its deference to others. For this reason, the structure of the symbolisation of desires (for example, in works of music) does not homologously map onto the structure of what is desired. One cannot consequently read these symbolisations hermeneutically in terms of a one-to-one correlation, saying "X in the music means Y". This relationship is always "non-identical." Thus, I am *not* saying that a work is something singular symbolized in sound – Silvestrov's quartet does not "mean" *something* – it is rather a meeting point of partial past articulations of desire as they have already been taken into inherited musical materials.

"Residues" of the Past

Historical reminiscences are immediately apparent from the very beginning of Silvestrov's String Quartet No. 1 (Ex. 36). Suspensions (see bar 7-8), are heard in a (broadly conceived) "tonal" context of G major. Harmonic changes help articulate relatively regular phrases. The tonal framework of this opening passage even permits a sensitive treatment of the cadence from V to I (first inversion) at the beginning of bar 9, following a prolongation of V in the bass from bar 4 (that itself falls to IV, in bar 6, before returning to V in 7). I will show how the materials that make up this historically evocative soundworld – which seems unproblematic at first – are brought into new

³⁶⁹ KOHUT, HEINZ 1990: 'Observations on the Psychological Functions of Music' [orig. 1957] in *Psychoanalytic Explorations in Music* (eds. Stuart Feder, Richard L. Karmel & George H. Pollock), Madison: International Universities Press

³⁷⁰ I follow the convention, as found in SANDLER (et al.) 2005, of capitalising the word "unconscious" when referring to the system Unconscious (i.e. as it is related to and distinct from the systems Conscious or Preconscious) and leaving it lower case in its (non-topological, non-systemic) adjective form (as in "unconscious thoughts" – thoughts that might not necessarily be "conscious" but that do not belong to the system Unconscious proper).

interrelationships so as to become newly significant. Like in a dream, familiar materials become sources of significance that go beyond their established functions or meanings, yet still must be understood as related to them.

Ex. 36, Silvestrov: String Quartet No. 1, opening

The image shows the opening of Silvestrov's String Quartet No. 1, marked *Andante* with a tempo of 66. The score is for four instruments: Violino I, Violino II, Viola, and Violoncello. The music is in 3/4 time and features a complex, layered texture. The first system (measures 1-5) shows the Violino I part with a melodic line starting on a half note, followed by a triplet of eighth notes. The Violino II part has a similar triplet. The Viola and Violoncello parts provide a harmonic foundation with sustained notes and some movement. Dynamics range from *mp* to *ppp*. The second system (measures 6-9) continues the development, with the Violino I part moving to a new melodic phrase and the other instruments providing accompaniment. The score includes various performance instructions such as *con sord.*, *dolce*, and *rit.*.

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I will illustrate this in three complementary stages. This means, in the first, showing how historical materials become significant in new settings that are nonetheless connected with their former ones. The development of the suspension figure from the quartet's opening in a later passage, and the sustained 2^{nds} and 4^{ths} that are associated with it, is cited as an exceptional example of this process. The second stage concerns an otherworldly passage in the Lydian mode from the middle of the work. With reference to the psychoanalytic concept of *displacement*, I show how fragmentary material found here is unconsciously invested with significance from materials found earlier in the work. Third, I turn towards the coda of the work in discussing the role of *condensation*, where materials from across the work are brought together so as to negotiate (incompletely) the desires for closure that are sought by each of them.

This discussion begins by reconsidering how the historically reminiscent materials of the opening passage may later be drawn on as (freshly) significant. Centrally, I suggest that to read these materials simply as “historical reminiscences” – imagistically so – would be to skip over the *processes* by which they are felt to be affective and, more importantly, to fail to understand how they develop in bringing significance to textual connections within the work.

In *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Sigmund Freud gives a note of caution about the imagery found in dreams: ‘we would obviously be misled if we were to read these signs according to their pictorial value and not according to their referentiality as signs.’³⁷¹ An apple seen in a dream, whilst symbolic of something – of some wish to be fulfilled, perhaps – probably does not mean that this wish is to eat an apple. Instead, the apple may be there in place of features of some other object or person – and it is the apple’s relationship with these other things that is important, not the fact that it is an apple. Very broadly speaking, through either metaphor or metonymy the apple would stand in the place of a thing or multiple things that are repressed. As a recent “residue” of the past, maybe a memory from the day just passed, it is easily recalled. This ease of recall makes it perfect to disguise some deeper, repressed meaning. Importantly, the way in which the apple is affectively significant in the dream – the way in which it is *felt to be meaningful*, even if we cannot say exactly what it means – is very different from waking life.

It is important to understand why images (like the apple) are chosen for incorporation into a dream – and what this means for the pictorial (imagistic) value and referentiality of signs in a late 20th-century musical context³⁷². Joseph Sandler (et al.) write that such imagery is most often based in recent experience; dream-thoughts are often expressed through “residues” of the day just passed. These residues are ‘incorporated into the dream in some form either because of a connection between such impressions and unconscious thoughts or wishes, or because their content rendered them suitable for the purposes of symbolic representation’³⁷³. This means that imagery which is easy to recall –

³⁷¹ FREUD, SIGMUND 1999 [orig. 1899]: *The Interpretation of Dreams* (trans. Joyce Crick), Oxford: Oxford Paperbacks, 211

³⁷² By ‘pictorial value’ in the context of music, I mean explicit allusions and reminiscences to extramusical ideas, or musical features marked out as being from the past that are used imagistically in contemporary works – quotations are the most obvious example.

³⁷³ SANDLER (et al.) 2005: 120. It can be noted that these residues fit very much into Freud’s topological model of the mind under the concept of the Preconscious. However, I have chosen to avoid (as far as possible) psychoanalytic terms within the body of the text.

of recent memory – is often the most likely to be called upon in the disguised expression of latent dream thoughts.³⁷⁴

A musical parallel is found at the opening of Silvestrov's Quartet, where residues of the past form the basis of the opening. Archetypal, "historical" musical imagery is drawn on, figures available for easy recall by those familiar with the art music tradition, material stemming from a collectively experienced past which is still present in contemporary listening habits (due to current concert programming, their familiarity due to recordings, and so on). The "suspension figure" which closes the first phrase is an exceptional example of this (bar 8), as are the first violin's ornamental triplets in the second bar.

The introduction of this kind of imagery into the work (especially at the opening of the work) sets it up – "in mind" – as a point of attention³⁷⁵, something that may be looked out for as the work unfolds as marked with intensity through reference back to this point. (This ties-in with the idea of setting up of discursive positions at the opening of a work, "expositionally", a strategy observed in Schnittke's String Quartet No. 4 in the previous chapter.) Similarly, as with dream symbolism, the suspension figure and the ornamental triplet figures, whilst they may suggest "pictorial" connotations through their "day-to-day" contextual associations with musical styles of the past, go beyond these, towards referential significance. They are brought forward in the mind so as to be later referred to again as meaningful textual components within the work. In this sense then, two pasts play a role in shaping the experience of what comes later: (1.) the "historical" past outside the work (from which these mnemonic traces are drawn) and (2.) recent memory of past material "internal" to the work as this has unfolded so far, which may later be reformulated or transformed³⁷⁶. This is to begin talking about what Freud called their 'referentiality as signs'.

³⁷⁴ Freud was himself specific about why certain images are chosen: dream imagery allows for unconscious thoughts to pass the threshold of repression – the "censor" – through transforming these thoughts into an acceptably disguised manner. Music – at the level of the social, and of the philosophical and historical – operates differently from the dream of the individual. (Although, that said, they are also connected in light of the fact that the individual is situated socially and philosophically-historically.) I specifically discuss this difference in the next chapter (under the subheading 'From Dream to Desire').

³⁷⁵ Attention is a key distinction between what is conscious and what is in the Preconscious. Once attention is removed from an object such as 'suspension' it moves from consciousness back into the Preconscious.

See SANDLER (et al.) 2005: 97.

³⁷⁶ Daniel Sabbath has written about this second type (see SABBETH, DANIEL 1990: 'Freud's Theory of Jokes and the Linear-Analytic Approach to Music: A Few Points in Common' [orig. 1979] in *Psychoanalytic Explorations in Music* (eds. Stuart Feder, Richard L. Karmel, & George H. Pollock), Madison: International Universities Press) Specifically he argues that elements of a given musical work become Preconscious elements of recent memory, in the sense that a single idea may allow for the release of various cathected energies, allowing for an "economy of psychic expenditure" as elsewhere found in jokes. For example, in a

Ex. 37, Silvestrov: String Quartet No. 1, bars 76-88

5

Meno mosso ♩ = 60

6

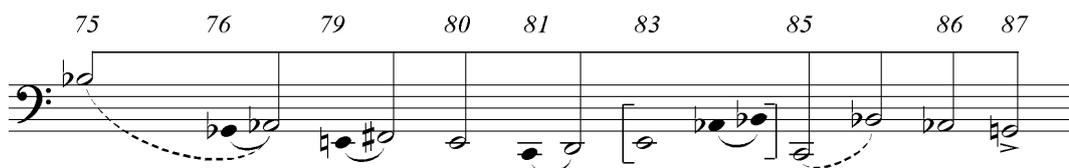
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This opening material is drawn on and modified in the passage from bars 76-87 (figure 5 onwards) and the significance of these elements is transformed from their earlier,

musical sequence 'instead of having to comprehend and retain two melodic units, the listener need actively grasp only the first' (SABBETH 1990: 52).

“day-to-day” usage. This is a passage based principally on the material of the ornamental figure of bar 2 and the suspension in bar 8, as well as being echoed in the unresolved 2^{nds} as found in bar 3. In these terms, the series of quartal harmonies found in this later passage can be heard as a chain of 4^{ths}, attempting to resolve on the surface (see the momentary resolution in the viola at the end of bar 78, which is undercut by the cello’s pitch right away).

Ex. 38, Silvestrov String Quartet No. 1, bars 75-87 (reduction of progression in bass)



A reduction of the progression in the bass shows that whilst there are allusions to tonal centres on the surface, these provisional points fail to stabilise. In short, the background follows a whole-tone descent, rather than a teleologically driven tonal sequence like, to cite a historical paradigm, a circle of fifths underpinning the chain of suspensions found on the surface. This lack of a tonally functioning background makes an authentic resolution of the suspended 4^{ths} impossible. The goal-directed tonal function of the suspension and the whole-tone (i.e. non-tonal) harmonic context find themselves to be at odds with one another. This disparity between the non-tonal background and the tonally figurative surface allusions detaches these residues from their “day-to-day” setting as presented at the work’s opening.³⁷⁷ Indeed, one could say that the historically inclined function of the suspension figure is itself relocated to a deeper structural level in these bars; through a background lacking teleological drive, the temporal unfolding of the work is temporarily held back, this direction being provisionally “suspended”.

Despite the whole-tone background in this episode, and the lack of goal-directed closure, the underlying descent in the bass does suggest some level of cohesion in this section. It is based on a process that unifies it at an underlying level, one that is, nonetheless, contradicted at the surface through quartal harmonies that fail to coincide harmonically with the pitches of the whole-tone background. A descent from the B-flat in bar 76 (established at the close of the last section) to the G in bar 87 occurs in the bass. The descent proceeds by whole-tones until the A-flat to G of bars 86-87, a semitone

³⁷⁷ This also contrasts with the non-functional harmony of earlier composers (prominently Debussy) in that here the disparity between the tonal implications of the surface with the “failed” tonality of the background is a source of expression; this markedly “historical” surface expresses disparity with the background. In addition, setting up these figures within a “tonal” framework at the opening grants their later transgression of tonal space a special significance.

marked in that it steps outside of the whole-tone sequence of the bass, and articulates a (relative) point of arrival. The E in the bass in bar 83 also suggests a temporary point of arrival through a change in the descent's direction, as well as a change in the overlying harmonies from being quartal to being based around thirds. This is retrospectively undercut in bar 85 with the C in the bass reasserting the sequential descent. A marked semitone (a movement from A-flat to G-natural in the bass) articulates a relative point of arrival and a point of structural change at bar 87.

Displacement

It has been noted that the dreamer's apple might signify something else metaphorically or metonymically. More accurately, in the context of dreaming we should say that the apple relates to something else through either *condensation* or *displacement*.³⁷⁸ Condensation brings together various features of things into a single object or activity. It is thus aligned with metaphor and the paradigmatic plane. Displacement works through taking the affectivity or emotional energy linked with one thing and transferring it to another. The dream image would be tangentially associated with, adjacent with, or contain aspects of the thing for which it stood in. It is therefore aligned with metonymy and the syntagm. Such correspondences have been widely noted (for example, by Jacques Lacan³⁷⁹, Roman Jakobson³⁸⁰, and Kaja Silverman³⁸¹). The work of both processes can be recognised in Silvestrov's quartet, in both forms of memory discussed above – in the connection of the work's materials to what is outside (at the level of "historical", intertextual memory) and in intratextual connections and transformations of materials within the work (recent memories of the work as it has so-far unfolded).

Regarding displacement, Freud noted that the "dreamwork makes use of a *displacement of psychical intensities* to the point of a transvaluation of psychical values".³⁸² This idea of the transfer of "psychical intensity", I suggest, may help us to develop an analytical understanding of the significance of moments in the music despite their lacking clear representational content. An excellent example of such a moment appears at bar 72 (Ex. 39), at the point when a single A-natural in the first violin appears in the context of an *A-flat* Lydian section in the middle of the work. Here it must be recalled that Freud noted

³⁷⁸ SILVERMAN 1983: 62

³⁷⁹ See Ian Parker's discussion of Lacan's thinking in PARKER, IAN 1997: *Psychoanalytic Culture: Psychoanalytic Discourse in Western Society*, London: Sage, 193-196

³⁸⁰ As Craig Ayrey summarises: 'Jakobson equates metaphor with the paradigmatic and metonymy with the syntagmatic plane, since they comprise relations of similarity and contiguity respectively.' AYREY, CRAIG 1994: 'Debussy's Signification Connections: Metaphor and Metonymy in Analytical Method' in *Theory Analysis & Meaning in Music* (ed. Anthony Pople), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 136

³⁸¹ SILVERMAN 1983: 87

³⁸² Freud cited in SILVERMAN 1983: 61, emphasis in the original

that what is important is *referential* rather than *pictorial* content. This moment should therefore be investigated as referentially connected with other musical materials in the work, themselves resonating as residues of historical material. Furthermore, as a residue, this moment takes on wider and more profound affective significances than a simple “pictorial” understanding would at first suggest, with this *referential* connection working around a displacement of psychological intensities.

Ex. 39, Silvestrov: String Quartet No. 1, bar 72

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This A-natural is not much to look at pictorially. It has little or no “meaning” when talked about in this way, yet it is affectively rich in referential terms. Whilst we cannot directly map affectivity, we can trace formal connections in the music, through examining the chain of metonymic relationships through which displacement functions. Paradigmatic analysis can be adapted towards this end (Ex. 40).

Ex. 40, Metonymic chain

The first statement referentially significant to the A-natural of 72 is the “flourish figure” seen in the viola (Ex. 41) in bars 18-19 (although this itself is a derivation of earlier material). One may ask why, given that the A-natural is a single note – and, as such, suggests many, many correspondences to other materials – I selected only these elements for inclusion into this table. The rationale behind the selection of elements found in this table is exemplified by the first choice. Both it and the final A-natural have similar affective energy – although with the last acting as a concentrated version of the first. Crucially, they both act as “extraterritorial” components – foreign things coming from outside the music, as dissonant to it. (This evokes the Kristevian idea of ‘rupture and/or boundary’ as explored at the opening of Part II, something I go on to focus on below as this plays out in Silvestrov’s quartet.) In both cases this comes through harmonic dissonance: the viola plays a marked *E-natural* against its overriding *E-flat* context of bars 18-19, and the first violin analogously plays an *A-natural* against the *A-flat* Lydian context of bar 72. The other moments in the table encapsulate stages of transformation between the two statements, although this is by no means an exhaustive list.

Ex. 41, Silvestrov: String Quartet No. 1, bars 15-21

The viola's material is developed in various directions in the work, but the resulting development that concerns us here can be seen in bar 67. Through a process of interverson – whereby the statement's internal content is reordered – the first violin states a figure derived from the viola's. Instead of the viola's previous E-flat, D-flat (a major-2nd) then G to E (a minor-3rd), we hear the 3rd and then the 2nd – D-sharp, F-sharp, B, A. This reordering, and the resulting similarity of their constituent parts, links the two statements together. In bar 72, this continual reduction of the figure leaves it with us in microcosm only – as a single A in the first violin (played as a harmonic). Transformations lead to a displacement of affective value through distortion and connection, a developmental connection that is marked by the two statements' possessing “extraterritorial” characteristics (through both being “foreign” to their contexts, with regard to their respective pitch-spaces). As such, there are two aspects to the relationship between the earlier and the later materials: firstly, there is a *transformative* aspect, where the motif is developed and distilled into a single note which can act as to stand in as a residue of earlier material, and, secondly, there is a *contextual* aspect – both the original E-natural and the later A-natural share an “extraterritorial” function within their respective contexts, something that links them through affinity. In this sense, the connections between the two are both deferred (material transforms in reference to what came before) and direct (based on the affinity of these materials' relationships to their respective contexts, as this is affectively significant).

The transformation of musical statements above is a strand of the role of displacement, of transferring intensity from one element to the next through these elements' connections. Put in the context of a metonymic chain – of referentiality – the significance of this moment as it connects with wider textural and intertextual (historical) processes becomes better appreciated. This process of transferring significance through the transformation of elements of the musical discourse again emphasises how referential process is central to the question of affective significance, rather than it being based in the mere presentation of pictorial – i.e. symbolically codifiable – musical content.³⁸³

³⁸³ Indeed, Stuart Feder writes that ‘there is a fluidity and flexibility in mental function which is well known clinically such that every aspect of mentation can potentially articulate with every other aspect. As a result one thing can readily come to represent another. This is perhaps clearest in the dream but certainly not confined to it. Put another way, *mental representations are infinitely displaceable*. Thus, whatever the discrete element identifiable in mental life, what can become represented in one *form* can assume another, and yet another form ad infinitum.’ FEDER, STUART 1993: “Promissory Notes”: Method in Music and Applied Psychoanalysis’ in *Psychoanalytic Explorations in Music: Second Series* (eds. Stuart Feder, Richard L. Karmel & George H. Pollock), Madison: International Universities Press, 15, emphasis in original.

In addition to the fluid role played by displacement through *textual* metonymies, displacement also makes fluid the movement of significances between *context* and text. In this sense, the concept of displacement helps account for affectivities and meaningful significances flowing over the imagined boundaries of the work – context flowing into the text, so as to be experienced through it. In this regard, something can be said of the suspension figures already discussed at the opening of the quartet. They shift in function throughout the work – most evidentially from their “day-to-day” usage at the opening, to their detached usage in bars 76-84 – but this change of treatment is only part of their chain of displacing affective significances. This metonymy extends to a historical level also. Much like a topic or trope in the Classical repertory, these figures are included in the fabric of the work as metonymic fragments of past musical styles. These figures thus stand as a textual metonymy of a former historical context.³⁸⁴ There is, however, an important difference from the figures in Silvestrov’s quartet to the topics of Classicism. Without a clear stylistic context within which Silvestrov’s figures now sit – a clear code through which we may “decode” them – their meaning becomes unclear. Any signifier-signified relationship they might suggest is less clear than, say, the drones and rhythms signifying the pastoral topic as found in Classicism. As a result, in this sense, these figures “stand for history” – they are symbols markedly of the past that may enter into new, playful relationships – but this is a history in the abstract, an idea of history, not the concrete history of a given time and place that is being signified.

Condensation

Alongside displacement Freud talks also of the process of *condensation*. Kaja Silverman writes that ‘condensation involves the compression into a single feature of qualities belonging to two or more. Although that compression can take many forms, it always requires that there be points of *affinity* between the elements it conjoins’³⁸⁵. Condensation is closely related to the idea of *multiple function*, as it brings together many qualities and conflicts. Robert Waelder wrote that, according to this principle of multiple function, “every attempt to solve a task is necessarily, at the same time, an attempt to solve other tasks, even if incompletely”³⁸⁶.

³⁸⁴ This idea of textual metonymies of former contexts playing a role in discourse has already been touched upon, although in a very different context, in my discussion of Alfred Schnittke’s String Quartet No. 4, above. In this case it was of a “figure of closure” as evocative of past ways of articulating the autonomy of both musical work and self.

³⁸⁵ SILVERMAN 1983: 62, emphasis added

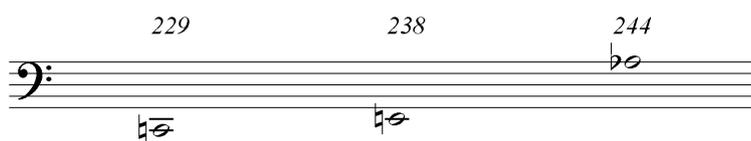
³⁸⁶ Robert Waelder cited in FEDER 1993: 14

Silvestrov ends the work with a coda that brings together – in part – various aspects of musical material already outlined. Specifically, this final section operates through a process of condensation. Multiple aspects of diverse and previously developed materials find closure in a passage that multiply functions through negotiating new points of affinity between them. This can be seen as an attempt to attend to various tasks, to attend to different types of closure, brought together at the end. Notably, these concepts of condensation and multiple function enable the conception of a distinctly modernist – non-synthetic – closure, one that combines and mixes elements, without affirming a dialectical synthesis or the singularity of a Whole.³⁸⁷

The coda draws together materials, multiply functioning through modifying them in light of compromises demanded by each of the others. The texture is sparse at the ending of the work. Form is not clearly “articulated” (in the sense used above). Despite this, I suggest that the coda begins at approximately bar 229, from rehearsal mark 13 to the end, as this supplements a final return of the opening material at bar 198³⁸⁸. The materials negotiated include: 1) the whole-tone structural background of bars 76-87, 2) extraterritorial material derived from the flourish motif, and 3) an earlier section of the work based around an A-flat-centred Lydian mode (bars 66-75). This last, modal section included the “extraterritorial” A-natural harmonic discussed earlier. As in a dream, compromises between many surface materials and the desires for closure, something deeper, are negotiated at several simultaneous levels.

Firstly, the concept of a whole-tone structural background, as presented in bars 76-87, is addressed principally through a progression in the bass in the coda. The cello’s three final bass notes – C-natural, E-natural, and A-flat – spell out an augmented triad in the structural background (Ex. 42), echoing the whole-tone structural background of the earlier section. However, these are now presented in the opposite direction: not from the A-flat down to the low C but the other way around.

Ex. 42: Silvestrov: String Quartet No. 1, 229-244, reduction of bass



³⁸⁷ It should be noted that, however, closure is not the same as condensation in general, but it does allow Silvestrov to bring together musical materials in this work in particular.

³⁸⁸ This return of the opening material, which the coda supplements, is discussed in the next chapter (under the subheading ‘...traces of the means of closure (i)’).

Secondly, material derived from the extraterritorial flourish motif, which originally appeared in the first violin in bars 18-19, is also accounted for. This takes the form of a short figure (see the end of the bottom line in Ex. 43), a tone moving quickly upwards, derived from the major-2nd in lines that themselves find relation to the original flourish motif. This is ultimately derived from the original “flourish” motif (compare the top two staves of Ex. 43, below, and the third of Ex. 40, above).

Ex. 43, Affinities between “extraterritorial” flourish-derived material and the short “tone figure”

The image displays three staves of musical notation. The top staff, labeled 'Vln. II 42-45', shows a flourish motif starting with a 5-measure rest, followed by a series of notes including a triplet. The middle staff, labeled 'Vln. I & II 64-65', shows a similar figure with a 6-measure rest. The bottom staff, labeled 'Vln. I 182-183', shows the same figure in a different context, illustrating its integration into the work's structure.

It is also worth noting that this tone figure itself becomes the principal material of a passage (bars 192-197) that precedes the return of material from the very opening (bar 198). This passage is typified by the tone figure’s outlining of the pitches A-flat and B-flat, which tend to dominate the top of the texture. This material’s inclusion into the coda helps to incorporate not only this figure into the work as a whole but, by extension, the section based on the tone figure. In the coda, this motif stands in synecdochically – through displacement – for a section whose motivic content is otherwise left unincorporated.

In the earlier section, this tone motif was counterpoised against the harmonic context. In the coda, it becomes incorporated within the harmony. In bars 238-240, with the bare 5th of E and B in the cello, the pitches G-sharp and A-sharp (i.e. enharmonically A-flat and B-flat) are played by the viola and second violin. These pitches’ distance in terms of their relative octaves and their pianissimo entries suggests a sonic blending with the cello’s dyad. In bar 240, however, the “real” identity of this tone motif is stated, although now within a context of no longer being foreign to its prevailing harmonic surroundings. The A-flat/B-flat motif is recontextualised as a major 3rd and augmented 4th of a mode based on E-natural. This brings us to the final crucial condensed element: the Lydian mode material mentioned above (the Lydian mode of course being identifiable through its augmented 4th scale degree).

Thirdly, similarly as with the suspension and the triplet ornamentation figures, the A-flat-centred Lydian section (bars 66-75) brings “the past” explicitly into the present – this modal identity is immediately historically evocative. This Lydian section is also drawn on in the coda. As noted already, the augmented 4th of the Lydian mode is echoed in the reharmonisation of the A-flat/B-flat tone motif over the cello’s bare 5th in bars 238-240. The modal A-flat centre is also given the final say in the coda, being the chord sounded at the end of the work (Ex. 44). Furthermore, this final A-flat centre, as noted above (under point 1.), helps to close the pitch-space. It appears after the previous pitch centres of C-natural and E-natural. This echoes the major-3rd relations derived from the whole-tone structural background of bars 76-85, though brings completion to this sequence with an A-flat harmonic identity that has become referentially rich (structurally, as it relates to the A-flat Lydian section, and historically, as this section was itself historically evocative). The coda explores relative compromises between elements found throughout the work at various levels. Through the negotiation of new points of affinity, materials are condensed so as to perform common functions in the musical discourse.

Ex. 44, Silvestrov: String Quartet No. 1, bars 234-245

The musical score for Ex. 44, Silvestrov: String Quartet No. 1, bars 234-245, is presented in two systems. The first system (bars 234-240) begins with a *rit.* marking. It features a complex texture with multiple staves. Dynamics include *sub. p*, *ppp*, and *pp*. Performance instructions include *sul tasto* and *pp*. The second system (bars 240-245) continues the *rit.* and includes dynamics such as *ppp*, *pppp*, and *ppp dim.*. Performance instructions include *sul tasto*, *vibr.*, and *non vibr.*. The score is written in 4/4 time and includes various musical notations such as triplets, slurs, and dynamic markings.

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2^{nds} as ‘Rupture and/or Boundary’

Kristeva’s concept of the *thetic* (see chapter 4) may also supplement this discussion, particularly in the capacity of better defining the articulation of discursive identities in moments which are nonetheless – as my appeal to dream theories have illustrated – relatively fluid. As I will show, 2^{nds} (both major and minor) facilitate, at a basic level, articulations of various aspects of the discourse, acting as both discursive boundaries, yet also enabling moments of rupture that suggest something outside of this. Indeed, given many composers’ drawing on “pseudo-tonal” techniques in various works (not just by Silvestrov – by Wolfgang Rihm, for instance), my exploring of these techniques here has implications beyond shedding light on Silvestrov’s music alone.

The minor 2nd: Given the “pseudo-tonal” context of Silvestrov’s String Quartet No. 1, the semitone exists as an atomic unit of the discourse, beyond which there is no possibility of further discursive terms. This is a boundary constituted by the discourse yet, paradoxically, also one constitutive of it. However, this significance “as boundary” goes beyond formal immanence. Through flirting with tonality, the semitone is invested with a particular historical resonance and, furthermore, is significant as the farthest point to which discursive identities may bend before breaking.³⁸⁹

Major 2^{nds}, as well as quartal harmonies, appear throughout much of the music, giving discursive elements of it articulatory shape. These find their earliest expression at the opening of the work, in the suspension figures that, as it has been shown, become of importance later. A few examples are given in Ex. 45. As will become clear, both minor and major 2^{nds} (and quartal harmonies) become worked together.

Ex. 45, a selection of motivic elements derived from 2^{nds} and 4^{ths}

The image displays a musical score for three string instruments and a harmony section. The first three staves are for Vln. I (Violin I), Vla. & Vc. (Viola and Violoncello), and Vln. I (Violin I). The fourth staff is labeled 'Harmony, bar 4'. The Vln. I part (top staff) shows a melodic line with a slur over measures 67-78, marked with a '6' above it. The Vla. & Vc. part (middle staff) shows a similar melodic line with a slur over measures 77-78. The Vln. I part (bottom staff) shows a melodic line with a slur over measures 157-158. The Harmony section (right side) shows a chordal structure with various intervals and accidentals.

³⁸⁹ Put in other terms, the semitone is not a necessary boundary for discursive terms – I am not prescribing a general ontology of what-musical-discourse-is and what-musical-discourse-is-not, simply discussing what gives *this* discourse its particular philosophical identity, immanently (formally) and through its extrinsic (philosophical-historical) investments.

The 2nd – specifically, the minor 2nd – facilitates rupture as much as it appears as boundary, which come though at the important “extraterritorial” moments that were discussed above. The original such moment occurs in bar 15, in which a flourish motif gives prominence to an E-natural in contrast with the prevailing harmonic context (that gives prominence to E-flat). As explored above, this is later, through a series of metonymic displacements, drawn upon in an extraterritorial A-natural appearing “outside of” its A-flat Lydian setting (bar 72). These points where materials appear a “semitone out” – where attrition between pitch centres is foregrounded – facilitate moments of rupture.

Ex. 46 Silvestrov: String Quartet No. 1, bars 127-128

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This rupturing semitone duality is laid bare in bar 128 (Ex. 46), between B-natural and B-flat. This draws on the “semitone out” idea (i.e. the E-natural and E-flat duality introduced by the flourish material), but is also referentially connected to the earlier juxtaposition of B-natural and B-flat at bar 30. Indeed, the material in the second violin that suggests this extraterritoriality at bar 30 is *itself* derived from the viola’s flourish material of bars 18-19. This is derivation based in interversion. Instead of the viola’s previous E-flat, D-flat (a major-2nd) then G, E (a minor-3rd), as heard in bar 19, the second violin plays B-flat, D-flat (a major-6th, an inverted minor-3rd) followed by E-flat to F (a major-9th, a compound 2nd).

The semitone and quartal harmonies – as rupture and/or boundary – in fact function in complicity with one another. This can be illustrated with reference to a

moment touched upon already: the foreign A-natural in the A-flat Lydian section (bar 72), in moments of *condensation*. Freud notes that the work of condensation includes the ‘selection of elements occurring many times in the dream-thoughts [the unconscious thoughts underlying a dream’s manifest content]; its formation of new unities (collective figures, composite structures), and its production of *mediating common factors*’³⁹⁰. The semitone duality idea seems to be one such ‘mediating common factor’ in the materials of the quartet.

The A-natural harmonic of bar 72 (discussed above in relation to displacement), and the extraterritorial pitches which follow it, as well as deferring their significance backwards through displacement, also rely on condensation in effecting their significance; they also draw on the (many times occurring, “over-determined”) concept of “semitone-clash-as-extraterritorial”. Like the B-natural/B-flat and the E-natural/E-flat dualities discussed already, this A-natural is counterpoised to an A-flat-centred Lydian context. Furthermore, the paradigmatic pitches that provide moments of extraterritoriality throughout the work – B-natural, E-natural, and A-natural – are presented syntagmatically in the Lydian passage (in bars 72-75), with these pitches spelled out one by one: A-natural (bar 72), E-natural (73), B-natural (74), and E-natural again (75). In addition to the mutual negotiation of all these elements, the octaves at which these pitches (B-E-A) are played in bars 72-75 suggests a stacking of 4ths (Ex. 47). Hence, a further ‘mediating common factor’ is drawn on – that of quartal harmonies.

Ex. 47: “Extraterritorial” pitches, bars 72-75



As such, these pitches in bars 72-75 derive significance through a wide range of hidden connections. They are metonymically derived from the extraterritorial flourish material, but also condense and shape other overdetermined elements of material (semitonal dualities and quartal relationships). Freud talks of “*nodal points*”³⁹¹ in dreams around which many thoughts converge – that is, these points foreground content pertinent to thoughts which run throughout the dreamwork. In musical terms, this is echoed in nodal points where elements that run throughout the musical work are brought to the surface or drawn together. This happens in miniature in the A-flat-centred Lydian

³⁹⁰ FREUD 1999: 226, emphasis added

³⁹¹ Freud cited in SILVERMAN 1983: 90

section, in particular in bars 72-75, where semitonal and quartal ideas are brought into fluid interrelation.

Silvestrov's modernist work is one that is open to questions of memory. It draws on history fluidly. Yet from this fluidity are created discursive boundaries that are concrete, that shape the work and give it form. Given the fluidity of these mechanisms at play, works such as Silvestrov's are particularly well suited to psychoanalytically-inclined interpretations. Past materials are drawn on as historically allusive. However, at the same time, the discursive frameworks within which these materials are situated are themselves characterised by provisionality, instability, and drift.

6. Desiring Through Contemporary Music

DESIRE, ABSENCE AND AFFIRMATION

From Dream to Desire

Late 20th- and early 21st-century music draws upon and reacts to legacies of subjectivity – ways of knowing Selves and Worlds – as inscribed into musical materials and practices. But, as Julia Kristeva points out, ‘the knowing subject is also a *desiring* subject, and the paths of desire ensnarl the paths of knowledge.’³⁹² A discussion of subjectivity that eclipses desiring with knowing, and evades relationships between the two, misses something – even more so here, given this discussion is of subjectivities *in music*, a discourse, as it has often historically been conceived, of the passions and of the sensuality of desires *par excellence*.

This move from knowledge to desire is mediated through my discussion of “dreaming through contemporary music” – for dreaming is a process exemplifying the roles of desire in the shaping and giving direction to discourses. The world becomes *known* through some symbolic capacity, symbols whose significance and interrelations are disturbed, de- and re-formed so as to express things as-yet unknown (conceptually, at a conscious level) through *dream*-like processes, swept forwards by *desire*. It is my intention to account more fully for the last of these here, an absent core of these processes which has until now been left open (hence, this can be read as attending to the desire for closure of this earlier absence, something pulling discussion forward, if you will).

Continuing to expound past-present relations means characterising strategies of desire in Western art music as these are confronted by recent composers. But, a word of caution before this characterisation begins. What desire “is” is not self-evident. Despite this, I will not characterise it in any single way, define it, measuring later examples against a singular pre-established yardstick (like the Lacanian conceptualisations of desire that are burgeoning at the moment³⁹³). I follow Susan McClary’s suggestion here, that the

³⁹² KRISTEVA, 1982: 81, emphasis in original

³⁹³ I draw on aspects of Lacan’s thinking. However, I wish to avoid “applying” his framework as a model, as a whole. For examples of explicitly Lacanian approaches see SMITH, KENNETH 2011: ‘The Tonic Chord and Lacan’s Object *a* in Selected Songs by Charles Ives’ in *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, Vol. 136, No. 2, (pp. 353-398), REICHARDT 2008, or ŽIŽEK, SLAVOJ & DOLAR MLADEN 2002: *Opera’s Second Death*, New York: Routledge, among many others. (In his article Smith provides a good summary of various Lacanian musicological approaches.)

twentieth century put... questions [surrounding desire and Self] in the foreground of psychoanalytic theory... But this recent history does not mean we must put a Lacanian trademark sign beside the word *desire*, for the problem of understanding desire and its varying solutions predated formal psychoanalysis by millennia.³⁹⁴

And so, whilst I will draw upon psychoanalytic theory in part, it is through no singular conception that I characterise desire; it is by its very nature polymorphous, slipping beyond the psychoanalytic-theoretical and into the aesthetic and philosophical.

Following my characterisation of musical materials so far, I will outline desire as operating musically in two dialectically interrelated ways. Firstly, strategies of desire find themselves distilled into musical language itself, into, for example, teleologies of closure as these are articulated in the harmonic background. Secondly, desire works around, through, or towards some foregrounded 'Object'. Following Fredric Jameson's warnings about "understanding" touched on in chapter 4, these aspects should not be seen as divisible from one another, and there is in fact movement between them.

I explore both aspects in this chapter by revisiting works discussed so far, but now in light of issues of desire. As such, I also hope that this underlines the dialectic between desiring, discussed below, and "knowing", explored above. After outlining the intermingling of desire and knowledge in music, I examine closure's relationship with articulating desires in the tonal idiom, and note two different reactions to inherited traces of tonal closure in works by Silvestrov (his First Quartet) and Schnittke (his Fourth). The former draws on this idiom explicitly, although not unproblematically so. The latter, as was shown in chapter 4, takes a figure of closure as an object, thus shifting from desire as distilled into ("objective") musical language towards desire as working around a distinct object. This section finishes by briefly looking back to Tiensuu's *Arsenic and Old Lace* and Rihm's String Quartet No. 10 as these works encompass issues of desire. Notably, in the latter, it is shown that "found" objects might act also as "*sought*" objects, hazy objects of desire from the past that pull forward musical discourse. As such, I hope to bring together the constellation of works and ideas foregrounded in Part II, whilst also reflecting the polymorphous nature of desire and its articulation of, coalescence around, and pulling towards (musical) objects. However, in order to proceed down this route – and also to understand how desire is articulated musically – I should first show how this connects with the subject of the previous chapter, the dream-like processes found in music, as desire itself has a place in dreaming.

³⁹⁴ MCCLARY, SUSAN 2004: *Modal Subjectivities: Self-Fashioning in the Italian Madrigal*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 57, emphasis in original

Dreams were, for Freud, principally a device of wish fulfilment³⁹⁵. Tensions within the mind of the dreamer found themselves coming forward in disguised forms, a form of compromise and self-censorship which allowed repressed or overtly unpleasant thoughts to surface and provisionally discharge themselves. Of course, this process plays out with reference to a social context – the dreamer has constructed a socially mediated framework of what is permissible, taking this context into him or herself, and hence also what is impermissible and must be repressed (for example, incestuous thoughts). However, it should be immediately clear that the symbolism within the dream (despite certain archetypal images appearing³⁹⁶) is specific to the individual dreamer – how the dream is experienced is pertinent to him or her as an individual.

At this point a distinction needs to be made between *drive* and *desire*. Drives, often also translated from Freud as “instinct” (or instinctual drives), are never directly observable, but are rather the undercurrent of an Unconscious, with roots both in biology (physical needs, like consumption and excretion) and childhood. They are primarily sexual in nature; Freud goes so far as to claim that ‘sexual impulses also make contributions that must not be underestimated to the highest cultural, artistic and social creations of the human spirit’³⁹⁷. Desire can be thought of in some sense as the (necessarily partial) symbolisation of drive. That is, through the process of *sublimation*, drives may be temporarily discharged – although their thirst is never fully quenched – through being attached or directed towards some externalised object (“object” in this context is an extended concept, one which can include everyday objects, or people, places, and so on)³⁹⁸.

³⁹⁵ Freud argues this throughout his *Interpretation of Dreams*. See also HOPKINS, JAMES 1992: ‘The Interpretation of Dreams’ in *The Cambridge Companion to Freud* (ed. Jerome Neu), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

³⁹⁶ These images are explored by Freud in his lecture on the ‘Symbolism in Dreams’ [orig. 1915-16] in 1973 [orig. 1917]: *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, London: Penguin. Elizabeth Wright notes that at an extreme, this ‘interpretation of “typical symbols” has led to what has become known as “vulgar Freudian symbolism” (WRIGHT, ELIZABETH 1998: *Psychoanalytic Criticism: A Reappraisal* (2nd Edition), Cambridge: Polity Press, 22).

³⁹⁷ FREUD 1973: 47

³⁹⁸ Whilst there are moments of overlap between such psychoanalytic “objects” and the “Objects” I explore – particularly, that both help articulate desires – they should not be confused as identical. My approach is *discursive*, taking a *semiotic* line – with different theoretical foundations from the object-relation theories most notably developed in the psychoanalytic schools of Melanie Klein and D.W. Winnicott. An exploration of object-relations theories and music would require a separate study in itself. For a fascinating Winnicottian study in the field of literature, see RUDNYTSKY, PETER (ed.) 1993: *Transitional Objects and Potential Spaces: Literary Uses of D.W. Winnicott*, New York: Columbia University Press. Georgina Born has paid some attention to the Kleinian concept of “part-objects” in her discussions of multiple musics’ surrounding cultures. See BORN, GEORGINA 1997: ‘Modernist Discourse, Psychic Forms, and Agency: Aesthetic Subjectivities at IRCAM’ in *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 12, No. 4 (pp. 480-501) and BORN, GEORGINA 1998: ‘Anthropology, Kleinian Psychoanalysis, and the Subject in Culture’ in *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 100, No. 2 (pp. 373-386).

Drive and desire are thus interrelated concepts, but neither identical nor oppositional with each other.

Desires, being symbolically articulated, tend towards the social world. Music presents one social domain within this world, but an exemplary one in its ability to articulate tensions and social conflicts in a fluid space that draws on both the reified and the non-conceptualisable. Music mediates desires socially. I focus on this quality of mediation, as it has been sedimented into musical materials, rather than focussing on – as following psychobiography – music as expressing an individual’s drive energies³⁹⁹. Regarding this mediation, and the sedimentation of (past) desires into musical material, this is to understand desires as already present within the musical material being experienced. Here music is not seen as the expression of drive impulses of an individual, but as a social dreamwork caught in the net(work) of the sociality of desires. This accords with Tim Dean’s sketch of the contemporary psychoanalytic-critical terrain –

Whereas traditional psychoanalytic criticism decoded the neurotic conflicts of individual artists (finding in writers’ and painters’ characters the surrogates of warring parts of their selves), contemporary psychoanalytic criticism demystifies the transindividual struggles (whether social or ideological) that the work of art is understood to encode.⁴⁰⁰

When considered at this intersubjective level, desires, as sublimated through musical works, defer not to individuals’ drives but to other socially mediated desires, just as in language a word takes on meaning only through its deference to others. Here my method – in seeing desire as constructed almost linguistically – is much closer to Lacan’s than to Freud’s. This may seem odd given my reliance on Freud’s thinking elsewhere. However, given that here I am discussing artifacts already at a social level – musical works – rather than individuals’ pathologies, it makes sense to turn towards a socially, *linguistically*-inclined characterisation of desire. Thus, it becomes the work of the psychoanalytic-theoretically inclined musicologist not to “unveil” how a work pertains to an individual’s pathology, but rather how a work pertains to larger desires, anxieties, and wishes as they are mediated outside of the work. This “social” reading of desires as explored in music gets us past the problem that Adorno identified in the psychoanalytic interpretation of artworks, that

³⁹⁹ See my discussion of Heinz Kohut’s comments in the previous chapter.

⁴⁰⁰ DEAN, TIM 2002: ‘Art as Symptom: Žižek and the Ethics of Psychoanalytic Criticism’ in *Diacritics*, Vol. 32, No. 2 (pp. 21-41), 29

[in the psychoanalytical reading of artworks] artists whose work gave uncensored shape to the negativity of life are dismissed as neurotics... For psychoanalysis, artworks are daydreams; it confuses them with documents⁴⁰¹.

With my social, philosophical-historical caveat, Adorno's statement becomes not a rejection of psychoanalytic interpretation as whole, but of a specific type – a warning against attempts to analyse the artist behind the work. In this sense, the artwork might be a 'daydream', as per Adorno's observation, but this is a process of day dreaming understood differently, as a collectively experienced daydream, and a 'dream' that is understood as part of the social world. Instead of existing as otherworldly alternative – as differently understood against "reality" – this dream provides a space in which the "real world" might become immanent transformed.

In this discussion, music's significance, in contrast to that of dreams, tends more towards the social than the individual. However, this does not mean that what can be learnt from Freud's theories of dreaming is redundant in coming to terms with musical experience. Like the dream, the musical work may be seen to open itself as *a space within which tensions may be worked through in disguised forms*. For example, fears of "the Other" can be provisionally discharged, through the incorporation and mastering of images of exoticism and orientalism. Musical language itself can even take on this role of resolving social tensions through facilitating social-sonic phantasies; an example of this is provided by the immanent musical synthesis found in many works of the Classical era – a musical quality mirroring the Classical ideal of an ordered, rational society (within which the individual also has a harmonious place).⁴⁰²

This returns us to the dialectic outlined at the opening of the chapter: that desires are sublimated into objects within musical language as well as into musical language itself. This echoes the duality between the representational (i.e. programmatic) aspect of music and its absolute dimension. (Although my conception of musical objects, as I have shown, goes beyond simple "representation", being more adequately described in terms of "relation" or "referentiality".) Legacies of both – and the dialectics of the two – are explored immanently within recent critical musical works (examples below).

In the case of the first – objectification – fears may be mastered as objects that may be handled, grasped, and ultimately symbolically dominated. As Susan McClary has illustrated with reference to Bizet's *Carmen*, categories of alterity – "Woman", the "Oriental" (as erotic/exotic and hence dangerous things) – are mastered in this work when

⁴⁰¹ ADORNO 1997: 8

⁴⁰² I cite again the example of the Symphony as a space in which the dialectics of Part and Whole, individual and society, were negotiated (see chapter 1). See also, BONDS 2006: 63

stable order is (re)affirmed.⁴⁰³ She writes that ‘Carmen herself represents virtually all available categories of alterity: inscrutable “Oriental”, menacing worker, lawless criminal, *femme fatale*. And José, child of the Enlightenment bourgeoisie who surrenders his claims to racial, class and gender privilege because of her, must pay the consequences in the finale. Yet it is ultimately Carmen who pays – with her life – for José’s identity crisis and Bizet’s fantasies of alterity’⁴⁰⁴. This objectification is extended to the musical materials: drawing on a musical legacy, a way in which alterity has been and is objectified into material, in the course of the Opera’s prelude

a new motive emerges, a motive marked by the augmented second. This interval – defined as illicit in traditional counterpoint – has long been associated in Western music either with exotic Others (Jews, “Orientals,” gypsies) or (in, say, the works of Bach) with extreme affective states such as anguish... Bizet aligns [these dual connotations] with the “Oriental” *femme fatale*.⁴⁰⁵

During the first act, to the already-held connotations of this materials is ‘added to them the dimension of “Woman”’⁴⁰⁶. Social desires – the re-establishment of patriarchal (and occidental) authority (as well as correspondent, “cooked” discourses of power that are knotted together at this nodal point) – are deferred into the tensions in the work, and so desired to be resolved within the work as this reflects what is rooted outside. (McClary makes this explicit: ‘The urgency of Bizet’s music... invites us to desire Carmen’s death.’⁴⁰⁷) This first dimension is explored in greater detail below. I should prefigure this later discussion, however, by saying that the handling of objects in late modernist works, and their relationships to the concept of desire, differs from that of Bizet’s (to take him as an example of wider tendencies).

The second dimension is found in music’s “absolute”, autonomous characteristic, the “second nature” through which desire is sublimated into the “musical language

⁴⁰³ She writes: ‘The principal irony of the opera concerns a fatalism that engages with the most basic formal processes: the willful teleology of José’s actions results in the “necessary” return of materials announced before he even appeared’ (MCCLARY, SUSAN 1992: *Georges Bizet, Carmen*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 110). However, she also points out that despite closure of formal processes, something lingers beyond the end of the work’s performance. This, I suggest, accords with an idea that I visit below: that objects of desire can never completely satisfy the functions which they are called to serve.

⁴⁰⁴ MCCLARY 1992: 43

⁴⁰⁵ MCCLARY 1992: 65-66

⁴⁰⁶ MCCLARY 1992: 73

⁴⁰⁷ MCCLARY 1992: 110

itself”.⁴⁰⁸ This is undeniably connected with the first dimension.⁴⁰⁹ As I will show, this aspect impacts on the articulation of, among other things, certain ways of “opening” absences that are desired to be later “closed” (principally through “musical closure”). These legacies of articulating desire in musical language, I will suggest, are often approached as materials of significance in recent critical works. What follows is a discussion of the historicity and aesthetics of musically articulated desire, followed by revisiting of string quartets already discussed, in their “desiring” dimension.

Desire in (Musical) Language

The “immediacy” of music is, I suggest, philosophical-historically bound-up with questions of desire. Adorno attended to this aspect of immediacy as this was related to nature or, as it may be better put, the *naturalisation* of expressive immediacy. Max Paddison summarises Adorno’s position:

In the case of music, as with nature, what is most striking is its *immediacy*... Music, especially if it is purely instrumental music without words, absolute music, appears to speak to us in a way we find difficult to conceptualize, because of its apparent intentionlessness – its lack of intention and lack of purposiveness beyond its immediate sphere.⁴¹⁰

This is where I bring desire into this discussion of immediacy: This lack, rather than limiting the sublimation of desire into music, does the opposite, enabling music to act as an exemplary locus of desires. Its naturalised “immediate” dimension – defined against representability – positions it as implying a lack that stands for *absences at the core of the desiring process itself*. It should be noted that this formulation itself posits music as absence to language’s presence, something standing on problematic foundations (i.e., a music-language duality that, as we have seen, comes with its own problems). Despite these problems, this is nonetheless a significant philosophical-historical legacy and, as such, important to past-present relations. The supposed autonomy of music from the world

⁴⁰⁸ Furthermore, the place of the first – object as Part to the second’s Whole – is doubly telling of desire: it allows for desires which conflict with the dominant logic (the supposed eroticism, exoticism, and alterity of “feminine sexuality”) to be enjoyed as *objects facilitating and attending to these desires*, whilst also *desiring to resolve or dominate the object* under this same logic, as Part of a larger Whole.

⁴⁰⁹ A connection that can be observed in the already-cited use of the augmented second as conative of “alterity” or “anguish”; this is deployed as objectified alterity but part of a larger, naturalised tonal musical language. A further example is provided by McClary in *Feminine Endings*. In the introduction (to the 2002 edition) McClary points to gendered aspects in traditional music theory: notably, notions of “masculine” and “feminine” cadences as these connote degrees of strength and finality (MCCLARY, SUSAN 2002 [orig. 1991]: *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 9-17).

⁴¹⁰ PADDISON 2010b: 67, emphasis in original

itself also means that any incorporation of world(ly desires) into musical work occurs through a disguising process of sublimation.

As a result, two complementary notions of lack in musical language are apparent: firstly, that musical language – in its historically alleged opposition with the representationality of “language proper” – is itself built around *lack* (lack of representationality, lack of signifiers/signifieds, lack of mediation). This first lack leads to a second one. Positioning music as a space of absence – as this has been done so historically – music provides a space in which desires might safely find articulation. Lack in the work, as exterior object – later affirmed, fulfilled, or closed – might help affirm, fulfil or close a lack perceived as interior to the subject. The apparently unmediated quality of musical language – its “first lack” – might be drawn on in achieving an effective sublimation from subjective interiority to an exterior object to this end. Within tonal musical language, this is expressed through (to give one example) Leonard Meyer’s “gap-fill” phenomenon – that, within a system, there is a desire to close gaps that are opened. As Meyer puts it, moves to completion and closure ‘function both within the framework of what is given in the style and within the terms established in the particular work’⁴¹¹. The system deals with lack by setting up ways of opening and closing – this is, in essence, a control of desire⁴¹².

The concepts of internalisation and externalisation (as outlined above) are applicable here. The rise of the “autonomous work” mirrored the rise of the autonomous bourgeois individual, externalising the expression of the latter through its transplantation onto the former – something that can also be seen in the institutions surrounding these autonomous works, like the rise of ‘bourgeois concert life’⁴¹³. Again it can be seen that desires explored in musical works defer backwards to other desires; desire for musical closure within a work defers to the desire for the autonomous work, this itself signifying the stabilising of the autonomy of the individual.

Notably, this quality of deference chimes with one aspect of Jacques Lacan’s thinking: that desire acts *metonymically*. In desire, Elizabeth Wright notes, one may ‘substitute one [associated, contiguous] signifier with another’.⁴¹⁴ (This has an important connection the role of displacement, which also draws on metonymy, as explored in the

⁴¹¹ MEYER, LEONARD B. 1956: *Emotion and Meaning in Music*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 128

⁴¹² It should be said that Meyer’s understanding of this process was psychological rather than psychoanalytic in nature. His focus was on the pleasure derived from closing gaps in the music, in reasserting “wholeness”. In contrast, I am not looking at the means for inducing *cognitive pleasure*, but rather ways of *evoking desire* – desire which cuts across what is interior and exterior to the work, rather than limited to within the work as cognitive construct.

⁴¹³ Dahlhaus notes that the rise of the autonomous work of art developed beside the rise of this institution DAHLHAUS, CARL 1997 [orig. 1977]: *Foundations of Music History*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 145.

⁴¹⁴ WRIGHT 1998: 102

previous chapter). This leads to ‘an incessant referral of the subject from one signifier to the next: the absence of one can only be replaced by another, equally marked with absence’⁴¹⁵. An important point should be emphasised here. Desires, always satisfying only incompletely, are also always deferring non-identically. Desires do not identically stand in the place of other desires (desire for musical closure as taking the place of, mapping cleanly onto, the desire for autonomy of the individual).

The level of success of this sublimation of anxieties and desires into supposedly autonomous cultural practices, like music, can be judged by the ability to say, “What happens in the work, stays in the work” – that it bears no resemblance to anything outside of itself. This is something echoed by Theodor Adorno when he noted that the

ideological essence of music, its affirmative element, does not lie, as with other arts, in its specific content, or even in whether or not its form operates in terms of harmony. It lies merely in the fact that it is *a voice lifted up*, that it is music at all. Its language is magical in itself, and the transition to its isolated sphere has *a priori* a quality of transfiguration. The suspension of empirical reality and forming of a second reality *sui generis* seem to say in advance: all is well.⁴¹⁶

This “affirmative” aspect of music thus relates to the sociality of desire. Desires set in motion in the work, distilled into the very fabric of the musical discourse (like in my reading of Meyer) move to suggest self-evidence – that ‘all is well’, that tensions resolved in the work have no relation to tensions outside of the work. Here, music’s mediative function, of socially articulating and performing desires, is hidden.

Returning to the tonal system as paradigmatic example, here it was noted that desire was *sublimated within* it. Lack sublimated within it (gaps, structural and stylistic dissonances, and so on) could, with reference to the system as a whole, be synthesised, closed, and put right. Unknowns were absences within the system, there (or, more accurately, not there) so as to be reconciled, to be mastered. These were unknowns for a subject that could anchor itself musically within a (tonal) frame of meaning. This past still informs and mediates contemporary musical subjectivities, something made possible through reference to fragments of this tonal past as made present. In the context of recent critical musical works, despite no such system or frame of closure as an (unproblematically) tonal one, *traces of the means of closure* – of dealing with gaps, lack, and as such, with desire in musical language – still exist as immanent to fragments of inherited musical materials.

⁴¹⁵ WRIGHT 1998: 103

⁴¹⁶ ADORNO 1998: 6-7, emphasis in original

...traces of the means of closure (i)

Traces of desires in musical language – as found in acts of closure – can be observed in Silvestrov’s String Quartet No. 1, a work focused on in detail in the previous chapter. My exploration of the workings of displacement and condensation in the musical discourse can be seen to be complemented by, and lay the groundwork for, the discussion that follows. Specifically, I outlined above how the coda supplemented closure through “multiply functioning” so as to draw together both ideational aspects (on the musical surface), and materials not resolved, or brought together, at deeper structural levels. However, I left the recapitulatory moment of return – the thing supplemented by the coda – out of the discussion (this work, like his Symphony No. 5, overwrites a palimpsest of sonata form). I address this omission here. Indeed, as I will show, this moment of return is problematic, deferring closure towards the coda (a closure that is never fully achieved). The opening material – as a returning, intentional object of focus – fails to satisfy, lacking internal cohesion and undercut by the conflicting materials around it. Nonetheless, this moment of return is musically-historically resonant in evoking past legacies of closure.

Ex. 48, Silvestrov: String Quartet No. 1, bars 196-217 (continued on the next page)

196 ord. rit. → s.p. (2) mf

arco → s.p. (2) mp

ord. pizz. rit. arco ord. → s.p. (2) mf

f > pp

197 rit. accel. (2")

arco (6") → s.p. (2) p con sord.

ord. (8") → s.p. (2) con sord. ord. (9") → s.p. (2") mp

ord. → s.p. (2) mf pp

12 Andante ♩ = 66 rit. → s.p. rit.

198 ord. mf pp

sul tasto meno vibr. più vibr. 3

ppp dolcissimo pp

sul tasto meno vibr. più vibr. 3

ppp dolcissimo pp

con sord. ord. v

p

Three central aspects should be outlined as important to the final section (before the coda). Firstly, at bar 198 (fig. 12) a return of original opening material can be heard (although it is altered, and set in opposition to “extraterritorial” material that is played simultaneously). Secondly, a momentary instant of apparent synthesis appears (in bar 217), with earlier material being revised in light of motivic working-out, yet this is a moment undermined by the surrounding harmonic context, as well as by that which appears after it. Thirdly, quartal material – which, as I have shown in the previous chapter, has its own important role in the work – comes forward as an element within the discourse, yet as also disruptive of its closure. These three aspects all promise closure but, in our drawing closer to them, swiftly defer this desire onto other objects.

Harmonic processes reliant on markedly historical conventions play an important role here, and so do discursive materials that take on existence within the work. Objects promising satisfaction are set up in the discourse of the work, peculiar to this work as a constellation of objects, each with their own inscribed resonances and processually developing/developed significances. Owing to this, it is not only with reference to historical paradigms (sonata form as palimpsest, the tonal idiom) that closure is deferred but also – in a modernist sense – through the autonomy of the work and its elements that desire is articulated.

At bar 198, the opening material returns, in the original key of G major (Ex. 48). Notably, this also occurs after a lengthy passage (bars 163-197) emphasising a D in the bass – recalling a dominant function. However, on returning, something is different. In an almost Schubertian manner, instead of an affirmative return, one creeps in *pianississimo*. Indeed, whilst making direct comparisons would be misleading, it may still be noted that there are echoes of Schubert’s last quartet (No. 15, D. 887) in Silvestrov’s. In G-major, a principally tonal centre of Silvestrov’s also, the first movement of Schubert’s quartet includes an understated recapitulatory return, and explores a duality of major and minor modes, marked, of course, by the duality B-natural/B-flat, which is also central to Silvestrov’s. The second movement of the Schubert work also suggests insistent material that sits “outside” the discourse proper, as exemplified in bars 53-55. In Silvestrov’s moment of return, the instrumentation is altered from its expository statement, with the bass G given by the cello to the viola (which is now double stopping).

Ex. 49, Silvestrov: String Quartet No. 1, bars 198-220, reduction

The musical score reduction consists of three staves. The top staff is in treble clef, the middle staff is in treble clef, and the bottom staff is in bass clef. The score is annotated with various musical concepts:

- 198:** Labeled "extraterritorial" with a bracket over the first two notes.
- 201:** A bracket spans from bar 201 to 203.
- 203:** Labeled "extraterritorial" with a bracket over the first two notes.
- 205:** A bracket spans from bar 205 to 206.
- 206:** A bracket spans from bar 206 to 209.
- 209:** Labeled "inclusion" with a large arrow pointing from bar 209 to bar 214.
- 211:** A bracket spans from bar 211 to 214.
- 214:** Labeled "inclusion" with a large arrow pointing from bar 214 to bar 216.
- 216:** Labeled "quartal relationships" with a bracket over the first two notes.
- 217:** Labeled "tritone" with a bracket over the first two notes.
- 218:** Labeled "tritone" with a bracket over the first two notes.
- 219:** Labeled "tritone" with a bracket over the first two notes.
- 220:** Labeled "no 'authentic' resolution" with a bracket over the first two notes.

Other annotations include "extraterritorial" in the bass clef staff at bars 203 and 205, and "quartal relationships" and "tritone" in the top staff at bars 216-219. The score uses various musical notations including notes, rests, and accidentals, with specific intervals and relationships highlighted by brackets and arrows.

Crucially, extraterritorial material remains. The A-flat/B-flat “tone motif”, which dominated the top of the texture (being also its farthest reach) in the previous section (fig. 11-fig. 12, 192-197), remains unsynthesised with its setting. As can be seen from the reduction (Ex. 49, in bars 198-211 in particular), this B-flat extreme – occasionally oscillating with E-flat material – remains outside of the return, its presence being disturbing. Furthermore, E-naturals also appear in this extraterritorial context – recalling the E-natural/E-flat duality, this time within the extraterritorial material itself. (The B-flat appears, as I illustrated in the previous chapter, a “semitone out” from the (major 3rd) B of G major’s primary chord, here present. The presence of the E-natural, I would suggest, gives extra emphasis to the extraterritoriality of the E-flat, which, in this context of neo-Romantic tonality, is not necessarily “outside” to this harmonic context). In addition to this rupturing presence, the returning material, as an object itself, also fails to satisfy the desire for closure. Similarly as with its expository appearance, the I-IV-V movement in the bass prolongs V, finally dissolving in bar 220 onto C (IV) rather than leading to an authentic resolution (shown in the reduction). So, an object’s return – here, that of the opening material – fails to satisfy and, in fact, conflicts with materials that remain outside of it.

The extraterritorial B-flat “tone motif”, hanging above the texture, finds some provisional closure in bar 217, when a B-*natural* (at the same octave) is markedly articulated. The B-flat – as an extreme of register – shifts upwards a semitone to this new limit. Nevertheless, this “inclusion” of the outside into the inside is only provisional, with the tone motif – even its A-flat/B-flat manifestation – again creeping in later (bars 227-230). This occurs before, as shown in the previous chapter, its final incorporation into the harmony, refracted through the lens of the Lydian mode, during the coda, when it finds true *vertical* inclusion in the harmonic background, rather than transitory inclusion into the *linearity* of the voice-leading on the surface. This B-natural also comes at an important moment in the flow of returning opening material, as the third scale degree in a descent from the fifth degree (D, bar 211). It is articulated through a leap upwards differing from the corresponding moment in the opening section. (Bar 217 corresponds with bar 15 of the opening. The first time a leap reaches the a G – this time the leap reaches beyond this to the B-natural.)

Again, satisfaction is only transitory and is incomplete. The D pedal remains under the surface (as shown in the reduction). This prolongation is only articulated further by chromatic voice-leading in the bass which “gravitates” around this centre. Indeed, here something else must be said about the provisionality of desired objects: that the gravitation

towards these provisional centres grants them the status of provisional points that are desired – localised, momentary points of desire which, nonetheless, conflict with the overriding direction towards overall closure in an unproblematic tonic. This conflict helps “prolong” tension such that final satisfaction is only greater (although, in this work this is not supplied unproblematically). Furthermore, the descent from the fifth scale degree (bar 211) continues beyond the provisional synthesis of the B-natural (the third scale degree, bar 217) continuing to and ending on the *second* (A-natural, bar 218), which is left “hanging”.

This second scale degree, the A-natural, becomes the locus – in dream-theoretical terms: a point of affinity and correspondence, a ‘mediating common factor’⁴¹⁷ – through which another idea is turned to, quartal materials and their relationships. This is a point of negotiation, a condensation, a deformation, of materials in light of one another. As illustrated in the reduction, just behind the surface can clearly be heard a series of fourths/fifths in bars 218-220 (compare with the original passage, Ex. 48). This occurs doubly so, in fact, as quartal relationships unfold in two directions: from a central axis of F-sharp appears, in one (increasingly sharp) direction, a quartal sequence (the pitches A, E, B, F-sharp) and, in the other (increasingly flat) direction, another (A-flat, C-sharp, and F-sharp). However, the inclusion of these quartal relationships within the flow of the music only leads to its disruption from within, and the further deference of closure. This quartal chain is broken through the shift of a (compound) tritone in bar 220, to a C, bringing us to the beginning of the coda as discussed in the previous chapter. (This C itself alludes to a proliferation of this earlier quartal motion – C in the cello (bar 220), F in the viola (221), and B-flat in the cello (222).)

...traces of the means of closure (ii.)

As noted above, “musical language” encompasses desires as sublimated within it. Historically, sounding-objects within this language also articulate desires – “cultural” objects connotative of (for example) otherness, femininity, exoticism, and/or eroticism. Flirting with these objects, but ultimately dominating them through their objectification, allows for enjoyment of them whilst, at the same time, protecting subjectivity’s claim to be divested of their inherent danger through elevating desire to – investing it into – the sphere of the aesthetic. (An exceptional example of this can be seen in the visual arts, in painting – the female nude.⁴¹⁸)

⁴¹⁷ FREUD 1999: 226

⁴¹⁸ It is notable also that within this tradition this itself becomes immanently contested in works like Edouard Manet’s *Olympia* (1863-65) in which the nude is not only looked upon, but *looks back* at the

Whilst I would not contend that recent critical musics escape these functions – notions of musical immediacy (as lack, as opposing language’s “presence”), and traces of desires as sublimated into musical language are drawn upon – they often foreground a different treatment of objects and of desire’s relationship with objects. In Schnittke’s String Quartet No. 4 (in aspects of the second movement in particular, see chapter 4), for example, one hears a focus on musical language as mediating closure, on traces of the means of closure. However, this differs from Silvestrov’s treatment of closure discussed above. Whereas in Silvestrov’s quartet it is the *naturalised immediacy* of processes of closing that is of critical focus, in Schnittke’s it is material *mediative* of closure that is taken as an *object* of interpretation.

Connections between desire, knowledge, and interpretation were the focus of Julia Kristeva’s 1982 paper, ‘Psychoanalysis and the Polis’⁴¹⁹. In it, she develops a poststructuralist notion of interpretive “delirium”. Specifically, Kristeva argues that whilst interpretation is often conceived of in such a way as to neutralise the radical and dramatic moments of thought, psychoanalytically-inclined approaches, like those she pursues, explore something different, exceptionally so in cases in which one sees the ‘psychoanalytic decentering of the speaking subject to the very foundations of language.’⁴²⁰ Crucially, Schnittke’s focus on the signification of selfhood, as elevated into musical material – in taking it as something objectified, as an interpretable object – can be seen as paralleling Kristeva’s psychoanalytic decentering. This is a decentering of subjectivity through focusing upon the processes and inherent lacks within signification, on the objectification of aspects of subjectivity as inscribed immanently to musical material. Rather than “interpreting” Schnittke’s quartet, the work is itself seen to perform an “interpretation” that begins from musical objects.

This centres on Schnittke’s treatment of an object, the musical material related metonymically to closure and to the historicity of musical and subjective self-coherence (see chapter 4). Instead of temporal process pushing forwards the closure of the work as an object – a process driven by a desired goal of closure, “putting right” the work through its synthesis – one hears a marker of this now-passed temporal process appearing as a sound-object itself. Lived experience unfolding in time – in its reification as material – becomes an object from which one might begin interpretation.

viewer. ‘While female nudes were traditional artistic subjects, the confrontational gaze of Manet’s model was unusually aggressive’, as Michelle Facos puts it. See FACOS, MICHELLE 2009: *Symbolist Art in Context*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 20.

⁴¹⁹ KRISTEVA 1982

⁴²⁰ KRISTEVA 1982: 78

Kristeva points out that interpretation, in its psychoanalytically-inclined form, has the advantage of

being midway between a classic interpretive attitude – that of providing meaning through the connection of two terms from a stable place and theory – and the questioning of the subjective and theoretical stability of the interpretant which, in the act of interpretation itself, establishes the theory and the interpreter himself as interpretable objects.⁴²¹

Schnittke's quartet performs something similar. Musical language is taken as a site of performing subjective concerns – in which materials and discursive positioning articulate subjective concerns – whilst the material through which these ends are reached itself becomes an interpretable object, as discernible objects in which moments of subjective articulation are their most visible (i.e. in the figures of closure).

The rupturing sounding-objects of Schnittke's quartet (in the second movement) recall figures of closure which – in unproblematic settings and unambiguous contexts – helped satisfy the desire for closure. However, in this work they do not provide this closure. Those aspects of the discourse that would have closed gaps with reference to the system as a whole (into which desire had been sublimated) become themselves seen to be lacking. They become heard as objects distant from the subject, themselves objectified subjectivity as a new object of focus. Rather than the sublimation of desire *into* the musical language – so that, as in the dream, meanings might be negotiated and compromises sought – there is a focus upon the incapacity of the object to articulate the desires for which it historically performed, i.e. closure.

In this sense, and in taking these materials as objects, Schnittke dialectically puts in motion a process of interpretation that Kristeva would characterise as distinctly modern⁴²², albeit now in a musical context. This centres on the dialectical relation of knowing and desiring. The object of knowledge, Kristeva writes, already contains *a lack, an absence* within it; 'it shelters within its very being the nonsignifiable, the nonsymbolized'⁴²³. In what Kristeva describes as 'theory' – but in a critical outlook that I would say is performed in music (and in the arts more widely) – a supposedly unproblematic object is taken as a point of contestation, its own immanent lack brought forward as this object of knowing is confronted.⁴²⁴ In the sense of desire, an object of knowledge – what I characterised above

⁴²¹ KRISTEVA 1982: 81

⁴²² KRISTEVA 1982: 80-81

⁴²³ KRISTEVA 1982: 81

⁴²⁴ In the context of 'theory' (the kind of theory that is now often spelt with a capital 'T'), Kristeva sees this move as a way of challenging established interpretive theories. As examples of 'theory' she notes

as an object of “understanding” – in this dimension is always incomplete. This incompleteness itself suggests a deferring from one object to another, to those to which it sits in relation, as we grapple to ‘know’ it – to bring knowledge and object into synthesis.

The returning, fixed figure of closure, and its later fluidity in mediating other musical materials, accords with a process pursued by Kristeva’s modern interpreter (who ‘avoids the presentness of subjects to themselves and to things’⁴²⁵). In “confronting” this object, its sublimative role, at least its previous sublimative role, is rendered inoperative; it may no-longer articulate desire effectively. As a figure of closure, it no longer performs the closure of gaps within the work and within an unproblematic system and framework of immediacy in which closure is possible. Instead, a gap is shown to exist between the subject and its object, the object through which closure was articulated.

Desire, however, still pulls discourse forward, circling around this fundamental chasm of subject and object. Flowing forward, the work performs a distinctly “modern” interpretation of a musical object. In avoiding the ‘presentness’ of the subject through its object, things appear ‘strange’ and challenge the interpretational framework by which subject and object are related.⁴²⁶ ‘Breaking out of the enclosure of the presentness of meaning’, as Kristeva puts it, ‘the *new* “interpreter” no longer interprets: he speaks, he “associates” because there is no longer an object to interpret; there is, instead, the setting off of semantic, logical, phantasmatic, and indeterminable sequences.’⁴²⁷ What was known – the object of “understanding” – becomes the beginning for a play, development, and deformation of musical signifiers. In such a treatment of an object one sees a dialectic between its capacities as an object of knowledge (to be known, as well as for facilitating knowing) and as an object of desire (as articulating desire, as well as itself lacking).

I will end this section by briefly mentioning the two works with which it opened – Jukka Tiensuu’s *Arsenic and Old Lace*, for microtonally tuned harpsichord and string quartet, and Wolfgang Rihm’s String Quartet No. 10. In both, the role desire plays entails relationships between past, present, and future. Looking backwards to the source, the object of desire/knowledge, in its revising, becomes *retrospectively* changed. Remembering it in light of an ever-changing present, and forwards toward potential futures, a multiplicity

Marx’s *revolution* and Freud’s *cure*. These are attempts to break through a known conception of the object: ‘Whatever *object* one selects (a patient’s discourse, a literary or journalistic text, or certain sociopolitical behavior), its interpretation reaches its full power, so as to tip the object toward the *unknown* of the interpretive theory or, more simply, toward the theory’s *intentions*, only when the interpreter *confronts* the interpretable object’ (KRISTEVA 1982: 79-80).

⁴²⁵ KRISTEVA 1982: 80

⁴²⁶ KRISTEVA 1982: 80

⁴²⁷ KRISTEVA 1982: 80-81, emphasis in original

of *prospective* directions, absences and gaps newly open and through a proliferation of new discursive affinities/differences.

In Tiensuu's work, the improvisatory tone of the harpsichord's part draws on the instrument's past, allusively expanding out cadenza-like figures and ornamental materials. This leads to the negotiation of materials in the present, pointing prospectively in future directions. At the same time, these ideas undergo retrospective change, being recontextualised, their significance becoming transformed. We hear prescience in elements of the past.

In Rihm's quartet (the central movement), the use of the material of *La Follia* is noteworthy regarding desire and its retrospective/prospective dimensions. Whilst markedly of the past, this "found object" is actually an object pursued, only slowly becoming visible and articulated clearly. Consequently, the found object *becomes a "sought" object*; it is "found" only in the sense of a forward-driven seeking out. A distinct object – the *La Follia* model – slowly becomes apparent. Returning materials, heard in new settings, take on new significances as aspects or versions of this object, becoming retrospectively reinterpreted. 'Desire, the discourse of desire, moves towards its object through a connection, by displacement and deformation'⁴²⁸, as Kristeva puts it. But, in seeking out this object, we also hear desire pushing forwards, towards a prospective goal.

Retrospective and prospective here operate in dialectic with each other. It is only later, once the object of desire has become apparent, that we become aware that earlier versions, inadequate facsimiles standing in for it, were lacking. It seems the case that in this instance, lack – that which pushes forwards desiring through discourse – only retrospectively becomes audible. However, on the dialectical other hand, the standpoint from which this retrospective judgement may be made is only available through following the prospective line traced following *an absence of which we were originally unaware*.

Regarding desire, musical objects can be said to be *of the past* in two senses: firstly, that they have inscribed into them objectified past desires; and, secondly, that the object might stand in (metonymically) for some aspect of the past, helping to articulate some desire in the present, and of the future, although never completely. In this sense, past and future can be said to be wrapped-up in the present, in the musical objects presently perceived, echoing what Hegel has referred to as "the immense privilege of the present"⁴²⁹. Hence, the confrontation of musical objects in the present also concerns a retrospective rereading of subjectivities of the past, objectified into these materials. Prospectively, it might also articulate, through these materials, desires that propel experience forwards,

⁴²⁸ KRISTEVA 1982: 82

⁴²⁹ Hegel cited in JAMESON 2010: 479

which defers the experience of objects from one to the next, through a process of continual displacement, deformation, and development.

ALTERNATIVE STRATEGIES: NEGATING DESIRE IN
FELDMAN'S STRING QUARTET NO. 2

Eventlessness has no posts to drape duration on.

– John Steinbeck, *East of Eden*⁴³⁰

The music seems to float, doesn't seem to go in any direction, one doesn't know how it's made, there doesn't seem to be any type of dialectic, going alongside it, explaining it. They [the audience] are not told how to listen, that is the problem. Most music listens for the public.

– Morton Feldman⁴³¹

Morton Feldman's String Quartet No. 2 (1983) opens up and meditates upon fragments of musical material, distilling them so as to evacuate them of desire to unfold or move forward. This is taken to an extreme, culminating in a work assembling (as opposed to developing) musical fragments over a meditative five and a half hours. As objects, these fragments of past material are taken as the fixed (although minutely varying) focal points of each musical section. But, as explored above, desire concerns not only its immediate object but how objects unfold in discourse – how focus defers from one to the next, how closure is found, how they “should” relate, and so on. In Feldman's quartet, there is no real formal development and no struggle for the affirmation of closure (*affirmation through closure*). In this sense, objects – or the fragmented moments of what is inherited – stand divided from a processual, desiring, teleological flow, neither articulating this nor participating in it. The idea that fragments of past materials are divided from their “normative” functions (the context in which they “should” participate/articulate) could be said of the works of many other composers also – Stravinsky would be an excellent example in that he also created static fields of musical material. However, Stravinsky's neo-classicist fragments, unlike Feldman's, make explicit their rootedness in the past, that they

⁴³⁰ STEINBECK, JOHN 2002 [orig. 1952], *East of Eden* (Steinbeck Centennial Edition), London: Penguin Books, 54

⁴³¹ Morton Feldman in FELDMAN, MORTON & BROWN, EARLE & METZGER, HEINZ-KLAUS [online]: ‘Morton Feldman, Earle Brown, Heinz-Klaus Metzger in Discussion.’ (1972) [website: <http://www.cnvill.net/mfmetzger.htm>, accessed 16th October, 2012]. The transcript of the discussion was taken from a recording released in the four LP set ‘Music Before Revolution’ (EMI Electrola, 1C 16528954/957, 1972).

can be heard through the past, whereas Feldman's obscure the role of this mediation, suggesting that the sounds are experienced for their own (nonetheless historically mediated) qualities. I argue this should be interpreted as a peculiar treatment of temporality and desire, insofar as these dimensions call forth and immanently articulate subjectivity experienced within the music.

It has been argued above that desire moves through the dialectics immanent to a work as this responds fluidly to the needs of what is outside the work. It flows through the gaps of non-identity, of "absences" taken into musical material (and always present in signification and articulation through objects). It has also been noted that desire need not be seen as counterpoised to critical thought, and so may play a role in it, in shaping the subject's relationships with its object. Instead of seeing desire as tending towards immediate and unreflective gratification, this is to see it as in dialectic with reified knowledge, and to recognise this relationship as possessing critical potential.

There are, however, critical musical responses to the sociality of desires that do not encircle lack as their central – if absent – entity. Feldman's String Quartet No. 2 typifies such a response. Such artworks step outside of the established dialectical frameworks of affirmation and negation, object and subject, and identity and non-identity. This is done through the act of shutting down the interplay of identity and non-identity: without reference to identity, there is no façade which may come to crumble and through whose cracks negativity may flow; without syntax and a sense of the interrelation of parts, a field of difference cannot form, and so identity cannot find affirmed articulation; without an imagined object of desire (the comportment of some symbolic articulation in the work – "Woman", "Other", "subjective struggle" – or the enunciation of alterity), there is neither purpose nor, more problematically for musical artworks, *purposiveness*, the sense of motion, direction, or chase – and as such no possibility of formally developing play around some veiled set of tensions at its core.

It will be argued that Feldman's String Quartet No. 2 offers an alternative strategy to the evocation of desire and, as implicit within this, the deference through desire of developmental musical processes. It has already been suggested that desire works through symbolically articulating underlying forces. This quartet, as we will see, is written against the grain of established modes of articulating musical forms. The celebrated failure of syntactic articulation is symbolised by Feldman's distinction between "composition" and "assemblage", the latter of which he designates this work to be:

...the distinction between constructing a "composition" and that of assemblage, which is more what this quartet is about. A "composition" for

me forms sentence structures within a beginning, middle, and end. Very much the way Picasso uses a rectangle as a ready-made protagonist. With assemblage there is no continuity of fitting the parts together as words in a sentence of paragraph.⁴³²

This principle of assemblage is at play in Ex. 50, in which elements of material, often single bars, repeat with minor alterations. Larger, static ‘fields’ of material result from the assemblages of these elements, and these fields appear beside one another – assemblages in a larger sense – as static states without a beginning, middle, or end. Like Heinz Knobeloch’s characterisation of another of Feldman’s late works, *Neither* (1977), instead of an unfolding, large-scale form, something happens more akin to turning the pages of a diary.⁴³³

Ex. 50, Feldman: String Quartet No. 2, page 53, second system

2. Streichquartett | für Streichquartett © Copyright 1983 by Universal Edition (London) Ltd., London/UE 17650

There are dialectical forces at work in this quartet even if these are not immanent to the musical form; through the intense focus on the moment – in its geometrical expansion, on being over becoming – becoming results. This paradox results from the treatment of being. Being is focused upon yet it is not affirmed (as it is in unreflective thought). Rather, the quiet insistence on passivity suggests that the being *becomes* dialectically itself through our changing perceptions of it, often through stifled repetition drawing attention to previously imperceptible nuances in the material. Instead of being through becoming (as in, say, the Beethoven-Hegelian dialectic), becoming is experienced through being. This is a consequence of the work divesting itself of driving forces of

⁴³² FELDMAN, MORTON 2000: *Give My Regards to Eighth Street: Collected Writings of Morton Feldman*, New York: Exact Change, 196

⁴³³ Heinz Knobeloch cited in JOHNSON, JULIAN 2006: “‘Elliptical Geometry of Utopia’”: *New Music since Adorno* in *Apparitions: New Perspectives on Adorno and Twentieth-Century Music* (ed. Berthold Hoeckner), Oxon: Routledge, 77

desire, so that all is left is *drifting* perception – the being of the works’ surface to be perceived. A dialectic opens up as a consequence of this focus on the role of the *perception* of being, rather than *being* as antecedent to the ‘to be’ of its being perceived. There is a point of correspondence here between Feldman’s aesthetic and Adorno’s thinking. Daniel Chua has recently characterised Adorno’s dialectics as ‘drifting’, arguing that that the immanence of Adorno’s critique highlights that ‘there is no vantage point from which to philosophize’, and that ‘to drift is to lose all bearings’, a move explored in critical music⁴³⁴. Put in Feldman’s terms, the ‘drifting’ perception elicited by his music can be contrasted with perception of music which, to repeat Feldman’s words, ‘listens for the public’, that tells them how to hear it. Furthermore, in eschewing a developed ‘Whole’, or moment of desired-for arrival, Feldman grants no privileged position or vantage point at which perception might become concretised, grasped, or “understood”.

Desire, Temporality

Desire’s relation to temporality is important here, as is temporality’s with the philosophical-historical context surrounding the work. Desire, as unfolding affirmatively via an established, teleological route or, alternatively, exploring the negativity of lack, of course takes place in time. This much is clear at least. My hope here is to focus upon desire, temporality, and Feldman’s String Quartet No. 2 – and in this triangulation locate the relationships between them as these are significant to the experience of the present as shaped by the past. This is to elucidate shifting conceptions of time and desire as these relate to each other and shape subjective experience.

I have argued that desire can work affirmatively in circling around certain veiled ideological tensions which are desired to be reconciled (often through synthesis immanent to musical form). The teleology of struggle, the “overcoming” and mastering of social fears, provides an example of this – for instance, putting the second subject right in the context of the first, the feminine in heteronormative light of the masculine, as seen in classic sonata form. This conception of teleology is caught up in conceptions of time. As Karol Berger has shown, as musical modernity developed, a cyclical conception of time – both in music and in culture more widely – started to heed to a linear, directed model of time (“time’s arrow”)⁴³⁵. Berger illustrates that this directedness can be observed in musical forms as these are situated socio-historically. The linearity of the temporal dimension and the teleology of overcoming can here be seen to be in congruence. This could have much

⁴³⁴ DANIEL K CHUA 2006: ‘Drifting: The Dialectics of Adorno’s *Philosophy of New Music*’ in *Apparitions: New Perspectives on Adorno and Twentieth-Century Music* (ed. Berthold Hoeckner), Oxon: Routledge, 2

⁴³⁵ BERGER, KAROL 2005: ‘Time’s Arrow and the Advent of Musical Modernity’ in *Music and the Aesthetics of Modernity* (eds. Karol Berger & Anthony Newcomb), London: Harvard University Press, 18-19

to do with the classical alignment of time and interiority (as opposed to space with exteriority) that, as Fredric Jameson puts it, ‘time governs the realm of interiority, in which both subjectivity and logic, the private and the epistemological, self-consciousness and desire, are to be found.’⁴³⁶ Following this logic, a mastery through *struggle in the temporal unfolding* of the work can be seen as the mastery through *struggle of the interior* world of the autonomous bourgeois subject (i.e. Beethoven’s “Heroic” style). The dialectical unfolding of the struggle for affirmation in time and the alignment of this temporal development with subjective interiority⁴³⁷ both suggest that the treatment of temporality may come to impact upon the treatment of subjectivity and self in music (insofar as this is temporally articulated).

Feldman’s rejection of a temporally disclosing logic suggests that the quartet disinvites a temporal hearing pertaining to subjective interiority. Instead, in the sense of exteriority, the work becomes a space within which subjectivity may become ensconced, listening “outwards” around it. This begs that we ask how a late modern experience of temporality is responded to musically in this work, as well as what relation this holds to teleology, directedness (and “purposiveness”), and, as such, to desire. Indeed, it should be noted that Jameson goes on to suggest that the pairing of time with interiority and space with exteriority is problematic; ‘such descriptions are clearly predicated on the operative dualism, the alleged historical existence, of the two alternatives’.⁴³⁸ This problematic is – in Feldman’s terms, the dialectics of spatiality and temporality, objects and an experiencing subject – the substance of musical critique in the Second Quartet.

Fredric Jameson has diagnosed late capitalism’s treatment of time as a reduction of experience to bodily immediacy in the moment, an ‘End of Temporality’.

This situation has been characterized as a dramatic and alarming shrinkage of existential time and the reduction to a present that hardly qualifies as such any longer, given the virtual effacement of that past and future that can alone define a present in the first place.⁴³⁹

⁴³⁶ JAMESON 2003: 697

⁴³⁷ For a discussion of space and time as these relate to objective exteriority and subjective interiority in Beethoven’s music see CHUA 2011, particularly 346-348. Indeed, Chua also argues that, throughout the Enlightenment, there is a move towards inwards towards the self, with truths coming to be located in selfhood: ‘the [pre-Enlightenment] music of the spheres, under the critical gaze of Enlightenment reason, collapsed into the subject and became the Song of the Self, shifting the meaning of music from the universe to the ego – or rather, the self became a singing cosmos’ (343-344). He later argues that this interiorisation of the self through music still plays a role in contemporary society: ‘Modernity, even in its postmodern form, has never quite outlived the spaces of the Romantic song and continues to shape who we are’ (345).

⁴³⁸ JAMESON 2003: 697

⁴³⁹ JAMESON 2003: 708

Feldman's Second Quartet, as with much of Feldman's music, explores 'the moment'. But this is very different from the Jameson's postmodern moment. In fact, the former can be seen as a reaction to the experiential-temporal conditions of the latter.

What allows Feldman to achieve this is a mimesis of the surface, whilst also taking another step. By surface, I mean traces of past musical material as abstract form devoid of their inherited content, but also as a kind of musical analogue to the "flatness" Clement Greenberg famously identified in modernist painting, in his essay 'Modernist Painting'⁴⁴⁰. This mimesis takes the form of an intense focus on traces of material – could-almost-be-tonal pitches collections, for example, or fragments of repeating motivic material. The additional step is one of "unfixing" these mimetic traces from their established patterns of composition and hearing; 'only by "unfixing" the elements traditionally used to construct a piece of music could the sounds exist in themselves – not as symbols, or memories which were memories of other music to begin with', said Feldman in his essay on musical systems and indeterminacy⁴⁴¹.

Feldman's strategy is not a postmodern reduction of experience to the moment (like that diagnosed by Jameson above in contemporary society in general), but quite the opposite, a (five and a half hour) meditation on the postmodern reduction of experience to the moment. The kind of experiential context found in the "throwaway" society of late-capitalism – where the temporariness of consumer products seems itself to become an atemporal truth, a way things are, will be, and should be – is symbolically resisted in the creation of a sonic space antithetical to this type of thinking, one that eschews the dominance of administered experience through an unfixing of its objective, naturalised elements from their standardised arrangement. Indeed, this is a situation which itself makes visible the link between the experience of temporality and desire. Works like the Second Quartet, provide a space of refuge, a different timeframe – a different framing of time – outside of the prevailing temporal conditions of that hard-and-fast capitalism of 1980s New York. A different type of listening is asked for within this frame. It is in this spirit that Heinz-Klaus Metzger, in discussion with the composer, told the Feldman that

⁴⁴⁰ However, it is also worth noting that Greenberg identified this characteristic, or at least its possible limit, as unique to painting – 'It was the stressing... of the ineluctable flatness of the surface that remained most fundamental in the processes by which pictorial art criticized and defined itself under Modernism. Flatness alone was unique and exclusive to that art. The enclosing shape of the support was a limiting condition, or norm, that was shared with the art of the theater; color was a norm or means shared sculpture as well as the theater. Flatness, two-dimensionality, was the only condition painting shared with no other art, and so Modernist painting oriented itself to flatness as it did to nothing else.' GREENBERG, CLEMENT 2003: 'Modernist Painting' [orig. 1960, this version slightly edited from the original version and then published in 1965] in *Art in Theory 1900-2000: An Anthology of Changing Ideas* (eds. Charles Harrison & Paul Wood), Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

⁴⁴¹ FELDMAN 2000: 35, in the essay 'Predeterminate/Indeterminate' [orig. 1965].

‘...there is a contradiction between your music and the world in which we live. The world is much louder.’⁴⁴²

Ex. 51, Feldman: String Quartet No. 2, page 60, beginning of the second system

2. Streichquartett | für Streichquartett © Copyright 1983 by Universal Edition (London) Ltd., London/UE 17650

Mimesis of the surface comes through in the ‘degrees of stasis’ explored; unfixed elements are given a space and time in which to speak (although, given their “unfixing” from codified ways of hearing, we cannot be sure what they are saying). Writing two years before this quartet, in his essay on ‘Crippled Symmetry’, Feldman noted that he discovered this idea of stasis through painting. (This point also relates to the idea of “flatness”; stasis being in time, flatness being in space, but both mutually conducive in the aesthetic experience they can together bring about.)

Stasis, as it is utilized in painting, is not traditionally part of the apparatus of music. Music can achieve aspects of immobility, or the illusion of it: the Magritte-like world Satie evokes, or the “floating sculpture” of Varèse. The degrees of stasis, found in Rothko or a Guston, were perhaps the most significant elements that I brought to my music from painting.⁴⁴³

What impact does Feldman’s mimesis of the surface, the exploring of static states, and the intense focus upon “unfixed” musical elements, have on the idea of subjectivity in music in general and the dialectics of experience in particular? The short answer is that these aspects help to evacuate Feldman’s musical materials of conventionalised significance, both in terms of paradigms and their deviations, as well as how they (“should”) fit together syntagmatically. A result is that, unlike the processual unfolding of works that articulate themselves around some (albeit illusive) teleological objective, desire is not

⁴⁴² FELDMAN, BROWN, & EARLE [online]

⁴⁴³ FELDMAN 2000: 149, in the essay ‘Crippled Symmetry’ [orig. 1981]

evoked, neither in directed musical motion nor through a dialectical struggle for affirmation.

Ex. 51 shows one instance when this unfixing of elements and focus on the surface is explored in explicitly temporal terms. In the most part, the same time signatures appear across all four instruments simultaneously, as they do conventionally. However, as this example illustrates, time is, at some times, conceived differently. Within this static field, each instrument takes its own time signature, though, given that each takes varying combinations of the *same* four time signatures, on completing the field they reconvene into a mutually held common time (a silent two-two bar). (A similar field, another assemblage of time signatures then follows this.) Note that in the score, despite the bars being of differing lengths, the spacing of the bar lines (and the notes within them) on the page do not reflect the sonic result produced, in which the players do not begin and end their bars at the same time. A sense of temporal depth in the score is lost as each bar, in each instrumental part, signifies a framing of time that is removed from the temporal flow at large. The “5/8” does not frame the temporal flow but rather exists in the space of this larger assemblage, this static field. Furthermore, in a “painterly” sense⁴⁴⁴, the score becomes a surface written on, a surface on which temporal elements are unfixed and then distributed, rather than developed so as to unfold temporally.⁴⁴⁵

With this focus on the static and unfixed surface the desire for some deeper goal is evaded. This is reflected in the non-developmental character of the quartet, in the static character of material which steps outside of articulating moments as Parts of a larger unfolding Whole – something which can be readily observed in there being no formal “opening” or “closing”. This can be formulated in terms of desire as discussed above. A subject which desires, in its dialectical dimension, requires an ‘Other’ by which desire, and subjectivity flowing through this, articulates itself. In the terms I have outlined above, this could be an Other both in terms of an object (e.g. “Woman”) or objectivity (e.g. “struggle” as immanent to music’s formal logic⁴⁴⁶), with the two dimensions articulating each other. Indeed, this other need not be specific – it is rather to say that the dialectics of perception require subject and object. Subject and object in this sense are in interrelation, as

⁴⁴⁴ This harks back to Adorno’s essay ‘On Some Relationships Between Music and Painting’, which is discussed in chapter 1.

⁴⁴⁵ For an excellent discussion of connections between Feldman’s music and the painting of Jasper Johns, see LAWS, CATHERINE 2009: ‘Feldman – Beckett – Johns: Patterning, Memory and Subjectivity’ in *The Modernist Legacy: Essays on New Music* (ed. Björn Heile), Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Ltd

⁴⁴⁶ On this point, see McClary’s discussion of the dialectic of individual and group in the second movement of Mozart’s Piano Concerto in G, K. 453 (MCCLARY, SUSAN 1986: ‘A Musical Dialectic from the Enlightenment: Mozart’s “Piano Concert in G Major, K. 453”, Movement 2’ in *Cultural Critique*, No. 4 (pp. 129-169), see in particular page 155).

subjectivity relies on Otherness to negate and hence affirm itself (Hegel prominently argued this). Philip Kain summarises these aspects of desire in writing that

when I say, “I want that object”, the emphasis is on the “I want”, not on the object. My desire is what is important; the object is a means to its satisfaction. The object is subordinate, negative. The object is nothing but an object-of-my-desire, an object-of-my-self-consciousness.⁴⁴⁷

Desire requires the Otherness of the object in order to function; ‘desire desires the existence of the other as much as its negation’.⁴⁴⁸

However, this seems at odds with Feldman’s music, where sitting in the moment dissolves the subject and object’s unfolding in mutual relation, with the object of experience removed from articulation via the/an Other. Feldman’s Second Quartet lacks the dialectics of desire as functioning around Otherness. In being static, becoming through musical motion is avoided, something echoed in the work’s exploration of assemblages rather than development through musical form. Through sitting on the surface, gaps showing through are covered up and left unexploited. By unfixing objects from their historical connotations and resonances, memory does not open up, with one thought leading to the next, this itself then deferring towards others.

To recapitulate, Feldman explores the surface mimesis of musical materials and sound production whilst he divests them of their established affective contents. This divesting of content takes various forms, which I have surveyed above: there is no teleological drive, whereby there is something presented as to become *affirmed through overcoming* (a function of dialectics of Otherness). This comes through not only in the degrees of stasis Feldman presents but also, and connected with this, in the fact that assemblages of unfixed surface forms are favoured over unfolding formal development and the shaping of musical content.

The articulation of subjectivity – in its dialectical relationship to affirmation and negation – is thus problematised. From a Hegelian standpoint it could be said that without “Otherness” there is no articulation of subjectivity, there is no *becoming* of it. It seems that nothing can be said of subjectivity, it finding no affirmed articulation through musical language. How do we go beyond this impasse? My answer to this would be to say that we need to modify the terms at play in the dialectic, shifting focus away from the *object* of perception, towards the *perception* of the object (without succumbing to unreflexive phenomenology).

⁴⁴⁷ KAIN 2005: 45

⁴⁴⁸ KAIN 2005: 46

Perception over Object

The interrelation of past and present in this quartet is a curious one. Past musical materials and techniques of instrumental production sit far away from their temporal articulation in the experiential present. By this I mean that the listener is placed in the moment whilst, as part of an assemblage rather than form, this moment itself averts taking Part in a larger unfolding contextual Whole. Objects, *being* from the past, are taken into the work, whilst affirmative modes of *becoming* are rejected; the moment is ‘there’, for us to step into, but this moment itself eschews embeddedness within a temporal flow affirmatively becoming through formal process.

This is not to say that becoming plays no role in the experience of the work as, dialectically, the contrary is also true – becoming is central, rather than the work simply “being there” outside of experience set in the interrelation between past and present. In this sense, *perception* itself becomes the object of focus. The mimesis of surface itself leads to a different type of becoming from one which finds affirmation as it is articulated determinately, through Otherness (as object or in the naturalised, immediate dimension of music). “Unfixed” elements, in their shifting repetition (in their ‘crippled symmetry’), are *fixated* upon. An exemplary instance of paradoxical fixation through unfixing, appears in a passage from page 21 of the score (see Ex. 52). In fact, this cannot really be even called a “passage”; passages, to evoke the architectural metaphors of chapter 1, take us from one place to another and this material, as non-developmental and non-teleological, does not take us anywhere. Here, the oscillation between two pitches is minutely varied timbrally through being doubling by and passed between the different players, or by briefly appearing *ponticello*, always requiring the intensely focused listening demanded by a quintuple-*piano* dynamic. The elemental materials of the work – the objects brought into its assemblages – are repeated and altered, standing apart from one another within their own static fields. Little (if any) emphasis is placed on development across the syntagmatic plane between these fields. This surface focus, in taking objects outside of established affective contexts or formally developmental relations, means that objects are divided from inherited “objective” contexts.

Despite the lack of dialectical development of material, and the emphasis on being, I suggest that this leads to experiential implications that can be understood dialectically. In *being* repeated, and in asserting their *being* in this act, focus *becomes* fixated upon the elemental materials. Rather than Jameson's diagnosis of postmodernism's reduction of experience *to* the moment, Feldman expands experience *from* the moment. Through the intensity of the focus on being, being *becomes* a starting point for musical experience. This can be contrasted with becoming into being, where, through the negation of Otherness, being is *to be* affirmed as necessary goal as this unfolds temporally. Thus, through an emphasis on perception itself, being is not pursued through becoming, but becoming through being; we are asked to focus intently on being, such that, through intense perception, being's certainty in-itself dissipates.

As noted in the discussion of Feldman's String Quartet No. 2, the time/space duality has, historically, coincided with a duality of subjective interiority and objective exteriority. This might be problematised in critical works like Feldman's. If Part II underlined issues of the psychical world of the subject, Part I emphasised music's role in shaping the "exterior" world of nature and culture. These worlds mediate one another, of course, and do so musically. In critical music, the means by which one might become seen to be immanently shaped by the other becomes reformulated. Critical musical works provide spaces (temporalities) in which the transgression and intersection of experiencing subjectivities and the materialities of the world become audible.

It is in the terms of the mind/body dialectic, as this has been a philosophically-historically significant legacy, that this issue is of focus in Part III. The canon of musical works and the habits prescribed pedagogically discipline not only a "body of knowledge" that is kept "in mind", reified conceptually, but also one that inscribes the body *with* knowledge, reified non-conceptualised practices and performativities. Indeed, this is a body that is always already inscribed, rather than existing as a blank slate "prior to" its becoming culturally, philosophically, and musically significant.

III) Bodies of Knowledge: the Piano



– Rebecca Horn, *Concert for Anarchy* (1990)⁴⁴⁹

How do we reconceive the body no longer as a passive medium or instrument awaiting the enlivening capacity of a distinctly immaterial will?

– Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble*⁴⁵⁰

⁴⁴⁹ [website: http://www.tate.org.uk/collection/T/T07/T07517_9.jpg, accessed 14th April, 2011] © DACS, 2002

⁴⁵⁰ BUTLER, JUDITH 2007 [orig. 1990]: *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, London: Routledge, 12

7. Putting the Piano “Centre Stage”: Lachenmann’s *Serynade*

Pianos and Bodies as Inherited Musical Materials

Performance techniques, musical instruments, and performing spaces are also shrines to memory, as much and often more so than musical works in themselves.

– Luciano Berio⁴⁵¹

A seemingly simple question: what is the Piano? The answer to this question has an obvious physical component – it is an object that can be felt, touched, played. However, “physicality” in this answer does not stop purely at delineating the piano’s physical boundaries. The piano is not simply a physical entity – eighty-eight keys and a lid – but everything that comes with and around this. These are the dimensions which shape our relationship to it; the way it is “meant” to be played, the canonic tradition that stands behind it as repertoire, and the normative expressive gestures that are “input” by the player and “output” sonically by the instrument. Hence, the piano does not exist merely as a lifeless piece of technology (although this is a dimension of it), it also exists in habit, in the fingers of pianists whose bodily relationships with their instruments are mediated historically and inscribed into the instrument.

Lachenmann’s *Serynade*⁴⁵² brings this idea to the fore through reshaping these relations, consequently altering embodied relationships with the piano.⁴⁵³ In *Serynade*, the place of the piano and the way in which it is played become central to expression in the work. Put another way, the piano is itself approached as a point of contention. Unlike in a classical piano sonata (for example), where the piano is a *medium* for the expression of meaning, in *Serynade* the medium itself becomes an object of focus. In doing this, Lachenmann pushes and pulls between the inherited idea of the piano as a medium for

⁴⁵¹ BERIO 2006: 62

⁴⁵² A note on the title of the work: The alteration of the word ‘serenade’ to include a ‘y’ is for the dedicatee of the work, the composer’s wife, the pianist Yukiko Sugawara. See, for a discussion of the concept of the serenade and its pertinence to this work, SERVICE, TOM & HODGES, NICHOLAS 2005: ‘Expressivity and Critique in Lachenmann’s *Serynade*: Nicholas Hodges in Conversation with Tom Service’ in *Contemporary Music Review*, Vol. 24, Issue 1 (pp. 77-88).

⁴⁵³ For reflections on the technical aspects of performing *Serynade*, see PACE, IAN 2005: ‘Lachenmann’s *Serynade* – Issues for Performer and Listener’ in *Contemporary Music Review*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (pp. 101-112)

expression and a present in which the medium of expression is itself rendered visible. The piano is explored as an inherited instrumental technology, though one now open to new experiential possibilities through the inherent openness of performance, that space in which one locates the relationships between players and instruments. This incorporates questions of pedagogy, with pedagogy representing the institutionalisation of the skills and capacities of operating the instrument. This means that one's bodily relation to the instrument's operation in the past – as historically habitualised – becomes something to be explored in the present. Through modifications within this space of pedagogical technique, of established ways of playing and hearing the piano, the relation of the body to music is itself modified.

In recent years great emphasis has been put on the body as important to the creation and experiencing of meaning. To musicians and musicologists it has been of interest in particular as either a biological fact or as a site of identity politics. This means that this debate is generally set within the fields of empirical science⁴⁵⁴ or cultural theory⁴⁵⁵. This is not the course to be followed here; neither neuroscientific nor physiological methodologies will be drawn on in my discussion of the musical body. Instead, I hope to focus on the often forgotten aspect of studies of the body: that, as we deal with music, the question of the musical body is, in addition to being one of hard science, a question of aesthetics and philosophy. Nor will I focus on the body as something explicitly political (as seen in cultural theory or feminism, where the body may be taken as a site of identity)⁴⁵⁶. The focus here is one of incorporating the body into musico-historical discussions, one here centred on a late modernist work that itself calls into play (historically resonant) bodies. *Serynade*, through problematising the habituated body of the past, explores the dialectics of embodied phenomenology in the present. This is not to talk of the effect of music *on* the body (in the scientific sense) or on body-image (in the cultural-theoretical sense); instead I want to explore some directions for a *musicology of the body* brought into critical focus in Lachenmann's *Serynade*.

But whose body is this? This question has general and specific answers. Firstly, we can talk about “the body” in general – that our understanding of it and experience through

⁴⁵⁴ Neuroscientific and cognitive psychological methods have been of increasing interest to many musicologists (see DELIÈGE & DAVIDSON (eds.) 2011).

⁴⁵⁵ For example, SHEPHERD & WICKE 1997, William Echard's (2006a) 'Sensible Virtual Selves: Bodies, Instruments, and the Becoming-Concrete of Music' (in *Contemporary Music Review*. Vol. 25, No. 1/2 (pp. 7-16)). The body is also been introduced in much Lacanian-influenced musicology as a 'pre-linguistic' realm of experience, as in DAME 1998. Feminist work has also sought to understand the role of the body, and not uncritically so (see CUSICK, SUZANNE 1994: 'Feminist Theory, Music Theory, and the Mind/Body Problem' in *Perspectives of New Music*, Vol. 32, No. 1, (pp. 8-27)).

⁴⁵⁶ In the next chapter, identity politics begin to creep in as significant to the conceptualisation of bodies, and the roles of bodies as conceived of distinctly from “minds”.

it are things shaped by history. Secondly, we may discuss the body by distinguishing two particulars: (1.) the musical performer’s body in-so-far as they act with and speak through their instruments, and (2.) the audience’s experience of music as visceral, being felt with immediacy, of music’s *embodying* of meaning and movement. Indeed, these particular bodies (of performer and of audience) and this rather more “general” understanding of bodily experience will be shown to be interlinked; to separate performer and audience too rigidly would be to deny that they meet within a socialised and intersubjective space. Embodiment is more than just experience of a body to be delineated (“music’s effect *on* the body”); it is perception *through* the body and the collapse of a clear mind-body distinction in musical experience.

There are two ready criticisms of my sketch of musical bodies above: firstly, that due to today’s plural environment no longer can the idea of *a* unitary body be discussed – there is no ‘we’ whose body is to be modified; secondly, that the embodying of meaning and movement immanent to music is distinctly metaphorical, or imaginary, as contrasted with the “real” bodily relations found between player and instrument. Regarding the first critical point it should be said that a plural, decentred world does not mean that subjectivities are free from mediation and history. As I argue in earlier chapters, provisional centres might still be evoked, foregrounded as philosophical-historical points of significance. *Serynade* builds itself both upon and in response to a musical past, in a past rooted in the Western art music tradition – specifically, in the conventionalised ways of playing, hearing, and understanding piano music. I do not claim that *Serynade* is the expression of a single, unitary body. Instead, it articulates a critical tension between historically inherited, conventionalised embodied meanings, and contemporary settings in which normativity and conventions are themselves taken as problematic in the production of meaning.

Ex. 53, Lachenmann: *Serynade*, bars 41-42, ‘hemidemisemiquaver figure’

(Sost. ~~And.~~)

(c) 2002 by Breitkopf & Härtel, Wiesbaden

On the second point – that there is a difference between the “real” embodied relationships of player and instrument and the “imagined” embodied relationships immanent to the music – it should be said that there *is* a difference. However, and this must be underlined, this difference is relative not absolute. It is the “immediate” perceptibility of both – to those familiar with Western art music, as this is dialectically related to past traditions – that is the quality I focus upon here. To cite a ready example from *Serynade*, in the context of familiarity, the hemidemisemiquaver figure (Ex. 53) suggests a “downward” trajectory, a kind of movement that is immediately gestural. Indeed, as Patrick McCreless notes in his study of gesture, prototype gestures that developed in the Romantic piano repertoire still play out affectively in much modernist piano music. McCreless’s example of such a gesture was the ascent to a peak followed a quick descent to lowest notes of the piano before ‘bouncing’ upwards to a chord above them. This same gestural scheme forms the basis of the second of Pierre Boulez’s *douze notations* (1985)⁴⁵⁷. These kinds of gestures, I would contend, still play their role in much recent critical music. As Mine Doğantan-Dack puts it, ‘In the Western classical tradition, music needs to be understood as constituted both by abstract structures and performance movements, both by the score and by its performances... the abstract and the concrete are in continual interaction.’⁴⁵⁸ Lachenmann, in a musical-critical context, continues and brings forth this still-present legacy of interaction. The pertinent question seems to be: what is the nature of this “immediacy” that cuts across the “real” and the “imagined”? Indeed, this also regards the character of “immediacy” as itself perceived “bodily”, as contrasting with the “abstract” quality of the “mind” (as these distinctions have been philosophical-historically inherited).

The idea that bodily immediacy cuts across a clear distinction between the inside and outside of the work – between formal connections “within” the work and historical connections “beyond” it – can also be illustrated with a more general example, from topic theory. As Kofi Agawu illustrated in *Playing With Signs*, external meanings and internal connections draw upon and develop one another⁴⁵⁹. Developing this idea, it could be said

⁴⁵⁷ MCCRELESS, PATRICK 2006: ‘Anatomy of a Gesture: From Davidovsky to Chopin and Back’ in *Approaches to Musical Meaning* (eds. Byron Almén & Edward Pearsall), Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 34-39

⁴⁵⁸ DOĞANTAN-DACK, MINE 2011: ‘In the Beginning was Gesture: Piano Touch and the Phenomenology of the Performing Body’ in *New Perspectives of Music and Gesture* (eds. Anthony Gritten and Elaine King), Farnham: Ashgate, 248. Also see this chapter for a discussion of the duality of ‘a work-/score-based and a performance-based understanding of music’, and relevant tendencies as exhibited throughout musicology.

⁴⁵⁹ He writes that ‘[i]ntroversive semiosis denotes internal, intramusical reference, both backward and forward, retrospective and prospective, whilst extroversive semiosis denotes external, extramusical, referential connection’. He notes, crucially, that this distinction, ‘as useful as it is for conceptualizing various aspects of meaning in Classic music’, is something of false dichotomy. (AGAWU 1991: 132-133)

that topics themselves suggest embodied content, made immanent to musical discourse – for example, the pastoral topic, evocative of nature, accords with stasis, whereas *Sturm und Drang* may suggest sharp and sudden changes in direction. To talk about the body in the sense of embodied relationships, as mediative of musical experience – rather than as “a body” acting as signified – allows a flow of connections between that which is embodied interior and exterior to the work.

This should be put in the context of conventionalisation that, among other things, disciplines perceived connections between inside and outside (effectively conventionalising the inside/outside boundary). Where there is a clear style or mediative frame – when conventions are naturalised – the immanent musical content seems apparent and immediate even to those without any formalised training. As Howard Becker puts it in his classic *Art Worlds*:

Conventions known to all well-socialized members of a society make possible some of the most basic characteristic of an art world. Most important, they allow people who have little or no formal acquaintance with or training in the art to participate as audience members – to listen to music, read books, attend films or plays, and get something from them.⁴⁶⁰

Conventions, once established, recede into the background, operating as a *medium* for meaning, as a frame or space within which new configurations of meaning are made possible. This reaches its apex under the so called ‘relative autonomy’ of the artwork, where convention becomes naturalised as ‘second nature’, being no longer seen as explicitly social. Here, due to the regulatory frame of convention, expression – and embodied experience – seems inscribed as something interior to the music (rather than as exterior historical-material fact). The meaning and significance of gesture in music, within the “space” of the music, is shaped by a habitualised stylistic aesthetic or frame of conventions.⁴⁶¹ Through the conventionalisation of embodied relationships with musical meaning, the body’s relation to experience becomes shifted from “outside” the music (as socio-historical context) to “within” it (as embodied immanently with the text). This is the ‘immanence’ of musical meaning, or what William Echard characterises as ‘an apparently unmediated presence, such that the necessary backgrounds of competence and context, although operative, recede from awareness and it is *as if we hear a property directly in the*

⁴⁶⁰ BECKER, HOWARD S. 2008 [orig. 1982]: *Art Worlds*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 46

⁴⁶¹ HATTEN 2004: 21-24

*music*⁴⁶². As hidden yet operative, style and intramusical conventions might themselves be considered as “technological”, as mediating one’s sense of embodiment.

However, when conventions are broken apart or become unfamiliar – as in *Serynade* – traces of these historically inscribed somatic expressions still remain. McCreless goes so far as to suggest that ‘the physical experience of the gesture – for the pianist or for us, vicariously through the pianist – is as much a part of its musical meaning as the notes themselves’⁴⁶³. This is problematised in two senses in *Serynade*. Firstly, the piano – a conventionalised medium for the mediation of these gestures – is rendered as a visible point of focus for the work. Secondly, connected with this, in disturbing the naturalness of both the piano as medium and the medium of conventionalised musical space – in critically reassessing the normativity or regulative frame of guiding stylistic norms – the idea of embodied musical movement “within” the work becomes problematic. Crucially, material in *Serynade* still retains traces of historically inscribed movements and gestures, but as fragments brought into new positions, new relationships of organisation. This goes both for the “real” relationships between player and instrument and the “imagined” relationships between elements of the work, as somatically inscribed.

In *Serynade* the relationships between instrument and instrumentalist are always transitory and in flux. The status of each in the eye of the other, is never taken for granted, but undergoes constant changes throughout the work’s seven sections. As I illustrate below, changing “real” relationships transform the sense of embodiment perceived (“imagined”) as immanent to the music.⁴⁶⁴ Each section takes an idea, or a set of interrelated figures, as provisional centres around which various musical possibilities and combinations are explored. Section (A) sets out some of these ideas, and from the very opening of *Serynade* one hears a series of bold statements that seem to attempt a feeling of their way around the instrument, getting to know it afresh – as if the established relationships between player and instrument, whilst not having been abandoned, are not taken for granted.

As may be observed of Ex. 54, from the opening well defined musical elements are brought into relation with one another – ‘the chord’, ‘the hemidemisemi-quaver flourish’, and ‘the pedalling figure’, for example. Each element seems also to suggest certain gestural actions or embodied musical movements. The sections that follow this explores material

⁴⁶² ECHARD, WILLIAM 2006b: “Plays Guitar Without Any Hands”: Musical Movement and Problems of Immanence’ in *Music and Gesture* (ed. Anthony Gritten & Elaine King), Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 81, emphasis added

⁴⁶³ MCCRELESS 2006: 19

⁴⁶⁴ This is an idea that is also further developed in the next chapter, where the embodied motions of dance forms are heard to be sedimented, and transversed, within inherited musical material.

that is, in the most part, introduced in the first section. Each reflects on what has come before: section (B), calmly investigates low, pianissimo chords; (C), repeated hemidemisemiquaver notes and flourishes; (D), chords, resonances, and pedalling figures; (E), a focus on sustained resonances; (F), repeated notes, arching flourishes, and chordal figures; and finally (G), the most ‘synthetic section’, in which elements are worked together, like developmental transformations between fully sounded chordal material and sympathetic harmonic resonances. A discursive network of elements is set up, outlined syntagmatically. The work’s sectional construction allows Lachenmann to engage with different aspects of the musical material and conventionalised playing techniques, to build a musical discourse – and a new conception of the piano – from the pedagogical resources of history.

Ex. 54, Lachenmann: *Serynade*, bars 57-63, interaction of figures

The musical score for Ex. 54, Lachenmann: *Serynade*, bars 57-63, is presented in two systems. The first system (bars 57-60) begins with a treble clef and a 3/4 time signature. It features a complex chordal structure with various accidentals and dynamic markings, including *f* and *ff*. The bass staff shows a series of chords with a *Sost.-Ped.* marking. The second system (bars 61-63) continues the complex texture, with dynamic markings ranging from *fff* to *p* and *ff*. It includes intricate rhythmic patterns and a *Sost.-Ped.* marking in the bass staff.

(c) 2002 by Breitkopf & Härtel, Wiesbaden

Each of these figures seems to suggest something gestural. Moreover, each figure seems to derive from fragmentary moments of past styles and past articulation – the fantasy-type flourish in bar 62, for example. Practitioners of contemporary music have themselves commented on the chords as seeming to arise from past styles, without being limited within a given style, with Nicholas Hodges commenting of them that “they are

chords which are supremely well chosen because, while they are not tonal or triadic in an obvious way, they could easily happen as passing chords or incidental moments in Schumann”⁴⁶⁵. Conventional gestural moments appear as fragmented motions, set apart from any larger formal backdrop, a large-scale overriding stylistic schema. A result is that somatic play is pushed to the surface of the work, where we see fragmented changing directions between gestural figurations.

I will now assess these connections between embodied experience, conventions, the piano as historical (technological) object, and its operation (pedagogy) with reference to Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology of embodiment. Merleau-Ponty’s work is particularly useful in thinking about these issues as he foregrounds the body’s place in perception and living in the world. This is a body shaped by the world, by the habits of convention – in a musical context: of relationships between player and instrument, and the sense of bodily immediacy within the music.

However, I adapt this phenomenological thinking as in *Serynade* conventions are fragmented – their “naturalness” is problematised. Historically resonant musical objects, such as the piano and distinctive entities within the musical discourse, are focused upon and *denaturalised*, being heard and experienced anew or performed with renewed and vitalised potency. This idea of denaturalisation calls us towards Viktor Shklovsky’s notion of *ostranenie*⁴⁶⁶, where conventions are complicated and original aesthetic experiences elicited. This complements Ross Feller’s⁴⁶⁷ and Piotr Grella-Możejko’s⁴⁶⁸ Shklovskian interpretations of Lachenmann’s compositional aesthetic in a somatic dimension.

Examining the processes of naturalisation allows me to interweave concerns of embodied space “within” the music as this is connected with bodies “outside” of it. Traces of these embodied spaces are drawn on in *Serynade* – prominently through the evocation of localised discursive centres from which provisional deviation is made possible, both in terms of the musical space and in the actions and their deviations as made by the performer. Indeed, there is an emphasis on the historicity of the instrument as this facilitates both. This is something I highlight through showing how extended techniques (like “sounded resonances”) are an integral part of a musical discourse that engages with a dialectic of naturalisation and denaturalisation. I end by situating this in the context of other works by Lachenmann as these engage with the dialectics of past and present.

⁴⁶⁵ Nicholas Hodges in discussion. SERVICE & HODGES 2005: 80

⁴⁶⁶ SHKLOVSKY, VICTOR 1965: ‘Art as Technique’ [orig. 1917] in *Russian Formalist Criticism: Four Essays* (trans. Lee T. Lemon & Marion J. Reis), Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press

⁴⁶⁷ FELLER 2002

⁴⁶⁸ GRELLA-MOŻEJKO, PIOTR 2005: ‘Helmut Lachenmann – Style, Sound, Text’ in *Contemporary Music Review*, Vol. 24, Issue 1 (pp. 57-75)

In attempting to answer the seemingly simple question “What is the piano?”, I underlined that this object, this technology, is inherently entangled with pedagogy, the historically established relationships found between instrument and instrumentalist. This means that a change in the relationships between instrument and instrumentalist modifies both technology and pedagogy; each changes as a relation to its other. In order to better understand this mutually constitutive relationship, here a turn as is made towards the phenomenology of the French philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1908-1961)⁴⁶⁹.

Merleau-Ponty’s work on embodiment has been influential recently in cultural studies (notably on the work of Judith Butler⁴⁷⁰) and on work on the influence of technology on experience (in that of Don Ihde⁴⁷¹). Musicology has given little attention to Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology directly, generally being influenced second hand via another discipline or method⁴⁷². This could be in part due to Merleau-Ponty’s own characterisation of music as, as he put it, “too beyond the world”, too “pure” to have worldly meaning⁴⁷³ – a transcendentalism which does not chime with current musicological thinking. Developing his ideas as enacted in practices like musical performance and reception, as something mediated historically and, in the case of musical performance, pedagogically, circumvents this problem.⁴⁷⁴

For Merleau-Ponty, technology – be this musical-instrumental technology or any other kind – was always entangled with the ways it was used, and in the ways in which certain types of use became naturalised, habitualised, and automatic for the user (in music: pedagogy). Merleau-Ponty’s most famous example of this process of habitualisation was that of a blind person’s cane. In his *Phenomenology of Perception* he writes that,

⁴⁶⁹ Cf. Anthony Gritten’s discussion of ‘Instrumental Technology’, in which he draws on Heideggerian thinking. See GRITTEN, ANTHONY 2011: ‘Instrumental Technology’ in *The Routledge Companion to Philosophy and Music* (eds. Theodore Gracyk & Andrew Kania), New York: Routledge

⁴⁷⁰ See, for discussion of this influence, STOLLER, SILVIA 2010: ‘Expressivity and Performativity: Merleau-Ponty and Butler’ in *Continental Philosophy Review*, Vol. 43, No. 1 (pp. 97-110)

⁴⁷¹ SELINGER, EVAN (ed.) 2006: *Postphenomenology: A Critical Companion to Ihde*, Albany: State University of New York Press

⁴⁷² e.g. as influenced by musicology after Judith Butler’s “performativity”, or in empirical qualitative work like musicological applications of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA).

⁴⁷³ Merleau-Ponty cited in GOEHR, LYDIA 2005: ‘Understanding the Engaged Philosopher: On Politics, Philosophy, and Art’ in *The Cambridge Companion to Merleau-Ponty* (ed. Taylor Carman & Mark B.N. Hansen), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 337

⁴⁷⁴ Whilst I draw on Merleau-Ponty’s ideas, it should be noted that my philosophical and theoretical emphases differ subtly from his. The embodied phenomenological explored here is influenced by Merleau-Ponty’s work as retrospectively inflected by later developments – particularly, ideas of ‘performativity’, that embodied experience is grounded in repeated, conventionalised (and conventionalising) practices.

the blind man's stick has ceased to be an object for him, and is no longer perceived for itself; its point has become an area of sensitivity, extending the scope and active radius of touch, and providing a parallel to sight.⁴⁷⁵

This habitualisation as such goes beyond the automatic, going so far as to make that piece of technology – momentarily at least – fade out of view.

Merleau-Ponty explains this through the notion of 'body-schema'. Body-schema are the organising principles which mediate experience through, and of, the body.⁴⁷⁶ This can be seen in the modification of the blind man's body-schema to incorporate his stick as *mediative of* perception, no longer as an object external to him to be perceived. A musical and performative parallel can be found in the learning of the piano. The piano starts out as a foreign object but, as relationships between between player and instrument become increasingly habitualised, it becomes increasingly *naturalised*: fluency and immediacy take the place of struggle with the instrument.⁴⁷⁷ The bodily schema of the performer comes to incorporate this new object, and a space in which to explore new sets of relationships is opened up. Body-schema is thus a bodily space which is modifiable and within which are created new embodied, perceptive relationships.

In musical-pedagogical terms, body-schema are *naturalised conventions* – at the most practical level, movements and practices ossified into pedagogy. As Taylor Carman puts it, body-schema are 'the bundle of skills and capacities that constitute the body's precognitive familiarity with itself and the world it inhabits.'⁴⁷⁸ As such, the institutionalisation of skills and capacities (pedagogy) can be seen as an establishment of a shared and collective familiar mode of relation with the body and the world around it (for example, with musical instruments). Another example of the incorporation of technology into body-schema can be given with reference to Merleau-Ponty's comment on habitualisation of bodily action (in this case, use of a typewriter):

The subject knows where the letters are on the typewriter as we know where one of our limbs is, through a knowledge bred of familiarity which does not give us a position in objective space. The movement of her fingers is not presented to the typist as a path through space which can be described, but

⁴⁷⁵ MERLEAU-PONTY 2002: 165

⁴⁷⁶ See CARMAN, TAYLOR 1999: 'The Body in Husserl and Merleau-Ponty' in *Philosophical Topics*, Vol. 27, No. 2 (pp. 205-226) for an excellent introduction to Merleau-Ponty's concept of 'body-schema'.

⁴⁷⁷ Chris Shilling discusses this as it plays a role in David Sudlow's account of learning to play the jazz piano. SHILLING, CHRIS 2005: *The Body in Culture, Technology & Society*, London: Sage Publications Ltd, 129-130

⁴⁷⁸ CARMAN 1999: 220

merely as a certain adjustment of motility, physiognomically distinguishable from any other.⁴⁷⁹

This example works equally well for the piano. The piano, whilst in ‘objective space’, is not known to the player in an absolute sense, and is instead operated through a phenomenologically distinct, though not objectively codifiable, ‘adjustment of motility’. The instrumentalist knows where the piano keys are as they know where their limbs are, something ‘bred of familiarity’. They enter into a performative relationship with the piano, through a bodily dimension, one of a fluid immediacy that transgresses the boundary between instrument and instrumentalist as this would appear in objective space. “The distinction between subject and object is blurred in my body”⁴⁸⁰, says Merleau-Ponty; as with using the typewriter, the boundaries between the instrumentalist and instrument begin to blur in the bodily experience of playing.

To some degree, what has been said about what the instrument *is* – or rather what it *does* naturally, as this is habitualised – goes not just for how the performer experiences it, it also goes for the audience. For the audience, because of naturalised processes of playing the piano, the player’s inputs appear as *becoming*, rather than causing, sonic outcomes. ‘[T]he role of the instrument’, writes Anthony Gritten, ‘is to facilitate the execution of the performer’s intentions unobtrusively... Using the instrument should be effortless for the player and transparent to the music.’⁴⁸¹ Technology goes hand-in-hand with pedagogy – the piano is not only a physical “thing” but is mediated by the history of its operation. The piano, like the blind man’s stick, becomes an invisible medium through which experience, sensitivity, and expression are mediated. And both for player and audience, this is “immediately” perceptible, although this is an immediacy that is reliant on the past, on habitualisation and conventionalisation. This point brings us back to the issue of musical conventions, as a musical-historical dimension of Merleau-Ponty’s body-schema.

Bodily Space, Musical Space

Lachenmann engages with conventions dialectically, drawing on them but not unproblematically. Both the audience’s experience of the instrument as invisible medium of expression⁴⁸², and the body-schema of the instrumentalist, are brought into focus – *made*

⁴⁷⁹ MERLEAU-PONTY 2002: 166

⁴⁸⁰ Merleau-Ponty cited in CARMAN 1999: 206

⁴⁸¹ GRITTEN 2011: 190

⁴⁸² Whilst it is often the case that technologies, in conventional usage, recede from view as objects of focus in their own right, it should be noted that this is not always the case – in displays of virtuosity in which the physical dimension of the players and instruments are underlined as an event in itself. However, Lachenmann’s treatment of the instrument-instrumentalist relation is particular in its “critical” emphasis.

visible – when previously habitualised relationships between the player and instrument are reorganised. The instrument, as a set of relationships between technology and pedagogy, is reconfigured. As Ian Pace puts it, the performer, in *Serynade*, ‘is able to project an artisan-like demeanour in performance, methodically and calmly enacting the motions to produce the fantastical range of sounds that Lachenmann employs in full view of the audience.’⁴⁸³ Perception of the instrument – perception of sonic events – is constructed in a way that draws on a tradition of instrumental playing whilst simultaneously distancing it. This seems in keeping with Lachenmann’s own thoughts on the new and old, when he says that, “the problem is not to search for new sounds, but for a new way of listening, of perception”⁴⁸⁴.

Both the sense of embodiment “within” the music, and the formation of body-schema, are founded in intersubjective and historical conventions. This move towards immanency of musical embodiment can be seen in the fragmentary figures of *Serynade*. What must be noted at this point is that Merleau-Ponty’s conception of embodiment is *spatial* by nature, that is, body-schema refer to our awareness of bodily positioning “in relation to the vertical, the horizontal, and certain other axes of important coordinates of its environment”⁴⁸⁵. In immanent, musical terms, the work – which incorporates conventionalised body-schema in its performance – in this dimension sets itself up as a space within which fragments of musical forms and somatic motions may be recombined, just as seen in the interplay of ideas in bars 57-63 (Ex. 54). The work’s quality as critical space, in which the spatialised body-schema may be reformed and modified, is further emphasised in its lacking of metric stability; spatiality, in the organised/organising and bodily dimension at least, becomes dominant over an organised and hierarchical temporal dimension.

This link between space and the body is not something specific to *Serynade* (although, as will be shown, the way in which the relationship between the two is constructed in *Serynade* is particular to the work). The idea of musical works as having spatial/somatic elements is, as Robert Hatten argues in *Interpreting Musical Gestures, Topics, and Tropes*, important to much Western art music: ‘meter functions like a gravitational field that conditions our embodied sense of up versus down, the relative weighting of events,

It modifies, reformulates, these relationships and their impact upon the mediation of experience, rather than simply – as in the case of the virtuoso – making visible physicality as a category mediative of experience.

⁴⁸³ PACE 2005: 103. Pace also notes that, in working with the composer in preparation for a performance, he saw that Lachenmann himself valued a pragmatic view that avoided an ‘unwarranted level of theatrical tension’, that tended away from a display of virtuosity. (103-104)

⁴⁸⁴ Lachenmann in interview in STEENHAUSEN, PAUL 2004: ‘Interview with Helmut Lachenmann – Toronto, 2003’ in *Contemporary Music Review*, Vol. 23, Issue 3/4 (pp. 9-14), 9

⁴⁸⁵ Merleau-Ponty cited in SCHILLING 2005: 55

and the relative amount of energy needed to overcome “gravitational” constraints (as in an ascending melody).⁴⁸⁶ Tonality also plays a role (in its relationship with metre) in mediating gestural and embodied space immanent to musical works, leading Hatten to conclude that ‘if meter and tonality each afford analogies to gravitation, or more broadly, *vectoral space*, together they enhance an experience of *embodied motion*, in that they provide the listener with dynamics and constraints comparable to those the body experiences in a natural environment, including its orientation as up or down.’⁴⁸⁷

Serynade, in contrast with the tonal music of Hatten’s discussion, denies the tonal and metric frameworks which helped articulate the sense of space and motion that is within this earlier music. Hatten’s emphasis on the role of tonal space in articulating embodied motion should not be forgotten, however. We hear fragments of material, gestural figures that still bear traces of this past. Indeed, figures and motions derived from the piano, as technological and pedagogical object, become the focus of the work, as materials of the work’s discourse. Gestures and actions derived from habitualised body-schema are brought from “outside” the work to its “inside”, as material constitutive of its discourse. Performance becomes not the delivery of the immanent embodiment held to be in the work; on the contrary, the sense of embodiment “within” the work’s discourse is derived from the historicity of performance, as this is itself constituted by relationships between piano (technology) and performer (pedagogy). Traces of the past appear: firstly, “inside” the musical space; secondly, in the space between a player and an instrument that is “outside” the work; and, thirdly, in the relationships of mediation these two aspects, between the inside and the outside.

With this in mind, it may be noted that allusions to tonal space appear in *Serynade* (within which embodied motion may be felt); metric instability does not completely preclude the possibility of gestural motion in the temporal dimension. In terms of pitch, provisional centres are set up within the work as fractured allusion to pitch space (without tonality). This can be observed in Ex. 55. Here, chordal identities provide a home from which deviation is made possible; this provisional centre becomes a structured lynchpin around which material may coalesce, and from which it may be said to deviate. Lachenmann colours the pitch-space through exploring different resonances “around” this chordal centre.

One more dimension can be added to this characterisation of the historically mediated perception of this section of the work. Whilst the work’s allusions to embodied space is historical it is also *lived* – that is, whilst it draws on past notions like tonal relations,

⁴⁸⁶ HATTEN 2004: 115

⁴⁸⁷ HATTEN 2004: 117

these only come through in their problematisation in the immediacy of the present – meaning that we become bound-up with historicity in the immediate. Each chord deviating from this centre, whilst experienced in discursive relations to the ‘tonal centre’, is doubly historical – it also finds itself connecting to moments in works beyond the one at hand, with all the historically inscribed somatic baggage which comes with this. This is to say that, in terms of past-present relations, these connections can be made both at the levels of text and “intertext”, with both impacting upon the comprehension of one another.

Ex. 55, Lachenmann: *Serynade*, bars 145-159, provisional centre

16 \textcircled{D} a tempo

145 $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{6}{8}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{5}{4}$

149 $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{6}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{13}{4}$

153 $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$

157 $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$

(Sost. - Sed.)

(Sost. - Sed.)

(Sost. - Sed.)

(Sost. - Sed.)

Whilst a clear metrical frame may not be present in *Serynade*, figures are suggestive of gestural motions at a local level (through bearing traces of historically inscribed motion). This means that the work suggests itself as an embodied space that is heterogeneous rather than synthetically unified in somatic direction – these traces at the local level push and pull in multiple fragmentary directions. This quality of heterogeneity can be observed in the phenomenology of these chordal figures in bars 145-159 – that we seem to ‘move’ around them in a pitch-space. Quoting Nicholas Hodges again:

[The effect of these chords in *Seranyde*] is like looking at a sculpture from several different angles at the same time. You hear a chord, you hear different kinds of resonances of that chord, maybe you get notes cutting off at different times, and these are all in a sense different facets of the same sound object. So in a sense he’s using those techniques to make each sound object multidimensional or multi-faceted.⁴⁸⁸

This reverberates with Merleau-Ponty’s comments on the perception of (physical) objects in general – that observers build a Gestalt image of objects from all angles as they move around them, but also in the virtual aspects of these objects’ relations to and “viewing” by other objects around them⁴⁸⁹. Put in musical terms, entities of musical discourse suggest various simultaneous connections to other moments in the musical discourse, and indeed virtual, unexplored possibilities of correspondence and deviation. The exploration of the resonant pitch space around the chords as highlighted in bars 145-159 expresses this idea, with this ‘moving’ around the chordal entity/entities suggesting simultaneous trajectories and affinities of historical and bodily relation, a shifting of perception around a musical object akin to ‘turning a log on the fire’⁴⁹⁰ in order to elicit new experiential aspects (to borrow a phrase from Victor Shklovsky, whose poetics are discussed below). Thus, whilst pitch-space and metric-space are conventionally mapped as being directional (pitch as vertical, metre as horizontal), the heterogeneity of phenomenological space in *Serynade* – directly linked-in with the role the body plays in expression – problematises any such mapping of conventional oppositions in this work. This history is, nonetheless, drawn on dialectically, through the persistence of its material and performative traces.

⁴⁸⁸ Nicholas Hodges in discussion in SERVICE & HODGES 2005: 83

⁴⁸⁹ See MERLEAU-PONTY 2002, especially page 79

⁴⁹⁰ Victor Shklovsky cited in CRAWFORD, LAWRENCE 1984: ‘Viktor Shklovskij: Différance in Defamiliarization’ in *Comparative Literature*, Vol. 36, No. 3 (pp. 209-219), 210

Ex. 56, Lachenmann: *Serynade*, Bars 296-301

The musical score for Ex. 56, Lachenmann: *Serynade*, Bars 296-301, is presented in two systems. The first system (bars 296-300) features a piano part with a 'Flag-Reservoir' section in 4/4, 3/4, and 4/4 time signatures. The piano part includes dynamics like *p* and *mp*. The second system (bars 301-305) features a piano part with a 'Flag-Reservoir' section in 4/4 time signature. The piano part includes dynamics like *sfz* and *f*. The score also includes a 'Saiten' (strings) part with 'Flageolet-Berührung' and 'Flag-Berührung' markings, and a 'Sost.-Ped.' (sostenuto pedal) marking.

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The playing with traces of past conventions can also be seen in the approach to the piano itself as an object of history. This is it as a historically conventionalised piece of 'technology'. Technological conventions, in so being highlighted, may themselves become explored as crucial aspects of musical experience. Put another way, the processes of artistic production may be explored critically as the material embodies the artistic products (musical works, expression) of which they are mediative. Howard Becker again:

When the equipment [of artistic production] embodies the conventions, the way a conventional thirty-five-millimetre camera embodies the conventions of contemporary photography, you learn the conventions as you learn to work the machinery... The same is true of many of the understandings associated with conventional music; you learn them as you learn to manipulate the instrument.⁴⁹¹

This is made explicit in *Serynade* where the technology of musical expression (as related to pedagogy) is subject to modification. This is evidenced by a simple example: that

⁴⁹¹ BECKER 2008: 57

a huge amount of the ‘content’ of the music seems to be absent from the score (see Ex. 56, bars 296-301), with the work being indebted to the exploration of musical dimensions that are not notatable in a traditional sense, yet require traditional and conventional resources in their production (for example, resonances that require a grand piano⁴⁹²). Instead of the score being the documentation of the content of ‘the work’, of the exploration of musical-formal conventions – a message to be sent to the audience through the medium of the piano – the piano is engaged with as convention itself, as an object of the established musical past which nonetheless holds the potential for eliciting new and exciting musical experiences. The score itself becomes instructive of the manner of sound-production – of the mode of engaging with the equipment which embodies the musical tradition (the piano). In this sense, the piano is itself presented as a physical presence, as the content of the work to which the body bears relation; both literally and symbolically the piano is placed “centre stage”.

Ex. 57, Lachenmann: *Serynade*, “Sounded resonances”, bars 316-319

The musical score for Ex. 57, Lachenmann: *Serynade*, “Sounded resonances”, bars 316-319, is presented in a multi-staff format. It begins at bar 316 and spans four measures. The time signatures are 2/4, 4/4, 6/4, and 4/4. The score includes dynamics such as *p*, *mf*, *fff*, and *f*. Performance instructions include *Sost. Srd.* and *Srd.*. The notation is complex, with multiple layers of sound and sustained notes.

(c) 2002 by Breitkopf & Härtel, Wiesbaden

Whilst the piano is placed as central to the content of the work, formal musical material also plays a role in the discourse of the work, as has been shown above, with these more formal elements having their own connections with the body – particularly immanently embodied expression. Critical issues of performance develop in dialectic with intramusical developments. The use of so-called ‘extended techniques’ is an excellent case in point. They are not used as exotic devices⁴⁹³, but rather to bring out qualities from, and

⁴⁹² In the performance notes Lachenmann goes so far as to specify the use of a Steinway C or D.

⁴⁹³ Pace contrasts this with the use of such techniques by ‘lesser composers’ – ‘In the hands of a lesser composer (e.g. George Crumb), these sorts of instrumental sonorities would be likely to function more as novel effects, akin to similar usage of exotic instruments and sounds in film scores. Lachenmann’s ability

to relate to, more conventionalised musical elements⁴⁹⁴. Sympathetic harmonic resonances – which are important elements of the work’s content – are heard as *emerging* from clusters of pitches that surround them. They are not presented as some extraneous device of ‘otherness’, but instead emerge as inner qualities of the musical material. Indeed, this becomes all the more clear in bars 316-319, where ‘sounded resonances’ mediate between fully sounded pitches and the attenuated harmonics of silently depressed keys which occur throughout much of the rest of the work (Ex. 57).

The *piano* chord in the uppermost staff blends into and colours the natural harmonics of the low *fortississimo* E-flat. The upper voice then gains strength, until it emerges from “within” these harmonics to become a fully sounded chord. In doing so, it draws explicit connection between resonances and sounded pitches as connected entities – as points on a spectrum or ‘scale’ rather than as distinct entities.⁴⁹⁵ Sympathetic resonances, an ‘extended technique’, is shown not to be something “outside” of and alien to the main content of the work, but as arising from it. In being synthesised as part of the work’s discourse, technique becomes ‘extended’ in *extending outwards the inner qualities of the material*, rather than as an extension of technique as an abstract category in-itself. This characterisation itself seems to fit into Lachenmann’s own aesthetics; he himself has suggested that “defamiliarisation of sound for its own sake represents no more than a sort of surreal, exotic, expressionistic affectation”⁴⁹⁶. Furthermore, the accented “scratching” sounds from bar 292 onwards (produced by the player pulling a finger rapidly from single strings inside the piano) are produced in the context of this focus on resonances. In their difference from what has come before they help organise a reflective passage pre-empting section (G), which begins in bar 309 (Ex. 57 is an excerpt from (G)). As Lachenmann writes in the preface to the score, these sounds ‘should give rise to a brightly resonating, complex mixture of overtones.’ They might express difference – which helps organise the musical discourse – but (and especially in light of Lachenmann’s prefatory comments) the focus on resonance also organises *qualities of affinity* between these ‘extended’ and other (more ‘conventional’) materials. In this dimension at least, both are brought within a common discursive boundary.

to integrate them into a total musical narrative (while always omni-directional and operating dialectically between layers) and sense of timing and pacing both demonstrates a much more acute compositional craft and depth and ensures that the sounds and gestures he uses do not sound hackneyed when the initial novelty has worn off.’ PACE 2005: 106

⁴⁹⁴ Ross Feller notes that extended techniques are not used as something special in Lachenmann’s music, but are central to his works’ materials (FELLER 2002: 252).

⁴⁹⁵ This recalls my discussion of the articulation of discourse, and qualities of discursive consistency, as explored in chapter 4.

⁴⁹⁶ Lachenmann in interview in RYAN, DAVID 1999: ‘Composer in Interview: Helmut Lachenmann’ in *Tempo*, No. 210 (pp. 20-24), 22

Lachenmann explored pianistic resonances in an earlier work, his piano concerto, *Ausklang* (1984/1985, revised 1986). The pianist Ian Pace points out that the soundworld of *Serynade* ‘is not so strange to those familiar with the piano concerto *Ausklang*’⁴⁹⁷. However, he points out that the compositional style in *Serynade* is ‘pared-down’ when compared to this earlier work.⁴⁹⁸ Lachenmann, in an interview with Abigail Heathcote, suggested that the concerto was initially conceived around a core concept – that of exploring the (familiar, i.e. naturalised) piano, and its relationship with an orchestra that could potentially recharacterise or transform experiences of the piano’s sound material. Resonance, and the decaying quality of the piano’s sound, was central to this: “...I began with the rather simple idea of the familiar piano integrated into or confronted with a sort of huge ‘meta-piano’ represented by an especially developed and gradually transformed orchestral sound.”⁴⁹⁹ The orchestra took on, sustained, and transformed the resonances produced by the piano. Its decaying sound was as such expanded outwards, recoloured and refigured.⁵⁰⁰ In the same interview, the composer gave a concrete example of what this core concept meant in practical terms:

In my piano concerto *Ausklang*... the pitchless elements, just air from brass instruments, or the strings with the bow moving directly on the bridge avoiding any pitches, serve as a world of shadows – even when *fortissimo* – continuing the noisy resonances of the pedalled piano in the highest register.⁵⁰¹

I have discussed how, in *Serynade*, “extended techniques” are intricately bound up with the development of the work, rather than being placed in a position of exteriority. A similar compositional strategy is worked through in the concerto. In sustaining and transforming the naturally decaying sounds of the piano in the orchestral material (his “meta-piano”), the “drama” of the work is, in Lachenmann’s own words, ‘dependent on a procedural logic internal to the sound-material’⁵⁰². In this aspect, *Ausklang* exists as a pianistic precursor to the ‘pared-down’ compositional logic of *Serynade*, in which Lachenmann endeavours to expand outward qualities of the piano’s sonic material, in ways that draw on the piano’s familiar, “natural” sound, yet that transform it.

⁴⁹⁷ PACE 2005: 102

⁴⁹⁸ PACE 2005: 102

⁴⁹⁹ Lachenmann in interview in HEATHCOTE, ABIGAIL 2010: ‘Sound Structures, Transformations, and Broken Magic: An Interview with Helmut Lachenmann’ in *Contemporary Music: Theoretical and Philosophical Perspectives* (ed. Max Paddison & Irène Deliège), Farnham: Ashgate, 345-346

⁵⁰⁰ Lachenmann has himself talked of the ‘dynamic transformations’ of sound material that take place between the piano’s material and the orchestra in *Ausklang*. See RYAN 1999: 23.

⁵⁰¹ Lachenmann in interview in HEATHCOTE 2010: 333

⁵⁰² Lachenmann in interview in RYAN 1999: 23

Serynade explores the dialectics of body-schema and musically immanent embodied expression, something predominantly achieved through the problematisation of naturalised pedagogy and reception. Musical conventions are also engaged with, setting in motion heterogeneous perceptual possibilities. This is done on two interconnected fronts: firstly, in the play of musical-formal fragments, fragments which bear traces of gestural and somatic content, and in exploring immanently embodied musical space (in engaging with pitch-space and pitch-centres); and, secondly, in confronting the piano as technological convention, one which itself may traverse unexplored aspects of its own physicality in the processes of musical performance.

In *Serynade*, typically peripheral aspects of the past (like the resonant pitches) are foregrounded as points of focus central to the experience of the present.⁵⁰³ This brings us to a juncture in this discussion – one that moves the discussion from the level of the general down to the focus on the particular. Questions surrounding naturalised body-schema and immanently embodied musical space – things naturalised by their conventionalisation in pedagogy, technology, and reception – are now to be focused on in localised phenomena in the work. Theoretically speaking, this means a shift from Merleau-Ponty’s all-embracing embodied phenomenology towards the incisive formal-analytic concerns brought on by Victor Shklovsky’s notion of *ostranenie* (translated as ‘defamiliarisation’, sometime as ‘estrangement’ or even ‘enstrangement’⁵⁰⁴). *Serynade* explores the dialectic of naturalisation and defamiliarisation, and a counterpointing of Merleau-Ponty and Shklovsky’s concepts elucidates this process. If Merleau-Ponty’s body-schema helps to conceal the pedagogical, technological, and formal faculties by which perception is mediated, Shklovsky’s defamiliarisation reveals, or at least complicates, these same processes.

⁵⁰³ David Lesser has made a similar observation about the focus by Lachenmann on aspects which are typically peripheral to meaning (LESSER, DAVID 2004: ‘Dialectic and Form in the Music of Helmut Lachenmann’ in *Contemporary Music Review*, Vol. 23, Issues 3 & 4 (pp. 107-114)). I am in agreement with Lesser on this point, though I want to suggest that this should be understood primarily in terms of embodiment and perception as philosophically-historically mediated.

⁵⁰⁴ See Benjamin’s Sher’s translator’s introduction to SHKLOVSKY, VICTOR 1990 [orig. 1929]: *Theory of Prose* (trans. Benjamin Sher), Elmwood Park: Dalkey Archive Press, especially page xix

Denaturalisation

...the magnifying glass, amplifies certain microfeatures of the world,
but only by reducing our field of vision.

– Carl Mitchum, on embodied phenomenology.⁵⁰⁵

The splinter in your eye is the best magnifying-glass.

– Theodor Adorno, *Minima Moralia*⁵⁰⁶

Carl Mitchum's comment, followed closely by this aphorism from Adorno, potentially opens up an imagined dialogue between phenomenology and critical theory – one in which embodied experience is accounted for, not as something passive and uncritical (as epiphenomenon) but as something aware of the dialectics and historicity of perception. The place of technology, and our embodiment of the world as mediated through it – seen in something as simple as a magnifying glass, for example – means that, potentially, a conscious modification of these embodiment relations may refocus aesthetic perception. In a musical vein, the fracturing of the conventional image of an instrumental technology – the piano, for example – may 'splinter' perception, affording the experience of something new in the shards and fragments that remain.⁵⁰⁷ If the piano, and piano playing, are traditionally viewed as reducing the field of focus, so that particular musical ideas might be presented within this field, then, in *Serynade*, the intense focus on the embodiment technology itself, immanently splintered as a point of contention, develops a new mode of experience, educing new possibilities in musical vision.

Ross Feller has called attention to the parallels in Lachemann's compositional approach and the Russian formalist Victor Shklovsky's theory of poetry, particularly the latter's concept of *ostranenie* (most often translated as 'defamiliarisation'). As Feller understands it, *ostranenie* is 'making the familiar strange'⁵⁰⁸, according with Lachenmann's

⁵⁰⁵ Here, Mitchum is discussing the work of Don Ihde, the American "post-phenomenologist" who developed the work of Maurice Merleau-Ponty with regard to the experience of technology. MITCHAM, CARL 2006: 'From Phenomenology to Pragmatism: Using Technology as an Instrument' in *Postphenomenology: A Critical Companion to Ihde* (ed. Evan Selinger), Albany: State University of New York Press, 29

⁵⁰⁶ ADORNO, THEODOR 2005 [orig. 1951]: *Minima Moralia: Reflections From Damaged Life*, London: Verso, 50

⁵⁰⁷ Rebecca Horn's *Concert for Anarchy* (1990), an image of which is reproduced at the opening of Part III, shows a more literal representation of this process.

⁵⁰⁸ FELLER 2002: 254

defamiliarising of the musically familiar (performance techniques, musical conventions, and so on). Feller writes that Lachenmann's compositional technique 'involves the exclusion of unquestioned or habitual standards, brought into *play* through the use of devices such as fragmentation and masking'⁵⁰⁹.

I want to augment this insight through relocating defamiliarising processes in the bodily, through the experience of the immediate, as this has been naturalised historically and, in light of this mediation, *denaturalised* in *Serynade*. This is to adapt Shklovsky's concept slightly – to defamiliarise the concept of defamiliarisation – by regarding it in its bodily dimension. Indeed, this is also to promote a dialectical view in which the naturalised and the denaturalised are in constant interaction. This resonates perhaps more with Benjamin Sher's reading of Shklovsky than Feller's. Sher writes that defamiliarisation is not 'a transition from the "familiar" to the "unknown"'. Instead, it 'starts from the cognitively known' and then "'complicates" our perceptual process in the rich use of metaphors, similes, and a host of other figures of speech.'⁵¹⁰ It is a 'complication' rather than a transition, a process in which the original 'known' materials still show through but are distanced from themselves. I will also make points of comparison between the defamiliarisation/denaturalisation of material in *Serynade*, and similar processes in some of Lachenmann's earlier works.

A key process in Lachenmann's aesthetic, a compositional technique which, whilst no longer the core of his aesthetic, still leaves its imprint on his recent music, is his notion of *musique concrète instrumentale*. This method, as he puts it,

signifies an extensive defamiliarisation of instrumental technique: the musical sound may be bowed, pressed, beaten, torn, maybe choked, rubbed, perforated and so on. At the same time the new sound must satisfy the requirements of the old familiar concert-hall sound which, in this context, *loses any familiarity and becomes (once again) freshly illuminated, even 'unknown'*. Such a perspective demands changes in compositional technique, so that the classical base-parameters, such as pitch, duration, timbre, volume, and their derivatives *retain their significance only as subordinate aspects of the compositional category* which deals with the manifestation of energy.⁵¹¹

⁵⁰⁹ FELLER 2002: 254, emphasis in original

⁵¹⁰ Benjamin Sher in the translator's introduction to SHKLOVSKY 1990: xix

⁵¹¹ Lachenmann in interview in RYAN 1999: 21, emphasis added. Notably, in this characterisation Lachenmann suggests that the familiar becomes "unknown", in seemingly direct contradiction with Sher's comment that defamiliarisation *is not* 'a transition from the "familiar" to the "unknown"'. However, this is not as problematic as it might at first seem. As Lachenmann also suggests, this process must also relate to the inherited history of that being defamiliarised ('At the same time the new sound must satisfy the requirements of the old familiar concert-hall sound...'). This is a dialectical process of becoming, rather than a transition in a single direction – from familiar to the unknown; a becoming unknown that critically highlights the mediative role of "the known".

This process can be well summarised through a studio-based analogy: inputs are reassigned in terms of their outputs. For example, the pedal no longer functions only as a sustaining device, but comes into focus as an audible element in itself. The use of the pedal takes on its own place and significance in the context of the work's discourse. With this “rerouting” of resources the established directness of gestural inputs and sonic outputs is severed. Circuits of relationships between player and instrument, between physical actions and musical expression, are rewritten. Handed-down playing techniques – *physical and expressive actions historically inscribed with symbolic significance* – are subject to a transforming perception, through a rerouting of the relationships found between player and instrument.

The use of the pedal becomes an important component of the musical structure itself (see Ex. 58). This contrasts, of course, with the conventionalised use of the pedal as a sustaining or colouring device. What is of conventional focus is modified: this pedagogical and technological technique no longer merely facilitates the playing of musical content. Instead, pedagogy and technology become musical content themselves. The music is not seen to be something transmitted via the *medium* of the piano. Instead, the piano itself – as a series of relationships between elements of pedagogy and technology – becomes foregrounded as a central aspect of this aesthetic experience.

Ex. 58, Lachenmann: *Serynade*: bars 233-236

(c) 2002 by Breitkopf & Härtel, Wiesbaden

Using the piano in such a way, altering it in terms of technological and pedagogical focus whilst still drawing upon tradition, enables Lachenmann to supply and explore a “fracture of the familiar”⁵¹². This is manifested, for example, in focused uses of the piano’s resonances (discussed above), and in the audible use of the piano’s pedals. They become newly posited, positional elements, playing a part in organising the work’s structure. They

⁵¹² Lachenmann cited in FELLER 2002: 254

provide the means by which, and the substance of which, a musical discourse is constituted. A structure and level of discursive consistency “within” the work (as was explored in chapter 4) comes forth, though this is located in technological and pedagogical resources from “outside”. This strategy builds on earlier works in which playing techniques are reconceived (works like *Pression* (1969, rev. 2010), *Guero* (1969/88), *Gran Torso* (1971/76/88)). *Serynade* can, as such, be regarded as a dialectical study into the interpenetration of musical-formal content and the medium through which this presented (pedagogy/technology/convention).

Ex. 59, Lachenmann: *Ein Kinderspiel*, opening



(c) 1982 by Breitkopf & Härtel, Wiesbaden

Ein Kinderspiel (1980), a cycle of seven short pieces, provides a pianistic precursor to *Serynade*'s complication of inherited embodied relations (Ex. 59). In this work, as in *Serynade*, the use and modification of pianistic (technological and pedagogical) resources elicit the experience of new phenomenological significances, manifested concretely from the potentialities of inherited history. This process is less extreme than in *Serynade*, but what this earlier work does underline is Lachenmann's interest in historical resources, and dialectic relationships with history rather than a disavowal of it, in favour of the “new”. It is in this spirit that Lachenmann recently characterised the approach taken in *Ein Kinderspiel* not as “playing the melody on the piano” but rather of “playing the piano on the melody”⁵¹³. It is a defamiliarisation that is achieved dialectically, through a reformulation of the inherited relationships between material immanent to music (“the melody”) and the medium by which that immanence is expressed (“the piano”).

This is a focusing, and Shklovskian ‘complication’, of the mutual mediation of the one by the other. In Lachenmann's music, the ways in which this complication is manifested discursively takes different forms. Two major works from the late-70s, for instance, tackle historical material head on. The first, *Accanto* (1975-76), is written for solo

⁵¹³ Lachenmann said this at a pre-concert talk (an interview with Ivan Hewett) as part of the ‘Helmut Lachenmann Weekend’ at the London Southbank Centre on 23rd October 2010.

clarinet and orchestra. It includes a mostly silent tape track of Mozart's Clarinet Concerto that occasionally punctuates the otherwise modernist surface texture. This reflects the commodification and compartmentalisation of Mozart's Concerto in contemporary society.⁵¹⁴ The discourse of the work here reflected the larger cultural discourses in which the Concerto is situated. As Alastair Williams puts it,

Accanto seeks not to recreate the past but to use the rubble of Mozart's style to defamiliarize the present: it is not authentic Mozart we hear in *Accanto*, but a contemporary response to the discourses that envelope Mozart.⁵¹⁵

The second work, *Tanzsuite mit Deutschlandlied* (1979-80), is for string quartet and orchestra. In this work one finds the use of past material as a background 'skeleton'⁵¹⁶ around which the body of the work is built – 'folk music, the German national anthem, and J.S. Bach serve as a kind of naked frame on which to hang his idiosyncratic sound material'⁵¹⁷. As such, in *Accanto* and *Tanzsuite mit Deutschlandlied* markedly historical material is held as something *external* to the works. In the former this takes the form of a 'lifeless' tape recording which imposes itself as a foreign body upon the orchestra's material, rupturing over this discursive boundary. In the latter, historical material forms the framing device for the musical content, and as such, suggests an existence outside of it.

In *Serynade*, though, something different happens. Instead of the externalisation of historical form from expressive content, fragments of historically inscribed material are *internalised* into the discourse⁵¹⁸. The dialectic is refocused: it is not one defined by internal expression and external forms. Instead, attention is brought to the relationships between fractured gestures, each in themselves inscribed with historicity. Put another way, with neither clear historical references, nor some "external" force to which the discourse reacts (for example, quotation), a clear hermeneutic starting point is not provided. As a result, the listener relies on the implications – traces – of historicity within discursive elements, of implicit rather than explicit connections, in locating significance. Indeed, the immanent engaging with pedagogy, technology, and form in *Serynade* – the internalisation of the dialectics of convention – allows it to act as a space for their relative, mutual reformulation,

⁵¹⁴ See WILLIAMS 2012 and MOHAMMED 2004b. I discussed this work in chapter 2, as it (and its critique of commodity) is connected with the idea of objecthood.

⁵¹⁵ WILLIAMS 2012: 92

⁵¹⁶ LACHENMANN, HELMUT 2004b: 'Philosophy of Composition – Is There Such a Thing?' in *Identity and Difference: Essays on Music, Language, and Time* (ed. Jonathan Cross & Jonathan Harvey), Leuven: Leuven University Press, 63

⁵¹⁷ FELLER 2002: 254

⁵¹⁸ Indeed, by the late 1980s Lachenmann himself claimed he was "less happy to employ 'exterritorial' sound material". Cited in HOCKINGS 1995: 8

with each changing in relation to its other. Reference is made both to a sense of embodied musical space, and to the body-schematic space of pedagogy and technology. In their interrelationships they are shown to affect one another, and this forms an important basis for expression and significance in the work.

The piano, in both its expressive and physical dimensions, goes beyond its own “literal” boundaries. *Serynade* critically explores this idea, approaching it with reference to conventionalised embodiment relations of pedagogy, technology, and material within the musical discourse. Merleau-Ponty’s body-schema (here historicised in relation to musical conventions) allowed for the development of a nuanced understanding of this process within bodily and musical space. In this playful dialectic – to borrow a phrase from Merleau-Ponty – ‘the body is essentially an expressive space’⁵¹⁹. In a general point regarding the study of musical instruments, as they are indicative of wider concepts and practices, Kevin Dawe writes that they ‘can provide unique insights into the body-machine interface in their development, construction, and the ways in which they are played’⁵²⁰. Lachenmann focuses on this moment of ‘interface’. Drawing on Shklovsky’s ideas has allowed for the development of the idea of denaturalisation; a defamiliarisation goes beyond the formal, as evidenced in the physicality of embodiment relations as foregrounded in *Serynade*. This is a work suggestive of a (critical) phenomenological mode of enquiry, one which, like the work itself, puts the piano “centre stage” in the processes of experience. The apparent immediacy of experience turns back on itself, underlining its historicity and materiality, through complicating the processes of understanding and playing with the ‘naturalness’ of convention – ‘A crooked road, a road in which the foot feels acutely the stones beneath it, a road that turns back on itself – this is the road of art.’⁵²¹

⁵¹⁹ MERLEAU-PONTY 2002: 169. It is telling that here Merleau-Ponty was originally referring to an organist practicing his instrument.

⁵²⁰ DAWE 2003: 275

⁵²¹ SHKLOVSKY 1990: 15

8. Embodying the Body in Two Non-Danced Dances

I especially remember with great pleasure one evening when [Johann N. Hummel] improvised in so splendid a manner as I never since heard him whether in public or in private. The company were about to break up, when some ladies, who thought it too early, entreated *Hummel* [emphasis in original] to play a few more waltzes [*sic*] for them. Obliging and gallant as he was to the ladies, he seated himself at the piano, and played the wished for waltzes, to which the young folks in the adjoining room began to dance. I, and some other artists, attracted by his play, grouped ourselves round the instrument with our hats already in our hands, and listened attentively. *Hummel* no sooner observed this, than he converted his play into a free phantasia of improvisation, but which constantly preserved the waltz-rhythm, so that the dancers were not disturbed. He then took from me and others who had executed their own compositions during the evening a few easily combined themes and figures, which he interwove into his waltzes and varied them in every recurrence with a constantly increasing richness and piquancy of expression. Indeed, at length, he even made them serve as fuge-themes [*sic*], and let loose all his science in counterpoint without disturbing the waltzers in their pleasures. Then he returned to the gallant style, and in conclusion passed into bravoura, such as from him even has seldom been heard. In this finale, the themes taken up were still constantly heard, so that the whole rounded off and terminated in real artistic style. The hearers were enraptured, and praised the young ladies' love of dancing, that had conducted to so rich a feast of artistic excellence.⁵²²

Louis Spohr

– *Louis Spohr's Autobiography: Translated from the German* (published in 1865)

I begin this last chapter with a 19th-century anecdote, one that I will return to in due course. This sets the tone for the following discussion of connections between dance, piano music, and the body in two musical works, Alfred Schnittke's Piano Quintet (1972-76) and Thomas Adès's Mazurkas, Op. 27 (2009). It is also a story whose significance to this discussion should only later become fully apparent.

⁵²² SPOHR, LOUIS 1865: *Louis Spohr's Autobiography: Translated from the German* (Copyright Edition), London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts, & Green, 191-192. My attention was drawn to this passage through its citation at length in CAREW, DEREK 2007: *The Mechanical Muse: The Piano, Pianism and Piano Music, c. 1760-1850*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 550

In the previous chapter it was observed that the piano is an object that mediates the body, and that this is underlined by or reframed in music that plays with the mediative dimensions of this object, the foremost being relationships between technology and pedagogy. But concerns regarding embodiment in piano music are not only limited to pedagogical-technological relationships. Another exceptional example of the immanence of the body in music – by which I mean that its mediation ‘within’ musical forms – is also underlined in the historic and continuing connections found between piano music and dance forms. Dance, and the sedimentation of aspects of it into music material, reminds us that the body and embodied relations are also core conditions of musical experience.

Whilst pedagogical and technological relationships took centre stage in the previous chapter, with immanent musical space being related to this, in this final chapter primary focus is placed on this space, as well as the structuring functions this space works to achieve (in structuring relationships between minds and bodies). A musically immanent history of the body is shown to be drawn on and explored by recent works. The waltz is taken as a paradigmatic example of a dance form taken into and distinctively shaped by the pianistic repertoire, as a historically resonant mode of bodily mediation still drawn upon, and transformed, in late 20th-century music. This is discussed in the case of the waltz from Schnittke’s Piano Quintet.

Having outlined these historical and bodily connections I then go on to discuss another reaction to these legacies, in Thomas Adès’s Mazurkas. Central here are connections with Fryderyk Chopin’s piano music and his shaping of bodily gesture. An intriguing, although by no means unique, situation emerges, in which “purely musical” allusion is made to earlier musical entities that were dance(d) forms. (Although, in Adès’s work, as in Schnittke’s too, dancers themselves are absent.) This disconnection of dance form from dancer is not peculiar to these late 20th- and early 21st-century works – undanced minuets are expected in Mozart’s symphonies, tempi too quick for dancing are found in many of Chopin’s Waltzes⁵²³, a ländler is often heard in Mahler’s symphonies, and Ravel’s *La Valse* (1919-20) was written not for dancers but in homage to Strauss and to “the wonderful rhythms of the Viennese Waltz”, as Ravel himself put it⁵²⁴. However, in these later works, whilst this literal disconnection continues, what is distinct in Schnittke’s waltz is a critical focus upon *the treatment of musical aspects in the waltz connotative of body and*

⁵²³ For a discussion of this in Chopin’s music see YARAMAN, H. SEVIN 2002: *Revolving Embrace: The Waltz as Sex, Steps, and Sound*, Hillsdale: Pendragon Press, 73

⁵²⁴ Ravel cited in YARAMAN 2002: 94

mind (the structuring of these, as related to one another) and, in Adès's Mazurkas, *the historicity of these dance forms as mediated specifically through their treatment in Chopin's solo piano music*. The musical and philosophical-historical issues central to my discussion of the first are drawn on in supplementing the direction of analytic musical concerns regarding the second.

SCHNITTKE'S QUINTET – THE WALTZ

The body is socially constituted in practices such as music. And, as I have noted in earlier chapters, this constitution often finds parallels to, and coincidences in, other domains, manifesting coincident articulation musically. This is made clear in an outlook sensitive to the interconnected histories of piano and dance. Whilst late 20th- and early 21st-century music is our primary focus, the primacy of historicity to the method developed here means that looking back to the roles of piano and dance in the 19th century sharpens the interpretative lens of this focus. As Richard Leppert puts it, the 19th century was a time when the 'the piano became the ubiquitous and unrivalled instrument of the bourgeois home'⁵²⁵. It provided, both physically and musically, a domestic space in which social performativities could be played out. I suggest that drawing these aspects out aids our understanding of later music with regard to mind, body, and the historicity of these things as articulated musically.

The waltz from Schnittke's Piano Quintet makes connections to the past through the use of this form. This work, as Alexander Ivashkin notes, is a milestone in Schnittke's compositional development and offers a noteworthy case study. It is a work in which, unlike 'the First Symphony or early serial compositions... [or f]rom the polystylistic surface of his earlier compositions[,] Schnittke goes deeper into the sphere of a new musical language in which all the various stylistic elements are combined into a single homogeneous whole.'⁵²⁶ The quintet uses material originally intended for his Requiem (1972-1975)⁵²⁷. Schnittke's quintet is dedicated in memory of his mother, who was of Volga-German descent. In addition, Schnittke spent part of his childhood in Vienna, where his father was working, studying privately there from 1946-48. The explicit

⁵²⁵ LEPPERT 1992: 111. Leppert goes even further, suggesting that it performed an already gendered function within its place in the home: 'the piano served as an object to be looked at beyond being heard or played upon... [this] looking insistently gendered, driven by the instrument's extramusical function within the home as the visual-sonoric simulacrum of family, wife, and mother.' (LEPPERT 1992: 105)

⁵²⁶ IVASHKIN 1996: 133

⁵²⁷ WETTSTEIN, SHANNON L. 2000: *Surviving the Soviet Era: An Analysis of Works by Shostakovich, Schnittke, Denisov, and Ustvolskaya*, D.M.A Diss., University of California (San Diego): 43 and IVASHKIN 1996: 131. Note also that there is an orchestral version of the Quintet, entitled *In Mermoriam* (1978).

connections with Vienna (i.e. the waltz) in the quintet can accordingly be heard as a making links with the Austro-German musical tradition.

The quintet is comprised of five movements. The first begins (and ends) with the solo piano and revolves around a short section of musical material, the piano's interplay with the string quartet, and a passage of tense chromatic string writing accompanied by the insistent repetition of a high G-sharp in the piano part. The second – *Tempo di Valse* – begins without break from the last. A tense *Andante* follows this, before a reflective *Lento*. The work ends with a nostalgic pentatonic melody played by the piano over which, in the strings, are layered materials derived from throughout the quintet as a whole, in a movement marked *Moderato Pastorale*.

Organising Bodies (and Minds)

Listening (rather than dancing) to music provides the conditions for a turning inwards for the listener.⁵²⁸ In the 19th century, the motionless body of the listener afforded an experience of interiority within one's private world *par excellence*, ideals of the time's culminating bourgeois subjectivity. The contemplative listening of an autonomous music was mirrored in an autonomous listener, with his or her own distinctly interior experience. This was emphasised through another 19th-century development – the turning down of the house lights during performance. It is not my aim to contradict these interpretations regarding the disembodied interiority of listening practices by discussing the body's role, but instead to augment to them. This is to say that it is not only the disembodied that mediate still-present legacies of this subjectivity.

Issues of embodiment are underlined in dancing. Values inscribed in the listening act found themselves supplemented by dancing. As Derek Carew puts it,

One dance... was to embody all the qualities which the *bourgeoisie* held dear and which characterised their social ascendancy. The waltz was informal, with no prescribed steps or patterns, danced by couples in intimate bodily contact whirling in and out of a floorful of others similar.⁵²⁹

Sevin H. Yaraman similarly stresses the connection between the waltz and bourgeois values in her *Revolving Embrace*.

⁵²⁸ Dahlhaus traces this, in terms of concert listening practices, to the educative function played by music in the 19th century; 'Education – *Bildung* – meant gaining an inner detachment from the "realm of necessity," as the bourgeoisie regarded their everyday existence' (DAHLHAUS 1989: 50).

⁵²⁹ CAREW 2007: 546, emphasis in original

[T]he waltz required dancers of sufficient experience – not training – to withstand the constant whirling. This appealed to a nineteenth-century bourgeois’ desire for sophistication; and, indeed, the waltz became synonymous with the bourgeois life-style.⁵³⁰

The waltz can therefore be understood in two connected ways. Firstly, it shaped and organised a certain embodied aspect of subjectivity that was culminating during the 19th century. And, secondly, in-so-doing, in sedimenting these practices through being their musical vehicle of mediation, it came *to itself embody* this embodiment.

This should be put in the context of a process during the 19th century – and Chopin has been attributed a central place in this process⁵³¹ – in which gestures of dance became increasingly sedimented into “purely musical” materials. This was a time when piano music was in many ways becoming disconnected from “real” dancing bodies but dancing nonetheless still shaped notions of the body in music, especially in its dance forms. Eric McKee, in his history of the waltz and the minuet, demonstrates how ‘Chopin translates physical motions into musical gestures and uses these musical gestures as compositional source material of a sort whose potential is developed on different levels of musical organization’⁵³². Carew suggests that Chopin ‘manages to transfer the choreographic gestures to the piano’⁵³³. Indeed, it is significant that he ends his history of the piano and its repertoire (c. 1760-1850) with a section on ‘The Dance’ in piano music, ending the book by suggesting that works like Chopin’s op. 70/1 (1833), which were “‘too profound’ for the *salon* [Chopin’s words], were also never meant for the ballroom: it remains to the pianist and piano itself to dance the music out, as indeed it does, in its way, the whole history of this period’⁵³⁴.

This is where Schnittke re-enters the discussion. In his use of the Waltz – in its association with Viennese 19th-century life and embodying of a set of philosophical-historical values – he draws on aspects historically mediative of subjectivity as sedimented into the musical music. The waltz as formal scheme, in its disembodied (rather than danced) character, plays a role, but so too does its bearing traces of past compartments of *being* – or, to put this into the language of Merleau-Ponty, of historically pertinent body-schema. Schnittke’s waltz thus draws immanently on two complimentary legacies – mind

⁵³⁰ YARAMAN 2002: 5

⁵³¹ See CAREW 2007 and MCKEE, ERIC 2012: *Decorum of the Minuet, Delirium of the Waltz: a Study of Dance-Music Relations in 3/4 Time*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press

⁵³² MCKEE 2012: 146

⁵³³ CAREW 2007: 555

⁵³⁴ CAREW 2007: 556, emphasis in original

and body, listening and dancing – of 19th-century experience, locating the latter, in being sedimented into listened-to musical materials, through the former.

Noting some of the general characteristics of waltzes will focus the following discussion of Schnittke's waltz in particular, as these are reaffirmed, deviated from, or negated. The waltz is characterised by its prominent accompaniment, the 'more or less constant "um-cha-cha" pulse outlining the harmonic framework' (and, owing to this background stability, the waltz provides an exceptional vehicle for melodic improvisation).⁵³⁵ This observation might appear obvious. However, these rhythmic and harmonic functions are crucial in that the accompaniment/melody dualism mirrors, in some respects, a body/mind one. This is underlined through recalling features of Spohr's story from the very opening of this chapter.

In the passage from Spohr's autobiography, several interconnected philosophical themes that surround the waltz are crystallised – most centrally, a series of dualities of mind and body (coinciding with gendered issues). The 'young folks' and the 'ladies', who enjoy the bodily action of dancing, are spatially separated ('in the adjoining room') from the 'artists' and men ('hats already in our hands') that gather around the piano so as to enjoy the music ("the music" as removed from its danced dimension). The pleasure of this dancing is also contrasted with the artistic appreciation of Hummel's 'science in counterpoint'. Differing experiences of temporality might also be inferred; in the musical experiences of the dancers, caught up in unfolding rhythms and in bodily movement, and of the 'artists', enjoying the abstract nature of musical themes' fugal treatments. Hummel's 'feast of artistic excellence' is a balancing of the body and mind – dancing pleasure and aesthetic endeavour – an attending to both without disrupting one by the other. Spohr's account underlines that both the waltz and the piano have historically mediated conceptions and practices of body and mind, his depiction of the event also structuring the relationships between the two.

Often recognised in the waltz are qualities of circularity and repetition – 'its intoxicating, repetitive circularity', as Yaraman puts it.⁵³⁶ As Susan McClary has noted, dance's place is often elided from discussions of (dance) music. She attributes this, in large part, to modernist aestheticians' (especially Adorno's) hostility to repetition, a central component of dance (in terms of both its rhythmic and formal organisation).⁵³⁷ Whilst repetition can be generally observed in dance musics, a characteristic 'circularity' is particular to the waltz – '[t]he *valse à trois temps* is often described as a dance of circles:

⁵³⁵ CAREW 2007: 50

⁵³⁶ YARAMAN 2002: 73

⁵³⁷ MCCLARY 2012: 193-195

small clockwise circles embedded within larger counterclockwise ones.⁵³⁸ This is an action often mirrored in the musical schemes, following, for example, A.B. Marx’s advice that waltz composers must “at the very least... bring into prominence this basic motive of motion [the circle]... Each bar, or better, each two-bar segment, must correspond to the dance motive, marking... the swinging turn of the dance”.⁵³⁹

Schnittke’s waltz creates repetitive circularity in both its phrasing and the reappearance of materials (and, having in-part affirmed this characteristic, it is often then deviated from or negated). As it is pervasive throughout much of the second movement, I will continue to attend to this aspect as the discussion of the movement unfolds.

Tempo di Valse

Ex. 60, Schnittke: Piano Quintet, (ii) *Tempo di Valse*, opening

The musical score for the opening of Schnittke's Piano Quintet, *Tempo di Valse*, is presented in four staves. The first staff (Violin I) begins with a half note B-flat, followed by quarter notes A and G, and a half note F. The second staff (Violin II) has a whole rest. The third staff (Viola) has a whole rest. The fourth staff (Cello/Double Bass) has a whole rest. The tempo markings are 'Tempo di Valse', 'rit.', and 'a tempo'. The dynamics are 'pp' and 'pp pizz.'

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The basic quality of circularity comes through in other musical dimensions too, in ways that are less-than-waltz-orientated in their origins. This can be heard firstly, to mention a central feature of the work in passing now, in the use of the B-A-C-H monogram that forms the basis of the waltz’s melody, beginning the movement in the first violin (Ex. 60). (The Quintet begins with the strings only. The piano enters in bar 19.) This motif is repeated over and over, circling around a central pitch (in its original permutation, around B-flat). Repetition and circularity are also core to the work – in its non-waltz dimensions – in the recurrence of, and on-going insistence of, some materials within movements. Schnittke made has reference to these as ‘the Lebensuhr’, which, as Shannon L. Wettstein writes, concerns ‘the ticking away of life, where each moment is caught in a perpetual state of tension’.⁵⁴⁰ (She cites the repeated high G-sharp in the piano in the first

⁵³⁸ MCKEE 2012: 148

⁵³⁹ A.B. Marx cited in MCKEE 2012: 148

⁵⁴⁰ WETTSTEIN 2000: 44

movement (starting at bar 41) as an excellent example of this⁵⁴¹. This is also something that is expressed through the re-emergence of particular motifs and themes.) Despite the non-waltz origins of these circularities, they nonetheless do – especially the use of the B-A-C-H motif – create a quality of circularity peculiar to Schnittke’s waltz movement.

Ex. 61, Schnittke: Piano Quintet (ii), bars 11-14

a tempo

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A key feature of Schnittke’s waltz, and one that philosophically-historically relates to the issues raised in Spohr’s anecdote, is the interaction of counterpoint and the waltz’s incessant accompaniment figure (“um-cha-cha”). The former takes shape prominently through Schnittke’s use of canon.⁵⁴² From bar 11 (Ex. 61), canonic entries at the unison are heard one bar after the next. This articulates the triple time of the waltz – on the vertical, rhythmic axis – but is also linear in dissonantly paying no heed to the harmonic content of the viola’s accompaniment. This is a canon which, harmonically at least, disrupts itself through dense chromatic circularity around a pitch centre (of B-flat, in a “G minor” context). This interplays with the Waltz accompaniment figure, whose gestural two-bar circularity is founded on a swaying between G and F-sharp (reminiscent of a back-and-fourth “I to V⁶” in G) heard at the bottom of the texture in the viola (originally heard in the cello, bar 2). Furthermore, early on in the movement focus is brought onto the linearity of the counterpoint at important structural moments through a prolonging of the circularity of the rhythmic accompaniment figure. This occurs in the bars preceding returns to the “B-A-C-H” melody (at bars 11 and 19) as well as in the bar before bar 39, at

⁵⁴¹ WETTSTEIN 2000: 46

⁵⁴² As noted in chapter 4 (on his Fourth Quartet), Schnittke often uses closely voiced canons to create ‘a texture continuously in motion’ (DURRANI 2005: 80). Richard Taruskin has also noted how, in his Fourth Symphony, Schnittke employs ‘perpetual canon at the almost-unison and the almost-octave’ (TARUSKIN 1997: 103).

which point this melody extends its range upwards to as-yet-untouched peak. At these points single bars of four-four take the place of the three-four metre, acting as written-out ritardandos, so as to linger on a moment of unfolding counterpoint before (re)affirming the waltz-rhythm.

Ex. 62, Schnittke: Piano Quintet (ii), bars 19-25 (strings omitted)



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At bar 19 the piano enters the movement (Ex. 62). It takes the melody in the right hand, slightly adapted rhythmically through the use of quavers, and the accompaniment in the left. The affirmation of the waltz-rhythm at bar 19 centres the piano as the gestural, rhythmic core, before the strings enter in canon once again. The melody then develops, in terms of pitch content and gestural direction, for the first time, with, in bar 23, a movement upwards to an F-sharp and then G. The strings' counterpoint adapts to follow this new pitch space, still in canon. This culminates in a motif derived from the original B-A-C-H figure, one falling downwards onto an E-flat (the new motif: F-sharp, G, F-natural, E, E-flat). This E-flat, first in the piano part at bar 29, articulates a structural point of change, a movement towards a new pitch space that flirts with the subdominant of the original "G minor" – the E-flat acts as a third degree of a "C minor" space, harmonically analogous to the original B-flat linear centre as third degree of "G minor". At bar 29, a C-minor second inversion chord in the piano part confirms this move. Yet the G to F-sharp undulation continues in the bass. Indeed, here the waltz-rhythm complicates. The hemiolas introduced in the pianist's left hand in the third bar of the piano's original entry (i.e. in bars 21-22) continue. In bars 31-34, for example, three groups of four crotchets are heard (made up of four then four then two plus two). The piano on entering thus adopts a pseudo-improvisatory, developmental role. It reaffirms the waltz-rhythm but is also granted the freedom to complicate, to push-and-pull against, a stable concept of rhythm.⁵⁴³

⁵⁴³ In addition to the different roles played by the piano and the strings, they are also often separated structurally. As is also found in Shostakovich's Piano Quintet, lengthy sections appear for strings alone, and 'both Russian quintets [Schnittke's and Shostakovich's] begin their first movements with extended passages for piano alone, and thus contribute further to a separation of the two "sides" of the ensemble.' (SMALLMAN, BASIL 1996: *The Piano Quartet and Quintet: Style, Structure, and Scoring*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 150)

This is important as it calls on yet also disturbs the clarity of the duality highlighted in Spohr’s anecdote: that of counterpoint and rhythm.

Despite the reassertion of the waltz-rhythm by the piano at bar 39 – the bass of which spells out the B-A-C-H motif this time (centred on B-natural) – rhythmic disturbance continues in the strings. In this sense, and in rhythmic terms at least, the waltz returns to “business as usual”, working on the duality of a strong accompaniment that provides the foundation upon which more complex counterpoint might unfold. Again, this principally takes the form of a canon: the second violin’s hemiola figure and following descent is imitated by the first violin (down one semitone) two bars later (bar 41), and the viola two bars later and one semitone down again (43), and finally by the cello (45). Through canon, materials are circled around linearly in the context of a dense chromatic pitch-space.

Ex. 63, Schnittke: Piano Quintet (ii), bars 55-61

The musical score for Ex. 63, Schnittke: Piano Quintet (ii), bars 55-61, is presented in 3/4 time. It consists of five staves: four strings (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Cello) and Piano. The tempo is marked "a tempo". The strings play a series of half notes with a "non vibr." marking. The piano part features a chromatic descending line in the right hand and a bass line with a "Ped." marking. Dynamics include "pp" and "a tempo".

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This leads to a significant moment, at bar 57 (Ex. 63). Here, the piano does not continue to facilitate development of material. It instead becomes the means by which material from outside may be reintroduced – material from the very opening of the first movement. This alters the role of the waltz, as well as the significance of this returning material. The strings settle on a tense cluster made up of the intervallic content of the B-A-C-H motif as starting on C – pitches D to B (and this “B-A-C-H cluster” is an element

that reappears later). The linearity of the counterpoint becomes static. Dancing action turns inward, towards memory, as body and mind audibly disturb one another. The piano here plays a role that could be described using the word ‘extrateritoriality’, as used in previous chapters – as bringing something to a discourse from outside, in this case, reintroducing it. A C major chord is played in the left hand (second inversion), a C-sharp appearing in the right – material derived closely from the opening of the quintet is heard. What was before a solo statement by the piano – an expressive and almost improvisatory passage that appeared not to follow rhythmic strictness – now appears superimposed over a pitch cluster with which there is no reconciliation.

In this passage, the piano’s second chord (bar 61) draws together past and present explicitly. Within the second movement, it appears as a derivation of part of the waltz’s two-bar circular gesture – specifically, from the second chord of the two-bar waltz accompaniment figure (“V⁶”), heard for the first time at the opening of the movement (movement ii, bar 4; F-sharp, B-flat, and D-natural). However, it is heard simultaneously – recontextualised through its proximity to the piano’s first chord in bar 57 – as derived *also* from the second chord of the original opening material of the *first* movement (Ex. 64). Past and present, the abstract nature of memory and the immediacy of the bodily waltzing gestures, become complicated in a moment entangling both. In referring back, in this evocation of the opening, memory is modified as to reflect the present waltz setting (though insufficiently in terms of providing a waltz-rhythm proper). They could even be considered objects, invested with significance, now becoming modified in their new discursive setting.

Ex. 64, Schnittke: Piano Quintet, (i) *Moderato*



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This moment also marks a change in the role of bodily gesture, culminating in a passage characterised by dissolution and stasis before the body’s ultimate recovery. Indeed, from bar 76 onwards, no trace of the waltz-rhythm remains – solo entries are written across bar lines and there is a frequent use of dotted crotchets (also tied across bar lines). The first Violin’s solo quadruple-stopped chord, which announces a quarter-tone trill on

A-natural, is only occasionally punctuated by chords in the piano part. All rhythmic articulation seems abandoned. From 103, slow, triple-*piano* chords appear in the other strings (still revolving around the B-A-C-H motif). Fragments of material appear in the context of static chords in the strings.

At bar 134, there is a movement towards the recovery of discursive, and gestural, articulation. This is done so viscerally, although through gestures very different from those of a waltzing body. Microtonal trills enter in canon in a gesture that complicates pitch identities. The trill, what might in Viennese classicism function at points of structural prolongation or even liminality – that space of “neither here nor there”, having “not yet arrived” at a new, affirmed identity – is extended outward as a large-scale gesture that disturbs affirmed discursive identities. The strings enter one at a time, one bar after the next, with trills that overlap the pitch spaces of each other. This leads to a downward collapse by all the string’s lines into another static “B-A-C-H cluster” (G-sharp to B) just in time for the piano to reenter. This point, as at the marked instance of remembering earlier material (in bar 57), provides a moment in which traces of the opening movement appear again as superimposed upon a new, chromatically dense backdrop.

Ex. 65, Schnittke: Piano Quintet, (ii) *Tempo di Valse*, bars 158-162

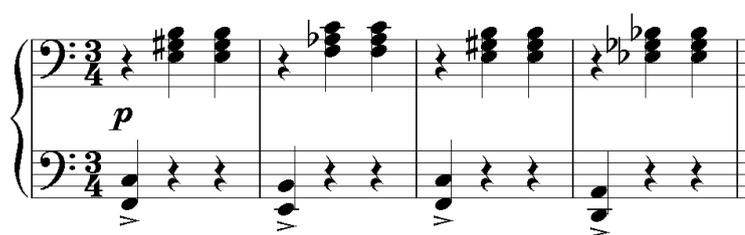
The musical score for Ex. 65, Schnittke: Piano Quintet, (ii) *Tempo di Valse*, bars 158-162, is presented in a five-staff format. The top four staves represent the string ensemble (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass), and the bottom staff represents the piano. The time signature is 3/4. The tempo is marked "Tempo I". The piano part features a chromatic descent in the left hand, with a trill in the right hand. The score includes dynamic markings like "ppp" and "Ped.".

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Articulation of the triple metre is reaffirmed after this passage, at bar 161 (Ex. 65). This is not a waltz exactly, but it bares traces of it. Rather than the return of the emphatic

“um-cha-cha”, the solo piano’s entry is triple-*piano*. Yet the bars’ first beats’ F-natural to E-natural movement back and forth recalls the G-natural to F-sharp in the bass of the original waltz accompaniment. This prepares the ground for a new melody – itself derived from the B-A-C-H motif – before, as previously, the strings enter one-by-one in canon. In another move reflecting earlier large-scale gestures, this section’s (again, problematic) “F minor” centre lands next in the area of “B-flat minor” at bar 181, mirroring the earlier flirtations with the pitch centres of G moving to its subdominant-related C. Indeed, the most (relatively) affirmed key areas are G, C, F, and B-flat (all minor), a circle of fifths, attesting to this movement’s deeply ingrained references to the Austro-German musical tradition, taking these beyond surface signifiers thereof.

Ex. 66, Schnittke: Piano Quintet (ii), bars 197-200 (strings omitted)



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The surface reconfirms this connection at bar 197 (Ex. 66). Here begins a build towards the final, unresolved climax (bar 227) in a passage that, again, puts the piano at the centre of its rhythmic organisation, with the strings in dense polyphony above it (Spohr’s duality, again cited yet disturbed). From bar 197, the waltz-rhythm builds towards its most emphatic expression, with the pianist’s left hand’s parallel fifths and, in the right, pronounced tonal triads on the second and third beats, although these chords are out of kilter with the bass. The waltzing gesture is reimposed but at the cost of a further deviation from this gesture’s reliance on chords’ functional relationships (and their own self-consistency). This escalates slowly towards triple-*forte* – with increasingly tense, microtonal polyphony above it in the strings – until at bar 227, at this climax, the waltz-gesture is broken off, as if unable to go further, and the strings’ collapse once more towards another B-A-C-H cluster (D-natural to F-natural) at bar 243. Through the violence of its gestures the waltzing body becomes self-negating. Indeed, this state of collapse becomes the final defining condition of the movement as, from here onwards, further microtonal fluctuations distil all the strings onto a unison E-flat (with the piano, in a memorial tone, providing fragments of previous waltz material and disconnected pitches in superimposition).

It should also be noted that the waltz material makes an explicit return in the last movement. It appears in a fragmentary form in a moment in which – as seen similarly in the case of a return of earlier material at bar 57 in the waltz movement – its now superimposed, “extraterritorial” context complicates categories of past and present. This occurs in the last movement at bar 77, with the waltz’s B-A-C-H-derived melody (circling around B-flat) entering after two further bars. Another expression of Schnittke’s *Lebensuhr*, at a macroscopic level, this material appears in the strings only, in “G minor” as in the waltz. Importantly, this occurs beside a simple and nostalgic D-flat pentatonic melody in the piano part, whose quiet repetition makes up the entirety of the piano’s material in this movement. The last movement ends with the solo piano “fading out” with this tune, a diminuendo towards a state (described by a performance note in the score as) ‘without sound, almost only key noise’.

Indeed, this is a moment that can be best understood with reference to an idea examined above: “distance”. Similarly to the moment referred to in my brief discussion of Schnittke’s *Symphony No. 3* above (chapter 3), this is an instant characteristic of Schnittke’s “doubling” of distance in his deploying of historically resonant materials. Schnittke’s original use of the waltz (in movement two) positioned it as an object of focus – nonetheless, one that was historical by nature, belonging to a particular past (holding associations of classicism, Vienna, and so on). But, in this return in the last movement, it is not positioned centrally (though still of the past) as before, but rather situated behind the screen of a new and repeated level of discursive consistency – the piano’s continual, sentimental pentatonic tune. It is as such made doubly distant: in the first instance, as a gestural and social index sedimented with content from a bygone era (yet still the object of focus) and now – doubly so – as a distant world from the plane of nostalgic constancy that is the piano’s recurring melody. If, in the case of the first time, it is granted a presence that holds associations of the past, it is now, in its extraterritoriality, relegated to the status of a memory infracting into the nostalgic character of the present, apart from and entering into it.

Thomas Adès's (2009) *Mazurkas for piano, op. 27*, provide a more recent example of the use of dance forms in piano music, of an immanent engagement with the history of the body in music. Musical sedimentation of the memory of dance is underlined in Adès's indebtedness to Chopin's music; Adès is not so much playing with the Mazurka as a dance form, but with Chopin's Mazurka, as a form now removed from its danced function. As a result, these works demonstrate a very particular relationship between mind and body.

The role of metre and rhythmic emphases is a central feature of this and, as I will go on to demonstrate in detail, so are treatments of counterpoint and melody. What is striking from the start of Adès's *Mazurkas* is the fluidity of rhythm, something owing in large-part to rubato often being written out. (It is notable that, as Charles Rosen points out, most of the instances in which Chopin himself wrote out rubato were in his *Mazurkas*.)⁵⁴⁴ In addition, rhythmic values are sometimes decreased and bars cut short in accelerando-like passages that push phrases forward. This is particularly pronounced in the First *Mazurka*. For example, in bars 25-28 we hear two bars of 3/4 move seamlessly into a bar of 2/4 + 3/16 and then one of 5/8, before returning to 3/4 (bar 29). The use of 2/4 bars in the First *Mazurka*, often in conjunction with a *ritardando*, is also noteworthy, given stories of Chopin's rhythm freedom in the performance of his own *Mazurkas*. It was said by Sir Charles Hallé that,

Chopin's rhythmic freedom in the mazurkas seemed so natural that he was not even struck by it for years. In 1845 or 1846, however, Hallé remarked to Chopin that he played most of his mazurkas as if they were notated in 4/4 and not 3/4. Chopin at first denied this energetically, but finally agreed when Hallé made him play a mazurka and counted aloud to him as he did so. Chopin then said, laughing, that the rhythm was the national character of the dance.⁵⁴⁵

Rosen goes on to comment of this account that, even if Chopin's performances were objectively measurable in two or four, the musical sense was still one of a triple metre.⁵⁴⁶ It is in this spirit of rhythmic flexibility that Adès writes, especially in his first two *Mazurkas*.

⁵⁴⁴ ROSEN 1995: 413

⁵⁴⁵ ROSEN 1995: 414

⁵⁴⁶ ROSEN 1995: 414

Ex. 67, Adès: Third Mazurka, bars 1-8

Grave, maestoso (♩ = 44)
semplice
p cantab.
con slancio
molto espr.

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Ex. 68, Adès: Third Mazurka, bars 1-8, concealed counterpoint (octaves displaced for clarity)

Adès often relies on very simple materials as bases of his works. The opening of the third Mazurka is a case in point. The opening eight bars (Ex. 67) serve to set up, unlike the character of the two Mazurkas preceding it, a framework of rhythmic clarity (though one later deviated from). But this basic frame conceals counterpoint within it (counterpoint, from the upbeat to bar 9, becomes a surface phenomenon). There are actually four lines at play, implying paired contrary motion with each other, although a motion that is made distant through constant octave displacements that disturb it. This is made clearer once the implied lines are arranged diagrammatically and brought to the same octave, as shown in Ex. 68. A single line in the diagram is a result of pitches selected from every other bar. The first stave is made up from the pitches of bars 1, 3, 5, and 7 that constitute the “top” voice of the texture, the two bottom staves noting each other pitch from the bass.

The discussion of Schnittke’s waltz (and Spohr’s story) above should serve to underline that dance forms served historically to discipline relationships with and between bodies, and conceptual relationships between mind and body. Melody and counterpoint, and metre and rhythm were crucial in mediating these ideas musically. Indeed, as Eric

McKee argues, composers of the 19th century were aware (although perhaps not consciously so) of cultural associations of elements of forms as these mediated “extramusical” ideas, principally gender. (And, as noted in previous chapters, the construction of gender often finds coincident expression in the formulation of mind-body relations). He makes a case in the last chapter of his *Decorum of the Minuet, Delirium of the Waltz* that ‘Chopin’s adjustments of the Viennese [waltz] model may be read as a critique that, to some extent, was motivated by his own anxieties with regard to performing, composing, and publishing in a popular music genre so strongly associated with femininity and unmitigated sensual pleasure’⁵⁴⁷. Crucially, this comes through in Chopin’s approach to counterpoint (particularly in the later works). Notably, it is not only in the ‘rhythmic’ dimension of the Mazurka, as dance form, around which Adès develops his musical discourse; counterpoint and melody are central and, as I argue, they are so in an acutely Chopinesque manner.

“Endless motivic unfolding”

Ex. 69, Adès: Second Mazurka, bars 1-10

Prestissimo molto espressivo ♩ = 122-136

hear this

play this

(RH)

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Adès’s Mazurkas draw strongly on Chopin’s music in their treatment of phrasing. This is not only significant in that it opens points of allusion or historical connection but also because the notion of “phrasing” itself is one at which issues of melody, rhythm, and

⁵⁴⁷ MCKEE 2012: 14

metre intersect, as well as coincident ideas about the relationships between mind and body. William Rothstein’s 1998 essay on ‘Phrase Rhythm in Chopin’s Nocturnes and Mazurkas’⁵⁴⁸ provides an excellent starting point for this discussion and will be drawn on as an on-going analytical reference point in my illustration of these concerns.

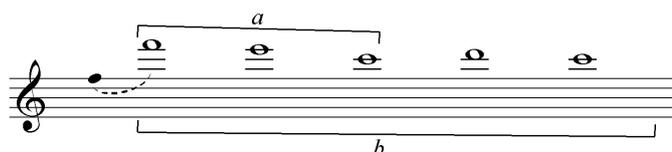
Rothstein’s essay opens up a way of understanding Chopin’s – and, as I demonstrate, Adès’s – ability to write phrases beyond the confines of metric articulation (principally, the emphases of metre). In particular, this comes through in Chopin’s later writing, in his approach to melody.

During the decade of the 1840s, both [Chopin and Wagner] were moving towards an increasingly seamless style of melodic writing, which in Wagner’s case has become famous under the name of “endless melody”.⁵⁴⁹

This is an approach that it is drawn on particularly in the second of Adès’s Mazurkas, in which, to borrow the Wagnerian parlance, an “endless melody” develops on a number of levels: motivically, it charts a core idea that continually flows; and harmonically, it unfolds around (in the most part) a series of descending thirds in a slowly evolving modal context. This is all filtered through an approach to rhythm that is formally strict yet gives the sense of a freeing rubato that cuts across barlines and metric emphases. The basis of this process can be observed in the passage leading up to the first climax (bar 29, marked *triple-forte*). An analytical exploration of this passage, with regard to these features, forms the heart of the following discussion.

In Adès’s early 21st-century work it might seem more appropriate to talk of motif rather than melody as of principal focus – and hence of something like “endless motivic unfolding” rather than “endless melody”. However, this idea is still drawn upon in the sequentially unfolding treatment of motif and in the “melodic” groupings that emerge through their phrasing.

Ex. 70, Adès: Second Mazurka, motivic paradigm



Ex. 70 shows a motif – or rather, a germ of a motivic contour – that is fundamental to the movement’s materials. These are the first notes of both the right hand

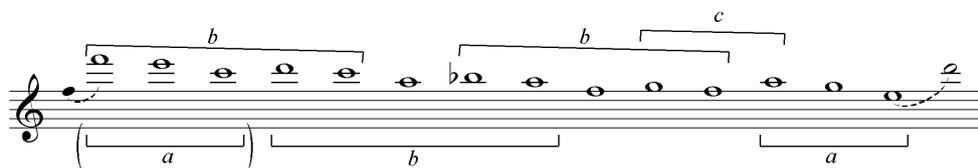
⁵⁴⁸ ROTHSTEIN, WILLIAM 1998: ‘Phrase Rhythm in Chopin’s Nocturnes and Mazurkas’ in *Chopin Studies* (ed. Jim Samson), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

⁵⁴⁹ ROTHSTEIN 1998: 128

(“melody”) as well as its own accompaniment (in the left hand, in rhythmic canon of one note per crotchet an octave below). What should be kept in mind from the very beginning is that this music is modal, by which I mean that it employs at any given time a pitch-collection and one that is often treated linearly (i.e. as a “scale”). (And, as shown below, Adès’s modes allude to tonal pitch-space.) The consequence of this modal context is that permutations of motivic contours do not retain their absolute interval values. To give a simple example, if the pitch collection (mode) C, D, E, and F were in play, if the contour C to E were taken “up a modal step” it would result in a movement from D to F. Instead of a major 3rd, as before, a minor third would result. The melodic contour, *the gestural shape*, is of primary importance. This is filtered through a rhythmic pattern, an alternation between two triplet-quavers and two straight quavers, that is sometimes momentarily deviated from (especially toward the ends of underlying groups of bars, as explored below).

The first two bars of the Second Mazurka make up the first melodic phrase, with phrases beginning approximately every two bars. This I call a phrase as it repeatedly appears, in different modal permutations, as a gesture leapt up to that then descends from this highest peak. It is also developed through a sequence of modal permutations that pertain to this melodic phrase identity as Gestalt. This descent develops the motivic paradigm of Ex. 70 in which I label the principal germ *a* and its larger version *b*. Almost all material of the movement is derived from the first germ – gestures are generally constructed through combinations of modal steps (i.e. either a semitone or a tone) and thirds (minor or major). (And, as such, *b* can be heard as extension of *a*.) This makes up a longer sequence, which itself totals the first phrase. (*C* is a cell derived from the “step and third” contour but inverts it.)

Ex. 71 Adès: Second Mazurka, first phrase, pitch sequence



As can be seen in Ex. 71, contour *b* appears again and again, although in-so-doing continually overlaps beginnings and endings. The potential “endlessness” of this gesture is therefore visible in the movement’s most fundamental materials, although this is an endlessness which stems from internal repetition. Rothstein writes (of Chopin’s F-sharp Nocturne, op. 48, no. 2) that, “[i]t may seem paradoxical that a melody which contains so

much repetition could be thought of as “endless”.⁵⁵⁰ However, he accepts this paradox as ‘[t]he segments are *always* ending, but the larger thrust of the melody never allows them to end peacefully.’⁵⁵¹ Similarly, Adès’s melodic phrases, whilst they suggest continual repetition, never resolve the larger unfolding sequence to which they belong.

I define the “entry” of each melodic phrase as a jump upwards to this high point and its following descent. Including the moment of climax itself, which hits as its high point the highest note on the piano, there are fifteen such phrases in this opening passage.⁵⁵² The pitch sequences of each melodic phrase are mapped out in Ex. 72. This form of presentation allows for a comparison of motivic derivations and the on-going transformations of the modes used. In this example I have placed slurs over the principal motivic gesture *a* and over modal steps downwards. Minor moments of development can be noted – for example, in the step movement found in phrase five that becomes extended to *a* in phrases six (shown by brackets) or in the ellipsis of a step-wise cell in phrase four. More significantly, at the end of phrase nine appears step-wise movement from A-flat to F-sharp (marked with an arrow and a “2”). This is repeated a further two semitones downwards (F-sharp to E-natural) at the opening of the next phrase. (This development is shown at the end of the line showing phrase nine, in a box). This is a marked move that confirms an almost entirely new modal space, also articulated by a *fortissimo* dynamic, at phrase ten. Like a DNA sequence, the gestural sequence replicates itself, often identically, but sometimes with small mutations that are carried forward.

⁵⁵⁰ ROTHSTEIN 1998: 134

⁵⁵¹ ROTHSTEIN 1998: 134, emphasis in original

⁵⁵² The first, marked *piano*, bar 1 beat 1 (F); second, bar 3 beat 1 (D); third, bar 5 second triplet quaver (B-flat); fourth, marked *mezzo piano* bar 7 second triplet quaver (G); fifth, bar 8 last triplet quaver; sixth, bar 11 beat 1 (C); seventh, marked *mezzo forte* (then *mezzo piano*), bar 13 beat 1 (F); eighth, bar 15 beat 1 (D-flat); ninth, bar 17 second quaver (B-flat); tenth, marked *fortissimo*, bar 19 beat 1 (F-sharp); eleventh, bar 21 second triplet quaver (D-natural); twelfth, bar 23 second quaver triplet (B-natural); thirteenth, bar 25 third quaver triplet (G); fourteenth, bar 27 second quaver; and, fifteenth, marked *triple-forte*, bar 29 beat 1 (C-natural, the highest note on the piano).

Ex. 72, Adès: Second Mazurka, gestural sequences in an evolving pitch-space, bars 1-30

Entry: 1

p

MODE

2

3

mp

4

5

6

mf

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

fff

Modal pitch spaces are outlined to the right of the double bar line, with the introduction of new pitches shown as diamond-headed. (The first appearances of these pitches are also marked out in the melodic phrases by small arrows.) Despite getting higher in pitch, there is a sense that the melody is falling, especially prior to phrase ten. This can be explained with reference to the modes' transformations: to the original B-flat is added an E-flat, then an A-flat, then in quick succession D-flat and G-flat. This constitutes a "flattening" of the pitch-space that, despite the modal context, works its way around the circle of 5^{ths}. (In anachronistic terms, these modes make use of the pitches of F major, then B-flat, E-flat, A-flat, and then D-flat.) The pitch space of tonality, that provided a framework enabling the 'experience of *embodied motion*' within music⁵⁵³, is remembered, if not enacted wholesale. A sense of embodied motion, within a musical space that still resonates with the echo of a tonal past, is articulated by always-unfolding gestural contours.

Importantly, this development towards phrase ten also marks a shift in the opening contours of the phrases that follow, with the leaping up to each new phrase now reflecting this shape (of a modal step downwards). However, the internal contours of the melody lines remain the same (illustrated through arranging phrases above each other in Ex. 72), giving an inner consistency to the endless melody despite this development. The arrival of phrase fifteen can be heard to return to the identity of the melodic phrase before the lasting changes introduced by the development and extension of the motivic contours at the end of phrase ten, making this moment all-the-more climatic. Dialectically, this is both of a moment of development and return.

Phrasing and Metre

As Rothstein points out, there is an important difference between phrasing and metric groupings.⁵⁵⁴ Furthermore, the difference (i.e. the non-coincidence) between the two is a crucial part of "endless melody"; phrases pushing beyond metric guidelines. Rothstein shows how Chopin exploits such discrepancies in the context of the mazurka, a dance form, that 'encourage[s] a phrase organisation in duple lengths – four, eight, sixteen, and thirty-two bars'⁵⁵⁵. Chopin does so through his use of, to give one example, a relatively simple background metric pattern (e.g. a sentence of 1 + 1 + 2 bars) that is elaborated with phrases and subphrases that overflow these edges.⁵⁵⁶

⁵⁵³ HATTEN 2004: 115, emphasis in the original. This issue of immanent musical motion was discussed in greater depth above, in chapter 7.

⁵⁵⁴ ROTHSTEIN 1998: 115

⁵⁵⁵ ROTHSTEIN 1998: 118

⁵⁵⁶ ROTHSTEIN 1998: 119-121

Whilst not duple in character, in Adès's Second Mazurka a metric hierarchy nonetheless emerges, one upon which is heard a fluidity of phrasing arising from the "endless melody". The basic phrase is approximately two bars in length, whilst not always coinciding with the metric background. This metric framework is itself made up of clear grouping of bars: six bars four times and then four bars, themselves each made up of two bar units.⁵⁵⁷ Each six bars, and then after the last group of four, we hear a growth in the dynamic marking or a return to a dynamic level after a sudden decrease nestled within that group: *piano* (bar 1), *mezzo piano* (7), *mezzo forte* (13), *fortissimo* (19), *fortissimo* again (25), then *fortississimo* (29). The basic two-bar phrase shaping appears fluidly above these somewhat rigid metric structures, not always confirming it and often, in a rubato-like manner, appearing a little after each two-bar background unit.

Rigorous compositional processes give shape to the work's material: rhythmic and harmonic (modal) filters, and developing, linear contours. These could potentially be considered in some sense as "pre-compositional" materials, and following this abstract quality, as markers of a musical mind over a musical body. But the body and the mind are bound-up together: the rhythmic filters are informed by the body, by bodily gestures taken into (Chopin's) piano music; the harmonic space resonates with tonally articulated embodiment; and, what might be understood as motivic development, emphasises gestures that spiral up and down within this space, privileging contour over absolute interval relationships. Furthermore, contrapuntal writing (Spohr's/Hummel's "science in counterpoint") is filtered through, rather than structurally set against, rhythmic content.

Rothstein notes a technique pertinent to our discussion through which Chopin connected phrases together at an underlying level, so as to transcend background metric groupings – the use of a 'phrase overlap'⁵⁵⁸. A similar manoeuvre can be heard in Adès's work, albeit in an early 21st-century context. A 'phrase overlap' is defined by Rothstein as the simultaneous functioning of the final note(s) of one phrase, or subphrase, as the first note(s) of the next.⁵⁵⁹ In Adès's Mazurka, the octave displacements at the ends of the phrases (except for the first) repeated pitches at the end of one function also as the first of the next, an octave (or a number of octaves) higher. This anchors the end of one to the beginning of the next in the manner of a phrase overlap. The question, "Does each phrase begin with the (first) lower note of the octave leap of the highest note, the second?" can

⁵⁵⁷ It should be noted that, whilst it was unusual, Chopin sometimes made use of six-bar phrase structures. For example, in the Mazurka op. 59 no. 1 in A minor (a late work, of 1845) (see Rothstein's discussion, ROTHSTEIN 1998: 129-130).

⁵⁵⁸ ROTHSTEIN 1998: 117

⁵⁵⁹ ROTHSTEIN 1998: 117

therefore be answered both in the affirmative and negative as one phrase blends in the next through this anchoring via pitch.

Ex. 73, Chopin: Mazurka, op. 24, no. 2, opening

Allegro non troppo. M.M. ♩ = 192

il basso sempre legato

Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel (1879 edition)

The historical dimension is also highly relevant to this question. In terms of allusion these octave leaps are extremely evocative of Chopin’s gestural language in suggesting gestural and phrasing similarities with, to give the most immediately apparent example, Chopin’s Mazurka op. 24, no. 2 in C major (Ex. 73), the first melody of which (bar 5) similarly leaps up the octave and then descends down a scale step (which is also elaborated, with a triplet auxiliary note in Chopin’s case) before further descent towards the lower octave. Like Adès’s, Chopin’s melody is motivically defined by steps and thirds, and rhythmically by an alternation of quavers and triplet quavers. In Chopin’s work this gesture gives strength to the second beat (as following the Mazurka model). Through this lens of allusion to Chopin’s gestural language, Adès’s octave leap can be heard as the “first beat”, with the fall a modal-step serving to help place emphasis onto a “second beat”. This is readily apparent at the very opening of Adès’s Mazurka, with the octave leap literally falling on the first beat. However, at other times, it is the second, higher note of the octave leap that becomes the first pitch of each melodic phrase – for example, at the entry of the seventh melodic phrase (bar 13) in which there is suddenly a jump three octaves upwards to a new high point, one that coincides with a chord in the accompaniment, the first beat of the bar, and the first bar of a new bar-group. Adès therefore blends and shifts the beginnings and endings of phrases through both historical allusion and transforming the basic melodic contours (as outlined in Ex. 72).

Ex. 74, Adès: Second Mazurka, counterpoint (in the left hand) gestural sequences

Entry: 1
4
7
10
13

In his late works, Chopin also developed his treatment of phrases, with regard to the pursuit of endless melody, through the avoidance of cadences and the increased use of counterpoint⁵⁶⁰. The latter of these plays an important role in Adès Second Mazurka. The counterpoint to the melody of the right hand is summarised in Ex. 74. At first, the gestures unfold in crotchets (on the beat). From the entry of phrase ten onwards they become mostly triplet-crotchets with the occasional duplet crotchet (which is why, even though it still totals six bars in length, the sequence from phrase ten contains more pitches). As demonstrated in the diagram, this contrapuntal line makes use of the contours of the melody (and in fact starts off in rhythmic canon at the octave with it). Further cells closely derived from the main line also make an appearance: *d*, which modally steps twice downwards; and *b-*, a derivation of *b*, which drops a modal-step, next a third, but then steps downwards and back (rather than upwards and back, as in *b*). *A* followed by an arrow (*a*→) indicates an extension of *a* (normally by another descending third/ascending sixth). Whilst these moments can be heard as an extension of the inner intervals of *a*, their straying from the discursive terms already outlined articulates points of scission between one line and the next – here, in the accompaniment line, segmentational boundaries appear. This counterpoint supports the upper part, adopting its “transpositions” in different modal spaces whilst also elaborating the melodic material itself through exploring new combinations of the basic gestural contours. These lines follow the six-bar grouping, with the left hand also punctuating these their beginnings with sustained chords beneath them. Whilst in many other of Adès works (for example, in his *Five Elliot Landscapes*, 1990) harmonies are produced from the superimposition of *interval cycles*,⁵⁶¹ here *gestural contours* are paramount, unfolding within the context of a modal framework that colour these gestures with memories of the embodied pitch-space of tonality. The upper part, which, despite its appearance, is surprisingly strict in its gestural and rhythmic content, in the left-hand’s part becomes the basis for freer musical development.

Aspects of Chopin’s Mazurkas live on through Adès’s. In the second this means the appeal to melodic writing that transcends its own metric framework and a specific treatment of the “rhythmic body” vs. “science in counterpoint” dualism. The focus on gestural contour over rigid intervallic relationships is also noteworthy in providing hidden links with tonal treatments of musically embodied motion. Historical allusion mediates the hearing of this work, with Chopin’s Mazurka’s providing an auditory frame for Adès’s handing of musical gestures and counterpoint.

⁵⁶⁰ ROTHSTEIN 1998: 129

⁵⁶¹ MARKOU, STELLA IOANNA 2010: *A Poetic Synthesis and Theoretical Analysis of Thomas Adès’ Five Elliot Landscapes*, D.M.A Diss., University of Arizona, 30-31

Schnittke's waltz and Adès's Mazurkas present two reactions to the historicity of dance forms as sedimentated into instrumental music. In the former, this regards allusion to the waltz as an exemplar of Austro-German music making and, in so doing, an immanent musical engagement with legacies of mind and body – abstract form and rhythmic, gestural immediacy, and past and present – as these dialectically mediate one another. In the latter, this is traced through the specific treatment of the historicity of a dance form, the Mazurka, as located through the Mazurkas of Chopin. The common element of both compositional, critical reactions – though one nonetheless accomplished differently in each – is a facing of the historicity of dance forms as these have been historically instructive ways of *being*, of the comportment of values beyond themselves: with the waltz, as embodying dimensions of bourgeois ideals and of Austro-German musical identity, and, in Adès's Mazurkas, of embodied musical gestures, in the interactions between counterpoint, the unfolding harmonic space, rhythm, and metre.

CODA

It would be misleading to conclude this project in a singular manner. Whilst conclusions have been made throughout, the often-decentred character of both the music focused upon and the philosophical lens(es) of focus make a synthesising of my on-going findings undesirable. It would be better to conceive of any conclusions in the manner of one of Valentin Silvestrov's codas – take as example that from his String Quartet No. 1 (see chapter 5). Like this coda, closure here is partial yet multidimensional. It, like mine, is non-synthetic, drawing together (musical/philosophical) themes that have been outlined and developed throughout. Both bring together new points of contact between materials so-far outlined – so that they might be heard and thought anew – whilst still maintaining these materials' identities in difference and tension with each other, so as to deny the affirmation of some new, higher unity. Given that the body of issues has already been explored at length I will keep these comments brief.

The way in which the presence of the past is explored in the works discussed can be understood, at a general level, as a dialectic between two tendencies (tendencies often simultaneously at play in a single work): firstly, that of locating the past as mediative *of* the present, and, secondly, that of attending to objects from the past as they persist and face us *in* the present. Looking back to Part I, Silvestrov's Symphony No. 5 provides an excellent example of where the former tendency is favoured. It is a work in which, through the ruination of past symphonic structures, the present immediacy of musical material is brought into question, as something ghostly and fractured that might only be made sense of with reference to the past. In Kancheli's Fifth Symphony, in contrast, the latter tendency comes through; an object markedly of the past is foregrounded (the harpsichord melody), insisting nostalgically on being present. Indeed, this use of an 'object' provides an exceptional example of a tendency found in many recent musical works – where objects become the foci of experience, foregrounded over (an often naturalised) background that frames events while remaining hidden.

In Part II this staging became the central topic of investigation. The dialectic here can be encapsulated in a chiasmus: here was an investigation of the nature of discourse (in the sense of discourse's "essential" qualities, its identity, in these works) and the discourse of the natural (that discourse is always reliant on some degree of hidden, naturalised staging, upon which objects articulate their foregrounded identities). Through developing concepts from the poststructuralist poetics of Julia Kristeva, dimensions of subjectivity (particularly, those regarding philosophical "identity") were shown to be embroiled through these discursive issues in their mutually constitutive processes. Under three

headings – *knowing*, *dreaming*, and *desiring* – I explored those dialectical tendencies from Part I: that, firstly, knowledge of the present is mediated by the past and, secondly, that the past also finds itself emerging in the present, as objectified. In a discussion of Wolfgang Rihm’s String Quartet No. 10, this dialectical co-emergence of one and the other was underlined: as objectified features of the past emerged, these elements began to organise a discourse which had hitherto expressed instability. These objects of the past came to audibly mediate the structuring of the present. The objectification of elements from the past took on a particular resonance in Schnittke’s String Quartet No. 4 through these elements’ associations with the closure of past musical works and past musical selves. This idea that past materials might find new significance in the present was developed in my discussion of Silvestrov’s String Quartet No. 1, with reference to theories of dreaming. Both music and dream are places in which knowledge and desire interpenetrate, and desire’s relation to mediation of the past by the present and the presence of the past (passed) object was the focus of the final chapter of Part II.

The body’s relationship to mediation and to musical objects formed the core of Part III. This was something underlined through the role assumed by the piano in Lachenmann’s *Serynade* – the piano is both an object of the past, compositionally confronted by Lachenmann, and an object that mediates the present through its inscribed historicity. It is a technological object but one whose inherited pedagogy continues to mediate the present. The use of dance forms in Schnittke’s Piano Quintet and Thomas Adès’s Mazurkas provided examples of further reactions to bodies as sedimented into musical material. In the former, this meant taking the Waltz as an object that is associated with – indeed, embodies – certain bodily aspects of the Austro-German music tradition. In the latter, the use of Chopin’s Mazurkas as a past that continues to mediate the present, as a screen that frames aspects of contemporary piano writing, was the chief issue of focus.

The concept of coincidence has been particularly valuable in making visible the hidden links between different philosophical-historical legacies, as these are immanent to inherited musical materials (coincidences, for example, between musical articulations of body/mind issues as these reflect a nature/culture dualism (see chapter 3, in particular)). Indeed, this concept is supplemented through the dream-theoretical approach to musical analysis pursued in chapter 5. In music, as in dreams, elements might “stand in” for something else (metonymically), or might take that structure of something else (metaphorically), in a fashion comparable to the metonymic and metaphoric coincidences between ideas across different conceptual domains – mind/body, culture/nature, masculine/feminine, and so on. This conceptual fluidity, and the continual deferring of philosophical-historical issues and concepts to each other, attests to the

multidimensionality of musical experience, and to the contemporary musico-historical condition in which any stable centre might be considered only provisional.

It has been my aim to react appropriately to this multidimensionality through pursuing a method that has been in many ways anti-methodological or, at least, non-schematic. Like the works under investigation, I have sought to shift positions around the object(s) being explored – pointing to the affinities, coincidences, and boundaries that shape their significance – rather than attempting to ascertain their “true” essence(s). This, I hope, is to make these philosophical investigations “musical” as much as this music is “philosophical”, in a way that is distinct to the music and philosophy of the late 20th century onwards. This distinctiveness comes through – as I argued in the introductory chapter – in the *provisionality* of interpretative centres found in both these musical works and in (my employing of) philosophies, provisionality that are favoured over the pursuit of some higher closure within either music or philosophy, or indeed between the two. This quality of provisionality is reminiscent of what Sylviane Agacinski calls a modern quality of “passingness”. And, indeed, as she puts it, ‘if being stops being eternal and if passing acquires ontological dignity, then the images of a transitory world can themselves emerge from the shadow of nonbeing and become capable of truth.’⁵⁶² This is to locate in provisionality the possibility of truthfulness, without recourse to the assuredness of universality.

My attending to these issues has been dialectical (yet non-synthetic): working between reification and reaction, I have tried to maintain the relatively autonomous identity of the objects under discussion whilst, at the same time, “opening up” these objects to intersections by philosophical and historical discourses. Furthermore, the same may be said in an inverse form: philosophical ideas have been taken as objects that are intersected by musical discourses as these articulate concepts – and non-conceptualised performativities – of mind, body, culture, nature, and so on. The title of Part II – “Mind in Music, Music in Mind” – alludes to this situation in which music and philosophy mediate one another, that the object of one is simultaneously conditioned by a framework provided by its other. This means that music might act so as to reformulate the conditions by which it is experienced.

I have discussed how past-present relations are approached with reference to objects. This attendance to objects in music is itself historically and philosophically significant. Following Fredric Jameson’s suggestions above, we saw how interiority and temporality found themselves aligned with subjectivity, and space with the exteriority of

⁵⁶² AGACINSKI, SYLVIANE 2003 [orig. 2000]: *Time Passing: Modernity and Nostalgia* (trans. Jody Gladding), New York: Columbia University Press, 15

the world (a world of objects)⁵⁶³. As the most quintessentially temporal of the arts, music's attendance to objects can be seen to complicate this arrangement. Whilst respect is paid to the object as a concept derived from spatiality (e.g. as it exists within the "space" of a musical discourse), the object in many respects also becomes a category of *temporal* significance. The object is heard to be shaped in time (developing musical sound-objects within works) and/or to itself shape time (the sounding-object of the piano as colouring an unfolding temporality, and shaping subjectivities bound-up with this). In highlighting the objects' temporal qualities, temporality is itself seen to be mediated by a material world of objects. Temporality, and music as a temporal art, ceases to remain defined by ephemerality, as opposed to the materiality of space. Indeed, this very duality is played-off – shown to stand on unstable foundations – with a transformation of the categories by which aesthetic experience is mediated as this process's end. Whilst critical music faces the ephemerality of temporality (as this is a significant, established idea), it also confronts the material conditions that shape this temporal condition and the materialities that appear "within" temporality (i.e. "in time"). This is a critical attitude manifested principally in the attending to sound(ing)-"objects", i.e. the "materiality of musical material".

However, the role of objects is not only something that shapes the immediacy of experience as this unfolds temporally. Relationships with objects, which nonetheless become apparent temporally, also shape conceptions of *historical time*⁵⁶⁴ – that is, a sense of time as abstracted from moment-to-moment temporal experience. Jameson suggests that postmodernism effaces historical time, and any sense of depth. A focus on the present, as the site of the experience, reflects this historical condition. But, taking this further, this focus on the present, as leading to a past located in the present – and in so giving the present historical (and expressive) depth – is to reflect this condition critically. Following this, if one common element can be located in the diverse works discussed, beyond areas of musical and philosophical overlap and points of cross-fertilisation, it is this preoccupation with the past that is located, dialectically, through a focus upon the present. In chapter 6, I touched on Jameson's account of the 'End of Temporality', a key characteristic of which being a reduction of experience to the present. This, he sees as a symptom of our postmodern condition. The music discussed, in the manner of immanent

⁵⁶³ JAMESON 2003: 697

⁵⁶⁴ In addition, and I will mention this only briefly (at risk of inviting another project in itself), it is also significant that new notions of historical time are themselves developing, ones in which, in a time of Google, Wikipedia, Twitter, and "Cloud Computing", materiality's role in the sedimentation of historical memories is changing. We can only wait and see what critical musical reactions to these contemporaneously developing times and temporalities will bring. These developments are also reflected in philosophy in the recent rise of "object-oriented" philosophies and New Materialisms, which ascribe (new) objects new ways of being significant, and of "being" altogether.

critique – to greater degrees in some, less in others – does not simply affirm or negate this condition. Instead, it dialectically works *through* it, through the contradictions within it. That is to say, in its critical dimension it does not merely reject the End of Temporality through, to imagine one response, the appeal to a supersensual realm beyond the presentness of experience (through turning back to aspects of Romanticism)⁵⁶⁵. It rather takes the reduction of experience to the present as a point of critical beginnings, locating, in this present, worlds shaped by the past. This function develops the critical role played by music as outlined by Adorno: music is dialectically both a part of, and apart from, society. However, this is achieved in a manner that – through the fact of its situatedness within ever-changing philosophical-historical conditions – was by its very nature unforeseeable to him. The music, in imitating the End of Temporality – in its sensitivity to this historical and philosophical condition – actually manages to take us beyond it.

In a time when our metanarratives are “dead”, when “the past” is supposedly reduced to an imagistic surface without depth, the means by which critical music is critical is itself reformulated from earlier modernity. When the relationships between past and present are themselves core to social and political anxieties⁵⁶⁶, locating the present in the past and the past in the present becomes itself an inherently critical project. If, as Jameson suggests, postmodernist conditions mean the reduction of temporality to a persistent present, late modernist music’s criticality stems in-part from the contradictions immanent to this present – that it is the product of particular philosophical-historical conditions, that “within it” it contains the past, and that it itself sits within a frame mediated by the past. Historical material and sedimented conditions of musical experience, which have passed, are *surpassed* through this dialectic of past and present.

I made a claim in my introduction, that “musical experience – and the conceptualisation of experience – is shaped by categories of thought and feeling (like mind and body, and culture and nature) that are themselves articulated musically”. I have illustrated that each of these terms may be “opened up” and (uncovered as) related to the others. In categories of “thought and feeling” – and in this very act of demarcation, of the “one” and “the other” – coincidences with ideas of mind (“thought”) and body (“feeling”),

⁵⁶⁵ The case of Giya Kancheli’s Symphony No. 5 provides an interesting counterpoint to this in that it *does* make reference to a realm of nature beyond the present (see chapter 3), using this as a framing device for the staging and drama of a musical object.

⁵⁶⁶ Present conceptions of (anxieties over) the state of historical time, of the present’s relationship with the past, has manifested various reactions. The rise of Historically Informed Performance provides a notable example; “[h]istorical” performers’ use period instruments and practices, writes Richard Taruskin, ‘in a manner that says more about the values of the late twentieth century than about those of any earlier era’ (TARUSKIN, RICHARD 1995: *Text and Act: Essays on Music and Performance*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 164). See his essay, ‘The Modern Sound of Early Music’.

culture and nature show through. I have also argued that “articulation” is a highly contested issue, one in which subjectivity – and the means by which it speaks *through* and *of* music – is at stake. Within “each” domain can be located a wider set of historically and philosophically established relationships. And to engage with any, so as to bring significance to musical experiences in the present, is to engage also with (critical) issues of historicity and philosophy. It is to confront these ideas as they have shaped musical experience and are consequently “taken into” music, as it both shapes the world and is also a part of it. As they shape music, as music is itself always an act of “doing” – a doing of subjectivities, pedagogies, instrumental technologies, performativities... – these ideas (these practices) are themselves forms of inherited musical material.

APPENDIX – SCORES CITED

Adès, Thomas –

Mazurkas for Piano, op. 27 (2009), Harlow: Faber Music, 2011 (corrected impression)

Beethoven, Ludwig van –

Egmont Overture, op. 84 (1809-1810), Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1862

Chopin, Fryderyk –

Mazurka op. 24, no. 2 (1836), Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1879

Feldman, Morton –

String Quartet No. 2 (1983), Vienna: Universal Edition, 1988

Kancheli, Giya –

Symphony No. 5 (1976), New York: G. Schirmer, 1982

Lachenmann, Helmut –

Ein Kinderspiel (1980), Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1982

Serynade (1998-2000), Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 2002

Rihm, Wolfgang –

String Quartet No. 10 (1993/1997), Vienna: Universal Edition, 1997

Schnittke, Alfred –

Piano Quintet (Quintet for Piano, two Violins, Viola and Cello) (1972-76), Leipzig:
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