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### THE LISTENER AND “SPACE FOR WORK” IN ANTON VON WEBERN’S DODECAPHONIC MUSIC

Answering the questions of whether, by which means and to what extent twelve-tone music achieves communication proves neither more nor less difficult than answering the questions of the communicativeness of music in general. One of the basic relevant dilemmas that needs solving is how listeners recognize that a certain work possesses specific qualities or, more generally, how the audience determines that a particular music piece is meaningful. According to the postulates of Tia DeNora, the production of musical meaning is a complex process, one of whose important elements is the so-called “framing”, carried out through specific “contextualization cues”, that is, “implicit signals” which “prepare the listener [...] in such a manner that he ‘works’ on the realization of a work’s meaning” (DeNora, 1986, 91). The said cues consist of “different conventions or ritual practices that produce, through experience, connotations which, in turn, serve as a tool for producing sense and constructing meaning” DeNora, 1986, 91). Together they form the so-called preparatory set which serves to maintain the faith necessary for “a collaborative and cooperative relationship between the listener and the composer, which helps to perform the ‘task’ of constituting meaning in music” (1986, 91).

As far as famous works are concerned, namely certain classics from the repertoire of art music, “the listener has simple and easy access to that which constitutes the idealized way of reacting [...] and his work is therefore already done owing to certain other individuals...” (1986, 91).<sup>1</sup> In this case the listener is offered a series of “contextualization cues” so that, “in such a completely ritualized situation”, he only needs to confirm the conventional interpretations of the work (1986, 92).<sup>2</sup> But what happens with the listener when there is not enough of these cues? According to DeNora, in these circumstances the actor/participant “can be given wider space for working on the interpretation of the object or, in other words, he then acts like a ‘composer’” (1986, 92).<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> DeNora’s assumption is that the preparatory set upon which the listener relies is more extensive for repertoire works than for premiered works, as well as that by reading about that work and by listening to it with other individuals, he has undergone an interactive process of constructing meaning, or rather, he is “given a sketch or a cognitive map of how to work on the said composition” (DeNora, 1986, 91) prior to the very act of listening.

<sup>2</sup> DeNora believes that the meaning of a certain kind of music will be less ambiguous, and the range of possible concepts to which it can be linked – limited, provided it includes a larger number of ‘contextualization cues’. “Such music will seem untouchable and sacred” (1986, 92).

<sup>3</sup> It is also important to mention that the more signals concerning the object the speaker/performer/conveyor sends out, the more forced the listener is to “submit himself/herself to the actual interpretation of the object; accordingly, the process of constructing meaning or “work” will be more covert or, in other words, genuine work on constructing meaning will be less transparent” (1986, 92).

Before examining how Tia DeNora's theoretic views on the mechanism of constructing meaning in music function when applied to twelve-tone music, it is necessary to critically reflect on what is perhaps the author's key postulate – the concept of the listener's work. In fact, the problematic issue concerning this concept is DeNora's claim that a certain composition, if featured in the standard concert repertoire the listening and interpreting of which involves a number of preset "recipes", must necessarily produce a "staticness" of the listener's work and vice versa. Moreover, should we accept the hypothesis that listening to music is contingent on concept,<sup>4</sup> we may well assume that the degree of the listener's work depends on not so much the quantity of *contextualization cues* as its configuration, i.e. on whether the listener has grasped the *conflict strategies of interpretation* from the offered sketches or cognitive maps, that is, externally imposed *perceptual limitations*.<sup>5</sup> Further, I believe that the degree of the listener's work also depends on the composer's work by which I mean his/her manipulation of "coded voices", i.e. sound material in time and in relation to the set structural/semantic norms of a certain historical period.<sup>6</sup> It is quite possible that factors such as the dimension of a music work, its micro-structural and macro-structural organization, as well as the relationship of the work to the defined genre, stylistic, formal and expressive framework, can influence the listener's interpretation.<sup>7</sup>

With respect to the space for work that is offered to the listener in twelve-tone music, we should first and foremost mention *contextualization cues* which include various kinds of data, from biographical data to data on the characteristics of works and compositional paradigms, all of which

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<sup>4</sup> This hypothesis implies that "the listener consciously perceives music based on the musical-theoretical concepts or descriptions he is capable of grasping" (Miller, 1994, 219).

<sup>5</sup> To illustrate this point, we could give an example of works from the period of music classicism and Romanticism which came to have very conflicting interpretations on the structural/semantic level in the writings of musicologists and in various performances and which are, in addition, invariably featured in concert repertoires. In view of the divergence of existing interpretations that constitute *contextualization cues* of the aforementioned works, it is difficult to say whether the listeners will have less freedom in their own interpretation thereof than while listening to premiered compositions, but it is certain that their space for work is not so confined as DeNora claims.

<sup>6</sup> The idea about the composer's work that I have presented is closely related to Jason Toynbee's theoretical analysis of the composer's creativity (Toynbee, 2003). Namely, this author regards a piece of music as an amalgam of the so-called **coded voices**, which is an utterance of its authors in the Bakhtinian sense. Bakhtin's concept of utterance is characterized by dialogic form because "its every aspect is determined by the interrelationship between the speaker's need to achieve a certain meaning, i.e. local factor, and the general demands of language as a generalizing system, i.e. global factor." (Holquist, 1997, 60). Also, utterance is "a social phenomenon *par excellence*", "which is at once a borderline between the uttered and the unspoken". It is "shaped by speakers who share the values of a certain community, which are not always manifested in the act of speaking" (1997, 61). In fact, the composer's utterance results from the dialogic relationship between his work and stylistic or genre forms, where creativity represents the quality of such an utterance. The creativity of an author's work or utterance can be linked to the transcension of norms, or "in the case of avant-garde esthetics, their transgression" (Toynbee, 2003, 106). Toynbee believes that reasons behind greater or lesser creativity of certain authors can be grasped only if the creative act is viewed in the context of Pierre Bourdieu's concepts such as field of production, habitus and space of possibilities. Some of the premises of this author concerning the creative process in music will be used in the final chapters of this paper.

<sup>7</sup> The said influence means that if a composition is so structured as to elicit from the listener a large number of possible interpretations on the structural/semantic level, the possibility of the listener's "composing", i.e. *imaginative organization and interpretation of sound data* is all the stronger.

can be drawn from numerous texts, from autopoietic writings of the authors themselves to analytical works of musicologists to a variety of texts discussing twelve-tone music from the standpoint of philosophy, cognitive psychology and music esthetics. The listener experiencing dodecaphonic works, including those by Anton von Webern which are analyzed hereinafter, appears to be well “equipped” conceptually. Still, it is only by carefully reading texts on this kind of music, which examine it from different, and often contrary positions, that one can establish if, and what kind of, “sketch” or “cognitive map” serving as instructions for approaching the works, has been developed, that is, whether they contain clear guidelines for the listeners on the listening strategy of twelve-tone music, as well as on possible ways of structuring such works and the emotional reactions they produce.

### *The Defining of Perceptual Limitations in the Writings on Twelve-tone Music*

The possibility of examining the structure of twelve-tone music by applying a specific analytical technique based on following permutations of a series/row<sup>8</sup> was pointed out already in the 1920's<sup>9</sup> in the theoretical writings of Schönberg, and later in those of Křenek, Rene Leibowitz and George Perle.<sup>10</sup> The term *perceptual limitations*, which was introduced in these analytical writings, is based on two important categories – variance of the row and symmetry of relations in a work's structure (on all levels) which, according to various authors, should be the focus of the listener's attention. However, the question is whether and to what extent the listener is psychophysically equipped to perceive such kinds of phenomena in twelve-tone music. Judging from the empirical researches conducted by Pedersen, Krumhansl, Sandell and Sergeant, the answer is negative<sup>11</sup>, which leads to the following conclusion: seeing as the listeners failed to perceive even the simplest elements of the structure of twelve-tone music as defined in the theoretical-analytical writings, it follows that neither variance of the row nor symmetric relations can be accepted as foundations for the framework of *perceptual limitations* on account of their imperceptibility.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Note that the application of the described technique, with analytical discourse having been enriched by adopting concepts or methods from natural sciences, especially mathematics, can be traced in the writings of authors from the 1960's to date.

<sup>9</sup> I am primarily referring to the texts “Twelve-tone Composition” (1923), “Composition with Twelve Tones (1)”, (1941), “Composition with Twelve Tones (2)” (1948) and “My Evolution” (1949). They are included in the 1975 edition of the collection of texts entitled *Style and Idea* (see in: Schönberg, 1975).

<sup>10</sup> I am referring to the studies *Zwölfstön Kontrapunkt Studien* (Křenek, 1952), *Introduction à la musique de douze sons* (Leibowitz, 1949), *Serial Composition and Atonality: An Introduction to the Music of Schönberg, Berg and Webern* and *Twelve-tone Tonality* (Perle, 1962, 1977). Of course, it should be noted that the list of authors of theoretical-pedagogical studies on twelve-tone music has not therewith been exhausted seeing as such kinds of works concurred with the increasing use of the twelve-tone technique in different countries.

<sup>11</sup> These researches revealed that regardless of their degree of musical education and knowledge about twelve-tone music, the listeners were incapable of memorizing “the specific order of tones (pitches) in a twelve-tone series, even after intensive repetition” (Raffman, 2003, 76), and that they failed to identify differences in the series if the tones constituting them were far apart in terms of register (2003, 76), that is to say, they could follow the permutations of the row, but only under highly controlled conditions (2003, 76).

<sup>12</sup> This does not mean that said categories are not valid in the analytical sense, since they were not developed with the aim of influencing, in any way, the empirical judgment of the listener, or conforming to such a

Select writings by Diana Raffman, Roger Scruton and Richard Taruskin, in which a critique of twelve-tone music is established in divergent ways and with different goals, reveal a lack of a determined effort to define its *perceptual limitations* in greater detail. The reason behind this is probably the need of said authors to prove, proceeding from certain philosophical viewpoints and hypotheses, that twelve-tone music either rests upon false theoretical premises or is artistically “defective”, or both, without intending to further analyze the problems of the listening and possible understanding of this music, as well its meaning.<sup>13</sup> The conclusions of Raffman, Scruton and Taruskin all amount to the hypothesis that in twelve-tone music the listener is not capable of experiencing feelings similar to those in tonal works, which does not, however, nullify the possibility of him/her experiencing any kind of sensation in the process of perceiving (and receiving) music based on twelve-tone rows. Such a possibility can occur only if the boundaries of *perceptual limitations* of twelve-tone music as set in the analyzed works are extended.

*A Possible Defining of Perceptual Limitations of Twelve-tone Music on the Example of Anton von Webern's Twelve-tone Works*

1) *The Composer's Work with Sound Material*

Making assumptions about what the listener perceives as distinctive characteristics of twelve-tone music and about what happens while he interacts with that kind of music is possible only if the serial structure of certain music components is given secondary importance in the analysis. I believe that this procedure does not rule out analyzing the composer's work on the music text; rather, its effect is such that the work is viewed from a comparatively different perspective.<sup>14</sup> Quite simply, in order to

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judgment. True, they were formulated based solely on one's access to the graphic notation of the work and relying on the theory of composition, disregarding or even dismissing the needs and abilities of the listeners as irrelevant, but the fact alone is not sufficient to dispute them. If the importance of analytical approaches or techniques were measured by their contribution to the listener's experience or argued on account of their inconsistency with that experience, most of the methods that have so far been applied would very likely be dismissed. On the other hand, the results and effects of the analysis are not necessarily oriented towards the listener; rather, their purpose is to elucidate possible intentions of the composers, as witnessed by analytical works on twelve-tone music.

<sup>13</sup> The common ground in writings by said authors, particularly Scruton and Raffman, is a tendency to call into question compositions realized on the twelve-tone basis, or rather, their ability to bring any form of esthetic enjoyment to the listener, by pointing out the insolidity of the theoretical foundations of dodecaphonist technique, i.e. the illusiveness of Schönberg's hypothesis about the possibility of replacing his already established system by the tonal system by integrating the sonic space into a solid whole, applying the cohesive force of the motivic *Grundgestalt* rather than chordal centralization. Judging from the observations of Scruton, Raffman and Taruskin, such a conclusion should, logically, proceed from a comparison between music based on the twelve-tone technique and that based on the tonal system, since it is clear that in dodecaphonic music the recipient will not be able to cognitively grasp all those events that are available to him in tonal music, least of all to form an impression of the organic connection of such an acoustic-temporal gestalt, which exists only “on paper”.

<sup>14</sup> Undoubtedly, the serial structuring of pitches, and often also of rhythm, is a constructive principle Webern used in his dodecaphonic compositions, but the fact is that such a principle is detectable only if one is reading

determine what it is that the listener hears when listening to Anton von Webern's twelve-tone compositions, it is necessary to examine the so-called local and global structures<sup>15</sup> of these works, laying special emphasis on the observation of the process of organizing sound data, in other words, the behaviour of the grouping structure<sup>16, 17</sup>.

On the lower hierarchical levels in Webern's works, grouping is usually done according to the *principle of proximity and change* and the *principle of parallelism*, which means that groups of tones are identified based on changes in instrumentation, articulation, dynamics, as well as similarities between melodic contour and rhythmic structure. Analyzed works also include examples of grouping according to the principle of "figure and background", namely in those segments in which two different courses of grouping, each with its different characteristics, run parallel to one another, usually creating some sort of conflict.<sup>18</sup> The types of distribution of music material in Webern's compositions usually produce divergent forms of group overlapping, i.e. a phenomenon known as dissonance in grouping which, depending on the characteristics of the sonic surroundings in which it

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the score, rather than listening to the actual composition, which is evidenced by empirical experiments conducted by cognitive psychologists. Therefore, focusing on that aspect of the composer's work cannot lead to the establishment of valid perceptual limitations for the listener.

<sup>15</sup> The terms local and global structure refer to hierarchical levels in the organization of the music flow. Local structure refers to events in the music flow within shorter time intervals, i.e. successive segments of time on the lower hierarchical levels, whereas the term global structure denotes higher hierarchical levels in the organization of music. These terms are equivalent to those of micro-structure and macro-structure.

<sup>16</sup> The term grouping structure comes from Lerhdal and Jackendoff and refers to the theoretical model of the analysis of tonal music which was developed by the two authors in the 1980's. These authors believe that "the process of grouping is common to different forms of human cognition", and that "faced with a larger number of elements or a series of events, an individual tends to segment them, i.e. group them in a particular way" (Lerhdal, Jackendoff, 1981, 480-481). When it comes to music, Lerhdal and Jackendoff hold that while listening to a work, "the listener organizes sound signals into units such as motives, phrases, periods, themes-groups and segments up to the level of the work itself", i.e. groups, which is the common term for all the stated types of wholes. The principle according to which this kind of segmentation is realized and according to which segments of the music flow and the manner of their integration are identified is called a grouping structure. Lerhdal and Jackendoff point out that a grouping structure is determined by two sets of rules – rules of good form "which specify possible structures" and rules of preference "which represent probable structures" (Radoš-Mirković, 1996, 124). The first set of rules permits only "hierarchical organization, structure of a group", while "the second set of rules determines the boundaries between groups, the break between two groups 'based on the principle of proximity and change, the principle of parallelism and the principle of symmetry (according to "the principle of proximity and change, delimitation of groups is determined by the distance between the accented segments, rests, by the change of register, by texture, dynamics and cadences which mark the end of the group; the principle of parallelism in the structure involves repetition of motives, sequences etc.; the principle of symmetry represents the degree to which group divisions are organized into subdivisions of equal length", see in: Radoš-Mirković, 1996, 124). Because of the numerous limitations of the model of grouping structure of these two authors (see in: London, 1997, Roeder, 2001), when analyzing the grouping structure in Webern's dodecaphonic works, we shall rely only on some of its aspects which relate to the general principles of identifying groups.

<sup>17</sup> Such examination will take account of the treatment of music components – their selection, combination and correlation – with the aim of classifying the detected procedures of the composer in order to single out those that are typical, that is, less typical.

<sup>18</sup> The segments in question are from *Variations* op. 30 (b. 20-52), *Concerto* op. 24 (I movement, b. 11-27; II movement, b. 1-39), *Symphony* op. 21 (II movement, b. 23-24, b. 55-67) and *String Quartet* op. 28 (II movement, b. 8-29). See example 1.

appears, may gain in complexity.<sup>19</sup> Such is the case with the entire first movement of *Concerto* op. 24, in which different conflicting types of grouping run parallel to one another in two texture layers.<sup>20, 21</sup>

Due to the limitations of human cognitive apparatus, that is, the nature of its **working memory** and **focus**, it is difficult to say to what extent the listener is capable of perceiving the aforementioned examples of grouping structures in Webern's twelve-tone compositions, but it is also clear that this is only partly contingent on the structure's complexity.<sup>22</sup> In the analyzed Webern's works or segments of these works, the negative effects of certain factors (for example, complexity of the grouping structure coupled with fast tempo and frequent changes of dynamics, register and timbre) on said psychological processes are very likely to hinder one's accurate perception of their structure, particularly on the lower hierarchical levels,<sup>23</sup> and this is further reinforced by the fact that generation of some sort of hierarchy of beat in said works, that is, extraction of metric structure,<sup>24</sup> is reduced to a minimum or is next to impossible.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> In addition to the simple type of group overlapping, which rarely goes unaccompanied and in which groups are concatenated in such a way that the end of one group is at the same time the beginning of another (for example, in the III movement of the *Concerto* op. 24, b. 7-24), this type of grouping is far more frequently combined with some other manner of sound organization. This yields more complex results as the synchronous development of different types of grouping generates a conflict between them. Undoubtedly, this is a consequence of Webern's polyphonic way of thinking which is reflected in the need for employing a larger number of smaller groups, each consisting of two to three tones, and their circular transmission from one instrument to another, which creates layeredness in both the simultaneous and successive time organization of music.

<sup>20</sup> Namely, in a large part of the said movement two "currents" of grouping run simultaneously, in the piano part and in the parts of eight solo instruments (woodwind, brass and string instruments) respectively. The two-fold texture resembles the pattern of "figure and background", except that the currents are equal in that it is difficult to say which one of them is the figure and which one the background. Grouping by means of linking, which occurs in the solo instruments, is at variance with the grouping in the piano part, and the conflict is provoked by the fact that the beginnings and ends of the groups in both currents do not overlap (Example 1).

<sup>21</sup> There is a similar realization within the second movement of the *String Quartet* op. 28 (b. 8-29), in which asynchronous processes of grouping develop in two texture layers. Various forms of conflict between grouping structures, especially the crosswise intertwining of groups, can also be seen in parts of *String Quartet* op. 28 (II movement, b. 11-19), *Symphony* op. 21 (I movement, b. 139-141) and *Variations* op. 30 (b. 25-44).

<sup>22</sup> The reason behind this is the specific way in which focus functions in the process of listening. According to the results of psychological investigations, simultaneous exposition of different melodic textures, such as those in polyphonic music, requires the recipient to, in a way, filtrate data because the textures cannot be perceived as a whole, each one separately, that is to say, the assumption is that attention will be focused on certain textures, perceived as figures, and these will be processed in detail, while other, background textures, will remain outside of the focus of attention (Radoš-Mirković, 1996, 133-135). We should add that focusing attention on a certain melodic texture depends on several factors, such as register or dynamics in which it is exposed.

<sup>23</sup> Such is the case in the segments of II movement of the *Symphony* op. 21, II and II movement of the *String Quartet* op. 28, *Variations* op. 30, and II movement of the *Concerto* op. 24, in which a complicated grouping structure is coupled with the music flow's fast tempo. Since data selection according to specific criteria is vital to the functioning of analyzed psychological processes (focus and memory), the rate of data flow, in this case of music stimuli, can certainly help to detect the subtle relations between them. Therefore, the illustrated grouping structures are not likely to be perceived in their entirety, and it is quite uncertain which dimensions of these structures the listener will attain.

<sup>24</sup> I depart from the phenomenological understanding of the metre, which is based on the hypothesis that "metre is not a musical parameter like pitch or timbre", or rather, that it is "inseparable from music, since music defines accent patterns which we interpret as meter" (London, 1993). The point here is a phenomenon that has an ambivalent relationship to music – on the one hand, it exists thanks to the way music is structured but on the other, it influences the perception of that structure, particularly the processes of its segmentation. A notated metric structure does not reflect the richness of a perceptible metric structure because numerous fluctuations and

The higher hierarchical levels of the grouping structure are, like lower levels, identified according to the principles of *proximity and change* and *parallelism*, that is to say, based on the changes in instrumentation, articulation, dynamics, as well as on similarities between melodic contour and rhythmic structure, where differentiating between groups based on whether they are capable of generating a metric structure figures as an important parameter in segmentation.<sup>26</sup>

## 2) *The Composer's Work with "Coded Voices"*

In the previous chapter, Webern's work with sound material was examined in isolation from its historical, cultural and social context. However, if creative act is understood to mean a process of selecting "coded voices" from a radius of creative potentials,<sup>27</sup> which depends on both the complex convergence of the field of production in which the author creates and the author's habitus (Toynbee, 2003, 107), it is then clear that such an examination is not complete unless creative selections of this composer are analyzed in greater detail, which can only be achieved by identifying "coded voices" that figure in his compositions.

In the analyzed works by Anton von Webern we can identify two types of coded voices, the first of which is established by transgressing syntactic and genre norms of tonal music and constituting new, "local" norms which are affirmed by actions specific to this author, while the second type is established by relying on syntactic and genre norms of tonal music. The first type of coded voices appears as a combination of a twelve-tone technique, the so-called *klangfarben* technique, with contrapuntal techniques, resulting in a specific treatment of certain music components. Typical

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developments within this structure are a result of interaction between the most diverse sound data, from pitch to dynamics to articulation and the already mentioned parameters, which can be discerned only in the process of listening. (see in: Large, Palmer, 2002, London, 1993, 2002).

<sup>25</sup> The causes of such a phenomenon are different, varying from one work to another. The most common reasons are frequent changes of tempo, along with pauses in the music flow in the form of caesuras, rhythmic patterns without phrase-construction, absence of parallelisms in the structure, oscillations in the notated metric structure and asynchronism of grouping structures. Such a mixture of events in the music flow is realized in a large part of *Variations* op. 30, in I movement of the *Concerto* op. 24 and III movement of the *String Quartet* op. 28.

<sup>26</sup> When it comes to the effect of the *principle of parallelism* within said hierarchical levels, it is important to point out that equivalence of certain segments in Webern's works is achieved, first and foremost, by equivalent texture arrangements, rhythmic patterns, tempos, orchestrations and melodic contours, regardless of whether the segments are in succession or at a distance. For perceiving similarities between certain segments of the music flow, melodic contour seems to be the least relevant of the parameters because in most Webern's compositions there is a small number of contours that even appear intertextually, i.e. they can be found in many different compositions. Due to the considerable homogeneity of intervallic motions in Webern's works, the melodic contour, accordingly, cannot play an important role in the process of perceiving the equivalence of certain segments.

<sup>27</sup> According to Toynbee, the radius of creative potentials is a circular space consisting of coded voices; in its centre are accumulated points which represent the most frequent realizations necessary for a competent production within a certain genre. Departing from the centre, "the density of the points decreases, which causes, on the one hand, difficulties in making selections outside the boundaries of the genre, but on the other – expansion of the space for possibilities" (Toynbee, 1997: 107).

procedures include transparency of texture, pointillistic orchestration<sup>28</sup> and, very importantly, imperceptibility of metric structure.<sup>29</sup> Interaction of all the foregoing procedures favoured by Webern is what makes the syntactic structure of his dodecaphonic works specific, particularly with respect to the syntactic structure of most works of tonal music.<sup>30</sup> The second type of coded voices is present in those segments of Webern's compositions in which certain syntactic and genre norms of tonal music survive in traces. The traces of syntactic norms refer primarily to all those examples in which texture is presented as two-layered, as figure and background, i.e. melody and accompaniment, especially if the accompanying layer is based on chordal repetition like in the first variation on *Variations* op. 30, which is suggestive of the metric structure of the material<sup>31 32</sup>.

### *The Composer's Work and the Listener's Space for Work*

In Webern's dodecaphonic compositions, the two dimensions of the composer's work – with sound material and with “coded voices” – demarcate the boundaries of the listener's space for work. The specific manner of organizing local structure in said works, which creates impediments to the process of perception, offers, in fact, the listener a wide range of possibilities for organizing sound data on these hierarchical levels of form. This can be achieved because the listener has the freedom, given the perceptual entropy within grouping structures on the lower levels, to associate and dissociate stimuli according to his own criteria. Therefore, the aforementioned aspects of Webern's twelve-tone works provide the listener with a specific *aleatoric way of listening*, based on the recomposing of the

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<sup>28</sup> This term refers to a type of orchestration in which the least perceptible groups are strictly differentiated according to instrumental timbre, with no doubling of instruments.

<sup>29</sup> In addition to the aforementioned techniques, we should also mention a technique which the composer likes to employ in structuring the music flow; it is characterized by successive linking of smaller groups of tones with similar intervallic content, but different in timbre, while the dynamics of form is realized by condensing or rarifying the entry of the groups and, by extension, instruments and timbres.

<sup>30</sup> With respect to the transgression of genre forms in the compositions of said composer, Dahlhaus says the following: “Webern is one of the first authors of *New music* whose oeuvre testifies to a clear tendency to transgressing genres and inaugurating individuality for every composition because he departs from the connections between formal models, movement structures and types of instrumentation which determine genres, although, like Schönberg, he uses their names, such as symphony, concerto or string quartet (Dahlhaus, 1988, 33). Thus, in *Concerto* op. 24, accompanying nine solo instruments is the piano instead of the orchestra, while in other analyzed compositions their formal structure, tempo and character deviate from genre conventions. In *Symphony* op. 21, for instance, there are two movements: the first is in slow tempo, structured as sonata form, while the second is also in slow tempo, but in the form of variations. *String Quartet* op. 28, on the other hand, has three movements, the first being in slow tempo, in the form of variations, the second being three-part and in moderate tempo and the third being in fast tempo, also in the ternary form.

<sup>31</sup> Also, in *Concerto* op. 24 we can detect traces of norms of the concerto genre such as the three-movement structure and the characteristic arrangement of tempo in each movement (moderately fast-slow-fast). We should also mention the significant role of the metric component in III movement, which is a sort of dance-like simulation typical of the final movements of concertos, and the competitive relationship between solo instruments and the piano in I movement.

<sup>32</sup> One could quite possibly discover an even greater number of coded voices in the analyzed dodecaphonic compositions by Webern if one were to take account, in addition to the already identified relations with works of tonal music and genre framework, of their relations with Webern's entire output, the works of Schönberg and other authors of dodecaphonic music, as well as works of modernist authors belonging to different orientations.



existing structure of these works in the process of observation. In addition to the ways of organizing local structure, the expansion of the listener's space for work also yields the organization of "coded voices" by which said works establish relationships with the corpus of western-European art music.

The great potential for the listener's work, inherent in the compositions of this author, which results from the two dimensions of the composer's work, namely forms of *contextualization cues*, can be maximized by incorporating other *contextualization cues*, i.e. different discursive forms of mediation, and by identifying their confliction. Still, this is only a matter of potential. What meaning of Webern's dodecaphonic compositions the listener will actually produce depends on his habitus, and it is evident that the mechanism of meaning production in these works functions the same as in the works belonging to other kinds of music. This conclusion prompts a hypothesis that dodecaphonic works do not have one and only meaning, along the lines of the "unifying idea", which is available only to the listener with above-average intellectual capacities and musical talent, as some of their authors maintained.<sup>33</sup> Quite on the contrary, not only is there no such thing as exclusive listeners or exclusive meanings of dodecaphonic music, there is also no doubt about the proliferation of its possible (structural/semantic) interpretations, as evidenced by Anton von Webern's compositions which provide the listener with wide space for work. It then follows that *aleatorics of listening*, understood in the broader sense as a structural/semantic interpretation of a work, is the only possible way of listening to this kind of music, as well as music in general.

Translated by Dušan Zabrdac

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<sup>33</sup> For further details, see article "My Evolution" in the collection of texts *Style and Idea* by Arnold Schönberg (Schönberg, 1975).

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