

Purifying Through Failure, Uniting Through Defeat: Schnittke's Sonata Forms and Their Apocalyptic Structural Logic

*Purificando através do fracasso, unindo através da derrota: As formas de
sonata de Schnittke e a sua lógica estrutural apocalíptica*

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Abstract: In this article, we suggest that Schnittke creates imaginative paraphrases of sonata form which are concealed in the whole movements of his works and are supported by a network of reversals. By codifying common threads of thematic, functional, gestural, and developmental logics, in combination with theories which concern the sonata-tonality duet as well as the ideological reflections of pivotal patterns of modern western culture, we argue that the composer, driven by a fierce desire towards wholeness, creates a structural edifice which negates itself through an ambiguous language “where nothing is as it seems”. We use four case studies to suggest that, beyond Schnittke’s inherently representative aspects, imprints of ambiguity, stress, and failure are totally absorbed by the material, the processes, and structure themselves. Extreme heterogeneities provoke the sustainability of the sonata’s limits, setting crucial questions about preservation, renewal, continuity, and belonging. By discerning a thorough exploitation of the sonata’s two-and-three dimensional aspects as well as its narrative and dramatic potential, we support that the composer outlines a “reversed success-story” moving from Enlightenment’s drama to cultural trauma. The internalized ideological discontinuities and the violent externalizing of his predecessors’ techniques, filtered by Adorno’s musical aesthetics and the composer’s inner imperatives, reveal gaps that nurture cultural and ontological anxiety, alluding both to late capitalism’s and the Soviet regime’s antinomies. Following a path of agony, where “consonance is tested through increasing dissonance,” the ideological disillusionment gets inscribed on the sonata’s narrative and constitutional framework, where failure is sovereign in different levels, offering hermeneutic, ontological reflections as well as prophetic problematizations about the futural sounding world.

Keywords: Alfred Schnittke. Sonata Form. Theodor Adorno. Idea of Progress. Failure.



Resumo: Neste artigo sugerimos que Schnittke cria paráfrases imaginativas da forma sonata que são disfarçadas ao longo dos movimentos de suas obras e são apoiadas por uma rede de reversões. Através da codificação de linhas comuns de lógica temática, funcional, gestual e de desenvolvimento, em combinação com teorias sobre o par sonata-tonalidade, bem como sobre os reflexos ideológicos de padrões pivotais da cultura ocidental moderna, argumentamos que o compositor, impulsionado por um forte desejo de integralidade, cria um edifício estrutural que se nega através de uma linguagem ambígua, “onde nada é como parece ser”. Utilizamos quatro estudos de caso para sugerir que, para além dos aspectos intrinsecamente representativos de Schnittke, impressões de ambiguidade, *stress* e fracasso são totalmente absorvidas pelo material, pelos processos e pela própria estrutura. As heterogeneidades extremas geram a sustentação dos limites da sonata, estabelecendo questões cruciais sobre preservação, renovação, continuidade, e pertencimento. Ao discernir uma exploração minuciosa dos aspectos bidimensional e tridimensional da sonata, bem como de sua narrativa e potencial dramático, defendemos que o compositor esboça uma “história de sucesso invertida”, passando do drama do Iluminismo para o trauma cultural. As descontinuidades ideológicas internalizadas e a violenta externalização das técnicas dos seus antecessores, filtradas pela estética musical de Adorno e pelos imperativos interiores do compositor, revelam lacunas que alimentam a ansiedade cultural e ontológica, aludindo tanto às antinomias do capitalismo tardio como às do regime soviético. Seguindo um caminho de agonia, onde “a consonância é testada através de dissonâncias crescentes”, a desilusão ideológica fica inscrita na narrativa e na moldura constitutiva da sonata, onde o fracasso é soberano em diferentes níveis, oferecendo reflexões hermenêuticas, ontológicas, bem como problemáticas proféticas sobre o mundo sonoro do futuro.

Palavras-chave: Alfred Schnittke. Forma Sonata. Theodor Adorno. Ideia de Progresso. Fracasso.

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In this article, we suggest that Schnittke creates similar formal frameworks which embrace and control the unfolding of each work. These often produce rephrased sonata types which are narratively and structurally supported by a broad network of reversions. We intend to show how, through the total substitution of a sonata's thematic material, developmental techniques, and gestures, the composer structures a process of controlled disaster with identical characteristics. At the same time, it is argued that Schnittke creates new types of thematicism and functionality which substitute and renew the oppositional relationships of tonality. It is supported that, through thorough substitution, Schnittke creates a structural edifice which ultimately betrays itself, concluding in an apocalyptic (in Adorno's sense) failure. Fueled by the composer's expressionistic need of testing wholeness as meaning, validity, and truth, an unbreakable bond of material, process, form, and extra-musical dimensions leads

to an organic entity, and gradually assumes the qualities of a personal language which exists in an intermediate space 'where nothing is as it seems' We argue that the formation of reversed sonata types is fundamental to this language's transparent organization.

We focus on Schnittke's solo *concerti* from the third violin concerto (1978) onwards. Exceptionally, the beginnings of our conceptualization lie on the Concerto for Piano and Strings (1979). This continuous single-movement work follows a sonata form where Schnittke's "sonata logic" is explicitly outlined for the first—and last—time. From this work on the sonata's sections remain segmented and hidden within each work's particular movements. Features of sonata feeding both two- and three-dimensional aspects can be detected both macroscopically and microscopically, and are justified by such elements as: the sharing of the same main material, the adherence to stable developmental practices and models, the conjunction of ternary structure to acme shapes with analogous overall symmetries in combination with transitional and climaxing points in a continuous course of dramatic force.

Aiming to depict the ways that the composer exploits and apocalyptically reverses the sonata form, we combine theories on sonata form and tonality with a consideration of the ways that sociopolitical Western ideological patterns get absorbed by the structural logic and musical material, which are then eventually filtered by Adorno's musical aesthetics. To do so, we use four solo concertos as case studies where the internalized ideological discontinuities and the violent externalizing of his predecessors' techniques reveal gaps that express cultural stagnation and nurture ontological anxiety, fitting to bourgeois antinomies, communist regimes' disillusionment as well as to forthcoming worldly sonority. Failure is fostered in different compositional levels, acquiring additional contemporary hermeneutic reflections and ontological extensions within a dynamic course where the sonata's dramatic potential, according to Rosen, is fueled. A "reversed success-story" is constructed, turning from Enlightenment's drama to cultural trauma, which ends up elevated to an ontological mystical one, creating new states of purification.

To arrive at our conclusion, we present one by one the movements of Schnittke's works in correspondence to sonata sections and endeavor the codification of common, processes and techniques.

1. First Movements

The first movements function as a relatively short introduction and provide an effective re-engagement with traditional thematic material and tonality. Below, we discuss new types of thematicism and functionality which allow the first movements to act analogically to a sonata's exposition and fuel the compositional plot.

a. New Types of Thematicism

In Schnittke's first movements, a large spectrum of thematic structures is detected. Here we focus on the prevalent role of motif in Schnittke's work as we trace a common logic which often connects diverse thematic schemas. We suggest that he not only builds his thematic formations on combinations or enclosure of motivic cells, but he also chooses to confine themes themselves in the abbreviated form of motif. In those cases, the traditional thematic material is manipulated in two main complementary ways: it is linked to allusions or other types of musical borrowing and is generally reduced to minimal motivic formations, whose thematic function is reinforced by the implementation of common supportive means. Through a network of "complementary treatments" that submit to the main presuppositions of thematicism, motif is converted to "a complete, autonomous and recognizable entity that stands out from the compositional context, able to consist the main building-material for compositional structure and elaboration" (Zervos 1994, p. 57).¹ These treatments are related to the strong bond established between thematic-motifs and orchestration, texture, and dynamics. Such simple means partially derive from the composer's conception of the inherent symbolism of sound itself: "This symbolism is predetermined by the character of the sound. For example, a loud, harsh, sound is a natural elemental phenomenon, something that evokes fear and alarm [...] the same applies to another kind of sound that turns you on [...] or calms you down" (Schnittke 2002, p. 10). Furthermore, the occasional identification of thematic-motifs with monograms integrates their autonomy

¹ A theme in tonal music is understood as a "single melodic-rhythmic-harmonic unity", forming a self-sufficient and recognizable musical entity, which provides the main building material of each composition (Zervos, 1994, p. 57–58).

through the force of symbolism, while their incorporation in raw-series facilitates their developmental suitability.

Their identification as stylistic allusions and conventions plays a key role to the motifs' thematicisation. This practice is reinforced by the unique features of musical borrowing from contemporary sound material, of which Schnittke is fully aware, something which can be seen in his theoretical work as well. In his essay "The third movement of Berio's *Sinfonia*: Stylistic counterpoint, thematic and formal unity in context of polystylistics, broadening the concept of thematicism", he remarks on the unprecedented potential of contemporary musical material to convey "an intonational block with an enormous range of emotional, stylistic, and historical associations" (Schnittke 2002, p. 216). For Schnittke, the adornian concept of the "socially saturated material" (Padisson 1993, p. 93; Tsetsos 2012, p. 208) obtains extra qualities: The uprising sonic situation supersedes the "sedimentation of history", imprinted in musical material, and saturates it by novel types of techno-cultural-media sedimentations, characterized by new attributes such as brevity, ephemerality, sound-image-topos-senses relations etc. For Schnittke, the above activates the ability of awakening a vast variety of associations with instantaneous emotional accessibility, rendering types of borrowing adequate to support new forms of thematicism.

Schnittke's observation coincides with the phenomenon of "historical awareness of music", a term coined by Zofia Lissa in the same period of time (1973) (Lissa 1973, p. 18). It is connected to the emerging commercialized world of media and information, where a co-existing space of unending musical/cultural sounds of many origins and genres is being shaped. According to Lissa, thorough cultures are restricted to the form of information modules, functioning as codes of "manifold stereotypes": elemental music-stimuli capable of eliciting the listeners' automatic associative reflexes, by alluding to an unprecedented plethora of sources (epochs, places, situations, cultures, advertisements, images, etc.)

Schnittke thoroughly exploits these new qualities of the contemporary raw sound material, that allows the thematic shortening to motivic cells. Within them, their referential aspects and influential effects remain active. In this way he achieves maximum impact by implementing an extreme economy of means. This choice strengthens further his indispensable principles of economy and

organicism (Peterson 2002, p. 43) serving the merging and transformation of thematic-motifs' in the sections to follow. The confinement of a theme's referential capacity in the elementary and abstract formation of motif, results in a paradox: through abstraction, its generalization's ability and, consequently, its referential range, are increased. This solution neutralizes and purifies Schnittke's sources, which seem to occupy an intermediate space between plagiarism and authenticity. For example, the first theme of the Concerto for Piano and Strings (1979) (Ex. 1) consists of a twelve-tone row based on four triadic chords (Storch 2011, p. 53), which appear separated by pauses. The row itself becomes totally veiled by its intrinsic triadic arrangement (recalling a tonal landscape). At the same time, the general character of the triadic chords along with their serial treatment prevents from any narrow sense of "borrowing". Through such paradoxical means, Schnittke rests between "musical purity" and his own memory-scape.²



Example 1: Twelve-tone row based on triadic chords: G–E \flat –C–G \flat –C \flat –F–D–A–A \flat –D \flat –E–B), Concerto for Piano and Strings (1979)

In the choice itself of reducing thematic material into motivic cells a series of hermeneutics may be established. The under-fed themes bear an aspect of mourning: an ambivalent state between the desire and the inability to speak. Given the connection between the structure of language and the perception of the world, the inability to speak a (musical) language in Schnittke becomes an inability to communicate in a broad sense, thus raising issues of faith. Since "memorizing does not guarantee understanding" (Meyer 1994, p. 303) and since memory has been extensively linked to the constitution of self (Steinhauer 2021, p. 1), the reduction of allusive material to the bare bones of its referential ability

² This approach seems to be inspired by Alban Berg. It has been argued that Berg incorporated thirds within his rows, as he wished to embrace beloved musical kinds of his surroundings such as popular and film music (see Pople 1994, p. 79; and Bruhn 2016, p. 9). As we see below, Schnittke also adopts a Bergian logic concerning the motivic development.

not only puts forward issues of originality, historical continuity, as well as of linguistic egalitarianism and deconstruction, but mirrors an increasingly spread out, nonspiritual reality and alludes to the lacanian issue of homogenized identities.

Such a thematic treatment resembles to sketches on silence, indicating an effort to re-activate it in the form of a zero-point and of re-starting a quest for faith, through sonata's propulsive nature. The first theme of the Viola Concerto (1985) constitutes an example of that. Comprising eight bars, it is divided in two parts: mm. 1–4 include two intervals (a ninth and a seventh) and mm. 5–8 a downward semitone movement. The intervallic simplicity highlights the gestural, primordial, element of sound, which supports symbolic dimensions (Ex. 2) and deepens the starting point of the work.

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Example 2: First eight-bar theme, shaped by two characteristic motivic formations, Viola Concerto (1985) (mm. 1–8)

b. New Types of Functionality

The aforementioned thematicism is based on new types of contrast that provide novel types of functional interactions. Instead of harmonic areas, stylistic areas, made by allusions to multiple musical kinds as well as to idioms connected with different historical phases of Western classical music, are engaged. These produce stylistic conflictive relations which enhance the preservation of dissonance/consonance attributes of traditional tonality, and elevate harmonic dissonance to stylistic dissonance.

The origins of this practice are traced to the basic idea of his work *Quasi Una Sonata* (1968), which has been extensively discussed and analyzed (see Rice 1989; Cholopova 2002; Westwood 2002; Smirnov2002; and Fitzpatrick 2016). Grounded in Webern's conceptualization of sonata as the interaction between the rigid (fest) and the flexible (locker) Schnittke introduces two stylistic allusions, one of tonality (flexible) and one of atonality (rigid) to engage an antagonistic debate, appearing in the form of two single chords in-between of stretched pauses. These different idioms act as contrastive worlds fighting for domination, an aspect that supports their role as the main and the secondary key of a sonata's exposition. According to Schnittke himself,

We know that Webern understood the basic principle of sonata form as contrast between Strict and Free (fest und Locker). I thought that such contrast might also be possible between the Atonal and Tonal or Tonal and Serial [...]. I tried it out and seemed to me that a certain condition of music history was restated on a new level. (Perhaps the opposition of two styles can be experienced in a similar way to the interaction of two themes in a sonata form) (Fanning, 2006, p. 3).

The replacement of thematic/harmonic areas with motivic/stylistic ones will henceforth be central to the composer's logic. Through it, he will enrich and renew the notion of hierarchical interrelationships and restore functionality in a contemporary manner. In later phases, Schnittke arranges heterogeneous thematic material in a less conflicting manner. However he preserves the sense of instability which enhances the promotion of the work towards a 'solution'.

Silence plays an unusual role in backing functionality. Pauses which intervene between thematic-motivic elements offer important solutions, through their utter simplicity alone. Pauses encourage thematic-motivic discrimination and memorizing, a crucial precondition of thematicism. Furthermore, they prevent from a quasi-collage, paratactic display of the thematic-motifs. The composer activates pauses' "silent quality" and utilizes them as a reminder of an eternal inaudible field of sounds.³ Its presence adds a further mystical element of dubiety, which expands the sense of non-stability and reinforces functionality's main attribute in the exposition: the creation of a situation of instability and conflict. Thus, silence reinforces the creation of a "living space" around thematic-

³ The application of this kind of pause is characteristic of works such as the Violin Concerto No. 4, the Viola Concerto, and the Concerto for Piano and Strings.

motifs, substituting the notion of a “harmonic area” which correlates rather suggestively with their functional dimension. Long pauses contribute to the perception of the composition as an “eternally pre-existing territory”, in which pluralistic fragments arrive, claiming a (thematic) role, offering rich hermeneutic potential.

In the fourth violin concerto (Ex. 3), the first thematic motif, which derives from the monogram of the violinist Gidon Kremer (G–C–D–E), appears within a silent atmosphere and is completed amid pauses. The orchestration, the brevity of this thematic motif, and its nature as a monogram enhance its function as a birth of a sonic entity amid silence. This effect is also intense in the Viola Concerto discussed above (see Ex. 2). The beginning of this concerto can be associated to Peer Gynt's Prologue “into the world” (1987) (Weitzeman 1994, p. 13) as both works open with the succession of the same intervals: a ninth and a seventh. This treatment provides spatial, symbolic, and ontological effects. The octave seems to act as a sort of equilibrium which is undermined both by the desire to outstrip it (ninth) and the impotence to reach it (seventh). We suggest that the silent surroundings and the musical utterance amid pauses reinforce the sense of something that is both felt and known and at the same time remains unattainable. This connects with the “mystical element” which, according to Wittgenstein, is “the sense of the world as a confined whole” (Wittgenstein 1978, p. 130).

The musical score for Example 3 shows two staves: Bells and Piano. The Bells staff has a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. It contains two measures of music, each followed by a long pause. The Piano staff has a bass clef and a 4/4 time signature. It contains two measures of music, each followed by a long pause. The music is in 4/4 time and features a monogrammatic motif based on the letters G-C-D-E.

Example 3: First thematic motive, based on the monogram of Gidon Kremer's name, appears in between of pauses, Violin Concerto No. 4 (1984)/I (mm. 1–6)

Thus, despite the pluralistic referential effect, the choice of economic devices not only highlights a preference towards suggestiveness and abstraction, which give space to spirituality. This treatment of suggestive substitutions achieves the preservation of sonata form's dynamics. To quote Adorno's remark: “Composers now work in terms of ‘areas’, instead of themes and thematic

complexes [...]. the sonata and even more importantly the spirit of the sonata, has been exhausted” (Adorno apud Westwood 2002, p. 47). We support that Schnittke activates the fundamental elements of the thematic and functional attributes of the sonata form in order to preserve exactly its “spirit”, that allows the future to speak through the past and vice versa: The “spirit” infuses soul to the fragmentary sound reality, gives structure to discordant sounds and remobilizes meaning. Finally, we suggest that this spiritual, yet tangible and strict compositional mentality goes beyond the representative polyglots and calls for a broadening of polystylistics’ perception while it seems supportive to the recently coined term of metastylitics which reflects soviet metaspirtuality and postmodernity (Medic 2017, p. 322).

2. Intermediate Movements

Schnittke’s intermediate movement(s) corresponds to an extensive elaborative area identified with the development section of the discussed works. The introduced material is manipulated through certain procedures with similar characteristics, position, and role within the whole structure. Instead of a propulsive procedure towards stability (such as the return to the dominant key in the recapitulation), Schnittke’s developmental area corresponds to a series of elaborative disintegrational processes, chaotic climaxing procedures in conjunction with diverse reflections through stylistic changes. This deepening sequence of dissolution and decolorization, was initially codified by Alexander Ivashkin as “negative development”. Ivashkin connects this treatment with Shostakovich’s patterns, and interprets it as alignment to the principle of variation instead of alignment to the large-scale sectional logic which derives from traditional tonality. “Syntax is more and more eroded by morphology, by withdrawal into the depths of material itself, by the search of different point of views upon it-as it is used to be in the old variation form” (Ivashkin 1995, p. 265).

Ivashkin’s term encodes a large spectrum of erosional and exhausting manipulations. We explore this term by supporting that negative development draws further aspects of motivic manipulation and types of substitutional practices that owe their logic to two separate models of compositional thinking,

deriving from two composers that Schnittke recognized as his predecessors: Dmitri Shostakovich and Alban Berg.

Schnittke seems to follow Shostakovich's footsteps by adopting elements of his developmental technique and bringing them to the fore of his own music, making them more visible and intense. According to Yuriy Kholopov, Shostakovich often thoroughly exhausts the material's transformational possibilities in the exposition of his symphonic works. Subsequently, he seeks and develops "new effective means of contrast, an even higher form of dissonance" (Kholopov 1995, p. 69). By citing Shostakovich's Symphony no. 5 (1937) as an example, Kholopov continues:

Shostakovich's new solution as 20th-century composer consists of finding new effective means of contrast, an even higher order of dissonance. In the development section he now starts to place contrasted sound-layers one on top of another. The unity of the harmony in the vertical dimension is broken. The layers of Polyharmony dissonantly contradict one another, as if voices somehow are not listening to one another; in some places they even try to out-shout one another to see who can make the most noise. In places it becomes impossible to sense any tonality whatsoever. Supercharging the discordant mass of sound leads to a huge "proclamation" at the beginning of the recapitulation, where uncoordinated shouting lines suddenly merge into mighty unison (Kholopov 1995, p. 70).

This treatment is clearly discerned in many of Schnittke's compositions. The stratification of diverse repetitive patterns, in ostinato form, undertaken by specific instrumental groups that increasingly create a "supercharged mass" which results in catastrophic entropy or unison, is one of the main ways he organizes his material (compare Exs. 4 and 5).

Shostakovich's tradition is decisively merged with Berg's motivic elaborative processes, characterizing his total work since "Five Altenberg songs" (1912) admittedly revealing an ambiguous mentality which urged him to incorporating contrastive trends (Pople 1997, p. 23). In this piece (see Ex. 6), Berg creates a specific effect of "mixed sound without mixing" (Adorno 1968, p 66), realized through the repetitive quasi-ostinato treatment of elementary cells, which becomes horizontally punctuated in the form of gradually added parallel vocal lines. Each ostinato-motivic line is linked to a special orchestral group and sound-color, becoming discernible and less integrative. Berg's model is quite evident in Schnittke's practices, shaping the micro-scale of his own corrosive motivic treatments.

a tempo con tutta forza

Picc.
Fl.
Ob.
Cl. picc.
Cl.
Fag.
C-fag.
Cor.
Tr-be
Tr-ni
e
Tuba
Timp.
T-tam
Sil.
Archi

253

DSCH

Example 4: Shostakovich, Symphony No. 5/I (mm. 253–256)

Example 5: Violin Concerto No. 4/III (1984) (mm. 298–302)

Berg's technique, following "a predetermined tendency towards disintegration which extends to orchestration" (Adorno 1994, p. 66) in combination with Shostakovich's "deaf voices", acquires a renewed developmental force with extra-musical dimensions. In fact, the deaf parallel and repetitive vocal/motivic stratification is incarnated both in Berg's exceptionally elaborative, elusive, and less pictorial manners and in "Shostakovichian grandiose logic" constituting a common developmental logic. Schnittke detects this fundamental logic between the two composers, incorporating them combinatorially in his own work. In the second movement of the composer's third violin concerto, this logic is reinforced by techniques which intensify the chaotic sense (Ex. 7). At the same time, in the third and the fourth violin concertos, the merging of "deaf voices" into unison takes place.

Example 6: Disintegrative ostinato-like motivic lines in Alban Berg's *Five Orchestral Songs after Postcards by Peter Altenberg*, Op. 4 (1912) (mm. 15–16)

Example 7: Incoherent repetitive motivic lines, Violin Concerto No. 3/II (mm. 160–166)

We support that Schnittke maximizes the techniques of Shostakovich and Berg, in four main ways:

1. He links motivic cells not only to specific instruments but also to certain stylistic references.⁴
2. He applies an extremely expended *divisi*, resulting in his characteristically dense “Schnittkean Stretto” (Taruskin 2005, p. 418).
3. He uses indeterminate repetition (Stone 1980, p. 133) to magnify the chaotic and absurd effect.
4. He applies steadily a collapse-gesture, functioning as the peak of the previous chaotic treatments and as an end of a development section, which leads either to generalized orchestral unison, after both Berg’s and Shostakovich’s paradigm, or a cluster.

⁴ Alban Berg also uses allusive stylistic elements seamlessly in such works as the Violin Concerto (1935) and the Three pieces for orchestra (1913–1915). For example, Antony Pople has characterized the second movement of his Violin Concerto as a “Valse Pastiche” (Pople 1994, p. 54).

Along with these four practices, an additional developmental practice frequently completes the composer's developmental techniques, which we codify as "Polystylistic variations". These appear as a sequence of stylistic areas, in which the thematic material is reflected through various prisms. "Polystylistic variations" function as a necessary ingredient to bring about a completed material's wandering, deepening, and deconstruction. Following "dreamy-converting procedures" (Schnittke 1994, p. 96), stylistic areas substitute the harmonic areas and modify the main structural divisions of the section, they highlight the narrative approach of the sonata as an adventure, and offer modernization as well as immediate representational effects.

34

Pf. s.

19

p sub. molto rubato

VI. I

VI. II

Cb. s.

sul pont.

pp

pizz.

mp

H.S.1879

Example 8: "Jazz variation" based on the intervals of Bach's monogram, Concerto for Piano and Strings (1979) (mm.188-191)

This process is observed in overtly pluralistic as well as tonal-elusive works such as the Concerto for Piano and Strings (1979), Violin Concerto no. 4 (1984), or Viola Concerto (1985). In these works, the pre-described models of motivic decomposition and vocal stratification fall short of exhausting the developmental potential of the material. Stylistic territories are thus shaped, in which the material is imposed to a spiral process of stylistic deformation and metamorphosis,⁵ which allude to romantic developmental models as well as Russian variation (Zajaczowski 1987, p. 138). For example, in the Concerto for Piano and Strings, the main thematic material is mirrored through a series of stylistic areas, ranging from atonal, to valse and jazz sections. In the “jazz variation” (Ex. 8), orchestration, rhythmic, and melodic features, such as the use of Bach's monogram (BACH) are adapted to a jazz-like idiom and reflect the thematic material from a different point of view.

When the variation process within a stylistic section is completed, the composition proceeds either to a new stylistic area, to a new development section, or to a “collapse gesture”. Therefore, we discern a typical developmental sequence: Episode (stylistic area) – Erosion (bridge) – New episode (new stylistic area).

In such practices as “polystylistic variations” and motivic/vocal disintegrational networks, a potentially endless deepening into heterogeneous compositional elements, a quest for a common essence between uncommon elements is identified, realized in analyzable compositional techniques.

In summary, the dominant elements which support the intermediate-development section of Schnittke's works can be codified as follows:

1. motivic deconstructive processes;
2. linear (motivic/vocal) augmenting stratification;
3. “polystylistic variations”;
4. collapse-gestures.

⁵ “Spiral” is a term used by Schnittke himself in 1988 to describe a branch of his compositional approaches. (Makeleva; Zyppin 1994, p. 23).

Collapse-Gesture as Culmination and Transitional Point

Collapse is a common gesture that holds a fixed position in Schnittke's works. Through its repetitive appearance it acquires a representative dimension and meaning.⁶ It is connected to the end of the intermediate-development section and consists of the negative culmination of the disintegrational processes which precede it. Representing a climax of "maximum estrangement", a collapse reconfigures the sonata's acme shape in an expressionistic and catastrophic way. It reveals itself as a giant mass, a chaotic gesture shaped by repetitive elementary motivic cells, highlighted by a controlled indetermined notation. Simultaneously, huge crescendo, *divisi*, and *stretti* expanded to each instrument of the orchestra are utilized to achieve an effect of complete incoherence.

Despite its catastrophic sound effect, collapse bears aspects of redemption. As examined at the end of this article, this "explosion" resides between catastrophe and relief and serves as an important point of transition. As collapse

⁶ To codify meaning, we choose four different approaches which may function complementarily to each other. Firstly, we engage with Leonard Meyer's definition of style as a "system of probabilities". Probability is identified with the "expected" and, by default, with "normality" (Meyer 1994, p. 6). According to Meyer, (embodied) meaning arises through the appearance of unexpected musical stimuli within certain "systems of probability". These "improbable" stimuli awake reflexes towards new directions and at the same time they highlight the "probability system" as a recognizable context and as "normality". Secondly, we adopt the approaches of musicologists such as Charles Rosen, Christopher Ballantine, Peter Burkholder, and Robert P. Morgan (Morgan 1978, p. 78), who have dealt with the inherent extra-musical dimensions of borrowed material. Here, meaning is formed through the referential character of musical borrowing itself. This, in combination with the ways of the borrowed material's incorporation, shape the symbolic (Rosen 1980, p. 93) or the dialectic field (Ballantine 1979, 168) of the work. Thirdly, we embrace the notion of meaning, as it is reflected on the surficial and linear narrative dimension, mainly based on the sequential organization and the musical facts' unfolding. Theorists such as Lawrence Kramer and Susan McClary observe that, through the repetitive use of similar processes, forms of meaning become stabilized which are supported by the fact that key metanarratives of western mentality are perpetuated in the abstract musical form (McClary 1995). Finally, we use Adorno's notion about meaning in music, which arises through repetitive use, historical progress, and social saturation of material which is imprinted in form. Meaning, is exceptionally connected to "authenticity". It is identified with dimensions of dissonance which reveal social antinomies and seal the form in ways which reflect "the crisis of meaning" (Padisson 2006, p. 200; Adorno 1970, p. 264–265).

Concerning Schnittke's works, meaning results from a constellation of 1) the unexpected aspect which provokingly tests "systematic normality", 2) the extra-musical aspects of borrowed material, 3) the aspects of material's "social saturation" and "dissonant form", 4) these function supplementarily to each other and, when poured to the eloquent narrative sequence of sonata-form types, reveal dimensions of anxiety about music history culture and self.

crashes, it allows space for an enigmatic recapitulation, where the thematic material gets reconsidered under ambiguous prisms in-between massive defeat and unification. An instance of Schnittke's collapse gesture is found in his Concerto for Piano and Strings (Ex. 9).

Example 9: Collapse gesture in the Concerto for Piano and Strings (1979) (mm. 351–354)

3. Last Movements or “Lingering” in the Shade of Failure

In the last movements of Schnittke's works, the main thematic-motivic material reappears in its initial keys, often in a sequence similar to the expositional first movement,⁷ completing a cyclical course. Totally affected by the preceding development section, the thematic material reappears annihilated, bearing the marks of its previous adventures, and acquires the quality of sonata

⁷ Less frequently, extra elements are added, such as choral (third violin concerto and second violoncello concerto) or monograms (fourth violin concerto) as thematic episodes. At the same time, certain characteristic gestures, or fragments of motifs from the intermediate sections may appear in weakened forms of remembrance.

form's recapitulation. This exhaustion is represented through particular strategies which appear almost identical in the majority of Schnittke's last movements. It is mainly carried through by means of sparse orchestration, timbre, texture, low dynamics, slow tempo, as well as a specific use of register and sound effects associated with the solo instruments. Ex. 10 brings an instance of this procedure in the Finale of his Violin Concerto No. 4.

[illegible]

Example 10: Last bars of the Violin Concerto No. 4/IV: a “lingering” finale

To codify the above, we chose the word “lingering”, which is considered representative of the composer’s treatment and its extra-musical dimensions. By occupying a fixed position within the musical plot, “lingering” acquires narrative potentialities, crystallizing a “double-oriented meaning”: Looking backwards, it stands as the conclusion of a certain sonata sequence which is inseparably fused with the re-enlightenment of the thematic material, resulting in a re-evaluation

of the preceding procedures' worth. The form's endurance and validity in order to afford a unity of dissimilar elements and sustain new levels of dissonance is questioned. Simultaneously, a two-dimensional "forward-looking meaning" is shaped, functioning both as question mark, incarnating in musical terms Wittgenstein's urgent question "Now, how shall we go on?" (Wittgenstein apud Bauman 1997, p. 228) while flirting with glimpses towards spiritual exits.

Ordering and grouping the above, we trace a structure which resembles the three-dimensional framework of the sonata form's regulatory prototype:

1. Introduction of the main thematic-motivic material implicating a precarious state, which triggers the composition's unfolding.
2. Models of motivic disintegration and maximized stratification as well as "polystylistic variations" that shape combinatorially a set of entropic forces, meticulously organized in a chaotic way which leads to collapse.
3. Recapitulation of the main thematic-motivic material, which reappears in a decolorized way, leading to an ambiguous conclusion.

The repetition of similar structural rules and the engagement with similar technical devices concerning thematic, developmental, functional, as well as extra-musical parameters, result in formations of meaning. Meaning is reinforced by the immediacy of the representational aspect of the composer's style (Schmelz 2009, p. 12) which is linked to his conception that music is a "thought about the world in musical form" (Kholopova 2002, p. 63). Through a total substitution of elements and processes as well as through a decomposing route which reflects familiar attributes of the sonata, the composer creates a stressful state where "nothing is as it seems to be". Schnittke preserves the driving forces of tonality and creates microscopical and macroscopical levels of dissonance to reorder the sonic world in terms of "white noise which becomes a signifier of our civilization" (Aranovsky apud Medic 2008, p. 217), within a comprehensible structure. We suggest that Schnittkean forms get revitalized by residing in this intermediate space where "nothing is as it seems". This stands as a key to his choices: if sonata and tonality constitute an inseparable dyad ideally suitable to endorse and reproduce the great metanarratives and ideas of Enlightenment in musical procedures themselves, then, the self-negating versions of Schnittke's sonata forms obtain rich hermeneutic ramifications.

4. The Sonata as Ideological Echo: The Sonata-Tonality's Hermeneutic Approaches and Schnittke's Overall Formal Designs as Paraphrased Sonata Types

Investigating macroscopically Schnittke's structural route, one easily discerns a generalized three-section contrasting and continued framework which reflects the normative model of sonata form, organized in an acme shape with characteristic cornerstones. This framework encompasses the whole movements of the discussed works, reorganizing this well-known schema to a deconstructive narrative sequence that leads to defeat and vacillation.

Considering the catalytic influence of Philip Herschkowitz, who acted as a bridge between the unofficial soviet composers⁸ and the Vienna School, we assume that Schoenberg's structural thinking about this form influenced Schnittke's perception. Almost every aspect of Schoenberg's dealings with this form is discerned in Schnittke's organizational approach. The composer's macroscopical thought reveals a three-dimensional scheme based on the concept of contrast, thematically and structurally, as well as a passage from stability to modularity, with specific points of transition. Simultaneously, the openness of Schoenberg's thought, who repeatedly connects this "fixed design" to the "sensitive formal feeling of the artist" (Strang; Stein 1967, p. 213) and his imagination, as well as the unique value he attributes to the sonata as a "form of commanding position" due to "its extraordinary flexibility in accommodating the widest variety of musical ideas long or short, many or few, active or passive, in almost any combination", (Strang; Stein 1967, p. 213) echoes the treatment of sonata by Schnittke as a form of high respect and as an elastic concept able to

⁸ We adopt the term "unofficial composers", proposed by the musicologist Peter Schmelz. According to Schmelz, the "unofficial musical world spanned the long decade from Khrushchev's time in power to that of Brezhnev, running from mid 1950's [...] until late 1980's" (Schmelz 2009, p. 21). As "unofficial composers" are characterized those who were not subscribed, or quitted from the Composer's Union (official musical culture) such as Abrdei Volkonsky, Edison Denisov, Sofia Fubaidulina, Alfred Schnittke, Alemdar Karamanov, etc. They resided in a non-resistant, intermediate state of being, obeying to the ideal of making art for the sake of art. They were "oppositional but not directly, only musically" (Schmelz 2009, p. 67–68). They adopted "non-official musical techniques" such as dodecaphony and aleatory, to follow later their personal compositional paths. Finally, the strong bond between the unofficial composers, their performers, the particular concert venues and the audience created an increasing stream of interest and popularity both within and outside the Soviet Union.

incorporate imaginative personal elements, exploited in poetic paraphrastic ways. At the same time, in the legacy of soviet realism, the sonata never stopped being the paragon of morphological thought, where another bridge from Mahler to Shostakovich was formed, offering the composer an ideal "pattern of embracing his whole musical periphery" and enhancing a dialectic relationship spanning from the classic/romantic era up to the recent soviet past.

Although Schnittke seems to follow one three-dimensional preconceived structural model, his broad imaginative logic demands combinatorial theoretical approaches linked to the sonata form. These have resulted in a long-lasting debate concerning mainly its binary or three-dimensional aspects that have recently ended up to more inclusive contemporary approaches from Cook and Caplin to Hepokoski. We support that, by total substitution and reversion of material and processes, the composer achieves the "restructure of a banal form with simultaneous avoidance of it" (Schnittke 1994, p. 96) where two- and three-dimensional aspects are fully exploited.⁹

In Schnittke, binary aspects that generally correspond to the tonal design and the continued dynamic course, fueled by a "crisis point at the exposition" (especially since Beethoven's era; see Ratner 1970, p. 472–473) are totally supported by the means presented in the first section of the article which are mobilized through substitutional devices of functionality. Emphatically, the reduced thematic material, the primary focus on initiating a state of disharmony

⁹ According to theorists of the twentieth century such as Rosen and Rattle, the conception of the sonata as a binary form considers the harmonic factor as its most prominent feature and is mainly grounded on the two main cadences that take place in the overall sonata structure, as well as on its continual, non-segmented route and dramatic character that derive from the dynamic nature of functional tonality. The two main cadences formalize a succession of: I-V (exposition)/V-I (development-recapitulation). In exposition, a state of disharmony occurs that propels the compositional continuation towards development, mobilizing a craving for resolution served in turn by the recapitulation, which is elevated to the notion of an end as a gesture of re-appearance and resolution than mere re-exposition. Schenker provides an alternative reading of sonata form as a binary structure, an interrupted one, that supported the form's thematic layout organized as Exposition-Development (I-V¹¹) and Recapitulation (I-V-I). Such binary approaches have been presented in contrast to the three-sectional model of exposition-elaboration-recapitulation which mainly follows the thematic factor. The two- and three-dimensional approaches also concern issues of the sonata's chronological evolution and origins, which have been surpassed. Nowadays, theory, after forming a long catalogue of compositional examples, inclines to the amalgamation of the two approaches within a wide spectrum of types of this form, dealing with it as a space of broad potentiality rather than an ocellated framework with exceptions. See, selectively, Ratner 1980, p. 216; Rosen 1988, p. 9–10; and Hepokoski 2002, p. 97–98)

in the exposition, the extensiveness of the development section by combinatorial introduction, integration, renewing, and maximizing of diverse techniques and models, along with a recapitulation affected by the preceding processes of the development section, support the form's two-dimensional aspects.

Schnittke's sonatas endorse three-dimensional aspects in a similar manner. In his ternary structures, the division in three sections (organized as three different movements) is mainly linked to the thematic factor. Macroscopically, a contrastive form which glides from stability to mobility and stability again shapes a typical sequence in numerous of Schnittke's works, and produces one more reversal aspect: if the sonata is dealt as a genre (not as a form) then, the sequence of *tempi* of the work's movements is the opposite, reversing the fast-slow-fast arrangement to a slow-fast-slow one. The association of a quick tempo with the mobile, variative, and modular character of a development section stands as one more feature of the composer's handling of each formal section as a single movement.

At the same time, an acme shape controls the piece's power in a way which results in a deconstructive pyramid, made by a starting point (already alienated and torn out), disintegrational proceeding, culmination (collapse), and end (lingering), offers a schema which is harmoniously related to Rosen's approach of the sonata as "a dramatic structure in which exposition, contrast, and reexposition function as "opposition, intensification, and resolution" (Rosen 1988, p. 18), where the "intervallic dissonance" is elevated to "structural dissonance" (Ibid., p. 25). Through his contrastive continuity, formulating linear processes of beginning, gradation, peak, and end, Schnittke exploits the sonata's inherent dramatic and narrative potential, and enriches the notion of dissonance, with harmonic/stylistic/structural dimensions. Substituted thematic material, processes, gestures, and narrative course, all interconnect with the abstract interactivity of contrasted, elastic, and juxtaposing relationships of the consonance/dissonance complementarity of traditional tonality, revitalize the structure from within and prove that the composer deals with the sonata as a living concept rather than a stereotypical canonical structure or a form of the past.

Under this scope, Schnittke's solo concertos are conceptualized as a broad variety of sonata types, based on this form's imaginative paraphrases. The personalized character of the solo concerto, supported by the propulsive nature of sonata, acquires an additive feature of drama or martyrdom in which the

soloist acts as a protagonist. This phenomenon eliminates any "notion of distance" and delineates his solo concertos after 1978. "Distance elimination" leads to utterly expressionistic works, where the subject/object relationship, which will be dealt with below, obtains forceful qualities: The representative, programmatic, and theatrical aspects are absorbed by a vivid form where the drama-bearer (not storyteller) is the soloist himself. He/she seems to become an integral part of the sonata form's revitalization as if it was a drama unfolded in real time through the voice of the protagonist/martyr himself/herself. If "voice is a sound produced by something with a soul" (Aristotle 2003, p. 163) then the preservation of the "spirit" of the sonata form is completed by the infusion of soul through the "voice" of the soloist. The issue of "voice" in terms of sound-identity relation, as well as phonation as means of presence and praxis will be analyzed in the last section of the article.

Such facets of Schnittke's sonata types maintain contemporary and apocalyptic (in Adorno's sense) features. To examine them, we will present and combine a series of sovereign ideas as well as their incorporation to the material itself, placing especial focus on those that are correlated to the relationship between tonality and sonata.

In the last few decades it has been shown that the musical gestures and procedures themselves as well as the ways the material is organized, structured, and developed, mirror the social and ideological nexus that generate them. The sonata, related to the Enlightenment, Reason, and the French Revolution's emerging bourgeois attitudes, is thought to foster in its dynamic plot the same archetypal and pivotal Western ideological patterns. Here we discuss the Alterity Logic, the Heroic Quest Pattern, the Idea of Progress and the bourgeois Harmonious Whole.

The Logic of Alterity constitutes a branch of "Binary thinking" (Kramer 1995, p. 34), a fundamental element of Western "either/or mentality" (Samson 2008, p. 17) which gradually acquired ideological features, able to justify sociopolitical choices and practices. Alterity is based on a differentiating model between a superior, central, and global prototype and a number of imperfect, inferior individuals considered "others", which is also mirrored to a homogenized self-identity.

Aspects of Alterity are endorsed in the narrative archetype of Heroic Quest Pattern, the roots of which, according to Adorno and Horkheimer, can be

traced as early as in the *Odyssey*. A subject is provoked to confront and survive through numerous fatal facets in the form of otherness as temptation, magic, femininity, adventure, nature, to return self-realized and fully conscious. “The contrast between Enlightenment and Myth is represented by a Self that manages to survive and pass through the myriad turns of fate. The wandering from Troy to Ithaca corresponds to the path through the Myths that a self is challenged to follow, who is naturally weaker than the forces of nature, and can attain self-realization only through self-knowledge” (Adorno; Horkheimer 1944, p. 65)

According to Suzan McClary, “tonal music in general depends on a ‘narrative adventure away from and back to the tonic’ that must pass through and ultimately annex or ‘master’ an ‘alien terrain’” (McClary apud Kramer 1995, p. 36) thus functional tonality and sonata form consist of two complementary narrative schemes. The exposition of primary themes, the development section as adventurous wandering, and the recapitulation as return and domination, become representative of an archetypal hero who sets off on a quest, confronting a series of provocations in various forms of “otherness”, in order to come back self-conscious and self-realized. In the sonata’s historical context this hero is elevated to a bourgeois individual, provoked to “lose himself so as to find him again” and acquires the noble features of the Enlightenment ideals where “the hero’s entitlement is gained only at the cost of negation of all desires in favor of a complete, ecumenical and indivisible happiness.” (Adorno; Horkheimer 1944, p. 75)

Moreover, the great metanarrative of the Idea of Progress (Meyer 1994, p. 329), theorized as the main ideological fuel of Western civilization since the early modern era (1450), multi-dimensionally invigorated by the ideas of Enlightenment and Modernism and reevaluated by postmodern thought is reflected in sonata’s forward-looking motion, nurturing a “historical optimism” (Meyer 1994, p. 331). Through rationalization, humankind acquires control of its own fate, by mobilizing, dividing, and evolving the sectors of scientific, philosophical, artistic, and religious life, in order to create a global progressive motion towards ecumenical happiness. From the three main spheres of “objective Science, ecumenical Justice and autonomous Art” renewed faith is drawn, aiming at a gradual understanding of world and self, which will finally lead to universal prosperity (Habermas 1988, p. 90). The perception of time is affected and consequently the entire human experience and activity as well his perception of

self and world become affected. Deleuze codifies a time-dimension as "Chronos": "the actual, linear, succession of just in time production" (Deleuze 1994, p. 122) in conjunction to a future-oriented mentality engaged with Christian mentality (Meyer 1994, p. 321) further encouraged by the scientific, geographical discoveries, and technological advancements finds ideal residence in sonata form(s). For us, sonata's domination, dissemination, and long-lasting utility as a key reference to engage dialogue with, rest upon its ability to be a "time sculpture" of this time/self constitution.

The Sonata-Tonality dyad functions as a source that regenerates cultural ideas and antinomies perpetuated both in collective and individualized western consciousness, providing a commonly recognized musical platform of meanings. It endorses structurally and narratively the prescribed sovereign ideas, ideals, contradictory attitudes, and reproduces a specific sense of time, self and worldly interaction. Underneath its eloquent musical sequence, its processes narrate a "story of dominance", saturated by qualities such as difference, inequality, superiority, and hierarchy, through which the early modern Western civilization and the bourgeois period which followed, fueled a principal worldview which in effect translated a goal-oriented culture into a profit and conquest-oriented one.

Thus, we may divide the sonata form in a schema with two levels. At a superficial level, its dynamic course incorporates a positive mentality and mechanistic future-oriented temporality. In the end, a typical return to the main key, appears as a reward for the previous tortuous wandering, representing ideally the Idea of Progress, and simultaneously enriching the heroic quest pattern with noble features. However, at the internal level of harmonic/structural interrelationships, the alterity practices are incarnated. A story of violent domination emerges through interchangeable situations of stability and instability, of tension, stress, and solution incorporated in the functional and thematic processing. The contradictions between the superficial and structural aspects mirror the distance between ideology and practice, while the definite conclusion is not based on unity but on violent tactics of homogeneity, where "not a hint of difference is allowed to be remembered" (Fitsioris 2000, p. 144).

Bourgeois ideology seems to search an equilibrium between Western othering practices (Staszak 2008, p. 3) and Enlightenment ideals. Engaging with the immanently contradictory perception of a "harmonious whole", able to sustain and reconcile diverse individual parts by following higher global visions,

bourgeois culture nurtured crucial antinomies and formed a deceptive idea of universal freedom, control, and reason. According to philosopher Panagiotis Condyles,

Programmatic concern of bourgeois thinking was the constitution of its own worldview by a diversity of elements and forces that, separately observed (potentially) may stay in oppositional places between each other, brought together in order to constitute a “harmonic and law-abiding whole”, within which partial struggles and confrontations are removed according to the precepts of higher logical goals (Condyles 2000, p. 63).

In music, the idea of harmonious wholeness is represented by the principle of Organicism, conceived during the Romantic era and heightened by modernist mentality. According to Leonard Meyer,

Organicism posits that all the relationships through a work of art [...] should develop into an in-violable unity (a movement or a whole composition) and that the process of development should be governed by an inner necessity and an economy of means such that nothing in the work is either accidental or superfluous (Meyer 1994, p. 327).

The principle of Organicism is an ideal fit for the sonata form. Based on the logic of an inviolable “harmonious whole” which reflects the inherently violent practices embedded in Alterity tactics, sonata’s overall schemas seem to emerge through the equilibrium of dissonant antagonism, and it is no coincidence that their positivistic ends are increasingly saturated by meteoric attributes (Hepokoski 2001, p. 151–152; Fulas 2005, p. 235–236) aligned with the revelation of contradictory practices that undermine the uniting ideals.

The previous aspects are linked to Adorno’s concept of “object-subject relationship”. Adorno traces the success of an artwork in its “self-reflective character”, which enhances the disclosure of the “subject-object” antinomies, incorporating them in the structure itself. Starting as early as the late Classical era, Adorno discerns the “socially deceptive wholeness” internalized in Beethoven’s late works, where an innate impulse for truth becomes the key towards antinomies’ revealing.

The “late Beethoven’s demand for truth rejects the illusory appearance of the unity of subjective and objective, a concept practically at one with the classicist idea. A polarization results. Unity transcends into the fragmentary [...]. The gap between both becomes obvious and makes the impossibility of aesthetic harmony into the aesthetic content of the work; makes failure in a highest sense the measure of success (Padisson 2006, p. 218).

Below, we combine structural narrative and ideological tools to examine the features of Schnittke's reversal forms, attempting further hermeneutic approaches. We notice the ways Alterity, Hero Quest, bourgeois Harmonious Whole and the Idea of Progress are reflected in his structures and examine how the "subject/object relationship" formations provide new types of exit and meaning within his own times and perspective.

5. Schnittke's Reversal Logics: Using Dissonance as a Path to Consonance and Failure as a Path to Wholeness

Schnittke restructures a generalized sonata concept under conditions of failure. The stabilized developmental techniques of disintegration increasingly expose and unmask the incompatibility's attributes within a sonata framework which represents a model that challenges unity in various levels and meanings. In such a course, the maintained ideologies embodied in musical structure are questioned in the most obvious way possible, sonata being their highest musical expression. The heroic quest pattern is reversed: the thematic material gives in to defeat, while the lingering finale questions the worth of preceding adventures and reveals a crisis of meaning. The nature of sonata as a transcendental whole that houses and gives a role to the individual parts becomes thoroughly exploited. Provoked to sustain an extreme heterogeneity of differently oriented trends, and conducted by a dynamic desire towards holistic unity, its association to a "bourgeois harmonious whole" becomes immediately questioned. The ideal of wholeness as an objective, collective goal providing cultural meaning proves insufficient to contain and mobilize the individual parts, and results in a tensional "subject-object relationship", mirrored in structural cracks which turn the "harmonious whole" into a "disharmonious division".

The choice itself to implement the sonata framework is of utter importance, as its use is directly associated with historical tradition and sets crucial questions about preservation, renewal, continuity, and belonging. Furthermore, the sonata stands out as the natural choice for a composer who belongs to the great Soviet tradition and works under Shostakovich's sovereign influence. By externalizing its latent structural cracks, the composer embraces and advances his heritage, ending up in an overtly expressionistic and

ambiguous language by maximizing and transforming his predecessor's polyharmonic surfaces. At the same time, the sonata seems to be the most recognizable format in order to confront the pluralistic sound material of the present, which enhances eloquent re-organization and vivid representation of the composer's "musicophilosophical queries" (Ballantine 1979, p. 181).

Failure is internalized both on structural and narrative level. On the structural level, the aspects of a substituted functionality not only revitalize Schnittke's forms by the maintenance of their contrastive tensions but also play a fundamental role in "failure's absorption" in process and structure. We support that except for the reversion of the sonata's narrative course, the composer adds a new form of reversion by "turning the sonata upside down": the harmonic interrelationships, the sonata's inner propulsive network, break through the musical surface and regenerate structure in an apocalyptic way by sealing it with violent attributes of tensional relations grounded in dissonance. When fostered on the narrative compositional field, failure is linked to the musical sequence by fashioning an inverse story of success, where defeat is superimposed on progressive positivity and the personified themes acquire expressionistic qualities. Thus, on the narrative level, failure is shaped by the reversion of the sonata's positivistic sequence of musical facts. In the structural field, anxiety is fostered through disintegrative processes and renewed functional tensions that expand the notion of dissonance which seals the form.

Schnittke's reversed sonatas are entirely composed by a "personal" material. This derives from the composer's high task and belief that (every composer) must "he, himself find everything he does" (Schnmelz 2009, p. 245) motivated by transcendental laws of inner necessity and high objectivity. Sonata facilitates Schnittke to create multi-movement as single-movement works, which, through the use of repetition, obtain the qualities of an increasingly specific personal language. The logic of the sonata allows him to arrange his material in a way which connects him structurally and linguistically to the broader logic of an already existing vocabulary that "bears quantities of knowledge, that one has never been taught but already knows" similarly to oral language. (Bloom 1973, p. 63) We support that Schnittke preserves this inherent information, its "spirit" and expands it by his thorough and yet not visible re-orderings. His structure is dictated by elements the nature of which is often incompatible with the sound effect they provide and constitutes an apocalyptic compositional realm, an

intermediate space, where surrounding, historical, inner, and transcendental sound reality is reformed in the quest for new types of solution.

The reduced thematic-motifs are “socially saturated” and appear imprinted by the new aspects of musical polyglossia, produced by the coexistence of styles, idioms and techniques, combined with fragmentation, and are furthermore polluted by the combination of sound and image. The abbreviated formations act as musical sounds, decoupled from their origins, and thus their value as tools of communication is undermined. As such, they are reflective of the late Soviet regime, where words lose their ideological consistency and are repetitively cancelled by controversial practices. Therefore, the decreased thematic material, appears not only alienated from its initial context but also tired, marked by mistreatment and erosion: In the same way, words become deprived of meaning, thematic-motifs occur as sounds deprived of music, and appear in the beginning of the work already as motivic remnants. A series of crucial emerging issues can be glimpsed through such thematic manipulation.

First, that of a socially/musically saturated subconscious, occupied by a plethora of fragmented voices calling for attention, validity, or domination (Kramer 1995, p. 19). In the beginning of many of Schnittke's works, the arrival of a diversely mutilated thematic material seems correlated to the way that the “contemporary self” receives sounds as shattered information, and gradually acquires the qualities of what Cage named as an “omniattentive soul” (Morgan 1990, p. 327), shaping a saturated subconscious. Second, the alienated nature of the thematic elements, results in the constitution of noisy masses that acquire dimensions of a threatening reality beyond one's own choice and control. As “sound is never a private affair” (Labelle 2014b), Schnittke's “threatening sonic expansion” feeds extra levels of despair by stressing an uprising issue of “inner privacy” and, in our view, acts prophetically in terms of the following sound-power-technology relations. Concerning his era, the inner-sounding world, saturated itself, becomes incapable of providing shelter, abolishing thus the latent shelter of Modernism: the inner, private sphere where a creative escapism from oppressive realities transformed despair into authentic types of expression, is rendered inaccessible. Concerning contemporary issues, we trace dimensions linked to the politics of “prevention of accessing one's own thoughts” ranging from everyday life to sonic torture methods (Goodman 2009, p. 132; Cusick 2018, p. 285) as well as a designation of the passage “from music to sound” (Solomos

2020)—e.g., from the structure to noise, the abstraction of sound, as well as from pluralism to liquidation through the drift of high technology to the imperceptible (Baumann 2013, p. 7; Goodman 2009, p. 206).

As we have showed, in the development section, the implicative heterogeneity of the exposition is multiplied through divisional, erosive manipulations as well as stratification and practices based on the variation principle. The increasingly fragmenting tactics, interpreted as a struggle between “possessive sonic surroundings” as “voices” threatening to consume the individual, attains evidently political as well as nightmarish dimensions. This practice acts in the same way dreams do: the truth about mundane perceptions and memories emerges, through the apocalyptic reconstructions of everyday’s experiences resulting in a surrealistic, intolerable fusion. Compositionally, this truth becomes an agent of unveiling in manifold ways, underlining the composer’s anxiety about “his inability to talk with his own voice” (Griffiths 2010, p. 270). Voice’s metaphorical as well as literal qualities as identity, presence, and resistance bears exceptional importance.

As Dialogic theory has been far considered in relation to polystylistics and the unofficial composers of Schnittke’s generation, implementing Bakhtin’s phrase “we are full of responses” (Bakhtin 2014, p. 93) in Schnittke’s Babylonian edifice adds an extra aspect of imagining the inability of forming and uttering a deliberate response through one’s own voice as a metaphor for hell and imprisonment to non-existence. In Derridean terms: “if the voice were the metaphorical voice of consciousness, there would be much less in circulation. Only the voice that is perceptible sound and breath is capable of transferring an effect of living presence to the phonic sign, rendering it an animated signifier” (Derrida 226 apud Magnat 2021, p. 85). In an Arendtian view, the revelation of the real subject behind the praxis is inseparably connected to speech. Thus the vocal utterance forms a precondition for subject’s complete, responsible and free presence in the world, an attitude that heightens meaning. (Arendt 1958, p. 246. Born 2012, p. 177). Seen under the metaphor of voice, Schnittke’s sonata forms in combination with the solo-concerto genre complete each other. They revitalize the “dead letter” and reassure tradition’s sustainability and regeneration within the world beyond the duration of a single life (Arendt 1958, p. 233). Schnittkean massive orchestral sound renders the “concerto’s” initial meaning from a dialectic antagonism to an unequal battle between voices in the form of inner

pluralism or totalitarian and sonically fragmented reality where the soloist's "voice", implicates futural issues linked to sound immersion, self-coherence, echoic memory, and self-expression (voice) as identity, presence as well as resistance to sonorous colonization. Voice's linkage to soul and Schnittke's approach to sonata's "spirit", in the way showed before, offer a quasi-literal revitalization of form in terms of a real life impression, because of the ubiquitous (solo) voice's unfolding.

Moving from the private sphere of the vocally "occupied subconscious" to the public sphere of ideological patterns, the segmented pluralism's nightmarish reformations are also supported by a deconstructive narrative course which encourages a critical re-evaluation of the Metanarrative of Progress. This re-evaluation is incorporated in the developmental treatment as well as in the external compositional field, mirrored in the sequence of the musical facts and the thematic factor's manipulation. Schnittke values the dynamic linearity of the sonata form in a way that accurately reflects a type of defeat linked to cultural failure. After two world wars, colonization, racial, gender and political oppression the idea of progress is no longer sustainable. The composer from his own geo-historical point and ideological view adds his own seed of doubt which seems aligned to Meyer's codification of the conclusion of the modern era as the "end of historical optimism" (Meyer 1994, 332–3). He raises issues of incompatibility, stress, and dead-end, and calls for alternative, metaphysical exits.

Adhering to vast "dissonance's multiplying practices", diverse fragmented materials are being imposed to a seeming merging, constituting a scheme of spiral deepening and erosion. Such a treatment of multiplication results in division instead of constructive augmentation, being connected to fragmentation and subsequently to deconstruction. The deconstructive nature of *Multiplication-as-division* is not only an eloquent way to express anxiety about a de-oriented, deceptively positive culture, be it capitalist democratic or socialist. It also appears as a means of querying the elements' deep linking thread, which would immediately test and enhance consonance in the form of an ultimate immanent substance. However, the material itself, despite Schnittke's disintegrative processes, seems to resist it. Failure towards a common essence internalizes defeat in the material itself, reflecting stress towards new types of unification as representatives of a new sustainable objectivity, questioning the

possibility of attaining meaning. Finally, *Multiplication-as-division* stands for a hellish aspect which alludes to the idea of “Evil” in Schnittke’s work. Besides concepts extensively discussed linked to it, ranging from instrumental theater and orchestration (Kostakeva 2002, p. 21, Adamenco 2007 p. 158–163), idioms such as atonal and pop (Redepening, 2010 p. 74) to monograms (p. 127) and programs (Dixon 2010, p. 90), we notice a non-symbolic “Evil”, absorbed by abstract musical processes. In this form, it acts as Whitehead’s “eliminating feeling” which is “inoperative in the progressive constituting the unity of the subject” (Whitehead 1928, p. 24). It functions ambiguously as in our approach, it forms the path towards the common essence of musical material, thus towards unification, which implicates a Christian point of view of achieving purification through martyrdom. Such interpretations reinforce the naming of development as “negative” by Ivashkin entangling religious approaches to the contemporary self and world.

However, Schnittke’s catastrophic collapse-gesture, which serves as climax to the developmental procedures, appears as a double-coded confirmation of the consonance’s impossibility as well as its peculiar attainability. A type of consonance amounting to catastrophic dissonance substitutes the notion of unification. Unification is expressed in the form of total disorganization which follows the preceding catastrophic procedures, revealing an inability towards unity as common truth and meaning and a terrifying violent unity in the form of depersonalization and equation appears, which replaces the value of an “in-violable unity” and reveals the unsustainability of both the Idea of Progress and the Harmonious Whole. The decolorization of the unitary subject in the soviet regime is eloquently expressed while the deceptive nature of a symbiotic postmodern mentality is remarked upon. Thus, collapse acquires hermeneutic dimensions that concern both the contradictions of the soviet regime and the practices of late capitalism.

In addition, collapse functions as “exit” providing a sense of relief: if a solution cannot be offered through a higher consonance, then it must be gained through absolute disaster. A dimension of catharsis is thus engaged which attains qualities of differentiated redemption and completion. Collapse transforms the preceding procedures, it releases failure and sketches a common “defeat area”, which functions ambiguously as a “departure area”. Here, again, Schnittke constructs a reversed solution in the form of entropy which in fact is no solution

at all. However, the free creative space offers the possibility of a liberating expression, even in catastrophic form, provoking identification and consolation, linked to catharsis (Taruskin 2005, p. 403).

By examining the above, we return to the remark that each feature of Schnittke's forms "is not as it seems to be": The thematic material's referential range is augmented by its confinement. Multiplication and grading are based on decrease and division. The developmental procedures correspond to disintegration. Collapse is both catastrophe and relief. The end is equally exhaustion, ambiguity, and liberation. As an inseparable whole, the material processes and the sonata form itself seem revealed and hidden at the same time. By "not being what it seems" Schnittke's music reflects the antinomies of the decadent socialist environment, which are absorbed and exposed through his musical language itself.

We suggest that the use of sonata by Schnittke reveals also that time (in "chronos" form) is 'not as it seems' and uncovers different temporalities. For example, after the collapse crashes down, another type of time is revealed. Fragmented pieces of time in the form of motivic cells (sounds) corresponding to mediated, mundane and memorial synchronic aspects of time, accelerated through the futural motion of sonata's linear time, leave space for a rhythm of the world in herakleitean terms (Axellos 1976 p. 55–56) to be heard, or unveiling an inner mythological time (Adamenco 2007, p. 127) accessing an inner habitat (Arendt 2015, p. 17) or a "Cagean" unison of silence. In this way, we approach Schnittke's sonatas as paths from dissonance to consonance in two additive ways: As path from "social/subjective time" to cosmic time or, in Jungian terms, from personal to collective unconscious.¹⁰

Instead of building a "spiritual country" (Kostakeva 2002, p. 68) the composer through the extensive corrosive treatments accelerates and dissolves time in apocalyptic way. At this point we support that the composer amplifies the potential of the sonata's structural and dramatic features, shaping a permanent "crave for consonance through dissonance", consonance representing unification in various levels: unity through heterogeneity of material, unity

¹⁰ Schnittke's concept of Schattenwelt as a hyper sphere of musical and temporal co-existence as well as his appreciation and use of Jung's archetypes have been analyzed (e.g., Adamenco 2007, p. 158–163; Trimblais 2007; and Borchard 2002, p. 28).

through purification towards a common essence sought by developmental decaying practices, unity as consistent objectivity/truth or unity as one's domination, related to the end of the composition, unity as revelation of spatial temporalities. Sonata's familiar framework, by its predominant reiteration throughout history, incorporates a race towards unification, affirmation, and meaning, condemned to fail by the composer's own treatments, enhancing however the most overt apocalyptic and dramatic impact possible. This impact is achieved by his manipulation towards unity in such a way that the "whole is repetitively turning out to be untrue" (Göhr 2006, p. 222). The composer's fundamental desire for unity clashes with his imperatives for truth, and results in an organic network which negates itself by its own constitution: "I set down a beautiful chord on paper – and suddenly it rusts" (Ross 1992).

Permanently driven by the variously expressed challenges for truth-as-unity, ranging from inner necessity, to truth to self, to reality, to transcendental laws, to eternal spiritual impositions,¹¹ the composer repeats stubbornly a wager: the unifying of extreme contrasts in an overt and simultaneously in-violent way, craving for their unifying deep essence. In his sonata course, the consonance is elevated to the notion of unity, a test of cultural, personal, and spiritual limits in a quest for a new consistency. His "defeat manipulations" function as an apocalyptic deepening path toward social antinomies embodied in structure and material, highlighting the "crisis of meaning as negative", ending in failure. His self-denied intermediate space reveals the systematically sustained and concealed antinomies of his era through a structure sealed by the ambiguous nature of his language itself, redefining the "subject/object relationship" in contemporary terms. The fact that "nothing is at it seems" stands as proof of contradictory reflections absorbed by structure, functioning as the work's "self-reflection" as well, enhancing a series of processes that challenge meaningfulness. His forms attain aspects of a test of faith, touching upon a religious Dostoevskyan questions. In addition, the retelling of a dissonance-to-

¹¹ The idea(l) of truth is repetitively expressed by the composer, linked to different symbolisms and internal commitments. Some indicative pages where forms of truth emerge are: About truth and truth as unity/economy: see Schnittke, "From Schnittke's conversations with Alexander Ivashkin", Ivashkin ed. *A Schnittke Reader*, 10, 24. On truth as imperative of confluence with the world, see Ivashkin 1995, p. 254. On truth as a transcendental realm conceptualized as Schattenwelt by Schnittke, see Schnittke 1994, p. 88. And, on truth as high imperative and internal necessity in comparison to Schoenberg's idea, see Maniou 2015, p. 20.

consonance story of failure, brings about the ideal of unity-as-co-existence instead of domination. The idea of "unity as common essence" becomes doubly symbolical as co-existive democratization as well as a type of quest for ontological global roots.

Schnittke refuses to comply with a superficial use of traditional models by composing consolidating surfaces and insists on fragile authenticity (Adorno 1970, p. 264–265). He also denies the notion of choice itself, considering it as confinement to the shelter of a single style.—He also seems uninterested in renewing his relationship to the past through disguise, to quote Eco (Kamper 1988, p. 213). On the contrary, he insists on un-masking and dangerously exposing the inherent incompatibilities imprinted in the material itself, empowering the sonata framework to function again, motivated by a manifoldly revealing contemporary agony, constantly "interpreting darkness, instead of replacing it by a clarity of meaning" (Göhr 2006, p. 244). By internalizing agony, his structures reflect his "battle with the material as battle between himself and society" (Adorno 1958, p. 40) while traumatic failure serves Adorno's imperative for an apocalyptic, uncompromised art, which, after the horror of Auschwitz, has to "express the crisis of meaning as negative" resulting in "mutilated forms": "works that truthfully show the untruth of society are those that have dissonant or mutilated form. If 'dissonance shows the truth about harmony', then dissonant elements in society show the untruth of its apparent harmonious administration" (Adorno 1958, p. 110)

As his manipulations express sheer anxiety without even the hint of a reconciliatory or resurrective return to the traditional language of the past, Schnittke chooses innovation instead of mere restoration. Schnittke's sonatas function in a historically progressive way concerning both their socially saturated material and their dissonant structure. His exploitation and externalizing of his predecessors' techniques function in the same way that time externalizes deception. They act apocalyptically in terms of cultural meaning, of internalized contradictions, of time conceptualizations and they prelude the forthcoming global sonority. The re-introduction of a bare bones functionality and thematicism through the substitution of tonal interrelationships and elastic oppositional contrasts enhances the direct revelation of the inherent dominating ideological controversies through dissonant tactics and, at the same time, highlights music's nature as an immaterial nexus of relations which gets

informed by temporal, humanly vocal and sonic qualities of the future. Schnittke, through his continuous striving for unity, does not try to hide a nostalgic desire for the traditional musical past: However, by “making music for the world through confluence with the world” (Ivashkin 1995, p. 254) the composer manages to control completely his materials’ dissolution, remaining consistent to his contradictory internal impositions toward truth. By committing to an anxious quest for consonance and implementing increasingly dissonant procedures, Schnittke identifies material with ambiguous structure and a plot of defeat, achieving “synthesis through dissolution” (Padisson 1993, p. 171). As Schnittke converts failure into a unifying space for his heterogeneous and saturated material, he offers ambiguous glimpses to different types of realities. Due to such attributes, Schnittke’s sonatas get “saturated” by authenticity, composing an ambiguous sphere that speaks on behalf of itself.

To conclude, a final reversal aspect must be highlighted: a reversal course from saturation to purification. Thematic remnants, already saturated, become purer and more “original”, following a course from inauthenticity to originality enhanced by the composer’s processes. This adheres to a reversed course of the sonata’s thematic factor, which (in personalized “heroic quest” terms) starts off ignorant to return marked by his adventures at the end of the composition. Through exhaustive techniques, Schnittke converts failure into a unifying space for his heterogeneous and saturated material. His ternary forms attain a mystical dimension, since, through total dissolution, he endeavors to offer his thematic material back to its original sources, a bit humbler and united within a common field of defeat. Or, to put it differently, in a higher level where the previous procedures are not and never were that important. The path of purification from saturation to originality is an added, almost religious, element to his reversal sets. The socially saturated material ends up in a form closer to originality, a bit closer to nature than culture, closer to *Schattenwelt* than human dimension, functioning above all in a metaphysical level of de-personified common origins. An ambivalent catharsis is shaped, opening up a space for repetition in the form of the next composition.

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