

AN ANALYSIS OF ALFRED SCHNITTKE'S POLYSTYLISM IN HIS
STRING QUARTET NO. 3
(1983)

By

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The study of polystylism and its role in the history of music is a relatively new idea; Alfred Schnittke is often regarded as the first true proponent of the term, and the bulk of his compositional output did not begin until the latter half of the twentieth century. My interest in the music of Schnittke began from an extension in my research of the music of Shostakovich, who, as an earlier composer of the Soviet orbit, was quite influential on Schnittke's early style. Many of Schnittke's early works exemplify an apparent Romantic syntax, often regained within dramatic chromaticisms that Shostakovich is well known for. Perhaps some of the most notable of these is *Schnittke's Symphony No. 0* (1953), and his *Violin Concerto No. 1* (1957, later revised in 1963). This thesis will provide an in-depth theoretical analysis of Schnittke's *String Quartet No. 3*, as one of the major works within the idea of polystylism. Further examinations will include Schnittke's use of motivic connections in relation to polystylism, such as the BACH and DSCH motives of Bach and Shostakovich, Orlando di Lasso's "Stabat Mater," as well as Beethoven's *Great Fugue Op. 133*, and how these connections are used to intertwine highly disjunct, abruptly contrasting styles and musical periods.

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STRING QUARTET NO. 3
(1983)

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With concentrations in
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By

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title Page	i
Copyright Page	ii
Signature Page	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Table of Contents	v
List of Figures	vi
List of Musical Examples	vii
Note on Musical Examples	x
Introduction	1
A. Methodology	1
B. Outline	2
I. Biographical and Background Information	3
A. Schnittke's Polystylism	4
B. <i>String Quartet No. 3</i> (1983)	6
II. Literature Review	13
III. Movement I Analysis	16
IV. Movement II Analysis	27
V. Movement III Analysis	47
VI. Conclusion	59
A. Schnittke's Polystylism in the <i>String Quartet No. 3</i>	53
Bibliography	65

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1	Structural Diagram of Motivic Cycles in Movement I	12
Figure 2	Connections and Expansions of Motivic Material	64

LIST OF MUSICAL EXAMPLES

Example 1.1	Movement I, mm. 1-2, 27-30	7
Example 1.2	Movement I, mm. 70-74	8
Example 1.3	Movement II, mm. 1-11	8
Example 1.4	Movement II, mm. 58-66	9
Example 1.5	Movement III, mm. 317-326	9
Example 1.6	Movement III, mm. 14-17	10
Example 1.7	Movement III, mm. 90-101	10
Example 3.1	<i>String Quartet No. 3</i> Movement I mm. 1-10, <i>Grosse Fugue</i> mm. 1-25	16
Example 3.2	<i>String Quartet</i> Movement I mm. 31-42, "Stabat Mater" Mvts. I + II	19
Example 3.3	Movement I, mm. 70-82	22
Example 3.4	Movement I, mm. 35-38, 65-67	23
Example 3.5	Movement I, mm. 11-16	24
Example 3.6	<i>String Quartet No. 3</i> Movement I mm. 65-69, <i>String Quartet No. 8 in C Minor</i>	25
Example 4.1	Movement II, mm. 1-5	27
Example 4.2	Movement II, mm. 6-17	29
Example 4.3	Movement II, mm. 18-23	29
Example 4.4	Movement II, mm. 24-35	30
Example 4.5	Movement II, mm. 37-41	30
Example 4.6	Movement II, mm. 42-66	31
Example 4.7	Movement II, mm. 67-105	32
Example 4.8	Movement II, mm. 106-121	35

Example 4.9	Movement II, mm. 124-131	36
Example 4.10	Movement II, mm. 139-193	37
Example 4.11	Movement II, mm. 204-212	38
Example 4.12	Movement II, mm. 227-232	39
Example 4.13	Movement II, mm. 233-243	40
Example 4.14	Movement II, mm. 244-250	40
Example 4.15	Movement II, mm. 251-275	41
Example 4.16	Movement II, mm. 281-295	42
Example 4.17	Movement II, mm. 296-311	43
Example 4.18	Movement II, mm. 313-326	44
Example 5.1	Movement III mm. 1-4, Movement I mm. 17-18	48
Example 5.2	Movement III, mm. 11-13	48
Example 5.3	Movement III mm. 14-23, Movement I mm. 1-10	49
Example 5.4	Movement III, mm. 24-27	50
Example 5.5	Movement III, mm. 28-32	51
Example 5.6	Movement III, mm. 38-41	51
Example 5.7	Movement III, mm. 38-46	52
Example 5.8	Movement III, mm. 46-55	53
Example 5.9	Movement III, mm. 60-61	53
Example 5.10	Movement III, mm. 63-75	54
Example 5.11	Movement III mm. 84-85, Movement I mm. 11-16	56
Example 5.12	Movement III, mm. 84-101	57

Example 6.1	Movement I mm. 27-30, Movement II mm. 139-149	60
Example 6.2	Movement I mm. 5-8, Movement II mm. 30-33, 76-83, 233-236	61
Example 6.3	Movement III, mm. 96-101	63

Note on Musical Examples:

For the sake of simplicity and clarity, all musical examples implemented in this thesis use a system organized by color; this is to convey the composer's frequent use of motivic material in a manner that is visually traceable and understandable. The following table should be referenced regarding the various types of musical examples that are used:

Color	(Motivic) Material is Derived From:
Blue	Orlando di Lasso
Green	Ludwig van Beethoven
Red	Dmitri Shostakovich (DSCH)
Purple	J.S. Bach (BACH)
Yellow	Other: Material 1) does not directly reference a single motive, 2) uses multiple motives equally, or 3) is essential for other (non-motivic) purposes, such as harmony and/or texture

INTRODUCTION

The importance of Alfred Schnittke and his role in the development of the music of the twentieth century cannot be denied. He remains one of the most widely recognized Soviet composers of the twentieth century, largely following in Shostakovich's footsteps (and perhaps even rivaling him, had they lived within similar timespans). His music received reputable fame in the 1970s and 1980s, despite the numerous hardships created as a result of Soviet oppression. Through his development of the iconic idea of polystylism, Schnittke has become an international phenomenon that is well-deserving of a thorough analytical and scholarly examination.

The thesis will provide an in-depth examination and analysis of Alfred Schnittke's *String Quartet No. 3* (1983), with a particular focus on what the composer refers to as polystylistic techniques that are found and the way in which connections are made through the use of motivic material. The analysis will be motivically-based, drawing upon the various motives of Orlando di Lasso's "Stabat Mater," Beethoven's *Great Fugue Op. 133*, and the personified motives of Bach (BACH) and Shostakovich (DSCH). Secondary elements will incorporate a biographical overview of Schnittke and his works (with a particular focus on his various stylistic periods, including those preceding his period of polystylism and those following, toward the end of Schnittke's life), and the origins of polystylism, including Schnittke's own original thoughts on the subject. Schnittke's "Polystylistic Tendencies in Modern Music" will form the basis of this examination.

A. METHODOLOGY

Due to the polystylistic nature of Schnittke's works, a wide variety of analytical approaches will be implemented. Schnittke is quite overt in his use of stylistically contrasting quotations and motives as a source for compositional material; labels and notes are personally printed in the score

and musical passages from drastically contrasting styles (from Renaissance modalities to Twentieth Century chromaticism) are placed and intertwined with one another. Schnittke includes quotations from the following sources: 1) from the renaissance music of Orlando di Lasso's "Stabat Mater," which centers on modal voice-leading tendencies; 2) motives of Beethoven's *Great Fuge Op. 133* (which utilizes the phrase from "Stabat Mater" as its principle subject); and 3) the renowned motives that are formed from the names of Bach (BACH), and Shostakovich (DSCH). A successful and comprehensive analysis of Schnittke's style will therefore be reliant on a mixture of various analytical approaches, often shifting between more traditional harmonic analysis and more modern concepts of atonal chromaticism and set theory.

B. OUTLINE

This thesis is organized from an approach that is based on the consideration of Schnittke's highly unique and dynamic polystylistic style. In a broad sense, most chapters focus on a particular movement, with the motivic material serving as the melding material through which the various movements (and as an extension, chapters) are connected. As previously mentioned, the foundation of Schnittke's polystylism is his use of musical quotations and motivic figurations, and so while the organization is abstractly based on the movements and formal aspects, the essential motives (those drawn from Orland di Lasso's "Stabat Mater," from Beethoven's *Grosse Fuge Op. 133*, and the musical monograms of Bach and Shostakovich) will be constantly referenced throughout the work.

I. BIOGRAPHICAL AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A Russo-German composer, Alfred Schnittke was born in the town of Engels within the Volga-German Republic of Soviet Russia in 1934 to a German family of Jewish descent.¹ Throughout his lifetime, Schnittke experienced a sense of never truly belonging to various communities in which he lived; in Russia, he was seen as a Jew, while in Germany, he was seen as a Russian.² At age 12, Schnittke began his formal music education in piano and music theory in 1946 in Vienna, where his father, a journalist and translator of Russian and German texts, had been posted. Schnittke developed a great love for music during his time in Vienna; classical composers such as Mozart and Schubert were particularly influential to him.³ Shostakovich was also particularly influential in his early compositional style, with Schnittke reportedly claiming that “I am undoubtedly his successor, whether I want it or not.”⁴ After moving to Moscow in 1948, Schnittke began graduate studies in composition at the Moscow conservatory, where he graduated in 1961, and thereafter taught for the next ten years (1962-1972).⁵ A prolific film composer, Schnittke produced nearly 70 film scores during his lifetime.⁶ His music was highly distrusted by the Soviet bureaucracy, and as a result his *Symphony No. 1* (1974) and was banned by the Soviet Union of Composers.⁷ Schnittke suffered from a series of strokes beginning in 1985, which seemed to affect his compositional style (becoming bleaker and less dramatic). He died in Hamburg, Germany in 1998.⁸

¹ Alexander Ivashkin, *Alfred Schnittke* (London: Phaidon Press Limited, 2002), p. 15.

² Ivashkin, *Alfred Schnittke*, p. 16.

³ Ivashkin, *Alfred Schnittke*, p. 16.

⁴ Hartmut Schick, “Musikalische Konstruktion als musikhistorische Reflexion in der Postmoderne: Zum 3. Streichquartett von Alfred Schnittke,” p. 248.

⁵ Ivashkin, *Alfred Schnittke*, p. 17.

⁶ The 1974 film *Agony* and the Soviet film *The Ascent* (1977) are some notable film soundtracks written by Schnittke.

⁷ Peter J. Schmelz, *Such Freedom, If Only Musical: Unofficial Soviet Music During the Thaw*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 44.

⁸ Ivashkin, *Alfred Schnittke*, p. 18.

A. SCHNITTKE'S POLYSTYLISM

As a composer, Alfred Schnittke exhibited four main stylistic compositional periods. His early period, which lasted roughly until the middle of the 1960s, displays a neoromantic syntax of sorts, with strong influential inclinations of those such as Dmitri Shostakovich.⁹ Schnittke's second phase was far briefer, lasting only around three to four years. The beginning of this period is generally marked by his 1964 work *Music for Piano and Chamber Orchestra*, where he journeys into the world of serialism.¹⁰ However, Schnittke's dissatisfaction with serialism was apparent (defining it as "the puberty rights of serial self-denial").¹¹ The solution (his third phase) was to create an entirely new style; one that juxtaposed music of highly contrasting styles (from past to present) into a single work. The result was music with abrupt and sudden changes, all contained within a sense of motivic unity. Schnittke's *Sonata No. 2 for Violin and Piano* (1966) is generally regarded as his first polystylistic concert work, which was developed further with his *Symphony No. 1* (1969-1974) that followed.¹² Schnittke's polystylistic period was by far his longest, lasting well into the middle of the 1980s. Schnittke is most widely recognized for his idea of polystylism, as he writes:

"I have this dream of a unified style where fragments of serious music and fragments of music for entertainment would not just be scattered about in a frivolous way, but would be the elements that can be used to manipulate – be they jazz, pop, rock, or serial music."¹³

Schnittke defines polystylism in his 1971 essay "Polystylistic Tendencies in Modern Music," noting two essential aspects of his polystylistic idiom. The first aspect is the principle of quotation,

⁹ Flechsig, Amrei and Christian Storch. "Alfred Schnittke: Analysis, Interpretation, Reception," (Hildesheim: George Olms 2010), p. 56.

¹⁰ Ivashkin, *Alfred Schnittke*, p. 18.

¹¹ Ivashkin, *A Schnittke Reader: Alfred Schnittke*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press 2002), p. 20.

¹² Ivashkin, *Alfred Schnittke*, p. 21.

¹³ Ivashkin, *A Schnittke Reader: Alfred Schnittke*, p. 20.

which “manifests itself in a whole series of devices, ranging from the quoting of stereotypical micro-elements of an alien style, belonging to another age or another national tradition, to exact or reworked quotations.” The second aspect is the principle of allusion, which “manifests itself in the use of subtle hints and unfulfilled promises that hover on the brink of quotation but do not actually cross it.”¹⁴ Some examples of this idea may include styles such as neoclassicism or neoromanticism.

Schnittke claims that composers such as Berg, Webern, Stravinsky, Shostakovich, Penderecki, Stockhausen, Pärt, Denisov, and many others use polystylism to some extent.¹⁵ Although written ten years after his *Sonata No. 2*, Schnittke’s *Concerto Grosso No. 1* brought his polystylism to the western world’s attention.¹⁶ Ultimately, Schnittke’s style exhibits a disjunct combination of highly contrasting musical styles from different eras, and features abrupt and sudden changes in texture; a successful examination of Schnittke’s polystylism requires a mixture of various analytical approaches, including chord symbols, Roman numeral analysis, pitch class/atonal analysis, and an investigation of intervallic expansions and motivic relationships.

B. STRING QUARTET NO. 3 (1983)

Written in 1983, Schnittke’s *String Quartet No. 3* has become one of the major works in his polystylistic genre. In some respects, it may be seen nearly as a high point in his compositional development, as he had spent several years by the 1980s in developing his style of polystylism (that would soon vanish towards the end of the 1980s). Along with the *String Quartet No. 2* (written two years earlier, 1981) and his *String Trio* (1985), the *String Quartet No. 3* is one of the most essential

¹⁴ Ivashkin, *A Schnittke Reader: Alfred Schnittke*, p. 23.

¹⁵ Ivashkin, *A Schnittke Reader: Alfred Schnittke*, p. 24.

¹⁶ Ivashkin, *A Schnittke Reader: Alfred Schnittke*, p. 25.

polystylistic works Schnittke had written up to that point in this career.¹⁷ It thus stands to reason that the *String Quartet No. 3* might be regarded as a major landmark in the development of Schnittke's polystylistic aesthetic, with the *String Quartet No. 2* and the *String Trio* serving as bookends on each side of Schnittke's compositional timeline.

Above all, it is clear that Schnittke's motivic usage formulates the structural basis for the entire quartet; other musical aspects such as tonality and form are significant, but these are melded and forged to ultimately accommodate the importance and interrelated characteristics of the motives themselves. In terms of tonality, Schnittke seems to follow a scheme related by the tritone; the first movement begins with what initially suggests G major (aside from the deceptive cadence in measure 2). This idea is further affirmed with the canonic material beginning in measure 27 (see example 1.1). A tritone relationship can then be heard in measure 73, where the first violin suggests a Db tonality (see example 1.2). In movement II, the quartet begins in G minor, yet briefly visits the key of Db again in measure 9 (see example 1.3). The presence of Db Major is also noteworthy in the second movement in that the major section following the grand pause in measure 59 immediately begins with a chord progression grounded in Db major (see example 1.4). After transitioning through several tonal centers, the quartet finally returns to something suggestive of G minor (note the violin I line) in measure 320 (see example 1.5). Although it does not begin in G, the final movement soon returns to the original quotation of the di Lasso motive (from mm. 1-2, mvt. 1) in measure 14 (see example 1.6). With the presence of the C# pedal in the cello beginning in measure 92, Schnittke seems to suggest that the work is meant to end in Db, thus showing a large-scale

¹⁷ Ivashkin, *A Schnittke Reader: Alfred Schnittke*, p. 25.

transition from G (movement I) to Db (ending of movement III). However, the split chord double-stop in the violin I of measure 99 offers a clear hint of a G tonality (see example 1.7). Being that the work therefore essentially ends with a bitonality of G and Db, it is safe to conclude that the tritone relationship between these two tonal centers is far more than coincidental.

EX. 1.1: Movement I, mm. 1-2 & 27-30; Early Statements of the di Lasso Motive, G Major¹⁸

Andante

Violino I

Violino II

Viola

Violoncello

I

Orlando di Lasso - Stabat mater

3

27 sul tasto, non vibr.

p

sul tasto, non vibr.

p

sul tasto, non vibr.

p

sul tasto, non vibr.

p

¹⁸ Alfred Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, (Vienna-London: Universal Edition, 1984), p. 1.

70

ff dim.

mf

mp

p non vibr.

ff dim.

mf

mp

p non vibr.

ff dim.

mf

mp

p

8 a tempo non vibr.

rall. --- rit. ---

[illegible]

²⁰ Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 7.

EX. 1.4: Movement II, mm. 58-66; Modulation to Db Major following grand pause (m. 60)²¹

EX. 1.5: Movement II, mm. 317-326; G minor tonality in Violin I (m. 320)²²

²¹ Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 10.

²² Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 23.

EX. 1.6: Movement III, mm. 14-17; Return of original di Lasso motive (G Major)²³

EX. 1.7: Movement III, mm. 90-101; Bitonality (Gm in Violin I, m. 93; Db in cello, m 90-)²⁴

²³ Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 25.

²⁴ Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 30.

It is also worth mentioning that there is a clear cyclical relation between the various motives that Schnittke uses in the *String Quartet No. 3* (di Lasso, Beethoven, Bach, Shostakovich). Although he does not follow this system exactly, Schnittke seems to cycle through the motives equally and consecutively, so that not one single motive is repeated too often over another. An example of this idea is seen from the very beginning of the work. From the di Lasso quotation in measures 1-4, Schnittke transitions into the *Grosse Fuge* (Beethoven) which also contains the BACH monogram. From there, Schnittke ends the phrase with a statement of the DSCH monogram in measure 7. The DSCH monogram is immediately followed by a variation of the di Lasso motive in measure 9, which is then followed by what Hartmut Schick identifies as the Beethoven monogram in measure 15 (see explanation in chapter 2). Thus, one can see that a cyclical succession of motives exists, an idea that recurs in multiple instances throughout the quartet. Figure 1 on the following page illustrates this cyclical succession of motives in the first movement.

FIGURE 1 Structural Diagram of Motivic Cycles in Movement I		
Measure	Motive	Tonal/Pitch Center
1-4	Di Lasso, "Stabat Mater"	G Major (D->C, deceptive cad)
5-7	Beethoven, <i>Grosse Fuge</i>	Bb chromatic
6-7	BACH Monogram	Bb chromatic
7-8	DSCH Monogram	C minor
9-14	Di Lasso (S.M. + Monogram)	C minor/chromatic
15-16	Beethoven Monogram	G minor/E & B natural
17-18	DSCH Monogram (in chords)	C minor
24-47	Di Lasso, "Stabat Mater"	G Major
36	Beethoven Monogram	G Major
48	Beethoven, <i>Grosse Fuge</i>	Chromatic
50-51	BACH Monogram	Chromatic
64	Di Lasso, "Stabat Mater"	F minor
66	Beethoven Monogram	G Minor/ E & B natural
68-69	DSCH Monogram	C Minor
73-82	Di Lasso, "Stabat Mater"	Db -> atonal (end)

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Because the *String Quartet No. 3* is a relatively recent work (1983), there are few substantial published sources that provide a comprehensive analysis of the work; this also extends to some of Schnittke's other so-called "polystylistic" works. Perhaps the most well-examined work of Schnittke's polystylism is the *Concerto Grosso No. 1*, as this is widely recognized as one of his first major polystylistic works. Jean-Benoît Tremblay's *Polystylism and Narrative Potential in the Music of Alfred Schnittke* is perhaps the most notable source on this work.²⁵ Of the analytical literature regarding the *String Quartet No. 3*, many are in the form of dissertations and other scholarly writings, including authors such as Alexander Ivashkin and Peter J. Schmelz.²⁶ Sources on Schnittke can essentially be categorized as follows: General overviews/textbooks, anthologies/bibliographies, original writings/correspondence, biographies/reception, interviews/documentaries, and critical essays/work studies. A full list of these references is included in the bibliography.

While nearly one hundred known sources on the subject of Schnittke exist, many are not thorough and specific enough to provide a useful consideration of analyzing Schnittke's less known works (such as the *String Quartet No. 3*). The known textbooks and general overviews (around 8-10) are more broad summaries rather than significant commentaries on Schnittke's works from a theoretical perspective.²⁷ There are approximately five anthologies and bibliographies that provide a

²⁵ Jean-Benoît Tremblay, *Polystylism and Narrative Potential in the Music of Alfred Schnittke*, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 2007).

²⁶ Ivashkin, who was Schnittke's biographer, has written multiple texts on the life of Schnittke, and Schmelz is widely known to have compiled a wide array of sources on Schnittke, as well as mentioning Schnittke in his text *Such Freedom, If Only Musical: Unofficial Soviet Music During the Thaw*. See bibliography for full citation.

²⁷ Boris Schwarz, *Music and Musical Life in Soviet Russia: Enlarged Edition, 1917-1981*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983).

reliable reference to some writings on Schnittke,²⁸ although some of his earlier life (pre-1980) is not as thoroughly mentioned.

Schnittke himself was quite an active writer, producing at least eight known analytical texts; his “Polystylistic Tendencies in Modern Music” is the most widely recognized of these, giving a firsthand insight on the composer’s thoughts and theories behind his compositional style.²⁹ The records of Schnittke’s correspondence are less known; only 4-5 known sources exist.³⁰ The majority of these include Schnittke’s letters to various composers and musicologists throughout the years, most notably among them the composer Henri Pousseur and musicologist Tilo Medek.³¹ Fifteen biographical and reception sources on Schnittke have been published. Many of these are noteworthy in that they were written by associates and friends of Schnittke, giving a credible primary source material on his life and the manner in which his music was received over the years. Reception history sources are particularly notable for their examination of Schnittke’s reception within the Soviet Union, showing how political and cultural aspects influenced the perception of his music.³²

Perhaps the most reliable form of primary sources on Schnittke are a collection of interviews and documentaries, of which there are eleven. These sources are a useful reference for information given from the composer himself. However, many of these (as well as several sources in

²⁸ Peter Schmelz’s “Alfred Schnittke” is the most thorough and reliable of these resources (see bibliography for full citation).

²⁹ Alfred Schnittke, “Polystylistic Tendencies in Modern Music,” In *A Schnittke Reader*, Ed. Alexander Ivashkin and translated by John Goodliffe, 87–90. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press: 2002).

³⁰ In his bibliography, Peter Schmelz mentions several interviews and other correspondences of Schnittke over the years, notably among them are those by Joachim Hansberger (German, 1982) and Claire Polin (English, 1984). See bibliography for full citation.

³¹ Peter Schmelz, “Alfred Schnittke.” www.oxfordbibliographies.com. June 7, 2018.

³² Richard Taruskin. “After Everything: Postmodernism: Rochberg, Crumb, Lerdahl, Schnittke.” In *The Oxford History of Western Music*, Vol. 5, *The Late Twentieth Century*, (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press 2005), p. 411–472.

other mediums) face the dilemma of requiring an English translation (around 50 total), which also presents the possibility of inaccuracies due to this language barrier. Along with the German interview by Joachim Hansberger (1982), the 1988 interview with Yuliya Makeyeva and Gennadiy Tsipin is perhaps the most essential of these non-English interviews, as Schnittke comments on his aesthetics and creative evolution over the years.³³

There are also sources (many in languages other than English, such as Russian and German) that provide an analytical examination of Schnittke's music. However, of the 25-30 known sources, only one is known to provide thorough analysis of the *String Quartet No. 3*; Hartmut Schick's "Musikalische Konstruktion als musikhistorische Reflexion in der Postmoderne." Zum 3. Streichquartett von Alfred Schnittke" is a 21-page article that provides a thoughtful analysis of the *String Quartet No. 3*.³⁴ However, this source does not appear to provide an analysis as thorough as a full thesis would, and so there is a considerable opportunity to evaluate and expand upon Schick's analysis of the quartet. The article does provide a reliable examination of the motivic use/connections within the quartet, namely the BACH and DSCH motives, as well as the quotations of di Lasso and Beethoven. Due to the language barrier, my own translations of Schick's analysis are essentially approximations; they are not meant to be interpreted as direct quotations of his work. Due to the lack of substantial analytical sources, most of the theoretical concepts will therefore be derived from my own analysis of the work.

³³ Alfred Schnittke, Yuliya Makeyeva, and Gennadiy Tsipin. "Real'nost' kotoruyu zhdal vsyu zhizn'..." (*Sovetskaya muzika* 52.10, 1988), p. 17-28.

³⁴ Hartmut Schick. "Musikalische Konstruktion als musikhistorische Reflexion in der Postmoderne: Zum 3. Streichquartett von Alfred Schnittke." (*Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* 59-4. Jahrg., 2002), p. 245-266.

III. MOVEMENT I, “ANDANTE”

From the very beginning of the work, Schnittke presents musical quotations from the music of Beethoven, Orlando di Lasso, and Dmitri Shostakovich, and reveals distinct motivic connections among them. The motives that are used within the work are mentioned in the program notes as well as labeled on the first page of the score (see example 3.1).³⁵

EX. 3.1: Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3 Mvt. I*, mm. 1-10.³⁶

3. Streichquartett

Orlando di Lasso, lower neighbor + triadic expansion/
Andante transformation

Alfred Schnittke (1934)

Violino I

Violino II

Viola

Violoncello

Beethoven, Grosse Fugue Op. 133

BACH Motive

DSCH Motive

Orlando di Lasso - Stabat mater

Ludwig v. Beethoven - Quartett N. 16

DSCH

ratt. a tempo

pp

p

mf

f

pizz.

arco

pp sub.

p

pp sub.

pp sub.

pp sub.

³⁵ Schnittke implements motivic material from Orlando di Lasso's "Stabat Mater," Beethoven's *Grosse Fugue Op. 133*, and Dmitri Shostakovich's *String Quartet No. 8*.

³⁶ Alfred Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 1.

(EX. 3.1 Continued)

Beethoven, *Grosse Fugue*, Op. 133, mm. 1-25.³⁷

Op.133.

Overtura.
Allegro.

The image shows a musical score for the Overture of Beethoven's *Grosse Fugue*, Op. 133, measures 1-25. The score is for Violino I, Violino II, Viola, and Violoncello. It features a BACH motive in retrograde in the violin lines. The tempo changes from Allegro to Meno mosso e moderato and back to Allegro. Dynamics include f, ff, p, and pp.

While the BACH motive may be slightly less overt, it still remains ever-present, as the first appearance occurs in a retrograde in the violin lines beginning with the B-flat in measure 7. In a 1989 interview, Schnittke notes Bach's influence on his music: "I bow to all my knitting before that name, the center of music and after Bach passed is a further development of what is already there with him, that is the center that I cannot lose."³⁸ Tracing back through each quarter note, one can see that the violins spell Bb – A – C – B (B-A-C-H). Schnittke also notes that this retrograde of the

³⁷ Ludwig van Beethoven, *Grosse Fugue* Op. 133. (Berlin: E. Bote & G. Bock, 1860).

³⁸ Hartmut Schick. "Musikalische Konstruktion als musikhistorische Reflexion," p. 251.

BACH motive occurs in the sixteenth string quartet of Beethoven (*Grosse Fuge Op. 133*). Likewise, it is a motive that constantly recurs throughout the *String Quartet No. 3* (such as in measure 48, movement I; a transposition of the original). The BACH motive can be transposed and is equivalent to the chromatic set (0123).

Hartmut Schick also notes the striking resemblance of measures 5-8 to the music of Webern, stating the following:

If you forget for a moment that they are two quotes, then the melody (even if only at first glance) looks quite like one typically in Webern's twelve-tone row. The melodic line contains only nine different notes, but in a striking way it comprises exactly twelve sounding tones, ordered like pearls on a chain, and only a single tone – the “h” in the Beethoven quote – repeats itself at absolutely the same pitch level.³⁹

The influence from the primary theme of Orlando di Lasso's “Stabat Mater” is perhaps the most overt and recurring of these three main motives, and its influence is evident within the entirety of the first movement, as this theme is transformed and restated in a variety of textures. Although these motivic gestures can ultimately be seen in every movement of “Stabat Mater,” a good example is shown in the first movement; Schnittke clearly employs the use of the lower neighbor figure first seen in the cantus I line (see example 3.2). The cadential aspect of the di Lasso quotation is also noteworthy in that it serves as an iconic element of di Lasso's era, employing renaissance voice-leading techniques to a great extent through the resolution (and what is essentially a 4-3 suspension, in modern theory terminology) to the C Major chord, thus creating somewhat of a deceptive cadence to the modern ear. Although the di Lasso motive remains fragmented throughout the work,

³⁹ Schick. “Musikalische Konstruktion als musikhistorische Reflexion,” p. 255.

the cadential aspect of its quotation is still significant, due to its attribution to a style of some four hundred years ago.

EX. 3.2 Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3 Mvt. I* mm. 31-42:⁴⁰

Harmonic language similar to "Stabat Mater," lower neighbor motive

31

35 4 poco vibr., ord. mp poco vibr., ord. mp poco vibr., ord. mp poco vibr., ord. mp

39 vibr. cresc. vibr. cresc. vibr. cresc. vibr. cresc.

⁴⁰ Alfred Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 3.

(EX. 3.2 Continued)

Orlando di Lasso, “Stabat Mater” Mvts I + II:⁴¹

I

Orlandus Lassus

II

⁴¹ Orlando di Lasso, “Stabat Mater,” (Sabine Cassola: 2004).

Although the di Lasso motive is not always stated in (Schnittke's *String Quartet No. 3*) its full original form, the double sixteenth note figure is constantly recurring. From Schnittke's quartet shown in example 2.2 displays the di Lasso motive in a texture with an abundance of imitation. It is also essential to note that Schnittke's polystylism incorporates distant tonal languages, and this idea is portrayed through Schnittke's placement of this imitative passage in G major with the highly chromatic material that immediately precedes it. The use of canon is a common characteristic in musical imitation, and it is thus not surprising that Schnittke develops the di Lasso motive into a full-fledged canon than begins in measure 27. This canonical idea recurs many times throughout the movement, one clear instance in measure 73, which effectively ends the movement, leading into movement II (see example 3.3).

EX. 3.3: Schnittke, *String Quartet No 3*, Mvt. I; di Lasso motive (Canonical Texture), mm. 70-82⁴²

The image shows a musical score for Schnittke's *String Quartet No. 3*, Mvt. I, measures 70-82. The score is in G major, 4/4 time. It features a di Lasso motive in a canonical texture. The first violin part (top staff) starts with a di Lasso motive (D, G, A, Bb, E, B) in measure 70. The other instruments follow in a staggered fashion. The score includes dynamic markings such as *ff dim.*, *mf*, *mp*, *p*, and *pp*. Performance instructions include *rall.*, *rit.*, *a tempo*, *non vibr.*, and *pizz.* The score ends with an *attacca* marking.

Hartmut Schick's analysis of the work also notes the abundant use of musical monograms to implement motivic ideas; he suggests that Schnittke utilizes monograms of Beethoven and di Lasso.⁴³ The first of these instances can be seen in measure 15, where the notes in the first violin spell D, G, A, Bb, E, B. According to Schick, this phrase is a monogram of Beethoven's name through the German lettering system, as follows: (Lu)D(wi)G (v)A(n) BE(et)H(o)E(n). In this example (see

⁴² Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 6.

⁴³ Hartmut Schick. "Musikalische Konstruktion als musikhistorische Reflexion," p. 260-61.

example 3.5), “Be” is the German version of Bb, while “H” is the German version of B natural. The D-G-A-Bb(-E-B) figuration is highly significant throughout the work; Schnittke overtly implements this motive in a multitude of textural ideas throughout the work. Within the first movement, clear examples of this can be seen in the canonic texture of measure 36, and the reiteration of the original motive in measure 66 (see example 2.4).

EX. 3.4: Variations of the Beethoven Monogram, Movement I, mm. 35-38 & 65-67⁴⁴

35

poco vibr., ord.

mp

poco vibr., ord.

mp

poco vibr., ord.

mp

poco vibr., ord.

mp

65

7 a tempo

ff

f

p

ff

f

p

ff

f

p

ff

f

p

⁴⁴ Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 3-5.

Similarly, Schick notes that Orlando di Lasso's name is reflected in the violin parts of mm. 11-12 (see example 2.5). Here, it is suggested that Lasso's name is spelled as (Orl)A(n)D(o) D(i) (L)ASS(o), with the final Eb (violin II) and Ab (violin I) represented through the German forms of "Es" and "As," respectively.

EX. 3.5: Schnittke's use of the Beethoven and Orlando di Lasso Monograms, Movement I, mm. 11-16⁴⁵

The final essential of motive of the first movement is Shostakovich's famous DSCH motive (see example 3.6). Shostakovich, like many composers, was known to employ a motivic representation of his initials in many of his works. Perhaps one of the most prominent examples is in the opening phrases of his *String Quartet No. 8 in C minor*. Like the preceding motives, Schnittke also clearly has this motivic connection to Shostakovich printed in the score, and there are multiple occurrences of the DSCH motive within the first movement.

⁴⁵ Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 11.

EX 3.6: Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3* Mvt. 1, mm. 65-69⁴⁶

65 7 *a tempo*

D S C H

Shostakovich, *String Quartet No. 8* in C Minor:⁴⁷

Largo *Shostakovich, String Quartet No. 8 in C Minor*

Violino I

Violino II

Viola

Violoncello

11

20

⁴⁶ Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 5.

⁴⁷ Dmitri Shostakovich, *String Quartet No. 8* in C Minor. (Leningrad: DSCH, 1960).

The DSCH motive recurs in mm 68-69, in a slightly altered form from its original statement in mm. 7-8. Shostakovich's initials can be understood to spell D-Eb-C-B, as "S" is the German letter for "Eb," and "H" is the letter for "B." Thus, D(mitri) S(hostakovi)CH is portrayed through this motivic gesture. The motive can also be transposed as an abstract reference to DSCH through the use of the set (0134).

The monograms and quotations of Beethoven, Bach, di Lasso, and Shostakovich are therefore the unifying motivic materials of the *String Quartet No. 3*.

IV. MOVEMENT II, “AGITATO”

The second movement begins with a melody that is based upon the Beethoven monogram originally stated in measure 15 of the first movement; the D-G-A-Bb (seen beginning in measure 1) is a variation of the original D-G-A-Bb-E-B (see example 4.1). Largely rooted in G minor, this melody is recurrent in various forms throughout the movement. The use of a canonic texture that was originally implemented with the di Lasso motive also returns, and there is a clear tonal relationship to the G Major of movement I and the G minor of movement II. From a purely stylistic perspective, the *agitato* marking of the second movement is highly suggestive of the final movement of (“*Allegro appassionato*”) Beethoven’s String Quartet in A Minor Op. 32, as the style of an *agitato* aria shimmers through here.⁴⁸

EX. 4.1: Beginning of Movement II, Beethoven monogram used within G minor melody, mm. 1-5⁴⁹



⁴⁸ Hartmut Schick. "Musikalische Konstruktion als musikhistorische Reflexion," p. 255.

⁴⁹ Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 7.

Schnittke's use of intervals as a basis of motivic unity is also important in understanding the overall cohesive significance of the *String Quartet No. 3*. Just as Schnittke's uses of intervals drawn from the Beethoven, BACH, di Lasso and DSCH motives to provide motivic unity, he also uses these intervals to generate harmonic unity. A prime example of this is first seen in measure 6 of movement II, where the 8th chord on beat 3 contains the following pitches: G, A, Bb, C#, D, E, F# (0124578). Other than being roughly in G harmonic minor, this chord also contains the Beethoven monogram (D-G-A-Bb-E-B, where the B is found in the following measure). As a general rule, Schnittke seems to employ 7ths (likely a result of the major 7th found in the di Lasso monogram; Ab-A, as well as the original voicing of the DSCH motive; C-B) and tritones quite often; these intervals are often used for harmonic support, as seen in the descending cello line and upper string lines in measure 7. Furthermore, the sudden modulation from G minor to Db Major in measure 9 also contains a tritone tonal relationship. This tonal shift is brief however, as Schnittke creates a solid half cadence in G in measure 15, preceded by an implied leading tone diminished 7th harmony (F# A C Eb, see example 4.2).

The original di Lasso motive immediately follows this cadence, transitioning to the key of C minor. This is perhaps the first major section of the entire string quartet that clearly uses a functional chord progression (see example 4.3). A variation of the Beethoven monogram is introduced by the viola melody in measure 19, which also serves as the basis for another modulation to A minor in measure 22.

EX 4.2: Movement II, mm. 6-17; intervallic chord, Beethoven monogram (Db), di Lasso Motive⁵⁰

DbM:

EX. 4.3: Movement II, m. 18-23; Beethoven monogram (Cm), modulation to Am

Cm: i VI iv Am: V i

A transposition of the BACH monogram (T3, that was originally introduced as an embedding of the Beethoven quotation in Movement I) is heard in measure 28. The BACH monogram is used to transition into another variation of the Beethoven monogram in measure 32, as well as both the di Lasso motive and the DSCH motive in the viola in measure 33 (see example 4.4). The cello then resumes the Beethoven monogram in its original key (Gm) in measure 34, which

⁵⁰ Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 7.

is then given to the violin I in Db major in measure 37 (see example 4.5). The harmonic material in this passage is important in that the supporting lines largely use the tritone and half step (016), which again is a significant interval in understanding the unity of the work. An example of this idea can be seen in measure 34, where the violin II line plays the tritone double stop (Bb-E), which is also the upper span of the original Beethoven monogram (between the fifth and sixth pitches).

EX. 4.4: Mvt. II, mm. 24-35; BACH trans., Beethoven trans., di Lasso motive, DSCH motive⁵¹

EX. 4.5: Movement II, m. 37; Beethoven monogram transposition⁵²

⁵¹ Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 8.

⁵² Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 9.

The imitative texture resumes in measure 42, further enhanced by a small quotation of the di Lasso motive in measure 44. This quasi-stretto texture continues with additional transpositions of the Beethoven monogram beginning in measure 45 (C# to D in m. 46, then G in m. 48, etc.), which ultimately leads to a culminating grand pause in measure 59 (see example 4.6). The cello entrances are notable, in that they highlight the tritone interval (C# to G, F# to C, etc.).

The use of stretto also reemerges in this section, forming a texture with overlapping imitation with the Beethoven and BACH monograms. Beginning in measure 54, the series begins with the cello beginning on its low C#. The first note of each set features a tritone relationship (C# and G, F# and C, etc.). It is also important to note that the entrance of each instrument descends chromatically beginning in measure 54 (C#-C-B-Bb, etc.), which one might recall is a transposition of the pitch class identity for the BACH monogram (0123).

EX. 4.6: Movement II, mm. 42- 66; di Lasso motive, Beethoven monogram⁵³

The image displays a musical score for Schnittke's String Quartet No. 3, measures 42-66. The score is divided into two systems. The first system (measures 42-53) features a red box around measures 42-44, a blue box around measures 45-48, and a green box around measures 49-53. The second system (measures 54-66) features a green box around measures 54-58. The score includes various musical notations such as 'arco', 'mf', 'f', 'p sub.', 'rall.', 'a tempo', 'ff', 'sul tasto non vibr.', and 'ord., vibr.'. A chord chart at the bottom indicates the progression: DbM: I, V6, vi, V, IM7, I7, I.

⁵³ Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 9.

Following the grand pause, Schnittke begins a new section that is highly romantic and Beethovenesque, clearly containing a largely tonal chord progression. Schnittke's choice of key here is also important, as the violin I ends on a high G just before the grand pause, while the new theme is clearly rooted in Db major, thus forming another tritone relationship. Within this tonal passage, the Beethoven monogram is introduced in yet another texture, now found in the dotted half notes of the violin II line beginning in measure 74 (see example 4.7). This version, now in D minor, ends with a statement of the DSCH motive, found in the viola and violin I lines beginning in measure 80. This instance of the DSCH motive is reminiscent of the initial statement from movement I. Schnittke modulates again in measure 84, now with a statement of the Beethoven monogram in G minor, as heard in the violin I and the lowest notes of the cello's series of double stops. The viola begins a brief interlude using the di Lasso motive in measure 91, also highly to the opening statement from the beginning of the work. The di Lasso motive leads to a final statement of the Romantic melody in G# minor beginning in measure 100.

EX. 4.7: Movement II, mm. 67-105; Romantic style motive, DSCH motive, di Lasso motive⁵⁴

The musical score for Schnittke's String Quartet No. 3, measures 67-105, is presented in a four-staff format. The key signature is Db major (DbM) for measures 67-83 and D minor (Dm) for measures 84-105. The score includes various dynamics (pp, mp, mf, f, p) and performance instructions (ord. vibr., sul tasto, non vibr.). A green box highlights a section of the score in measure 84, showing the DSCH motive in the Violin II line. The score is labeled with Roman numerals: DbM: I, V6, vi, V, IM7, and Dm: i, V6.

⁵⁴ Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 10-11.

(EX. 4.7 Continued)

76

8

ord., vibr. poco vibr.

mp

ord., poco vibr.

poco vibr.

ord., vibr. mp

ord., poco vibr. mp

VIM7 i6/4 V/F V4/3 I Gm: i6/4 i

36

Figured Bass (Basso Continuo):

- ii
- i6
- iii
- vi

Figured Guitar:

- mf
- pp
- vibr.
- mf
- pp
- mf
- f
- mf
- mf
- pp
- mf
- f
- mf

[illegible]

The final statement of the Romantic melody transitions into a contrastingly dissonant texture that is harmonically dominated by the tritone and various seventh intervals, beginning in measure 106 (see example 4.8). The harmonic material here is essential, as Schnittke gradually expands the texture into full triple stops across the ensemble beginning in measure 114 (something that has not been implemented up until this point). In terms of pitch material, the repeated chord in this section (G# A B C D#) eventually becomes (01347), which noticeably contains the DSCH motive (0134) embedded within. The triple stops are also notable in that they eventually comprise the entire chromatic spectrum (3 different pitches for each instrument beginning in measure 114).

A dissonant statement of the Beethoven monogram, centered in Gb, begins in the violin I line of measure 118. This version of the Beethoven monogram is further developed into an ostinato texture in measure 124, with the violin I and viola playing the Beethoven monogram (now in C# minor, accompanied by the (016) set in the viola and cello). In measure 131, the violin plays one final version portion of the di Lasso motive before ending the section on a highly dissonant full texture chord, again grounded in the seventh and tritone (016), see example 4.9.

EX. 4.8: Movement II, mm. 106-121, tritone & 7th intervals, dissonant statement of the Beethoven monogram⁵⁵

The image displays a musical score for Movement II, measures 106-121. The score is written for four staves (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass). The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The score is divided into three systems. The first system (mm. 106-110) features a dissonant statement of the Beethoven monogram (F#-B) in the Violin I part, highlighted by a yellow box. The second system (mm. 111-115) continues the monogram in the Violin I part, also highlighted by a yellow box. The third system (mm. 116-121) features a dissonant statement of the Beethoven monogram in the Violin I part, highlighted by a green box. The score includes various dynamic markings (sf, pp, p, mp, mf, f) and articulation marks (accents, slurs). The monogram is represented by the interval of a tritone (F#-B) and a seventh (B-F#).

⁵⁵ Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 12.

EX. 4.9: Movement II, mm. 124-131; Beethoven monogram (ostinato, C# minor), di Lasso portion⁵⁶

The image displays a musical score for Movement II, measures 124-131. The score is written for a string quartet (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello). The key signature is C# minor, and the time signature is 3/4. The score is divided into two systems. The first system (measures 124-126) features a Beethoven monogram (ostinato, C# minor) in the upper strings, marked with a green box. The second system (measures 127-131) features a di Lasso portion, marked with a blue box. The di Lasso portion is characterized by trills in the upper strings, marked with a green box. The overall texture is dominated by the Beethoven monogram and the di Lasso portion.

Whereas the Beethoven monogram was the dominating element of the preceding section, the di Lasso motive is clearly the main feature of the following section beginning in measure 139. The pitches of the di Lasso motive are performed with trills in the upper strings (see example 3.10). In terms of harmony, the prevalence of the various seventh and tritone intervals remain (016), as does the overall texture. The double stop tremolos of the cello line in this passage roughly suggest the use of a variation/inversion of the BACH monogram (ascending step -> descending leap, as opposed to descending step -> ascending leap of the BACH monogram). For example, the cello plays C#, D, E, D# in the lowest voice of each double stop, while the upper voice plays G, Ab, Bb, A. So, the BACH motive is therefore played in tritones.

⁵⁶ Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 13.

EX. 4.10: Movement II, mm. 139-193; augmentation of di Lasso motive, BACH motive⁵⁷

The musical score for String Quartet No. 3, Movement II, measures 139-193, is presented in four systems. The first system (measures 139-144) shows the initial statement of the di Lasso motive in the first violin, highlighted with a blue box. The second system (measures 145-150) shows the motive in the second violin, also highlighted with a blue box. The third system (measures 151-156) shows the motive in the third violin, highlighted with a blue box. The fourth system (measures 157-162) shows the motive in the fourth violin, highlighted with a blue box. The score includes various dynamics (p, mp, mf, f) and articulations (pizzicato, glissando).

The various statements of the di Lasso motive become increasingly unstable, eventually fragmenting (without a concrete melodic line) in measure 199. However, the first violin then enters with a pizzicato version of the original melody (based on the Beethoven monogram) in measure 208, now centered in Bb minor (see example 3.11). The violin's melody is harmonized with a chromatically ascending sequence of tritones, combined to form the set (0167). In measure 221, the texture becomes more complex, as the large 8th spans originally seen in measure 37 reappear. From

⁵⁷ Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 14.

a harmonic perspective, these eighth notes are also largely composed of additional tritone and seventh harmonies.

EX. 4.11: Movement II, mm. 204-212; original motive returns (Bb minor), tritone harmonizations⁵⁸

The image shows a musical score for Movement II, measures 204-212, from Schnittke's String Quartet No. 3. The score is in Bb minor and features complex tritone harmonizations. Measures 204-212 are highlighted with a green box. The score includes staves for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass. Dynamics include 'sempre', 'mf', 'f', 'pizz.', 'sf', 'cresc. sempre', and 'sf>p'. A box labeled '17' is present in measure 209.

The cello and first violin move to an expanded version of the melody in measure 229, now in C minor and E minor, respectively. The harmonic material beginning in measure 227 is particularly important because Schnittke uses the BACH monogram as its basis; the A#, G#, B, and A in the viola and violin II combine to form the set (0123), and the spelling suggests a version that is fairly close to the original (see example 4.12).

⁵⁸ Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 16.

EX. 4.12: Movement II, mm. 227-232; Beethoven motive with BACH accompaniment⁵⁹

The image shows a musical score for a string quartet, specifically measures 227-232 of Movement II. The score is written for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The time signature is 4/4. The score includes dynamic markings such as *mf* and *f*, and articulation marks like accents and slurs. Two specific musical motifs are highlighted with green boxes: the BACH monogram (B-A-C-H) in the upper staves and the Beethoven motive in the lower staves. The BACH monogram is a sequence of four notes: B, A, C, H. The Beethoven motive is a sequence of four notes: G, A, B, C. The score shows how these motifs are intertwined in the music.

Small quotations of the BACH monogram and the DSCH motive are also intertwined within measures 234 and 235, just before the first violin and cello modulate yet again with another version of the melodic line, now in F# major and E minor, respectively (see example 4.13). The polytonality prevails for quite some time, as a transformed di Lasso motive returns in measure 244, much like the stretto/imitative version that appeared in the first movement (see example 4.14). It is important to note that the final pitch of each statement of the di Lasso motive formulates a series of seventh harmonies across the ensemble (beginning in measure 247, from the cello upwards), which also results in a transposition of the BACH monogram; D-C#-C-B = (0123).

⁵⁹ Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 17.

EX 4.13: Mvt. II, mm. 233-243; BACH monogram, DSCH motive, original motive (Beethoven)⁶⁰

EX 4.14: Movement II, mm. 244-250; di Lasso motive, 7th harmonies⁶¹

⁶⁰ Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 18.

⁶¹ Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 18.

The original motive returns (again with a stretto/imitative) texture in measure 253, now in a change of mode in C major (see example 4.15). The opening passage closes with an authentic cadence in the new key of Db major in measure 260, which also sparks a series of phrases that modulate in an ascending and mostly chromatic/stepwise fashion.

EX. 4.15: Mvt, II, mm. 251-275; Original motive stretto texture; ascending sequential modulations⁶²

The image displays a musical score for measures 251 through 275 of the second movement of Schnittke's String Quartet No. 3. The score is written for four staves (treble and bass clefs). Measures 251-260 are highlighted with green boxes, indicating a stretto texture with ascending sequential modulations. The score includes various dynamics such as *cresc.*, *ff*, *mf*, and *sf*, and markings like *sul pont.* and *ord.*. The key signature changes from Db major to A major between measures 260 and 261.

Following the sequential series of modulations from measures 260 through 281 moving from Db major to A major, the romantic style melody (that is essentially a retrograde of the Beethoven monogram) returns in a far more rhythmically amplified version in measure 282,

⁶² Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 19-20.

arriving in the key of F major. Example 4.16 (below) shows this rhythmic amplification with the presence of 16th notes, thus giving a more active texture than the one preceding it.

EX. 4.16: Movement II, mm. 281-295; Romantic melody, rhythmic amplification⁶³

The ensemble reaches another cadential point in measure 288, where the pedal C in the cello leads to a far sparser texture than the material immediately preceding it. This material proceeds in with another sequence, based upon the 8th notes spans of the Beethoven monogram (see example

⁶³ Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 21.

4.17). Unlike the previous section, these spans of 8th notes do not exist within any tonal center, and the texture gradually becomes less sparse as the movement comes to a close. Fragments of the di Lasso theme are heard in measures 313-316 (see example 4.18).

The ensemble reaches its full texture in measure 320, where seven measures of ostinato material effectively end the second movement. Each ostinato part suggests an allusion to a particular motive; the violin I (as previously mentioned) contains a variation of the Beethoven monogram. The violin II suggests a combination of the BACH and DSCH motives originally found in measures 5-8 of movement I; there is an alternating pattern of chromatic steps and leaps (which essentially comprise the core component of these two motives), such as the G-Ab-F-E in measures 320-322 (see example 4.18). The viola part does not directly quote a motive, but it clearly suggests a partial variation of the Beethoven theme, as evidenced by the constant leap of fourths (which is also possibly an allusion to the leaping tritone material seen earlier in the second movement). The cello also mostly follows the alternating step and leap pattern, but in a more direct ascending fashion. This presence of simultaneous motivic allusions in the second movement's ending is something that alludes to the ending of the entire quartet on a much grander scale, as we will see soon enough.

EX. 4.17: Movement II, mm. 296-311; Beethoven monogram, 8th note spans⁶⁴

22

The image displays a musical score for Movement II, measures 296-311. The score is written for a string quartet, with four staves (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass). The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The score is divided into three systems. The first system (mm. 296-301) features a Beethoven monogram in the second staff, highlighted by a green box. The second system (mm. 302-306) features a Beethoven monogram in the first staff, highlighted by a green box, and a second Beethoven monogram in the second staff, also highlighted by a green box. The third system (mm. 307-311) features a Beethoven monogram in the first staff, highlighted by a green box, and a second Beethoven monogram in the second staff, also highlighted by a green box. The score includes various musical notations, including notes, rests, accidentals, and dynamic markings (ff, mf, mp, gliss.). A page number '22' is visible in the top left corner.

⁶⁴ Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 22.

EX. 4.18: Movement II, mm. 313-326; di Lasso portions, final ostinato phrase (Beethoven monogram)⁶⁵

312 28

317 29

p sub. *mp* (Mixture of BACH and DSCH material)

p sub. *mp*

p sub. *cresc. sempre*

322

(*mf*) *f* *fff* *fff* *attacca*

⁶⁵ Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 23.

In terms of its large-scale structure, the second movement is specifically essential for its thorough development of the original motives introduced in the first movement; it serves as a culmination of the various polystylistic ideas, improved and introduced in various contrasting textures compared to the initial motivic material of movement I. Although not as grand in terms of duration, a sense of culminating development continues in the final movement of the work.

V. MOVEMENT III, "PESANTE"

The final movement of Schnittke's *String Quartet No. 3* serves as an essential synthesis of the motives that are used in the previous two movements. The material from Beethoven, Bach, di Lasso, and Shostakovich all return, and, although more brief than the second movement, Schnittke still maintains a sense of motivic development throughout the movement. Overall, Schnittke seems to adhere to a plan of motivic development and implementation that is quite similar to the first movement, and this becomes more evident as the third movement progresses.

The movement begins with dramatic double-stopped chords, played at fortissimo throughout the ensemble. Clearly grounded in C minor, the opening measure is comparable to measure 17 of the first movement, played in the same expanded double-stopped fashion (see example 5.1). The pitch class of C is also particularly present in the cello line, as there are several instances where the pedal C is emphasized and drawn out (even with contrasting pitch material in the other parts). However, any suggestions of C minor quickly vanish going into measure 3, where the texture gathers rhythmic momentum and chromatic dissonance. Something reminiscent of the "sigh" effect can be seen in measure 4, effectively creating a cadential point for the opening phrase. The majority of the introductory section is largely stepwise in terms of contour; most lines are chromatically ascending and descending, with occasional leaps (such as in measures 5 and 7). These leaps, however, ultimately prepare for a quotation of the DSCH motive heard by the first violin in measure 12 (see example 5.2).

EX. 5.1: Comparison of opening C minor chord (movements III and I)⁶⁶

Movement III, mm. 1-4

Movement I, measures 17 & 18

The image displays two musical staves side-by-side. The left staff is labeled 'III' and 'Pesante'. It shows measures 1-4 of Movement III, featuring a C minor chord in the bass and a complex, dissonant texture in the upper staves. The right staff is labeled 'I' and 'arco'. It shows measures 17 & 18 of Movement I, featuring a C minor chord in the bass and a similar dissonant texture. Both staves have yellow boxes highlighting the opening C minor chord in the bass and the upper staves. The tempo/mood is marked 'Pesante' for Movement III and 'arco' for Movement I.

EX. 5.2: Movement III, measures 11-13; DSCH motive⁶⁷

The image displays a musical score for Movement III, measures 11-13. The score is written for four staves (violin I, violin II, viola, and cello). The DSCH motive is highlighted in a red box in measure 14, showing an ascending and descending chromatic line. The tempo/mood is marked 'ff' (fortissimo) for measures 11-13 and 'mf' (mezzo-forte) for measure 14. The key signature is C minor.

A textural change clearly occurs in measure 14; the ascending and descending chromatic lines are suddenly exchanged with two trills played a semitone apart in the viola and cello.

Quotations of the di Lasso motive then follow soon after in the violins (see example 5.3). This

⁶⁶ Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 24.

⁶⁷ Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 24.

particular quotation (like the opening C minor chord) is similar to the one that begins the first movement; they both share the same chord progression of D -> C major (see m. 15). In measure 18, a variation/transposition of the BACH monogram can be seen in the second violin; if traced from the upper strand in retrograde, and then the lower strand retrograde, the contour is identical to that of the BACH monogram (Bb->A->C->B vs A->Ab->B->Bb, see example 4.4). This quotation is comparable to measures 5 and 6 of movement I.

EX. 5.3: Motivic comparisons, Movements I and III⁶⁸

Movement III, mm. 14-23

Movement I, mm. 1-10

In following the same overall development plan as the first movement, it is not necessarily surprising that the BACH motive of measures 18 and 19 is almost immediately followed by another statement of the DSCH motive. Additional statements of the BACH monogram are heard in the violin I part; the first is a strict retrograde in measure 25, and the second is a juxtaposed version

⁶⁸ Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 25.

found in measures 26 and 27. The DSCH motive then returns again in the viola in measure 27 (see example 5.4).

EX. 5.4: Movement III, measures 24-27; BACH monogram variations, DSCH motive⁶⁹

Further statements of the di Lasso theme return in measure 28. The first is another statement of the D -> C progression, while the second (in measure 32, stretto with entrances a tritone apart; (0167)) prepares a transition into another section of dissonant material (see example 5.5). Following a dramatic registral change in the first violin, the ensemble finally comes to a cadential point in measure 38, where a variation of the quotation from Beethoven's *Grosse Fugue Op. 133* (from movement I) is stated (see example 5.6). After a pause in measure 41, this quotation leads into an obscured version of the varied Beethoven monogram that served as the primary theme of the second movement, beginning in the viola line. The harmonic material of the second movement also returns here, as the supporting voices all clearly contain intervals of sevenths and some tritone leaps (0167) (see example 5.7).

⁶⁹ Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 25.

EX. 5.5: Movement III, measures 28-32; di Lasso motive⁷⁰

EX. 5.6: Movement III, measures 38-41; Beethoven's *Grosse Fugue* Quotation⁷¹

⁷⁰ Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 26.

⁷¹ Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 26.

EX. 5.7: Movement III, measures 38-46; Movement II theme (derived from Beethoven monogram)⁷²

The image displays a musical score for a string quartet, specifically Movement III, measures 38-46, and Movement II theme. The score is written for five staves (two violins, two violas, and a cello/bass). The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo is marked 'a tempo'. The score is divided into measures 38-46 and 43-46. Measures 38-46 are highlighted with a green box. The score includes dynamic markings such as *pp*, *sf*, *p*, *mp*, *mf*, and *f*. The score is numbered 7, 8, and 9. The key signature has one flat (B-flat).

Following the phrase of the Beethoven theme, the texture becomes much more reserved and less dramatic. After a phrase of the high violin line in measures 46-51, the original opening theme quietly emerges within the inner voices from a pizzicato texture in measure 53. This return to the original theme can nearly be seen as a return to an A section of sorts, as the overall stepwise contour intertwined with the occasional drastic leap begins to reemerge in measure 56 (see example 5.8). Another juxtaposed version of the BACH monogram is heard in measure 60, followed immediately

⁷² Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 26-27.

by a small portion of the di Lasso motive, effectively ending the phrase in measure 61 (see example 4.9), with the (0167) set heard from before.

EX. 5.8: Movement III, measures 46-55; altissimo violin, original theme returns⁷³

This musical score shows measures 46 through 55 of Movement III. The top staff, marked '47' at the beginning, features the altissimo violin part with dynamic markings of *ff*, *mp sub.*, and *p*. The bottom staves show the rest of the string quartet. A yellow box highlights a section in measure 51, which is marked with a '10' in a box and includes the instruction 'pizz.' (pizzicato).

EX. 5.9: Movement III, measures 60-61; juxtaposed BACH monogram, di Lasso theme⁷⁴

This musical score shows measures 60 and 61. Above the staves, the letters 'H C B A' are written in purple, and '(0167)' is written in blue. A purple box highlights the first part of measure 60, corresponding to the letters 'H C B A'. A blue box highlights the second part of measure 60 and the first part of measure 61, corresponding to the set '(0167)'. A yellow box highlights the second part of measure 61. The score includes dynamic markings of *mf*, *f*, and *ff*, and the instruction 'arco' in measure 61.

⁷³ Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 27.

⁷⁴ Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 28.

Following a brief pause in the first violin, a quotation of the *Grosse Fugue* material is reintroduced, now as a sparser pizzicato variation. Beginning in measure 65, these pizzicatos continue in the lower strings, now as harmonic double-stops, which serves as counter-material to the whole-note chords in the upper strings. Here, the harmonic material in the violins is suggestive of a variation of the original di Lasso monogram of movement I, due to the prolonged use of seventh and ninth intervals (which one might recall was a basis for the di Lasso monogram). It is therefore not surprising that a brief quotation of the di Lasso motive effectively ends the section in measure 75 (see example 5.10).

EX. 5.10: Movement III, measures 63-75; *Grosse Fugue* variation, di Lasso monogram/motive⁷⁵

⁷⁵ Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 28-29.

After a dramatic pause, Schnittke enters the concluding section of the quartet with material that has not been previously introduced; a series of dotted half-note chords form the basis of a grand crescendo of ten measures, with an expansion from double-stop thirds to double-stop fourths (contrary motion between violin I and cello) from mm. 76-85. The harmony (01368) reached at measure 82 is strikingly comparable to the one found in measures 15 and 16 (012357T) of the first movement (which coincidentally prepares the transition into the material that is comparable to the opening chord of the third movement) due to the common presence of minor seconds and fourths (see example 5.11).

Beginning in measure 86, Schnittke introduces the true conclusion of the entire work through a complex reminiscence of nearly every major motivic device we have seen thus far. The viola and second violin exchange the DSCH motive in measures 86-92. In the first violin, a pizzicato version of the second movement melody (Beethoven monogram) occurs. The original version of the Beethoven monogram (Movement I, mm. 15-16) then reappears in 93, which is then followed by a new version/statement of the di Lasso monogram in measures 95 and 96. In the final phrase, Schnittke concludes the work with the Beethoven monogram, di Lasso motive, and DSCH motive all embedded within the violin I line in measures 97-99 (see example 5.12). Schnittke's ability to synthesize and incorporate so many motives in such a detailed and comprehensive manner is what truly distinguishes his craft within the idea of polystylism.

EX. 5.11: Harmonic comparison, Movements I and III⁷⁶

Movement III, measures 84-85

This image shows a musical score for Movement III, measures 84-85. The score is written for a string quartet, with four staves. The first two staves are highlighted with a green rectangular box. The music is in treble clef and features a 'rall.' (rallentando) marking. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Movement I, measures 11-16

This image shows a musical score for Movement I, measures 11-16. The score is written for a string quartet, with four staves. Two sections are highlighted with colored boxes: a blue box labeled 'Orlando di Lasso Monogram' and a green box labeled 'Beethoven Monogram'. The 'Orlando di Lasso Monogram' section is marked 'mf' and features a complex, rhythmic melody. The 'Beethoven Monogram' section is marked 'f' and features a more complex, rhythmic melody. The score includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

⁷⁶ Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 30.

EX. 5.12: Movement III, mm. 84-101; Synthesis of various motives conclude the work⁷⁷

30

84

16

rall. - - a tempo

pizz.

pp sub.

pizz.

pp sub.

arco

p

pp sub.

90

17

accel. - - a tempo

arco

mp

f

pizz.

mp

f

arco

f

mp

96

pizz.

p

pp

morendo

morendo

morendo

⁷⁷ Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 30.

The final movement of Schnittke's *String Quartet No. 3* is therefore an effective conclusion to the work that synthesizes the motives of the various styles (Beethoven, di Lasso, Shostakovich, Bach) into a single unified polystylistic statement. The frequent references to material of previous movements further emphasizes this idea, and the "Pesante" movement thus successfully implements Schnittke's polystylistic vision.

VI. CONCLUSION

Alfred Schnittke's idea of polystylism is a result of his desire to break away from the musical norms of the past, and yet also comprehensively implement them. After transitioning through several stylistic phases, namely those such as neoromanticism and serialism during the 1950s and 1960s, Schnittke came to the conclusion that his unique style would be to synthesize and unify a multitude of styles, primarily through the principles of quotations and allusions of various stylistic musical periods. Although Schnittke's developmental process of polystylism occurred over the course of decades, the style (for Schnittke) reached its pinnacle in the 1980s. The *String Quartet No. 3* is therefore well-developed example of Schnittke's polystylistic aesthetic.

A. POLYSTYLISM IN THE STRING QUARTET NO. 3

As we have seen, the *String Quartet No. 3* makes great use of Schnittke's principle of quotation; the various motives of Bach, Beethoven, di Lasso, and Shostakovich are clearly revealed from the very beginning of the work. However, Schnittke's polystylism is multifaceted; as if merely stating these quotations is not enough, he also implements them in a variety of colors and textures. To succeed in this, Schnittke has introduced the motives at various pitch levels (such as the Beethoven motive in Movement II), as well as varying textural and phrasing aspects, such as changes in articulation (pizzicato, etc.), and augmentation (both rhythmically and harmonically, multiple clear examples of these techniques are seen throughout the work). In the first movement, Schnittke introduces the di Lasso theme within an imitative and somewhat canonic texture beginning in measure 27. In movement II, this same di Lasso motive is introduced again, but in an altered form; a far more rhythmically sparse version begins in measure 140 (see example 6.1).

EX 6.1: Polystylism of the di Lasso Motive, Movement I mm. 27-30 & Movement II mm. 139-149⁷⁸

The image displays two musical score excerpts from Schnittke's String Quartet No. 3. The top excerpt, measures 27-30, features four staves with the instruction "sul tasto, non vibr." and a box labeled "3". The bottom excerpt, measures 139-149, also features four staves with various markings including "p", "mp", and "(poco gliss. sempre)", and boxes labeled "13" and "139".

The other motives of Bach and Shostakovich are no less lacking in terms of motivic variety and implementation. Throughout the quartet, there are several instances of an altered quotation of these motives (be it transpositions, or retrograde/juxtaposed statements of the BACH and DSCH monograms (see example 6.2). Schnittke also makes great use of the intervallic nature and pitch

⁷⁸ Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 2, 14.

material of each individual motive. One might recall that the BACH motive was initially stated as an embedment within the quotation from Beethoven's *Grosse Fugue Op. 133*. With a prime form of (0123), it is not entirely surprising that Schnittke melds the BACH monogram into a statement of the DSCH motive, which, in its prime form, is (0134). These two motives naturally suggest a sense of intervallic expansion, and this is precisely what Schnittke does throughout the quartet to achieve his polystylistic vision.

To make his intentions unambiguously clear, Schnittke unifies his entire stylistic development with a grand fusion of the di Lasso, DSCH, and Beethoven motives into the final phrase of the work, effectively realizing the “polystylism” that he famously become known for (see example 6.3).

EX 6.2: Polystylistic Variations of the BACH and DSCH Motives

Original Statements, Movement I mm. 5-8⁷⁹

The image shows a musical score for Schnittke's String Quartet No. 3, Movement I, measures 5-8. The score is in 4/4 time and features four staves. A purple box highlights measures 5-6, labeled 'H C A B' in pink, representing the BACH motive. A red box highlights measures 7-8, labeled 'D S C H' in black, representing the DSCH motive. The score includes dynamic markings such as p, mp, mf, and f, and performance instructions like pizz. and arco. The bottom of the page shows the title 'Ludwig v. Beethoven - Quartett N. 16' and the DSCH motive 'D S C H'.

⁷⁹ Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 1.

(EX. 6.2 Continued)

Movement II, mm. 30-33⁸⁰

Retrograde/Juxtaposed/Transposed BACH Monogram
(2 3 0 1)(2 3 0 1)(23 0 1)

HCAB

Incomplete DSCH Monogram

D S C

Movement II, mm. 76-83; DSCH Motive embedded within harmonic texture⁸¹

D S C H

ord., vibr.

mp

mf

f

pp

ord., vibr.

mp

pp

VIM7 i6/4 V/F V4/3 I Gm:

⁸⁰ Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 8.

⁸¹ Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 11.

(EX. 6.2 Continued)

Movement II, mm. 233-236⁸²

18

233

(2 3 1 0)H C A B

D S C H

19

EX 6.3: Polystylistic Culmination of Beethoven, DSCH, and di Lasso Motives,

Movement III, mm. 96-101⁸³

96

pizz.

p

pp

morendo

morendo

morendo

⁸² Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 18.

⁸³ Schnittke, *String Quartet No. 3*, p. 29.

Schnittke therefore connects and expands the motives of di Lasso, Beethoven, Bach, and Shostakovich with great effect. If one traces the prime forms of these motives, beginning with the di Lasso in its original statement in measure 1 of movement I, and ending with the *Grosse Fuge* quotation beginning in measure 5, it becomes apparent that Schnittke's usage and placing of these particular motives naturally expands over time. Figure 2 below displays this sense of an expanding connection between the motives.

FIGURE 2 Connections and Expansions of Motivic Material						
Motivic Material	"Stabat Mater" (di Lasso)	J.S. Bach	Dmitri Shostakovich	Grosse Fuge Op. 133 (Beethoven)	Orlando di Lasso	Ludwig van Beethoven
Monogram		BACH	DSCH		ADDASS	DGABeHE
Pitch Content	F#-E-D (ex.)	Bb-A-C-B	D-Eb-C-B	Bb-B-Ab-G-C-A	A-D-D-Ab-Eb	D-G-A-Bb-(E-B)
Prime Form	(013)	(0123)	(0134)	(012345)	(0167)	(023459)
Intervallic Content	Major/Minor 2nds	Minor 2nds; descending 2 nd , ascending 3 rd , descending 2 nd	Minor 2nds, 3rds	Purely chromatic; minor 2nds	2nds, 4ths, Tritones, 7ths (inverted)	2nds, 3rds, 4ths, Tritones, 5ths, 7ths (inverted)

Elements of polystylism in the *String Quartet No. 3* are the essential aspect in understanding the work as a whole as well as Schnittke's identity as a composer. It remains one of his most exemplar works of his polystylism, and therefore largely worthy of study and appreciation in the realm of musical and stylistic developments throughout history.

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