

Improvisation and Hegelian/Triadic Dialectic in
Vinko Globokar's *Correspondences*

by james bunch

Submitted to: Dr. Bruno Nettl

“Dans toutes les exécutions de cette pièce (102) jamais une improvisation “libérée” ne s’est produite. Aujourd’hui soit j’improvise et je suis égal aux autres, soit j’écris une pièce et là je suis responsable pour tout. C’est pourquoi je suis devenu allergique à l’improvisation contrôlée.”

Vinko Globokar

“In all of the performances of that piece [Correspondances] (102) never has a free improvisation been produced. Today, whether I improvise or I write out a piece, I am equally responsible for the result. That is why I have become allergic to controlled improvisation.”

In thinking about the music of Vinko Globokar – particularly of the work under present consideration *Correspondances* – I am reminded of the famous Robert Frost poem *The Road Not Taken*. When Frost’s speaker makes the comment “...knowing how way leads onto way / I doubted if I should ever come back...” there is an intimation of the task at hand. Not only is the work certainly “off the beaten path” compositionally, but also understanding the sinewy network of philosophical and musical ideas that drive the piece will require that the present paper have a somewhat labyrinthine format. The *purgation* stage of this labyrinth will fittingly consist in an exposition of the basics of negative dialectics as it appears in the work of many continental European composers of the post-war era¹. The *illumination* stage will consist in “meeting the maker” – Vinko Globokar – and in a short consideration of how dialectics reveals itself in his work and in his concept of free improvisation. And finally, the *union* stage will consist in a poor man’s analysis of the work *Correspondances* for 4 soloists. In this final section, the *process* of the triadic dialectic as a form-generating principle will complete the present research into its role in this particular work.

Purgation (dialectics * Hegel – Marx – Adorno)

The concept of dialectics has become central to the understanding of continental philosophy, social theory and the study of history. But by its very nature, the concept is an unbound one. In order to understand dialectics in the form that is significant to Globokar’s work, shades and transpositions of meaning brought in by a number of thinkers will need to be expounded. More directly, an approach to the modulation of the original concept can be symbolized as a three-level matryoshka doll whose inner corpus is Hegelian,

¹ Here I am referring to the three-stage conceptualization of the medieval unicursal labyrinth: purgation, illumination, and union. This tri-section of the labyrinth is a European, and more specifically, a Christian adaptation of the labyrinth as a technique of meditation.

encased in an intermediary corpus that is Marxian, which is in turn encased in an outer corpus provided by Theodore Adorno.

G. W. F. Hegel (1770-1831) – a contemporary of Beethoven, and a roommate of Friedrich Hölderlin at the Tübingen Seminary was not, in an absolute sense, the originator of the concept of triadic dialectics. Hegel saw the dialectic method as immanent as a consequence of the logical nature of reality. Furthermore, Hegel saw his philosophical enquiry as being only a participation in the One Philosophy of all human thought². Its roots can be traced back through the Greek Eliatics (esp. Parmenides and Zeno)³, through Plato and Aristotle, and through the “modern” philosophers Spinoza, Hume, and Kant. Hegel took not only the Idealism of the Greeks (that reason rather than the sense experiences must be the basis for true knowledge of reality), but also a chain of arguments that would result in the establishment of a school of thought known now as Phenomenology.

The essentials are that we cannot have direct experience of the *noumena* (the universals – the objective Ideas/Forms from which the things that exist follow like logical conclusions). We cannot experience the noumena because it does not exist (where existence is defined as the “immediate appearance” of a thing/concept /action/quality to the consciousness). We experience *phenomena*, which are particulars (individual things that exist/appear in time and space and have *content*). So for example, we can experience “white” objects, but not “whiteness.” White objects exist. They have a dependent being that follows from the universal (Idea/thought) of “whiteness,” including any other determinate characteristics that one could use to describe them. “Whiteness” as a class however, does not exist/appear (that is, you cannot find “whiteness” as it is in itself in space/time). “Whiteness” the idea has being, but the nature of its being is logical, not factual⁴. Thus Hegel’s thought, which is dependent upon the Greek Idealists, is pointedly dualistic, dividing nature into material/rational, real/existent, subject/object, universal/particular, potential/actual; noumena/phenomena. A second concept Hegel owes to the Idealists is variously known as *Mind*, *Spirit*, or *Geist*.

The foundation for Mind comes particularly from Aristotle. Aristotle’s doctrine of the *Absolute* (his abstruse concept of God) forms the basis for Hegel’s *Geist*. Aristotle did

² (Stace, *The Philosophy of Hegel*, 1-4).

³ (“Dialectics,” Blackwell Companion to Philosophy), (“Hegelian dialectic,” MacMillian Encyclopedia of Philosophy).

⁴ (Stace, 5-18)

not believe in Plato's realm of Idea Forms as a place with both reality *and* existence, but he retained the concept of Idea/Form as the ultimate universal, the uncaused cause of which all else is a logical consequence. Aristotle defined the Absolute as pure thought (objective thought, independent of a material intellect, essentially Reason). From all of this follows Hegel's concepts of *World-mind*, which drives world-history⁵. Hegel's thought, which is concerned primarily with rationality, freedom (very importantly), and self-consciousness, finds its ultimate embodiment in his concept of "world mind/spirit." Dialectic, as we will see, is a real-world historical process – a sort of ideological evolutionary force – through which Spirit/Mind strives toward a greater realization of freedom and self-consciousness through a becoming-more-rational of collective thought⁶.

The "noumenal"

Universal	Abstract, able to provide content to particulars – a "class"
Objective	Not dependent on a particular perceiving mind to exist
Real	Has "true" being – is the thing as it is in itself apart from a perceiving mind.
Non-existent	Does not immediately present itself to the consciousness
Non-conceptual/Non-identical	Cannot be described by some other collection of universals or classes – it is "is-ness"
Logical	Is "thought" in Hegel. It has logical being because it is reasonable, but does not appear anywhere or anywhen.

The "phenomenal"

Particular	Specific object/thought/action/quality with content
Subjective	Depends upon a particular perceiving mind for existence
Un-real	Is only an image – the signature of the real but not itself the thing that it represents
Existent	Immediately presents itself to the consciousness
Conceptual/Identical	Must be apprehended by ascribing determinate qualitative descriptions through classes (universals) ex. "Coldness."
Factual	Has material/sense-able/thinkable being.

⁵ (Stace, 18-31)

⁶ For Hegel, "freedom" consists in self-determination, and is enhanced by self-understanding/self-consciousness. Hegel's freedom is the foundation for the understanding of freedom espoused by Mathias Spahlinger and other Continental European composers of the late 20th Century – including Globokar.

At root, triadic dialectics is a logical technique or formulation used to engage with an object or an idea. The triad is expressed as thesis (affirmative proposition), antithesis (negative proposition), and synthesis (affirmative proposition). It involves the resolution of two opposites (thesis and antithesis) into a higher unity (synthesis) by showing that the antithesis can be deduced from the thesis (that the thesis in a sense, “contains” its opposite). The opposition of a thing or a concept is called its *negation*⁷. The goal of the dialectic process is not simply to discard one way of thinking for another, but to *sublate* (to assimilate) two opposites or extremes into a higher unity – that is, into a higher, more developed way of thinking that contains and encompasses both, including the contradictory space carved out by their mutually exclusive properties. According to Hegel, sublation (synthesis) “destroys, preserves, and elevates” oppositions at the same time⁸. It renders the former way of thinking about a concept or thing as obsolete – as incomplete and thus unsatisfactory – replacing it with a more reasonable/logical one.

What Hegel brings to the concept of triadic dialectics (aside from the phenomenology of Spirit) is the understanding that the difference between thesis and antithesis is quantitative rather than qualitative. As a test case of the dialectical process, Hegel offers the synthesis into *becoming* from the thesis of *being* and its antithesis *nothingness*. He reduces being to *pure being* (“is-ness” – as understood apart from anything that *is*). Since pure being is a universal – that is, it is a quality that every particular that exists possesses – it is not to be found in itself anywhere or anywhen, and thus does not exist. It is nothing. This shows that nothing is contained in being; that the difference between the two is in one sense quantitative rather than qualitative. Thus the logical miracle of dialectics is that the thesis and antithesis are shown to be both simultaneously identical and distinct. Hegel furthermore demonstrates that the passing of thesis into antithesis (which he calls synthesis) in the case of being and nothing is accomplished in the process called *becoming*, because becoming is a concept that contains both being and nothingness in itself. What happens next is that, because dialectics is an iterative and recursive process that is embedded in the logical nature of reality (driven forward by world-mind), what has been newly posited as a synthesis becomes the thesis of a new

⁷ And thus “negative,” in the context of continental music is not, as so often and erroneously misapprehended, a personal disposition (such as *sour* or *ill-tempered*), but a description of the process of taking a concept together with its opposite.

⁸ NEED CITATION!

triad. This process continues until you reach a thesis for which there is no rational antithesis – this is actualization of knowledge⁹.

Hegel's aesthetic theory actually plants the seeds for (negative) dialectics as Adorno formulates it. The former literally espoused an imitation theory of art that posited art as:

- 1) Artificial – man-made (as opposed to a natural phenomenon and understanding humankind and its products as being separate from nature).
- 2) Made for man – more or less borrowed from the sensuous, and addressed to human senses.
- 3) Telos-driven – containing a specific, single purpose.

His understanding of the nature and function of music – as “feeling without thought, concerned with the unrefined movement of the spiritual nature...[that] needs little or no spiritual content¹⁰” – contains a complex and not entirely consistent tension with both the fading Classicism and the emerging strands of Romanticism of his own time¹¹. The greater import of this statement can only be understood in light of the meaning of the word “content” as Adorno understood it – as fixed identity¹². Despite these conditions and at a deeper level of Hegelian thought, is the assertion that “Art invites us to a consideration of it by means of thought, not to the end of stimulating art production, but in order to ascertain scientifically, what art is¹³.” Hence, aesthetic consideration – which is the proper effect of participation in a work of art – abets critical reception not as a means to maintain the production of art as it is commonly conceived, but to generate an exploratory (read *critical*) disposition towards what art *may be*. This aesthetic criticality is the foundation for what has been termed “experimental” music composition from the Americans: Ives, Cowell, Cage, Feldman, et. al., to the contemporary European avant-garde: Boulez, Stockhausen, Lachenmann, Gris y, Sciarrino, Spahlinger, Globokar, et. al.

⁹ (Stace, 90-99)

¹⁰ (Hegel, *Philosophy of Art: Introduction*, 381)

¹¹ CITE THE ARTICLE IN THE HEGEL AND THE ARTS BOOK AT THE UNION BOOKSTORE!!!

¹² More on this below...

¹³ (ibid, 374).

“Marxist dialectical materialism” is the next developmental stage of the concept of dialectics that concerns us. Although Hegel remained a committed Idealist for his entire life, Marx came to reject the metaphysical qualities of Hegel’s dialectics (speculative philosophy as it is now known) in favor of a kind of positivism. In asserting that the only knowledge to be had, the only reality, is that which is empirically verifiable, Marx believed himself to have realized more fully the historical moment(um) of Hegel’s world-mind. Marx took from Hegel the impression that development (social development in Marxist thought) occurs by means of opposition and struggle (negation), and that transition from one form to another (quantity into quality – synthesis) occurs by sudden leap rather than gradual change. He understood the historical process as a series of revolutions organized by three principle laws (derived from Hegelian triadic dialectics):

- 1) **The law of the unity and the struggle of opposites:** Change is provoked by interests in conflict. Unlike Hegel’s Idealism, this tension, contradiction, or opposition is the driving force behind natural and human history rather than the immaterial world-mind.
- 2) **The Law of the Negation of the Negation:** The growth/advent of a new state/idea/form/thing is predicated upon the death of the previous one. The new idea must always be superior to the old one. Human progress is by a means of destruction that leads to better things.
- 3) **The Law Transformation of Quantity into Quality:** History as a process by which one situation becomes, or is replaced by, another situation at first by gradual change, then by a sudden turning point (a revolution) called in Marx’s terminology, the *nodal line*.

The import of the Marxist transposition is that the dialectic process becomes entangled most directly with socio-political realities. Marx the economist, the socialist, provides a very material(istic) pair of feet for Hegel’s logical abstractions. And Marxist dialectical materialism takes very seriously the materiality of human freedom made tangible via a set of socio-economic power-relations. The conceptual weight of this transposition (at least for the present consideration) can only be felt through its further embodiment in the aesthetic thought of Theodore Adorno and his negative dialectics.

“The dialectic is neither a mere method by which the spirit may elude the cogency of its object – in Hegel the dialectic literally accomplishes the opposite, the permanent confrontation of the object with its concept – nor is it a weltanschauung into whose schema one has to squeeze reality...Dialectic is the unswerving effort to conjoin reason’s critical consciousness of itself and the critical experience of objects¹⁴.”

In the quotation above, Adorno has brought the faculty of reason into the subject so closely that it appears that to speak of one is to speak of the other. In the same publication Adorno calls dialectic the “epitome of Hegel’s philosophy.” Importantly Adorno emphasizes that dialectic is not, as perhaps some suppose, a method for eluding logical commitments, nor is it a static worldview, but a method of continual, conscious, critical engagement with the object of consideration. Adorno establishes the need for dialectics by observing that “objects do not go into their concepts without leaving a remainder¹⁵.” The act of *identifying* some aspect of the noumenal world – embodying it in a concept – is always in Adorno’s manner, like trying to fit square pegs into round holes. The philosopher calls this failure of concepts “the untruth of identity¹⁶.” Due to the failure of statically conceived identity, Adorno follows Hegel in proposing a permanently self-renewing process of dialectical engagement. Brought into the field of aesthetic thought, one arrives at a situation described by Hegel’s comment on Art’s invitation to its observers described above. Dieter Henrich, in his essay “The Contemporary Relevance of Hegel’s Aesthetics” demonstrates the union of Hegelian and Marxist dialectic in Adorno’s thought:

“ Throughout the Frankfurt School the revision of Hegelian philosophy amounts in essence to a revision of this insight – Adorno’s negative dialectics serves the same end. This dialectic is the equipment which refuses to deny humanity its hope for beautiful conditions of life, conditions which can be comprehended in aesthetic categories¹⁷.”

¹⁴ (Adorno, *Hegel: Three Studies* (I), 9-10)

¹⁵ (Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, 5)

¹⁶ (*ibid.*, 5)

¹⁷ (Henrich, 206)

In other words, Adorno's negative dialectics as they pertain to his aesthetic theory aestheticizes Marx's politicized dialectics as they had pertained to Hegel's dialectics as logical/rational historical movement¹⁸. Adorno's formulation of the deeper Hegelian aesthetic mentioned above is that "Aesthetic identity is meant to assist the non-identical in its struggle against the repressive identification compulsion that rules the outside world¹⁹."

The deep structure of this aesthetic theory is embodied by the continual quest to escape being pinned-down into a single identity/definition. Note the familiar shades of Marxist connotations brought to this formulation through words such as "struggle" and "repressive identification compulsion." Furthermore, note that Adorno roots the constellation of aesthetic activities and meanings to the "outside world," to the social realities of non-aesthetic life – he aestheticizes the political²⁰.

The synthesis stage of Adorno's negative dialectics as it relates to his aesthetic theory is quite different from that of Hegel. Although Hegel's dialectical movement is one of continuous progressive negation, as is that of Adorno, the former believed that this process produced a positive accumulation of honed knowledge that would lead eventually to an ultimate point of self-consciousness and admittance to what is the universal truth of a thing. It seems that Adorno did not share this optimism however, as the synthesis stage in his negative dialectics leaves behind only a very temporary truth that must be newly eradicated by each succeeding generation – a concept that surely owes no small debt to the Marxian transposition of the Hegelian dialectic. Adorno's dialectical drive never reaches the universal truth because its real goal is the prosecution of human freedom rather than the production of content. New music can never have a universalized content/identity/aesthetic imposed upon it because to do so would be to destroy artistic freedom and to bring the dialectic process to a standstill.

For Adorno, that a person listens to a work or receives a set of aesthetic maxims passively (non-reflectively) is not only a dramatization of that state of affairs by which a person may be made a slave by inattention, but it is a token of the real situation by which the "culture industry" actually does so via a mass art that is "propagandistically

¹⁸ In fact, Adorno references dialectical materialism as the heir apparent of Hegel's dialectics (Adorno, *Philosophy of Modern Music*, 57)

¹⁹ (Adorno, *ibid.*, 6)

²⁰ "... its [new music's] critical and aesthetic self-understanding also has an objective social dimension." (Adorno, "Music and New Music," 255).

conceived²¹." Adorno formulates an ethic that opposes itself to the inattention bred by the culture industry in his essay "On the Fetish-Character in Music." Marxian language abounds amongst its pages to the startlingly dismal conclusion that "The liquidation of the individual is the real signature of the new musical situation²²." The confusion of use-value and exchange-value reflects a situation in which the dialectical possibilities in music are absconded in favor of a music of immediacy (that is, non-reflection) that affirms only status quo and extant cultural power relations at the expense of real individualism (freedom as self-determination). Thus, the mark of truly great art ("transigent art" as he calls it) is that it has "renounced consumption²³;" that it has freed itself from the gravity of not only the market, but of the necessity to conform itself to what has come before it – to conform to what has become a repository of cultural expectations that remove art from its true function as the dialectically mediated pursuit of freedom. In Adorno-speak the *truth* that the culture industry fears is the state of absolute freedom of thought²⁴. Thus music that idealizes this freedom is "true." And so it follows that "music is not to be decorative, it is to be true²⁵."

The particular understanding of (negative) dialectics as espoused in Adorno's aesthetic idiolect has entwined its roots firmly in the soil of German musical thought and also amongst those who have identified with it in one way or another. Helmut Lachenmann's concept of "rejection" is nearly an exact repetition of Adorno's negativity as is his retooling of the concept of beauty as the avoidance of habit and as critical engagement with the musical "apparatus²⁶." Also Mathias Spahlinger's anti-ideological sentiments in his essay entitled: "This is the Time for Conceptive Ideologies No Longer" carries Adorno's insistence on the non-identical aspect of new music (and thus is highly dependent on Hegel's dialectic). Spahlinger states that new music is "self-aware, and as

²¹ (ibid., 113)

²² (Adorno, *On the Fetish-Character in Music*, 293)

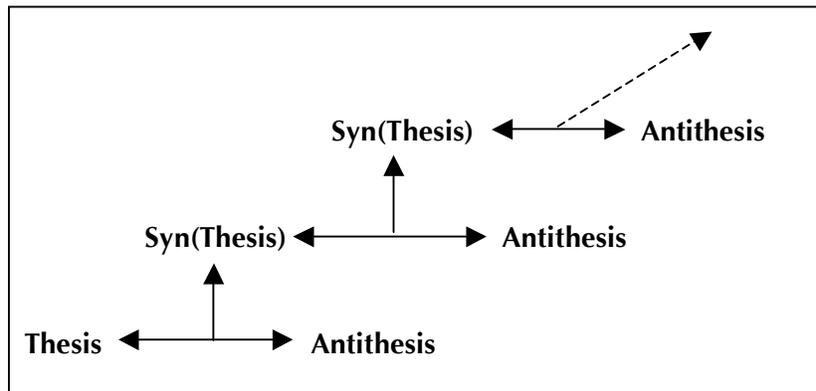
²⁴ (Adorno, "Music and New Music," 254)

²⁵ "Bourgeois music was decorative...It was given notice to quit because it had degenerated into ideology, because its reflection of the world in positive light, its call for a better world, became a lie which legitimated evil." (ibid., 257) The reason why "positive" values are to be avoided in new music is because their true effect is to "prevent anyone reflecting on the fact that none of them has been made real in practice." (ibid, 265).

²⁶ See Lachenmann's rarified English translation essays "On Structuralism," and "On the Beautiful in Music Today." Also, for a look at some of the criticisms against this "musica negativa" see Lachenmann's "Open letter to Hans Werner Henze" printed in *Perspectives of New Music*, Vol. 35, no. 2.

such anti-ideological.” In saying so, he makes new music the ideal musical medium for the ongoing realization of Hegel’s world-history through Marx’s critical take on it²⁷. New music, as he puts it, “discards the conventions of the past without replacing them with new conventions²⁸”. From all of this it seems appropriate to make the generalization that for the Continental avant-garde, the beam of music’s critical gun is aimed at the “superstructure” made implicit in the intersection between old and new art and what the values that separate them for individuals do to socio-economic reality and existence (to borrow a distinction from the dualists).

Figure 1



The dialectical process

²⁷ It’s unclear as to whether or not Hegel’s *weltgeist* amounts to *geistgeschichte* or is a completely separate idea. If the two terms are equal, Adorno then opposes Hegel’s concept of *geist* because it obscures the truth that there has always been the dialectical pair of conservative and progressive (which Adorno reclothes as “old” and “new,” or affirmative and negative). (Adorno, “Music and New Music,” 261)

²⁸ (Spahlinger, 1)

Illumination (Globokar * improvisation)

Enter Vinko Globokar, who must be numbered amongst those who find in Theodor Adorno, a sympathetic spirit²⁹:

“This idea of a certain critical aspect of the work started to seduce me...A lot of works started to contain at that time something which is not acceptable, or which is not polite, or which is disturbing, or which questions some habits, usual habits. And of course with this attitude you start to loose a lot of friends, to loose a lot of sympathizers...”³⁰”

More directly in private correspondence (no pun intended), the composer related to the author:

“In the 1960’s, I read Adorno enormously, and I think that it [Adorno’s philosophy of negative dialectics] is a philosophy that one must know to avoid thinking that one piece of music is less beautiful than the kind of music most people consider”³¹.”

The drive of questioning “habits” and the retooling of the nature of “beauty” as we have seen, are familiar artistic tomes by now. Is it permissible to understand the catholicity of these ways of thinking as an embodiment of what Hegel meant by *geist*³²? Prodding even further into Globokar’s sentiments to see Adorno’s influence:

“The quotation: “A tone can be neither communist or Catholic, is only valid if one abstracts this tone from all environment/context. The mode in which one plays this tone, the whole context in which this tone is being produced, the locality and the environment, the social situation of the people who listen, and of those who play, all that causes that music has political significance in the most embracing sense”³³.”

Importantly here, Globokar wants to establish a safeguard against the misapprehension that the Adorno’s transposition is to be taken always in the most literal sense while at the same time asserting his belief that the musical apparatus exists in a very real polity that has categorically verifiable consequences for the artist. Indeed, the composer’s *Discours V* for saxophone quartet – a text-based work, as are all of the works in the *Discours* series – features a number of aphorisms written by the composer himself.

²⁹ (Lund, 6).

³⁰ (ibid., 9)

³¹ Private e-mail to the author: 28, May, 2008. Translation and parenthetical clarification are mine.

³² Certainly it is easy to see that the concept of dialectics has itself been submitted to the process of dialectic, and it is to this rather than to the faulty concept of *geistgeschichte* I refer.

³³ (Lund, 10) [translation is Lund’s]

A partial quotation of the text sheds more light on the nature of Globokar's absorption with Adorno's aesthetic politics:

"Would you like a recipe for blissful existence? Well, in each occasion do exactly the opposite of what is expected of you!"

*"Creators! Be entertaining! Render service to listeners! Write pleasant pieces!"
Recently a man said: Today in art the Happy-Ending is nothing but a lie."*

"What do you expect from music? Could it be the carrier of subversive political ideas? Do you think music is disregarded if it becomes functional?"

"You are, aren't you, aware that a piece of music is a commodity, subject to the same publicity, promotional and sales laws as a pair of shoes or cheddar cheese³⁴?"

Though he does not wish to be thought of as a "political composer," Globokar's compositions (whether or not they address literal political contents as do *Les Emigres* and *Hallo! Do You Hear Me*), contain what through Adorno can be called political traits.

Globokar's formal music education was initiated at the Paris Conservatory where he matriculated as a trombone performance student in the mid 1960's. During this time, he supported himself via his career as a freelance performer (including involvement with jazz and commercial music). In 1969 he co-founded the New Phonic Art Ensemble with clarinetist Michel Portal, pianist Carlos Alsina, and percussionist Jean-Pierre Drouet. It was for this ensemble that Globokar composed the work under present consideration – *Correspondences*. As his artistic interests gradually transferred to composition, he found himself studying informally with Luciano Berio (and serving as a technical consultant most notably during the composition of the latter's trombone *Sequenza*). During the 1970's, Globokar also served as the director of vocal and instrumental research at IRCAM. This position was mainly concerned with the discovery of new idiomatic ways of approaching instrumental technique – a research which led not merely to the compilation of novel new "extended instrumental techniques," but to alternative ways of conceiving musical *language* that are grounded in the physiognomy of instruments.

An examination of the works Globokar completed during his tenure at IRCAM will amply reflect the effect that his instrumental discoveries had not only upon notation as a matter of simple convenience, but also in regards to notational limitations on what may be musically *conceived*. Without exception, Globokar was forced to invent new methods of

³⁴ (Lund, 124-5)

notation to communicate the exact ideas that his material discoveries implied – new material demands new musical discourses that demand new notation³⁵. Strikingly, what Spahlinger has referred to as the “n-dimensionality” of noise – its resistance to classification and scalation, its “anarchism” – lead Globokar to structural apparatuses that are heavily dependent upon indeterminate procedures³⁶. None of the composer’s mature works are absolutely free from some aspect of performer choice in the constitution of their foreground landscapes. This leads to the necessity of drawing distinctions concerning the definition of improvisation and its connection to performer choice in Globokar’s thought and work.

Globokar’s personal involvement in the practice of improvisation goes back to his work in jazz and commercial music as a student, through his involvement with the New Phonic Art Ensemble, whose primary concern was the performance of improvisations. The N.P.A. was actually involved in a recording of Karlheinz Stockhausen’s *Aus dem Sieben Tagen* – a series of text-based improvisation pieces that can be profitably compared to Pauline Oliveros’ *Sonic Meditations*. Stockhausen’s work directs the performers to, for example, clear their minds of all thoughts and begin to play when they have achieved total emptiness and then to stop playing when they start to think again. Another example directs the musicians to play something in the “pulse of the universe...” No musical material is specified, and neither is any formal process or shape – only the conditions for unique self-expression (or the unique expression of non-self, if such a thing is possible?). Globokar’s recollection of this process:

“He wrote texts about improvisation where he, for instance, says “think of nothing – when you are sure you are thinking on nothing, play.” Yes, why not? – only that when we worked on this together with the New Phonic Art and his group, he was always correcting, saying “this is good, this is not good,” etc. This is the reason I would say he left very fast this idea about improvisation³⁷.

³⁵ c.f. *Echanges* for solo brass player – physical activities and levels of exertion become the primary values of this work – exact pitches and rhythms are treated as inconsequential in comparison, and so they aren’t notated.

³⁶ In this case “performer indeterminacy,” where performers are left to engage with the techniques in a situation where the non-quantifiability of the materials results in gestures that can only be “statistically specific.” Such a situation demands choice-making of the performer in ways that the composer anticipates and builds into the structural concept of the work.

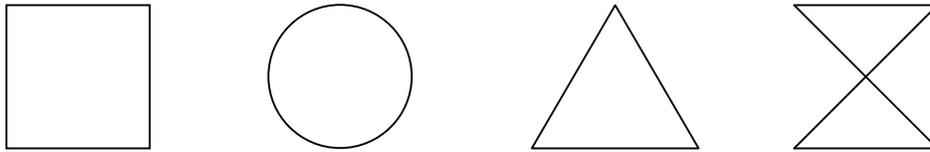
³⁷ (Lund, 7)

Stockhausen's handling of improvisatory (non)-material upset Globokar so greatly that he refused to allow his name to be credited on the LP release of this particular recording. In Stockhausen's desire to control the actual results of what otherwise were formulated as *free improvisations*, he negated the very essence of improvisation – he asserted a form of domination over the musician-participants that rendered the entire experience a failed contradiction in terms. The frustration Globokar experienced flows from his understanding of the distinction between *free improvisation* and *instrumental improvisation* that occurs within the context of an otherwise *composed piece*³⁸.

Improvisation within the context of a composed work (such as is the case for nearly all of Globokar's fully notated compositions) involves performer choices that affect only the most superfluous layer of the musical surface. Examples of these types of choices include which note, among a number of prescribed possibilities, the performer chooses to play in a particular order. If the performer is directed to play a murmuring figure of pitches in quick succession within a particular bandwidth of pitches delimited by range/density around a central pitch space, the exact pitch and the order of pitches is a matter of statistical coincidence articulated within a generalized shape that is phenomenologically obligatory. Expanding the level of the phenomenological consequence of performer choice, there are situations where the performer may choose the order of the succession of phrase-level structures, or perhaps even section-level structures but in which the specific material/gestural contents of those structures is statistically (if not literally) fixed. Finally, Globokar developed a systematic symbolization for the most expansive level of phenomenological consequence that he granted to performers (in the context of composed pieces/controlled improvisations).

³⁸ Lund implies the distinction between free improvisation and improvisation within the context of a composed work (Lund, 17), although he doesn't expound what is entailed in that distinction other than that the former and latter amount to two different contexts. Particularly I want to emphasize that the two differing contexts actually expose two completely different compositional concerns: one philosophical and ultimately dialectical, the other technical (instrumental – i.e., a means of achieving a designed end).

This simple quartet of symbols (a square, a circle, an isosceles triangle, and an hour-glass figure) represent, respectively: precise imitation, imitation with development, contradiction/opposition, and new idea outside of existing context (“a fresh and sudden situation”)³⁹.



These figures – the notions that they communicate – represent what Globokar understands as the “form-generating” principles of music, that is, they are the categories within which the composer imagines the process of formal perception (of phenomenological self-construction) that the listener undertakes in attempting to conceptualize the formal noumena of a work (the unfolding of its structural soul – so to speak). At this deeper level of phenomenological consequence, the musicians are actually generating musical *content*, but the composer still wields control over the relative qualitative interrelationships between the materials (i.e., the form).

Globokar is not alone in the intimation that such a cadre of structural categories is necessary in a music that dialectically rejects the tonal system (indeed “system” in general, in its blindly prescriptive forms – including but not limited to hierarchic functional tonality and serialism), and traffics in the n-dimensional world of noise. Italian composer Salvatore Sciarrino has posited his *figura della musica* (accumulation, multiplication, “little bang,” genetic transformation, and “shapes with windows”); Helmut Lachenmann, his *klangtypen* (*Kadenzklang*, *Farbklang*, *Fluktuationsklang*, *Texturklang*, and *Strukturklang*) in addition to his concepts of *supersequenz* and “subtraction sounds”; Mathias Spahlinger his concept of *microdramaturgy*. Without these perceptive tools, the composer is unable to sublimate the nature of the materials and the works would become, as Adorno said of the “freedom” of free-atonality, “coincidental”⁴⁰.

³⁹ It’s interesting perhaps to note that, unlike the perceptual formal models offered by Sciarrino, and Lachenmann mentioned below, Globokar’s perceptual model is without specific formal content – where the other composers specify exact formal shapes and functions, Globokar conceives of gestural differences that originate in communal modes of response. This conceptual non-identity surely shares some seed with Adorno’s dialectic.

⁴⁰ (Adorno, *Philosophy of Modern Music*, 64). Coincidentally, it is interesting to point out Spahlinger’s affirmation of this “coincidental” freedom as being a proto-realization of the dialectical

Separate from the telos of improvisation in the context of a composed work, the act of *free improvisation* has also in Globokar's thought, a specific set of conditions that serve an entirely different purpose. Firstly, the act of free improvisation is the dramatization, or the ideal incarnation of the artist as free artistic agent, liberated from the strictures introduced by exterior factors (the will of a composer, tradition, habit, the will of other performers)⁴¹. Free improvisation "prohibits the preparation of material and is considered an entirely spontaneous event"⁴²." Globokar further discourages even the retrospective evaluation of a previously executed free improvisation in order to "protect the material from documentation"⁴³." This "documentation" putatively inhibits the acceptance of one's freedom by rejecting its results. The freedom of the musician in improvisation takes priority over the construction of an approved musical product. In any case, where the earlier *instrumental* sense of improvisation in the context of a composed work permits the performer to make some personal choices (but denies the possibility of radically altering the deep structure of the work), the act of free improvisation grants the improviser total access to that deep structure (indeed the act *is itself* the deep structure of the work produced).

A further dimension of Globokar's understanding of improvisation, especially in its connections with dialectical thinking, reveals itself in a group of text-based improvisation games/exercises that the composer formulated under the auspices of the Centro di Ricerca e di Sperimentazione per la Didattica Musicale which formed the collection *Individuum – Collectivum*⁴⁴. The works may be performed by musicians or, as Globokar insists, photographers, dancers, etc. The composer remarked of the exercises:

freedom of the Twelve-tone technique in its conscious, specific, unmediated negation (Spahlinger, 10).

⁴¹ Cage's ideal of improvisation as manifested in his works of the 1970's also involved the avoidance of habitual figures and by separating technical "cause and effect." However the two composers are diametrically opposed in that Cage idealized the purgation of expression of the self (putatively as an artifact of his Zen-inspired aesthetic) whereas the freedom of the self as a self was paramount to Globokar's dialectically inspired concept of improvisation. For more on Cage's ambivalence towards improvisation, see Sabine Feisst's forthcoming ***

⁴² (Lund, 14)

⁴³ (ibid., 14)

⁴⁴ A thesis – anti-thesis pairing.

“...inside a group you have always this kind of tension between the only person (individuals), each person that wants to be themselves, a type of freedom. But on the other side is a collective, where one has to show tolerance for the others. So it is a reflection of these two things which are antinomies. I would say they are two terms that are fighting each other⁴⁵.”

For the most part, the exercises from *Individuum – Collectivuum* involve processes of improvisation initiated by a leader and then responded to by the rest of the group. The manner of response is sometimes the province of the individual members, and for many of the exercises (for example exercise 12b of chapter 2), the directive to mutually listen creates a situation where the power structure of the leader/follower relationships can be altered or exchanged in some fashion. The set of exercises is thus first and foremost, a group of meditations on social mediation. Not only is the mutual tolerance of individual freedom a matter of critical focus in the work but also, as Globokar states in his preface on the collective nature of the exercises: each person is “entirely responsible [not only] for his own activity but also of the collective global product⁴⁶.” The introduction of the language of “responsibility” is a nod to ethics⁴⁷. Thus the exercises of *Individuum –Collectivuum* demonstrate with great candor the junction between structural-material phenomenality and the act of improvisation (both free and controlled) in terms of aestheticized social analogy (c.f. Adorno).

⁴⁵ As quoted in Lund (ibid., 24) [Trans. is Lund’s]

⁴⁶ (Globokar, *Collectivuum – Individuum*, 22c) [Tans. and clarification mine.]

⁴⁷ Especially perhaps, to the ethical questions of Existential thought, concerned mainly upon the question of the responsibility of man to use his freedom ethically. Here applied to the collective, Globokar makes culpable the individual for their success or failure at critically engaging the actions and artifacts of the society in which they live.

Union (*Correspondences* * dialectic as form * post-script)

"I composed Correspondences for the premiere concert of the New Phonic Art [ensemble] in 1969 in Berlin. I had had the idea to compose a dialectic piece, one passage of a work beginning with total organization and culminating in [free] improvisation. The second stage would be based on the absence of one or two parameters that the musician had to listen and discover in the game of neighbor [c.f. the game of "telephone"]. The third stage would be based on four types of reactions (imitate, follow, oppose, propose something different). That would become the point of departure for a free improvisation..."⁴⁸

It will be rather helpful that I have already discussed several of the aspects of Globokar's thought that are embedded within the structure of *Correspondences*. For instance, both instrumental improvisation and free improvisation are invoked in this work. What has been known in other contexts as "performer indeterminacy"⁴⁹, I have preferred to call *instrumental improvisation* in this context because it involves spontaneous choices that serve statistical ends. In other words, what Globokar calls "total organization" is really a reference to the fact that he has reserved the right as composer to arrange and delimit the phenomenological shape of the music. But because Globokar's formal language in this work places more value on statistical formulations of phenomenological shapes, he allows the performer to make a great deal of very locally consequential decisions without feeling as if he has placed the larger organization of the work in a state of indeterminacy. The performer's choices are *instrumental* (that is, a means to a prescribed end). That being said, the formal trajectory of the work is generated directly from the logical form of the dialectical process. That is to say that the thesis (total organization) is gradually taken into its antithesis (free improvisation) through the process of synthesis (the unfolding of the work). Marx's Law of the transformation of quantity into quality is instrumental to understanding how this happens. The content of the thesis in *Correspondences* is the volume of determined/composed elements.

⁴⁸ E-mail to the author. 28, May, 2008. This e-mail arrived after I had come to the conclusion that it later confirmed. I had asked Globokar point blank if he had been thinking of the dialectical process – which he confirmed here, as well as the stage by stage transformation. However, where Globokar divides the work into four stages (total organization, indeterminacy, response chains, free improvisation), I will divide the work into eight sections in order to demonstrate the gradual transformation.

⁴⁹ (c.f. Cope, *New Directions in Music*, 85-88)

Even if Globokar were to initiate this process with a concept of “total organization” that is more like what one might imagine it to mean (integral serialism, or at least specified pitches/rhythms) a level of choice is always involved – this level of choice is most often referred to as “interpretation,” and it is as real as the experiential difference between Vladimir Horowitz’s recording of Mozart’s K. 333 and Alfred Brendel’s. However, Globokar’s work departs from a more open concept.

As the performers proceed through the various sections of the work, Globokar gradually (though not linearly) increases the number of choices that the performers can make, as well as the level of phenomenological consequence of those choices. This amounts to emptying the thesis of “composed material” of its determinate contents (replacing them with performer choice). Eventually the distinction collapses, and it is demonstrated that the concept of determinate composition contains the concept of improvisation⁵⁰. One of the results of this process is that it becomes rather difficult to decide when the “composed” section ends and the “improvised” section begins. Recall that the point at which quantity (the accumulation of choice consequence) becomes quality (transforming thesis into antithesis) is called the *nodal line*. In *Correspondences* this nodal line is hard to place because of the clever trickiness of Globokar’s concept of freedom. But, to “let the cat out of the bag,” the very final notation of the work is the nodal line. And here it is necessary to remind the reader that the last notation of the score is not the last musical event of the work. Depending on any number of factors, the composed score of *Correspondences* might occupy anything from 100 to (1 – infinity)% of the performed work. Therefore in the case of this work, the nodal line is a rather abrupt moment in the notation. At the nodal line a leap from the quantitative approach to the state of qualitative synthesis occurs. Before this moment, at least conceptually, what Globokar calls free improvisation is not possible, after this moment, it is the only thing possible.

Globokar also utilizes the shape notation discussed above to indicate response types in what he refers to as the third stage (imitate precisely, “follow” – or imitate and develop, oppose, and propose a new situation). Contemplating further this manner of dividing up the response patterns, one arrives at yet another dialectic opposition. In this

⁵⁰ Of course, the question remains as to whether the concept of determinate composition also contains the concept of **free** improvisation. But this already hinges on a larger conversation that involves the question of whether or not free improvisation is even possible.

case, the thesis is “oppose” and the antithesis is “imitate⁵¹.” The concept of opposition is stripped of its content by the removal of volition. The abrupt nodal line occurs in moving into the final figure (the hour-glass – “propose a new situation”). Before this point, a new situation is impossible, after that, it is the only thing possible.

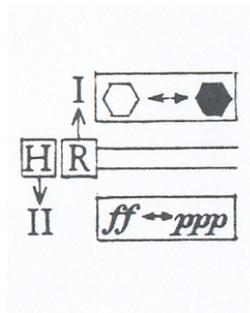
The score of *Correspondences* includes – as is now habitual for post 1950’s scores – a lengthy list of symbols with their explanations. Calling this list a “key” highlights the schematic nature of many of the scores which have been transformed from syntactically-conceived, to visually-conceived mappings of sounds and the forms into which they are situated. The symbolic language of the piece serves to break individual musical parameters up into continua (into “triads?”). There is a continuum for pitch that centers on specificity (mainly registral rather than frequential). There are schematized options for thinking about the directional contour of a line (signified by arrows). There are continua for timbre and dynamics, as well as a proportional notation for durations (although time is notated in several different ways in the piece: metrical, proportional, and not-at-all). There is a continuum for the amount of breathiness in the wind instrument, etc. Also Globokar specifies in addition to the response-type categories, each response is capable of being enacted in the parameters of: pitch (H), rhythm/time (R), dynamics (D), and timbre (T). It is often the case that when a response type is specified, it will be accompanied by a specific parameter (and there are also situations where the performer has to divide her field of attention in multiple ways in the midst of a response chain found in the work, listening to player II for dynamics and player I for pitch. Below is an example taken from the key wherein which the performer must listen to player II for pitch (and to imitate it as precisely as possible), to listen to player I for rhythm, and to freely play instances cut out of timbral and dynamic continua (figure 2).

It may actually be impossible to divide the attention into four or five active streams of musical behavior with any accuracy, but that is immaterial to the end toward which Globokar strives. The notational value being communicated here is that the phenomenological shape of the work is presented as a consequence of the collective, rather than a preconceived design on the part of the composer. In this atmosphere, the traditional grammar of analysis is made useless by the non-grammatical; a new mode of

⁵¹ They are *logically* sequential and not *temporally* sequential in this formulation. Globokar’s temporal order in *Correspondences* is the reverse of the logical order as I have presented it (in order to demonstrate the concept).

analysis is required which takes into account the sensual and conceptual ground of the phenomenal unfolding of the structure⁵².

Figure 2



The following analytical commentary will use a method of graphic analysis that is derived from two sources: Firstly, the “schematische Darstellungen⁵³” utilized by Helmut Lachenmann in his article “Der Klangtypen den neue musik,” which represents the collective phenomenological impression given by a specific kind of gesture. They are formulated as a field whose x-axis is equivalent to duration, and whose y-axis is equivalent to volume. I will adopt the x-axis definition of duration (as time), but my y-axis will be predicated instead on concepts taken from my second source: phenomenological philosophy. The x-axis will represent “intensity” rather than simply volume and the y-axis will represent time. The reason I do not follow Lachenmann here is that the phenomenal category he refers to when he charts loudness can be experienced in any number of different ways (increase in tempo, heightening of pitch, increase in timbral variation over time, etc.). Thus this increase is something closer to a universal (it has no specific quality but can be detected in the changes of many particular musical elements). Three situations thus exist: increase, decrease, and stasis. A positive slope ($x = y$) will indicate increase, and the negative slope ($-x = y$) will indicate decrease⁵⁴. Where Lachenmann’s diagrams essentially translate to “envelope,” mine are intended to communicate something a little more terminologically ineffable (and thus universal): the phenomenological attempt to grasp at the noumenal. As universals, the categories I invoke have no specific content but

⁵² It is for this reason that all of the philosophical mumbo-jumbo of the preceding pages was necessary.

⁵³ translated: “schematic representation,” or due to its theatrical connotations “performance graphs,” or “interpretive graphs.”

⁵⁴ In fact, I had toyed with calling them “somethingness-nothingness,” “upwardness,” and “downwardness” but this terminology, while reflecting the flavor of universality and non-identity I seek, would be an impedance to clarity and suggest additional ideas that I don’t intend to posit.

consist in their ability to be reassigned to perceived sonic particulars (those things that immediately present themselves to the consciousness)⁵⁵.

There can be a line on the graph for every element in a single musical line/sequence (within an instrument or voice) that carries in itself the deterministic concepts provided by the universals, or a graph may simply represent the collective perception with a single line (that is, graphs can indicate levels of phenomena, can focus on a single aspect, or generalize the totality). There are thus, several consequences of representing phenomena in graphic form:

- 1) One is in the position of being able to predict the phenomenological shape of a notated excerpt.
- 2) One can compare a particular performance of a notated example to a graph of the expected shape.
- 3) Thus, for *Correspondences* the further along in the dialectically modeled form one follows, the less one should be able to predict the shape of the performance in specific terms. Put another way, the comparative graphs of the phenomenological shape of two or more different particular performances of the work gradually diverge as a function of time⁵⁶.

Since we are bound to the first consequence in this analysis, I will proceed by reproducing single excerpts from particular points in the unfolding of the form of this piece, providing a phenomenological graph for each excerpt in the process of describing also verbally the passing of thesis into antithesis.

The form of *Correspondences* as reflected in the score consists of a prologue followed by eight sections, which are so numbered. Globokar's comment above about there being three stages is misleading (particularly because what he referred to as the second and third stage overlap one another for the most part). I've made the decision to follow each division marked in the score, summarizing those things that are composed/determinant and those that are not (that are left to choice, or to improvisation altogether). The prologue is, especially at the beginning, a lot of throat clearing. It's

⁵⁵ Ex. dynamic level, pitch, density, timbre, etc.

⁵⁶ Regrettably this cannot be done in the context of this paper as there just isn't the space, and more concretely, there isn't the availability of a number of different recordings/performances of the piece available to the author at this time.

rhythmically flexible, but entirely determined in the form of meters and more-or-less traditional tempo markings. Pitch classes are specified though the composer allows some specific kinds of choices that result in analogous ranges within whatever instrument is chosen from each orchestral group⁵⁷. This means that the registral effect upon timbre will be preserved as well as pitch-class, but the contour will be variable. Dynamics and timbral descriptions are specified, but the means of achieving timbre (indeed the interpretation of “dark” and “light”) are left to choice. Most significant to note though is that any performer indeterminacy here amounts to instrumental improvisation rather than free improvisation.

Excerpt 1

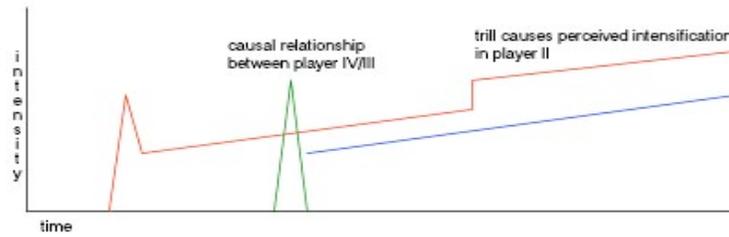
The image shows a handwritten musical score for five staves. At the top left, there is a tempo marking 'Accel.' with a small '8' below it. The first staff has a treble clef and a single note with an accent. The second staff is marked 'MULTIPHONIC tr' and contains several notes with dynamic markings like 'f' and 'mf'. The third staff has a treble clef and a note with an accent. The fourth staff has a treble clef and a note with an accent. The fifth staff has a bass clef and a note with an accent. There are various other markings such as 'ad lib.' and 'mf' throughout the score.

Excerpt 1 is taken from the prologue section, and is translated into graph form in figure 3. The multiphonic in player II begins at some level of intensity (a multiphonic nearly always produces a harsh and intense sound), the intensity is further increased in the dynamic field (the crescendo), and the trill which occurs on the last beat of the bar further increases the intensity of the sound. Player IV contributes a single strike to the texture. The significance of this strike can only be understood in terms of its relationship to the multiphonic that emerges in the part of player III. The propinquity of the strike with the emergence of the multiphonic (intensifying through crescendo) will be perceived as a kind

⁵⁷ Importantly, the instrumentation of *Correspondences* is not fixed, but may be chosen from a number of possibilities, one string instrument, one wind instrument, one brass instrument, and one multi-percussion set-up. The consequence of this is that pitch must be flexibly conceived so as to accommodate the sometimes vastly different range capabilities of each instrumental possibility.

of causality⁵⁸. The cluster that follows in player I (piano) will furthermore be interpreted as a violent gesture that abruptly ends the intensifying sustained tones in players II/III. In the figure below (and in all subsequent figures), player I is graphed in grey, player II is graphed in red, player III is graphed in blue, and player IV is graphed in green.

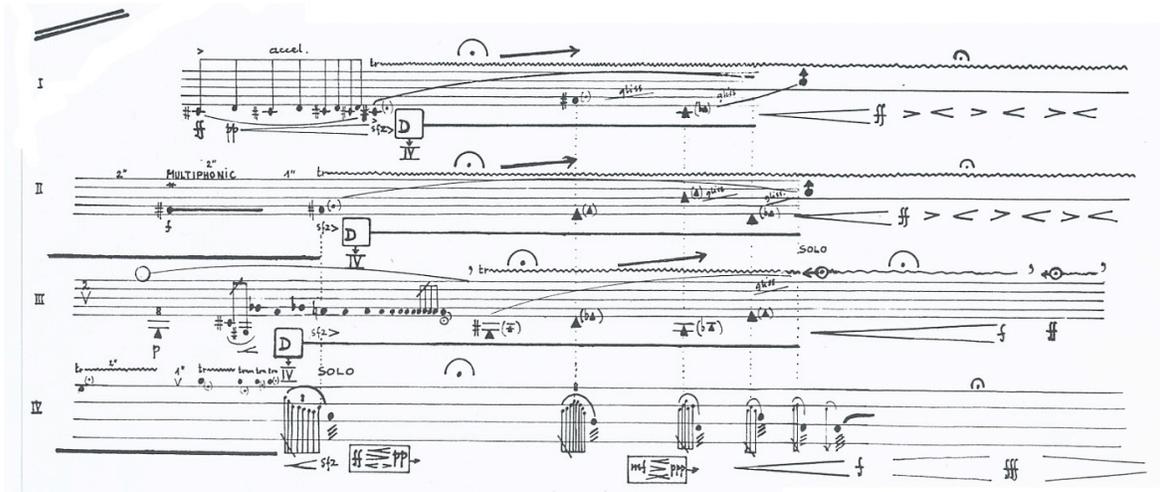
Figure 3



In the section marked 1, meter is absent – however rhythmic simultaneity is not. Simultaneity is – as the composer specifies – achieved by listening (in this case players I, II, and IV are aligning themselves with player III. The registral contour of pitches has become a collective phenomenon, controlled by the other players taking their cues from a lead player. At the close of this section, moving into section 2, the grid of simultaneity is obliterated. The pitch content gradually centers on a specific pitch (f#) in a specific register (f#3), after which the pitch is diffused yet contained within this same register. Also, one witnesses the first appearance of the shape notation (the square) given to player I. The function of the player’s engagement with the work changes to one of constrained improvisation. Globokar would not call this free improvisation because the player is told to imitate as precisely as possible something that another player is doing. It is significant that Globokar begins with precise imitation (which, however good the players ears are, is bound to end up in some similar – but not exactly precise – duplication of what is happening in another voice). Globokar will gradually introduce the other shapes in a sequence beginning with the square and ending with the hourglass. As was discussed above, the value that allows the square to “evolve” into the hourglass is “volition,” the precision of imitation gradually loosens to the point where it is wild opposition.

⁵⁸ Salvatore Sciarrino would refer to this as “*little bang*,” and Lachenmann would refer to it as a *Kadenzklang*. Moreover, the description I have provided elucidates to some extent, what Mathias Spahlinger would call *microdramaturgy*.

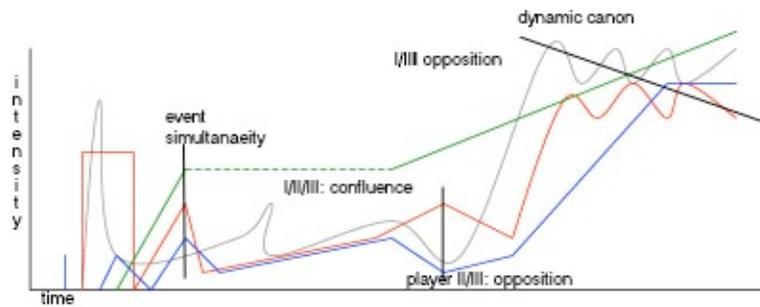
Excerpt 2



The exactitude of the graph shown in figure 4 (of Excerpt 2, from the first section) is unavoidably precarious towards the middle of the figure. This is because the exact dynamic shape of the material in the I/II/III players is predicated upon the dynamic shape that the fourth player chooses. So the fourth player is *instrumentally improvising* in terms of dynamics, and the other players respond in precise imitation. Three other distinct features that should be briefly discussed here are the event simultaneities, of which there are around three. The concord of structural phenomena occurring at the same time in different voices strikes the ear as being highly consequential. The mind posits a division, punctuation, or termination of some kind and begins to hazard a guess at what relationship it might have to the trajectory of the material. In this case, the first simultaneity occurs just as the fourth player begins to improvise dynamic shapes. The graph further shows that players I/II/III have a potential confluence of intensity increase (caused by different factors in each voice) that leads into a pitch-contour opposition between players II/III. After the point, there is a massive increase in dynamics in all voices. Two things happen in consequence. Firstly, the opposition that surfaced in players II/III as an inverse contour relationship, surfaces between players I/III as an inverse dynamic relationship. These inverses/oppositions and confluences are significant because they are audible categories from which we may subconsciously generate microdramatic shapes. Secondly, there is a “dynamic canon” which is one of a number of linear-imitative relationships that express themselves in the local forms of the music. The diagonal line is an attempt to show that the first player climaxes dynamically first, the second second, the third third, and the fourth

last. This creates a perceptible dynamic “wave” from the first player to through to the fourth (cross-faded loudness is essentially how panning in a home stereo system is accomplished)

Figure 4

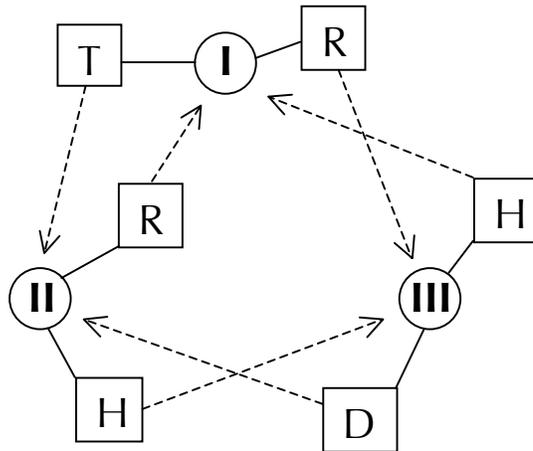


The second section accompanies the first appearance of the circular notation (imitate/develop). Metric notation is manifestly absent (loosening the time structure from its lattice, and causing the pacing of events to be *interpreted* by the players as a function of estimated translation of visual cues, interrelationships created by events occurring in other voice, or even sheer “feel”). Durations are specified however, and so this section seems to represent a medial state in the trajectory of diminishing rhythmic specification. Globokar introduces another structural principle in this section: the response chain. Here he breaks each player’s stream of attention into pieces and ask them to listen to the other players and imitate specific elements of their lines (pitch, rhythm, dynamic, or timbre). In one place, player III follows player II, and player IV follows player III (a telephone game of sorts). Eventually player III breaks away to perform a contrasting (but composed) gesture, and the other players soon respond by following him/her⁵⁹.

As an example of how confusing these response chains can be, here is a mapping of the division of attention streams that Globokar asks for in the deceptively simple looking excerpt 5 quoted below:

⁵⁹ Player III participates in the illusion of emancipation here? The other players adapt themselves to player III because they are motivated by the apparent assertion of his/her individuality?

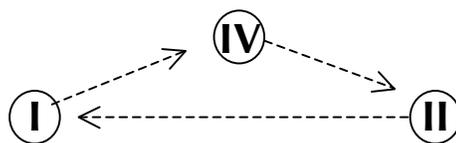
Figure 5



What we have seen so far is that the response categories invoked by the shape notations can actually create one of two different situations: a situation where three out of the four players is focusing on a particular player as a crowd following a leader, and a situation in which there is mutual exchange of leadership in confined streams of elemental categories (pitch, dynamic, rhythm, timbre). Also, the attention of the player may be focused so that they derive **all** of their musical behaviors from another player, or **parts** of their musical behaviors from another player(s). Thus one may say that these response chains are another dimension of the work that Globokar utilizes to symbolize social interplay, specifically as a function of power (via players generating and imposing content upon one another).

The movement from section two into section three involves the departure of specifically determined pitch-class content, but the re-introduction of synchronous gestures (and gradually of metric notation itself, for a time). Section three features an interesting moment in a response chain initiated by player IV. It can be mapped as follows:

Figure 6



In figure 6, player I adapts himself to the material as player IV shapes it, player II adapts himself to the material passed from player IV and mediated through player I, final player IV re-appropriates his own materials/interpretations from player II.

Meter departs from the notation again in the fourth section (this time never to return again). The rhythmic glue for this section is provided by event simultaneities. The duration of events, lengths of sections, proportions are not controlled by any notated means. This is unlike the first time meter disappeared, because here, traditional note values have disappeared as well. The time lattice has effectively been obliterated here, and rhythm becomes a gestural experience rather than a “measured” one. The players share the responsibility of leading one another in various capacities at various points, with no one player assuming any permanent priority over the others. Also, dynamics are now approximated, there is an element of choice given, but Globokar does indicate dynamic boundaries and general directions (which sometimes are a matter of choosing between one or more different dynamic trajectories).

Excerpt 3

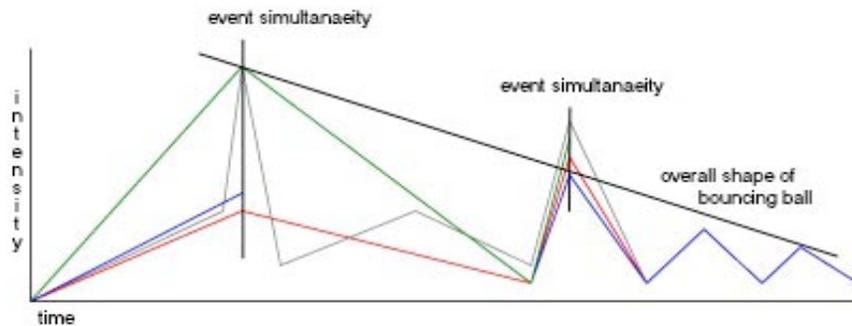
4.

The musical score for Excerpt 3 consists of four staves. The top staff begins with a box containing 'T' above and 'D R' below, with 'IV' written below the staff. It features a long horizontal line with a 'gliss.' marking and a 'SOLO' instruction. The second staff has a 'SOLO' instruction and dynamic markings 'fp', 'mf', and 'f'. The third staff starts with a box containing 'T' above and 'D R' below, with 'IV' written below, and includes a 'SOLO' instruction. The bottom staff has a box containing 'H T' above and 'D R' below, with 'II' written above it. The score includes various performance instructions such as 'gliss.', 'SOLO', 'ad lib.', and dynamic markings like 'fp', 'mf', 'f', and 'ff'. There are also some handwritten annotations and symbols throughout the score.

In this excerpt from the fourth section (as is demonstrated in the diagram below), Globokar creates an overall shape like that of a bouncing ball, through a unified mass climax (marked by a very clear event simultaneity) followed by a de-intensification in all voices leading into a second event simultaneity (also at a high intensity level, though not as high as the first), followed by the disappearance of two voices (players II/IV). Player I is initiating a gesture that properly belongs to the next gesture, so I’ve not mapped it into figure 7, but player III rounds out the liquidation of the ball bounce with two swells

(likely in performance to be interpreted as a continuation of the general downward trajectory in intensity set up by the first part of the gesture).

Figure 7



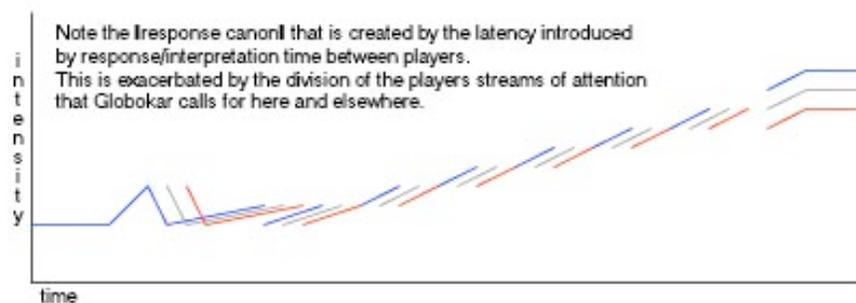
Section five begins the portion of the piece where players are asked to split their streams of attention into multiple directions (recall figure 5) and listen to one another more actively. In a sense, this represents a movement from taking your orders from the composer-dictator, to taking your orders from a specific leader, to taking your order from a complex of mutuality, and will eventually lead to a situation in which you take your orders only from yourself. This symbolic movement from one type of power-relation (total suppression of volition) towards another (absolute individual freedom) through different configurations of response chains, and through the softening and gradual deterioration of the determined materiality of elemental lattices is the means through which Globokar accomplishes a gradual transformation from completely composed to freely improvised music. But we are getting ahead of ourselves.

Excerpt 4

5.

The material presented in excerpt 4 seems simple, but requires a great deal of concentration from the players. Although the pitch content of the of player I's line is limited at first (it later intensifies by acquiring 3 additional pitches) and the pitch content of player II doesn't exist at all, and although the rhythmic aspect of the material seems rudimentary, the essential effect of such a high degree of focal diversification is the creation of "response canons." These canons are the latency that results from the amount of time it takes one player to perceive, interpret, and to appropriately execute the material they are given by the means they acquire from listening to a specified player in deference to a particular element. Figure 8 is a visual representation of such a response canon as is likely to result from the notated material/relations of Excerpt 4.

Figure 8



Moving ever forward, sections six and seven bring the further mollification of specificities. Timbre and mode of production are increasingly made a matter of choice. In some cases a pool of possible choices is specified (performer indeterminacy moves from instrumental choices that realize a determined statistical shape, to more consequential formal choices that may determine the future direction of the piece, though those choices may be only given alternatives to another given alternative. Section seven features the first appearances of the triangle (oppose) and hourglass (introduce a new situation) figures.

Excerpt 5 demonstrates some of the new situations and their effects upon the phenomenal experience of the work. Player IV, crucially, must introduce a new situation, player III is directed to imitate and develop that situation (actually there is no indication as to whether or not player III is to imitate player IV or player I – presumably then, it is the choice of player III who they will imitate). This makes it impossible to effectively predict

what the result of this notation will be until the mass crescendo before the fork in the road Globokar sets before player III. At this point, player III has the freedom to choose whether or not the music that follows the climax will be a continuation of violent/intense gestures, or a liquidation down to extremely quiet and more fluid gestures. The choice player III makes will be absorbed by player I. However, one should note that this new freedom for player III is not granted to the rest of the players (yet), nor is it a true freedom to decide the course of the music (as the imitative procedures which link the other players to player III will essentially lead to another statistical formal movement).

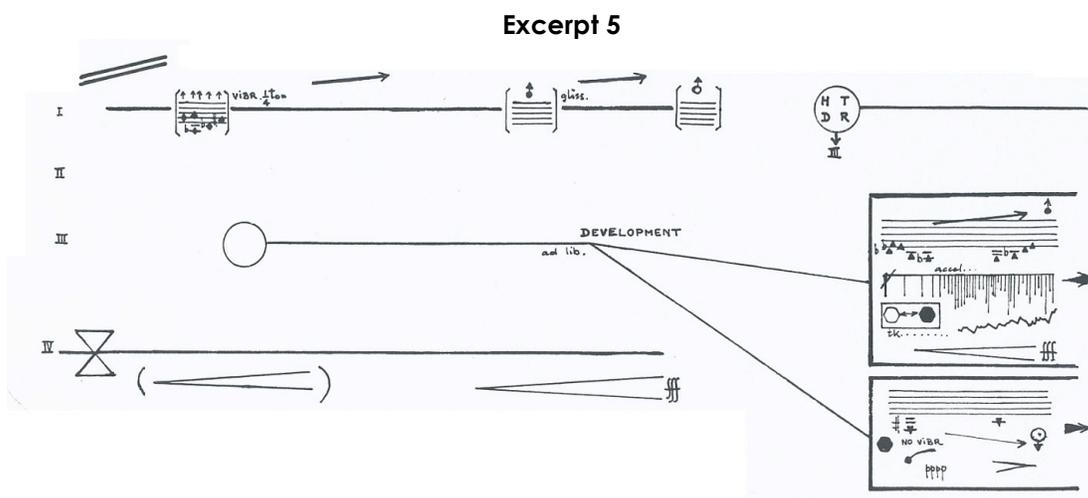
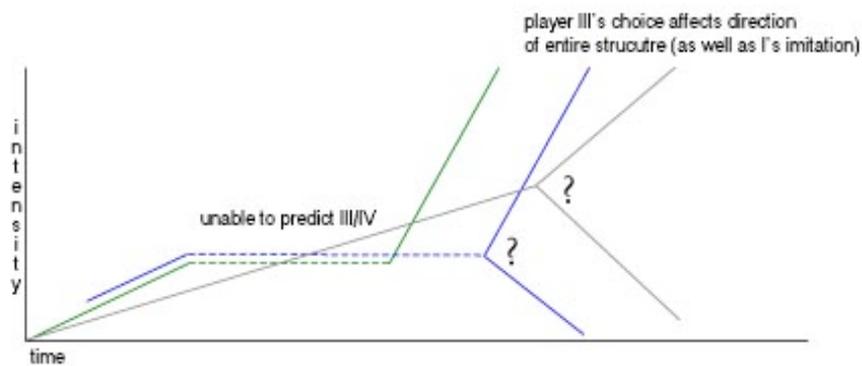
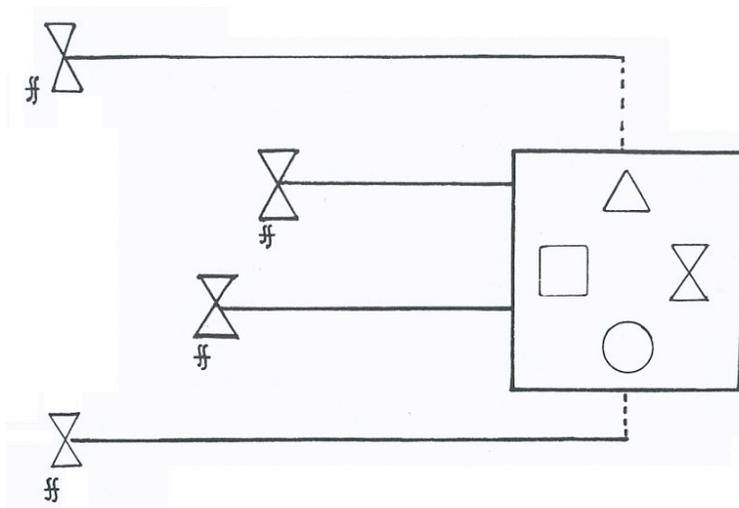


Figure 9



Finally section eight arrives and the score reflects its arrival be a drastic reduction in the amount of notations that are left for the performers to follow. The culminating gesture (and seemingly the arrival at total free improvisation) is reflected at the beginning of excerpt 6, where each player is directed to introduce a new situation (radically new material) at an incredibly loud dynamic. However, if Globokar had ended the notated portion of *Correspondences* with this gesture, he would not have succeeded in granting the performers the condition of totally free improvisation because they wouldn't have the choice to respond to one another in any way they like. This is why the further step of notating all of the response types in a choice-box was necessary. Of course, one may point out that Globokar limits their choices to four specific ways of relating to one another in the final gesture (and so has not really granted true freedom to the performers). And perhaps this is why Globokar was led to the conclusion that in all 102 performances of *Correspondences*, "never has a free improvisation been produced." But to make this conclusion seems to carry the analogy to an absurd extremity (all analogies break down somewhere). What is particularly important to point out though is that, as the reader will notice, there is no accompanying phenomenal graph for this notation. That is because there is obviously no way to make a prediction about what the sounds will be like. In at least this sense, Globokar has achieved the event horizon that leads into a free improvisation.

Excerpt 6



So to recap, the Hegelian/triadic dialectic as mediated through Karl Marx and Theodor Adorno has had not only a momentous effect on the aesthetic and compositional thought of Vinko Globokar, but also upon the entire Continental European avant-garde. Globokar's very concept of free improvisation as an analogy for the freedom of the individual in self-determination arises from the thought that has been historically developed and climaxed – at least for Globokar – in Adorno. Furthermore, the composer's fascination with the “not acceptable, not polite...[that which] questions habits...” is a thought very much in sympathy not only with Adorno's sometimes awfully polemic negative dialectics, but with the very roots of dialectic as a logical process of purgation and refinement *qua* triadic dialectic.

The dialectic process is the form of *Correspondences*. Its imprint can be seen in the gradual absorption of the deterministic into the volitional (the composed into the improvised). That this process can be realized *gradually* and by incremental transformation is an indication (via Marx's “law of the transformation of quantity into quality”) of its formal participation in that dialectical process. In the unfolding of this work through seeing it, through hearing it, and through reflecting on it, one is able not only to witness a very clever ratiocination, but a synthesis: one walks away from this work with a new understanding of what it means to compose and what it means to improvise, convinced perhaps that their old impressions were somehow insufficient to account for the complicated richness of both experiences.

Cope, David. New Directions in Music.

Stace, Walter T. The Philosophy of Hegel. Toronto, Ontario: Dover Publications Inc., 1955.

Globokar, Vinko. "Individuum – Collectivum." Milan: Edizioni UNICOPLI Milano, 1979.

Globokar, Vinko. "Correspondences." Frankfurt: Henry Litolff's Verlag (Edition Peters), 1971.

Corbussen, Marcel. "Improvisation: Between the Musical and the Social." Dutch Journal of Music Theory. Vol. 13, No. 1 (2008): 48-55.

Spahlinger, Matthias. "This is the Time of Conceptive Ideologies No Longer." Trans: Philipp Blume. Unpublished – trans: 2006

Henrich, Dieter. "The Contemporary Relevance of Hegel's Aesthetics" Hegel. Ed/trans: MJ Inwood. London: OUP, 1985.

Parkinson, GHR. "Hegel's Concept of Freedom." Hegel Ed. MJ Inwood. London: OUP, 1985

Hegel, GWF. "Philosophy of Art: Introduction." Hegel: Selections. Ed. M. J. Inwood. New York: MacMillan, 1989.

Adorno, Theodore W. Hegel: Three Studies. Trans: Sherry Weber NicholSEN. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1993

Hegel, GWF. The Science of Logic. Trans: A.V. Miller. London: George Allen & Unwin LTD, 1969.

"Dialectic (Hegel)." The Harper-Collins Dictionary of Philosophy. 2nd Ed. New York: Harper-Collins Ltd., 1999.

"Hegel." The Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Vol. 3. New York: Macmillan, 1967.

"Dialectic." The Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Vol. 2. New York: Macmillan, 1967.

"Dialectical Materialism." The Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Vol. 2. New York: Macmillan, 1967.

"Hegel." The Blackwell Companion to Philosophy.

"Freedom." The Blackwell Companion to Philosophy.

Lund, Erik R. The Discours of Vinko Globokar: To Speak-To Play. Urbana, IL: Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, 1988.

Adorno, T. W. Philosophy of Modern Music. Trans: Anne G. Mitchell and Wesley V. Blomster. New York: Seabury Press, 1973.

Adorno, T. W. Aesthetic Theory New York: Routledge, 1984

Adorno, T. W. "Music and New Music." Quasi Una Fantasia: Essays on Modern Music. Trans: Rodney Livingstone. London: Verso Classics, 2002. pp. 249-68.

Globokar, Vinko. "Der Kreative Interpret." Melos/Neue Zeitschrift für Musik. Trans: Herbert Brün. February 1976. p. 106