Iwona Sowińska-Fruhtrunk

Difference and Repetition as the Aspects of Representation in Arnold Schoenberg's Variations for Orchestra Op. 31

Iwona Sowińska-Fruhtrunk

Academy of Music in Kraków

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Abstract

The article focuses on the issues of difference and repetition, as defined by Gilles Deleuze, and their possible application to Arnold Schoenberg's dodecaphonic work, *Variations for Orchestra* Op. 31. Although Schoenberg's reflection on these problems comes from the earlier years than Deleuze's, the correspondence of understanding the difference and repetition between them is striking. Two other terms by Deleuze and Guattari applied to the work are becoming and refrain. Repetition and refrain are associated with the representational moment in the work (motif B-A-C-H as a quote and as a type of refrain) while difference and becoming are associated with the anti-representational moment (dodecaphonic technique, *developing variation* technique, etc.).

Keywords

> Two impulses struggle with each other within man: the demand for repetition of pleasant stimuli, and the opposing desire for variety, for change, for a new stimulus. These two impulses often unite in one relatively common impulse characteristic of beasts of prey: the impulse to take possession. […] Faced with the dilemma, whether multiplicity of stimuli or innovation be preferable, the human intellect decided here, too, to take possession; it founded a system.[2]
>
> (Arnold Schoenberg)

For Arnold Schoenberg the years 1914–1923 were on the one hand the time of developing and shaping "the method of composing using twelve tones",[3] and on the other the time of limiting the artistic creativity. The break-out of World War I did not favour composing (the composer was twice called up into the Austrian army), and in the years 1917–1920 there was an increase of attention towards the "composition seminar" led by Schoenberg, so he had to spend much time on it. At that time the idea of the oratory *Die Jakobsleiter* also appeared, connected with the necessity to write a text inspired by religious-mystic and ethical considerations of the composer.[4] The first piece, in which the dodecaphonic method is being crystallised, is *Fünf Klavierstücke* Op. 23 from 1923. In October 1925 Schoenberg was appointed to be a professor of composition at the Prussian Academy of Arts in Berlin (replacing Ferruccio Busoni after his death); he was also a Senator of the Academy. Due to the health condition, the composer started the job only at the beginning of 1926, simultaneously preparing for the use of the dodecaphonic method on the ground of a huge orchestra

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[2]   A. Schoenberg, *Theory of Harmony*, trans. into English by R.E. Carter, Berkeley–Los Angeles 1983, p. 48.

[3]   Compare: L. Rognoni, *Wiedeńska szkoła muzyczna. Ekspresjonizm i dodekafonia*, trans. into Polish by H. Krzeczkowski, Kraków 1978, p. 88.

[4]   *Ibid.*

form. At the beginning, it was planned to choose *Passacaglia*, which finally was not completed; in the meantime, *Suite* Op. 29 was created and many sketches of variations, dated on May 1926.[5]

According to Therese Muxeneder, *Variations for Orchestra* Op. 31 were created in phases: the first phase (up to the fifth variation) was written without any disturbance, then there was a break until 1928 (devoted to the work on the text of *Der biblische Weg*, foreshadowing the theme of the opera *Moses und Aron*), finally the ultimate impulse to complete the composition was the commission made by Wilhelm Furtwängler.[6] *Variations* were finished on the 21th August 1928 during holidays in Roquebrune-Cap-Martin in France. Despite technical problems characteristic for the work, Furtwängler planned only three rehearsals, what caused that premiere of the work on the 2nd December 1928 in Berlin was a total disaster. *Variations* gained the recognition of the audience only at the performance in Frankfurt in February 1931, which was preceded by the author's introduction. During the Schoenberg's radio interview about the work, broadcasted soon after (in March 1931), as many as seventy musical examples were quoted, numerous references to the criteria of the understanding of coherence, musical logic and the explanation of the references to tradition also appeared.[7] In this context, Muxeneder pays attention to the following composer's auto-reflection:

Variations for Orchestra are doubtless proximate to a symphonic manner of writing […], the variations are like an album containing views of a place or landscape showing the individual aspects. But a symphony is like a panorama, where one could look separately at every picture, although in reality the pictures are firmly interlinked and meld into one another.[8]

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[5]   T. Muxeneder, *Variationen für Orchester [Variations for Orchestra] Op. 31 (1926–28)*, http://www.schoenberg.at/index.php/en/joomla-license-sp-1943310036/variationen-fuer-orchester-op-31-1926-1928 [accessed: 02.08.2017].

[6]   *Ibid.*

[7]   *Ibid.*

[8]   *Ibid.*

Deleuze's terms of repetition, difference and refrain

The significant element of philosophical reflection of the 19th century, among others in Søren Kierkegaard's thought, was the idea of repetition. In turn, it resulted in focusing on the term of difference and, further, going to the end of representation, even to the anti-representation, in the thought of the philosophers of the second half of the 20th century. The retreat from representation, begun by modernists, becomes also to be one of the landmarks of widely understood postmodernism, especially post-structuralism, e.g. in visionary philosophy of Gilles Deleuze (1925–1995). The key problem for Deleuze's thought is to reverse the metaphysical relation between identity and difference. The philosopher reckoned that due to domination (and obviousness) of identity, which attracts our attention at the beginning, we treat difference only as the opposition of identity, and not "the thing-in-itself". On the other hand, repetition from Deleuze's perspective has a paradoxical character. Tomasz Załuski explains that the situation of a perfect repetition is impossible because of the different "internal context" of the repetition and the original.[9] As the fact of repetition itself implies the presence of certain modification, the role of difference is realised. It could be thought that such an understanding of difference makes the representation conceptually impossible. However, the conclusion refers only to the representation understood as imitation, not as *mimesis*. The latter takes the act of creation for granted and does not require neither absolute nor even partial similarity to the original.

Re-interpretation of Deleuze's repetition has huge consequences. As Załuski notices:

> Deleuze does not call for giving up one, particular paradigm of repetition for another, but for more radical transition from paradigmatic view on repetition to the view, which should be called "a-paradigmatic".[10]

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[9] Orig. "Deleuze nie postuluje porzucenia jednego, określonego paradygmatu powtórzenia na rzecz innego, lecz bardziej radykalne przejście od paradygmatycznego ujęcia powtórzenia do ujęcia, które należałoby określić mianem „a-paradygmatycznego". T. Załuski, *Modernizm artystyczny i powtórzenie. Próba reinterpretacji*, Kraków 2012, p. 5.

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 25.

Another term, which was re-interpreted by Deleuze—together with radical psychoanalytic Félix Guattari—is refrain (*ritournelle*).[11] It is understood by the philosopher in the broad way, remaining mainly in the strict connection to the terms of territorialisation, deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation,[12] although the general understanding remains similar to the musical concept of refrain. Deleuze and Guattari wrote about *ritournelle* in the following way:

> […] [it] is territorial, a territorial assemblage. Bird songs: the bird sings to mark its territory. The Greek modes and Hindu rhythms are themselves territorial, provincial, regional. The refrain may assume other functions, amorous, professional or social, liturgical or cosmic: it always carries earth with it […].[13]

From the point of view of music, one more feature is important: "The refrain is rhythm and melody that have been territorialized because they have become expressive—and have become expressive because they are territorializing. We are not going in circles. What we wish to say is that there is a self-movement of expressive qualities".[14] Deleuze and Guattari distinguish territorial motifs (rhythmical faces of figures) and territorial counterpoints (melodic landscapes).[15] The authors also propose a classification of refrains:

> (1) territorial refrains that seek, mark, assemble a territory; (2) territorialized function refrains that assume a special function in the assemblage (the Lullaby that territorializes the child's slumber, the Lover's Refrain that territorializes the sexuality of the loved one, the Professional Refrain that territorializes trades and occupations, the Merchant Refrain that territorializes distribution and products); (3) the same, when they mark new assemblages, pass into new assemblages by means of deterritorialization-reterritorialization; (4) refrains that

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[11] G. Deleuze, F. Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. into English by Brian Masumi, Minnesota–London 1987.

[12] The term "territorialisation" refers to the territory as an area (*sensu largo*), which borders are marked not by its function, but expression. Deterritorialisation is leaving of a territory; reterritorialisation is a return to the territory after leaving it before. Compare: G. Deleuze, F. Guattari, *op. cit.*, *passim*.

[13] G. Deleuze, F. Guattari, *op. cit.*, p. 312.

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 317.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 317.

> collect or gather forces, either at the heart of the territory, or in order to go outside it (these are refrains of confrontation or departure that sometimes bring on a movement of absolute deterritorialization).[16]

Such an approach towards refrain carries an element or ritualism, also because of connecting it to the idea of circularity, the eternal return.[17] As the refrain as stabilizing and repeating element, the idea of representation becomes possible to use again.

Musical means of representation. Repetition, refrain and difference

Repetition and difference are means traditionally perceived in relation of opposition. What is more, as Jacques Derrida suggested, "Western metaphysics is a system functioning as blurring the difference",[18] dominated by repetition. The difference "is terrifying", because what is different "is rejected and thrown away into the sphere of strangeness".[19] Therefore, it is not about the opposition itself, that the way of understanding it—as introducing the element of strangeness, even hostility. Only in the 20th-century reinterpretation of these terms the difference was perceived as an individual, rightful quality, especially thanks to Deleuze's "pluralism" (known as empiricalism), doubting the dialectic thinking.[20] In musical analysis, still unifying, synthesizing elements are being paid more attention to than the ones that make difference and causing the masterpiece (or its fragments) to have individual and original relation with musical and non-musical reality. Michael Cherlin, enlisting such "analytical errors", indicated such issues as: 1) highlighting the role of opposition and contrasts in music in an insufficient and inadequately oriented way; 2) the synthesis unifying the oppositions as the aim of analysis; 3) a stubborn search for a moment of cadence, what diminishes the weight of chords leading

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16   *Ibid.*, pp. 326-327.
17   G. Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. into English by P. Patton, Bloomsbury, London-New York 1994, p. 8.
18   As cited in: B. Banasiak, *Bez różnicy*, [in:] G. Deleuze, *Różnica i powtórzenie*, trans. into Polish by B. Banasiak, K. Matuszewski, Warszawa 1997, p. 5.
19   *Ibid.*
20   *Ibid.*, p. 19.

to it.[21] In this way, methods that create or intensify the opposition in musical though are marginalized.

The act of repetition is a fundament of representation understood as re-representing, creating presence, connected with the act of creation. Repetition can also cause "non-repetition", which finds its theoretical background in the philosophy of difference discussed above, from Henri Bergson to Gilles Deleuze. On the other hand, difference, according to Deleuze, is the base for "becoming" (*devenir*), what means breaking any connections with the representation based on repetition. According to certain researchers (among others Dorothea Olkowski and Elisabeth Grosz),[22] in the thought of this philosopher "ruining the representation" took place, but others (e.g. Eric Prieto)[23] think that representation is such a fundamental element of any human activity that there is no escape from it.

In music, the model example of the fall of representation is frequently seen in dodecaphony. However, the charge of "mathematical abstraction", frequent for dodecaphonic works of Schoenberg, does not stand up to scrutiny after the close examination of his auto-reflection and ideas of his work. The issue is accurately summarized by Julian Johnson:

Music is never reducible to the level of abstraction exhibited by mathematics, in parts because it exists in material (audible) form, but mostly because the materials it deploys are historically shaped and resonant of material things. Abstraction in music is perhaps better understood not as the absence of material content but as a particular transformation of it.[24]

In Schoenberg's *Variations for Orchestra* the forms of series, mirror juxtapositions of hexachords or units-motifs of series, "play" by only few sounds of series and contrapuntal complications could suggest the level of representation of a *mimesis*-like, reflective character, whilst B-A-C-H

[21] M. Cherlin, *Dialectical Opposition in Schoenberg's Music and Thought*, "Music Theory Spectrum" 22 (2000), No. 2, p. 165.

[22] D. Olkowski, *Gilles Deleuze and the Ruin of Representation*, Berkeley 1999; E. Grosz, *Chaos, Territory, Art: Deleuze and the Framing of the Earth*, New York 2008.

[23] E. Prieto, *Deleuze, Music, and Modernist Mimesis*, https://www.academia.edu/580419/Deleuze_Music_and_Modernist_Mimesis [accessed: 12.03.2017]; *idem*, *Listening In: Music, Mind, and the Modernist Narrative*, London 2002.

[24] J. Johnson, *Webern and the Transformation of Nature*, Cambridge 1999, pp. 215–216.

motif, an interval of tritone and a perfect fifth—the level of representation of metaphoric-symbolic character. However, due to the extraordinary adequacy of variations as a form in the context of considerations over the repetition and difference, as well as due to the presence of the issue of repetitions and "variants" in the theoretical reflection of Schoenberg, we will focus on these terms in the further part of the article.

Variations for Orchestra have the form of nine variations with an introduction, theme and developed finale. Introduction and finale connect the whole cycle, somehow creating the trenary form, thanks to the presence of motif-quotation B-A-C-H and structurally important intervals: perfect fifth and tritone. In this way, three somehow independent sound-semantic layers are created: dodecaphonic series, quotation and dialectics of the intervals of tritone (as the first interval in series) and a perfect fifth. What is interesting, the starting point for nine variations is the serial theme (see example 1), and finale is the type of double variations, in which the preferential theme is B-A-C-H. The new motif also appears, for which the structural role is indicated by Marija Benič Zovko.[25] Most of variations (similarly to introduction and theme) have the ABA' form consisting of three parts. The presence of a minor second *b* flat–*a* foreshadows the B-A-C-H quotation; it is a type of the anticipation and at the same time "exposure" of a motif, which root is hidden in the theme itself. The interval of tritone is gradually evolving in the beginning motif of a theme, the gradual "developing" of the series takes place in the linear way (both in terms and in time). Bach's motif-cryptogram appears for the first time in the full form in bars 24–25, in the part of trombone I, marked as *pp dolce*.

The theme of variations consists of the whole tone-row, shown in the melodic, linear way, with the accompaniment in the part of cello solo, and then in first violin in the prime form, retrograde, inversion and retrograde inversion. As Hartmut Krones notices, the phrases of the theme can be ordered in episodes: five-tone, four-tone, three-tone etc.,[26] but the internal feeling indicates the mentioned three-part ABA' form. Another interpretation is also possible, following the forms of series: four episodes of alternate five and seven bars (example 1).

[25] M. Benič Zovko, *Twelve-Tone Technique and Its Forms: Variation Techniques of Arnold Schoenberg's "Variations for Orchestra" Op. 31*, "International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music" 38 (2007), No. 1, p. 44.

[26] H. Krones, *Arnold Schönberg*, Wien 2005, p. 98.

Ex. 1: A. Schoenberg, *Variations for Orchestra* Op. 31, bb. 34–57, the theme of variations. Source: A. Schoenberg, *Composition with Twelve Tones (1)*, [in:] *idem*, *Style and Idea*, Berkeley 2010, p. 236.[27]

The finale's length is almost a 1/3 of the whole work, and, as it has been signalised, it is a type of double variations: on the theme and B-A-C-H quotation, enriched by the local motif, specific for the finale.[28] It has three-part form: A (*Mäßig schnell*) B (*Grazioso*) C (*Presto*), in which part B and C have combinations of all motifs-themes. *Adagio*, appearing at the end of finale, is a quite nostalgic return of a theme. In the finale, the theme of variations is the *spiritus movens* of the variation technique—all three motifs are treated as themes of quasi-development.

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[27]   In all examples the score in C has been used.
[28]   M. Benič Zovko, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

Repetition and refrain as representation

1) Sound material

The theme of variation is formed by the dodecaphonic series in the main shape and its prime form and its transformations (retrograde inversion, retrograde, inversion). The main shape is constructed, as usually in Schoenberg's works, in the way, which indicates the inclination to use the intervals of tritone and minor second (example 2).

Ex. 2: The main shape of the series of *Variations for Orchestra* (in the frame). Source: A. Schoenberg, *Composition with Twelve Tones (1)*, [in:] *idem*, *Style and Idea*, Berkeley 2010, p. 236.

As Marija Benič Zovko notices, the theme as the main melody appears in variations: I, II, III, VIII, IX, and in variations IV, V, VI and VII as a part of accompaniment (especially in V, VI and VII it is "absorbed" by the sound material of the whole music).[29] According to Carl Dahlhaus, in these variations the theme is only "symbolised", and the same sound material gains a new meaning.[30]

In the opposition of Wolfgang Rihm's opinion that B-A-C-H cryptogram is not directly present in the series itself, its intervallic construction is worth presenting:

[29] *Ibid.*, pp. 44–45.
[30] C. Dahlhaus, *Arnold Schönberg, Variationen für Orchester, op. 31*, München 1968, p. 17.
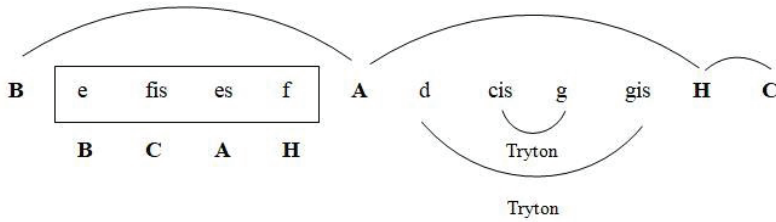
Table 1: Internal intervallic construction of the dodecaphonic series in *Variations for Orchestra* Op. 31 by Arnold Schoenberg. Prepared by the author.

What is also noticeable is the presence of perfect fifths: "in the middle" of series, on the cross of hexachords (*a–d* in inversion) and resulting of the second ones, from the first to the last, sounds of the series (*e–b*). In this form, there is a particular type of symmetry, which—although is not obvious—influences the construction of the whole cycle. Such an interpretation is legitimised by the claim of the composer himself about the musical space,[31] which makes it possible to consider the linear relations on the one hand and spacious on the other between sounds of the series. What is underlined is the circular character not only of the series, but also of the whole three-dimensional construction of idea and music: series, B-A-C-H motif and intervals of perfect fifths and tritone. Therefore, yet on the level of the prime form of the series there are two versions of a motif-quotation, two intervals of tritone and two perfect fifths. Such a simultaneous view on the variable (also from the perspective of symbolism) prime sound material provokes to consider the repetition and difference, as well as identity. The simultaneous consecutiveness of the series contributes to the specific play of times: flowing, suspended and condensed. The construction of the tone-row causes that new motifs can be created from it, of a differentiated and at the same time recognisable character. However, the spacious unification of a sound material remains the main advantage postulated by the composer.[32] Therefore, Schoenberg's

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[31]   A. Schoenberg, *Style and Idea*, Berkeley 2010, p. 220.
[32]   *Ibid.*, p. 244.

series is not identified with "sequencing", as Krzysztof Szwajgier wrote about dodecaphonic series.[33]

Introduction of *Variations* has *ostinato* character, for which the experience of stopping, suspending the time is typical (technique known yet from *Erwartung* Op. 17). It is worth mentioning that the archetype for the piece was the sketch of the work *Passacaglia for Orchestra*, working on which Schoenberg started in 1920. Ethan Haimo suggests that the model of passacaglia is characteristic for eight first variations.[34] The theme appears e.g. in the variation I as a type of *cantus firmus* (played by bass clarinet, bassoon and contrabassoon), in the variation II in the similar way, but in modified inversion (played by violin solo). Therefore, it appears in the one layer in unchanged form, and the second layer is the differentiated motivic material derived from the series. As Haimo notices, such a multidimensional (consisting of six elements) version of the series is also present in the variation V: tone-row appears there horizontally (in the part of bass clarinet and bassoons), but its elements are simultaneously matched vertically.[35] The basic intervals are minor second, major seventh and minor ninth. Cantilena theme of first and second violins is based on the *ostinato* cell built from minor seconds, resembling—according to Carl Dahlhaus[36]—more a B-A-C-H motif than the theme of the variations (example 3).

2) Polyphonic texture

The texture of the piece is polyphonic, especially in the spacious dimension (understood as the specific type of Schoenberg's *Klangfarbenmelodie*). Polyphonic technique refers not only to the elements derived from the dodecaphonic material, but also B-A-C-H motif and motif of tritone, which, thanks to this, gains certain independence. In the case of Schoenberg's polyphony, the question arises how much this type of technique is unifying and how much differentiating. Thanks to polyphony, various layers of the work can coexist in the way that does not question their identity (also symbolic). One of the rare examples

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[33] K. Szwajgier, *Webern, B-A-C-H, C-A-G-E i Czwórca*, [in:] *Muzyka w kontekście kultury*, M. Janicka-Słysz, T. Malecka, K. Szwajgier (eds.), 2001, p. 745.

[34] E. Haimo, *Variationen für Orchester, op. 31*, [in:] *Schönberg, Interpretationen seiner Werke*, G. Gruber (ed.), Wien 2002, p. 467.

[35] *Ibid.*, p. 476.

[36] C. Dahlhaus, *Arnold Schönberg…*, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

of the deviation of the rule of polyphony is motoric, *ostinato* variation VIII (example 4).

Ex. 3: A. Schoenberg, *Variations for Orchestra* Op. 31, variation V, bb. 178–180. In the frame there is a sound cell resembling B-A-C-H motif, and in circles— the consecutive tones of the theme of variations. All examples are published with the permission of Universal Edition Wien.

Ex. 4: A. Schoenberg, *Variations for Orchestra* Op. 31, variation VIII, bb. 262–273. The example of *ostinato*.

3) "Music in music"

The phenomenon of "music in music" was quite broadly discussed by Polish musicologists, for example during meetings in Baranów Sandomierski.[37] Mieczysław Tomaszewski, as one of the researchers discussing

[37] The author does not take the definition of "music in music" proposed by narratology into account; compare: K. Berger, *Diegesis and Mimesis: The Poetic Modes and the Matter of Artistic Presentation*, "The Journal of Musicology" 12 (1994), No. 4, p. 408.

the issue, pays attention to the foreground character of the relation, seen—in the metaphorical way—in thinking more by the category of interval than sound,[38] with the accentuation of the role of difference between the works. The author also notices the introduction of the field of tension "between what is given and taken and what is added, created individually".[39] In these tensions Tomaszewski sees primarily dialectic, oppositional element, visible e.g. in pairs: someone's—yours; primary—secondary; agreed, written—changing; improvisational, ancient—modern; far—close; belonging to the genre, type, style and form—belonging to the individual masterpiece.[40] On the contrary, Bohdan Pociej notices that if "music in music" is to exist, the total awareness of the composer is inevitable, so: "a) the awareness of two times: now and in the past, b) awareness of taking someone's material, c) awareness of self-attitude".[41] According to Regina Chłopicka, B-A-C-H motif (analysed in the context of *St Luke Passion* written by Krzysztof Penderecki) refers to the circle of the crucial values, the eternal and unchanging, mysterious and limitless.[42] Therefore, music does not only contain music, but also calls the symbolic sphere. B-A-C-H motif has the function of a direct quotation in the work, which is defined by Tomaszewski as "recalling in your own work someone's music, which is first—totally aware, second—totally evident, so made in the distinguished way, making the listener identify it easier, understand the aim and the sense of this quotation".[43] Krzysztof Szwajgier thinks that structure B-A-C-H is neither theme nor motif, but rather metaphor:

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[38] M. Tomaszewski, *Na otwarcie: dlaczego muzyka w muzyce*, [in:] *Spotkania muzyczne w Baranowie 1977. Muzyka w muzyce*, T. Malecka, L. Polony (eds.), Kraków 1980, pp. 23–24.

[39] Orig. "między tym, co dane i przejęte a tym, co dodane, wymyślone samodzielnie". *Ibid.*, p. 24.

[40] *Ibid.*

[41] Orig. "a) świadomość dwóch czasów—«teraz» i «niegdyś», b) świadomość brania «cudzego» materiału, c) świadomość własnej postawy". B. Pociej, *Bruckner—Mahler*, [in:] *Spotkania muzyczne w Baranowie 1977…, op. cit.*, p. 99.

[42] R. Chłopicka, *Tradycja gatunkowa w Pasji wg św. Łukasza Krzysztofa Pendereckiego*, [in:] *Spotkania muzyczne w Baranowie 1977…, op. cit.*, p. 193.

[43] Orig. "przytoczenie w utworze własnym muzyki cudzej dokonane po pierwsze—w pełni świadomie, po drugie zaś w pełni jawnie, czyli uczynione w sposób wyróżniony, ułatwiający słuchaczowi identyfikację oraz zrozumienie celu i sensu owego przytoczenia". M. Tomaszewski, *Muzyka Chopina na nowo odczytana. Studia i interpretacje*, Kraków 1996, p. 117.

Serialising, so series—it leads us to the structural thinking, characteristic for dodecaphonic and serial music. Series? Yes, if that scheme will be used in serial music. However, most of the settings of B-A-C-H theme is tonal and also—thematic.[44]

The choice of c h a r a c t e r i s t i c i n t e r v a l in constructing series is typical for Schoenberg's dodecaphony. As it has been shown before, the prime form of the series is penetrated by B-A-C-H motif thanks to the particular scheme of intervals. Therefore, the motif appears, in two ways: as a part of the original sound material and as a quotation, in known and recognisable form. And the presence of motif as "music in music" is precisely marked in the introduction and finale, but in variations it is used as a constructional element, so changeable (examples 5 and 6).

Ex. 5: A. Schoenberg, *Variations for Orchestra*, bb. 98-101. Permutations of B-A-C-H motif (in the part of flute I and bassoon I) and the interval of minor second (reminiscence of introduction), resembling the quotation of B-A-C-H (in the part of cello solo).

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[44] Orig. "Uszeregowanie, a więc szereg, czyli seria—kieruje nas to w stronę myślenia strukturalnego, właściwego dla muzyki dodekafonicznej i serialnej. Seria? Tak, jeśli układ ten zostanie użyty w technice seryjnej. Większość opracowań tematu B-A-C-H jest jednak tonalna i do tego—tematyczna". K. Szwajgier, *op. cit.*, pp. 745–746.

Ex. 6: A. Schoenberg, *Variations for Orchestra*, bb. 22–25. A first appearance of B-A-C-H motif in introduction.

Difference as anti-representation?

The base of the following considerations about the possibility to negate the representation through the term "difference" is the Gilles Deleuze's thought: "Difference can be internal, yet not conceptual".[45] The philosopher develops his thought: "There are internal differences which dramatise an Idea before representing an object. Difference here is internal to an Idea, even though it be external to the concept which represents an object".[46] This thought refers to Deleuze's term "virtuality" as unlimited potentiality. Only when it is actualized, both ideas and the events can exist in the concrete form. It would mean that the difference has a significant function yet on the virtual level and thanks to this the idea is finally shaped, opposite to Hegel's view on idea, according to which the concept and thing are the unity. Such defined difference is the introduction to consideration of relation of matter and form in music.

1) Matter and form

According to Deleuze, "form distinguishes itself from matter […], but not the converse, since distinction itself is a form".[47] The perfect difference is at the same time the biggest g e n r e d i f f e r e n c e (other than only a common difference or variety). As it, it is always a formal c a u s e.[48] Deleuze does not mean, obviously, musical genres, but the process of "distinguishing" is similar. In the case of dodecaphonic method, the moment of the pure difference is creating new, the unique series (in which dodecaphony differs from tonality) from virtual[49] sound matter. The, it is further differentiated through the form of a specific work. Therefore, both form and a specific, unique way of organisation of the sound material contribute to highlighting the difference. As Deleuze writes, difference resists, as the exception,[50] does not submit to the synthesis, generalisation. The philosopher refers to distinguishing rule from power—what gives power, is—in music—expression. Too

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[45]   G. Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, op. cit., p. 31.

[46]   *Ibid.*

[47]   *Ibid.*, p. 38.

[48]   *Ibid.*, pp. 42–43.

[49]   In Bergson's and Deleuze's meaning.

[50]   G. Deleuze, *op. cit.*, pp. 96–97.

general treatment of difference causes that it is always seen through representation; it is subject to mediation, similarly to the object itself. The representation in this understanding is even the way of use the series in the work, therefore catching the difference and its potential is important even on the level of material.

Difference is also what causes that the object cuts itself off from its ground. In *Variations* the "ground" can be series, but also theme, when considering how it "cuts" itself off in the variations from the "ground", and then returns to it. Benič Zovko aptly notices that the theme itself is the variation of the series.[51] The key elements are B-A-C-H motif (in the original form) and a perfect fifth (although it is difficult in perception in the further parts of the work). The differentiation results from the form of the work, but leaving the theme is underlined more that returning to it, what is connected with the favourite technique of Schoenberg—technique of "developing variation".[52]

2) Idea of "developing variation" (*entwickelnde Variation*) as a way of "becoming" (*devenir*)

"Music in music" has been discussed in the context of the quotation, but the form of variation itself is sometimes called "music in music".[53] In the case of Schoenberg's *Variations* we can talk rather about "becoming" than "circularity" (understood as a return, apotheosis of the theme at the end of the composition—here, apotheosis refers rather to the quotation). "Becoming" is, according to Deleuze and Guattari, the constant and dynamic process, in which shaped identity is momentary and leads to the next stage. "Becoming" understood in this way is somehow equal with the technique of "developing variation", called by Carl Dahlhaus as the idea of "developing variation", and—for the purpose of this analysis—the author proposes to call the technique of "progressive differentiation". In the subsequent variations the theme is becoming so far from the original through differentiation that its return seems to be rather a reminiscence, trace, relict than the constitutive and impulsive element of a structure. It should be remembered that theme

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[51] M. Benič Zovko, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

[52] Compare: M. Trzęsiok, [in:] *idem*, *Krzywe zwierciadło proroka. Rzecz o Księżycowym Pierrocie Arnolda Schönberga*, Katowice 2002, p. 36.

[53] *Dyskusja końcowa*, [in:] *Spotkania muzyczne w Baranowie 1977…*, *op. cit.*, p. 292.

is also a series, and it should be present in the whole sonic material. However, the composer suspends the rule formulated by himself (not for the last time) that any sound of series should be repeated before its whole appearance. Therefore, series in particular variations also cuts itself from its virtual "ground", favorites the difference. As Benič Zovko writes, the technique of "developing variation" provides the unity and coherence especially in these variations, in which theme was "absorbed" by sound material,[54] is not recognised by ear, only in the score. It corresponds with Deleuze's claim that the eternal return is existence, but only a existence of becoming: "Returning is […] the only identity, but also identity as a secondary power, identity of difference".[55]

The variation I is played *attacca* after the theme and sounds consonant-like because of the parallel thirds and tenths—the technique that comes—according to the composer—from the double counterpoint of tenths and elevenths, what allows to add parallel thirds to every voice.[56] In this regard, it is a type of the continuation of lyrical character of the theme, which appears there as *cantus firmus* (example 7).

The basic role of counterpoint in the work is the differentiation of lyrical theme through giving it both energetic and static character. In variation IV, theme is "surrounded" by the 4-part counterpoint, which—paradoxically—is in the foreground in terms of melody and expression, and is the *spiritus movens* of the whole fragment. Between voices of the counterpoint there is no hierarchy. On the other hand, the variation VII (one of the most developed, in metre 4/4) is the kind of sound impression resulting from the contrapuntal technique (in tempo *Langsam*, dynamics *pp* and *ppp*) and is generally played in high registers of the instruments. The indeterminate character of the timbre is additionally created through the variety of articulation (example 8).

The way in which the theme is "differentiated" in the following variations, consists not only of metrical, rhythm, agogic and dynamic changes, but also the mood derived from the type of expression and "tone".

[54] M. Benič Zovko, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

[55] G. Deleuze, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

[56] A. Schoenberg, *Style and Idea*, *op. cit.*, p. 237.

Ex. 7: A. Schoenberg, *Variations for Orchestra* Op. 31, bb. 58–60. *Cantus firmus* and double counterpoint.

Ex. 8: A. Schoenberg, *Variations for Orchestra* Op. 31, variation VII, bb. 238–239. A type of sound impression.

3) Three sound plateaus

Three sound plateaus—a tritone, perfect fifth and anticipation of the quotation B-A-C-H—coexist in the work somehow similarly to the palimpsest, in which what is older interweaves with what is newer. A tritone could be the representation of the symbol of dissonance, difference as a "different", "strange" element of music, also with the evil connotations (Fux's *diabolus in musica*). A perfect fifth is associated with the representation of nature—it was often identified with musical representation of Pythagorean harmony, perfection and at the same time the primary of the universe. On the other hand, B-A-C-H motif can be understood (not only in Schoenberg's work) as a representation of the sphere of culture, not only through evident reference to the persona of a famous composer, but also through the way in which it functions in semiosphere. The presence of these layers is dominant especially in the introduction and finale (so the elements creating the frame of the whole cycle), although the interval of a perfect fifth is not heard (example 9).

These layers confirm the spacious thinking and refer to Deleuze's version of the rhizomatic space. It implies the free movement in every direction and the lack of the spacious opposition, similarly to the view on Swedenborg's space, idealised by Schoenberg. It also rejects the presence of any centre; it is not hierarchic and homogeneous, although internally variable. It is more associated with the open form, but it is not its main aspect. The dodecaphonic series, through elimination of repetitions, implies the equal status of all sounds (what in the case of Schoenberg often remains only a theory), so, similarly to the Deleuze's concept, it makes prioritisation.

Ex. 9: A. Schoenberg, *Variations for Orchestra* Op. 31, introduction, bb. 5–12. Three plateaus in the introduction: a perfect fifth (in the part of horn, b. 5), a tritone (flutes, bass clarinet and harp, b. 7) and the first part of B-A-C-H motif (flute I, violin I, oboe I, bb. 9– 12).

Interpretation. Deleuze's concept of difference and repetition

Brian Hulse, discussing the issue of "usage" of Deleuze's concept of difference in music, pays special attention to the role of contrast and opposition[57]—two important aspects of Schoenberg's work in general. Deleuze himself thought that real opposition is not the maximum of difference, but the minimum of repetition. The difference exists as an opposition for itself, and not the "outside" (not only non-musical); it remains in constant movement, as a process of "becoming". Being subject to comparison (and it appears in every thinking by oppositions),[58] it loses a part of its independence. This is why it is so important that Schoenberg recalls Swedenborg's space in the context of dodecaphony. For example, as there is neither hierarchy nor privileging the direction, intervals should not be compared to each other. The free movement in all directions is also assumed by the term of refrain created by Deleuze and Guattari. Such a role is played in *Variations* by B-A-C-H motif, being a type of an anchor or harbor, mentioned by Tomaszewski, to which people run away or from which they come back.[59]

Dahlhaus notices that "developing variation" differs from motivic-thematic work mainly through the higher level of abstraction, which is allowed or even demanded by it.[60] The root of Schoenberg's musical idea is, according to the researcher, in the interval, and other elements (harmony, rhythm) serve only to the presentation of this idea—what does not mean that they are ignored.[61] Dahlhaus thinks that, for this reason, the real substance of Schoenberg's music, especially in dodecaphonic work, is diastematism. In the term "developing variation" the second word means the palpable aspect of compositional technique, and development is a form of aesthetic interpretation.[62] When the second motif arouses from the first one, and the third from the second one, it does not mean that that third and first motifs still

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[57] B. Hulse, *Thinking Musical Difference: Music Theory As Minor Science*, [in:] *Sounding the Virtual: Gilles Deleuze and the Theory and Philosophy of Music*, B. Hulse, N. Nesbitt (eds.), Burlington 2010, p. 25.

[58] As Deleuze wrote, for Aristotle "The greatest difference is always an opposition". *Vide*: G. Deleuze, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

[59] M. Tomaszewski, *Na otwarcie…*, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

[60] C. Dahlhaus, *Schoenberg and the New Music*, Cambridge 1990, p. 130.

[61] *Ibid.*, p. 131.

[62] *Ibid.*, p. 132.

have some common feature. It is the difference seen in opposition to organic concept of musical form, assuming the development from the one seed, which is possible to trace back in every moment. It is worth highlighting that the technique of "developing variation" was one of a few that the composer used for the rest of his life.[63]

Repetition and difference

According to Eugene W. Holland, two main problems of philosophical repetition are duration and *mimesis* (as an imitation).[64] Cyclical representation of time was typical for primitive and early religious societies, also for the sphere of myth.[65] In philosophy until the time of Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Derrida and Deleuze, the repetition never meant something new, but rather something static. Only the mentioned thinkers recognised repetition as the force, which simultaneously reproduce something and create the new thing.[66] Both for Derrida and for Deleuze the return of identical is theoretically impossible, because the fact of return of "the Same" already causes that it is different.[67] What is more, Derrida thinks that the concept of "original" is possible only because of the potential repetition, which "is between «re-representation» (so-called Platonic model) and pre-presentation […], doubts the «absolute» and «basic» terms of the «original» and «source»".[68]

The understanding of the role of repetition is the key for the interpretation of Schoenberg's work. For the composer "repetition is a structuring principle of coherence",[69] what means mainly setting the

[63] *Ibid.*, p. 88.

[64] E.W. Holland, *Deleuze and Guattari's A Thousand Plateaus*, London–New York 2014, pp. 3–30.

[65] *Ibid.*, p. 3.

[66] S. Gendron, *Repetition, Difference, and Knowledge in the Work of Samuel Beckett, Jacques Derrida, and Gilles Deleuze*, New York 2008, pp. 5–6.

[67] G. Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, op. cit., p. 27.

[68] Orig. "waha się pomiędzy «re-prezentacją» (tzw. modelem platońskim) i pre-prezentacją […], podaje w wątpliwość «absolutne» i «podstawowe» pojęcia «oryginału» i «źródła»". J. Derrida, *Głos i fenomen*, Wydawnictwo KR, Warszawa, 1997, p. 211.

[69] A. Schoenberg, *Coherence, Counterpoint, Instrumentation, Instruction in Form*, Lincoln 1994, p. 37.

rules of repetition of a musical motif.[70] The only way to recognize the combination of variants is to follow the rules of logic and understanding the musical form.[71] The basic condition of understanding is the memory, and the pre-requisite of memory—recognition. The memory is closely connected to the recollection, but recollection makes the past moment static, while the memory works in the synchronic way.

For Schoenberg "repetition is the initial stage in music's formal technique, and variation and development its higher developmental stages".[72] The composer gives the example of the rondo form, in which the musical thought, so the main theme of the rondo is repeated,

> but for a *different reason*: repetition is the only way to develop it, whereas in the poem the idea is developed by the strophes, which are not repeated. For it is *they* that prove the aptness of the refrain and give expression to its core of meaning: the fact that *different things* can be *equal*, *similar*, or *related*.[73]

Repetition in music—especially in variations—shows that different objects can be created from the one though development and changing, generating new figures.[74] "I define variation as changing a number of a unit's features, while preserving others",[75] wrote Schoenberg. Such a variation is the form of repetition and serves to achieve coherence. What the composer calls variants and "developing variations", is indeed the result of Deleuze's thinking through the pure difference. Schoenberg felt that the term of repetition understood in the general way does not fit his works, because it refers to the static feature.

Deleuze thinks that "repetition is not generality"[76] because generality has two orders: the quality order of similarities and quantity order of equivalents. Through generality the philosopher understands "point of

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[70] *Ibid.*, p. 36.

[71] A. Schoenberg, *Style and Idea*, *op. cit.*, pp. 102–103.

[72] *Ibid.*, p. 265.

[73] *Ibid.*, p. 266. It is worth noticing here that Schönberg distinguished the multiplicity of the rondo (known in the colloquial musical terminology as refrain) from the refrain in the literary form. It also highlights the positive character of the difference (equal, similar or connected), suggested in Deleuze's interpretation.

[74] *Ibid.*

[75] *Ibid.*, p. 287.

[76] G. Deleuze, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

view according to which one term may be exchanged or substituted for another".[77] On the contrary, repetition, as Deleuze writes, "is a necessary and justified conduct only with relation to that which cannot be replaced".[78] If the equivalent, substitute cannot be found, only repetition can be made (as in the case of B-A-C-H motif in *Variations*). It is the reason for such a strong relation between repetition and originality, and further with representation (especially understood as a reflex or echo). Similarly as there is no way to make a substitution of a soul,[79] there is no way to replace the essence of the (represented) work. Deleuze pays attention to the fact that repetition and similarity come from different orders: repetition can be "represented" through similarity, but still it will contain difference.[80] The philosopher actually criticises the rule of identity: all concepts can be subject to the pure difference of complex repetition. Repetition understood in this way is "the unconscious of representation".[81]

Bogdan Banasiak writes: "Thinking is […] the play of difference and repetition. Because of that, the traditional understanding of the subject as identical with *cogito* also must be converted, as the subject is constituted not by recognition but by the desire or flow of intensive multiplies".[82] Difference itself has unclear and changeable ontological status, because it remains in constant move and is converted. When it accomplishes its aim, it is not a difference anymore. Deleuze thought that Aristotle's inability to understand the difference without referring to identity underpinned the whole Western tradition of rational thinking.[83] This fact heavily influenced also the perceiving the representation. It was representation that enabled the similarity, identity and repetition to exist. Because of that, Deleuze's reflection is called a "ruin

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[77] *Ibid.*

[78] *Ibid.*

[79] *Ibid.*

[80] *Ibid.*

[81] *Ibid.*, p. 17.

[82] Orig. "Myślenie jest […] grą różnicy i powtórzenia. Z tego też względu tradycyjne rozumienie podmiotu jako identycznego z *cogito* również musi ulec przekształceniu, podmiot konstytuowany jest bowiem nie tyle przez poznanie, ile przez pożądanie lub przepływ intensywnych wielości". B. Banasiak, *Bez różnicy*, http://bb.ph-f.org/teksty/bb_bez_roznicy.pdf [accessed: 03.04.2017], p. 15.

[83] E. Prieto, *Deleuze, Music…*, *op. cit.*, pp. 7–8.

of representation".[84] However, as Eric Prieto notices, questioning the representation leads the philosopher (together with Félix Guattari) back to it with the through refrain.[85]

Refrain

It could be assumed that in the form of variation the theme cannot appear in the role of refrain (in philosophical, not musical understanding). It also happens in the case of Classical variations. However, in Schoenberg's work the collision of two opposite forces takes place: the theme being subject to "becoming" and quotation-theme as a kind of anchor, which does not allow the "real" theme of variation to unleash. What is interesting, B-A-C-H motif appears in long values, like *cantus firmus*, and in variations the main theme is presented in this way. Therefore, a certain constructive rule is visible here. Bogumiła Mika includes B-A-C-H motif in quotations-signatures of the function of index,[86] so appearing as intentional indication of the given composer. However, Mika unfortunately interprets this motif in Schoenberg's *Variations* as accidental,[87] what is contradictory with the analysis presented here. On the contrary, Krzysztof Szwajgier defines the symbolism of B-A-C-H motif (referring to *String quartet* Op. 28 written by Anton Webern) in the following way:

> The centripetal scheme of minor third, surrounded by minor seconds, is strongly saturated by the expressive symbolism. The condensation of this shape is comparable with—among 4-note themes—only with Beethoven's "motif of fate". Here the sadness, melancholy, regret, begging, crying, depression—these are categories, [which] should be recalled primarily, starting from musical allegories or the common experience. The whole in the natural way is divided into two parts, due

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[84] Compare the title of the work: D. Olkowski, *Gilles Deleuze and the Ruin of Representation*, Berkeley 1999.

[85] E. Prieto, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

[86] B. Mika, *Cytaty w muzyce polskiej XX wieku. Konteksty, fakty, interpretacje*, Katowice–Kraków 2008, p. 252.

[87] *Ibid.*, p. 253.

to this we receive the motif of question and request, which is the same (request). It is not the dialogue, but thoughts of the lonely person.[88]

It is interesting that in Schoenberg's work this motif is almost completely devoid of the expression of sadness and regret. The question arises if these aspects are immanent for the B-A-C-H motif, or they appear only in the individual context. What can be a hint is the fact that Schoenberg (contrary to Webern, according to Szwajgier) starts a dialogue with the past, which best example is the finale of variations. The nature of this dialogue refers to the three ways of the quotation's functioning in music, distinguished by Mieczysław Tomaszewski, among which *Variations* included firstly the situation of a quotation as the referential point for new music, secondly—the situation of enriching new music through the quotation (as an inclusive music).[89]

Such a way of functioning of the quotation is equal with the refrain in Deleuze and Guattari's interpretation. As Eric Prieto writes:

Deleuze and Guattari do not present music as an abstract, contentless, or non-representational art. On the contrary, they insist that all music has thematic content, of a kind that is indissociable from its form, but that is not different in any essential sense from the sorts of content found in literature. They identify this content with the refrain in music.[90]

The concept of refrain is what makes the representation possible. Deleuze and Guattari call him an eternal monster—understood as a cycle or circulation, finally as a moment of the greatest stability in the

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[88] Orig. "Dośrodkowy układ tercji małej, otoczonej dwiema małymi sekundami, jest silnie nasycony ekspresywną symboliką. Kondensacja tego ukształtowania porównywalna jest—wśród czterodźwiękowych tematów—jedynie z „motywem losu" Beethovena. Tutaj smutek, melancholia, wyraz żalu, błaganie, łkanie, przygnębienie—to kategorie, [które] należałoby przywołać przede wszystkim, czy to wychodząc od reguł alegorii muzycznych, czy też od powszechnego doświadczenia. Całość w sposób naturalny dzieli się na dwie części, przez co otrzymujemy motyw zapytania i odpowiedzi, która jest tym samym (zapytaniem). To nie dialog, lecz rozmyślanie człowieka samotnego". K. Szwajgier, *op. cit.*, p. 745.

[89] M. Tomaszewski, *Utwór muzyczny w perspektywie intertekstualnej*, [in:] *idem*, *Muzyka polska w perspektywie intertekstualnej. Studia i szkice*, Kraków 2005, p. 32.

[90] E. Prieto, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

song. Music, however, does everything to destabilize the refrain, "deter-ritorialise", because it limits the processes of musical transformation.

Variations for Orchestra Op. 31—conclusion

Schoenberg uses the B-A-C-H quotation as a motif that is repeated, but of a static nature (in introduction), which ensures it recognition even in the complicated texture. This motif appears to be a relic of an external world in the work, using the words of Mieczysław Tomaszewski.[91] On the contrary, in the finale of variations the motif holds the same structural function, not only associational. According to Deleuze, multiply means not to find an equivalent, so if something is irreplaceable, it can be only repeated. Louis Marin writes: "[…] quotation, through extracting certain text and placing it outside the system and locating to the other text belonging to the another system, was the final meeting of the mimetic or representing process".[92]

Indicating the form of variation, Schoenberg expressed his opinion on the topic of ambivalence of pure musical difference and repetition:

"Whatever happens in a piece of music is nothing but the endless re-shaping of a basic shape." Or, in other words, there is nothing in a piece of music but what comes from the theme, springs from it and can be traced back to it; to put it still more severely, nothing but the theme itself. Or, all the shapes appearing in a piece of music are *for-seen* in the "theme".[93]

Therefore, the theme serves as the starting point and contains the potential (virtual, as Deleuze would say) possibilities of "future rede-ployment of the elementary material".[94] Schoenberg uses three different elements in the introduction, creating the layers in the multidimen-sional space: perfect fifth (as a representation of "nature"), B-A-C-H

[91] M. Tomaszewski, *Utwór muzyczny jako refleks, odblask, relikt i echo rzeczywistości poza-dziełowej. Rekonesans*, "Teoria Muzyki. Studia, interpretacje, dokumentacje" 5 (2016), No. 8/9, p. 492.

[92] L. Marin, *Mimesis i opis albo ciekawość metody* [in:] *idem*, *O przedstawieniu*, trans. into Polish by P. Pieniążek, Gdańsk 2011, pp. 96–97.

[93] A. Schoenberg, *Style and Idea*, *op. cit.*, p. 290.

[94] *Ibid.*

motif (as a representation of a "culture") and the interval of tritone (as a representation of a "symbol"). The material of the work is dodeca-phonic and the series is the element that brings the difference. In the introduction we hear the repeated anticipation of thematic material. B-A-C-H motif and the theme of variations suggest the experience of "double time"—the anchor and movement simultaneously, different tempo, but in the unified flow. We get to know about anticipation when looking back, what remains in strict relation to Schoenberg's space as the unity and Deleuze's refrain—movement in every direction is possible. Therefore, the series appears both vertically and horizontally without favour of any dimension.

The characteristic features of *Variations for Orchestra* can be ana-lysed as simple oppositions: static—dynamic, symmetric—asymmetric, quotation—series, repetition—"evolutionary variation", so using the general scheme negative—positive. However, it would be equal with minimalisation of a difference. As Christopher Hasty writes, something, what is static, cannot represent the real experience.[95] Deleuze calls such a state "the image of thought", or, in other words, recognition. Thought and picture are like "the same" and "similar" in representa-tion. As Hasty writes, "Recognition—or, more generally, the Image of thought—gets things backwards by moving in the wrong direction, [...] as tracing the transcendental from the empirical".[96] It can be the reason for the impossibility to fully verbalise the concept of musical idea by Schoenberg. New, current experience (when it passes away) changes the virtuality, potentiality for the further experiences.[97]

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[95] C. Hasty, *The Image of Thought and Ideas of Music*, [in:] *Sounding the Virtual…*, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

[96] *Ibid.*, p. 7.

[97] *Ibid.*, p. 8.

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Oskar Łapeta

Uɴɪᴠᴇʀsɪᴛʏ ᴏғ Wᴀʀsᴀᴡ

Phonographic Realisations of the *Gothic Symphony* by Havergal Brian

Abstract

Havergal Brian's Symphony No. 1 in D minor (1919–1927), known as *Gothic Symphony*, is possibly one of the most demanding and difficult pieces in symphonic repertoire, the largest-scale symphony ever written, outdoing the most extreme demands of Mahler, Strauss and Schönberg. After the purely instrumental part 1, part 2 is a gigantic setting of *Te Deum*, inspired by the mighty Gothic cathedrals. This outstanding work has been performed only six times since its premiere in 1961, and has been recorded in studio only once. There are three existing phonographic realisations of this work. Two of them are live recordings made in England. The first of them comes from 1966, when the *Symphony* was recorded under the direction of Adrian Boult (it was released by the Testament label under catalogue number SBT2 1454) and the second one was made in 2011 under the baton of Martyn Brabbins (it was released in the same year under catalogue number CDA67971/2). The third recording, but the first one that has been available internationally, was made in Bratislava in 1989 under Ondrej Lenárd (it was first released by Marco Polo label in 1990, and later published by Naxos in

2004 under catalogue number 8.557418-19). Made with different orchestras and choirs, under very different sonic circumstances, they also differ considerably within interpretative ideas represented by conductors. They show Brian's work in different ways, illuminating this composition. Sadly, despite their efforts, the composer's output is still perceived as peripheral curiosity for connoisseurs.

Keywords

Havergal Brian, *Gothic Symphony*, Adrian Boult, Martyn Brabbins, Ondrej Lenárd

Havergal Brian's Symphony No. 1 in D minor, known rather as *Gothic Symphony*, is one of the most original and extraordinary works of the 20th century. The composition is exceptionally rarely played on concert stages—since the moment of finishing it in 1927, it was performed only six times, in years 1961–2011 (not including one studio recording). The reason for this are logistic problems caused by the great instrumentation of the piece, and, additionally, the long duration of the composition.[1] The performance of *Gothic Symphony* takes about 100 minutes, whilst in the case of the longest romantic symphonies (including such developed pieces as *Symphony No. 8* by Gustav Mahler or *Symphony No. 8* by Anton Bruckner), duration is usually no more than 80 minutes. Most of 19th-century symphonies (e.g. works of Tchaikovsky or Dvořák) are much shorter—their duration is about 45 minutes.

The author of *Gothic Symhony*, Havergal Brian, was born in 1876 in Stoke-on-Trent in Staffordshire county, in family from a working class. He belonged to the same generation of English composers as Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958), Gustav Holst (1874–1934), Joseph Holbrooke (1878–1958) or Frank Bridge (1879–1941). Despite Brian's outstanding creativity, his oeuvre was not recognized for a long time.

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[1] *Gothic Symphony* is present in *Guinness World Records* as "the longest symphony". The date of performed given there (1954) is wrong—the premiere of this work took place in 1961. *Vide*: http://www.guinnessworldrecords.com/ world-records/ longest-symphony/ [accessed: 8.07.2018].

Works of the composer were rarely performed by the outstanding conductors, such as Henry Wood, Thomas Beecham or Adrian Boult. However, the conflicting character of the composer combined with his reluctance to promote his own work placed him at the margin of English musical life. He earned for a living as a musical journalist and a copyist of scores. His oeuvre consists of five operas, three concerts, organ and piano pieces and numerous orchestral works (including concert overtures, symphonic poems and five orchestral suites). However, symphonies are in the centre of his heritage. The composer wrote thirty two pieces of this genre. Their catalogue begins with *Gothic Symhony*, and ends with *Symphony in A flat major*, finished in 1968, being at the same time the last work of 92-year-old composer. The artist died in 1972 in Shoreham-by-Sea in Sussex county at the age of ninety six years. The memory of his music is cultivated by The Havergal Brian Society, active since 1974.[2] The small recognition of the composer in Poland is seen through the fact that the article devoted to him appeared as late as in the supplement to the first volume of *Encyklopedia Muzyczna PWM* in 1998.[3]

Gothic Symphony was being written in years 1919–1927. This monumental work consists of six parts. The beginning three are instrumental, next—the setting of a hymn *Te Deum* — require also the participation of two choirs and four soloists. The set of the composition is as follows:

1. *Allegro assai* (284 bars)

2. *Lento espressivo e solenne* (145 bars)

3. *Vivace* (393 bars)

4. *Te Deum laudamus* (433 bars)

5. *Judex crederis esse venturus* (331 bars)

6. *Te ergo quaesumus* (765 bars)

The instrumentation of *Gothic Symphony* was presented in table 1.

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[2] All information about the composer and his oeuvre, as well as bibliography and discography devoted to him is gathered by the website of the Society: http://www.havergalbrian.org/ [accessed: 8.07.2018].

[3] J. Wiśnios, *Brian Havergal*, [in:] *Encyklopedia muzyczna PWM. Część biograficzna. Suplement*, E. Dziębowska (ed.), Vol. 1 (*AB*), Kraków 1998, p. 70.

Family of instruments	Parts I–III	Parts IV–VI
Woodwinds	2 piccolos (1 also flute) 3 flutes (1 also alto flute) 2 oboes oboe d'amore cor anglais bass oboe Eb clarinet 2 Bb clarinets basset horn bass clarinet 3 bassoons contrabassoon	2 piccolos (1 also flute) 6 flutes (1 also alto flute) 4 oboes oboe d'amore (also oboe) bass oboe (also oboe) 2 Eb clarinets (1 also Bb clarinet) 4 Bb clarinets 2 basset horns 2 bass clarinets contrabass clarinet 3 bassoons 2 contrabassoons
Brass	6 horns Eb cornet 4 trumpets bass trumpet 3 tenor trombones Tuba	8 horns 2 Eb cornets 4 trumpets bass trumpet 3 tenor trombones bass trombone contrabass trombone 2 euphoniums 2 tubas
Percussion	tambourine cymbals tam-tam triangle	2 tambourines 6 cymbals tam-tam thunder machine tubular bells chimes chains 2 triangles birdscare

Percussion	2 sets of timpani glockenspiel xylophone bass drum snare drum	2 sets of timpani glockenspiel xylophone 2 bass drums 3 snare drums long drum
Keyboards	organ celesta	Organ celesta
Strings	16 first violins 16 second violins 12 violas 10 cellos 8 double basses 2 harps	20 first violins 20 second violins 16 violas 14 cellos 12 double basses 2 harps
Soloists	-	Soprano alto tenor baritone
Choirs	-	mixed choir *ad libitum* (approx. 500 performers) children's choir *ad libitum* (approx. 100 performers)
Offstage instruments	-	8 horns 8 trumpets 8 tenor trombones 8 tubas 4 sets of timpani

Table 1: Instrumentation of *Gothic Symphony*.

There are not only many instruments and voices needed to perform *Gothic Symphony*, but also it requires instruments, which are very rare in symphonic orchestra, like basset horn, oboe d'amore, bass clarinet or bass trombone. Even instrumental parts require a huge number of performers, and it increases significantly in vocal-instrumental parts, for almost every group of instruments. Together, a performance of the work requires the cooperation of circa 700 musicians.[4] Moreover, the third and fourth parts are played *attacca*, what means that at the moment of the beginning of the concert all performers should be on stage.

The musical language used by the composer in this composition sometimes refers to the Romantic tradition. Waving ending of the slow part II, written for trombone and tube, conjures up a memory of instrumentation of Richard Wagner's *Siegfried*, especially fragments devoted to Fafner. In the motoric beginning of the part III, Bruckner's influence can be seen. On the other hand, the use of four wind orchestras behind the scene refers strictly to spatial effects used in Hector Berlioz's *Requiem*. On the contrary, there are many fragments characterised by a bright timbre, with the rich use of percussion section, of a sharp, aggressive character, highlighted by the dissonant harmony. An interesting example is the part III, in which the composer gave the especially demanding task to the performer of xylophone part. The texture is usually dense, and massive, orchestral *tutti* with the use of both groups of wind instruments are frequent. Exceptions include for instance theme II of the part I, introduced by violin solo in D flat major, march for clarinets in the part VI or extraordinarily originally instrumented ending if this part, using six sets of timpani, bass drums and snare drums. Choral parts are characterized by a dense polyphonic texture and the multitude of episodes for *a cappella* choir. The beginning of the part V—*Judex*—is also interesting, with episodes written so densely that they create cluster-like, dissonant effects.

In terms of the form, in instrumental parts some analogies with the traditional form of a symphony can be found. Part I is based on two themes, contrasting in expression, in which way the composer refers to the sonata form. *Lento* has the function of a slow movement, and *Vivace*—of scherzo. At the end of this part, there is a gradual reduction of volume, what prepares the listener for *attacca* entrance of the part IV,

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4   Such a number is given by The Havergal Brian Society; *vide*: http://www.haver-galbrian. org/works/symphony-1.php [accessed: 8.07.2018].

in which there is lack of audible culminations. The expressive culmination, with the use of all instruments in *fff*, finishes the part V—*Judex. Te ergo quaesumus* has a loose and episodic form, sometimes associated with the earlier parts, and it finishes in dynamics *pp* in E major key, when the choir intonates *a cappella* the last words of the hymn—"non confundar in aeternum".

The composition was published in 1932 by the publisher Cranz in Leipzig. Brian dedicated it to Richard Strauss, with whom he corresponded vividly at that time. In the letter to English composer from the 13th January 1933, the author of *Elektra* called *Gothic Symphony* a "wonderful masterpiece", wishing it a quick premiere and recognition.[5] The composer put the quotation from Johann Wolfgang Goethe's *Faust*: as a motto of the work: "He who strives with all his might, that man we can redeem".[6] *Gothic Symphony* meant a lot to the composer. In the letter to his friend, the composer Granville Bantock,[7] Briad said: "This work has been inside my head for a lifetime, and naturally there is inside it all those who have been very dear to me, who helped me and moulded me".[8]

Despite this, the composer kept the fact of writing such a huge and significant work in secret until the moment of finishing the first three parts in 1923.[9] He also did not admit that he wanted to finish the piece and add *Te Deum* to it. In the letters to friends written at that time he claimed that *Gothic Symphony* was fully finished.[10]

Brian's *Symphony No. 1*, due to its instrumentation and duration, is often compared with *Symphony No. 8* by Gustav Mahler. Both pieces are also connected by inspiration by Johann Wolfgang Goethe's *Faust*. However, there is no evidence that during the creation of *Gothic Symphony* the composer knew the work of the Austrian composer

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[5] *Vide*: M. MacDonald, [without title], [booklet in:] H. Brian, *Symphony No. 1 "The Gothic"* [CD], dir. A. Boult, Testament 2009.

[6] M. MacDonald, *Brian as Faust*, http://www.havergalbrian.org/articles/sym1_12.php [accessed: 8.07.2018].

[7] Granville Bantock (1868–1946) was an English composer writing works with colourful orchestration in Neoromantic style. His oeuvre consists of four operas, four symphonies, six symphonic poems and numerous choral, orchestral and piano works.

[8] The letter from 27.06.1926; as cited in: K. Eastough, *Havergal Brian: The Making of the Composer*, London 1976, p. 256.

[9] *Ibid.*, pp. 259–260.

[10] Compare: the letter to Grancille Bantock from 12.11.1924, [in:] *ibid.*, p. 252.

or was inspired by him.[11] The researchers indicate that the potential sources of inspiration were Ludwig van Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9 in D minor* and Hector Berlioz's *Grande Messe der Morts*, as Brian especially valued this composer.[12] Parallels are clear—both artists were fascinated by Baroque richness of orchestration, monumentalism of form and instrumentation, and a frequent use of the spatial texture.

In the search for sources of inspirations for *Gothic Symphony*, autobiographic contexts are precious. In 1887 11-year-old Brian took part—as a choir singer—in the festivities of fifty years anniversary of the Queen Victoria reign. The festivities took place in the cathedral in Lichfield in Staffordshire county, and the work performed during them was probably *Te Deum* written by Prince Albert. Brian admitted that the concert impressed him very much and hugely encouraged him to create his own composition. In the text *How the "Gothic Symphony" Came to Be Written* from 1938 the composer wrote: "I retained an impression of something on a vast scale".[13] What was equally significant was the artist's dream from 1909, "the most extraordinary and vivid dream I've ever experienced".[14] During the dream, the composer was in a German town and spent most of his time, glaring at the huge Gothic cathedral.[15] However, the most surprising stimulus and inspiration to create the work discussed here was the view of the strip of chalk mounts South Downs in South East England. As the artist wrote:

> I can think of nothing more mentally invigorating than gazing at miles of freshly made ploughed furrows, uniform and symmetrical, glistening purple red in the autumn morning light, unbroken by

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[11] Mahler's *Symphony No. 8* was performed in England for the first time in 1930 under Henry Wood. Brian became more interested in the Austrian composer's work only at this time. He also wrote the essay devoted to *Symphony No. 8*. *Vide*: H. Brian, *Gustav Mahler's Eighth Symphony*, "Musical Opinion", March 1930.

[12] *Vide*: J. Schaarwächter, *Beethoven, Berlioz, Brian (or Three Bs and more): Influences on One British Symphony and Beyond*, http://www.havergalbrian.org/articles/threebs.php [accessed: 8.07.2018].

[13] H. Brian, *How the "Gothic Symphony" Came to Be Written*, "The Modern Mystic and Monthly Science Review" 1938, No. 2/11; as cited in: M. MacDonald, *Brian as Faust*, http://www.havergalbrian.org/articles/sym1_12.php [accessed: 8.07.2018].

[14] *Ibid.*

[15] The composer, fascinated by the German culture, many times wanted to visit this country, but the obstacle was his obsessive fear of travelling. *Vide*: K. Eastough, *op. cit.*, p. 275.

a single hedge, over the vast rolling downs. This I have always felt to be the pivot of the *Gothic* Symphony.[16]

One of the reasons for which Brian's works were so rarely performed was the obsessive fear of the composer that the potential performer could lose the scores. The score of *Gothic Symphony* interested Henry Wood yet in 1924,[17] as he wanted to perform three first parts even before *Te Deum* was written. The obstacle was the tour of the artist through the United States.[18] The conductor again said to be interested by the piece in 1927, when it was fully finished. This time, the composer himself opposed to perform the composition, as two days after lending the score he went to Wood and categorically asked for its return.[19] Brian felt strong fear when other people had autographs of his pieces. It sounded like an irony of fate that the composer, who often worked as a copyist, did not have means to have his own composition copied.

Finally, the premiere of *Gothic Symphony* took place on the 24th June 1961 at Central Hall Westminster in London, thirty four years after finishing the composition. It was a half-professional performance, in which two orchestras participated—Polyphonia Symphony Orchestra and wind ensemble Royal Military School of Music, as well as four choirs—London Philharmonic Choir, Kingsway Choral Society, London Orpheus Choir and Hendon Grammar School Choir.[20] The performance was conducted by the Australian conductor Bryan Fairfax (1925–2014), specializing in discovering less known composers. In gratitude for it Brian dedicated him his *Symphony No, 18*, created at that time.

The first professional performance took place on the 30th October 1966 in Royal Albert Hall, where the piece was led by the doyen of English conductors, Adrian Boult (1889-1983). The performance made Brian famous and was the biggest triumph in the life of 90-year-old composer. Then, performances took place in: 1978 (Victoria Hall in

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[16]   H. Brian, *How the "Gothic Symphony…"*, *op. cit.*
[17]   Henry Wood (1869–1944)—an English conductor, one of Brian's closest friends. He is remembered as the initiator of Promenade concerts, so-called *Proms.* He led many British premieres of works of Bartók, Copland, Debussy, Hindemith, Janáček, Mahler, Prokofiev, Rachmaninoff, Shostakovich, Sibelius, Richard Strauss and Webern.
[18]   K. Eastough, *op. cit.*, p. 253.
[19]   *Ibid.*, p. 229.
[20]   *Ibid.*, p. 302.