ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation:	EXPANDING THE CHORAL CONDUCTOR'S HORIZON: THE APPLICATION OF SELECTED LITERARY THEORIES TO THE PROCESS OF CHORAL SCORE STUDY
	Gary B. Seighman, Doctor of Musical Arts, 2009
Dissertation directed by:	Professor Edward Maclary School of Music

The main premise of this document is that the various movements associated with literary theory can provide unique interpretative insights for the modern choral conductor during score study. Traditionally, score study involves making performance decisions based upon formal analysis, study of performance practices, examination of historical and stylistic information, and practical ensemble considerations. By adopting a stance that also acknowledges elements offered by literary theory, the conductor can begin to uncover those elements in the music that maximize the potential for the singer to have a meaningful musical experience.

Literary theory deals critically with the process of interpretation and focuses especially on the relationship between the literary text and the reader. On one end of the

literary theory spectrum, formalist studies of interpretation place value only on the words and notes and their grammatical relationship with one another while ignoring historical information as a determinant source for meaning. On the other end, Reader-Response Criticism focuses on the attributes of the reader, understood as part of the culture he belongs to, and through his personal background and experiences. Many branches of theory are located in the middle and consider how the properties of a text fuse with a reader's expectations and guide him to a particular interpretation.

The adaptation of these theories to music is not new, as shown by the sizeable corpus of books and articles devoted to musico-literary studies. Few if any of these studies focus exclusively on choral repertoire or address practical issues of score preparation and conducting gesture, however. This document surveys several literary theories, identifies their key concepts, and adapts them to the analysis of specific choral works. The result is a series of analyses that offer fresh perspectives for a variety of choral works. Topics include, but are not limited to the following: uncovering hidden dialogue, music as a system of signs (semiotics), tropes and hermeneutic windows, the vocality of text, and conducting gesture as metaphor.

The goal of musico-literary studies as it relates to choral training should be to educate a new generation of conductors who understand the processes of how we as both performers and listeners perceive meaning from our vast repertory and to develop strategies that improve its accessibility.

EXPANDING THE CHORAL CONDUCTOR'S HORIZON:
THE APPLICATION OF SELECTED LITERARY THEORIES
TO THE PROCESS OF CHORAL SCORE STUDY

by

Gary B. Seighman

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Advisory Committee:
Professor Edward Maclary, Chair
Professor Barbara Haggh-Huglo
Professor Michael Hewitt
Professor Francine Hultgren
Professor Martha Randall

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All musical examples including those in the Appendices are public domain and available
online at http://www.cpdl.org.

CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Study

This paper provides a unique set of methodologies for the interpretation of choral repertoire based upon key aspects of literary theory. During a conductor's time in private score study, he is responsible for identifying those elements in the work that imbue it with significance and meaning. These may be found not only in notation, but also in knowledge of the composer, history of the work, the text, and physio-kinesthetic associations that surface in performance. It is the author's conviction that studies in literary theory can provide a foundation for understanding how these attributes of a work are interrelated, while acknowledging that the interpreter is a product of collected experiences, cultural surroundings, and psychological influences. It will be argued that the process of musical interpretation is a dialogue between the "reader" and "text," in which traditional analysis is just one of several perspectives to consider.[1] Some of the concepts presented, particularly the ideas regarding sonic properties of words producing meaning, have remained fairly unexplored in current choral studies. Furthermore, some of the analyses employ techniques that are not unique, but are used in new ways to shed light on a work. By incorporating new and creative analytical approaches to the choral repertory, the gap between theory and performance can be lessened and meaningful experiences heightened for the performers and audience.

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[1] If shared ownership is assumed for the task of interpretation, then the terms "reader" and "listener" are both applicable to the performers (conductor and singers) as well as the audience. The "text" represents the musical notation created by the composer. An intermediate function may be assigned to the copyist or editor who attempts to either restore or elaborate on the original score.

The Need

A study of this nature is long overdue. The borrowing of concepts from various schools of literary theory in musical studies is by no means new. Too few of these analyses have included choral repertoire, however, and of those that have, there are no known studies that also address score preparation and performance-related issues with the same degree of focus. The conductor is responsible for making repertoire accessible for singers. The interpretations that result from our preparation must be conveyed in rehearsal and performance in order for meaningful interaction with the music to occur. Many a modern performer's sense of detachment from a particular repertoire, either due to its temporal distance or for fear of wrongly guessing the "composer's intent," often creates a general apprehension to offer subjective readings. This can result in insipid performances that lack any sense of vitality and even go against the very spirit of the composition.

The need for conductors to broaden our palette of performance options based upon historical research and analysis is vital for the choral art to survive. There is an enormous choral repertory spanning hundreds of years and it is imperative to generate new ways of understanding these works, so they can still communicate their message to twenty-first century ears. Despite the seeming vulgarity today of a several hundred voice choir singing a Palestrina motet as occurred during the revival of that composer's music in the nineteenth century, it is still worthwhile to try and define the qualities in his music that inspired such events. Another need for this study lies with the current practices of score study being taught in many undergraduate and graduate music programs. Far too often emphasis is given to formal analysis and historical facts without making meaningful

connections between the two. There is also room for the development of strategies that address the concept of physical gesture as a narrative entity – a result of its metaphorical and semiotic capabilities. Semiotics, the product of more modern research into general methods of interpretation, is scarely recognized within the choral profession, despite an immediate applicability connecting analysis with conducting gesture. Attention to musico-literary studies and the resultant performance implications can help to educate a new generation of choral conductors, who understand the processes of how performers and listeners perceive musical meaning.

Organization and Scope

This document presumes little or no familiarity with the various schools of literary theory. Given the scope of this work, it is impossible to offer an in-depth discussion on the specifics of each school, so only those concepts that are relevant to musical analysis will be presented. The challenge regarding the organization of this material stems from the fact that many of these movements arose simultaneously, borrowing concepts and creating various hybrid forms. Some ideas were reactionary to others, while later contributions would consolidate ideas and use what were once conflicting terminologies in the same narrative. This is especially true in the movements of structuralism, deconstruction, and semiotics. Further borrowing of ideas and blurring of various schools also occurred when musicologists applied these tenets to their own work. The very title of the section "Semiotic Incongruities and Hermeneutic Windows" in Chapter Five demonstrates this fusion of ideas. There, an attempt is made to clarify specific terminologies such as *topics*, *tropes*, and *windows* and use them in the general

spirit in which they were intended. Chapter Six adapts semiotic principles with what are

described as "humanizing" agents for establishing meaning. These include physical

aesthetic qualities that are shared through the commonality of the human experience.

Metaphor, a vehicle for diffusing semantic meaning, is used to bridge a connection

between notation and gesture. The musical analyses themselves are presented in such a

way that each offers a set of interpretative "tools" for the choral conductor. They are not

intended to represent a universally accepted reading, but one possibility among many,

such as a chosen type of analysis for each work, historical performance practices, cultural

background, and individual interpretation.

CHAPTER TWO – BACKGROUND

What is Literary Theory?

Literary theory deals critically with the process of interpretation. It explores not only the philosophical issue of whether a text can contain meaning, but how it may provoke numerous, at times, contradictory interpretations. It asks who has the authority to make interpretive decisions and how their answers are to be validated. Literary theory seeks to identify those qualities that deem a text to be called art and views these within the context of historical, social, political and personal realities.[2] As a result of its application to disciplines outside of literature and the strong philosophical underpinnings of interpretation as a means to discover truth, literary theory is often regarded as a critical examination of knowledge itself.

The primary object of focus in most literary theory studies is the text and its relation, or in some cases, its detachment, from the reader. There are numerous subcategories of literary theory, such as formalism, structuralism, hermeneutics, reader response, and many others which represent different and often conflicting schools of thought on the circumstances of how one interprets a text. Enveloping these approaches is the philosophical debate between pluralism and monoism. Pol Vandevelde describes pluralism as a "multiplicity of equally valid interpretations, resulting from the different backgrounds of interpreters who do not read with the same interests, concerns, and knowledge."[3] Conversely, a monoist stance states that a work has only one accurate

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[2] Thomas A. Schmitz, *Modern Literary Theory and Ancient Texts* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2007), 2.

[3] Pol Vandevelde, *The Task of the Interpreter* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005), 2.

interpretation. Vandevelde doesn't view monism and pluralism as diametrically opposed, but simply as two sides of the same coin, each emphasizing the differing aspects of interpretation, which he labels as both an "event" and an "act." It is an event, since it takes place in a cultural and historical framework where writer, interpreter, audience, and text are parameters of something that occurs. It is an act, since we must be committed to the statement we make about the text, including its "rightness" and appropriateness, so that we are ready to justify and defend our interpretation.[4]

This last point of justification is vital, since it emphasizes the role of critical thinking in presenting a particular interpretive outcome. Vandevelde maintains that for such an interpretation to be taken seriously, the interpreter must make a certain "claim of rightness" in his decisions.[5] In music, this same sentiment is shared by Richard Taruskin, who states that the most convincing performances are those in which the performers, not knowing the "composer's intentions" are "unafraid to have intentions of their own, and treat them with a comparable respect."[6] Dunsby follows up with, "It does not mean that one must throw in the towel and give up entirely on having the confidence to say something at all about music, but it does mean that one ought to have good reason and good evidence."[7] Most modern literary theorists understand interpretation as a deliberate

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[4] Ibid., 4.

[5] Ibid., 34.

[6] Richard Taruskin, "On Letting the Music Speak for Itself: Some Reflections on Musicology and Performance," *The Journal of Musicology* 1, no. 3 (July 1982): 343.

[7] Jonathan Dunsby, *Making Words Sing: Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Song* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge, 2004), 140.

act stemming from the relationship between text and reader and guided by the spheres of influences on each.

The Limits of Theory

During the 1970's and 1980's, the development and use of literary theory was accelerating at a feverish pace in the United States. There was an influx of work by authors representing its various movements, many of whom began to fashion their own terminologies to distinguish their ideas. Many questioned the value of the intricate web of conjecture and speculative notions which grew to comprise the bulk of the discipline, however. Even a quick survey of book and article titles serves as evidence for such a growing consensus within academia (i.e. "The End of Theory," "The Resistance to Theory," "Against Theory," "What's Left of Theory?"). One objection described by Schmitz is that some believed that these theories were "new wine in old wineskins" and simply a renaming of concepts dating as far back as Greek Antiquity.[8] Another complaint was that the study of theory was becoming more important than the study of the actual literature it attempted to explain, a charge of "theory for theory's sake."

There are also inherent risks relating literary theory to musical studies. The primary risk is the assumption that the basic structures of text and music are completely identical. Vandevelde attests that "a sequence of notes does not represent as articulated a level of meaning as a sequence of words."[9] Before being incorporated in a message, words are already endowed with a particular meaning, and sentences express certain

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[8] Schmitz, *Modern Literary Theory*, 8.

[9] Vandevelde, *Task of the Interpreter*, 26.

ideas possible within that "linguistic community."[10] The analogous argument for musical meaning lies in the notion of *topics* which will be explored in Chapter Five. Vandevelde uses the example of Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata," which can serve as "an evocation of romantic moonlight or a hymn to sadness," and describes a literary text as offering "more constraints on interpreters in the sense that they have to take into account the customary meaning of words and sentences."[11] In formulating a methodology for interpreting a musical work, one must describe the elements inherent in musical structure, such as melody, harmony, phrasing, and rhythm, but remain cautious of assigning too much intrinsic meaning to the notes on the page. While there are instances when a composer's specific use of pitches or key signatures are meant to convey symbolism, as one may encounter in Bach or Wagner, these examples are almost never self-evident or comprehended at first hearing by a typical listener. This association can usually only be made with some prior knowledge or analysis.

We must acknowledge obvious differences between reading a novel and listening to a musical work, due to the physical nature of each medium. A listener, unlike the reader, experiences the artwork in real time, with or without access to the notational figures. Once the sonic/acoustical event has occurred, it dissipates among the ever-expanded sound waves. The listener can mentally reconstruct prior musical ideas and reformulate his perceptions based upon hearing new material, however, not all of the information will be retained. The listener does not have the opportunity to understand music at his own pace and, unlike the reader, cannot refer back to previous sections to

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[10] Ibid.

[11] Ibid.

review a missed point. Therefore, the conductor in score study and performance is both a reader and a listener. It is through "reading" the musical notation that he is allowed to consider its structures and contextualize them carefully in the same sense that one would read a novel. The method of inquiry that is shared by both disciplines is formal analysis.

The Impact of Formalism in the Study of Literature

Contemporary modes of literary and musical analysis evolved over similar paths and both experienced a period in which formalist teachings dominated the scene. In text studies, Russian Formalism emerged just before the 1917 Revolution as the first clearly defined school of literary criticism.[12] Formalism understands an artistic work as an autonomous object that carries its own intrinsic value. Associated with the study of linguistics, it separates the text from its cultural and historical milieu to focus on features such as grammatical usage, syntax, the use of tropes, and meter.[13] Its aim is to explore what technical traits make a verbal message a work of art by making comparisons with conversational language. Formalists describe everyday speech as attempting to be simple and unobtrusive so that one can effectively communicate a message. Because the focus lies on the message itself and not the linguistic means to describe the message, speakers tend to use economical means to communicate by making abridged statements and leaving out self-evident words. Victor Shklovsky called this process "automatization."[14]

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[12] Russian Formalism gained quick popularity, but also equal criticism from Communist activists which only increased after Stalin took power.

[13] Schmitz, *Modern Literary Theory*, 19-21.

[14] Viktor Shklovsky, "Art as Technique" in *Literary Theory, an Anthology,* ed. Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan (Malden: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 1998).

Conversely, art and poetic language deliberately make communication more difficult, forcing us to focus more on the use of linguistic materials. This gives the reader a new perspective on ideas formerly taken for granted. Over time, these techniques of "defamiliarization" become more recognized and viewed as stylistic conventions so that they themselves become more automated. This perpetuates the cycle of artistic development by stimulating a need to make the recognizable unfamiliar again.[15]

Roman Jakobson, a formalist who moved to the Prague in the 1920s and to the United States in 1949, was influential in adapting the tenets of formalism to linguistics. Jakobson focused on the communicative process of sending and receiving a message. According to his model of linguistic communication, three factors are necessary in order for communication between an addresser and an addressee to occur.[16] The first prerequisite is a shared context. This means that both individuals have a shared understanding of certain topics and a common situation on which to communicate. This ensures that the message is received in the correct manner in which it was intended. Both individuals must also share the same code. This can refer simply to using the same language for communication, such as English or sign language. The final requirement is that the individuals establish a medium of contact. This may require that the two are either physically in the same room speaking with each other or using some other means to communicate. In the case of a singer and a composer, the point of contact is the musical score.

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[15] Ibid.

[16] Roman Jakobson, *Language in Literature* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987), 66-71.

Formalism in the United States took on the guise of a movement known as New Criticism during the 1920s and 1930s. Its advocates stressed the need for the interpreter to discover how the different elements of a literary work created tensions with one another to create a larger unifying structure. This required an immersion or "close reading" of the text, and the famous slogan associated with the New Critics was to study "just the words on the page." They believed the primary goal for scientific, historical, and philosophical writers was to communicate ideas through only semantic meaning. For poets, dramatists, and novelists, the means are of equal importance to the desired ends.[17] The poet, according to John Crowe Ransom, finds that "the composition of the poem is an operation in which the argument fights to displace the meter, and the meter fights to displace the argument."[18] Schmitz paraphrases Crowe by stating:

> The meaning of a poem, because it has been shaped by meter, may be richer and more fascinating than the meaning the poet originally had in mind: In searching for a rhyming word or a word to fit the meter, the poet may have discovered new subtleties of meaning. Adapting meaning to form can be immensely valuable for the creative process.[19]

In addition to this notion of form versus meaning, the New Critics caution readers against making the assumption that a text is identical with its author's intention, a point they called "intentional fallacy." Even if one could determine the original intention, there is no way to determine if those intentions are preserved in the final product.[20] Moreover,

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[17] Bonnie Klomp Stevens and Larry L. Stewart, *A Guide to Literary Criticism and Research, 3rd edition* (Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1996), 11.

[18] John Crowe Ransom, *The New Criticism* (New York: New Directions, 1941), 295; quoted in Stevens and Stewart, 11.

[19] Schmitz, 12; paraphrasing Ransom, 295-301.

[20] Stevens and Stewart, *Literary Criticism and Research*, 12.

one must be able to distinguish the text from the psychological effect it exerts on its readers. This point, labeled by William K. Wimsatt and Monroe Beardsley as the "affective fallacy," leads to "biography and relativism."[21] Relativism represents interpretative pluralism taken to the extreme, so that any interpretation, no matter how inappropriate to the actual text, can be deemed valid. Too much focus on non-textual details allows the reader to become entangled in secondary or unrelated matters.

Modern Musico-Literary Studies and Musical Formalism

Even before lyric poetry was sung by traveling bands of medieval poet-musicians, music and literature have been intrinsically connected throughout human history. In Classical Greece, plays often contained songs with poetic texts accompanied by instruments, and nearly every major philosopher of that age theorized on the nature of vocal music. It was those theories that represented the earliest musico-literary studies. Using the Greek tragedy as a model, Wagner developed the *Gesamtkunstwerk* ("Total art work") to signal a return to the interrelated nature of the arts. In the twentieth century, Steven Paul Scher prefaced his book, *Music and Text: Critical Inquiries*, with the notion that the disciplines of music and literature could be combined effectively "on the common ground of contemporary critical theory and interpretative practice."[22] In musicological studies, the majority of these music-text discussions fall within three categories: text *in* music, text *and* music, and music *in* text. The first is often associated

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[21] Wimsatt, William Kurtz. *The Verbal Icon: Studies in the Meaning of Poetry* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1954), 21.

[22] Steven Paul Scher, ed., *Music and Text: Critical Inquiries* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), xiv.

with program music and musical forms that serve a narrative function. The second is vocal music, and the third comprises not only discussions of music but also the imitation of musical forms in literary works.

It has been argued that because of the broad scope of contemporary musicology, in which researchers constantly find their work spilling over into other fields, the musicologist's attention to other disciplines was an act of preservation in order to assimilate more systematic methodologies.[23] Moreover, it was in reaction to the strict formalist philosophies of the New Critics that musical analysis began broadening its scope to include studies in literary theory. In describing the nature of musical studies prior to this shift in perspective, Joseph Kerman states that "the presentation of the texts of early music and of facts and figures about it, not their interpretation, was seen as musicology's most notable achievement," and that the field ignored putting the data into use for "aesthetic appraisal or hermeneutics."[24] Zofia Lissa remarks that "the musicologist had failed to notice the history of receptivity and barred from his field of vision the social function music performs, depending on the occasion; the influence of the time-and-place context on the listener's response to music; and the development of those mental processes that make up musical perception."[25] Such arguments allude to the fundamental dichotomy between the so-called objective and subjective qualities of music and the difficulty of traditional analytical practices to balance the demands of both.

[23] Roger Parker, "Literary Studies: Caught up in the Web of Words," *Acta musicologica* 69 (Jan. - June 1997): 11.

[24] Joseph Kerman, *Contemplating Music*: *Challenges to Musicology* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985), 43.

[25] Zofia Lissa and Eugenia Tanska, "On the Evolution of Musical Perception," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 24, no. 2 (Winter, 1965): 273.

Musical formalism asserted that music carried intrinsic value that could not be interpreted through extra-musical means. The origin of musical formalism is often associated with the nineteenth-century figure, Eduard Hanslick, who described music as "forms of sound, and these alone constitute the subject."[26] For Jenefer Robinson, Hanslick's view "exemplifies an attitude toward music that stresses the musical work as an autonomous entity divorced from the extramusical world, a structure of forms that can be studied in an objective, quasi-scientific way." [27] She goes on to describe how formalist thinking had "dominated the musical landscape" over other ideas and was represented "perhaps strongest by Schenkerian analysis and its emphasis on structural hierarchies consisting of multiple layers of musical reduction."[28] For some, the implication of Schenkerian analysis was that all other approaches were deemed wrong. As Kerman states, theory became "too preoccupied with its own inner techniques, too fascinated by its own 'logic,' and too sorely tempted by its own private pedantries, to confront the work of art in its proper aesthetic terms."[29] Kofi Agawu asserts that the analyst "has failed to reach for an extramusical label and provide a 'translation' of the analysis."[30] One objection to Schenker's linear analysis was that its deep structures were not heard as

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[26] Eduard Hanslick, *The Beautiful in Music*, trans. by Gustav Cohen (New York: Da Capo Press, 1974), 162.

[27] Jenefer Robinson, ed. *Music and Meaning* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997), 2.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Joseph Kerman, "A Profile for American Musicology," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 18, no. 1 (Spring, 1965): 65.

[30] Kofi Agawu, "Analyzing Music under the New Musicological Regime," *The Journal of Musicology* 15, no. 3 (Summer 1997): 302.

music. It was a product of the same cultural milieu as Freud's psychoanalysis, and its background layers were considered "hidden" as they exerted their influence on the perceivable forms. The famous line associated with this criticism is Schönberg's reaction after viewing a Schenkerian analysis of Beethoven's "Eroica" Symphony in which he states, "Where are all my favorite passages? Ah, here in these tiny little notes!"[31]

Music-text studies have remained a loose sub-discipline of musicology. This sentiment was observed by the literary scholar, Calvin Brown, who pointed out that "There is no organization of the work or the workers in the field of musico-literary relationships….The entire field of study remains essentially individual and unorganized."[32] The musicologist, Suzanne M. Lodato, echoed the same sentiment twenty years later, calling it "diffuse and fragmented."[33] Today, musico-literary studies have received increased attention within academia, but their potential for practical use by musicians has remained fairly untapped. Perhaps due to the very nature of their art, choral conductors have taken this music-text relationship for granted and not explored the deeper potential that literary studies may provide in offering unique forms of analytical inquiry.

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[31] For a different version, refer to Milton Babbitt, "A Composer's View," *Harvard Library Bulletin, NewSeries* 2/1 (Spring, 1991): 123-132.

[32] Calvin Brown, "Musico-Literary Research in the Last Two Decades," in *Yearbook of Comparative and General Literature* 19 (1970): 5-6.

[33] Suzanne M. Lodato, "Recent Approaches to Text/Music Analysis in the Lied – A Musicological Perspective" in *Word and Music Studies Defining the Field: Proceedings of the First International Conference on Word and Music Studies at Graz, 1997*., ed. Walter Bernhart, Steven P. Scher, and Werner Wolf (Amsterdam; Atlanta, GA: Rodopi, 1999), 96.

CHAPTER THREE - THE ROLE OF THE READER

American Reader Response Criticism

By the late 1960's, the study of formalism began to decline in the United States as scholars paid closer attention to the role of the reader. Arguing against a major tenet of New Criticism, Eric Donald Hirsch, Jr., believed one should not throw away the author's intentions but must rather put them at the center of our endeavor in trying to interpret a text.[34] The liberation of the reader was viewed by Jonathan Culler as the connective lining between reader-response criticism (RRC) and deconstruction, another movement to be discussed later.[35] Culler situated himself between RRC and the structuralist movement that deconstruction had reacted against. Hence, one can immediately detect the complicated nature of RRC, which consisted not of a single unified school, but of an assortment of theories that shifted the overall focus of interpretation onto the activities of the reader. The term "reader-response" in itself is vague. All schools of literary theory deal in some respect with how a reader responds, or in the case of formalism, should not respond to a text. The traditional view of RRC, in fact, represented a sharp contrast with formalist ideology and New Criticism, which ignored any involvement of the reader. Furthermore, the leaders of American RRC closely linked literary criticism and theory with classroom pedagogy and academic practices.

Despite its popularity, there are inherent dangers in a theory that places interpretation somewhere between the reader and the text. On the one side, the very

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[34] Eric Donald Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1967), 3-6.

[35] Jonathan Culler, *On Deconstruction. Theory and Criticism after Structuralism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1982), 31-83.

nature of RRC is at odds with formalism, since every reader is different and will not agree to one "correct" interpretation. If RRC is to acknowledge every possible interpretation of a text, however, it loses the ability to be critical of those viewpoints that are outright erroneous. According to Leitch, most of RRC exists somewhere in the middle, as it recognizes "the reader's activity as instrumental to the understanding of the literary text without denying that the ultimate object of attention was the text."[36]

Stanley Fish's early work represents an initial phase of RRC. For Fish, interpretation begins with the initial act of reading. Furthermore, he believes one's view is predetermined by the "interpretative community." Fish gives the example of students pouring out of a building on a university campus. There could be any number of explanations for this, such as a fire blazing inside the building. The most likely explanation is that class has just ended, however. This perception is determined because of one's knowledge of what typically goes on within college campuses.[37] For Fish, it is the process that is most intriguing about theoretical study, not the specific insights gained. Meaning is "an event, something that is happening between the words and the reader's mind."[38] One of the common critiques of Fish's "interpretative community" is the assertion that it allows for total relativism if a text's meaning is determined solely by the reader's experiences and knowledge. It prevents comparative analysis of different insights, since they are all considered valid within an interpretative community. Also,

[36] Vincent B. Leitch, "Reader-Response Criticism," in *Readers and Reading*, ed. Andrew Bennett (London: New York: Longman, 1995), 35.

[37] Stanley Fish, *Is There a Text in This Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980), 330.

[38] Stanley Fish, *Self-Consuming Artifacts: The Experience of Seventeenth-Century Literature* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), 389.

individuals are members of numerous interpretative communities, many of which offer contradictory views, values, and understandings.[39]

While Fish insisted on the role of communities to determine meaning, other theorists focused on the individual. Norman Holland's theories were situated along the vein of psychoanalytical studies and neuroscience. Employing Freudian philosophies, Holland theorized that a reader assimilates a literary work by creating interpretations that fit his or her psychological identity and meet the demands of the ego.[40] David Bleich is similarly concerned with the psychology of the reader, though his approach focuses more on education, as he believes knowing the motives that develop knowledge can greatly influence "pedagogical relationships" and institutions for learning.[41]

With these select examples of theories, it is clear that a wide range of ideas comprise RRC. Proponents of one theory often found themselves joining forces with other approaches or breaking away toward new directions in reader psychology. It is perhaps this diversity which, to this day, has prevented RRC from attaining the status of a single unified movement. Its greatest influence is often found in the fissures between other literary schools of thought.

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[39] Schmitz, *Modern Literary Theory*, 130.

[40] Norman Holland, *5 Readers Reading* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1975), 209.

[41] David Bleich, *Subjective Criticism* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), 146. One of Bleich's primary goals to "understand how and why each person sees differently" and make "public reality correspond to private reality." Bleich, *Readings and Feelings: An Introduction to Subjective Criticism* (Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English, 1975), 32, 95.

Phenomenological Hermeneutics

Across the Atlantic and developing independently from American RRC, the German conception of literary interpretation represented a cohesive movement as it emerged from a clear lineage of thinkers who represented the "continental tradition." This tradition embraced phenomenology, which is concerned with studying the structures that comprise human consciousness. The word "hermeneutic" is based on the Greek word meaning "to interpret." It is associated with the god, Hermes, who was credited with the creation of language. As a messenger between humans and the gods, Hermes was responsible for translating divine messages for human understanding. The study of philosophical hermeneutics is associated with Hans-Georg Gadamer, a highly influential figure who based his work on ideas related to the study of phenomenology. Because the term "hermeneutic" often carried vague connotations, Gadamer believed that a practical philosophy would prove beneficial to those wishing to develop their own methodology of interpretation.[42]

Before pursuing Gadamer's work, it is important to trace the development of his ideas within the Germanic phenomenological tradition. An appropriate starting point is the work of the philosopher and theologian, Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834). Schleiermacher was immersed in a variety of philosophical and religious topics, but with regards to hermeneutics, he is credited with forming a more coherent, generalized theory from many sub-specialties related to religious, legal, and literary text interpretation. According to Schleiermacher, the art of interpretation requires an understanding of both

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[42] Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Reason in the Age of Science*, trans. Frederick G. Lawrence (Cambridge: MIT, 1981), 112.

the grammatical and psychological elements of discourse. The reader must be familiar with the language "common to the author and his original audience."[43] The psychological aspect of hermeneutic understanding involves empathy with the author's motives, what Schleiermacher called the divinatory method. Johnson describes this approach as "moving inside the thought of another person and understanding that thought from the person's perspective." [44] Schleiermacher relied on the commonality of the human experience to achieve this understanding.

Another influence on Gadamer was Wilhelm Dilthey, a German philosopher and empiricist who applied hermeneutics to the humanities and cause and effect relationships. For him, understanding an object or work of art required going beyond searching for its creator's feelings to focus on the social realities and historical experiences that shaped them.[45] This view would prove to be an important component of Gadamer's work. Gadamer's main source of inspiration, however, would stem from the renowned twentieth-century philosopher, Martin Heidegger. Heidegger's monumental *Being and Time* is a hermeneutic text that viewed philosophy as a form of interpretation and sought to identify the conditions that initiate the process.[46] Heidegger's theory of human

[43] Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Hermeneutics and Criticism and Other Writings*, trans. A. Bowie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 30.

[44] Patricia Altenbernd Johnson, *On Gadamer*, Wadsworth Philosophers Series (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing, 1999), 10.

[45] Wilhelm Dilthey, *Introduction to the Human Sciences* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), 48.

[46] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time,* trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (London: SCM Press, 1962). Heidegger initiates this study by searching for what comprises the notion of "Being," a term used throughout history, but never defined.

understanding asserted that people seek to understand, so that they can discover their own human potential. A pupil of Heidegger, Gadamer interpreted this to mean that the task of understanding is an essential characteristic of being human. Furthermore, when one seeks to interpret a historical object, one must be prepared to accept its entire background.[47]

Gadamer's highly influential book, *Truth and Method* (originally in German as *Wahrheit und Methode)* discards the notion of textual objectivity by describing the nature of truth as being non-scientific. The moment one applies a method to determine truth, it is immediately lost. This follows with the notion that one can never determine the original intention of the author, since he or she can never understand the full context from which a text was written. Any so-called authorial mandate, for Gadamer, limited the potential for a text to grow beyond the subjectivities of its creator. As he states:

> The horizon of understanding cannot be limited either by what the writer originally had in mind or by the horizon of the person to whom the text was originally addressed….For texts do not ask to be understood as a living expression of the subjectivity of their writers. This, then, cannot define the limits of the text's meaning...Thus the reference to the original reader, like that to the meaning of the author, seems to offer only a very crude historico-hermeneutical criterion that cannot really limit the horizon of a text's meaning. What is fixed in writing has detached itself from the contingency of its origin and its author and made itself free for new relationships.[48]

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[47] Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and method, 2nd rev. edition*, trans. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall (London; New York: Continuum, 2004), 261.

[48] Ibid., 396-7. The constraint on meaning that accompanies the conviction of "author's intent" is remarkably similar to Jacque Derrida's conclusion. Not surprisingly, it is argued that Derrida's single biggest influence was the philosophy of Gadamer's teacher, Heidegger. As Bradley also points out, even Derrida's "deconstruction" was a radicalization of Heidegger's "*destruktion*." Arthur Bradley, *Derrida's Of Grammatology* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2008), 20.

The term used by Gadamer to describe this background of an author, or as he describes later, the "the range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point," is the *horizon*.[49] The term itself is not new, but Gadamer's own formulation of its role in interpretation is unique. The participation of the interpreter and his contact with the text creates a "fusion of horizons." The interpreter, having his own *horizon*, based upon background and previous experiences, approaches a text produced in another *horizon*. The two are fused and create a third *horizon*. Furthermore, Gadamer employs Schleiermacher's grammatical understanding of hermeneutics, since "we regard our task as deriving our understanding of the text from the linguistic usage of the time or of the author."[50] Gadamer continues:

> Hence the meaning of a text is not to be compared with an immovably and obstinately fixed point of view that suggests only one question to the person trying to understand it…the interpreter's own thoughts have also gone into the re-awakening of the meaning of the text…the interpreter's own horizon is decisive…but more as an opinion and a possibility that one brings into play and puts at risk, and that helps one truly to make one's own what the text says. I have described this above as a 'fusion of horizons.'[51]

In order for the reader to connect with a text from a different *horizon*, he must translate its meaning. Gadamer warns that the reader is not at liberty to falsify the information, but that it must simply be understood in a new way. This constitutes the arrival of the third *horizon*. It is from this perspective that Gadamer emphasizes the "otherness" quality of a text and advocates an active role on the part of the reader in interpreting its meaning. Gadamer recognizes the "fundamental gulf" between the reader

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[49] Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 301.

[50] Ibid., 270.

[51] Ibid., 390.

and the text, however, and acknowledges that difficult decisions will be necessary in producing a translation. He equates the interpretative process as a dialogue between text and reader:

> In our translation if we want to emphasize in our own translation a feature of the original that is important to us, then we can do so only by playing down or entirely suppressing other features. But this is precisely the activity that we call interpretation. Translation, like all interpretation, is a highlighting… Even if it is a masterly re-creation, it must lack some of the overtones that vibrate in the original…And, as in conversation, when there are such unbridgeable differences, a compromise can sometimes be achieved in the to and fro of dialogue.[52]

Vandevelde suggests that Gadamer's theory is successful at describing interpretation as an event, but misses the fundamental point that it is an act performed by someone who believes they know what they are doing and intends to take responsibility for their decision. Any interpreter would accept that his interpretation is influenced by experiences, training, and knowledge. He may also acknowledge that his rendering of the text is an approximation, leaving the door open for better future interpretations. Most, however, would not agree with Gadamer's account that their interpretation is merely a compromise. For any interpretation to be taken seriously, there must be at least some "claim of rightness."[53] To conclude, Gadamer's view of phenomenology understood literature as "a manifestation of that about the human experience which cannot be put into words and interpretation as our act of coming to a consciousness of the world."[54]

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[52] Ibid., 387-8.

[53] Vandevelde, 28-9, 34.

[54] John K. Sheriff, *The Fate of Meaning: Charles Peirce, Structuralism, and Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), 141.

Gadamer was highly influential on a younger group of theorists who took

residence at the University of Constance in West Germany. The "Constance School" also

focused on the reader and on how "literary texts interact with their recipients and deploy

their potential meanings."[55] Wolfgang Iser was a major figure in this group of scholars

and his ideas will permeate this paper.

For Iser, a literary work contains both an artistic and an aesthetic "pole." The

artistic pole is the author's text and the aesthetic pole is the realization accomplished by

the reader.[56] The perceived work is situated in a virtual state somewhere between the two

polarities of the text's reality and the reader's subjectivity. As the reader passes "through

the various perspectives offered by the text," he or she gains insight into the potential

effects situated within the work.[57] The act of reading thus offers the reader an opportunity

to experience an aesthetic response. According to Iser:

> Aesthetic response is therefore to be analyzed in terms of a dialectic relationship
> between text, reader, and their interaction. It is called aesthetic response because,
> although it is brought about by the text, it brings into play the imaginative and
> perceptive faculties of the reader, in order to make him adjust and even differentiate
> his own focus.[58]

Similar to Gadamer's description of a text's "otherness" which results from an

active role by the interpreter, Iser also calls for the reader to be proactive in approaching

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[55] Schmitz, *Modern Literary Theory*, 88.

[56] Wolfgang Iser, *The Implied Reader* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), 274.

[57] Iser, "Interaction Between Text and Reader," in Bennett, *Readers and Reading*, 21.

[58] Wolfgang Iser, *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), x.

the text's stance so that the aesthetic object may surface. Therefore, the text provides the

necessary framework which allows for different manners of interpretative fulfillment.[59]

Earlier, Gadamer had also discussed the text's role in eliciting responses by the

reader:

> That historical text is made the object of interpretation means that it puts a question
> to the interpreter. Thus interpretation always involves a relation to the question that
> is asked of the interpreter. To understand a text means to understand this question.
> But this takes place…by our attaining of the hermeneutical horizon.[60]

Iser argues against a strictly formalist approach by contending that if the goal of

interpretation is to derive meaning from a text, then the text cannot already have

formulated that meaning. This process of deriving meaning he calls "actualization," and

by focusing more on the process rather than the product, the interpreter reveals the

conditions that bring about its various effects. These conditions contain a verbal aspect,

which guides the reader's reaction to avoid random interpretation, and an affective

aspect, which is the fulfillment by the reader to elucidate the potentials of the text. The

reader must first identify the various perspectives offered by the text. Next, he must

search for the vantage point from where these perspectives emerge. Finding this vantage

point requires a layering of these perspectives, which inevitably leaves unanswered

questions for the reader.[61]

Meaning derives from the reader using his own experience and knowledge (his

horizon) to fill in these gaps (*Leerstellen*). Iser emphasizes:

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[59] Ibid., 37.

[60] Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 363.

[61] Iser, *Act of Reading*, 36.

It is characteristic of a system's [the text] empty spaces that they cannot be filled in by the system itself, but only by another system. Whenever this happens…the constituting activity comes into motion, whereby these enclaves [gaps] turn out to be a central pivot for the interaction between text and reader.[62]

Filling these gaps is an act of interpretation and stimulates an aesthetic response. Iser offers a simple example of this process by describing a novel in which one narrative section focuses on a particular character only to abruptly change direction and introduce new characters.

This becomes an invitation for the reader to find the connections between the old and new characters.[63] Schmitz lists three primary ways for these gaps to occur. Paraphrased, they include:

1. Omitting elements which are self-evident
2. Provoking readers to think about possible continuations (especially in the case of novels which are published in several installments)
3. Modern literary works can leave an "open" ending which leaves unanswered questions for the readers to resolve on their own.[64]

Regarding Schmitz's second and third points, an example common in action films is a final scene depicting the villain lying on the ground believed to have been killed by the hero. Just as the scene is about to end, however, a finger moves slightly, suggesting his return in a sequel. A more common example could involve the description of a country house at the beginning of the novel. In developing a mental picture of this house, the reader immediately fills in the missing information (such as its color, furnishings, etc…). As the novel progresses, additional information regarding the house may be presented and so the reader is continually modifying his mental image. Iser refers to this

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[62] Ibid., 266.

[63] Iser, "Interaction between Text and Reader," 25.

[64] Schmitz, *Modern Literary Theory*, 90

feedback system as the reader's "wandering viewpoint."[65] For him, the literary text is comprised of the reader's imagination, not the ink on the page. By providing too much information, a text can limit the imagination of the reader and the artistic work begins to resemble a technical manual. Conversely, some texts may leave out too much information and not provide the needed structures to guide the reader. Iser points out that "if the literary communication is to be successful, it must bring with it all the components necessary for the construction of the situation, since this has no existence outside the literary work."[66] Each new perspective creates an expectation, and the reader tries to determine how they are fulfilled. Since Iser is not concerned with developing a historical study of how a text has been interpreted, his described "reader" is not to be identified with any specific person or group of persons. Rather, he uses the construct of an "implied reader," who is based on the "structure of the text," while embodying "all those predispositions necessary for a literary work to exercise its effect."[67]

Iser's "wandering viewpoint" can make direct application to literary analysis difficult. John Sheriff uses the analogy of a reader bringing with him a stained glass window in which every multicolored pane represents an experience that has shaped his way of interpreting. The text is another stained-glass window with all of its intrinsic details as separate panes (i.e. the style of the composer, the genre, individual words, etc…). When the reader holds the two windows up face to face, in front of the light, the resulting pattern is his interpretation. Since the patterns are in a constant state of flux as

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[65] Iser, *Act of Reading*, 118.

[66] Ibid., 68-69.

[67] Ibid., 34.

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every newly encountered word shapes the reader's experience with the text, Sheriff

contends that it becomes impossible to determine the exact contribution of each color and

pattern to the emerging image.[68] Because RRC tends to focus on the conditions and

foreknowledge of the reader which determines his or her interpretation, Sheriff refers to

Paul de Man's wry suggestion that "the psychoanalyst should pay half the fee because he

is analyzing himself as much as he is analyzing the patient."[69]

Hans Robert Jauss, a colleague of Iser, expands the scope of the individual's

contact with a text to the relationship between the text and an entire history of different

readers. Jauss views literary history "in terms of a triangle of author, work, and public

and of their relationship."[70] His reception theory asserts that cultural and temporal

distance affect how a group of readers interpret a text, and that this history of reception

could be studied to examine the range of possibilities for textual meaning. Furthermore,

he asks how this range of meaning may compare with the author's own interpretation

based upon his original perspective. Parker uses the example that the meaning of the

novel could drastically change from one time to another, and the same novel could be

regarded as inappropriate, while earlier it may have been common.[71] When approaching a

text, readers develop a "horizon of expectations" (*Erwartungshorizont*) determined by

their own experiences and familiarity with writer, genre, or other similar texts. The text

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[68] Sheriff, *Fate of Meaning*, 21-2.

[69] De Man, Paul, *Blindness and Insight: Essays in the Rhetoric of Contemporary Criticism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), 10; quoted in Sheriff, 23.

[70] Hans Robert Jauss, *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception,* trans. Timothy Bahti (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982), 19.

[71] Robert Dale Parker**,** *How to Interpret Literature: Critical Theory for Literary and Cultural Studies* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 284-5.

can then employ various rhetorical techniques (i.e. allusion, metaphor, etc…) to elicit responses and awaken memories in the reader.[72] Schmitz summarizes the "horizon of expectations" by explaining:

> Jauss proposed a new way of writing literary history which ought to take into account that literary works do not magically appear on an empty stage but are framed by the literary context of their period. When a reader opens a new novel, (s)he has already read other novels and developed certain assumptions of what a novel is and should be; the new text will be read and understood against the backdrop of these assumptions.[73]

One of Jauss's aims is to investigate how past works of art are still relevant in the present. He does not suggest a reconstruction of the original meaning, because we can never fully understand the historical consciousness of a given period. Like Gadamer, he explains the need for a temporal translation (*Übersetzung*) that allows the modern reader to find meaning within his or her own *horizon*. This translatable quality of art confirms Jauss's point that texts do not maintain stable, objective meaning, but exhibit a variability by which different receptions create different meanings. Thus, Jauss is able to provide insightful macrocosmic conjectures on canonic tradition and the concept of the "masterwork." He maintains that the masterwork undergoes a successive unfolding of its embedded potential for meaning and becomes identified with the term when a reception history recognizes the degree to which it can provide this meaning.[74] Jauss warns against believing in the objectivist's "illusion of a self-activating tradition" since it assumes that one can simply restore an early work in its original form without interpretation.[75]

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[72] Jauss, *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, 23.

[73] Schmitz, *Modern Literary Theory*, 88.

[74] Jauss, *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, 15.

[75] Ibid., 64.

Consistent with Gadamer's and Iser's criterion of a proactive reader, Jauss asserts that "the past work can answer and 'say something' to us only when the present observer has posed the question that draws it back out of its seclusion."[76] Developing this mode of inquiry is the ultimate goal of hermeneutics.

While these West German theorists encountered much criticism from East German Marxists, they received a much different audience in the United States. Iser and Jauss became familiar names to American theorists, though Iser's work was more widely received. Leitch attributes this to the fact that Iser specialized in classic English fiction, while Jauss studied early romance-language literature.[77] In general, the Americans became intrigued with the German terminologies, and fruitful collaborations were forged between the two traditions. Furthermore, hermeneutic concepts gained popularity in disciplines outside of literature, including musical studies.

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[76] Ibid., 32.

[77] Leitch, "Reader-Response Criticism," 52.

CHAPTER FOUR - MUSICAL ANALYSIS AS READER RESPONSE

Musical Hermeneutics

The movement known as New Musicology took a pluralist approach to the interpretation of music. Nicholas Cook credits Joseph Kerman and Leo Treitler as being the "godfathers" of the New Musicology, which valued musical criticism over strict analysis.[78] To understand the concept of musical criticism, one must set aside the traditional usage of the term "music critic" typically associated with someone in the profession of attending performances and publishing reviews in the local newspaper. Instead, the concept more accurately follows the semantics of the term "literary critic," referring to someone who studies, discusses, evaluates, and interprets literature. Out of this movement emerged musical hermeneutics, a term actually adopted over a hundred years ago by the German musicologist, Hermann Kretzschmar.[79]

An important hermeneutic concept assimilated into musicological inquiry is the notion of "indeterminacies" or gaps within musical works. In a report published by *Early Music* on the 1995 International symposium titled *Authenticity in Interpretation*, Shai Burnstyn paraphrases Menachin Brinker, who stresses that:

> Any act of artistic interpretation must fill the gaps in the script. While the determinate aspects of the work should be followed according to its author's intentions, indeterminate aspects must be given concretization by the performer, albeit in concordance with the determinate ones.[80]

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[78] Nicholas Cook, "Analysing performance and performing analysis" in *Rethinking Music*, ed. Nicholas Cook and Mark Everist (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 253.

[79] Hermann Kretzschmar, "New Stimuli to the Promotion of Hermeneutics of Music," *Musikbibliothek Peters für 1902*, no. 9 (1903): 45–66.

[80] Shai Burstyn, "Authenticity in Interpretation," *Early Music* 23, no. 4 (Nov., 1995): 721.

Kramer describes how a musical work can continue to produce meaning after subsequent performances since "interpretation arises to bridge a gap or to adjust for an excess, but never to close the gap or smooth out the excess; interpretation preserves these non-congruities in order to continue the production of meaning."[81] Benson discusses Gadamer's *horizon* as a means to create dialogue between composer and performer:

> On Gadamer's account, successful communication takes place when the 'horizon' (or perspective) of the listener 'fuses' (or perhaps better, 'connects') with that of the performer, composer, and tradition. The score and/or composer has one sort of horizon (temporally, culturally, musically, and perhaps otherwise) and the performers and listeners have yet other horizons. The goal, then, is a 'fusion' of these horizons to enable a genuine dialogue.[82]

Benson justifies this correlation by using Gadamer's own claim that the same "interpretational characteristics" apply to both reading a text and to musical performance.[83] The difference, however, is that music is produced by sound.[84] The result of Gadamer's "fusion" is the creation of a third *horizon* of interpretation which expresses an entirely new perspective or "translation," a sort of renewed version of the original but influenced by the historical and cultural background of the interpreter. This same sentiment is expressed by Benson in regards to Felix Mendelssohn's nineteenth-century restoration of Bach's music:

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[81] Lawrence Kramer, *Musical Meaning: Toward a Critical History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 170.

[82] Bruce Ellis Benson, *The Improvisation of Musical Dialogue: A Phenomenology of Music*. Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 168.

[83] Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, xxxi; quoted in Benson, xiii.

[84] Theodor Adorno describes it as such: "interpreting language means: understanding language; interpreting music means: making music." Theodor Adorno, "Fragment über Musik und Spache," in *Sprache, Dictung, Musik*, ed. Jakob Knaus (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1973), 73; quoted in Benson, xiii.

Thus, we could say that Bach had intentions for the *St. Matthew Passion* that were complex and specific. But the performance by Mendelssohn did not *merely* bring out those possibilities (even though it did that *too*). Rather, it also created certain possibilities – possibilities that truly did not exist before.[85]

Another frequently encountered concept in musical hermeneutics is related to Iser's "wandering viewpoint." Benjamin Boretz explains "the retroaction of musical things on each other is not merely replacement by different things – the syntactical landscape is at all times connected…so that everything possible within a musical landscape is *commensurable* with everything else."[86] Boretz, in a later article expounds upon the idea by stating:

> [The] temporally evolving act of 'thinking in music' constitutes the simultaneous ongoing creation and music-entity-productive action of a fluid but determinate set of syntactic mindwarps which at any juncture could be described as determining…the range of music-meaning.[87]

In a similar vein, Edward T. Cone describes how every musical detail becomes an opportunity for "suspense" and prompts the questions "how will it be related to its context, and how will the context fit into the whole?" while Lissa defines perceptive listening as operating on simultaneously existent "planes" that function on a continual "feedback system."[88]

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[85] Benson, 129.

[86] Benjamin Boretz, "What Lingers on (When the Song Is Ended)," *Perspectives of New Music* 16, no. 1 (Autumn - Winter, 1977): 107.

[87] Benjamin Boretz, "Experiences with No Names," *Perspectives of New Music* 30, no. 1 (Winter, 1992): 274.

[88] Edward T. Cone, "Music: A View from Delft," in *Music: A View from Delft*, ed. Robert P. Morgan (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1989),16; and Zofia Lissa, "The Temporal Nature of a Musical Work," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 26, no. 4 (Summer, 1968): 536-7.

A connective figure between phenomenology and music is the Polish philosopher,

Roman Ingarden. His *Ontology of the Work of Art* was published just two years after

Gadamer's first edition of *Truth and Method*. Ingarden's conclusion of the musical score

being a "kind of shorthand" is preceded by the following observation:

> Even in these features of the work that have been recorded with the help of the notes,
> we find a large number of different types of imprecision of determination….But in
> the individual performances of the work they must *ipso facto* be eliminated and
> replaced by sharp, univocally structured determinancies, the selection of which is
> necessarily left to the talent and discretion of the performer.[89]

Echoing Jauss's "horizon of expectation," José Bowen describes how performance "like

every speech act, is an attempt to mediate between the identity of the work (as

remembered by tradition) and the innovation of the performer; musical performers are

engaged in both communication of the work and individual expression."[90] Lastly, Leo

Treitler's takes a hermeneutic stance by stating that music should be studied "as a

meaningful item within a wider context of practices, conventions, assumptions,

transmissions, receptions – in short, a musical culture, which serves to endow its

constituent aspects with meaning while attaining its own meaning from the combination

of its constituents."[91] Many tenets of New Musicology are now considered part of the

mainstream of musicological studies.

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[89] Roman Ingarden, *Ontology of the Work of Art: The Musical Work, the Picture, the Architectural Work, the Film*, trans. Raymond Meyer and John T. Goldthwait (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1989), 105, 115.

[90] José A. Bowen, "Finding the Music in Musicology: Performance History and Musical Works" in Cook and Everist, *Rethinking Music*, 425.

[91] Leo Treitler, "Structural and Critical Analysis," in *Musicology on the 1980s: Methods, Goals, Opportunities*, eds. D. Kern Holomon and Claude Palisca (New York: Da Capo, 1982), 66-7.

The Listener's Perspective

The New Musicologists distinguished between autonomous and contingent properties in music and argued that analysis should similarly reflect this dichotomy. Hence, their analyses acknowledged music's formal components (autonomy) but focused on formulating interpretations based on the listener's perspective (contingency). The rationale for this method was that music contained indeterminacies that required the listener to apply intuition and extra-musical knowledge. Musical hermeneutics encourages different perspectives on how to study a work. Traditional modes of analysis are still important, but there should be more freedom to decide what constitutes valid forms of inquiry – that is, relating musical material to feminist, gender, or other studies. Lawrence Kramer, in summarizing these points, adds that "music has generally operated on the basis of a series of contradictory tendencies" which include "autonomy, universality, self-presence" on the one end and historicism and personal meaning on the other.[92] He continues that while we may understand the "suspension between autonomy and contingency all around us…in music we feel it in ourselves."[93]

Christopher Norris points out that music is separate from literature, since it carries with it a "sensory-perceptual" element that combines "analytically informed… modes of listener response."[94] His conjectures tend to be critical of New Musicology for favoring historical studies and not giving formal analysis its fair due. Norris's philosophical perspective calls for a listener-based approach to interpretation, which results only after

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[92] Kramer, *Musical Meaning*, 2.

[93] Ibid., 3.

[94] Christopher Norris, *Platonism, Music and the Listener's Share*, Continuum Studies in Philosophy (London: Continuum, 2006), 3.

critical analysis has revealed contradictions in possible meaning.[95] To complicate matters, it is argued that so-called "formal" modes of analysis carry subjective underpinnings as well, since there are a variety of ways to interpret even the most basic musical components. Tasks ranging from assigning Roman numerals in harmonic analysis to constructing complex Schenkerian foreground analyses all require some intuition since there can be differing opinions on the exact function of certain chords or identifying the hierarchy of voice leadings. Jürgen Habernas states that one "can never analyze the structure of its object to the point of eliminating all contingency… Hermeneutics is both a form of experience and grammatical analysis at the same time."[96] This "experience" can be equated not only to the analyst's individual *horizon*, but also to the range of interpretative possibilities offered by reception studies and performance practices. This Jaussian view on musical perception was also voiced by the Russian musicologist, Boris Asaf'ev, who described musical form as "socially manifested" sometimes over "several generations."[97]

From the listener's perspective, a larger dilemma involves ranking the influence between analysis and perception. On one end, many would maintain that analysis should

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[95] Ibid., 95. The term coined by Norris to represent this balance between autonomy and phenomenology is "Qualified Platonism," referring specifically to Plato's philosophy of abstract formal reasoning while allowing human response to transform music from the abstract to a fully "realized mode of existence." Ibid., 26. The idea of contradictions being revealed by analysis is similar to key tenets of deconstruction which will be discussed later.

[96] Jürgen Habernas, *Knowledge and Human Interests* (Oxford, Polity Press, 1987), 161-2; quoted in Dunsby, 27.

[97] Boris V. Asef'ev, *Musical Form as Process*, vol. 2, trans. and commentary by James Robert Tull (Ph. D. dissertation, Ohio State University, 1976), 185-6; quoted in Eero Tarasti*, Musical Signification: Essays in the Semiotic Theory and Analysis of Music* (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1995), 145.

guide listening while others take a more phenomenological approach and argue that

listening and performance should guide analysis. This argument lies at the foundation of

the theorist versus performer debate. Tim Howell describes the different approaches as a

depiction of musical form that constitutes "how things are heard," versus a "succession of

things to hear."[98] A conductor is responsible for guiding the singers to explore those

elements in the score that provide meaning ("succession of things to hear"). This must be

accomplished, however, within a rehearsal setting and through the actual sound being

produced by the singers ("how things are heard"). Achieving this balance between the

role of pedagogue and performer is the trademark of a gifted conductor.

An Introductory Exercise in Musical Hermeneutics:
Three Readings of W.A. Mozart's *Litaniae Lauretanae* K.109

Edward T. Cone describes three types of listening behaviors which each enable

their own perception of musical events. In his article, "Three Ways of Reading a

Detective Story – Or a Brahms Intermezzo," he draws the analogy of someone reading

the same detective novel on three separate occasions and how the interpretative process

evolves from insights gained from each reading.[99] The *first reading* is the initial contact

with the story, completely "innocent of analysis," and a purely aesthetic experience of

"naïve pleasure" as the reader uncovers its various outcomes.[100] The *second reading*

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[98] Tim Howell, "Analysis and Performance: The search for a middleground," in *Companion to Contemporary Musical Thought*, eds. J. Paynter, T. Howell, R. Orton, & P. Seymour (London: Routledge, 1992), 700.

[99] The connotation that this process occurs over exactly "three" readings is hypothetical as each merely represents a different stage of awareness.

[100] Edward T. Cone, **"**Three Ways of Reading a Detective Story – Or a Brahms Intermezzo" in Cone, *Music: A View from Delft*, 80.

occurs after the reader has "glimpsed the structure underlying a recounted series of events" and identifies "the pattern of their causes" and their "interrelationships."[101] Aware of the larger narrative, the reader compares each detail with his or her understanding of the story and places them hierarchically to determine their role and function. This reading exists in the mode of technical analysis since it consists of "intelligent and informed" study.[102] Cone describes this *second reading* as requiring some "intentional forgetting" of the story's ending. This motivates the reader to study each detail closely and not take for granted the already known outcome. Confident in his or her understanding of the story's overall development and the context of each detail, the *third reading* allows the reader to experience the work on two separate planes, one "fully conscious" and the other "partly suppressed."[103] The reader can enjoy the text without fear of misunderstanding, since he is fully conscious of how the parts interact. This freedom allows him to "play" and suppress the ending as if he is doing an ideal *first reading*. From a performance viewpoint, Richard Schechner describes the two halves of an actor – one side being the "feeler" who forgets himself in the scene and becomes the character, while the other side is the "knower," who is fully aware that he is acting and handles all of the necessary details related to the art.[104]

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[101] Ibid., 79.

[102] Ibid., 80.

[103] Ibid.

[104] Richard Schechner, "Magnitudes of Performance" in *By Means of Performance: Intercultural Studies of Theatre and Ritual*, eds. Richard Schechner and Willa Appel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 36-8.

The outcome cannot be fully suppressed since the ending is already known, but the hierarchical layering of details from the *second reading* now allows the reader to ration out information a little at a time, so that the story is exciting and pleasurable. The *third reading* is the only one "that fully accepts the story as a work of temporal art and tries to appreciate it as such."[105] Cone points out that analysis can still occur in the *third reading*, but the reader is now more aware of the author's specific "strategies of concealment and disclosure" of information, a point analogous to Iser's gaps.[106] Relating this to music, Cone suggests that the listener should still prepare for the first hearing by taking "advantage of all relevant information – historical, biographical, music-theoretical."[107] By adapting Cone's "listener" to a conductor preparing the score, many insights on the musical work can be achieved, so that the performance becomes a *third reading*. The conductor is cognizant of the work's details, and allows them to influence interpretive decisions, but he suppresses the final outcome for the sake of spontaneity in performance.

Applied to Mozart's *Litaniae Lauretanae* K. 109, Cone's tripartite approach to reading opens up a number of possibilities for performance. As Tim Howell states, "The role of analysis…is one of raising possibilities rather than providing solutions. It is an awareness of these possibilities at a preparatory stage, rather than finite decisions about stress and pacing, that analysis offers to the thinking performer, helping to shape an

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[105] Cone, "Three Ways of Reading a Detective Story," 81.

[106] Ibid., 81.

[107] Ibid., 87.

individual interpretation."[108] For the conductor, a *first reading* of the work might involve

playing through a piano reduction, singing through several of the parts, silent reading, or

listening to a recording. This reading presents surprises involving modulations and

deceptive cadences, frequent textural shifts between soloists and chorus, seemingly

spontaneous dialogue between the instruments and voices, and other compositional

techniques. All of these procedures signify a series of rapid mood changes necessitated

by the affective demands of the text and succinct nature of the work.

Returning in a moment to discuss implications of the analytical *second reading*,

an effective performance or *third reading* does not hinder the perceived spontaneity of

Mozart's modulatory techniques, nor does it view them as an exercise in music theory.

Rather, these two understandings can become fused into a performance that appears both

impulsive and self-assured. An example to illustrate this point occurs early on in measure

9 of the opening movement, where the listener's expectations are denied with a classic

deceptive cadence arriving on d minor (**vi** instead of **I**). See Figure 1. The conductor is

left with two options on how to handle this event. One possibility is to signal an arrival to

the **vi** chord either by relaxing the tempo or allowing for a subtle dynamic emphasis (both

being appropriate means to achieve the deception). The other possibility is to do nothing.

The *second reading* reveals this as a localized event part of a larger harmonic movement

to D major, which becomes the most remote key of the movement and occurs exactly at

its halfway point in measure 17. It would then be the conductor's decision to make this

deception an important event, occurring roughly at the quarter mark of the movement and

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[108] Tim Howell, "Analysis and Performance," 709.

landing on the parallel minor of the eventual key of D major, or to treat it as transitory within the greater formal scheme.

Figure 1. W.A. Mozart, *Litaniae Lauretanae* K. 109, mm.7-9.

Another interesting moment occurs in the second movement between measures 78-85 when the choir goes back and forth between the text *virgo potens* ("virgin powerful") and *virgo clemens* ("virgin merciful"). See Figure 2. While elsewhere in the piece there are instances where the text is repeated, this repetition occurs over a longer span of time, each repeated phrase is marked with its own identical dynamic indication, and the harmonic function is modulatory. The *second reading* would reveal that this event leads directly to the relative key, d minor, at the exact halfway point in the movement. The conductor, aware of the larger musical context under the auspices of a *third reading*, may

wish to intensify the dynamics through these repeated phrases in order to show an arrival

point on the final d minor chord at measure 85. A rhetorical understanding of the text also

explains the harmonic arrival point on *virgo clemens*, symbolizing that the most virtuous

aspect of Mary is not her strength but her mercy.

Figure 2. W.A. Mozart, *Litaniae Lauretanae* K. 109, mm.77-86.

Mozart continues with a developmental section following the half cadence at measure 96, highlighted with an unexpected move to the Neapolitan sixth chord of d minor at measure 104. Measure 105 contains a sixteenth-note figure in the violins that sounds analogous to a giggle since Mozart has just playfully deceived the listener with a sudden harmonic shift instead of arriving on the tonic. See Figure 3.

Figure 3. W.A. Mozart, *Litaniae Lauretanae* K. 109, mm.103-106.

Measures 106-113 hint at the eventual arrival of F major by briefly landing on the

secondary dominant G major at measure 107 and arriving at a C major half-cadence at

measure 113. A *first reading* may not make one aware that F major is reached at measure

118 following a brief passage by the soloists in g minor, since it not only arrives in the

second half of a sequence between the tenor and bass soloists, but also because it is

subsequently blurred by ascending sequential lines and dissonances between the soprano

and alto soloists. See Figure 4. An early *second reading* might suggest to the conductor

that this "hidden" arrival to F major at measure 118 should be emphasized.[109] However,

viewed within the context of a late *second* or *third reading*, a contrived arrival point

appears to negate the effect of the following soprano/alto sequence at measure 120. How

a conductor interprets the information from this reading can affect the perceived form of

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[109] In referring to an early *second reading*, it is important to reiterate that Cone's use
of readings is merely to represent hypothetical stages of awareness.

the movement since a strong arrival at the first instance of F major at measure 118 might

suggest that the following sequence takes on the characteristic of a peculiar (and

disappointing) coda rather than a dramatic finish to the anticipated home key.

Figure 4. W.A Mozart, *Litaniae Lauretanae* K. 109, mm.117-128.

The last movement is marked with a *tutti* rest before the text *miserere nobis* ("have mercy upon us") at measure 248. See Figure 5. Again, insight gained from the previous readings aids in understanding the context of this final section. First, the textual implications of these two words are significant since they comprise 25 measures of the piece (by far the longest unfolding of musical material for this amount of text in the work). Second, this section represents the second half of a harmonic palindrome moving by fifths that was begun in the previous section (B-flat, F, C, G between measures 230-242; G, C, F, B-flat in the following six measures). This indicates a further partition of this section from the previous ones. Third, instead of returning to B-flat major, this new section begins on the parallel minor and subsequently employs more flat-side harmonies, suggesting a significant change in *Affekt*. Lastly, the historical tradition of composers setting the penitential words *miserere nobis* as part of the Mass Ordinary and elsewhere invites more solemn musical treatment and the possibility of lessening the tempo.[110] All of these observations suggest that the conductor may take a rather dramatic pause at the

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[110] Unlike settings of the Mass Ordinary where the *miserere nobis* occurs within the first two petitions of the *Agnus Dei*, a differentiation in musical treatment here would not be inappropriate, since it occurs only at the very end of the litany and as a separate entity.

rest in measure 248 and indicate a slower tempo for the remainder of the work. While

Mozart does not specifically indicate a change in tempo, it may be convincingly argued

that he implies it with the form and the setting up of previous events. Text and drama are

guiding principles in music of the Classical era and composers would have expected

performers to be sensitive to such issues.

Figure 5. W.A Mozart, *Litaniae Lauretanae* K. 109, mm.240-252.

One final issue presented by the work is the blurring of the home key, B-flat, for a significant portion of the last movement. A closer analysis of this event, or a *second reading*, reveals that this is achieved through an emphasis on the parallel minor key (employing the use of D-flat) until a somewhat unexpected minor sixth leap by the tenors to D-natural and finally a minor plagal cadence in the final two measures. See Figure 6. The conductor may decide to lean into the more perceptible occasions of the D-flat in order to heighten this sense of blurring (i.e. measure 250 in solo voice). Similarly, the tenor's D-natural in measure 269 and subsequent outlining of the major third in the following measure should be made a significant musical event, since they clarify the return of the major modality.

Figure 6. W.A Mozart, *Litaniae Lauretanae* K. 109, mm.260-272.

Hidden Dialogue in Johannes Brahms's *Abendlied,* from *Vier Quartette*, Op.92/3

In *The Composer's Voice*, Edward Cone explores the relationship between the accompaniment and the vocal line in Schubertian art song. He identifies three "personas" in accompanied song which consist of the following types: 1) a vocal persona expressed specifically through the human voice; 2) an instrumental persona (accompaniment) being a "creature of analogy, an imaginary construct"; 3) the complete persona being an embedded entity created from the interaction of the other two.[111] Cone's conception of song renders the text as a component used by the composer to blend with the voice.

The following analysis of Brahms's *Abendlied*, the third song of his *Vier Quartette*, Op. 92, will describe in detail the interaction between its various personas and address the implications for performance. By recognizing the piano and vocal parts in *Abendlied* as separate characters, the conductor can begin to search for the possible motivations for certain musical "behaviors" in the work. See Appendix A for the complete score.

Text and translation of *Abendlied*, Op. 92/3 (poem by Friedrich Hebbel, 1813-1863):

Friedlich bekämpfen	In peaceful opposition,
Nacht sich und Tag;	night struggles with day.
Wie das zu dämpfen,	What ability it has to soften,
Wie das zu lösen vermag.	What ability it has to relieve.
Der mich bedruckte,	That which oppressed me,
Schläfst du schon, Schmerz?	are you already asleep, suffering?
Was mich beglückte,	That which gladdened me,
Sage, was war's doch, mein Herz?	tell me, my heart, what was it then?

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[111] Cone, *The Composer's Voice* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974), 18. Cone also offers detailed discussion on the personas in Schubert's *An Die Musik* in his article, "Poet's Love or Composer's Love" in Scher, ed., *Music and Text: Critical Inquiries*.

Freude wie Kummer,   Joy, like grief
    Fühl' ich, zerrann,   melted away, I feel,
Abet den Schlummer   but they bring me slumber
    Führten sie leise heran.   as they fade away.

Und im Entschweben,   And in their vanishing,
    Immer empor,   ever aloft,
Kommt mit das Leben   my entire life passes before me
    Ganz wie em Schlummerlied vor.   like a lullaby.

The song begins in F major with the top voice of the accompaniment descending stepwise and stopping on scale degree 2, just short from arriving on the tonic pitch. The vocalists enter with the soprano descending down the same scale, pausing briefly on the tritone B-natural, and also arriving on scale degree 2. Since neither the piano nor the soprano successfully traversed the octave, a playful rivalry begins to ensue.[112] The text similarly indicates conflict, since it describes night and day in opposition. The dominant seventh of d minor is outlined with an arpeggio on the left hand as D major arrives in measure 8. Already, one is aware of the avoidance of the home key through both harmonic and melodic means. The soprano reaches her highest note G in measure 10. This occurs ironically on the word *lösen* ("to relieve") in measure 10. The delayed resolution to F major by way of the secondary dominant function and the leap down of a 4th from the top note insinuates that this relief will not be attained easily in the song. Furthermore, this cadence arrives on an F major chord in first inversion instead of root position. This lack of total resolution necessitates a repeat of the text, because the soprano now leaps up a 4th following an augmented F chord. How the conductor decides to have

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[112] Even the arrival of F in the left-hand arpeggio in the piano part merely becomes the third of the d minor chord in measure 2.

the singers articulate these leaps can affect the perception of this "non-relief," since a smooth legato phrase style might be viewed as negating the intended effect.

In measure 15, the piano drops out completely, and the singers engage in a polyphonic texture, joined by a return of the piano as another point of imitation. The timing of this silenced piano part in measure 15 is intriguing, since it occurs just as the singers are about to inquire, "That which oppressed me, are you already asleep, suffering?" This suggests that the piano might be the cause of their sorrow. Furthermore, the piano maintains its representation of semi-conscious state in the form of a pedal tone starting in measure 19. Returning back to the vocal treatment in measure 15, the F major entrance of the bass vocal line immediately changes harmonic direction and all of the voices arrive on A major. Just as the singers are about to repeat this chord in measure 18, the piano has covertly descended (marked with a *diminuendo* to **pp**) and arrived on octave F-naturals, altering the harmony to an F augmented chord. Beat 4 of measure 18 arrives on the dominant of A as the singers continue their phrase, creating diminished chords within themselves, but conflicting with the aforementioned A pedal tone. The return of the soprano to the high F becomes a dissonance against the lower voices. This occurs on the line "That which gladdened me," inferring that the happiness is now tinged with frustration. Disappointed at the turn of events, the soprano's descending line takes on a minor quality followed by a chromatic descent and landing on the same tritone pitch of B-natural as in the singer's opening phrase of the song. The accompaniment again rests, after having accomplished its goal of thwarting the return to F major through its pedal tone. The conductor may sharpen the attack on the soprano high F to emphasize not only this dissonance, but also the irony in the text's meaning.

This is followed with perhaps the most fascinating moment in the entire song, when all voices fall silent after arriving on the g# diminished chord in measure 23. This event is interesting, because the piano appears to enter "early" on octave E-natural in measure 24. This pitch becomes the resolution of the previous chord, turning it into an E7 harmony, which fills in the pause before the next phrase. An awareness of this harmonic function might inform the pianist to play the eighth-note E as if it belonged to the previous phrase, rather than by propelling it toward the next beat. This moment serves as an example of Brahms's highly refined sense of poeticism through the treatment of musical pauses. Much has been written on this specific topic and Brahms's own student, Gustav Jenner, offers the following insight into the matter:

> It was particularly pleasurable to observe the way that Brahms knew how to treat these pauses in his songs, how they are often an echo of what precedes them, often a preparation for what follows…how…at times the rhythm undergoes an artistic development and the accompaniment is raised to a factor that has its own independent influence. He placed great importance on these pauses and their treatment, and they are often, in fact, an unmistakable sign that the composer is an artist who creates with freedom and assurance, not a dilettante groping in the dark, influenced by every chance occurrence. Once the song's structure had been examined from all these angles, there followed a consideration of its individual parts. At those points where language inserts punctuation, the musical phrase has cadences; and just as the poet, in his purposeful constructions, ties his sentences more or less closely together using commas, semicolons, periods, etc., as his external signs, so the musician, similarly, has at his disposal perfect and imperfect cadences in a variety of forms to indicate the greater or lesser degree of coherence of his musical phrases.[113]

F major is sounded briefly in measure 25 followed by an F# diminished-seventh chord. The accompaniment sits on the pedal tone C, which releases just as the voices reach a suspended C7 chord. This harmony is achieved by the alto resolving down and the soprano leaping down a tritone. The alto resolution is veiled by the piano, however,

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[113] Gustav Jenner, "Brahms as Man, Teacher, and Artist," in *Brahms and His World*, ed. Walter Frisch (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 197-8.

which not only echoes the soprano tritone, but surpasses her by starting the interval on the highest sounding pitch of the entire song, which is followed by *two* descending tritones, as well as a harmonic one in measure 28. The key of F major returns, but is quickly followed by the parallel minor in measure 33. The soprano voice asserts itself on a high F for an entire measure and repeats the pitch at measure 39 on F7 before cadencing on B-flat major. The accompaniment again prevents an immediate F major cadence at measure 42 by the suspended D-flat notes in the left hand. In the same measure on beat 4, the soprano resolves up to a stronger F major chord (F in the pianist's left hand). The final section consists of undulating melodic lines in the voices appropriately set to the text "my entire life passes before me." The accompaniment engages in offbeat rhythms marked **pp** and even stops on two occasions in measure 47 and 54, so that the melismatic vocal lines can emerge out of the texture. Even the syllabic accentuation of the singer's text in measures 49-53 is allowed to take priority as the piano continues to play only on weak beats. The joining of the piano and soprano on the singer's final sung note (beat 3 of measure 56) expresses a gesture of peaceful resolve at the poem's conclusion. The piano further avoids from reaching any pitches higher than this final "touch" with the soprano voice, even sidestepping any cadence stronger than the singer's perfect authentic version.

Establishing an empathic connection with these characters can prompt questions about their motivations and offer strategies to interpret and perform the resultant symbolic gestures. For example, why does the soprano decide to wait until beat 4 of measure 42 to sing the F? Establishing the proper voice-leading with the paired vocal bass line is one factor, but perhaps she also waited until the piano reached the lowest

octave to give increased integrity to the F major arrival. Employing a slight *rubato* may heighten this dramatic effect. Secondly, what has motivated the piano not to go above the soprano voice after her final cadence? Was it a gesture of goodwill to make up for the showmanship of the high B-flat echo in measures 27-28? Sensitivity to the F shared by the singers and pianist in measure 56 would be vital for the effect to be noticed. Since the sopranos and altos double that pitch, the conductor may wish to check for balance and soften the sung note further. In the case of the "competitive" gesture at measures 27-28, a slight *rubato* in the piano may be used to prolong this sense of pride on the high B while slowly echoing the descending tritones.

In this analysis, the conductor's goal becomes engaging the singers in an imaginative game, in which they personify the music and gain an appreciation for the interpretative possibilities Brahms has created. Nineteenth-century composers were fascinated with musical-psychological effects, and the modern conductor should be confident that searching for these symbolisms most assuredly typifies the Romantic spirit.

Character Delineation and Moral Lessons in J.S. Bach's *Ich Elender Mensch*, BWV 48

The Russian philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin provides highly insightful conjectures on the concept of "voice" within a narrative. According to him, voice is a "speaking personality" or "consciousness," which has its own "will," "desire," "timbre," and "overtones."[114] When a speaker or author employs different voices in his or her own

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[114] Mikhail Bakhtin, "Discourse in the Novel," in *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, ed. M. Holquist, trans. C. Emerson and M. Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), 434.

narrative, the result is a linguistic polyphony that challenges the reader to discern

meaning from this interaction. Linda M. Park-Fuller describes the concept as:

> The collective quality of an individual utterance; that is, the capacity of my utterance to embody someone else's utterance even while it is mine, which thereby creates a dialogic relationship between two voices. For example, I quote or report someone's speech and thereby "dialogue" with his/her opinion; I appropriate the speech pattern of an admired person and associate myself with that person's linguistic-ideologic community; or I mock someone and dissociate myself from him or her.[115]

Park-Fuller further relates this concept with the narrative speech in a novel, describing

how the writer embeds characters' voices in the narrator to create a dialogue between

them.[116] In general, this is an important aspect of storytelling, but when it occurs within

the text of a choral work, the implications for performance are substantial, since it affects

matters such as pacing, vocal delivery, and other musically expressive elements. Nicholas

McKay associates Bakhtin's polyphony with Cone's persona by developing his own term

of "hermeneutic voicing," which attempts to discern "who is speaking?" in a text and

"from whom does the personal subjectivity emanate?"[117]

The vocal works of J.S. Bach offer numerous examples of linguistic polyphony,

and allow the analyst to search for questions pertaining to hermeneutic voicing. As part

of a Lutheran hermeneutic tradition, Bach's interpretation of religious texts provides

moral lessons for the listener, and his primary vehicle to achieve this is through character

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[115] Linda M. Park-Fuller, "Voices: Bakhtin's Heteroglossia and Polyphony, and the Performance of Narrative Literature," *Literature in Performance 7* (1986); available from http://www.csun.edu/~vcspc00g/604/voices-lpf.html; Internet; accessed 20 December 2008.

[116] Ibid.

[117] Nicholas McKay, "'One for All and All for One': Voicing in Stravinsky's Music Theatre," *The Journal of Music and Meaning* 5 (Summer 2007) [journal on-line]; available from http://www.musicandmeaning.net/issues/showArticle.php?artID=5.5], sec.5.1; accessed 6 January 2009

associations. To illustrate this point, let us consider Bach's *Ich elender Mensch, wer wird mich erlosen*, BWV 48, first performed in Leipzig in 1723. Like many of his cantatas, *Ich elender Mensch* details a transformation, or journey from sin and death to reconciliation and faith in Christ. See Appendices B and C for scores to movements II, III, VII along with the complete text and translation. The opening chorus in g minor uses only one line of text, translated as "Wretched man that I am, who will deliver me from this body of death," which is repeated several times and demarcated with instrumental interludes. Simultaneously, the trumpet introduces the chorale melody *Herr Jesu Christ*, which is translated as "In Jesus Christ we will find comfort." Following several iterations of the text in which Bach employs various imitative techniques in the voices, the movement ends with a seven-measure melismatic setting of the word *Todes* "death."

The most distressing moment in the cantata is the second movement, with the alto's recitative that begins *O Schmerz, o Elend!* The recitative, accompanied by strings, is marked with extreme chromaticism and intervallic leaps of tritones and sevenths. In *Tonal Allegory in the Vocal Music of J. S. Bach*, Eric Chafe cites this movement to describe the use of "extreme sharps and flats" as representing a "separation of body and soul." [118] He continues:

> Beginning in E-flat, it modulates through F minor, C minor, and A-flat to cadence in B-flat minor for *Die Welt wird mir ein Siech und Sterbehaus, der Leib muß seine Plagen bis zu dem Grab mit sich tragen* [the world becomes for me a house of sickness and death, the body must bear its troubles with it until the grave]. Then, on *Allein, die Seele fühlet das stärkste Gift, damit sie angestecket* [Only the soul feels the strongest poison with which it is infected] Bach makes a shift, via the enharmonic reinterpretation of several tones, to E major (or F-flat). Here torment

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[118] Eric Chafe, *Tonal Allegory in the Vocal Music of J. S. Bach* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1991), 196.

both of body and soul are confronted, a context that suggests the extreme character of E major.[119]

The imagery and text painting is harsh, as words such as "poison, pain, and cross" receive particular attention, and the unstable harmonic progressions prohibit any sense of composure.

The following movement, a chorale, opens with the commentary that punishment and pain must follow sin. The chorus serves as an inner voice or conscience reminding the listener of sin's effects. The second line of text is an important pivot point for the entire cantata, since it reveals that the other aspect of pain is to allow for mercy in the afterlife. This phrase cadences on A-flat major, and the final text line accepts this pain as penance (*büssen*). The word *büssen* receives special treatment, as it is set melismatically with the upper three voices creating dissonances before cadencing on B-flat major. The music of the fourth movement is of a very different character from previous sections, as the oboe solo begins a light, dancelike melody in 3/8, and the alto soloist proceeds to describe the purifying of "my soul…so that it may be a holy Zion before Thee." Following a tenor recitative and aria, the final chorale proclaims Christ as "my only comfort." Here, the chorale melody from the opening movement returns in the soprano line, signifying that Christ has kept his promise.

Unlike the Passions in which there is a clear delineation between characters, and the choir moves between portraying mocking crowds to devoted commentators, a single narrative requires a more subtle exercise in hermeneutics to identify. To begin, one might consider the various characters or objects being personified in these excerpts. In the alto

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[119] Ibid.

recitative, the opening line personifies pain and misery as "striking" the character. Later, the character refers to the body as being a mortal entity. Notice the careful wording in measure 6, since the character refers not to "my" body, but uses the demonstrative adjective description of *der Leib* "that body." The distinction is made between the character and the physical entity. A similar distinction is made on *die Seele* "that soul." At this moment, Chafe observes the shift from flat notes to sharp notes. This represents a localized example of what he describes elsewhere as the descent/ascent principal.[120] Over the larger scale of an entire cantata, this involves the first set of movements employing flat-key signatures (representing destruction and Old Testament doctrine), followed by movements with sharp-key signatures (depicting redemption and Christ as portrayed in the Gospel). In *BWV* 48, the body is the instrument of sin and death, while the soul belongs to Christ. Toward the end of the movement, the persona of pain strikes at the body, and it lets out a sigh from the "cross's cup." The singing voice should match the appropriate inflections as represented in these objects of characters, through dynamic changes, articulation, pacing, color, and even intonation. While subtlety is a trait of the finest musicians, a crude example might involve darkening the tone color slightly on certain words or passages that refer to the body or death. Or conversely, the conductor could suggest that the soloist brighten the opening *O Schmerz* to convey a sharp pain. As the body carries itself to the grave, which Bach expressively paints with a descending melodic line, the soloist may also decide to lessen the pace. When the soloist is about to describe the soul, the conjunctive *allein* might be inflected in a manner that creates

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[120] Eric Chafe, *Analyzing Bach Cantatas* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), xii.

anxiety, since the soul is affected more than the body. Bach also separates references to body and soul with two and a half beats of rest, the longest pause in the movement.

Not only can the vocalist change inflection to match the personas in the movement, but the accompanying strings can also play a significant role. The opening chord sets the mood for *Schmerz* and should be played in a manner that accomplishes this *Affekt*. It can also be effective for the strings (or the vocalist) to lessen or even completely remove vibrato on certain phrases or cadences depicting starkness. Lastly, choosing between *secco*, *accompagnato*, or aspects of both playing styles, and shortening certain values can greatly affect the character of a particular movement.

In the third movement chorale, the same techniques may be applied to highlight certain points or to depict the change in direction mentioned earlier. In this example, the key phrase "then proceed here to afflict me and spare me over there" might be described to the choir during rehearsal as requiring a more "confident" sound than the previous phrase. What is also significant about these last few phrases, which is not apparent at first, is that the choir identifies itself as the character undergoing the transformation. The first phrase merely recounts the notion that punishment follows sin. The final chorale offers yet more opportunities for character depiction. On the repeat of the *Stollen*, a lesser dynamic or change in color might serve as a possible option to draw reference to the pain expressed in the earlier movements, while allowing a contrast on the uplifting *Abgesang*, which ends the cantata. There are numerous other possibilities for the performer to show this internal dialogue and illustrate the moral "lesson" of this work. The important point is that the performer should not be afraid to offer a subjective approach to the material. Too often, conductors hasten through chorales during rehearsal and performance without

exploring their potential for emphasizing important moral themes or bridging ideas

within the larger context of the work. This notion of studying component elements within

a work, either by exploring its syntactical usage (style) or by drawing historical

connections, is a key tenet of the next theory to be discussed, structuralism.

CHAPTER FIVE – STYLE, SIGNS, AND TROPES

Structuralism

When the formalist, Roman Jakobson, left for Prague to became an important figure in the linguistic circle, his ideas were based on the work of the Swiss linguist, Ferdinand de Saussure. Considered the father of structuralism, Saussure's approach to literature focused on two aspects of language, *parole* and *langue*. The first refers to the single utterance produced, while the second is the system of rules that underlie these utterances. Structuralism is similar to New Criticism in its focus on the inner-workings of a text. However, it employs new tools for understanding the structures that make up these systems. For structuralists, the world is produced through language, and in learning a new language, one learns a new way of seeing and understanding. To be able to use a language and to understand not only word meaning, but also the underlying grammatical systems is to achieve *competence*.

Adam Schaff, in *Structuralism and Marxism*, describes the school of structuralism having several main tenets. First, the structure of individual elements determines the whole, which is more than its combined parts. Second, every system has a structure. Third, one should focus on the laws in which elements coexist within a structure at a single moment rather than studying how they change.[121] Successful structural analyses ask not what a system means, but how it produces meaning, and Saussure's sign system is an effective method to study this process. While a *parole* or utterance is the external manifestation of language, in actuality it represents a sign or basic unit of language. Hence, every language is a complete system of signs. For example, the word "pencil" is a

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[121] Adam Schaff, *Structuralism and Marxism* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1978), 17.

signifier which represents the mental concept of a pencil, which is called the signified.

These two aspects together create a sign. Because structuralism in this sense is focused

on language, the physical object, called the referent, is not a significant entity within the

equation. Saussure describes the relationship as such:

> The linguistic sign unites, not a thing and a name, but a concept and a sound-image. The latter is not the material sound, a purely physical thing, but the psychological imprint of the sound, the impression that it makes on our senses. The sound-image is sensory, and if I happen to call it 'material,' it is only in that sense, and by way of opposing it to the other term of the association, the concept, which is generally more abstract.[122]

Since meaning is derived not from the object itself, but from the structure of the

system, structuralism works by defining what something is not. In language, for example,

the human voice is capable of producing an infinite range of vowel sounds within a given

continuum. One can slowly transition between the vowels used in the following words

while making imperceptible transitions between them – [hard, hot, hat, hate]. Hence,

there are no discrete vowel units, since even one's natural dialect will produce variants.[123]

Therefore, how one is able to comprehend another person's spoken "hot" is by drawing a

comparison and determining that it is not "hat."[124] Allison Assiter explains:

> Signifiers are not autonomous, but they are defined by their relationship with other members of the system. What gives the word "brown" its identity is not anything intrinsic to it, but its difference from other colour words. The identity of the sign consists in its place in the system of signifiers.[125]

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[122] Ferdinand De Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, ed. Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye, trans. Wade Baskin (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1966), vi.

[123] The International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) is one system that has attempted to categorize these sounds and explain the physical vocal process to produce them.

[124] Schmitz, *Modern Literary Theory*, 32.

[125] Allison Assiter, "Althusser and Structuralism," *The British Journal of Sociology* 35, no. 2 (June 1984): 275.

In order to make worthwhile comparisons, we must understand the system of comparison. Drawing on an example used by Schmitz, imagine an onlooker watching a stream of cars travel along the highway. An environmentalist might classify these cars by their emission levels. A police officer would categorize them based upon a given speed limit, while a child's only interest may be the assortment of colors. Without knowing the system, the differences are so numerous that classification is impossible.[126]

Formulas for Genre

Structuralists are also concerned with how expectations about a genre govern the reading of a work. Jonathan Culler states that a genre "serves as a norm or expectation to guide the reader in his encounter with the text.[127] He argues that readers bring a certain level of competence to the process of reading a specific genre. Readers not competent in the rules for reading a novel could mistake it for a biography. The goal of structuralist interpretation is not to interpret the literary work, but to discuss the level of competence that the work requires of the reader. An example offered by Parker describes the formulaic procedures of popular television shows. If one has watched a fair number of *I Love Lucy* episodes, he will begin to recognize the formula from which nearly every episode is derived. In nearly every episode, Lucy finds herself in some difficult and always comical predicament. The viewer can always be certain that things will resolve

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[126] Schmitz, 32.

[127] Culler, *Structuralist Poetics: Structuralism, Linguistics, and the Study of Literature* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975), 136.

themselves by the end of the episode, however.[128] Similarly, in the television show *Gilligan's Island*, the viewer can expect that the character, Gilligan, will inadvertently spoil the rescue efforts of the crew. One final television example uses a formula based upon the characters' misinterpretation of their own language system. In the show *Three's Company*, a frequent scene involves two characters having a discussion behind closed doors and another character misinterpreting the information from outside.

Consequently, a structuralist would argue that once a scenario has been presented, it is convention that completes the episode and not the writer, since one can deduce what will eventually occur. Even if Gilligan appears to die in the middle of an episode, experience with the genre will inform the viewer that he will emerged unscathed with some humorous explanation for his disappearance, followed by some light-heartedly condescending remark by the "Skipper," played by Alan Hale. These examples all illustrate that structuralism shares a common thread with genre studies. Ronald Salmon Crane, credited with founding the Chicago School of Literary Criticism, maintained that the writer is guided by the "requirements" of the genre for which he is writing in, and this influences every aspect of the text, down to its most detailed imagery.[129] Culler's middle ground between relativism and the strict ideas of New Criticism is the notion of "literary competence," since it requires the reader to understand the language used by the author in order to make a valid interpretation. It places responsibility on the reader to discover the proper analytical mode while making the text dependent on this mode.[130]

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[128] Ibid., 52.

[129] Ronald Salmon Crane, *Critics and Criticism* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1953), 16.

[130] Culler, *Structuralist Poetics*, 128.

The above television examples serve as evidence for Saussure's later assertion that any system of signs, not just literature, could be analyzed using the same criteria. The study of these sign processes is called semiotics, a term coined by the American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce. Like the misunderstanding in the *Three's Company* episode, semiotic thought would reason that the choice of particular words, although carrying essentially the same definition, can affect the message.[131] By a similar token, Bakhtin emphasizes the contextual nature of linguistic utterances and describes that every word we speak bears a connection to what has preceded, drawing meaning from such things as volume, intonation, prior utterances. For him, no word meaning occurs in isolation but participates within a larger context and dialogue.[132]

Structuralism does not place value in the meaning of individual elements, but determines how they are structured together within an implicit underlying system. In the process of reading, Culler believes that readers acquire a mastery of codes and conventions that allow them to process sets of sentences as literary works endowed with shape and meaning. Hence, the task is to "render as explicit as possible the conventions responsible for the production of attested effects."[133] The point of interest is not what actual readers happen to do while they read, but what an ideal reader must know implicitly in order to interpret works.[134] Some semioticians, such as the Robert Scholes, therefore stress the pedagogical importance of educating readers on these conventions.

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[131] Vandevelde, *Task of the Interpreter*, 10.

[132] Bakhtin, *Dialogic Imagination*, 428.

[133] Culler, *Structuralist Poetics,* 31.

[134] Ibid., 123-4.

Furthermore, he states that "the greatest usefulness of semiotics…will not be found in its elaborate analytical taxonomies, but rather is to be derived from a small number of its most basic and powerful concepts, ingeniously applied."[135]

Jacques Derrida and Deconstruction

The early structuralists assumed that words were universally accepted representations of meaning. But with interpretation solely based upon a common perception of things, some asked what would occur if words could suggest multiple meanings or were simply misunderstood (from the author's point of view). These questions stood at the heart of Jacques Derrida's argument against Saussure's structural view of literature. Influenced by such figures as Nietzsche, Heidegger, and Rousseau, Derrida discusses the implications of understanding language as either a spoken or written medium. Under the premise that language has historically been viewed as a spoken entity, he postulates that it is this medium which allows for greater success in transferring meaning to the listener.[136] Since the speaker is present, he or she can reiterate their statements to avoid misinterpretation. Language understood as a written entity, however, presents the reader with problems concerning misinterpretation. If, as in most cases, the author is not physically present, there is nothing to prevent the reader from misconstruing meaning.

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[135] Robert Scholes, *Semiotics and Interpretation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), xi.

[136] Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. G. C. Spivak (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1978), 7.

For Derrida, words can have numerous meanings, and so there always remains distrust not only for the written word, but also for language. As Arthur Bradley describes, "every signifier relates to other signifiers that surround it in space and time and so we can reach a pure thought or concept – a signified – that exists in and of itself independently."[137] Pure ideas can never present themselves without the medium of language to create potential distortion of the meaning. This dissolution of a message into multiple meanings to the point of instability is a key tenet of Deconstruction, a term introduced by Derrida in his best known work, *Of Grammatology*.

Roland Barthes was another significant influence on Derrida, and he represents a transitional figure between structuralism and post-structuralist thought. A prominent semiotician who contributed much to the earlier movement, Barthes increasingly became concerned that contemporary critical theorists were imposing a monoist view of interpretation based on authorial authority. In "Death of the Author," Barthes contends that one can never understand the intention of the author. As he states, "To give a text an Author is to impose a limit on that text, to furnish it with a final signified, to close the writing."[138] With a renewed sense of empowerment for interpretation, the "Death of the Author," Barthes maintained, was the "Birth of the Reader."[139]

The main achievement of the deconstructionists is their focus on taking apart the structures within a work and examining in detail their potential for skewed meaning through the use of open-ended signifiers. Specific meaning is irrelevant, since the result

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[137] Bradley, 71.

[138] Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author," in *Image-Music-Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (London: Fontana Press, 1977), 147.

[139] Ibid., 148.

is always an infinite number of possible interpretations. For Derrida, the description of this failure must be demonstrated with a rigorous "deconstruction" of a text by paying close attention to its details in relation to how the author would have intended them to be understood. Deconstructionists asserted that their ideas were extremely radically and at odds with all conventional forms of literary theory. They generated both strong supporters and vehement opposition. Nevertheless, it was a dominant force in literary criticism during the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Deconstruction in the United States centered on a single school of scholars at Yale University, where Derrida had made frequent visit as guest lecturer. One of the most influential of these scholars was Paul de Man. He set out to deconstruct texts provided by New Critics in order to find contradictions in meaning. A topic frequently encountered in de Man's work is the tension on meaning created by the use of verbal tropes such as metaphors, metonymy, and allegory, to name a few.[140] Moreover, he believed that texts naturally deconstructed themselves, since they denied the possibility of true understanding. The underlying issue in attempting to uncover meaning is that:

> Sooner or later, any literary study, no matter how rigorous and legitimately formalistic it may be, must return to the problem of interpretation, no longer in the naïve conviction of a priority of content over form, but as a consequence of the much more unsettling experience of being unable to cleanse its own discourse of aberrantly referential implications.[141]

Under the wide-ranging influence of Deconstruction, semiotics evolved beyond Saussure's original formalist-leaning structural theory to acknowledge the occurrence of

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[140] Paul de Man, "Shelley Disfigured," in *Deconstruction and Criticism*, ed. Harold Bloom et al (New York: Continuum, 1979), 44.

[141] Paul de Man, "Roland Barthes and the Limits of Structuralism," in *Reading the Archive: On Texts and Institutions*, Yale French Studies, ed. E. S. Burt and Janie Vanpeé, No. 77 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 187.

multiple meanings arising out of sign usage. Moreover, the adoption of semiotics to music studies allowed for greater insights on matters pertaining to musical style and interpretation. Kofi Agawu, Robert Hatten, Raymond Monelle, Jean-Jacques Nattiez, Anthony Newcomb, and Eero Tarasti represent some of the more prominent writers on music semiology.

A Semiotic Approach to Musical Style

Culler believed that identifying conventions aided the reader in contextualizing a literary work. Similarly, the conventions that operate within a musical work allow it to be identified as part of a particular musical style or genre. Understanding style can elucidate what elements in a piece are considered messages and codes and help the analyst determine how these are to be interpreted and manifested into meaning.[142] John Davis Booth describes style as a way of viewing a work in order to form value judgments:

> Even before appreciating it, he [the listener] knows its type: light or "serious" music, song or melody, or from the folklore of a particular country. Onto this identification is often grafted an especially abstract and superficial type of value judgment, which can be called categorical.[143]

In music from the Classical era, elements such as periodic phrasing, sonata form, metric accentuation, and multiple *Affekts* all contribute to the style ones associates with that period. Even more specifically, Haydn and Mozart can be compared stylistically by their different use of thematic content, since Haydn is often associated with monothematic expositions consisting of shorter motives, while Mozart tends to write polythematic

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[142] Marshall Brown, "Origins of Modernism: Musical Structures and Narrative Forms," in Scher, *Music and Text*, 90.

[143] John Booth Davies, *The Psychology of Music* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1978), 348.

expositions with longer melodies. These are obviously generalizations but, similar to the earlier formulas in *I Love Lucy*, these traits can be identified by their frequency of occurrence. Style is defined by Leonard Meyer as "finite and ordered systems of probability."[144] Furthermore, these statements on thematic usage are relative depending on the composers being compared; just as identifying the most appealing car on the highway depends on whether you are a child, police officer, or environmentalist.[145] The danger of stylistic analysis is the attempt to force a piece to conform to certain expectations, since each work must still be allowed its own level of autonomy apart from its *horizon*. The benefit of this acknowledgment is the gained perspective of discovering consistency or inconsistency in compositional practices and determining the possible reason behind such decisions.[146]

In musical semiotics, Agawu relates style to the concept of *topics*, which he borrows from Leonard Ratner.[147] *Topics* are recognizable musical forms or common stylistic procedures that a composer incorporates in order to imply an association outside of the immediate work.[148] They can include forms, styles, tempi, expressive markings, or

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[144] Leonard B. Meyer, "On Rehearing Music," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 14, no. 2 (Summer, 1961): 266.

[145] For a discussion on structural comparison, see p. 63-4 above.

[146] Leo Treitler, *Music and the Historical Imagination* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), 70-6.

[147] Ratner borrows the concept of *topics* from the Greek *topos*, meaning a common rhetorical device or convention.

[148] Kofi Agawu, *Playing with Signs: A Semiotic Interpretation of Classic Music* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 26-50. Agawu borrows the term "topic" from Leonard Ratner, *Classic Music: Expression, Form, and Style* (New York: Schirmer, 1980).

any other conventional music labels which introduce their own historical consideration. In music from the Classical era, tempo markings and time signatures were associated with certain *Affekts*. In this way, *topics* are musical signs. A short fugue within a movement or a passage in fauxbourdon-style each brings its own historical, formal, and performance connotations to a work. For example, a fugue in a Mozart Mass implies a concerted effort by the composer to invoke a Baroque technique and prompts the analyst to determine if Mozart has followed the rules of fugue technique. Similarly, identifying something written in a French Overture style might permit the possibility of overdotting the rhythm in order to follow certain performance practices.

Topics belong to a category of sign usage labeled by Agawu as extroversive semiosis. These include all types of signs that are referential, creating links to the world outside of the immediate musical work and carrying historical implications.[149] What *topics* do not offer is an understanding of the purely intrinsic, "grammatical" features of a work that could lead one to determine how such musical events relate to one another as part of a larger structure. This method of sign usage is called introversive semiosis and is often studied through a Schenkerian-style of analysis. Jean-Jacques Nattiez refers to intrinsic versus extra-musical references in addition to positing a separate notion of "intermusical referring," which contextualizes works within the "larger musical universe" and prompts a comparison of style. [150] He concludes his discussion by pointing out that,

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[149] Agawu, *Playing with Sings*, 23. This is an adaption of Jacobson's use of the terms "extroversive" and "introversive" semiosis in Roman Jacobson "Language in Relation to Other Communication System," in *Selected Writings, Vol. 2* (The Hague: Mouton, 1971), 704-5.

[150] Jean-Jacques Nattiez, *Music and Discourse: Toward a Semiology of Music*, trans. Carolyn Abbate (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 117.

"If there is an essential being of music defined from a semiological vantage point, I would locate that being in the instability of the two fundamental modes of musical referring."[151] These two modes are introversive and extroversive semiosis and will be further explored in the analysis of a cantata by Dieterich Buxtehude.

Extroversive and Introversive Semiosis in
Dieterich Buxtehude's *Nimm von uns, Herr, du treuer Gott* (BuxWV 78)

The first step in this analysis will be to identify various *topics* in the first two movements of Buxtehude's cantata and determine their historical, formal, and performance connotations. These qualities constitute sign usage that is extroversive in its referencing of concepts and material outside of the domain of the immediate work. Next, a deeper analysis revealing more pure sign usage through introversive semiosis will determine the relationship between these components as structural entities.

Extroversive Semiosis

Inventory of key *topics* and sign usage: chorale, concerto, *ritornello* (*topic* within a *topic*), *cantus firmus*, text, symbolism in the string writing

Nimm von uns, Herr, du treuer Gott is a six movement cantata labeled formally as a chorale concerto. As such, the prominent second movement is comprised of alternating segments between vocal and instrumental *ritornelli*. The *cantus firmus* is derived from the medieval chorale melody *Vater unser im Himmelreich*, adapted by Martin Luther. See Figure 7.

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[151] Ibid., 118.

Figure 7. *Vater unser im Himmelreich,* chorale melody - Unspecified mid 17th century source[152].

From a performance standpoint, it is important that the *cantus firmus* in the soprano voice is clearly audible above the other voices. While the higher *tessitura* of the soprano voice accomplishes much of this on its own, Buxtehude creates a more rhythmically active, almost ornamental line on the two occasions when the soprano range encounters the alto (measure 4 and 45). Thus, attention should be given to rhythmic clarity so that the melody maintains its natural prominence.

The poet of *Nimm von uns, Herr, du treuer Gott,* Martin Moller (1547–1606), was a German theologian, who was believed to have had Calvinist leanings despite his Lutheran background. Both perspectives would account for the language of the text being in concordance with the doctrine of "total depravity," which views original sin as the cause for man's inability to love God without acceptance of divine grace. Although Moller wrote the text prior to the Thirty Years War, the final two lines of the poem no doubt would have sparked certain associations for Buxtehude's listeners, having been witness to the lasting emotional and economic impacts of that struggle.

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[152] The melody first appeared in print in *Geistliche lieder*, edited/published by Valentin Schumann, Leipzig, 1539.

Text and translation of *Nimm von uns, Herr, du treuer Gott*:[153]

Nimm von uns, Herr, du treuer Gott,	Take from us, Lord, you faithful God,
die schwere Straf und große Rut,	the heavy penalty and severe punishment
die wir mit Sünden ohne Zahl	which we, with our innumerable sins,
verdienet haben allzumal.	have altogether deserved.
Behüt für Krieg und teurer Zeit,	Protect us from war and time of dearth,
für Seuchen, Feur und großem Leid.	from plague, fire and great suffering.

On another level, the familiar chorale melody would have also provided a textual association for the listener, serving as a counterpart to the darker tone of Moller's poem. Luther's verse is a meditation on the Lord's Prayer and invokes an equally weighty, but positive sense of penitence.

Translation of *Vater unser im Himmelreich*:[154]

Our Father in the kingdom of heaven,
Who commands us all equally
to be brothers and to call upon you,
and who wants us to pray to you:
grant that we not pray only with our mouths,
but help us, so that it may also come
from the depths of our hearts.

The "heavy penalty" of *Nimm von uns, Herr, du treuer Gott,* is balanced with the "depths of our hearts" (*Herzensgrund*), while the imagery of "fire," evoking not just war but also hell, is contrasted with "the kingdom of heaven."

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[153] Poet: Martin Moller (1584). Translation by *Collegium Vocale Gent*, Boston Early Music Festival, 2002; accessed 20 January 2009; available from https://www.bemf.org/media/BUXTEHUDE_TEXTS.pdf.

[154] Ron Jeffers, *Translations and Annotations of Choral Repertoire, Vol. II: German Texts*, ed. Gordon Paine (Corvallis, OR: Earthsongs, 1988), 300.

Buxtehude's strictly homophonic usage of strings, along with their *tessitura*, represents a stylistic procedure often associated with the composer. They are immediately perceived as a separate entity to the voices as they occur first only in the *ritornelli* and then eventually superimposed, but not fully integrated, with the voices. Such string effects in Buxtehude represent a "symbolic heightening" of the vocal parts. This technique is not unlike earlier string effects employed in the *historia* of Heinrich Schütz and more famously in the string "halo" that accompanies Jesus' narrative in Bach's *St. Matthew Passion.* A look at the introversive referencing in this work will eventually reveal a more significant role of this heightening effect within the deeper structure.

Introversive Semiosis
Structural components: phraseology of the *cantus firmus*, interaction of registers, aural links between *ritornelli*

The structure of the original chorale melody contains six phrases of eight notes each and suggests relatively few harmonization options at cadential points. A brief survey of other settings of this melody by Hans Leo Hassler, Johann Eccard, Dietrich Buxtehude, and J.S. Bach (BWV 101 and 102) reveals the most typical cadential pattern as shown in Figure 8.

Figure 8. Cadential points in frequently encountered harmonizations of *Vater unser im Himmelreich*.

Phrase 1 **(I)**   Phrase 2 **(V)**   Phrase 3 **(I)**   Phrase 4 **(V)**   Phrase 5 **(III)** Phrase 6 **(I)** **(III)***

It is only in Eccard's harmonization (*) that **III** is substituted for **V** after the second phrase. As shown by the phrase structure diagram in Figure 9, Buxtehude's second movement of BuxWV 78 clearly follows the harmonic convention at the cadential points, but creates a larger, proportioned formal scheme by placing the arrival of the dominant key area at the exact middle of the movement (measure 25) and the mediant key area at the three-quarter point (measure 37). See Appendix C for the score. Measures 28-34 serves as an extension that breaks away from the chorale melody. This consists of a noticeably thinner, more transparent texture, and also a more homogenized use of register - such qualities serve to counterbalance the previous, more climactic section. Therefore, the choral entrances between measures 28-33 should not take on any excessive dramatic character, and the cascading effect of the word *Behüt* in all four voices starting at the pickup of measure 32 should take on a simple quality of reassurance, as the translation suggests. The chorale melody returns at the pickup of measure 34.

Figure 9. Structure of Buxtehude's *Nimm von uns, Herr, du treuer Gott*, BuxWV 78, MVT II.

Phrase #:	1	2	3	4		ext	5	6	cadential
Key area:	**I**	**V**	**I**	**V**	**V**			**III**	
	m. 1				25	28	34	37	49
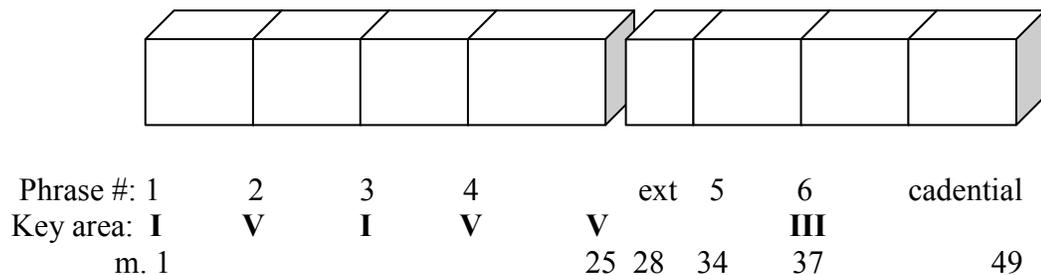
Measure 42 is significant, since it signals the eventual return to tonic, while the following dominant prolongation to the end of the movement is particularly long, because of the V^6

chord. A final closing *ritornello* serves to balance the second half of the work. The following Schenkerian graph in Figure 10 reveals the large scale harmonic motion of movement two consisting of **I-V-III-I**.

Figure 10. Middleground analysis of MVT II.

As demonstrated in Eccard's harmonization of this chorale melody, Buxtehude had the option of arriving at the mediant harmony prior to the dominant at the end of the second phrase, but chose against it. In many of his analyses, Schenker demonstrates the natural tendency of minor-mode works going to the median. While Buxtehude does not directly achieve this, the composer does frequently allude to this harmony on several occasions prior to reaching the dominant. Its inverted form occurs at measure 8 and measure 23, and the most apparent occurrence happens on the downbeat of measure 16 in root position at the precise point when the vocal line reaches its highest note in the piece and almost exactly 1/3 into the movement.

Buxtehude first establishes the dichotomy of two interacting registers (an instrumental "cover" and what eventually becomes the "vocal register" in the following movement) in the opening *sinfonia* movement. The "symbolic heightening" effect is achieved particularly through the large-scale interplay of register. From a perspective of range, the link between the two registers is the pitch G5. Being the "middle" note in the larger scale arpeggiation in E, it is employed often when changing registers (movement one, measures 5 and 10), and the ascending lines in the lower register often stop at that pitch (movement one, measure 10). But perhaps the clearest indication lies in the fact that G5 is the highest note attained by the voices in movement two, measures 14-16. The two registers are also connected through a motivic use of the sixth interval. This interval, along with its various enharmonic respellings, followed by stepwise motion in the opposite direction, is used frequently as a means to traverse both registers (Movement one: measure 5-6 – major 6th enharmonically respelled; measure 10 – minor 6th, measure 14-15 – augmented 6th enharmonically respelled; Movement two: measure 13 – minor 6th). Similarly, Buxtehude allows the tritone to take on a similar role as it traverses registers (the crossed voices in movement one, measure 6 and movement two, measures 12-13 and 18-19.

Sensitivity to how Buxtehude uses such intervals can inform the conductor of how much to stress their occurrence. For example, at the first instance of a sixth interval in measures 5-6 of movement, one should aurally prepare the listener for its important role within the work. By emphasizing its occurrence here, not only do the M6 and m6 intervals in measures 8 and 10 become more interesting, but it creates a long range connection to the sudden intervallic drop and subsequent leap of a m6 in measure 13 of

movement two. In both the first and second movements, it is also significant to note that both key areas are employed in the same order (**V** and **III**). But while the return is prolonged through the dominant in the first movement, the *Sinfonia* compresses this motion by an immediate return to **I** at measure 12.

Lastly, the exercise of extracting the *ritornelli* in movement two and placing them next to each other also provides additional insight into long range aural connections. These can affect how the conductor will prepare or prolong arrival points and employ dynamics within the sections. For example, the descending motion in the *ritornello* in measures 5-7 becomes inverted to an ascent (with an octave displacement) in measures 12-13. The conductor may wish to have the players sustain a steady growth in dynamic through the descending passage in measure 5-7, so that the following *ritornello* in measure 12 does not appear so abrupt, despite its higher register. The use of certain pitches in the *ritornelli* also helps establish long range aural connections between sections. See Figure 11.

Figure 11. MVT II, Extracted *ritornello*, mm. 27, 31, 37, and 46.

One can hear the connection from the B at the end of measure 27 to the C# at measure 31, the D at measure 37, and finally to the E in measure 46. This reinforces the final build-up to e minor and may the prompt the conductor to pace the strength of the preceding cadences. Earlier, the high E in measure 18 not only connects the instrumental *ritornello*

to the vocal line, but also to the end of the previous *ritornello* in measure 14. See Figure

12. This further deemphasizes the B-natural on the offbeat in measure 18.

Figure 12. MVT II, Extracted *ritornello*, mm. 13-14 and 17-18.
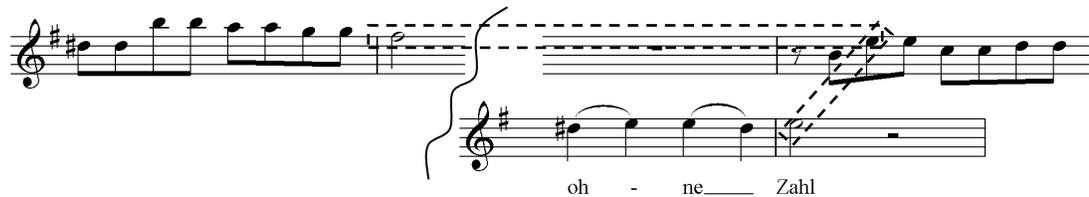
The combination of these semiotic referents offers a glimpse at Buxtehude's

process of musical dramatization and allows the performer to experiment with several

possibilities for interpretation. The compositional limits created out of the formal

structure and the use of a *cantus firmus* requires the composer to use creative means to

match the dramatic potential offered by the text. The use of certain harmonic

progressions, the motivic use of intervals to reach across large structures, and the

interplay between registers are all procedures resulting from creating drama out of self-

imposed structure. In a similar vein, Otto Christiansen describes meaning as a "kind of

semantic deposit left over from the process of connecting the levels of expression and

content."[155] The interaction between expression and structural content in Buxtehude's

cantata is fundamentally related to Iser's "gaps," and becomes a matter also of

hermeneutic understanding.

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[155] Otto M. Christensen, "Interpretation and Meaning in Music," in *Musical Significance: Essays in the Semiotic Theory and Analysis of Music,* ed. Eero Tarasti (New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1995), 87.

Semiotic Incongruities and Hermeneutic Windows

In reference to Gadamer's hermeneutics, John Sheriff points out that Gadamer's conclusions about the *horizon* are consistent with what is implied about meaning in Peirce's theory of signs. Both are concerned with validity and truth and look at these within the context of a language or sign system where the process of interpretation occurs.[156] The interpretations of the signs discussed in the Buxtehude cantata are, by and large, culturally-determined. For the chorale melody to have any relevance to the narrative, it must be familiar to the listener. Moreover, the war references in the final verses of text would take on an entirely new meaning to a society having recently experienced the miseries of the Thirty Years War.

Using the same "window" metaphor as John Sheriff, who earlier discussed textual and reader *horizons*[157], Kramer's "hermeneutic windows" are specific points of interest within a musical work which can initiate the "discourse of our understanding."[158] They many include any text within the work, allusions to other musical or non-musical ideas (i.e. some symbolic reference or musical quotation), or a "structural procedure" that relates to a "certain cultural/historical function."[159] This final type, labeled a "structural trope" by Kramer, may include any number of *topics* described by Ratner or Agawu. James H. Donelan describes the structural trope as allowing "the interpreter to bridge the gap between the internal workings of a composition and its possible meaning by

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[156] Sheriff, *Fate of Meaning*, 112.

[157] Refer to p. 27-8 above.

[158] Lawrence Kramer, *Music as Cultural Practice, 1800–1900* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1990), 6.

[159] Kramer, *Music as Cultural Practice*, 9-10.

determining what it meant to use a particular formal element for that composer and the intended audience."[160] Analogous to Nattiez's earlier point that meaning arises from a form of semiotic instability, Kramer uses hermeneutic windows to reveal incongruities by arguing that "Interpretation takes flight from breaking points, which usually means from points of under- or over-determination: on the one hand, a gap, a lack, a missing connection; on the other, a surplus of pattern, an extra repetition, an excessive connection."[161]

With regard to the television episodes, these are occasions when the episodic formula is stretched and challenges our preconceptions. In *Gilligan's Island*, for example, there are a handful of episodes when Gilligan's clumsiness actually saves the crew from dire circumstances. These instances create meaning for the viewer, allowing him or her to reflect on the previous notion of Gilligan's inept role on the island. The idea of comparing expectations with what actually occurs constitutes for Culler a reversal on the perspective of structuralism, where "the work is read against the conventions of discourse and where one's interpretation is an account of the ways in which the work complies with or undermines our procedures for making sense of things."[162]

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[160] James H. Donelan, "Nature, Music, and the Imagination in Wordsworth's Poetry" in *Poetry and the Romantic Musical Aesthetic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 102.

[161] Kramer, *Music as Cultural Practice*, 12.

[162] Culler, *Structuralist Poetics,* 130.

Salve Regina á 4 - Josquin Desprez

An analysis of Desprez's four-voice motet reveals not only how the composer incorporates the original Marian antiphon (see Figure 13), but also how he deviates from it, establishing the "breaking points" described by Kramer and Culler.

Figure 13. Chant, *Salve Regina*.

The entire chant melody is used in the motet, primarily heard in the alto voice with additional notes and coloration added to the original melody. The soprano, however, imitates the alto line at the semibreve (half note in reduced modern notation) for the entirety of the piece and at the interval of a 4th. See Figure 14.

Figure 14. Desprez, *Salve Regina á 4*, mm.2-14 (soprano and alto voices).

Desprez not only incorporates the chant melody but also preserves the antiphon's original structure of two identical phrases by repeating the first fourteen measures of the motet. In examining the usage of text through a hermeneutic window, the listener will notice incongruities as the motet contains repeated words not treated as such in the original antiphon.

Measure(s)	Voice Part	Repeated text	Translation
6-12	Tenor/Bass	*misericordiae*	of mercy
31-34	Tenor/Bass	*clamamus*	we cry
94-97	Tenor/Bass	*ostende*	show us [Jesus]

The soprano and alto voices are singing the *cantus firmus* as these occur, and so the effect by the lower two parts is one of commentary, highlighting the important themes presented. The most apparent examples of repeated text occur toward the end of the motet and signify the attributes given to Mary. Moreover, the final phrase, "O sweet virgin Mary," is repeated in all of the voice parts.

Measure(s)	Voice Part	Repeated text	Translation	# of times sung
99-103	Tenor/Bass	*O clemens*	O merciful	2x's (TB)
104-109	Tenor/Bass	*O pia*	O pious	2x's (TB)
110-115	All Parts	*O dulcis*	O sweet	2x's (SA); 3x's (TB)
116-121	All Parts	*Virgo*	Virgin	2x's (SA); 3x's (TB)

These repeated words, since they occur relatively infrequently in the motet, should be sung with varying dynamics. In the Middle Ages, these might have been troped and sung by different performers, effectively resulting in a change in dynamic. Particularly in the final section represented above, dynamic contrasts will bring attention to these words and give them more poetic effect. Another poetic usage of the text occurs in the soprano and alto parts, where Desprez pauses after the "*O*" in each of the three phrases before continuing on with each attribute. See Figure 15.

Figure 15. Desprez, *Salve Regina á 4*, mm.104-109 (soprano and alto voices).

Being sensitive to this poetic effect in which elation is the cause for the breakup of the text, the conductor should instruct the singers to "think" through the quarter-note rest and approach each attribute (*pia*, *dulcis*, etc…) without losing momentum out of the rest. Confirming this verbal instruction, the conducting gesture must carry through the entire phrase and not indicate a long, weighty breath.

Underneath these upper voices, the tenors and basses repeat the same four-note motive several times each. See Figure 16. This symbolic gesture is encountered in many of Desprez's works, including through his *Missa Pange lingua.* Through the use of repetition, the message is that "he who perseveres shall be saved," in Latin *Qui perseveraverit salvus erit.* The phrase is derived from Matthew 10:22, *Qui autem perseveraverit in finem hic salvus erit* ("But the one who perseveres to the end will be saved") and was quoted by numerous figures including St. Benedict in his *Rule*, chapter 7, verse 36. This symbolism would not have gone unnoticed to the contemporary listener and an implication for performance might be to shape these motives (<>) and bring them out of the texture.

Figure 16. Desprez, *Salve Regina á 4*, mm. 101-105 (tenor and bass voices).

The motive's occurrence is especially appropriate in this motet, considering the general theme of the antiphon's text, which evokes the Blessed Virgin Mary as the path to salvation. Hence, it represents not just a simple compositional procedure, but also a spiritual lesson. Following Vatican II revisions, the *Salve Regina* is usually reserved for Marian feast days, but it was used more frequently during Desprez's time.

The repeated text toward the end of the motet constitutes an extended final section with a persistent usage of the chant-based neighboring tone motives shown in Figure 15

(measure 104) and Figure 15 above. Due to all of the above features contained in this section, measure 97 to the end partially serves as its own independent formal entity. See Figure 17.

Figure 17. Phrase structure of Desprez's *Salve Regina* á 4.
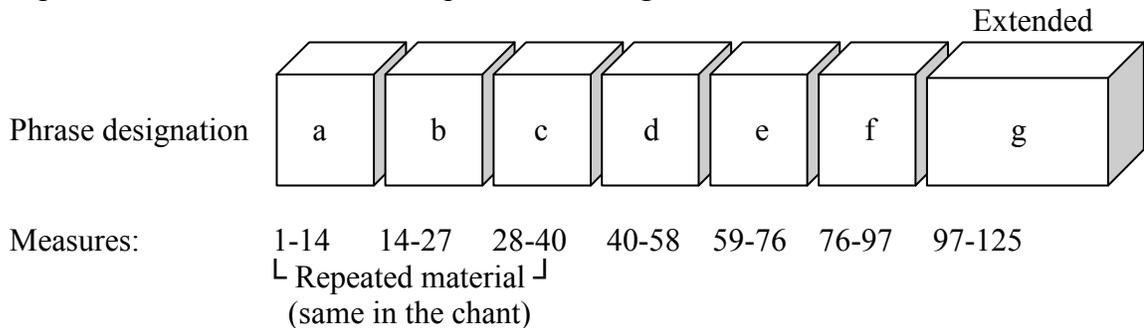
Phrases
(A) *Salve Regina, mater misericordiae,*
    Hail, O Queen, mother of mercy;
(B) *Vita, dulcedo, et spes nostra, Salve!*
    Our life, sweetness, and hope, hail.
(C) *Ad te clamamus, exsules filii Evae,*
    To thee we cry, banished children of Eve.
(D) *Ad te suspiramus, gementes et flentes, in hac lacrimarum valle.*
    To thee do we sigh, groaning and weeping in this valley of tears.
(E) *Eja ergo, Advocata nostra, illos tuos misericordes oculos ad nos converte*
    Hasten, therefore, our advocate, and turn thy merciful eyes toward us.
(F) And show us Jesus, the blessed fruit of thy womb, after this exile
    Et Jesum, benedictum fructum ventris tui, nobis, post hoc exilium, ostende,
(G) *O clemens, O pia, O dulcis Virgo Maria*
    O merciful, O pious, O sweet Virgin Mary.

Ave Verum Corpus - William Byrd

The occurrence of cross relations, a frequently encountered stylistic trait within the English musical tradition, is a highly effective expressive device. William Byrd uses it famously in the opening phrase of his motet *Ave Verum Corpus*, from his shared

Cantiones Sacrae of 1575 to stress a doctrinal position. The fact that this cross relation

occurs so early in the piece (within the first two measures of the piece rather than later on

as tension is allowed to build up) represents an incongruity (such as a gap or stretched

expectation) from more conventional usage to suggest some sort of special motivation by

the composer. Emphasis is immediately placed on the first syllable of *verum* instead of

corpus through intervallic jumps and the cross relation between the soprano F# and the

bass F-natural. As a culturally-determined sign, a modern listener might not immediately

recognize the inherent symbolism in such a gesture. In Reformation England, however,

this subtle effect of stressing the *true* body would have held special significance for

recusants, since it reinforced their doctrine of transubstantiation. See Figure 18.

Figure 18. William Byrd, Ave Verum Corpus, measures 1-5.

Byrd also reserves the highest note in the piece for the names *Maria* and *Jesu* in measures

6, 32, and 47, representing not only their relation, but also acknowledging the important

stature given to Mary in the Roman Catholic faith.

The above example demonstrates how an individual rhetorical figure can signify a specific extra-musical meaning. For Renaissance and Baroque era theorists, however, the notion of musical rhetoric extended beyond mere occasional occurrences. Instead, they were believed to permeate the very structure of a work. In Germany, during that time and into the eighteenth century, the correlation between rhetoric and musical figures was understood to be particularly strong in the treatises of Joachim Burmeister and Johannes Lippius, who both drew from the work of Nikolaus Listenius and the early tradition of *musica poetica*. Burmeister's systemized listing of *Figurenlehre* provided a method of applying Greek rhetorical formulas to music. To these men, compositions were understood to present an argument to the listener by using an assortment of techniques not only to organize, but also to dramatize the effect. Agawu places rhetorical figures under the category of introversive semiosis, since they embody a set of grammatical rules that describe how a piece functions from beginning to end.[163]

In the case of Byrd's *Ave Verum Corpus*, a brief rhetorical analysis of selected passages will open a hermeneutic window to determine the sign usage of certain functional events. Valentina Sandu-Dediu calls for the need to go beyond "strictly syntactic analyses" of Renaissance and Baroque music and integrate "the real practice of the age - that of rhetorical devices -, which brings together purely musical semantics, as well as the ones deriving from the word-music relationship."[164] In this way, the study of

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[163] Agawu, *Playing with Signs*, 52.

[164] Valentina Sandu-Dediu, "Common Subjects In Musical Rhetoric and Stylistics. Aspects And Proposals" in *New Europe College Yearbook*, issue 01/1996-1997, 391 [yearbook online] (Bucharest, Romania: New Europe College Yearbook, Accessed 5 Jan 2009); available from http://www.ceeol.com.

rhetoric is semiotic, since the listener derives a signified meaning from the particular method of oratorical delivery.

The following rhetorical figures and definitions are drawn from Burmeister's *Musica Poetica* of 1606, listed in Patrick McCreless's "Music and Rhetoric."[165] Figure 19 shows how a string of rhetorical figures work congruently for dramatic effect. The cadence in measure fifteen is preceded by increased syncopation, a rhetorical figure labeled *pleonasmus*. This energized approach to the end of the phrase is often used in speech to give strong emphasize to a particular point. Here, Byrd is depicting the significance of Christ being sacrificed on the cross for mankind (*immolatum in cruce pro homine*). The next figure, *aposiopesis* represents a general pause, while *noema* is a homophonic section intended for text declamation. The pause enables the sudden change in texture to become a musical event, appropriately signifying the text *Cujus latus perforatum* ("Whose side was pierced"). An implication for performance might involve slightly emphasizing the syncopated beats at the *pleonasmus* and accentuating the entrance of *Cujus.* This emphasis on the syllable *"Cu"* would have most likely received the same treatment during Byrd's day since it occurs on a longer note value, and the lack of barlines in the part books would have taken away the visual conflict of the weak beat entrance and tied note value.

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[165] Joachim Burmeister, *Musical Poetics*, trans. Benito V. Rivera (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993) quoted in Patrick McCreless, "Music and Rhetoric," in *Cambridge History of Western Music Theory*, ed. Thomas Christensen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 857.

Figure 19. Rhetorical Figures in *Ave Verum Corpus*, mm.13-17.

Figure 20 offers concurrent examples of *auxesis* and *climax*. The first represents an increasing number of voices along with a rising of pitch during a repeated text. *Climax* is the use of a sequence on a melodic fragment. The paired inner voices are joined by the outer voices in imitation after which the tenor briefly drops out. The inner voices then proceed to present their motive in melodic sequence as the soprano drops out, still leaving a predominantly three-part texture. Finally, the soprano returns sequentially in a genuine four-part texture.

Figure 20. Rhetorical figures in *Ave Verum Corpus*, mm.36-40.

One final example occurs at the end of the motet and contains a *supplementum,* which is a final sustained note "decorated" with chordal progressions. The performance implication here would be for the sopranos to maintain their held note fully while the harmonic backdrop continually shifts back and forth between the tonic and subdominant harmonies, reaffirming the sustained "Amen" with underlying plagal cadences. See Figure 21.

Figure 21. Rhetorical figures in *Ave Verum Corpus*, mm.56-60.
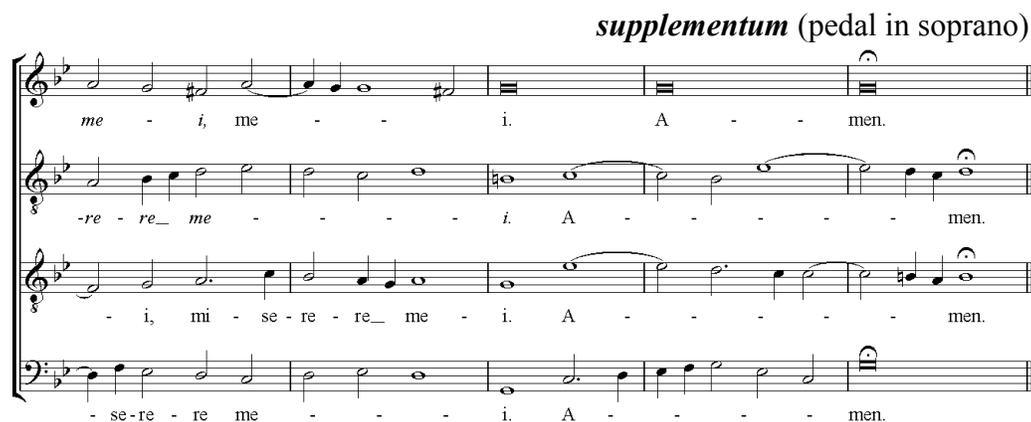
These examples only serve as a preliminary approach to rhetorical analysis, but highlight the potential in viewing the rhetorical devices themselves as a narrative to heighten the delivery of the text.

Yver, vous n'estes qu'un villain!, from *Trois Chansons* – Claude Debussy

In Neoclassical works, incongruities may occur as a result of fusing old and modern compositional styles. In the case of Claude Debussy's *Trois Chansons*, the composer sets out to emulate earlier musical effects while employing a decidedly modern harmonic language. The texts come from the fifteenth-century poet, Charles d'Orléans.

This poet stood on the threshold of the Renaissance and experienced an outstanding medieval education, yet he was exposed to the remarkable currents of change occurring in Western Europe.[166]

The third song in the set, *Yver, vous n'estes qu'un villain!*, personifies the seasons. Debussy illustrates the resentment towards winter through agitated melodic lines and motives. The opening employs a highly declamatory style with the initial outburst "Winter, you're nothing but a villain!" pursued by sharp accented two-note attacks in the remaining voices. See the text below.

Text and translation of *Yver, vous n'estes qu'un villain!*:[167]

Yver, vous n'estes qu'un villain!	Winter, you're nothing but a villain!
Esté est plaisant et gentil	Summer is pleasant and nice,
en témoing de may et d'avril	joined to May and April,
qui l'accompaignent soir et main.	who go hand in hand.
Esté revet champs bois et fleurs	Summer dreams of fields, woods, and flowers,
de salivrée de verdure	covered with green
et de maintes autres couleurs,	and many other colors,
par l'ordonnance de nature.	by nature's command.
Mais vous, Yver, trop estes plein	But you, Winter, are too full
de nége, vent, pluye et grézil.	of snow, wind, rain, and hail.
On vous deust banir en éxil.	You should be banished!
Sans point flater je parle plein:	Without exaggerating, I speak plainly:
Yver, vous n'estes qu'un villain!	Winter, you're nothing but a villain!

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[166] Ann Tukey Harrison, "Charles D'Orléans and the Renaissance," *The Bulletin of the Rocky Mountain Modern Language Association* 25, no. 3. (September, 1971): 92.

[167] Poem by Charles d'Orléans. Translated by *The San Francisco Bach Choir*; available from http://www.sfbach.org/repertoire/troischansons.html#dieu; Internet; accessed 1 June 2005.

Debussy stretches out the *rondeau* form of his third *chanson* by frequently repeating poetic lines. The individual character of each stanza is preserved primarily through textural shifts and changes in voicings. The declamatory nature of the music befits the poem itself, which makes frequent use of first and second person grammatical inflection ("I speak plainly," "You should be banished!").

One of the most apparent characteristics of Debussy's final *chanson* in the set is his use of alternation between solo and choral sections to indicate the poetic structure. Reminiscent of imitative technique used in Desprez's *chansons*, Debussy incorporates his own brief instances of imitation. See Figure 22. One familiar with Debussy's compositional style might find this unusual since, as Nichols points out, the use of such technically-precise imitation is found nowhere else in the entirety of Debussy's musical output.[168] Viewing this as inconsistent with Debussy's typical style affords one the opportunity to interpret his motive. Nichols suggests that it seems too ironic for such an unabashed technical formula to be used in a piece whose title translates to "Cold winter, villain that thou art." This supposed association between villainy and imitation, according to Nichols, would seem to reveal Debussy's true disdain for such obvious academic techniques.[169]

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[168] Roger Nichols, *The Life of Debussy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 127.

[169] Ibid., 127.

Figure 22. Claude Debussy, *Yver, vous n'estes qu'un villain!,* mm.45-54.

Another outcome arising from this fusion of styles is the use of a harmonic language that

is jagged and sometimes contradictory in nature. Within this song, there are moments of

extreme chromaticism followed immediately by satisfying cadential figures with little or

no preparation. One example occurs before the "Retenu," when the voices grow in

intensity and create a pervasive dissonance. They eventually join on the unison F# and,

after creating several more dissonant chords through stepwise motion, return for an

unexpected F# major cadence. See Figure 23. This use of hard cadence points further

defines the phrases of the poem and depicts the impulsive nature of the text. The

conductor can further evoke this stance by signaling gestures that add significance to these cadences. Closely observing the *tenuto* markings at the "Retenu" and allowing the sound to clear before continuing on after the cadence are two ways this can be accomplished. It is interesting to note the stylistic contrast in the first love song of the set. The cadences are softened in *Dieu! qu'il la fait bon regarder*, allowing the phrases to flow into one another. This also should be evoked in the conductor's gesture by not allowing for a sense of closure until the final chord of the song.

Figure 23. Claude Debussy, *Yver, vous n'estes qu'un villain!*, mm.41-47.

Unlike many of Debussy's works in other musical genres, particularly his instrumental works, his *chansons* necessitate a formal design and style that can accommodate the straightforward structural nature of the text and its overall historical connotations. He uses "ancient" compositional techniques that are easily adaptable to his own modern language. For example, the use of modal melodies are a common stylistic trait in his modern works and are equally appropriate here. See Figure 24.

Figure 24. Claude Debussy, *Yver, vous n'estes qu'un villain!*, mm.9-13.

In addition, the compositional technique of "planing" often associated with the composer finds its "ancient" counterpart in the *topic* of *fauxbourdon*. See Figure 25.

Figure 25. Claude Debussy, *Yver, vous n'estes qu'un villain!*, mm.14-17.

By examining this work through a hermeneutic window and uncovering the gaps created by superimposing old and new *topics*, one can interpret the use of certain compositional procedures and signifiers. For Debussy, it appears evident that his goal was to capture the spirit of the medieval text by employing "ancient" techniques, but within his own modern idiom of writing.

Additional Thoughts

Following certain performance practices can also determine what is recognized as a *topic*. For example, taking a piece at various tempi might create gestures that suggest

topics never considered by the composer. Conversely, experimenting with tempo during the score study process may reveal "hidden" *topics* and gestures that offer additional insights to the compositional process. This may help reestablish connections between motivic and large structural elements or evoke certain imagery that was either a deliberate or unconscious effort by the composer. Figure 26 is an excerpt from *Tecum principium*, the third movement of Handel's *Dixit Dominus*. At a slower tempo than is generally performed, the triplet eighth notes that pervade the movement take on a pastoral quality and can suggest a meter of 9/8 rather than the indicated 3/4 meter.[170] Placed alongside an overt example of Handelian pastoral writing, the *Pifa* from *Messiah*, the similarities are significant enough to consider that the earlier composed *Tecum principium* was intended to have some pastoral overtones.[171]

Figure 26. *Top,* G.F. Handel, *Dixit Dominus*, MVT III "Tecum principium*"* (sop. solo), mm. 8-12; *Bottom*, G.F. Handel, *Messiah,* "Pastoral Symphony" (Pifa), mm.18-21.

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[170] The association of a pastoral piece being in a compound meter and employing a minor key (related to a musical form known as the *siciliana*) became established in Neapolitan opera and especially in the arias of Alessandro Scarlatti. One such example is the aria, *Ardo, sospiro* in the third act of his opera, *Massimo Puppieno*.

[171] The fact that *Dixit Dominus* was composed earlier than *Messiah* eliminates any direct connection between the two works.

The conductor may wish to experiment with a slower tempo to achieve this effect or perhaps add a slight emphasis to the first note of each triplet to suggest this pastoral quality.

The performance options are many, but they are based on plausible arguments. A consideration of the text, *Dixit Dominus*, suggests a semiotic connection to the Christmas story, for which the pastoral *topic* carried strong connotations for eighteenth-century audiences. While *Dixit Dominus* prophesied the permanence of the kingdom of David, and contains powerful imagery, such as destroying kings and making enemies into footstools, the text for this particular movement offers a more modest account describing the ruler's birth ("I have begotten you from the womb before the rising of the day-star"). Hence, the pastoral elements in this movement signify a connection with the birth of Jesus, the greatest descendent from David's lineage. The discernment of meaning from these signs requires what Culler describes as competency in the language.[172] In the case of the chanson example, these include an understanding of Debussy's style, of early chanson writing, and of various elements, such as harmony, melody, and rhythm. How the use of text and of specific musical components can directly affect the listener's aesthetic experience will be the topic of discussion for the next chapter.

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[172] Culler, *Structuralist Poetics,* 136.

CHAPTER SIX –HUMANIZING ANALYSIS

The Vocality of Words

Several of the previous analyses demonstrate how compositional procedures
signify an internal dialogue in the music that can either support or contradict the text.
However, Naomi Cumming describes physical sound also as semiotic, saying it not only
carries acoustical properties, but is capable of human, subjective connotations.[173] This
section will focus specifically on text as pure sonic phenomenon. Aubrey Garlington
describes this as studying the physical "sound of the word," and recounts an experience
when the reading of an excerpt from Dante's *The Divine Comedy* in its native Italian
language stimulated a more memorable aesthetic response for a classroom full of non-
Italian speaking students than the English translation.[174] The emphasis on long vowels
and a legato articulation often associated with the Romance languages can create a very
different effect from the same translated text in a Germanic language. Moreover, the
subtle shades of different vowel sounds and how they interact with a myriad of fricative,
lingual, plosive, or lateral consonants can be aurally perceived in a manner similar to how
one might view a painting with different hues and shades rimmed with lines of assorted
widths and styles. For choral conductors, the physical "sound" of a text is an ever-present
attribute of the repertoire. The topic of enunciation or vowel production is usually limited

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[173] Naomi Cumming, *The Sonic Self: Musical Subjectivity and Signification*,
Advances in Semiotics, ed. Thomas A. Sebeok (Bloomington: Indiana University Press,
2000), 16

[174] Aubrey S. Garlington, "Music, Word, Performance" in Bernhart et al. (eds.),
Word and Music Studies. Paraphrasing the account from given by David Denby in *Great
Books: My Adventures with Homer, Rousseau, Wolfe, and Other Indestructible Writers of
the Western World*, David Denby (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996), 231-2.

to discussions on vocal technique or ensemble skills, however. Exaggerating consonants for text clarity, or modifying vowels to achieve proper blend, fix intonation, or alleviate vocal tension are common practices in the rehearsal setting, but not typically pursued as an avenue for generating their own meaning and signification. Garlington makes the distinction between these sonic events and simple text-painting, since the latter emphasizes "how sounds of *the music*…reflect the meaning of the word," while the former focuses exclusively on the vocal utterances themselves.[175]

To illustrate such effects in a literary text, we shall look briefly at a short analysis given by Donald Ferguson of Lord Tennyson's poem *Tear, Idle Tears*, belonging to a larger work published in 1847 entitled "The Princess."[176] While the basis of the entire work is to promote women's rights in education, Tennyson uses language to conjure up highly sophisticated imagery, rather than presenting a discursive argument:

> *Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns*
> *The earliest pipe of half-awakened birds*
> *To dying ears, when unto dying eyes*
> *The casement slowly grows a glimmering square;*
> *So sad, so strange, the days that are no more.*

The form of this excerpt is a five-line stanza in unrhymed iambic pentameter. Ferguson suggests that our feelings are by no means stimulated by the imagery alone, but that "Values of verbal sound and or rhetorical arrangement add incalculably to our awareness

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[175] Garlington, "Music, Word, Performance," 341 (emphasis mine).

[176] Donald N. Ferguson, *Music as Metaphor: The Elements of Expression* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1960), 29-31 and Alfred Lord Tennyson, *The Princess: A Medley* (London: E. Moxen, 1847 original publication).

of meaning in them."[177] He analyzes the sound values – pointing out Tennyson's careful distribution of sibilants in this stanza: eleven sharp s-sounds in fifty-two syllables with thirty-nine words. Seven of them occur in the first and last lines where the emotional tide is less high and where this effect of alliteration gives a "certain interest to these words of lower emotional altitude."[178] He also points out the use of nasals and dentals as similarly distributed as the vowels "grow broader and deeper as the curve of the long sentence droops." The dark sound of the [o] vowel in "slowly grows" is contrasted with the rhythmically charged and brighter syllables in "glimmering." This provides one last vocal tremble before the final cadence fades again on the darker vowels in "no more."

The speaker who is sensitive to this usage will dramatize the appropriate syllables and pronounce them accordingly. Therefore, a spoken reading of this excerpt will create an aesthetic effect that reinforces the semantic meaning of the text. This same principle will next be observed in Claudio Monteverdi's madrigal, *Sì, ch'io vorrei morire.*

Sì, ch'io vorrei morire (Madrigal Book IV) – Claudio Monteverdi

Text and translation (Maurizio Moro, poet):

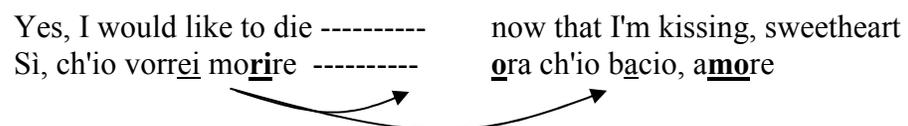|	
Sì, ch'io vorrei morire,	Yes, I would like to die,
ora ch'io bacio, amore,	now that I'm kissing, sweetheart,
la bella bocca del mio amato core.	the luscious lips of my darling beloved.
Ahi, cara e dolce lingua,	Ah! dear, dainty tongue,
datemi tanto umore,	give me so much of your liquid
che di dolcezza in questo sen' m'estingua!	that I die of delight on your breast!
Ahi, vita mia, a questo bianco seno,	Ah, my love, to this white breast

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[177] Ibid., 31.

[178] Ibid., 30-31.

deh, stringetemi fin ch'io venga meno! ah, crush me until I faint!
Ahi, bocca! Ahi, baci! Ahi, lingua! Ah mouth! Ah kisses! Ah tongue!
Torn' a dire: I say again:
Sì, ch'io vorrei morire! Yes, I would like to die

In examining the opening two lines of text, one will observe their distinction created by the quality of their vowels. For example, line 1 emphasizes the front vowels [i], [e], and [ɛ] while line 2 emphasizes the open [a] and the more rounded sound of [o]. See Figure 27. The word *ch'io* is not considered, since it occurs in both lines and contains both qualities. Even more evident is the immediate shift from front and back vowels between the stressed [i] vowel of the last word in line 1 and both stressed [o] vowels in the first word in line 2 and the rhymed word, *amore*. This analysis indicates an abrupt change in vowel usage, so before the listener or singers even understands the English translation, it will be perceived that the aesthetic quality has somehow changed. In this example, the semantic meaning of the text does confirm an abrupt change in perspective, since the opening line makes a plea for death followed by the unanticipated narration of kissing a loved one. The dichotomy between love and death, a popular symbolic pairing in poetry and in music (i.e. Wagner's *Liebestod*), immediately catches the listener's attention in the same way that the "sound" of *amore* (as the rhyme for *morire*) produces an aural surprise.

Figure 27. Relationship of vowels sounds in opening two lines of *Sì, ch'io vorrei morire.* Underlined bold represents the primary contrast in vowel while underlined are secondary contrasts.

Yes, I would like to die ---------- now that I'm kissing, sweetheart
Sì, ch'io vorr<u>ei</u> mo<u>**ri**</u>re ---------- <u>o</u>ra ch'io b<u>a</u>cio, a<u>**mo**</u>re

In another example, the first syllable of the word *stringetemi* "crush me" requires a

method of vocal production that is similar to the semantic meaning since it involves the

successive closing of the tongue position. See Figure 28. This is different from

onomatopoeia, since the focus is on how the sound is produced. Hence, exaggeration in

pronouncing the text can offer an opportunity for expressive effect.

Figure 28. Mouth positioning for the initial syllable of the word *stringetemi*.

Sound (IPA)	Placement	Description
[s]	Tongue and teeth ridge (Alveolar)	Relaxed position
↓		
[tr]	Tongue and teeth ridge (Alveolar)	Tongue moves up behind top teeth
↓		
[i]	Closed tongue position	Middle part of tongue at roof of mouth
↓		
[n]	Tongue and teeth ridge – nasal	Tongue closes to block air in mouth

In addition to presumably intending this natural "closing" at the phonetic level,

Monteverdi incorporates the sense of compression on a larger scale through the use of

texture and melody. Notice in Figure 29 that the lower three voices ascend between

measures 58-64 on that phrase, while the upper voices descend several bars later between

measures 68-73, both closing in toward the middle.

Figure 29. Claudio Monteverdi, *Sì, ch'io vorrei morire,* Madrigal Book IV, mm.58-78.

Another interesting phonetic feature of this madrigal is the sequencing of vowel sounds on the phrase *Ahi, bocca! Ahi, baci! Ahi, lingua!* so that they become increasingly open and spread. See Figure 30.

Figure 30. Vowel transformation on penultimate text phrase.

Ahi, b<u>o</u>cca!   Ahi, b<u>a</u>ci!   Ahi, lingua!
[------- vowels becoming more open ------]
[----------------- lip formation traverses from rounded to unrounded----------------]

If a conductor recognizes this progression, he can shape certain aspects regarding ensemble technique. For example, it is often proper convention to promote the formation of a more rounded [i] vowel, but doing so at this moment can diminish the aesthetic effect. He must facilitate the escalating dramatic-poetic effect by having the singers clearly distinguish the vowel sounds from rounded to spread. Incorporating a *crescendo* through these words can also add to the effect. Furthermore, the frequent occurrence of the word *Ahi,* most notably between measures 15-23, creates a rather conspicuous diphthong that, exaggerated by the singers, can add immensely to the dramatic fervor of the piece.

Referring briefly back to *The Divine Comedy*, Garlington observes that the English translation is less effective than the Italian, since it becomes divorced from the original soundscape of the author. As artists of sounds and words, choral conductors are obligated to acknowledge these effects, whether intentional or not, since they are embedded in performance and can allow for an enhanced sense of meaning. Certainly, if it is assumed that the composer has given great attention to planning out purely musical

elements to match a given text, its pronunciation had to be figured in also, even if it

existed on a subconscious level, as the composer spoke through it himself in order to

inspire possible melodies or accompanying harmonies.[179]

The Cloud Capp'd Towers, The Shakespeare Songs – Ralph Vaughan Williams

A writer whose works have inspired countless choral settings is William

Shakespeare, and a common device used by the Bard was alliteration. Examine the

following text from The Tempest, Act IV, Scene 1:

> The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
> The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
> Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
> And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
> Leave not a rack behind: We are such stuff
> As dreams are made on, and our little life
> Is rounded with a sleep.

When set by a composer as musically sensitive as Ralph Vaughan Williams, the aesthetic

nature of this text's physical sounds become so embedded in the musical attributes that it

is easy to overlook them and not allow singers to appreciate or take advantage of these

effects to their fullest potential. Line 2 contains two instances of the syllable [m]

followed by two hard [g]s. The contrast may be described as going from a calm form of

vocal production (often associated with humming) to a more energetic one, requiring a

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[179] The emphasis on text sounds in producing meaning also provides a substantial argument for the use of regional Latin dialect, a topic that has received much debate among choral musicians. For example, the use of French Latin in the works of Marc-Antoine Charpentier or German Latin for Anton Bruckner will have substantial effect on the aesthetic perception of the text and may even prove to alleviate specific ensemble issues. For example, employing more closed German [e] vowels in Bruckner's motets can aid in choral intonation.

velar stop in the mouth. Vaughan Williams also indicates a musical contrast at this same point not only with the first and only *crescendo* indication in the piece, but more noticeably with the quick ascent in vocal range by all of the voices. In fact, the highest point in the entire piece for each voice occurs on the word "globe." Another phonetic effect worth mentioning occurs on the words "such stuff as dreams." As one of Shakespeare's most notable lines, the aesthetic nature of the sibilants and palatal [tʃ] of the words "such stuff" creates a busy, almost visceral quality. Vaughan Williams sets these two words on quarter notes, making this characteristic unavoidable for the performer. The two [s]s that follow in "as dreams" are voiced and rhythmically extended by the composer, both features that alleviate some of the harshness of the sound to create a lighter, more delicate quality that contrasts with the previous effect of "such stuff." To further the point, Vaughan Williams sets the word "stuff" on an f# diminished 7th chord minus the 5th while "dreams" cadences on D# major.

<center>*The Blue Bird* - Charles Villiers Stanford</center>

In his essay entitled "Beyond Words and Music," Lawrence Kramer identifies an aesthetic quality where the music-text relationship is breached and meaning is derived from the pure sensation of "enveloping voice" rather than verbal semantics. This quality of "songfulness," is described by Kramer as:

> A fusion of vocal and musical utterance judged to me both pleasurable and suitable independent of verbal content; it is the positive quality of singing-in-itself: just singing...The one who hears it may not be able to account for it, or to say for sure whether it is more an attribute of the music (which seems made for the voice) or of the performance (which saturates the music with voice), or even of the ear that hears it, but the quality nonetheless seems utterly unmistakable. There is thus, once again,

<center>109</center>

a sense of immediate contact between the listener and the subject behind the voice.[180]

Kramer admits that this definition eludes analysis, but for him, that is the very point of "songfulness," since it depends on the voice to blur any distinction between voice and text. It is similar to Garlington's view on text sounds, since the focus is placed on sonic perception over verbal discourse. The aim for Kramer, however, is to establish that voice is a "medium of social relationship," and argues that "Even without a text, the addition of voice to a melody activates a set of human relationships that an instrumental performance can only signify."[181] Folk songs, in particular, have a strong capacity for "songfulness," because the melody can easily become detached from the text, with the listener deriving a virtual meaning from a sense of nostalgia, familiarity, or timelessness. While some songs may be overt in their use of "songfulness," (consider Frederick Delius's settings of *To be sung of a summer night on the water I,II* in which the sole text consists almost entirely of "ah"), others may contain elements of it insomuch as the listener's attention goes back and forth between purely vocal aesthetics and text. Charles Stanford's *The Blue Bird*, a setting of a poem by Mary Coleridge, is an example in which the composer rhythmically augments the text to the point in which the harmonic sonorities become the focus rather than the words. The soprano's first two entrances consist of only the word "blue" on a whole note E to create atmospheric effect. When they finally begin to offer a brief narrative, the accompanying lower voices similarly sustain the word "blue" and proceed with the text as the sopranos sing a soaring melodic descant. See Figure 31.

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[180] Kramer, Lawrence. "Beyond Words and Music: An Essay on Songfulness" in Bernhart et al. (eds.), *Word and Music Studies*, 305.

[181] Kramer, *Musical Meaning*, 54.

Figure 31. Charles Villiers Stanford, *The Blue Bird*, mm.1-21.

This example demonstrates another procedure coined by Kramer as

"overvocalization," which involves a rupture between voice and text through explicit

melismatic passages, complex textures, rich chordal sonorities, or long sustained notes.[182] Even for Kramer, the distinction between these two concepts is ambiguous, and so it may be surmised that "overvocalization" represents the techniques used to create effects of "songfulness."

A third concept briefly discussed by Kramer is "incantation" and represents perhaps the closest connection to Garlington's argument. Here, meaning derives from the physical enunciation of a text. It involves a component of linking the singer or listener with a particular historical community and tradition in which there is a close association with that particular text, however. Examples of incantation may include settings of familiar sacred texts, including chant. For a singer, the muscle memory in articulating the words in a setting of the *Lord's Prayer* might prompt earlier memories associated with the text to generate meaning. Like "songfulness," the listener's or singer's own *horizon* becomes the basis for the aesthetic response, since each person has different experiences from which to draw meaning. Within an ensemble setting, searching for areas of commonality while embracing the diverse backgrounds of members can promote a greater and broader understanding of how the music is experienced. Jonathan Dunsby iterates the same point when he explains, "What we hear in a performance of a song is also what we brought to that performance from our own experience, what we remember of it, and what it will become."[183]

By studying the effects of physical enunciation, *songfulness*, and *incantation*, the conductor's method of score study goes beyond semantics and traditional analysis in

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[182] Kramer, *Musical Meaning,* 63-64.

[183] Dunsby, *Making Words Sing*, 140.

order to uncover associations that Holland would argue satisfy the reader's psychological needs.[184] This preparatory work of recognizing sources of meaning, similar to Iser's point that the reader should "reveal the conditions that bring about [the text's] various effects," increases the potential for these meaningful associations to occur in rehearsal and performance.[185] George Steiner describes art as having the capacity to survive and foster repetition and variation only if it "makes palpable its links with those archaic, fundamental instinctive patterns…from which human consciousness grew," while Tibor Kneif understands music as a "pretext for human exchange."[186] Hence, it is the conductor's responsibility to discover those "human" elements in the repertoire that can provide a deep-rooted connection between the singer and listener. For this reason alone, there must be room for recognizing our innate responsiveness towards "language sounds," a perception which began during our earliest stages of human development when familiar maternal and paternal utterances provided moments of reassurance. Simply put, if the physical sound of words are not considered, then the generated meaning of the text is incomplete.

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[184] For a discussion on Norman Holland see p.18 above.

[185] Iser, *The Act of Reading*, 18.

[186] George Steiner, *Antigones* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 126-7; and Tibor Kneif, "Some Non-Communicative Aspects in Music," *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music 5*, no. 1, (June 1974): 58.

The Role of Metaphor

Current of meaning does not always flow from words into music.
It may also flow from music into words.[187]

The application during rehearsal and performance of these previous insights gained during the score study process is through the use of metaphor. It is this powerful tool by which conductors can draw upon the collective experience of his or her singers to achieve desired musical results. In deconstructionist theory, searching for metaphorical narrative is an important step in unraveling a text's meaning. Norris aptly describes a metaphor's tendency to "self-deconstruct" into an array of contingent and subjective details, while Ferguson argues that metaphors assert "an identity - remote, unsuspected, often almost wholly unreal – between two objects of experience."[188] In musical analysis and critique, some of the most common and formal terminologies are rooted in metaphorical language, including concepts of space and motion. Due to the very nature of sound, Marion Guck adds that "if we wish to speak of music, we *must* speak in spatial terms."[189] Even simple discussions of musical stress entail significant metaphorical implications. For example, a listener can experience harmonic stress as a gravitational pull away from the tonic.[190] Melodic stress is often perceived through a sense of increased effort in producing "higher" notes ("higher" being another metaphor). It is important for choral conductors to recognize the significance of metaphors so that they

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[187] Ferguson, *Music as Metaphor*, 161.

[188] Norris, *Listener's Share*, 149; and Ferguson, *Music as Metaphor*, 182.

[189] Marion A Guck, "Two Types of Metaphorical Transference," in Robinson, 201 (emphasis mine).

[190] Ferguson, *Music as Metaphor*, 68-70.

may be used effectively to convey musical ideas. To demonstrate some possibilities of creative metaphorical usage, Guck offers an account of an experiment in the guise of a college classroom discussion, in which the topic was Chopin's *Prelude in B minor*, Op. 28, no. 6. Students described the various attributes of musical gestures including phrase length, pitch duration, tempo, qualities of tension, melodic shape, harmony, and their various combinations by automatically employing metaphorical imagery to "distinguish each separate facet of the sound while assimilating all to the specific qualities of the whole."[191] See Figure 32.

Figure 32. Inventory of metaphors used in Guck's rendition of her classroom discussion.[192]

Metaphor	Musical Entity	Mode of description
swelling	dynamics	dynamics
arched	lines	melodic shape
sedate and laborious	stepwise motion	melodic shape, tempo
swooping	gestures	melodic shape, tempo
hovering and lingering	melodies	melodic shape, tessitura
aimlessly moving	melody	melodic shape with possible harmonic implications
meandering	harmonies	harmonies
stripping away of	accompanying chords	harmonies
waffling between	tonic and dominant	harmonic progression
frustratingly entangled	harmonies	harmonic progression
dissolving	resolutions	harmonic progression, dynamics

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[191] Guck, "Metaphorical Transference," 212.

[192] Ibid., 204-212. The words in the far left-hand column are directly quoted from the excerpt.

Just as the above examples demonstrate, Norris describes the creative potential and ability for metaphors to "capture something intrinsic to the well-equipped listener's pleasure and appreciation."[193] Not only does the conductor explore this potential, but by allowing singers to offer their own metaphors during rehearsal, they begin to personalize the musical gestures and effectively make them their own.

The danger is that metaphors can take on too much of a subjective quality. In order to avoid this risk of relativism, performers should attempt to determine how the original listeners might have reacted to certain musical effects in order to create "truly *informed* interpretation."[194] This is related to the earlier point of determining how the repeated motive in Desprez's *Salve Regina* embodied the notion of perseverance leading to salvation. Ralph Kirkpatrick shares another caveat when he states:

> For me nearly all of Scarlatti's music has some root in the experiences and impressions of real life or in the fantasies of the dream world, but in a fashion that ultimately can be stated only in music. The notions and outwardly ridiculous scenarios which I may suggest to myself or to a pupil in order to heighten a sense of character of a piece bear the same relations to performance as did the original life stimulus to Scarlatti's composition. After they have served their purpose they must be forgotten in favor of the real music. When perpetuated on paper they become sad and misleading caricatures.[195]

Thus, while metaphorical associations can, as Thomas Grey describes, "moisten a bit those 'dry technical designations,' making them somewhat easier to swallow and perhaps enhancing their essential blandness – for wider audiences – with a certain piquancy of

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[193] Norris, *Listener's Share*, 150.

[194] Peter Rabinowitz, "Chord and Discourse," in Scher, *Music and Text*, 55-6.

[195] Ralph Kirkpatrick, *Domenico Scarlatti* (Princeton University Press, 1953), 160; quoted in Ferguson, 89.

flavor," they must still be situated in solid musical analysis and performance practices.[196]

In a 1982 *Choral Journal* article entitled, "The Use of Metaphor in the Choral

Rehearsal," Jeffrey Cornelius explains their usage as a method for conductors to "channel

their speech more effectively" and to inform physical conducting gesture.[197]

Conducting as Metaphorical Gesture

In her discussion of the musical "arch" as metaphor, Guck relates this shape to arm

gesture by relying on an individual's kinesthetic memory to produce the corresponding

physical sensation that signifies for them the experience of the aural event. She states:

> To hear arching movement, one most likely recalls, subliminally, memories that
> incorporate the fine, continuous adjustments in muscle tensions needed to produce
> the smooth gesture: the initial impetus that increasingly opposes gravity as the arm
> rises, stretching to the point of fullest extension, then decreasing tension as the arm
> yields to gravity.[198]

This basic example of "gestural commentary" offers an account of how notation

translates metaphorically into something that can easily resemble a conducting gesture. In

fact, all conducting gestures are metaphorical in the sense that the specific manner of

their motion (in term of directionality, speed, weight, etc…) represents commonly

perceived elements of human response.[199] Anthropological research points to certain

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[196] Thomas Grey, "Metaphorical Modes in Music Criticism," in Scher, *Music and Text*, 93.

[197] Jeffrey M. Cornelius, "The Use of Metaphor in the Choral Rehearsal," *The Choral Journal* 23 (September 1982): 14.

[198] Guck, "Metaphorical Transference," 206-7.

[199] For a demonstration of these effects, refer to Rodney Eichenberger, André J Thomas, and Mike Dunn, *What They See is What You Get: Linking the Visual, the Aural, and the Kinetic to Promote Artistic Choral Singing* (Chapel Hill, NC: Hinshaw Music, 1994), videocassette.

gestures that are common to the human condition. Paul Ekman and Wallace Friesen

suggest that facial expressions are biologically universal (even through natural selection)

in order for members of a particular species to communicate information to other

members.[200] In conducting, therefore, the physical properties of a gesture intended to

convey urgency in a Beethoven work can be recognized universally through our common

human experience. Success in achieving a musical outcome occurs to the extent that a

conductor can be efficient in his gesture and not send mixed signals. It is often remarked

that the best conductors are those who embody, or more simply, "look like the music."

While the universality of certain physical gestures is acknowledged, the degree in

which a musical event is recognized as a gesture is influenced by matters regarding the

style and *horizon* of the work. What may constitute a significant gesture in the Baroque

period might be inconsequential within a twentieth-century work, implying that

individual gestures, like *topics*, are culturally-determined signs. The occurrence of an

ascending minor-sixth interval in a Baroque cantata can denote a specific *Affekt* of

sorrow, while the same interval in a Stravinsky work could simply be a result of serialist

technique. Robert Hatten's definition of musical gesture assumes a semiotic connection,

when he states "Musical gesture is movement (implied, virtual, actualized) interpretable

as a sign, whether intentional or not, and as such it communicates information about a

gesturer (or character, or persona the gesturer is impersonating or embodying)."[201] He

describes them as being "grounded in human affect," and "not merely the physical

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[200] Paul Ekman and W.V. Friesen, "The repertoire of nonverbal behavior: Categories, origins, usage, and coding," *Semiotica* 1 (1969): 72.

[201] Robert Hatten, *Interpreting Musical Gestures, Topics, and Tropes* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004). 224.

actions involved in producing a sound or series of sounds from a notated score, but the characteristic shaping that gives those sounds expressive meaning."[202]

While it seems an obvious point, in order for a gestural "signifier" to evoke the idea of the sound, it must occur prior to the musical event. This matter of causation is significant, since it recognizes gesture as preparatory in nature. One often sees in beginning conductors a tendency to "follow" or react to the sound so that a gesture evoking an accent articulation occurs with or even slightly after the occurrence, as opposed to being preparatory. After the onset of the event, however, gesture can still influence the sustained measure and release of the sound. Hatten refers to this period of "pre- and postmovement" influence as gesture's "envelope."[203] In addition, strings of gestures working in tandem provide a continuous, "analog" set of signifiers.[204] Using a term from Benjamin Boretz, they operate within a "syntactical landscape," in which every newly perceived gesture influences our interpretation of previous and future gestures.[205] Naomi Cumming denotes these assemblages of gesture as "personas," which change as the piece progresses.[206] For example, a gesture to indicate a *crescendo* into a *mezzo-forte* dynamic might be different from a gesture to indicate that same dynamic

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[202] Ibid., 93.

[203] Ibid., 124.

[204] Ibid. Hatten uses the term "analog" to differentiate between the notion of gestures being "discrete" or "digital" in nature. In the rhetorical analysis of Byrd's *Ave Verum Corpus* (see p.92-93 above), rhetorical devices are similarly "strung" together to create continuous gestures.

[205] Benjamin Boretz, "Experiences with No Names," *Perspectives of New Music* 30, no. 1 (Winter, 1992): 274.

[206] Cumming, *The Sonic Self*, 232.

following a *fortissimo* passage later on the piece. The final desired "decibel level" may be

the same in both, but different gestures are used to achieve it. As another example, what

was once a new and expressive melodic line introduced by the alto voice can later

become just one motive among several occurring in *stretto* imitation. To acknowledge

physically every single occurrence in this context would result in a convoluted set of

motions, which would have little impact on conveying the overall shape of the music.

Conductors rely on gesture's "syntactical" nature to affect future events, since they

cannot show every notated figure. For example, the thick eight-part choral texture in the

Henry Purcell's anthem, *Hear my Prayer, O Lord*, prohibits the conductor from showing

every nuance in every vocal line. See Figure 33. In gesturing the desired effect of the

alto's opening point of imitation (which conveniently occurs by itself, so that the

attention of the entire choir can be placed on it), the remaining voice parts can begin to

apply this signifier to their own part. This allows the conductor the freedom from having

to show each occurrence, since doing so inevitably becomes impossible later in the piece.

Figure 33. Henry Purcell, *Hear my Prayer*, mm.1-7.

The second half of the phrase presented in imitation, occurs first in the first soprano voice. Thus, the conductor's instructions here implicitly indicate how the rest of the ensemble should proceed. Of course, the speed at which the ensemble will recognize and apply these nuances to their own vocal line will depend on their skill and experience level, but after these concepts are reviewed in rehearsal, it requires then only occasional gestural confirmation. In having identified a hierarchy of important entrances based upon structural analysis, the conductor then decides to which he or she should offer the greatest attention and reinforce the desired shaping or dynamic level.

Through the very strength of metaphorical association, physical and musical gesture can be considered synonymous entities. Cummings observes that some melodic shapes are more suited to be called "gestures" than others, and that they tend to represent "recognized patterns of directional motion, energy (tempo, or degree of pitch change), and emphasis."[207] Furthermore, a musical gesture cannot be labeled as such without being validated through notated melodic shaping by the composer.[208]

Two Gestural Commentaries

As both a literary and symbolic entity, metaphorical language is the medium through which information gained from analysis can be translated into physical motions. SanduDediu acknowledges this gap by distinguishing the "artificial situations of form" and "frozen patterns" identified by analysis with music's "primordial element - temporal

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[207] Cumming, *The Sonic Self*, 136.

[208] Ibid.

movement."[209] Like Guck's description of the arch, a conductor can also produce a narrative that describes physical gestures in order to develop a conducting strategy that bridges the notation with the gesture-concept. This "gestural commentary" offers a reverse approach to a deconstructionist reading, since it uses the imprecise nature of metaphor to detail specific attributes of physical movement in order to "reconstruct" meaning. It is not unlike Cumming's suggestion of describing the "personality" of the physical gesture required to produce a perceived sound.[210] She illustrates the idea with the example of a listener hearing strength in a particular violin passage and imagining the "tension of her muscles," the "weight of the arm," and the "degree of friction in an attack."[211] For a conductor, this requires having a subjective sound-concept already in mind to serve as the basis for determining the "personality" of the evoking gesture. Cumming describes:

> Finding 'motion' in melodic structures is common enough in music theory, but relating this motion to the movements of a body, in breathing, gesturing, or forming a movement 'phrase'….is an important part of what it is to hear a virtual subjectivity in melodic shapes, the body inscribed in sound.[212]

The following gestural commentaries are first-person narratives that describe the gesture as it is related to interpretative and analytical insights. Stressing the nature of hermeneutic understanding, they each offer only one of numerous possibilities for performance instructions.

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[209] Sandu-Dediu, "Common Subjects," 384.

[210] Cumming, *The Sonic Self*, 21-22.

[211] Ibid.

[212] Ibid., 163.

Text (George Herbert, poet):[213]

Love bade me welcome, yet my soul drew back, guilty of dust and sin.
But quick-eyed Love, observing me grow slack from my first entrance in,
Drew nearer to me sweetly questioning if I lacked anything.
A guest, I answered, worthy to be here: Love said, You shall be he.
I, the unkind, ungrateful? Ah, my dear. I cannot look on thee.
Love took my hand and smiling did reply, Who made the eyes but I?
Truth, Lord, but I have marred them; let my shame Go where it doth deserve.
And know you not, says Love, Who bore the blame?
My dear, then I will serve.
You must sit down, says Love, and taste my meat.
So I did sit and eat.

Brief synopsis

The main character describes Love (Christ/God) inviting him as a guest in his home. Feeling unworthy, he refuses to look upon Love with his eyes. Love replies that he created his eyes. In an astounding musical moment when the poet accepts Love's invitation to eat but offers to serve Him first, the chorus begins to hum the ancient Corpus Christi antiphon *O sacrum convivium* "O sacred feast," while Love insists that He will do the serving, an allusion to the Eucharist.

Gestural Commentary

The movement begins with the clarinets and bassoon making two false starts on short syncopated motives, emulating the main character's initial apprehension of entering into the house as Love's guest since he is "guilty of dust and sin." My gesture would evoke this hesitancy. I would begin to move forward after each entrance and then pull

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[213] George Herbert, "Love bade me welcome," from *The Temple* (1633).

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back slightly. This hesitancy pervades much of the opening, marked *Tempo rubato*. I would not accent the beat of syncopation (beat 2, measure 1), since the figures are slurred and marked *dolce*. The third entrance by the winds is followed by the strings and flutes and immediately generates an undulating effect both through the melodic shape and the hairpin dynamics. My gestures would ebb and flow, emulating a motion similar to waves. I would relax the gesture into the *Largamente* at measure 18 "from my first entrance in." A clarinet solo enters at this point and its eighth-note triplet figures suggest a slight urging within this slower tempo just as Love gently presses the guest into conversation. I would gesture a slight *ritardando* before the return to the opening tempo, signifying a brief moment of confusion on the part of the guest, since God is asking to serve *him*.

The opening tempo returns with the same false start (just once) signifying the guest's revisited but lessened apprehension. My gesture would reflect this feeling but more quickly fall into the tempo as the guest prepares to reply that he is not worthy to be there. The horn enters when Love assures the guest that he is worthy. On this descending line, my gesture would indicate a reassuring, more horizontal shape as if reaching out to the guest. The mood changes abruptly as the guest retorts that he is not worthy: "I, the unkind, ungrateful?" Here, I would indicate a strong, bothered preparatory beat into the *mezzo-forte* and *forte* at measure 33. It would be followed with sharp gestures to indicate the marked pizzicato in the strings on the subsequent beats. Once I have reached "grateful," I would immediately retreat, bringing everything closer into my body as the guest feels shame, "Ah, my dear, I cannot look on thee. The dynamic similarly retreats to *pianissimo*.

The *poco animato* again has Love comforting the guest by stating that it was he who made the guest's eyes. Anger and frustration build up as the guest is about to admit his sinful nature. Here, I would allow the gesture to build up in frustration on the indicated *crescendo* at measure 45. I would achieve this by tensing the muscles slightly as if lifting a heavy weight and then releasing in on measure 46, "Truth, Lord, but I have marred them," with burdensome movements to each beat, signifying more *marcato*-like articulations. On "let my shame go where it doth deserve," I would use the meter change to 4/4 to help broaden my gestures (horizontally), as if groping for some sort of atonement after this feeling of disgrace.

At measure 52, my gesture would return to a state of repose, as Love begins to respond. The hairpin dynamics at measure 56 when Love reminds the guest that he has already bore the blame (by dying on the Cross) should feel somewhat labored. The *tutti f* at measure 58 begins the moment of realization for the guest as the woodwinds echo the frustrated motive from measures 46-7, "I have marred them," and the sound, along with the gesture, begins to wane and unravel to almost nothing by measure 63. Without a break after the *fermata*, the music changes to the same motivic undulations that accompanied Love at measure 38. At the *ppp* and *pppp*, my gesture would be extremely calm and steady where the chorus enters on the tune of *O sacrum convivium*. In order to maintain the reverent atmosphere created by the addition of this medieval hymn, in addition to following the marking *senza expressivo*, I would be careful not to raise my arms to inadvertently signal a *crescendo* over the chorus's long note value starting on measure 66 and recurring until the end of the movement. Similarly, I would maintain smooth movements through the chorus's syncopated rhythms, so that they remain legato.

On the final fermata of the movement, my hands would recede as the first violins gradually fade to nothing. Lastly, I would remain completely still as not to disturb the silence that follows.

An inventory of some metaphorical terms used in the above gestural commentary:

Lifting a heavy weight	Frustrated	Relax
Recede	Groping	Reassuring, reaching out
Smooth	Burdensome	Retreat
Calm and steady	Hesitancy	Bothered
Wane and unravel	Ebb and flow, waves	Sharp
Build up	Undulate	

To briefly elaborate on the commentary, the overall *Affekt* of the opening section consists of main character's two opposing perspectives. One the one hand, there is a strong sense of hesitation, "yet my soul drew back," resulting from the feeling of guilt. Conversely, there is the innate desire to accept the invitation and be forgiven for misdeeds. The *Tempo rubato* marking affords the opportunity for the conductor to emulate both mindsets by a continual sway back and forth between forward momentum and pulling back. The two incompatible gestures come together to form a single function, a concept described by Hatten as "gestural troping" and illustrated by him in the following excerpt:

> Several years ago I performed Schubert's *Winterreise* with Prof. Norman Spivey of the voice faculty at Penn State University. One of our students noticed that at a certain point Norman's body appeared to spiral upward as he sang a yearning melodic contour, while his eyes remained downcast, as though miming a gesture or posture of grief. Although these physical "extras" are not directly specified by the score, they are effective means by which a performer may complement and enhance a gestural trope as implied by the music. The contrast between overall mood (the heaviness of grief) and local emotional response (the pull of yearning or hope) might suggest a tropological interpretation.[214]

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[214] Hatten, 220-221.

Tenebræ factae sunt (Four Lenten Motets) - Francis Poulenc
Liturgical usage: The fifth Responsory for Tenebræ of Good Friday
SAATB

Text and translation:

Tenebrae factae sunt,	Darkness came over the earth,
cum crucifixissent Jesum Judaei,	when the Jews did crucify Jesus:
et circa horam nonam	and around the ninth hour,
exclamavit Jesus voce magna:	Jesus exclaimed in a loud voice:
Deus meus, ut quid me dereliquisti?	My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?
Et inclinato capite emisit spiritum.	And inclining His head, He gave up the spirit.
Exclamans Jesus voce magna ait:	Jesus exclaiming in a loud voice, said:
Pater, in manus tuas commendo	Father, into Thy hands I commend
spiritum meum.	my spirit.

Gestural Commentary

Poulenc's compositional style relegates musical phrases to concise motivic "cells" typically no more than one to two measures in length. These segments are then organized as building blocks and subjected to frequent repetition, as well as subtle melodic and harmonic transformation. They can take on a variety of sentiments, depending on their compositional makeup and how they are arranged within the larger scheme of the work. The general *Affekt* of *Tenebrae factae sunt* is somber and grave, since it depicts the death of Christ on the Cross. At the most rhythmically charged section of the piece, *exclamavit Jesus voce magna* "Jesus exclaimed in a loud voice," the dramatic nature of the piece completely changes. The preparatory gesture must signify this immediate change through a more vigorous and forceful motion. The subsequent beats would have a detached quality, so that the soprano's thirty-second notes after the dotted values take on a very rhythmic character. In addition, this is the first time the low bass voice has not sustained a

pedal tone and instead contrasts it with an ascending diminished arpeggio spanning over an octave.

The phrase *"My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"* is set quite poetically. The first invocation, *Deus meus*, takes on a more dramatic character with a *forte* dynamic marking followed by the same motive repeated down an octave and *subito piano*. The remainder of the phrase, *ut quid me dereliquisti?,* is sung four times with each dynamic marking evoking a different stage of emotional response (*p*, *pp*, *f*, *tutti*). My gesture would be *legato* on the first slurred articulation of this motive and then stop on the final note as if awaiting a reply to this rhetorical question. Following the second occurrence, I would impatiently gesture to prepare the ***forte*** motive sung by the sopranos. On the descending motive, *Et inclinato capite,* "And declining His head," my gesture would not give an accented impulse on the inner beat of tied note, so that the melodic line would remain *legato*. Poulenc's use of dynamics is precisely indicated. I must take care not to enlarge the gesture in the middle of phrases to insinuate any dynamic changes for the ensemble where they are not indicated. The dramatic element is created by the operation of these individual cells.

The irony of God allowing His own Son to be given into the hand of sinners is represented in the piece through musical effects that bend traditional rules regarding dramatic oratory. One such example is the presence of "static" motives, which evoke a sense of ontological time stopping. (mm.30-32 – "Father…Father...into Thy hands") and (mm. 38-40 – "He gave up……….His Spirit."). The pauses in the middle of the text phrases in this second group of examples do not serve a poetic function, but work against any perceived sense of forward motion. I would not insinuate any connection between the

words "He gave up" and "His Spirit" in my gesture. Harmonically, the first *emisit* "He

gave up" ends on a B diminished chord with an added C#, while the second *emisit* ends

on a G major also with the added C#. The addition of this note gives these chords a non-

functional quality, which prohibits any sense of forward momentum. Rhythmically,

Poulenc deliberately separates the text with eighth-note rests. My gesture should appear

to "hang" in front of my body as if it were attached to a string, while necessary

indications for preparations and releases would use minimal movement, so not to disturb

the scene.

Performance Practices and Reception Theory

In addition to these gestural descriptions, Poulenc's compositional style also

represents a larger metaphorical connotation, since his motivic-cellular technique may be

compared to the style of Cubist paintings in which individual shapes are arranged to

depict an aggregate image. His instructions for dynamics are often quite specific, making

it the responsibility of the conductor to observe these markings. Emerging out of the

Romantic era and escalating in the twentieth century was the view that musical

expressivity was built into the notation by the composer. This formalist idea, shared by

the New Critics and uttered in the musical writings of Schenker, significantly affected the

view of the relationship between composer and performer. For example, Stravinsky

stressed that performers of his music should avoid imposing their own interpretation and

allow for the music to "speak for itself."[215] In some instances, such as his *Symphony of*

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[215] It is well known that the composer did not follow this edict when conducting his own music.

Psalms, attempting to add expressivity can devalue the intended effect. Stravinsky was one of many composers who deconstructed music into its most basic elements of rhythm, melody, and harmony. Rose Subotnik explores the case for "structural" interpretation made by Adorno, Schoenberg, and Stravinsky only to conclude that there is no one-size-fits-all approach, and that "some music strives for autonomy."[216] In order to determine the degree of objectivity appropriate in studying and preparing a musical work, one must ironically take a historical approach, by searching for the composer's perspective on performance. But as mentioned in the inconsistencies of Stravinsky's performances, this authorial understanding only goes so far and demonstrates the formalist's point regarding "intentional fallacy." Borrowing terminology from semiotics and Gadamer, Cumming tells practitioners to admit their "prejudicial codes" when approaching a historical work and to confront this "horizon" of the past while assuming that no direct connection with the past artist's thoughts can ever be achieved.[217] Moreover, it is important to be reminded that the conceptualization of a "musical work" has varied considerably over the centuries. For most of Western music history, the emphasis was placed not on strict adherence to a musical score, but on spontaneous performance and also liturgical function.[218] Benson states that "The very idea that performers were essentially expected

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[216] Rose Rosengard Subotnik, "Toward a Deconstruction of Structural Listening: A Critique of Schoenberg, Adorno, and Stravinsky" in *Explorations in Music, The Arts, And Ideas – essays in honor of Leonard B.Meyer*, ed. Eugene Narmour, Festschrift Series, No 7 (Stuyvesant: Pendragon Press, 1988), 122.

[217] Cumming, *The Sonic Self*, 259-260.

[218] Refer to Lydia Goehr , *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works: An Essay in the Philosophy of Music* (Oxford: Clarendon Press; New York: Oxford University Press, 1992) and cf. Rob C. Wegman, "From Maker to Composer: Improvisation and Musical Authorship in the Low Countries, 1450-1500," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 49 (1996): 409-79.

to *reproduce* what was in the score was a foreign notion," and the perception of score and performance as separate entities "simply did not exist."[219] David Fuller brings up the important point that in the Baroque era, a large part of the repertory was "sketched out" rather than fully realized, leaving to the performer the role of finishing the work.[220]

Because of this process of "filling in the gaps," Gadamer stressed the idea of interpretation as a form of translation. Just as the concept of style results from a certain frequency of compositional traits, performance traditions emerge out of similar *translations* of a particular work. It may begin as a subjective exercise; however, as Hans Heinrich Eggebrecht argues in his famous *Beethoven-Rezeption*, "Certain constants in the responses to Beethoven's music, because of their persistence, have a claim to objective correctness in their assessment of what is in the music."[221] Jauss's reception theory furthers the point by stating that history should stand at the heart of literary studies. Two elements pertaining to reception theory are *Wirkung* and *Rezeption* and they work congruently in musical performance practice studies. *Wirkung* ("effect") focuses on the textual and musical influences of the work which can include primary source materials such as payroll records to determine the number of performers, markings on manuscripts, or evidence of stylistic influences such as contact with other composers or works.[222]

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[219] Benson, *Improvisation of Musical Dialogue*, 19, 22.

[220] David Fuller, "The Performer as Composer," in *Performance Practice*, vol. II, *Music after 1600*, eds. Howard Mayer Brown and Stanley Sadie (Houndmills, United Kingdom: Macmillan, 1989), 117-8; quoted in Benson, 19.

[221] Hans Heinrich Eggebrecht, *Zur Geschichte der Beethoven-Rezeption* (Mainz, 1972); paraphrased in Treitler, *Music and the Historical Imagination*, 31.

[222] Mark Everist "Reception Theories, Canonic Discourses, and Musical Value," in Cook and Everist, *Rethinking Music*, 380.

Rezeption ("reception") deals specifically on how a work was received once it was composed or performed.[223] This can include reviews, letters, and concert attendance records.

Reception histories, such as Eggebrecht's, can prove valuable not only for the sake of scholarship, but also for the performer who wishes to provide a valid interpretation that is translatable for the modern audience. One of the many criticisms of the "authentic movement" was the performer's inability to provide convincing performances that appealed to the tastes and expectations of modern audiences. In a fascinating article that speaks to this issue, Roger Parker describes the "contentious" business of paint restoration as such:

> To clean a painting may well reveal aspects that were for long invisible, but it will also permanently erase accretions through which the work has been viewed by many of its past interpreters. It will, in other words, cause a violent rift in the continuity of the work's reception history.[224]

He goes on by stating that this same restoration process in music carries the potential of "divorcing the work from the connective tradition that sustains it."[225] Therefore, the interpreter must be careful to not engage in performance techniques that are so foreign to listeners that a translation in the hermeneutic sense is impossible. Peter Philips, director of the Tallis Scholars, points out that "we can guess at the type of sound produced by sixteenth-century choirs, and the evidence suggests that imitation of them would be

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[223] Ibid.

[224] Parker, "Literary Studies: Caught up in the Web of Words," 12.

[225] Ibid.

highly undesirable."[226] Therefore, we must concentrate on "making sound good in our terms."[227] Musical interpretation must involve studying traditions and historical performance practices, but always under the assumption that these ideas, themselves, are transformed by time. Roger Scruton maintains that performance should be part of a movable tradition that is constantly amended in the light of new ideas, and Peter Kivy reminds us that:

> Bach was not reviving a tradition, he was living one…Bach was not an outsider to a tradition he was trying to reconstruct, but part of the living tradition that *we* are trying to reconstruct. Thus, what our time traveler would hear in Leipzig [at Bach's own performance of the St. Matthew Passion] would be a performance full of the spontaneity, vigour, liveliness, musical, aesthetic imagination that critics of the 'early music' movement find lacking in its 'authentic' performance.[228]

Moreover, Cones's hermeneutic viewpoint parallels those of the literary theorists who discuss the reader's layering of objective and subjective perspectives to generate meaning: "The interpreter's conviction should stem equally from insight, a product of the experiential mode of knowledge that, along with the historical and technical modes, is necessary to performers and critic alike. Faith without insight turns performers into fanatics, critics into propagandists."[229] Lastly, the issues of cultural bias and authenticity can be observed in the following comical anecdotes. First, Bernard Sherman tells the story of a small town in Iowa that hosted an Irish-accent contest in honor of St. Patrick's

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[226] Peter Philips quoted in Taruskin, *Text and Act*, 95.

[227] Peter Philips quoted in Bernard D. Sherman, *Inside early music: conversations with performers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 119.

[228] Roger Scruton, *The Aesthetics of Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 447; and Peter Kivy, *Fine Art of Repetition: Essays in the Philosophy of Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 128-9; quoted in Scruton, 449.

[229] Ibid., 7.

Day. A visitor from Dublin signed up and seemed certain to win the contest, only to be disappointed when the Iowan judges announced the winner as a local Iowan man.[230] Secondly, Donald Tovey expresses that if we want to truly be authentic in performing Bach cantatas, we would have to "flog the ringleaders of the choir after an atrocious performance."[231]

Conclusion

This document has sought to use concepts from literary theory as a basis for creative approaches to choral score study and analysis. Schmitz, in the introduction to his book on literary theory, explains that "those readers who will have the most rewarding and inspiring encounters with literary texts are those who are able to view them from as many different perspectives as possible, who can think of as many questions to ask as possible."[232] This same principle applies to choral music, and discussions on repertoire ranging from Desprez to Stanford have presented a variety of ways for establishing meaningful contact with the repertoire. These analyses have searched for hidden dialogues and narratives, rhetorical devices, *topic* identification, semiotic applications, the aesthetics of vocality, and metaphorical usage through gestural commentary.

Rather than limiting the possibilities of analysis, the goal should be to broaden the field of focus. This is not to insinuate, however, that some analytical techniques are not more appropriate than others, depending on the specific work being studied. Here, understanding matters such as musical style can guide the conductor in determining the

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[230] Sherman, *Inside Early Music: Conversations with Performers*, 8.

[231] Donald F. Tovey, *A Musician Talks* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1941), p. 66; quoted in Sherman, *Inside early music*, 11.

[232] Schmitz, *Modern Literary Theory*, 208.

best approaches to seeking out answers. This parallels Iser's idea of a *guiding text* and the assertion that "meaning arises out of the process of actualization" where the conditions that bring about a work's various effects are revealed.[233] This document has also identified and commented on aesthetic qualities produced through the physical acts of utterance and gesture that relate to the human experience and allow for a deeper appreciation of musical and textual elements. As an appropriate closing to this document, related to the analytical role of the conductor, David Lewin eloquently expresses that the goal of the analyst is "simply to hear the piece better….and to arrange his presentation in a way that will stimulate the musical imagination of his audience."[234]

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[233] Iser, *The Act of Reading,* 18.

[234] David Lewin, "Behind the Beyond: A Response to Edward T. Cone," *Perspectives of New Music* 7, No. 2 (Spring - Summer, 1969): 63.

2. Recitativo

Gift, da - mit sie an - ge - ste - cket; d'rum, wenn der Schmerz den Leib des To - des

trifft, wenn ihr der Kreuz - kelch bit - ter schme - cket, so treibt er ihr ein brün - stig Seuf - zen aus.

3. Choral

Soprano, Tromba, Oboe 1, 2; Violino 1 — Soll's ja so sein, dass Straf' und Pein auf Sün-den fol-gen müs-sen: so

Alto, Violino 2 — Soll's ja so sein, dass Straf' und Pein auf Sün-den fol-gen müs-sen: so

Tenore, Viola — Soll's ja so sein, dass Straf' und Pein auf Sün-den fol-gen müs-sen: so

Basso — Soll's ja so sein, dass Straf' und Pein auf Sün-den fol-gen müs-sen: so

Continuo

fahr' hier fort und scho-ne dort, und lass mich hier wohl bü - - - - - ssen.

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7. Choral

Soprano, Tromba, Oboe 1, 2; Violino 1

Herr Je - su Christ, ei - ni - ger Trost, zu dir will ich mich wen - den;
mein Herz - leid ist dir wohl be - wusst, du kannst und wirst es en - den.

Alto, Violino 2

Herr Je - su Christ, ei - ni - ger Trost, zu dir will ich mich wen - den;
mein Herz - leid ist dir wohl be - wusst, du kannst und wirst es en - den.

Tenore, Viola

Herr Je - su Christ, ei - ni - ger Trost, zu dir will ich mich___ wen - den;
mein Herz - leid ist dir wohl be - wusst, du kannst und wirst es___ en - den.

Basso

Herr Je - su Christ, ei - ni - ger Trost, zu dir___ will ich mich___ wen - den;
mein Herz - leid ist dir wohl be - wusst, du kannst und wirst es___ en - den.

Continuo

In dei - nen Wil - len sei's ge - stellt, mach's, lie - ber Gott, wie dir's ge - fällt: dein bin und will ich

In dei - nen Wil - len sei's ge - stellt, mach's, lie - ber Gott, wie dir's ge - fällt: dein bin und will ich

In dei - nen Wil - len sei's ge - stellt, mach's, lie - ber Gott, wie dir's ge - fällt: dein bin und will ich

In dei - nen Wil - len sei's ge - stellt, mach's, lie - ber Gott, wie dir's ge - fällt: dein bin und will ich

blei - - ben.

blei - - ben.

blei - - ben.

blei - - ben.

APPENDIX C: Complete text and translations of *Ich Elender Mensch*, BWV 48

Source of texts: Romans 7: 24 (Mvt. 1); Martin Rutilius (Mvt. 3); Anon (Mvts. 2, 4-7)

Movement I (Chorus)

Ich elender Mensch, wer wird mich erlösen vom Leibe dieses Todes?
Miserable man that I am, who will free me from the body of this death?

Movement II (Alto recitative)

O Schmerz, o Elend, so mich trifft,
O pain, O misery, that strikes me,
Indem der Sünden Gift
while the poison of sin
Bei mir in Brust und Adern wütet:
rages in my breast and veins:
Die Welt wird mir ein Siech und Sterbehaus,
the world becomes for me a house of sickness and death,
Der Leib muß seine Plagen bis zu dem Grabe mit sich tragen.
the body must bear its troubles with it until the grave.
Allein die Seele fühlet den stärksten Gift,
Only the [that] soul feels the strongest poison,
Damit sie angestecket;
with which it is infected;
Drum, wenn der Schmerz den Leib des Todes trifft,
therefore, when pain strikes the [that] mortal body,
Wenn ihr der Kreuzkelch bitter schmecket,
when the soul tastes the bitterness of the chalice of the cross,
So treibt er ihr ein brünstig Seufzen aus.
this drives the soul to utter a burning sigh.

Movement III (Chorale)

Solls ja so sein,
If it must indeed be so,
Daß Straf und Pein
that punishment and pain
Auf Sünde folgen müssen,
must follow upon sin,
So fahr hie fort
then here continue [to treat me in this way]
Und schone dort
and there take care of me
Und laß mich hie wohl büßen.
and let me here do penance.

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Movement IV (Alto aria)

Ach, lege das Sodom der sündlichen Glieder,
Ah, may Sodom with its sinful members,
Wofern es dein Wille, zerstöret darnieder!
so far as it is your will, lie leveled and destroyed!
Nur schone der Seele und mache sie rein,
But take care of my soul and make it pure,
Um vor dir ein heiliges Zion zu sein.
so that it may be a holy Zion before you.

Movement V (Tenor recitative)

Hier aber tut des Heilands Hand
But here the Saviour's hand
Auch unter denen Toten Wunder.
does wonders even among the dead.
Scheint deine Seele gleich erstorben,
Although your soul appears to be dead,
Der Leib geschwächt und ganz verdorben,
your body weakened and quite ruined,
Doch wird uns Jesu Kraft bekannt:
yet Jesus' power will be revealed to us:
Er weiß im geistlich Schwachen
for us who are weak in spirit he knows how to
Den Leib gesund, die Seele stark zu machen.
make the body healthy, the soul strong.

Movement VI (Tenor aria)

Vergibt mir Jesus meine Sünden,
If Jesus forgives me my sins,
So wird mir Leib und Seele gesund.
then my body and soul will become healthy.
Er kann die Toten lebend machen
He can make the dead live
Und zeigt sich kräftig in den Schwachen,
and shows himself to be mighty with those who are weak,
Er hält den längst geschloßnen Bund,
he keeps the covenant made long ago
Daß wir im Glauben Hilfe finden.
that in faith we find help.

Movement VII (Chorale)

Herr Jesu Christ, einiger Trost,
Lord Jesus Christ, my only comfort,
Zu dir will ich mich wenden;
I want to entrust myself to you;
Mein Herzleid ist dir wohl bewußt,
the sorrow of my heart is well known to you,
Du kannst und wirst es enden.
you can and will end it.
In Deinen Willen seis gestellt,
In your will may it be arranged,
Mach's, lieber Gott, wie dir's gefällt:
do, dear God, as is pleasing to you:
Dein bleib und will ich bleiben.
I remain yours and I want to remain yours.

APPENDIX D: Score of *Nimm von uns, Herr, du treuer Gott*, BuxWV 78
(mvt. 1 "sonata" and mvt. II) – Dieterich Buxtehude

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