

DIALECTICAL PARALLELS IN ALFRED SCHNITTKE'S *SEID NUCHTERN UND  
WACHET* AND THOMAS MANN'S *DOCTOR FAUSTUS*

A Thesis by

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The following faculty members have examined the final copy of this thesis for form and content, and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Music with a major in Music History-Literature.

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Dean Roush, Committee Chair

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Walter Mays, Committee Member

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Judith Babnich, Committee Member

## DEDICATION

For Miki, Kaiji and Hiroki

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.

*1 Peter 5:8. King James Bible*

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## ABSTRACT

Alfred Schnittke and Thomas Mann were both fascinated by the legend of Doctor Faustus, a Germanic myth based upon the life of a real man who lived in the early sixteenth century. Doctor Faustus was a transgressive figure from the perspective of the Lutheranism that swept Germany during the sixteenth century. His exploits were exaggerated to the point of fantasy and eventually became the basis for a 1587 chapbook by Johann Spies. The Spies chapbook functioned as a morality play censuring the acts of witchcraft and divination and exhorting would be-readers to consign themselves to the grace of God. The chapbook quickly spread throughout Europe and was translated into several languages within a few years.

In the twentieth century Thomas Mann wrote the novel *Doctor Faustus* in which he employed biographical elements from such luminaries as Freidrich Nietzsche and Arnold Schoenberg and combined them with the musical knowledge of Theodore Adorno to create the fictional musician and composer Adrian Leverkühn. Leverkühn is the Doctor Faust for a new century and after reading the novel in 1947 Alfred Schnittke, a Russian composer of German descent, decided to compose a musical work based on the fictional descriptions of music. The resulting work *Seid Nuchtern und Wachtet* became one of Schnittke's most well-known compositions. There is a complex web of interrelated material in these two works of art and this thesis document reveals the dialectical position of Thomas Mann's novel and Alfred Schnittke's work to previous versions of the legend specifically that of Wolfgang Von Goethe.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Alfred Schnittke (1934-1998) read Thomas Mann's (1875-1955) novel *Doctor Faustus* shortly after its publication in 1947. The young, would-be composer was so inspired by the musical feeling in Mann's writing that he sought to embody the ideas from the novel in a musical work. He went on to study music at the Moscow conservatory and developed a unique style of musical expression based on the combination of elements from many musical periods, yet he never completely lost the original urge to write a musical work based on Faust. In 1983 an excellent opportunity presented itself in the form of a commission from the Vienna Singing Academy. He chose to compose a secular Cantata based on the original complete telling of the Faust Legend in a chapbook published in Germany in 1587.

Both Mann and Schnittke chose the story of the chapbook over the imminent nineteenth century retelling of the legend by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. The monolithic nature of Goethe's *Faust* had foiled the artistic designs of many composers in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. At 12,000 lines, the sheer immensity of Goethe's poem precludes any standard approach; a problem which is further compounded by the way in which the two halves of the poem *Faust I* and *Faust II* deal with fundamentally different subject matter. In *Faust I* Goethe's focus is on Faust's soul, while in *Faust II* the focus is on the social, cultural, political and psychological changes in the first half of the nineteenth century; the work has been hailed as a monumental

allegory, or collection of allegories about humanity in the modern age.<sup>1</sup> Even Goethe expressed reservations about its publication for fear that it would be completely misunderstood. The second half of his life's work, a *Sorgenkind* that had occupied a great portion of his creative life was left unpublished at his death in 1832. In many ways Goethe's *Faust* is mired in historiography—it is fraught with the pitfalls of Romanticism's struggle against the rationality of Enlightenment. The work has variously been interpreted as a gloss on the plight of the proletariat and their struggles with the elite class (Faust and Margaret's relationship), a struggle between technology and the individual (Faust's attempts to tame the sea in the second half), a Freudian exposition of the poet's childhood and a host of other representations. The reason for such a wide array of readings is that Goethe's drama represents the multi-faceted nature of the poet.

"[Goethe] did want to be seen as standing, in some sense, within the humanistic tradition—and within the Classical tradition and within the scientific tradition!"<sup>2</sup>

Mann and Schnittke, although from very different backgrounds, both experienced the psychological devastation of the World Wars. Mann, a German citizen, saw the transformation of his country during the First World War and shortly after he was forced to remain in exile; he eventually immigrated to the United States. Although reluctant to leave Germany, Mann believed that he could not help the country from

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<sup>1</sup> Jaroslav Pelikan, "Faust as Doctor of Theology," in *Faust*, (NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 2001), 586.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 587.

within its borders. He became an outspoken critic of the Fascist regime and the Nazi party, yet attempted to come to terms with his own German heritage in the light of mid-century atrocities. Schnittke grew up in the former Soviet Union, and as a descendent of Baltic Jews and German emigrants he witnessed first-hand the hardships of Soviet life under Stalin and his successors; unlike Mann he was unable and for the most part unwilling to leave his country of birth until very late in his life. Schnittke was heavily influenced by the German culture of his ancestors and so both he and Mann had to come to grips with the realities of being multi-national individuals in a time when patriotism and national feeling were intensely divisive.

The original Faust chapbook appealed to each of these men for various reasons, but not the least of which was its simple moral essence; the straightforward, visceral nature of the original book fit well with the unprecedentedly bleak psychological landscape that pervaded their respective countries in the aftermath of industrialized global warfare. Both artists used the prism of Faust to come to terms with the fractured nature of the individual in the twentieth-century. In Faust, Mann saw the dichotomy of good and evil as an allegory for Germany's struggle with Fascism and in the plight of the individual artist's existence in a shifting cultural landscape. Schnittke chose to present the Faust myth as a stylized commentary on the inevitable resistance that every person must have against the banality of "Evil," as it exists in the Postmodern era.

These two works of art, the *Faust Cantata* and *Doctor Faustus*, share a common ancestry in the German tradition of the Faust Legend, and there are many parallels between the two works, but even more important than their similarities are the ways in which these two artworks represent a dialectical engagement with the each other and the canon of Faust material. This dialectic is exhibited in the first place by the choice of the chapbook as the primary source material. In essence this choice contributes to an argument against Goethe's answer to the fundamental question of Evil and the individual's relationship to it. At the end of Goethe's Faust the anti-hero is ultimately pardoned. He ascends into heaven after being saved by Grace; the reason for the apotheosis is Margaret's supplication. Margaret is Faust's first conquest after his diabolical pact with Mephistopheles has died, but she was truly penitent for her sins with Faust and she loved him with a pure love. From her place in heaven she petitions the Virgin Mary to allow her to lead Faust into the "higher spheres." Her petition is granted and Faust ascends into heaven in the final scene of Goethe's drama. Neither Mann nor Schnittke were interested in this ideal ending. In different ways they both came to a similarly bleak conclusion: Faust dies in grim fashion without redemption.

## II. ALFRED SCHNITTKE

### ANCESTRY

Although he lived and worked in the Soviet Union for most of his life, Alfred Garyevich Schnittke (1934-1998), always felt a strong affinity for the German side of his ancestry.<sup>3</sup> He was born a Russian citizen but Schnittke had no Russian blood as both of his parents were of German descent and his grandparents were descendants of the Baltic Jews and were originally from Libava (now called Latvia), a German settlement on the Baltic Sea. Some Jewish settlers had been granted special permission to live in Libava because members of the family had been soldiers in the Russian army.<sup>4</sup>

Thea and Viktor Schnittke Alfred's grandparents on his father's side were members of the communist party before the revolution, but in 1910, they were afraid that their Jewish heritage would lead to imprisonment and so they fled to Frankfurt am Main from their home in Libava (now Latvia) and it was in Frankfurt that Alfred's father, Harry Schnittke (1914-75) was born. The Schnittkes stayed abroad for several years, but eventually returned to the USSR and settled in Moscow in 1926. Harry Schnittke found Moscow difficult. He had spent his early childhood in Frankfurt and only spoke German. He fled to Engels, a Germany speaking city in the Autonomous

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<sup>3</sup> His first trip to the West was in 1977 when he performed as harpsichordist and pianist with the Lithuanian Chamber Orchestra as a harpsichordist/pianist. He was only allowed to travel as a performer not as a composer during this period.

<sup>4</sup> Under normal circumstances Jews were only allowed to live in the "Jewish Pale," a segregated region of European Russia that had been set aside for Jews by Catherine the Great in 1791 after her predecessors failed in their attempts to remove them from Russia entirely. For more on this subject see: Benjamin Nathans, *Beyond the Pale: The Jewish Encounter with Late Imperial Russia*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004.)

Soviet Socialist Republic of the Volga Germans in the Saratov region about 600 miles southeast of Moscow. It was in Engels that he met and married Alfred's mother, Maria Iosifovna Vogel (1914-72).

Although Maria Vogel Schnittke was educated and taught German at the local school she was of peasant ancestry and her speech was filled with colloquialisms—a rustic folk dialect that had retained much of its ancestral origins in eighteenth century Germany. She was very involved with the "Young Pioneers" a section of the *Komsomol* and both Harry and Maria were loyal Communists (Harry had even volunteered for military service). However, the Soviet officials in Engels were suspicious of them because of their German background and because Harry, a journalist, often traveled out of the country.<sup>5</sup>

The Schnittkes owned a small tract of land a few kilometers outside of town on which they grew vegetables. As children, Alfred and his brother Victor would make the long walk to work with their mother in the garden, the produce from which was sold to help support the family. This engagement in the secondary market was a common activity throughout Russia, especially during the period of Collectivization. Small personal gardens were more productive than the collective farms and families

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<sup>5</sup> The *Komsomol*, a syllabic abbreviation from the Russian *Kommunisticheskii Soyuz Molodyozhi*, was the youth division of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. First formed in 1918 in urban centers as a Russian organization after the unification of the Soviet Union in 1922 it became an all-union society. Although the organization had little influence on the Party, it was a useful apparatus for imparting the values of the CPSU to the young.

were strongly motivated to buy and sell fresh produce because widespread famine had made such commodities scarce. The meager income that such a garden provided allowed the Schnittkes to survive from month to month during the lean years of the 30's and 40's.

"From his early childhood he remembers certain words which he could not find in any dictionary. For many years he was sure there were no such words in German, but he later came across them in Mozart's letters. So his German roots are very deep; he has always felt much closer to German culture of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries than to the more modern German mentality of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. As he himself believes, this gap in his consciousness between the seventeenth and twentieth centuries is one of the 'genetic' reasons for his interest in mixing widely-differing styles in his music."<sup>6</sup>

During his childhood Alfred developed a close relationship with his maternal grandmother Elisaveta Nikolaevna; she would read to him from the Lutheran bible and she instilled in him a sense of piety and spiritual devotion. Her nightly praying in German for the welfare of the family had a sobering effect on the household, even the youngest.<sup>7</sup> She was a Catholic, and though reading from the Lutheran bible was a grave sin for Catholics at the time (individual reading from the bible was discouraged until much later), there was no catholic community nearby and so she felt it was a justified violation. This early exposure to religion would have a lifelong effect on Schnittke. He referred to himself as a religious person in interviews even before his official conversion

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<sup>6</sup> Alexander Ivashkin, *Alfred Schnittke*, 17.

<sup>7</sup> Valentine Kholopova, *Alfred Schnittke*, (online version of a printed biography of Alfred Schnittke, [http://yanko.lib.ru/books/music/schnittke-holopova.htm#\\_Toc40655813](http://yanko.lib.ru/books/music/schnittke-holopova.htm#_Toc40655813) accessed, 10/22/2012), paragraph 10.

to the Catholic Church in the 1980's; however, he experimented with many different aspects of religion, in his personal life and in his music.

"It is my belief that throughout their lives — from the first moment to the last — human beings cannot count on the fact that they have been cleansed of sin and can regard themselves, therefore, as saved. They must fight for their salvation throughout their lives. But this fight must be genuine, brought about by contact with real dangers, not with something that only appears dangerous on the surface."<sup>8</sup>

Schnittke's first official music lessons occurred in Vienna (his father was posted there from 1946-48), and that city's rich artistic legacy made a profound impact on him. Although the city had suffered much damage from the War, the cultural life had rebounded quickly and Schnittke lived right in the heart of the city. His feeling of attraction for German culture, especially eighteenth century culture deepened considerably during those two years. "Vienna also gave Schnittke a certain spiritual experience and discipline for his future professional activities. It was Mozart and Schubert, not Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninov, whom he kept in mind as a reference point in terms of taste, manner and style."<sup>9</sup> It was here, decades later, that the premiere of his *Faust Cantata* would take place. Writing in 1981 he described a sort of recurring daydream:

I have had the same dream for almost thirty years: at long last I am arriving in Vienna — what happiness returning to my childhood, a dream come true. I see myself walking for the first time from the Ostbahnhof along the Prinze Eugen Strasse, across the Schwarzenbergerplatz, from the Seilerstette to the Singerstrasse. I enter a building, take the lift to the fourth floor, on the left is the entrance to the apartment. Everything is the same as it used to be at the best time of my life.

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<sup>8</sup> Alexander Ivashkin, *Schnittke Reader*, 30.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

Then I walk up in Moscow or somewhere, my heart pounding, feeling guilty that I was unable to make one last little effort to enable myself to stay forever in the past..."<sup>10</sup>

## NAGASAKI ORATORIO

Schnittke's career began inauspiciously with his graduation piece for the Moscow Conservatory, an oratorio entitled *Nagasaki*. The text of the work was based on a poem by Anatoly Sofronov, an official Soviet Poet not of Schnittke's choosing. He was encouraged by his professors at the Conservatory, almost all of whom were functioning in some official capacity as censors for the Party, to write an oratorio based on a political event. Although he was not opposed to writing music based on world events, and tragic ones at that, he was well aware of the inadequacies of the poetry.

"In in the 1950's [Schnittke] was eager to align his art with its social context and was (like many musicians and artists of his generation) very keen to make his work a humanitarian statement. But he did not like the poem."<sup>11</sup>

Exhibited in the Oratorio are the dynamic contrasts that form an essential part of Schnittke's style, but the work is mostly traditional, an early example that is tamed down in order to assure his matriculation from the conservatory; it was nonetheless criticized by the officials in the Composers' Union for containing "modernist" elements.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Alexander Ivashkin, *Schnittke*, 33-34.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 68.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, xix.

Although the head of the Soviet Composer's Union, Tikhon Khrennikov (who had been appointed to the general secretary of the Soviet Composer's Union under Stalin's rule in 1947) criticized the oratorio for being too formalistic (a charge he had previously leveled at several other composer's music including that of Prokofiev and Shostakovich), the oratorio was recorded by the Radio Moscow World Service in 1959. The recording was allowed partly because Dmitri Shostakovich had written a short letter of reference in which he commended Schnittke's piece as "a remarkable work." The one-line description was one that Shostakovich used often, but it was enough to get the piece recognized.<sup>13</sup>

#### THE SHESTIDESYATNIKI

Schnittke was part of a generation of people who are referred to in Russia as the *shestidesyatniki* (people of the sixties) a term which refers to the seventh decade of the century.<sup>14</sup> There is an interesting parallel between Russia of the 1860's and the 1960's: both decades saw a marked lessening of governmental control and an easing of the tensions between peasants and the ruling class. In the 1860's the emancipation of the Serfs created a massive shift in social and cultural relationships. The nobility and the common folk were suddenly thrown together into a new relationship of uneasy equality.

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<sup>13</sup> Alexander Ivashkin, *Schnittke*, 69.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 82.

After Stalin's death in 1953 there was an inevitable power struggle within the Politburo, one which lasted for several years. Career party officer Nikita Khrushchev managed to wrest control from his adversaries. The period from 1958 to 1964 is known as the "Khrushchev Thaw." In truth the thaw was a series of reforms followed by retractions; although there was a general sense of liberalization, ambiguity marked the decade.<sup>15</sup> The *shestidesyatniki* generation of the twentieth century was fascinated with all things Western and they eagerly desired to experience art and culture from Europe and the United States; it was during this time that Schnittke acquired scores of works by Berg, Schoenberg, Webern and Stravinsky.

Composers in the Soviet Union were offered only brief contact with music from the West, but the few compositions they were able to study led to a fascination with new techniques of composition; serialism and aleatory music was the "forbidden fruit of the Western avant-garde."<sup>16</sup> Schnittke's contemporaries in the Moscow scene, especially the "unofficial" ones, produced compositions using various Modern techniques, mostly influenced by the Second Viennese School in the 1960's. Arvo Pärt, Valentin Silvestrov, Edison Denisov, Sofia Gubaidulina and Schnittke all wrote serial works during this decade. Pärt's *Perpetuum Mobile* and Symphony No.1 are primary examples of his serial

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<sup>15</sup> Peter J. Schmelz, *Such Freedom if Only Musical: Unofficial Soviet Music During the Thaw*, (NY: Oxford University Press, 2009), 216.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 65.

explorations and Schnittke's *Music for Chamber Orchestra* is his most robust example of serial writing.

"In this work, Schnittke applied a process of rotations by which he permuted series that dictate rhythm, pitch, and in some movements, the number of pitches in each instrument's entrance, as well as the overall form."<sup>17</sup>

Although there are still aspects of the technique in later works by Schnittke, he grew skeptical of using pure serialism after the two compositions from 1964 *Music for Chamber Orchestra* and *Music for Piano and Chamber Orchestra*. Of the former piece he said, "I've grown cooler toward it because it is too dried out by dogmatic serial techniques."<sup>18</sup> He believed that the composer's responsibility lay in other areas besides working out calculations based on tone rows; the system was too rigid for him. He would view serialism from this point on as only one technique or style among others which could be employed for specific types of expression or as musical symbolism.

Another aspect of many composers within the *shestidesyatniki* generation was a turn towards religion. For decades the state religion had been Communist materialism, but the retraction of Stalinist cultural controls allowed interest in religion to grow; at least during the few years of the Khrushchev thaw the taboo of religion had been eased.

"But nowadays I have generally lost my capacity for being fascinated by reading a book or studying philosophy. I have lost it because it is if I am continually aware of the total inadequacy of a philosophy of ideas. Even at its most subtle it still reveals its permanent shortcomings. It is for this reason that all those naïve mystics who were disinclined to systematize and limit what they knew, simply expounding it, are no more important to me than

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<sup>17</sup> Schmelz, *Such Freedom*, 234.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 244.

those who erected a structured system of knowledge. If one starts with Jesus Christ and takes the Gospel of Saint John, the writings of Saint Augustine, Meister Eckhart, or Saint Francis, in every case we are dealing with a mystery that will always remain a mystery, even when it is manifested through the naïve and sunny disposition of Saint Francis. It is a mystery that you cannot explain. This for me is the highest form of literature."<sup>19</sup>

However, the Soviet Union was far from an open society, and if ordinary Soviets felt the loosening grip of governmental control they were still wary of public displays; most cultural activities such as concerts and art showings were held in semi-private settings, either at underground venues or in private residences. Although there was a sense of greater freedom, many intellectuals and party leaders including Khrushchev believed in a humanistic form of Communism, and the ultimate goal of the reforms was to promote stronger bonds of socialism. Despite the change in attitude from the government there was still a defining sense of equivocation; any Western influence was censored immediately.

"Cultural policy remained inconsistent and variable throughout the Khrushchev years. Khrushchev reduced the role of Stalin in history and promoted what he considered to be a 'return to Leninism.'"<sup>20</sup>

When Schnittke began to experiment with aleatory techniques in combination with tone rows, his first composition was secretly based on the Biblical Passion; few people knew of the Christian inspiration for the work.

"In the Second Violin Concerto individual compositional techniques had become stylized and assumed symbolic meanings for Schnittke, much as they had for Pärt. These meanings are

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<sup>19</sup> Alfred Schnittke, "Conversations with Alexander Ivashkin," in *A Schnittke Reader*, (Bloomington IN: Indiana University Press, 2002,) 7.

<sup>20</sup> Ronald Grigor Suny, *The Soviet Experiment: Russia the USSR, and the Successor States*, (NY: Oxford University Press, 2011), 432.

rather obvious, if somewhat unexpected: serial music signified dogma, Christ's teachings to the twelve disciples, while aleatory techniques symbolized chaos, the opposition of the hostile secular world to the spiritual law."<sup>21</sup>

An abrupt shift of power from Khrushchev to Leonid Brezhnev in October of 1964 resulted in a reversal of government attitudes towards openness and progress; official Russia, the government and nearly all levels of bureaucracy entered a period of stagnation during which artistic expression became an even more important outlet for the frustrations of the Soviet people.

"The social surface of Russian life became almost entirely false and empty, arranged and constructed only for political reasons; the real intellectual currents emerged only in art. Soviet art gradually became a substitute for reality, while for most people everyday real life had become both a nightmare and an illusion."<sup>22</sup>

#### UNOFFICIAL COMPOSERS

An important figure in the art music scene of 1960's Moscow was a Romanian-born immigrant from Vienna named Phillip Herschkowitz. Before his arrival in Moscow in 1941 he had studied with Webern and Berg in the 1920's and 1930's. Victor Suslin, a well-known Russian composer and associate of Sofia Gubaidulina's, stated in a 1989 interview that Herschkowitz had significant influence on the underground composers during the 1960's in Moscow:

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<sup>21</sup> Schmelz, *Such Freedom*, 246.

<sup>22</sup> Alexander Ivashkin, *Alfred Schnittke*, 83.

"But if he had not been there, then everything would have happened differently, because it was thanks to him that a number of Moscow composers received as it were a thread which led directly to Webern, to Schoenberg and to Berg."<sup>23</sup>

He did not teach Serialism, instead he focused on the music of the classic period, that of Brahms, Beethoven, and Mozart. He was particularly fond of Beethoven and often discussed what he felt was a unique use of motives and pauses in Beethoven's work.

"In particular he analysed the structural significance of the pause in Beethoven, and the connexion in Beethoven's music between the motive and the pause. This was a complete revelation for us, because the system of analysis used by Herschkowitz was, you might say, some kilometers away from the analytical system practiced in the Moscow Conserveratoire."<sup>24</sup>

Herschkowitz was a friend and mentor of sorts to Edison Denisov, Alfred Schnittke, Sofia Gubaidulina, Nikolai Karetnikov, and many others in the Moscow scene. These are some of the individuals to whom Schnittke alluded when he mentioned in passing, "a common school of rationalism," during an interview with his biographer Alexander Ivashkin. They are often referred to as the "Unofficial Soviet Composers," because they were not recognized by the state officials; they did not represent appropriate Socialist art.<sup>25</sup> Herschkowitz's direct connection to the Second Viennese School gave him credibility and the connection to Berg is particularly

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<sup>23</sup> Viktor Suslin, Dmitri Smirnov, David Drew and Gerard McBurney, "Herschkowitz Encountered," in *Tempo*, Vol. 173 (1990): 39.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 43.

<sup>25</sup> Alexander Ivashkin, *A Schnittke Reader*, 19.

interesting in the light of later events, but it was his knowledge of the First Viennese School that he most effectively transferred to the group of Russian composers.

"Herschkowitz influenced everyone like a dispensary with a distinctive soul. Talking with him and being exposed to caustic attacks from his side, I repeatedly received a strike of the switch, making me not say overly long with one or another technical device."<sup>26</sup>

It may have been through Herschkowitz's influence that Schnittke's misgivings about Serialism were confirmed. It is also possible, based on the rigorous working out of the row in *Music for Chamber Orchestra*, that he had quickly exhausted his own interest. In the Ivashkin interviews it is clear that Schnittke came to dislike what he referred to as a "crystallization" of art into rigid structures. He didn't entirely reject serialism, but viewed them as immature techniques that failed to satisfy his musical ambition. He felt that the act of creating and manipulating serial rows—rigid structures within which music was intended to thrive, was essentially a false representation of reality; music should not limit itself to completely rational methods.<sup>27</sup>

"Schnittke believes that any attempt to explain life in a 'crystalline' way is not adequate, as the rhythms of nature are irregular. So in the early 1960's he started to use broken rhythms and random sequences of sounds. As he put it, 'music is no longer a poem but prose,' and yet he wanted his music to be the kind of prose that people can understand and think about."<sup>28</sup>

Later, in the 1970's and early 1980's, Schnittke's music began to gain widespread recognition not only in the Soviet Union but also in the West, and he received many invitations to attend the premiers of his work in countries outside of the Soviet Union.

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<sup>26</sup> Alfred Schnittke in Schmelz, *Such Freedom*, 53.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, 86.

<sup>28</sup> Alexander Ivashkin, *Alfred Schnittke*, 92.

Due to difficulties in his relationship with the officials of the Soviet Composers Union his requests for travel visas were regularly denied.<sup>29</sup> Between 1964 and 1984 he missed as many as twenty premiers of his work outside of the Soviet Union. He made his first trip to the West in 1977, and even then he was only allowed to travel as a guest harpsichordist with the Lithuanian Chamber Orchestra.<sup>30</sup>

Despite the obvious ramifications of his position, Schnittke continued to resist the Bureaucracy. During the vote to reelect the Khrennikov as the General Secretary of the Soviet Composer's Union in 1980 Schnittke chose not to vote; he remained seated during the casting of ballots. Such a blatant refusal to follow tradition did not go unnoticed by Khrennikov. The affront seriously violated the unspoken rules of the Union and for nearly a year following the insult Schnittke's travel requests were left unsigned by Khrennikov and so Schnittke missed several more premiers of his works.

"Everything was kept under strict control....It was impossible or extremely difficult for non-conformist composers like Schnittke to attend the first performances of his works abroad. All letters of invitation were kept in Khrennikov's or his deputy's office, and in most cases no permission to travel was granted."<sup>31</sup>

By refusing to alter officially commissioned works which were regarded as "Formalistic" or had too many "Modernist" elements, Schnittke made it apparent that he

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<sup>29</sup> Alfred Schnittke wrote his first composition for piano in 1946, and by 1949, he had completed his first large-scale work, a concerto for accordion and orchestra. Despite having studied music and written compositions for over thirty years, Schnittke's first appearance in the Western media was in 1982. During the 1980's, Schnittke's popularity in the West grew considerably, due in no small part to perceived exoticism inherent in all things Soviet—Schnittke was soon hailed as the successor to Shostakovich.

<sup>30</sup> Alexander Ivashkin, *Schnittke*, 123.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 76.

was more interested in his own creative freedom than he was in composing works in the official style. Although he was "blacklisted," his works continued to please a large segment of the Moscow underground scene. Informed audiences attended concerts of Soviet music with eager anticipation and during the 1980's performances of Schnittke's works drew large crowds.<sup>32</sup> A vibrant and extensive underground art culture existed in Moscow during the 1970's and 80's. Day-to-day existence for Soviets in the twentieth century, both average citizens and artists, was divided into "official life" and what the composer Sofia Gubaidulina called "our real life."<sup>33</sup>

#### POLYSTYLISM

"His style, eclectic and often pointedly atonal, irritates or, more often, assaults the ears only to turn around and seduce them shamelessly, opening into heavenly harmonies."<sup>34</sup>

Schnittke's inclusion of multiple styles in his music is shrouded with a Russian penchant for melancholy and extreme contrasts, something Schnittke has in common with the *Kutchka* composers of the nineteenth century. Seeking to transcend the perceived hegemony of European music in Russia in the mid-nineteenth century, the *Kutchkist* composers developed a uniquely Russian style of music that owed much to the European tradition, but deviated from it as well. Like his Russian forebears in

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<sup>32</sup> Alexander Ivashkin, *Schnittke*, 75.

<sup>33</sup> Viktor Suslin, et al, "Hershkowitz Encountered," 40.

<sup>34</sup> James Oestreich, "Adventures Outside the Classical Canon," *New York Times*, August 12th, (2005): 26.

Mussorgsky, Cui, Balakirev, and Rimsky-Korsakov, Schnittke's music was seen in the West as an exotic import.

After the beginning of the Cold War, cultural exchange between East and West became ritualized and mostly superficial. Of particular interest to music scholars studying Schnittke's music has been his use of "collage" technique, a particular combination of musical elements that evolved from the extensive work he did scoring Russian films during the late 1960's. As Jean Benoit Tremblay points out in his 2007 dissertation on Polystylism in Schnittke's music, the composer's usage of the word "style" indicates a plethora of elements: "light jazz, tango, serialism, Baroque sequences, and classical phrases can all be called styles."<sup>35</sup> For Tremblay, the juxtaposition or combination of styles within Schnittke's music results in narrative gaps; a sort of negative dialectic in which the audience is expected to respond to the network of musical allusion and in particular these "narrative gaps," which are created by the collision of various styles. In Schnittke's Polystylism, there are two primary points of praxis: direct quotations from historical works or allusions to a particular style. At the surface level there are many stylistic elements employed but the result in the *Faust Cantata* is a binary opposition of high art and low art: a dialectical configuration between the chromatic musical permutations of all of the temporal characters in the

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<sup>35</sup> Jean-Benoît Tremblay, "Polystylism and Narrative Potential in the Music of Alfred Schnittke," (Quebec B.C.: University of British Columbia, 2007), 3.

piece and the direct expression of stylized low art of the Devil's tango in Number 7 "Es Geshah."

"I have this dream of a unified style where fragments of serious music and fragments of music for entertainment would not just be scattered about in a frivolous way, but would be the elements of a diverse musical reality: elements that are real in the way they are expressed, but that can be used to manipulate..."<sup>36</sup>

Tremblay argues that a space or gap is created in the implementation of Schnittke's Polystylism that allows an audience to interpret a work even if they don't understand the musical quotes or allusions. The gaps created by the discontinuity of narrative cause "willing listeners" to create their own narrative. Tremblay asserts that this is the response of a musically educated audience to the music of Schnittke. He notes that scholars in such diverse fields as psychology, literature and history agree that there is a natural human tendency to explain change and to group shifting concepts into a comprehensible whole.

"Fulfilling the desire for continuity is precisely what narrative involves, even if that might mean constructing a second work—that is a new layer of meaning—on top of the open space provided by fragmentation."<sup>37</sup>

Tremblay associates the sudden contrasts that occur in Schnittke's music with a literary device known as "Foregrounding." This type of device breaks up continuity and familiarity in order to place the focus of the listener or reader on new and contrasting material.

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<sup>36</sup> Alexander Ivashkin, *A Schnittke Reader*, 45.

<sup>37</sup> Tremblay, "Schnittke's Polystylism," 17.

This desire to create logical and linear historical accounts in the humanities is analogous to the search in scientific fields for elegant solutions to the puzzles of the universe. A "theory of everything"—the holy grail of the sciences, especially in physics is the search for an all-encompassing theory that takes into account all of the vast phenomena in the universe and threads these elements together into a comprehensible whole. The craftsman's simple and efficient arrangement of spindles in a spiral staircase or the clean lines of a Frank Lloyd Wright design represent the human desire for order and esthetic satisfaction and yet as Leonard Susskind warns in his book *The Cosmic Landscape*, nature is rarely simple or elegant.

Susskind defines elegance as the peculiar aesthetic appeal of simplicity in principles or axioms. He goes on to describe the elegance of Einstein's General Theory of Relativity and he traces the attraction of elegant solutions to early Greeks like Euclid, Pythagoras and later Plato and Aristotle—Euclidean geometry is unique and elegant, and for Plato and Aristotle the circle represented perfection and so in addition to their inherent mathematical implications these ideas also carry with them aesthetic considerations that have become embedded in the sciences.<sup>38</sup> In actual practice though, natural phenomena are not nearly as ordered and as simplistic as we might wish, the complexities that crop up in the observation of some of the most ostensibly simplistic

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<sup>38</sup> Leonard Susskind, *The Cosmic Landscape: String Theory and the Illusion of Intelligent Design*, (NY: Hachette Book Group, 2006, Kindle Edition), 119.

behaviors in nature are a poignant reminder of the basic unpredictability of the universe:

"Umberto Eco's conception of the dual pairs of listener/readers supports the idea of a narrative impulse. According to him, there are not one but two different authors and readers for every text: the empirical author effectively wrote a text in order to produce its model reader, while the model author is imagined by the empirical reader as to coincide with the intention of the text. In the case of Polystylism, the natural reflex of the empirical 'listener,' when confronted by the challenges put forward by the empirical composer, is to imagine a model composer, to try to penetrate his or her thoughts in order to explain what seems, at first sight, to be unexplainable, to render continuous what is discontinuous."<sup>39</sup>

While most of Schnittke's *Faust Cantata* is composed what Tremblay refers to as "uniform" style, there is one prominent juxtaposition of stylistic differences within the work, one glaring collision of high and low art: the tango.

Analysis is an act of freezing an artwork in time. Music and time are intrinsically linked and to suspend time in the act of research presents a special problem in the objectification of elements within the musical work. The necessary ambiguity of rhythm and time inherent in the acoustic elements of a musical work are difficult to quantify objectively. The beauty and evocative nature of music lies in the poetical intention of the composer and in the subjective reception of the work by the observer. Imminent twentieth-century sociologist and aesthetician Theodore Adorno calls this phenomenon "music's riddle" and he discusses various ways that music hints at solving its own riddle, however it never really does.

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<sup>39</sup> Tremblay, "Polystylism," 18.

"Music gazes at its listeners with empty eyes and the more deeply one immerses oneself in it, the more incomprehensible its ultimate purpose becomes, until one learns that the answer, if such is possible, does not lie in contemplation, but in interpretation. In other words the only one who can solve the riddle of music is the one who plays it correctly, as something whole."<sup>40</sup>

Tremblay offers another solution to the riddle of a musical work, one that occurs when the Narrative Gaps are filled in by the audience. In analysis the observer freezes the elements in order to understand in more detail the constituent elements. In both acts of observation, the observer is the unquantifiable piece of the puzzle, the subjective element.

At base Polystylism poses a dialectical puzzle to the observer; this is the narrative "gap" that Tremblay describes, and it acts as a catalyst for synthesis in the observer's mind. Schnittke describes this process in Stravinsky's music:

"Today, one cannot compose something living in the musical language of the eighteenth century (without setting oneself some sort of specialized task); to try this would inevitably lead to dead stylization, a corpse galvanized into life. But one can compose in a contemporary language, imparting archaic attributes to contemporary intonations; or, conversely, one can compose in an 'antiquated' language, but follow a contemporary developmental logic. The resulting musical logic will inevitably involve a sense of paradox because it no longer falls within the framework of a single style or a single era."<sup>41</sup>

Schnittke attributes the beginning of his Polystylism to a need to combine the work that he was doing as a film composer, with what he calls "work at the desk."

"The fact that I began to use a polystylistic method was brought about, first, by everything these composers had done before me, which I naturally could not ignore. But there was a personal element too. The polystylistic method, the use of interacting styles, gave me a way out of a difficult situation in which I had been put by having to combine, over a long period,

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<sup>40</sup> Theodore W. Adorno, "The Relationship of Philosophy and Music," in *Essays on Music*, edited by Richard D. Leppert, translated by Susan H. Gillespie, (CA: University of California Press, 2002), 139.

<sup>41</sup> Alexander Ivashkin, *A Schnittke Reader*, 154.

work for the cinema with work 'at the desk.' There was a time when I simply did not know what to do: I had to drop either one or the other. My way out was not just on the surface, it lay at the heart of the problem, because what I did for cinema was serious, not mere hack-work. In my early years as a composer I was even interested in writing real marches and waltzes, not stylized ones. It gave me a certain personal satisfaction. Then I reached a critical point when I no longer knew how to proceed. And the way out I found was the First Symphony, in which there is interplay of film music and music written 'at the desk.'"<sup>42</sup>

Often referred to variously as collage, pastiche, or in the case of Schnittke, "Polystylitics," the admixture of various styles from a broad range of historical periods is signatory of a uniquely twentieth-century sensibility; it represents an outlook on art that appeared in the 1960's and continued through the end of the twentieth century. This emphasis on a plethora of styles and ideologies, a virtual pantheon of 'isms' is often referred to under the umbrella term Postmodernism. According to Kristen Peterson, Postmodernism is the third stylistic wave of the twentieth century (the first two are dominated by Modernism).<sup>43</sup>

This same ideology is evidenced in Schnittke's article on Stravinsky's music in which he makes clear delineations between the serial style of Stravinsky and that of the Second Viennese School.

"Stravinsky's 'serial' period is highly distinctive. There is, of course, no hint of a capitulation to his more farsighted rival [Schoenberg], who divined one of the characteristic tendencies of the age earlier than Stravinsky did. On the contrary, this is just another of Stravinsky's faces. He is capable of 'admitting' anyone at all into himself, while retaining his own identity....But it is much more important to discover what distinguishes his serial works from

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<sup>42</sup>Alexander Ivashkin, *A Schnittke Reader*, 17.

<sup>43</sup> Kirsten Peterson, "Structural threads in the patchwork quilt polystylitics and motivic unity in selected works by Alfred Schnittke," (MI: UMI Dissertation Services 2001), 4.

those of the New Viennese School. Quite obviously, Stravinsky could not submit to the norms a style hitherto alien to him, just as he could never submit to the norms of any school or trend."<sup>44</sup>

In a general sense Modern philosophy is associated with the denial of transcendent truth. A post-Modernistic viewpoint can be seen as attempting to rectify a perceived failure of Modernism to adequately describe the human condition, the parallel to this argument is that of Enlightenment rationalism versus Romantic sensibility. Post-modern philosophy resurrects transcendentalism, sometimes with a strongly ironic inclusion of Modernist elements; it tries to bridge all gaps, but also remains purposefully shallow. Post-modernism is inclusive where Modernism is exclusive, but only to a point. Post-modern ideology recognizes history, while simultaneously removing itself from history. No one era or epoch can be delved into too deeply, only the affects of the different artistic periods are of interest, not the underlying ideals.

A direct result of the mechanized warfare of the twentieth century, Modernism was an attempt to distance the individual from these unexpected horrors:

"...the more of what human beings are aware of unconsciously is transferred into the area of what they know consciously, the more of what is known consciously comes to lose those elements that are invisible and imperceptible, those elements that are a kind of shadow of human thought, before it crystallizes. In a certain sense the very word 'crystallizes' already imposes a limitation on this strange and infinite world. When crystallization takes place, the whole outer shell of the world vanishes, and with it an infinite number of possibilities. That's the danger of crystallization. When knowledge becomes crystallized, although it acquires something, it loses a

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<sup>44</sup> Alfred Schnittke, "Paradox as a Feature of Stravinsky's Musical Logic," in *Alfred Schnittke: A Reader*, Translated by Alexander Ivashkin (IN: Indiana University Press, 2002), 180.

great deal. The 'crystal' may be something bright, sparkling, and solid, but it is still a crystal, not a living thing, organic, changeable."<sup>45</sup>

The Post-modern attitude includes a contingent that strongly opposes any elitist tendencies in the modernist movement. In post-war Germany the state sponsored activities at the Darmstadt school were an easy target for the charge of elitism. Artistic activities at Darmstadt were largely insular and overall there was a protective, defensive posture regarding the specific aesthetic vision of the participants. To many composers, especially those from places other than The Continent, the work of the Second Viennese School, a leading force in Modernist music, represented another iteration of self-proclaimed hegemony by proponents of European art music. This hegemony had begun as early as the Carolingian Renaissance, when Franco-Roman chant became the ubiquitous and officially sanctioned music of the church. Another self-proclaimed victory occurred in the nineteenth century with the ascension of German Romanticism.

Many Russian composers had felt the need to distance themselves from the German methods; such a feeling which was prominent in the nineteenth century, well-before the apocalyptic conflagrations of the First and Second World War. Composers like Cui, Mussorgsky and Rimsky-Korsakov felt it necessary to make their own innovations while still maintaining a place in the pantheon of Western Art music. As a result

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<sup>45</sup> Alexander Ivashkin, *A Schnittke Reader*, 6.

Russian music has secured a place that is paradoxically outside of the Western tradition while still engaging with it. This dialectical relationship between Germanic tradition and Russian tradition is central to Schnittke's portrayal of the Faust legend and relates to Thomas Mann's ideal of the freedom of the individual artist. What was important to Schnittke was the individual style of the composer. "Schnittke really lies between two traditions, with German rationalism on one hand and Russian irrationalism on the other."<sup>46</sup>

## MONTAGE

The idea of musical collage carries with it a particular type of evocative art in which the juxtaposition of disparate and seemingly unrelated objects, be they graphic, tonal or textual, creates what Max Ernst called a "plane of non-agreement."<sup>47</sup>

"...Ives was abruptly juxtaposing musical quotations from a hodgepodge of sources — hymns, folk music, classical works, marching band tunes — before surrealism was a viable artistic movement."<sup>48</sup>

Schnittke had been an avid reader from childhood, and one book in particular that had fascinated Schnittke during his teenage years was Thomas Mann's *Doctor Faustus*. Schnittke read the novel in the original German at least five times and held long discussions about the passages referring to musicology with his theory teacher

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<sup>46</sup> Alexander Ivashkin, *Alfred Schnittke*, 166.

<sup>47</sup> Anne LeBaron, "Reflections of Serialism in Postmodern Musics," in *Postmodern Music/Postmodern Thought*, edited by Judy Lochhead and Joseph Auner, (NY: Routledge, 2002), 29.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 35.

Joseph Rhyzkin.<sup>49</sup> *Doctor Faustus* would be a recurring puzzle for Schnittke, a source of ideas philosophical and musical that would find their hypostatization not only in the 1982 composition *Seid Nuchtern und Wachet*, but in numerous other works throughout his career. "I have read Thomas Mann's *Doctor Faustus* at least five times. The first time—in 1949-1950—it had only just come out, and somehow my father had acquired it, not permanently, but just to read. Since then, although I read it all the time, I've never fully grasped it."<sup>50</sup> According to Valentine Kholopova who published an analysis of Schnittke's orchestral works in 1990 as well as a follow-up publication that is the first biography of the composer, a situation occurred which was unprecedented in the history of art, namely that the fictional music of a literary image became the prototype for the realized music of a real music composer. "The irony lay in the fact that Schnittke, not having the necessary training manuals, 'studied' modern techniques of composition based on the novel by Thomas Mann!"<sup>51</sup>

The idea that Faust ultimately suffers for his decisions and is not saved was an important aspect of the story for Schnittke. According to Ivashkin, Schnittke's music represents the Faustian mythology: "The whole complex of Faustian problems is very similar to the philosophical substance of Schnittke's music which deals with doubt, self-

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<sup>49</sup> Victoria Adamenko, *Neo-Mythologism in Music: From Scriabin and Schoenberg to Schnittke and Crumb*, (Hillsdale, NY: Pendragon Press, 2007), 254.

<sup>50</sup> Alexander Ivashkin, *A Schnittke Reader*, 35.

<sup>51</sup> Valentin Kholopova, *Alfred Shnitke*, 31. <http://yanko.lib.ru/books/music/schnittke-holopova.htm> accessed 11/14/2012. Also see: Valentina Kholopova and E. Chigareva, *Alfred Shnitke: Ocherk zhizni i tvorchestva*, (Moscow: Sovetskii Kompozitor, 1990.)

analysis, temptation, repentance and the conflict between good and evil."<sup>52</sup> He was attracted to the simplicity and clarity of that original tale — the clear warning against collusion with the devil and the horrifying and grotesque consequences of such a pact. Schnittke created a version of the Faust Myth that was musically a unique expression of the unofficial Soviet music culture during the second half of the twentieth century, but his desire to add to the long tradition was rooted in his Teutonic cultural background.

The nature of free-will and the individual choice of good over evil is dealt with ubiquitously in civilized cultures throughout history and in all parts of the world: Eve and Adam in the Garden, Prometheus, Pandora, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, etc., but Schnittke's interest in his own ancestry made it natural for him to gravitate toward the Faust legend. One aspect of the German myth that is different from that of other tales is its relatively short history. The first cohesive account of the Faust myth appears in the late sixteenth century — its roots only reach into antiquity tangentially.

The German artist's rite of passage has often taken the form of an engagement with the Faust material and Schnittke's *Seid Nuchtern und Wachet* issued forth from the same cultural well as that of Thomas Mann's novel *Doctor Faustus*, but unlike Mann, Schnittke's engagement with the myth was sifted through the reality of his Russian existence. Schnittke's *Faust Cantata* is a representation of his own philosophy on evil

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<sup>52</sup> Alexander Ivashkin, *Alfred Schnittke*, 152.

and its power to seduce and overcome the individual—a philosophy that has its roots deep in the esoteric nature of Russian Christendom.

"According to Irina Schnittke, the composer's widow, 'God was there [in Schnittke's life] from the beginning.' She confirmed that Dostoevsky, with his constant search for God, deeply influenced the composer."<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Victoria Adamenko, *Neo-mythologism*, 248.

### III. THOMAS MANN

Thomas Mann's *Doctor Faustus*, first published in 1947, was the culmination of an idea that had begun to take shape in 1904.<sup>54</sup> Originally planned as a story about a syphilitic artist who commits suicide before his own wedding, Mann was beginning to formulate his own response to a recurring motive in Nietzsche's writings—a dichotomy, first described in Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy*, in which he asserts that elements of Dionysian and Apollonian mythology are counterposed within art. He uses the classic Greek tragedy as a nascent example of this phenomenon. Mann would explore these concepts in several other books before his final and in some ways most closely related to, in a musical sense, exploration of the subject in *Doctor Faustus*.

"First, awareness and analysis were allegedly fostered at the expense of spontaneity and vital exuberance: thinking had replaced action. Secondly modern intellectuals were obsessed with amassing all available knowledge about the self and the world, heedless of the consequences for a sense of purpose or identity; excessive awareness had undermined the self-respect and lamed the healthy self-assertion of individuals and of cultures."

The association of sickness with artistic expression is another Nietzschean concept that exists in much of Thomas Mann's work from *A Death in Venice* and *Buddenbrooks* to *The Magic Mountain*. In *A Death in Venice* the protagonist succumbs to his sickness and dies without realizing the object of his desire. In *Buddenbrooks* the forty-year history of the Buddenbrooks family is marked by successive generations that suffer from increasing sickness and loss of moral direction. The last member of the

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<sup>54</sup> Bahr, *Weimar on the Pacific*, (CA: University of California Press, 2007), 248.

Buddenbrooks family is aware that he doesn't fit into society yet is powerless to make his own way: "Hanno, who is uncomprehendingly aware that something is wrong, intuitively foresees that school is only the pattern in miniature of life outside, a life in which there is no part for him to play. What can become of him?"<sup>55</sup>

The undermining of vitality by insight, the struggle to sustain 'life-enhancing' illusions by sheer will-power: these are the raw materials from which the psychology of nearly all of Mann's characters is built, and the efforts of such characters survive in an inhospitable world is the stuff of most of his plots.<sup>56</sup>

Adrian Leverkühn, the fictional German composer at the center of the novel *Doctor Faustus*, is an artist whose descent into madness serves as a metaphor for the real German state. Leverkühn, a sensitive human being, is led astray in part by his own solitary nature; the qualities in Leverkühn that cause him to be a great artist are also the qualities that enslave him, and Mann believed this to be the case for Germany as well.

At issue in the novel is the parallel between the destruction of the individual for the sake of art and the destruction of society for the sake of the advancement of a utopian ideal; the un-humanity of modernity. "A focus on Germany's self-consciously problematic relationship to modernity; an exploration of conflicts between the ethos of artistic creation and the demands of private and public morality; and, perhaps most importantly, a desire to take a stand on moral, cultural and political issues, uneasily combined with a deep suspicion of the blandishments of solidarity in either assent or

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<sup>55</sup> R.A. Nicholls, *Nietzsche in the Early Work of Thomas Mann*, (CA: University of California Press, 1955), 15.

<sup>56</sup> Michael Beddow, *Thomas Mann: Doctor Faustus*, (NY: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 7-8.

dissent, a tension between didactic ambitions and radical individualism."<sup>57</sup> By grappling with the issue of modernity and its inherent utopian ideals, Mann was engaging with a natural dichotomy.

## NIETZSCHE

German intellectual society was polarized in the early twentieth century between the ideas of Freidrich Schiller, viewed as the traditionalist, and Freidrich Nietzsche, the anarchist.<sup>58</sup> In Nietzsche's early writings, and specifically in *The Birth of Tragedy*, his position is not directly opposed to that of Schiller's, but can be seen as an extension of it. At the close of the nineteenth century the linking of these two names together would have resulted in a profound sense of contradiction in any well-read German; however, Udo Gacde compared the two German writers in a 1908 book entitled *Schiller and Nietzsche als Verkünder der tragischen kultur*. Gacde argues that Schiller is a predecessor to Nietzsche, an idea that was controversial at the time and has not gained much support since, but what is interesting about the Gacde study is his summation of the attitudes toward these two giants during the nineteenth century. Nietzsche was interested in and wrote extensively about the opposing forces of Apollonian and Dionysian modes of being in his 1872 book "The Birth of Tragedy." He understood Schiller's poem *An die Freude* to be fundamentally Dionysian in nature because it was

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<sup>57</sup> Michael Beddow, *Thomas Mann*, 3.

<sup>58</sup> Nicholas Martin, *Nietzsche and Schiller: Untimely Aesthetics*, (NY: Oxford University Press, 1996), 2.

the Dionysian that brought humanity together in fraternity and also imparted health, vitality and life.

For Nietzsche, the Dionysian is the reconciliation of the alienated soul of man with that of nature, and Schiller's poem which describes the reconciliation of man with himself and his brother aspires to this type of freedom. However, for Nietzsche, the poetry is unable to fully express this ideal—the fully Dionysian import of the idea is realized in the combination of Schiller's text and Beethoven's music.

"Transform Beethoven's 'Hymn to Joy' into a painting; let your imagination conceive the multitudes bowing to the dust, awestruck—then you will approach the Dionysian."<sup>59</sup>

Mann didn't wholly agree with Nietzsche's concept of the *Übermensch*, and in *Doctor Faustus* he explores a kind of anti-hero, in some ways the opposite of this "Superman," in the fictional composer Leverkühn a simile of Nietzsche. Through this character Mann explores the darker side of the Dionysian; sickness and death accompany the diabolical inspiration and he ultimately argues that ethics wins out over aesthetics.<sup>60</sup> Illness and health were the Janus-faced aspects of Leverkühn's existence after he had consummated the syphilitic union with Esmeralda. During bouts of illness Leverkühn gathered his thoughts and creative energies for the periods when his health

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<sup>59</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, translated by Walter Kaufman, (NY: Vintage Books by Random House, 1967), 37.

<sup>60</sup> Caroline Joan Picart, *Thomas Mann and Friedrich Nietzsche: Eroticism, Death, Music and Laughter*, (Amsterdam, Netherlands: Rodopi, 1999), 48.

returned; he then worked in "breathless productivity."<sup>61</sup> It was the dialectical relationship in this "morality play" that so attracted Schnittke to the *Doctor Faustus* novel and why he eventually decided to use the text from the chapbook.

Leverkühn's last work *The Lamentation of Doctor Faust* is counterposed to the Romantic tour de force of Beethoven's Ninth symphony. The final work by Leverkühn is said to be an "Ode to Sorrow" a denial of the utopia that Beethoven, the hero of Romanticism, had alluded to in the final movement of his last symphony. In the description of the final movement of Leverkühn's piece, a reversal is obvious from the outset. Contrary to the long orchestral introduction at the beginning of the fourth movement in Beethoven's piece Leverkühn's choir opens the movement with lamentations, and then is overcome by the orchestra; the instruments silence the poetry—a direct reversal of Beethoven's "vocal jubilation."<sup>62</sup>

#### SCHOENBERG SERIALISM AND SYPHILIS

It is axiomatic that Schoenberg saw himself as the natural and necessary culmination of the German musical tradition. The hegemonic position of German culture was a common conceit among German intellectuals throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. For many hopeful young composers during the mid-twentieth century, Schoenberg's music represented a major breakthrough—progress

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<sup>61</sup>Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus*, translated by H.T. Porter-Lowe, (NY: Knopf, 1948), 352.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 490.

and advancement—the next step in the evolution of musical expression. Whether or not he was the actual innovator of dodecaphonic music, Schoenberg certainly put that music in the spotlight and was very protective of what he saw as his personal invention. He was critical of Mann's novel *Doctor Faustus* because he felt that Mann had infringed on his intellectual property. In addition he was afraid that people reading the novel would make too close of a connection between himself and the fictional composer Adrian Leverkühn. Alex Ross retells a story about an encounter between Schoenberg and Marta Feuchtwanger, the wife of another novelist, Lion Feuchtwanger, which occurred in the late 1940's in Los Angeles. The woman was shopping in a market when she was approached by Arnold Schoenberg who was distraught: "Lies, Frau Marta, lies!" Schoenberg was yelling. "You have to know, *I never had syphilis!*"<sup>63</sup>

#### THEODORE W. ADORNO AND ALBAN BERG

In addition to imbuing his fictional composer with the musical ingenuity of Schoenberg, Mann drew heavily on another connection to fill in the gaps of his musical knowledge. He had struck up a friendship with fellow German expatriate and Frankfurt School luminary Theodore W. Adorno. While living in Los Angeles Adorno was composing music and working on his manuscript for the soon to be famous essay, "The Philosophy of New Music." Mann read the essay (as well as several of Adorno's

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<sup>63</sup> Alex Ross, *The Rest Is Noise: Listening to the Twentieth Century*, (NY: Macmillan, 2008), 36.

other works) and knew immediately that this was the person who could help him with the deeper issues of musical art in his novel.

"In spite of his highly developed musical interests, Thomas Mann was aware that he needed a 'helper, adviser, and sympathetic instructor.' Mann recorded consulting with Theodore W. Adorno for the first time while working on the novel on July 6, 1943 (they had met socially at Max Horkheimer's house in the Pacific Palisades in 1942 and earlier in 1943.)"<sup>64</sup>

Although Adorno became well-known for his sociological, aesthetic and philosophical works in the twentieth century, he was also a life-long composer who had studied with Alban Berg, one of the venerable Second Viennese School composers. In 1926 Berg had written to Schoenberg about Adorno's music. At that time Adorno was known to Berg by his patronym Wiesengrund:

"Wiesengrund's work is very good and I believe it would also meet with your approval, should you ever hear it. In any event, in its seriousness, its brevity, and above all in the absolute purity of its entire style it is worthy of being grouped with the Schönberg school (and nowhere else!)"<sup>65</sup>

Adorno's influence on the novel is a well-documented fact and has been written about in numerous publications and books, most notably by Thomas Mann himself in the follow up to *Doctor Faustus* entitled, *The Story of a Novel: The Genesis of Doctor Faustus*. Underlying this connection is the influence of Alban Berg on the musical thought of both Adorno and by extension Mann and Philip Herschkowitz, who was a significant influence on Alfred Schnittke.

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<sup>64</sup> Ehrhard Bahr, *Weimar on the Pacific: German Exile Culture in Los Angeles and the Crisis of Modernism*, (CA: University of California Press, 2008), 253.

<sup>65</sup> Richard Leppert, "Introduction," in *Essays on Music: Theodor W. Adorno*, edited by Richard Leppert, translated by Susan H. Gillespie, (CA: University of California Press, 2002), 14.

## THE ALIENATION OF THE SOUL

In *Doctor Faustus*, the inner conflict between learned inhibitions and the inborn urge of the artist to produce art functions as the soil out of which creativity flows; Mann calls this the naïveté of the artist, however, it is not the same thing as purely naive existence. Mann actually makes the distinction between a simple naïveté and a layered naïveté. This particular naïveté that Mann addresses is buried deep within the soul of the individual, an underlying trait upon which layers of consciousness, strata of resistance lay. The basic desire to live and be comfortable blocks the essential creativity of the artist and therefore it is through the degradation of vitality, the destruction of the body that essential creativity is released. The types of music which the character Leverkühn dashes off, those penultimate works are works of satire, sarcasm and the "intellectual mockery of art." This music is perfectly admirable in technical proficiency and in acceptable stylistic mannerism, yet it lacks the primal force of true expression — the milquetoast exercises of a mind that has moved on. Mann states that it is remarkable that "an artist can give his best to a thing in which he privately no longer believes, insisting on excelling in artistic devices which for his consciousness are already at the point of being worn out."<sup>66</sup>

For some theologians the very existence of humanity, in its current form, is sin. To be born is sin. How can Leverkühn's contraction of syphilis be viewed as signing the

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<sup>66</sup> Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus*, 151.

Devil's contract? Leverkühn purposefully inflicts the disease on himself in order to master his own destiny. The disease speeds up the natural process of entropy and essentially forces him to create at a higher level, more feverishly, with more vehemence. He writes the entirety of the *Faust Cantata Apocalypses cum figuris* in four months, apparently a very short period relative to the sheer size of the work.

"There are no eternal facts any more than there are absolute truths. Consequently what is needed from now on is historical philosophizing and with it the virtue of modesty."<sup>67</sup>

This belief creates relativity between all perspectives and historical viewpoints. Practicing modesty, the philosophizing historian ensures that no particular viewpoint is given the benefit of being superior to any other. Within Doctor Faustus there exists a plurality of characters and opinions, none of whose particular viewpoint is hegemonic to the narrative. Mann believed that myth was a repository of stability within cultural change.<sup>68</sup>

"Mann in his turn follows the Goethean example in recreating the legend of Faustus for his epoch. But in his radical use of montage Mann also assumes all the various roles of author, editor, and copier, defying the limitations of historical time and of individual, finite authorship, to compile, to 'construct' and create his epoch's legendary life of 'Simon Magus/Faustus/Nietzsche/Mann as composer Adrian Leverkühn."<sup>69</sup>

In his book *The Faust Legend in Music and Literature* William E. Grimm points out that Leverkühn's existence is a predetermined one; Leverkühn's fate is sealed from the

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<sup>67</sup> Frederich Nietzsche, *Human All Too Human*, Trans. R.J. Hollingdale,(UK: Cambridge University Press, 1986, 1996), 13.

<sup>68</sup> Michael Beddow, *Thomas Mann*, 4.

<sup>69</sup> Marguerite De Huszar Allen, *The Faust Legend: Popular Formula and Modern Novel*, (NY: Peter Lang Publishers, 1985), 83.

beginning, an ultimate demise that is like that of a hero in Greek tragedy. The description of Adrian Leverkühn's father, a "scientific dilettante" whose study of the naturally predetermined patterns in mollusks, flowers and the symmetry of ice crystals is according to Grimm a precursor to Adrian's study of the 12-tone system.<sup>70</sup> Leverkühn's father is an amateur naturalist and he takes pleasure in pointing out the strange and strange and obscure phenomenon of the natural world. Zeitblom describes him as one who wanted to "speculate the elements."<sup>71</sup> He uses the terminology on purpose to intimate a certain mysticism and occult sense about the older Leverkühn's interest—the dabbling in the black arts was ostensibly passed on to the son. Michael Beddow describes an intentionally Freudian aspect in the relationship between Leverkühn and his parents. In the Freudian concept of familial hierarchy the parents serve particular roles in the development process of their male offspring; the father figure is the law-giver, a boundary creator and the oppositional force in the psychology of the child while desire is learned from and for the mother. Beddow points out that Leverkühn's father blurs the boundaries the he is supposed to create and his mother shields him from the desire he is supposed (in the Freudian sense) to learn from her:

"Transgression and its interdiction by 'le 'Non' du Père' are possible only where there are firm boundaries, and Adrian's father takes special delight in blurring borders, pointing out to his son instances where categories dissolve into one another. So if the mother protects herself and vainly tries to protect her child against the allurements of desire, the father, far from enforcing discipline and law, actually subverts paternal rigor and clarity. Adrian Leverkühn's childhood is

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<sup>70</sup> William E. Grimm, *The Faust Legend in Music and Literature*, (Lewiston, NY: 1988, Edwin Mellen Press), 74.

<sup>71</sup> Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus*, 13.

deficient in the primary influences by which the male self is formed in the modern nuclear family."<sup>72</sup>

The result of this subversion and unnatural upbringing is Leverkühn's basic coldness and lack of feeling. At the center of his being is a hole where normal human feeling should reside. Here at the beginning of the novel the first important dialectical relationship occurs. The overtly perceptive individual who everywhere searches for something in life that will challenge his intellect has underneath a paucity of inner vitality a basic lack of soulfulness. In this section Adrian's father goes on to describe the butterfly species *Hetaera Esmeralda*, which hides among the foliage undetectable by predators because of its transparent wings. This is the first mention of the name *Esmeralda* which is attributed to the woman from whom Leverkühn contracts syphilis and who exists as the parallel archetype to Helen of Troy in earlier Faust myths. The description of natural prey and predators develops into remarks by Adrian's father about the vanity of outward beauty and the contradictory reality of nature. Nature contains both what is organic and inorganic and the older Leverkühn demonstrates to the two young boys, Zeitblom and Adrian, that it is difficult to tell one from the other in certain situations. After growing a miniature landscape of crystals in a vat of muddy water the older Leverkühn's asks the boys what they think the growth is:

"It was the most remarkable sight I ever saw, and remarkable not much for its appearance, strange and amazing though that was, as on account of its profoundly melancholy

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<sup>72</sup> Michael Beddow, *Thomas Mann*, 20.

nature. For when Father Leverkühn asked us what we thought of it and we timidly answered him that they might be plants: 'No,' he replied, 'they are not, they only act that way. But do not think the less of them. Precisely because they do, because they try to as hard as they can, they are worthy of respect.'<sup>73</sup>

This is a clear example of the two types of nature within Adrian and as an extension within the German people. Crystals in the vat developed into strange plantlike formations due to the deliberate placement of certain chemicals in the sand by Father Leverkühn—their natural inclination towards light caused them spring up from the layer of silt, but the whole experiment had been artificially created by the interference of the naturalist. Mann is attesting to the strange and wild aspects of Nature, but he goes further in asserting that the development of such "impish" phenomenon is a direct result of human interference. "...such weirdness is exclusively Nature's own affair, and particularly of nature arrogantly tempted by man."<sup>74</sup> It is the assertion of the will that brings out the diabolical aspects of nature.

The idea that music has evolved from an art of comfort to an iconoclastic expression that effaces and reminds the participants of human suffering comes from Adorno through Mann and is revealed in the *Faust Cantata*. Mann's *Doctor Faustus* simultaneously carries on the tradition of the Germanic Faust legend while incorporating aspects of twentieth-century aesthetic philosophy, especially that of Theodore Adorno's book, *Aesthetic Theory*.

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<sup>73</sup> Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus*, 19.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

"I understand that when Thomas Mann writes in his *Doctor Faustus* of an imagined oratorio on the Apocalypse in which the music of the righteous entering the Kingdom of Heaven and the music of Hell use the same notes, we have as it were the negative and the positive. This is important for me as a structural necessity: a work of art must have a structural unity. This unity can be expressed in different ways, at different levels."<sup>75</sup>

## POLITICS AND NATIONALISM

In a recent analysis of *Doctor Faustus*, Frances Lee creates a bifurcation in the novel between Zeitblom's narrative and Adrian's perspective. According to Lee the traditional reading of the novel views Zeitblom, the novel's narrator, as a pro-Fascist and through his pact with the Devil Adrian also becomes pro-Fascist. Lee's thesis is that Zeitblom's account is a misreading of Leverkühn's views and that the two characters are actually at odds in their interpretation of events. Such a reading seems to create an ideological wedge between Mann and his own creations, this is precisely the point:

"It is my argument that the story of *Doctor Faustus* is told simultaneously from two opposing points of view, that of the narrator of the biography and that of his subject. Parallel to Zeitblom's account, Adrian's point of view can always be perceived, and his interpretation of events is very different....In effect, Mann has the narrator consistently showing the reader one thing and telling him another."<sup>76</sup>

The interesting thing about Lee's book is that it reverses the traditional roles of the two characters. From standard perspective Zeitblom is the upstanding German citizen, patriotic, not given to extremes, a very sensible gentleman who cares deeply for

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<sup>75</sup> Alexander Ivashkin, *A Schnittke Reader*, 24.

<sup>76</sup> Frances Lee, *Overturing Dr. Faustus: Rereading Thomas Mann's novel in the light of Reflections of a Non-Political Man*, (NY: Camden House, 2007), 19.

his troubled friend Leverkühn. Lee turns this idea on its head, instead presenting a more complex view of these two characters as they relate to two sides of Thomas Mann's inner life. Zeitblom is seen as distorting the real position of Leverkühn by associating his descent into madness with the Devil.

Like many prominent German intellectuals Mann held strong views about the superiority of the German culture and way of life even in the face of the acts perpetrated by his countrymen during World War Two. In 1918 his book entitled *Betrachtungun eines Unpolitischen* [Reflections of a Nonpolitical Man] Mann praises the primal nature of the German people, the lusty and passionate soul of Germany. In the chapter entitled "Against Justice and Truth" Mann makes a distinction between qualities that are human and those that are political. When he writes that politics are concerned with things inhuman and the concern of the artist is chiefly those things that are most human, he is referring to a specifically governmental type of political attitude and not a general view of politics as interaction between individuals. He is essentially using an appeal to naturalism to justify Germany's aggression during World War One; the reason that Germany has a right to defy its neighboring countries is inherent in the German spirit.

*Betrachtungun* began as an argument between Mann and his brother Heinrich over their respective politics. The brothers stood on opposite sides of a great political divide in Germany during the First World War. Most of the essays that make up the

book were written during that period and they are a reflection of Mann's desire to come to terms with the changing political climate of his country. Frances Lee describes Mann's intentions in the book:

"Since it is inevitable that Germany will soon be a democratic country no matter who wins the war, it is necessary, Mann argues, to face the problem and to develop some criteria for directing this change....What Mann says, in effect, is that modern political totalitarianism is based on the same view of social control as was medieval Catholicism....dissent from this dogma is considered dangerous to the public order."<sup>77</sup>

Mann was opposed to those in Germany who wished to establish a democracy based on the French model, what he believed was a form of communism advocated in Rousseau's *Social Contract*. The opposing forces in the book are two mutually exclusive humanistic viewpoints the first, Heinrich's position, is based on the French model, an extension of Roman Catholicism of the medieval period. The second, Mann's viewpoint, is that of traditional German values based in Reformation Protestantism. The French system as Mann understood it would impose a social model that favored homogeneity and conformity, ideas that he believed were inimical to the freedom inherent within German culture. He feared that his side of the fight was in dire straits and the vehement arguments in the book are a reflection of his apocalyptic vision of German society as it would be realized under the French system. Such a position naturally placed him on the side of the conservatives in Germany during the First World War.

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<sup>77</sup> Frances Lee, *Overturing Dr. Faustus*, 25.

The basic arguments within *Die Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen* form a vision of morality and culture that is further developed in his later novel *Doctor Faustus*. Lee describes two characters as they exist in *Die Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen*, the Catholic Humanist and the Protestant Artist; these two characters serve as archetypes and their attributes appear in various fictional characters throughout Mann's *oeuvre*. The Protestant Artist is the opposite of the Catholic Humanist, but this archetype has nothing to do with religion in a basic sense, it is the embodiment of German morality and the specifically Teutonic approach to life. "[German Protestantism] is synonymous with the artist, with nineteenth century values, and with Mann's views, which he says are based in Wagner, Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, Kant and Goethe. Protestantism is essentially musical. It embodies the whole German Protestant culture."<sup>78</sup>

#### WORLD WAR I AND DOCTOR FAUSTUS

In Chapter XXX of *Doctor Faustus*, which takes place at the beginning of World War I, the narrator Zeitblom describes a national feeling of excitement regarding the imminent conflict; the out-of-ordinary movement carries everyone along—inertia blinds the majority to massive horrors that are about to be visited upon humanity.

"Of course the sword waving of that fundamentally unsoldierly play-actor, made for anything but war, who sat on the throne was painful to the man of culture; more over his attitude to things of the mind was that of a retarded mentality....Our naive egoism finds it unimportant, yes, takes it entirely for granted, that for the sake of our development (and we are always

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<sup>78</sup> Frances Lee, *Overturing Dr. Faustus*, 37.

developing) the rest of the world, further on than ourselves and not at all possessed by the dynamic of catastrophe, must shed its blood."<sup>79</sup>

There was a general sense of naiveté about the beginning of the Great War. It was viewed as a clearing of the air between the leaders of Europe, most of whom were first or second cousins, e.g. Tsar Nicholas II of Russia, King George V of England and Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany. A naval arms race between Germany and Britain began with the British unveiling a new *Dreadnought*-class battleship in 1906. From that point a general escalation in the development of mechanized weaponry began in earnest in several countries. Nineteenth-century industrialization changed nature of the military so quickly that no one had a clear idea just how much destruction could be inflicted. Conflicts in recent memory had been minor skirmishes with infantry and cavalry, but these new weapons had not been tested on the battlefield. What ensued was devastation on an unprecedented scale.

The pride and jealousy of the leaders in Germany, Britain and Russia was fuel to a nationalistic fire that had been smoldering in those countries during the final decades of the nineteenth century. Germany, a country surrounded by competitors, felt a particular kind of pressure that was geographical and that had deep roots. This type of misguided faith in the virtue and strength of Germany is summed up in Zeitblom's description of the general feeling at the beginning of the war:

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<sup>79</sup> Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus*, 300.

We were bursting with the consciousness that this was Germany's century, that history was holding her hand out over us; that after Spain, France, England, it was our turn to put our stamp on the world and be its leader; that the twentieth century was ours; that now, at the end of the bourgeois epoch begun some hundred and twenty years before, the world was to renew itself in our sign, in the sign of a never up to the end quite defined military socialism."<sup>80</sup>

Mann famously described the German situation in an address to the United States Library of Congress: "There are not two Germanys, a good one and a bad one, but only one, whose best turned into evil through devilish cunning. Wicked Germany is merely good Germany gone astray, good Germany in misfortune, in guilt, and ruin," sentiments which echo the duality of Dionysian and Apollonian in Nietzsche's work and which reflect the roles played by Zeitblom and Leverkühn in the novel.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus*, 301.

<sup>81</sup> Thomas Mann, *Addresses delivered at the Library of Congress 1942-1949*, (MD: Wildside Press, 2008), 64.

## IV. MYTHS AND LEGENDS

### SOUL AS COMMODITY

The argument that man is the controller of his own destiny and that he can affect the balance of nature through his knowledge of the occult has ancient roots; one story from the New Testament became an important document in medieval Theological treatises. In Acts Chapter 8 a famous magician named Simon Magus becomes a Christian through the preaching of Apostle Peter; however, after seeing Peter heal the sick Simon attempts to buy the miraculous power from the Apostle.<sup>82</sup> Simon is immediately condemned by Peter for equating the divine power with temporal wealth. Throughout the New Testament there is a recurring theme of division between wealth in temporal existence and wealth in the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus makes such division clear in The Sermon on the Mount.<sup>83</sup> For Simon Magus to attempt to buy divine power with worldly wealth demonstrated his fundamental misunderstanding of the teaching of the Apostles. His outright attempt to bribe the Apostles is parallel to the Satan's temptation of Jesus in the Gospel of Luke.<sup>84</sup> The association of Simon Magus with Satan

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<sup>82</sup> The story of Simon Magus and his disputes with Peter found in Acts Chapter 8:9-13,18-24 was expanded upon extensively in the early Christian literature especially in the Clementine Homilies and the Clementine Recognitions, which date from the fourth century. These documents were not written by Clement of Rome but may be remnants of an earlier source *The Circuits of Peter*, which was frequently cited in subsequent centuries. Another source that describes the legend of Simon is the *Kaiserchronik* a twelfth-century Bavarian document that has survived in several manuscripts.

<sup>83</sup> Matthew 6:20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal. King James Version

and witchcraft was further expounded upon in the medieval literature, but the primary concept here as it relates to the Faust legend is the exchange of worldly wealth for divine power.

In his book, *The Faust Myth: Religion and the Rise of Representation*, David Hawkes describes what he calls a progressive "alienation of the soul," from the early Greek period to modernity. Although the concept of the soul has undergone many transformations throughout the centuries, it has always been understood as an individual essence. Hawkes' describes a contemporary society in which the soul is no longer an integral part of people's lives:

"The antiessentialist philosophies of the late twentieth century have discredited the intellectual concept of an inherent human essence, while the forces that drive our everyday lives have gone a long way toward extinguishing it empirically, so that many people no longer experience themselves as having a soul at all. In this sense the decline of belief in the soul is itself a form of alienation: the concept of the soul, once indispensable to any theoretical or personal thought about the human subject, has become alien to mainstream philosophy, psychology, and to many people's everyday experience of the world."<sup>85</sup>

According to Hawkes, the soul is both the "knower" and the "known," the subject and the object of a person and it is the conversion of the soul into a commodity that results in the idea of the Faustian Bargain. In the Hebrew Old Testament, the term used most often for the soul is *Nephish* which refers to the essence of a living individual. The

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<sup>84</sup> Luke 4:5-8 And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. 6 And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. 7 If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine. 8 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. King James Version.

<sup>85</sup> David Hawkes, *The Faust Myth: Religion and the Rise of Representation*, (NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007), 7.

*Nephish* can be divided into subject and object as in Job 10:1 "My soul is weary of my life," and in Jonah 2:7 "My soul fainted within me."<sup>86</sup> There are numerous references in the Psalms to the division in the individual person between spirit and flesh; the psalms were written as laments and often carry ascriptions to the musical director as is the case for Psalm 84, "My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God." Subjective "inner" sense struggles with the external, physical nature throughout the Old Testament and New Testament. Plato also recognized this fundamental division and he developed the idea more fully in *Phaedrus*:

"Socrates compares the soul to a chariot pulled by two horses: one winged, noble and obedient, the other earthbound, base and insolent. These represent a division within the soul, the good horse standing for the logos, or rational element, and the bad horse standing for epithumiai, the desires and passions. Only the logos is immortal, the epithumiai perish along with the body they serve."<sup>87</sup>

The soul becomes enslaved, in classical tradition when, through the actions of the individual it becomes commensurate or equivalent with the corporeal and therefore can be exchanged for personal gain. Plato associates this action with the lower portion of the soul and in *Republic* he creates a further division of the soul into three parts in which each part corresponds with a specific desire and the lowest part is said to be driven by

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<sup>86</sup> Katharine J. Dell, "Job" in *Eerdman's Commentary on the Bible*, edited by James D. G. Dunn and John William Rogerson (Grand Rapids, MI:Wm. B. Eerdman's Publishing Co. 2003), 337.

The origin of the book is stated by Dell to be between the 4th and 6th centuries B.C.

<sup>87</sup> David Hawkes, *The Faust Myth: Religion and the Rise of Representation*, 9.

the insatiable desire for sex, drink, food and lastly and most importantly money, because wealth is the means with which to acquire the other desires.<sup>88</sup>

## THE HISTORIA

The *Historia von D. Johann Fausten* first appeared in the late sixteenth century as a collection of folktales which greatly expanded upon the legends of a real life figure called Johann Faust who had lived in Germany during the early to mid-sixteenth century. The most well-known version that exists from that period was printed in 1587 and distributed first in Frankfurt am Main by the prominent Lutheran publisher Johann Spies.<sup>89</sup> Although Spies version is the first complete account of the Faust myth there is an earlier manuscript, known as the *Wolfenbüttel Handschriften* [Wolfenbüttel manuscript] which appears to point to an even earlier common source.<sup>90</sup> Both versions contain assimilated folktales from earlier periods in which the name of the original character is changed to Faust, as well as stories based on the lives of such luminaries as Roger Bacon, Paracelsus, and Agrippa, all well-known academics and/or occultists from

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<sup>88</sup> Plato, *The Republic*, Translated and Edited by Sir Henry Desmond Pritchard Lee (NY: Penguin 2003), 320.

<sup>89</sup> Spies had moved to Frankfurt from Palatine when the Elector of Palatine Ludwig VI died. Engaged in an all-out campaign promote Lutheranism throughout the region Louis VI had purged the Calvinists from the University of Heidelberg and other prominent positions in the government however, Ludwig was not of strong constitution and he died before he could raise his son Frederick IV, (who was only a boy in 1583), in the Lutheran tradition. Instead Ludwig's brother Johann Casimir, a staunch Calvinist came to power and immediately reversed the direction taken by Ludwig VI. As conditions were unstable in the Upper Palatinate for a Lutheran publisher, Spies moved to Frankfurt am Main and set up shop in 1584 For more on this subject see: Andrew L. Thomas, *A House Divided: Wittelsbach Confessional Court Cultures in the Holy Roman Empire c. 1550-1650*, (Lieden, Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2010), 39-40, also: David Hawkes, *The Faust Myth*, 29.

<sup>90</sup> The 1587 book by Spies is different from the Wolfenbüttel Manuscript and these differences help to reveal something about their common ancestor in an earlier publication, or tale.  
<http://lettersfromthedustbowl.com/msE.html> accessed 12/7/2012.

various historical periods.<sup>91</sup> The polemical intent of the Spies' chapbook was to strengthen the connection between Magic and Satanism and to promote the Lutheran ideology, an activity that was an integral part of Spies publishing business. According to Elizabeth Wade, Spies was interested in more than the financial gain of his chapbook printings:

"Spies was thus one of those who worked hand in hand with authorities to promote measures that would make the crime of the devil pact too costly to commit. His *Historia* was part of a strategy of warning and threats as well as merciless action. In this sense the book does not appear simply as a profit-making venture. Serious religious and social concerns were in the background and in the message of this work."<sup>92</sup>

Shortly after the chapbook appeared it was translated into several other languages and the English playwright Christopher Marlowe wrote the first dramatic version of the legend (c. 1592). In Marlowe's *Faust* there is an epic struggle between good and evil within his soul, but Marlowe subverts the originally homiletic nature of the text. In Marlowe's play *Faust* is opposed to the Calvinist doctrine, which was more prominent in England during the Elizabethan Era.

"The historical Dr. Faustus, a close contemporary of such humanists as Desiderius Erasmus and Giovanni Pico dell Mirandola, was a blatant transgressor both in religious and sexual terms."<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> *ibid.* 29

<sup>92</sup> Elizabeth I. Wade, "Faustus on Trial: The Origins of Johann Spies 'Historia' in an Age of Witch Hunting," in *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology* Vol.93.2 (Apr. 1994): 294.

<sup>93</sup> Michael Keefer, "Introduction," in *Doctor Faustus: A library edition*, by Christopher Marlowe, (Ontario, Canada: Broadview Press, 2007), 21.

According to Keefer's introduction to Marlowe's play, the sixteenth-century atmosphere of religious freedom which would seem to be the result of the Reformation was anything but free. An increased focus on individual morality, and an all-out war against anyone thought to be in collusion with the Devil led to an oppressive atmosphere in Germany. Keefer quotes the historian Gerald Strauss:

"Only the most denominationally committed scholar would now speak of the age of state churches and orthodoxy as a time of religious emancipation....There can be no doubt that life for all but the most inaccessibly situated men and women in urban and rural Germany became more rule-bound, more closely surveyed, and more rigorously directed in the sixteenth century than it had been at any time in the recent or distant medieval past."<sup>94</sup>

## GOETHE

The fact that Schnittke chose not to set the Goethe text and that Mann also focused largely on the chapbook for his structural outline of *Doctor Faustus* doesn't completely eliminate the eminent German literary figure from the equation. In fact both Schnittke's and Mann's choice to avoid the Goethe says much about their intentions in dealing with the Faust legend. After Schnittke read Thomas Mann's *Doctor Faustus* as a teenager in the late 1940's he became fascinated with the subject of Faust in all of its various forms. Throughout the intervening two-decades Schnittke read everything he could find on the subject, including the supposed writings of the actual Doctor Faustus.

"From the late 1940's the Faust theme was constantly in Schnittke's mind. After *Doctor Faustus* he read everything he could on Faust, including Dr. Faustus' own writings. The Faust theme became more and more important to him. The story of the famous alchemist and magician

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<sup>94</sup> Keefer, "Introduction,"22.

who entered into a contract with the devil in order to stop the passage of time and return to his youth impressed Schnittke not because of its almost thriller-like plot but because Schnittke believes that the Faust story shows the balance between the rational and the irrational, between the human and the devilish which is found in everyone's soul."<sup>95</sup>

He was quite familiar with Goethe's version of the myth, but chose not to use it as a basis for his cantata. Despite the fact that Goethe's text runs to over 12,000 lines of poetry, a scale that makes a direct setting practically impossible, Schnittke was more concerned with avoiding the idealized version of Faust that Goethe had created:

"I am not concerned with Goethe's Faust. Goethe idealized him. But in the original Faust there revealed itself precisely that duality of the human and the diabolical in which the diabolical predominates. If we take the whole history of Faust, it becomes obvious that what was human about him reveals itself only when he, beginning to understand where it is all leading, starts to lament, to weep, to grieve. In his last days he became a human being who realized what he had really done."<sup>96</sup>

Goethe's work functions at a juncture between enlightenment thinking and the romantic backlash. The venerable poet struggled with the work for more than sixty years and still had reservations about the final result when he sealed the folder with the manuscript inside in 1831.<sup>97</sup> The dedication, written after the second part was complete reveals Goethe's ambivalent relationship to engaging with the subject of the poem:

Again, in deepening beauty, ye float near,  
Forms, dimly imaged in the days gone by—  
Is that old fancy to the heart still dear?  
To that old spell will ye again reply?  
Ye throng before my view, divinely clear,

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<sup>95</sup> Alexander Ivashkin, *Alfred Schnittke*, 154.

<sup>96</sup> Alexander Ivashkin, *Reader*, 29.

<sup>97</sup> Erich Heller, "On Goethe's Faust," in *Goethe a collection of Critical Essays*, edited by Victor Lange, (NJ: Prentice Hall, 1968,) 133.

Like sunbeams conquering a cloudy sky!  
Then have me at your will! My bosom burns,  
Magic is breathing—youth and joy returns!

Pictures you bring with you of happy years,  
Loved shades of other days are rising fast,  
First love with early Friendship reappears  
Like half remembered legends of the past.  
Wounds bleed anew;--the Plaint pursues with tears  
The wanderer through life's labyrinthine waste;  
And the names the Good, already past away,  
Cheated, alas! Of half life's little day.

But, ah! They cannot hear my closing song,  
Those hearts, for whom its earlier notes were tried;  
Departed is, alas! The friendly throng  
And dumb the echoes all, that first replied.<sup>98</sup>

His return to the Faust legend was marked with nostalgia and trepidation at reawakening the ghosts of people who had since passed away since he had completed the first part. Those sentiments are not the clear and rational ones of an enlightenment scientist; they have overtones of a mystical view of the world, one which acknowledges a level of unknowing that cannot be easily traversed with empirical knowledge. Goethe himself identified Classicism with health and the Romanticism with sickness; however, he admitted to his friend Schiller that despite himself he was a Romantic.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Wolfgang Von Goethe, *Faust*, translated by John Anster, (NY: Frederick A. Stokes Co., 1890), 16.

<sup>99</sup> Robert J. Richards, *The Romantic Conception*, 3.

It seems the poet couldn't decide how to properly redeem Faust and the end of the first part but ultimately it is Faust's love for Margaret that redeems him and Goethe makes reference to the Eternal Feminine in the final lines of the poem. For Goethe this final redemption is an act of nature because for him nature represents the eternal feminine. It is this act of redemption which Schnittke wished to avoid in his own telling of the story he wished to tell a tale of punishment, of just rewards for evil. The *Faust Cantata* comes very close to the original Lutheran morality tale in the way that Faust's damnation is made complete at the end of twenty-four years.

Chiefly the Romantics found inspiration in the novels and poetry of Goethe, and Novalis among others and the analysis of Greek literature by Karl and August Schlegel. The sacralization of Nature and the championing of the individual genius were primary elements of the Romantic ideology. Romanticism was a backlash against some aspects of the enlightenment, namely the idea that nature can be understood completely through merely empirical methods. Despite the skepticism of enlightenment rationale, the Romantic ideology still contained a strong engagement with nature, but in general it was the dark side of nature, the idea of nature that is larger than humankind and cannot be fully understood by the mind. As Robert J. Richards describes it the Romantic sensibility arose from a combination of empirical observations, initially those of Goethe

in his zoological writings, which, "...had been transformed by a creative imagination to reveal a deeper core of reality."<sup>100</sup>

There is an idea implicit in this movement that the sacred can be horrible as well as noble—that there is an ambiguity between low-art and high-art that should be exploited for the sake of emotional expression. There is feeling that the sacred can be experienced in terror, morbidity, fantasy, and the macabre. The combination in one individual of good and terrible qualities is one of the primary elements of the Faust story.

#### CONSCIENCE AND ACTION

The difference between Mann's Faust and Goethe's is one of polar extremes; the twentieth-century Faust is the dialectical response to his nineteenth century predecessor. Goethe's Faust believes he has exhausted all natural avenues in the quest for knowledge and it is at this point that he turns to the occult arts. The Goethe text is based on the paradox. For the enlightenment thinker that knowledge represents the path to true power in the world and Goethe's Faust presents a soul in torment between the ideals of enlightenment rationalism and the sense that such rationalism cannot fully satiate the thirst for complete knowledge. In the opening of the poem he is revealed in his study profoundly depressed by his lack of divine understanding, even when

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<sup>100</sup> Robert J. Richards, *The Romantic Conception of Life: Science and Philosophy in the age of Goethe*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 2.

Mephistopheles appears he is reluctant to take him up on his offer of help. Faust is portrayed as fundamentally conflicted; even after the deal has been struck with Mephistopheles there is an episode where, after winning the admiration of Margaret, Faust is sulking in a cave outside of the town, when Mephistopheles appears:

*Faust: Ah, serpent! Venomous wretch you!*  
*Mephistopheles: [Aside] I thought this might fetch you!*  
*Faust: Vile profligate, betake thee hence!*  
*Name not her sweetness that enslaves me!*  
*Make not my lust for her who craves me,*  
*Enflame again the exacerbated sense!*  
*Mephistopheles: No need to fret! She thinks you flown afar;*  
*And in a way, I think you are.*  
*Faust: However far, I'm near to her and crave her,*  
*She is never forgotten, never spent,*  
*I grudgeth the very body of the Savior*  
*Her lips that touch it at the Sacrament*  
*Mephistopheles: Well said! I've often envied you, my friend,*  
*That pair of twins beneath the roses pent.*  
*Faust: Off, pimp!*  
*[more banter between Faust and Mephistopheles occurs]*  
*Mephistopheles: Aboil again, all hiss and spout!*  
*Go in and comfort her you dunce!*  
*Where such a birdbrain finds no quick way out*  
*He sees the end of things at once.*  
*He prospers who stands undeterred!*  
*You're surely well traduced to our affairs;*  
*To me there's nothing more insipid in the world*  
*Than a devil who despairs.<sup>101</sup>*

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<sup>101</sup> Wolfgang von Goethe, *Faust I*, translated by Walter Arndt edited by Cyrus Hamlin (NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 2001), 93.

In *The Birth of Tragedy* Nietzsche writes: "The best and highest possession mankind can acquire is obtained by sacrilege and must be paid for with consequences that involve the whole flood of sufferings and sorrows..."<sup>102</sup> Goethe's *Faust* is one with a conscience, and this constantly irritates Mephistopheles. Roger Shattuck points out this interesting paradox within Goethe's poem:

"Faust's problem is that, as a learned doctor, in spite of his attempts to abandon that condition, he can never give himself over completely to resolute action. Thought, reflection, consciousness, scruple — they all interfere with action."<sup>103</sup>

The struggle between good and evil was quite real for Schnittke as it was for Mann, and through their retelling of the Faust Legend they sought to portray in some way their experiences with the inherent struggle within the individual. For Schnittke the transaction for the soul, the Faustian bargain is a metaphor for refusing to listen to one's inner voice — one's conscience. He believed in an ordered spiritual realm in which there were formalized patterns and laws and he sought to portray the interaction of this realm with the physical realm in his *Cantata*; however, underlying the fantastic elements of the work, beneath the melodramatic clashes and evocative contrasts lays an important premise: evil is real and insidious. The Devil has no more power in his original form, the old mythology of a red-skinned specter with horns is comical, but real evil is still at work in the constant need for something "new" and popular.

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<sup>102</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 71.

<sup>103</sup> Roger Shattuck, *Forbidden Knowledge: From Prometheus to Pornography*, (NY: Saint Martin's Press, 1996), 103.

## V. COMPARISONS

### WORD PAINTING

Each musical epoch or era of development in Western music has engaged, to varying degrees, the issue of emotional expression and evocation through the combination of text and music. During the fourteenth century, the development of mensural notation allowed the use of innovative harmonic structures and individual melodic lines that could then be specified by the individual composer instead of from improvisational techniques. Music in notated form allowed the relationship between text and music to be developed in different ways than before, new levels of complexity were available to the composer and the vocal polyphony of the *ars nova* attests to such experimentation.

A cleaving of the word from the inherent rhythms of speech began in antiquity with neumatic and melismatic chant settings and during the sixteenth century vocal polyphony was developed to such an extent that the Italian theorist Gioseffo Zarlino declared music and text related as a body is to a soul: "...we can see that poetry is so closely joined with music that whoever would separate the two, would be left as it were, with a body separated from its soul."<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> Gioseffo Zarlino, "On the Praises of Music," *Istituione harmoniche*, (Venice 1558), Vol. 1; Quoted in Oliver Strunk, *Source Readings in Music History*, (NY: W.W. Norton and Company, 1998), 294.

Word painting, the art of expressing textual meaning in music, reached its first peak in the late sixteenth century Italian Madrigal. For musicians of the so-called *prima prattica*, those who followed the principles that Zarlino codified in his treatise *Le institutioni harmoniche* (1558), the relationship between word and text was one that placed emphasis on expressing the content of single words or groups of words in the music that accompanied them. Although the word was important, it was still dominated by the music to which it was set. An important shift in text-setting occurred around the end of the sixteenth century and beginning of the seventeenth century with a new emphasis on conveying, through music, a specific and stereotyped set of emotions. Indeed the very terms *prima prattica* and *seconda prattica* were coined by Monteverdi where *seconda prattica* describes a new type of music in which the words are to be "...the mistress of the harmony and not the servant."<sup>105</sup> This new expressive ideal was related to the art of rhetoric as developed by the Greeks in that the music was intended to move the "affections," in the same way that an orator was supposed to move the affections of an audience through speech. The overall feeling of the piece was determined by the text and the music was carefully constructed in such a way as to evoke static emotional states. Specific musical elements became associated with the emotions they were thought to universally elicit. Along with this emphasis came more

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<sup>105</sup> G.C. Monteverdi, "Forward to Il quinto libro de' madrigali, 1607," in *Source Readings in Music History: From Classical Antiquity through the Romantic Era*, (NY: W. W. Norton & Co. 1950), 406.

abstract methods of portraying the text such as the use of a descending ground bass line from the tonic to the dominant tone to indicate sorrow, grief and the feeling of lament.<sup>106</sup>

This idea of lament is directly connected to the *Faust* legend as it exists both in Mann's novel and Schnittke's music.

The development of techniques to portray the affections was occurred in conjunction with the previous methods of text-painting so that Baroque composers had at their disposal techniques of *prima prattica* as well of those new techniques.

"By reducing the devices of the *seconda prattica* to a set of ordered principles, theorists like [Christoph] Bernhard gave them the justification they needed to match the prestige of the First Practice (which Bernhard calls the *stylus gravis*), i.e., Renaissance polyphony. Bernhard is at pains, moreover, to point out that the Second Practice was not a revolt against the first, but an outgrowth of it."<sup>107</sup>

The beginning of Opera in Italy in the late sixteenth century was concurrent with the dissemination of the *Faust* legend in Germany. Throughout the novel Mann writes about the combination of old and new styles of music and often refers several times to Monteverdi and the Madrigal style; at one point Leverkühn takes up residence in Palestrina, Italy, the namesake of the sixteenth-century composer from that region. Leverkühn composed the piece *Love's Labor Lost* during his stay in Italy and although it supposed to employ a large orchestra there are clear indications that Mann intends to evoke the idealized qualities of a sixteenth-century Italian style, "a delicate airy filigree,

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<sup>106</sup> Some have argued against the use of this terminology as it limits the particular sequence of notes to a specific emotion which is not supported in all music of the period. For a theoretical discussion of the "chromatic fourth" see: Peter Williams, *The Chromatic Fourth During Four Centuries of Music*, (NY: Oxford University Press, 1998.)

<sup>107</sup> Pietro Wiess and Richard Taruskin, *Music in the Western World: A history in documents*, (Belmont, CA: Thomson Schirmer, 2008), 159.

a clever parody in notes, ingenious and humoristic, rich in subtle, high-spirited ideas."

The Italians may be said to have dominated European art music during the latter part of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth and it was during this time that Opera was first developed in Florence, Rome and in the surrounding city states. This idea of employing elements from the Baroque right next to Modern techniques such as serialism, aleatory techniques and chromaticism is a hallmark of Schnittke's music.

Within the *Faust Cantata* Schnittke unifies the harmony through a principle of variation based on a chromatic cell. The cell appears in a multiplicity of forms, but its basic configuration is described in the novel and is related explicitly to the early mention *hetaera Esmeralda* the butterfly described by Adrian Leverkühn's father Jonathan in the early section of the novel. Later, when Zeitblom is describing the techniques that Leverkühn's uses to unify his *Lament of Doctor Faustus* he references this "strict-style," and specifically refers to a sequence of notes which are symbolic letters: H-E-A-E-E-flat. This sequence from which everything in the *Lament* blossoms is a simple five note motif that Zeitblom calls an "echo":

"Here marshaled and employed are all the means of expression of that emancipatory epoch of which I have already mentioned the echo-effect—especially suitable for a work wholly based on the variation-principle, and thus to some extent static, in which every transformation is itself already the echo of the previous one. It does not lack echo-like continuations, the further repetition of the closing phrase of a theme in a higher pitch. There are faint reminiscences of Orphic lamentation, which make Orpheus and Faust brothers as invokers of the world of shades: as in that episode where Faust summons Helen, who is to bear him a son. There are a hundred

references to the tone and spirit of the madrigal, and a whole movement, the exhortation to his friends at the meal on the last night, is written in strict madrigal form."<sup>108</sup>

## LOW ART AND HIGH ART

For Schnittke the tendency for pop culture to deny individuality and to create masses of people who have homogenous desires, who are manipulated by the patterns and symbols of commercialism is a real example of evil in the world.

"Nowadays what is often called 'pop culture' is the most direct manifestation of evil in art...It is natural that evil should be attractive. It has to be nice and tempting, it has to take the form of something that can creep into your soul without difficulty, something pleasantly comfortable. Whatever it is, it must be fascinating. And pop culture is a good disguise for any kind of devilry, a way of creeping into your soul. So I can see no way of expressing evil in music other than by using elements of pop culture...."<sup>109</sup>

The separation of high-art and low-art has been the subject of debate since the earliest compositions of polyphony when churchmen, already separated by their monastic vows from the rest of society, composed music that was intended to inspire awe in the commoner; however this segregation, which had evolved out of a complex web of cultural development, became starkly bifurcated during the twentieth-century. Schoenberg's *Emancipation of Dissonance* further distanced art music from the commoner and this widening gap, working in conjunction with the increasing commercialization and systematizing of the culture machines, advertising agencies, publishing houses, and the music recording industry, has relegated art music to an increasingly elite group. Elliot Carter, who was arguably one of the most prolific

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<sup>108</sup> Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus*, 488

<sup>109</sup> Alexander Ivashkin, *A Schnittke Reader*, 22.

composers of the twentieth century, started composing with what he calls a "populist" ideal in mind: he wanted to write music for the populace; however he soon realized that the public did not care and so he began writing music for himself. Ironically it was after this decision that he began receiving more commissions.<sup>110</sup> What Schnittke is referring to here, is not exactly the same thing as high-art and low-art.

In the novel the first discussion about the nature of low-art and high-art occurs between Zeitblom and Leverkühn:

"We spoke of the union of the advanced with the popular, the closing of the gulf between art and accessibility, high and low, as once in a certain sense it had been brought about by the romantic movement, literary and musical. But after that had followed a new and deeper cleavage and alienation between the good and the easy, the worth-while and the entertaining, the advanced and the generally enjoyable, which was to become the destiny of art."<sup>111</sup>

The juxtaposition of stylistic elements within Schnittke's music, the opposition of consonance and dissonance and the very inception of his Polystylistic method began with the novel. The practical application and working out of this interrelationship between different musical styles would occupy Schnittke for decades; the music that he composed for films came to represent the low-elements within his work.

The whole work is dominated by the paradox ( if it is a paradox) that in it dissonance stands for the expression of everything lofty, solemn, pious, everything of the spirit, while consonance and firm tonality are reserved for the world of hell, in this context a world of banality and commonplace.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> Allan Kozinn, "Elliott Carter, Composer Who Decisively Snapped Tradition, Dies at 103," in *The New York Times*, November 5, 2012, accessed November 10, 2012.

[http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/06/arts/music/elliott-carter-avant-garde-composer-dies-at-103.html?\\_r=1&](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/06/arts/music/elliott-carter-avant-garde-composer-dies-at-103.html?_r=1&)

<sup>111</sup> Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus*, 320.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, 375

*Seid Nuchtern und Wachet* refers to the New Testament book of Peter, chapter 5 verse 8: "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." The weariness of striving for knowledge leaves one thirsty for revelation, even from a negative source. Within the realm of the Faust myth, the absence of God creates a vacuum in which even the company of the Devil is preferable. To tempt fate, to go over the edge of the precipice just to see what is there, this is the ungodly Faustian desire. If Faust was sorry for his sins, if he lamented the choices he made, he still could not bring himself to ask for forgiveness. This is a central piece of the morality play as it relates to Lutheran principles. The grace of God is available to those who desire it, but if the individual will not freely ask for it, then it is tantamount to refusing it. Why did Faust refuse to pray? Once he had made the deal he could not break it and it was made clear to him that asking for forgiveness would only hasten his temporal demise. There was to be no escape.

Focusing on the evil aspects of life, bargains with the Devil and hedonistic escapades is opposite the intentions of the mystical poetry that Zeitblom says influences Leverkühn's *Apocalypse*. Hildegard von Bingen and the Venerable Bede were focused on the transcendent or divine aspects of their visions, not on the diabolical part. Just as Leverkühn's *Lamentation of Doctor Faustus* is described as the *Ode to Sorrow* the opposite of Schiller's *Ode an die Freude*, which supplied the text for that ultimate hymn to the

brotherhood of all mankind in Beethoven's Symphony No. 9. In this opposition Schnittke follows suite in that his *Faust Cantata* represents a dialectical opposite to another monumental work, also from the German canon: Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*.

#### APOCALYPSIS CUM FIGURAS

The ecstatic ravings of a given prophet are often based on the ravings of a preceding prophet. Leverkühn's *Apocalypse cum figuris* was meant to represent a culmination of prophetic literature, a highlight of this genre within the Bible as well as in art. In the novel, Leverkühn's inspiration, the prophet from whom he took the torch, was Albrecht Dürer. For Mann, Dürer was the epitome of the Protestant artist, an archetype which he often alluded to in his novels.<sup>113</sup>

The title and the composition of *Apocalypsis cum figuris* is inspired by the fifteen famous woodcuts by Dürer. The woodcuts received a great deal of attention in part because of the year they were completed. When Dürer first presented them in 1498, there was the usual anxiety among aristocracy and nobility about the turn of the century and the inherent apocalyptic ideas which are associated with presumably

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<sup>113</sup> In a long discussion of the opposing forces of Protestantism and Catholicism in Mann's *Betrachtungen* Frances Lee argues that the model for true German culture is found in the Protestant Artist. The opposite of this archetype is the Catholic Humanist, someone who: "believes in ideals and abstract absolutes, which Mann calls virtues, and the suppression of all deviations from the norm, or of individualism." The problem, as Mann sees it, is that the Catholic Humanist is based in the ideal form of humanity, not in the practical reality of humanity as it exists. The term that Mann uses for this contemptible person in *Betrachtungen* is the *Zivilisationsliterat* and in Mann's work this archetype reappears often.

ostentatious occasions. Such fears have accompanied the final years of every century since the counting began.

The music does not follow the woodcuttings in a direct programmatic sense, but the spirit of the Protestant Artist, the pure form of German culture is what is important here as well as the common inspiration of these two works of art. Leverkühn's music was meant to portray religious ecstasy in the vein of Hildegard von Bingen's visions and the work (a specifically German version) of the Venerable Bede. Music set to the text of Revelation in which a terrified humanity flees the approaching horsemen of the apocalypse comes to Leverkühn in flashes of devilish inspiration.

#### SEID NUCHTERN UND WACHET

Schnittke's *Faust Cantata* functions on multiple layers of meaning; the most obvious contrast in the work is that of simple melody and organized chromaticism. The two elements are counterposed throughout either in opposing sections, phrases or short motivic cells. A macrocosm of this opposition exists between number 7: "Es Geschah," most commonly referred to as the Tango, and the chromatic style of the rest of the Cantata. The Tango is organized around a lyrical melody and a basic tango rhythm. The melody which is sung by Mephistopheles is also found in the opening number and in the modified form at various points throughout the work. Schnittke's Cantata is an allegory for the place of the individual in the swirling ether of unseen forces. A pedal

on C acts a pivot point around which most of the *Cantata* revolves. The chromatic inflections of the various numbers are like harmonic spirals which move variously closer and further from the pedal point. It acts as an *axis mundi*, a center between heaven and hell where humanity dwells and around which the forces of good and evil vie for dominance. This pedal C opens the work, serves as the tonic for the hysterics of The Tango and continues under the impish fading waltz pattern in the final measures of the *Cantata*.

#### NUMBER 1: "FOLGET NUN"

The opening number and the Tango both begin with pedal C's and are for the most part organized around the C tonality. A hypnotic rhythmic tom-tom pattern, doubled by the piano on a low C opens the first number in the *Cantata*, "Folget Nun." In m.3 the organ takes up the first and most recognizable melody from the *Cantata*. A frequently recurring scalar element comprised of two minor thirds separated by a minor second unifies many melodic and harmonic structures within the work. There are several other recurring chromatic clusters that are subject to the ubiquitous methods of melodic variation, retrograde, inversion, diminution, augmentation etc.

The image shows a musical score for Schnittke's 'Seid Nuchtern und Wachtet, No. 1, 'Folget Nun''. The score is marked 'Sostenuto' and includes parts for Tom-tom, Piano, and Organo. The Tom-tom part features a complex rhythmic pattern with dynamic markings like 'p' and 'pp'. The Piano part is marked 'p, ma marcato' and includes a first ending bracket labeled '1' with a dynamic marking of 'mp'. The Organo part provides a harmonic accompaniment with sustained chords and moving lines. The score is written in a single system with five staves.

Figure 1 Schnittke, Seid Nuchtern und Wachtet, No. 1, "Folget Nun", © 1983 Universal Edition 17813

The overall structure of Number 1 is binary the first section is comprised of the ascending melody sung by the choir over a C pedal point. The choir begins at m. 11 with the words *Folget nun von Doctor Fausti greulichem und erschreckenden Ende dafür sich jedes Christenmensch zu hüten hat*. [Follow now the grisly and frightening end of Doctor Faustus against which every Christian must guard]. The melody builds in even four-measure phrases until the culmination in a triple *forte* on what is essentially a C dominant seven chord with a flatted ninth. This peak dynamic occurs roughly three quarters of the way through the first number and represents a microcosm of the overall dynamics of the *Faust Cantata*. The peak dynamic point in the *Cantata*, the moment of most effusive sonic expression occurs final phrases of the Tango, "Es Geschah" which occurs about three quarters of the way through the entirety of the work.

In the second section of the first piece the choir sings in layered chromatic clusters which gradually decrescendo as the upper voices drop out leaving finally only

the basses in a low and ominous pianissimo declamation: *genugsam zu spiegeln und dafür zu hüten hat*, [...sufficient to reflect upon and guard against].

The image shows a musical score for rehearsal 7 of the piece 'Folget Nun' by Schnittke. It features six staves: Soprano, Tenor, Bass, Violin (V-le), Viola (V-celli), and Cello/Double Bass (C.-bassi). The vocal parts have German lyrics: '... ob welchem sich jedes Chris-ten-mensch ge-nug-sam zu spiegeln und da-für zu hü-ten hat...' and '... ob wel-chem sich je-des Chris-ten-'. The instrumental parts are marked 'div in 3 pizz.' and 'mf'. The score is in a minor key and 3/4 time.

Figure 2 Schnittke, *Seid Nuchtern und Wachtet*, No.1, "Folget Nun", rehearsal 7, © 1983 Universal Edition 17813

## NUMBER 2: "DIE VIERUNDZWANGIG JAHRE"

Schnittke called his *Faust Cantata* an anti-Passion because he saw it as a directly countering the *St. Matthew Passion* by J.S. Bach, in parallel with Leverkühn's counter-positioning of the *Lament of Doctor Faustus* and Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* in the novel. Schnittke's anti-passion includes the necessary elements: a tenor voice as narrator, a bass voice as the anti-Christ or Faust and the two-voiced devil Mephistopheles sung by countertenor and alto. The second number in the *Faust Cantata* opens in parallel to the Bach *Passion* in which the narrator begins to unfold the drama over a sparse *continuo*. In Bach's *Passion* the second number opens with the tenor "Evangelist" and then Jesus responds. In Schnittke's anti-passion the narrator opens,

and the choir is first to respond representing humanity which is then followed by the devil Mephistopheles who sings in diminution the Tango melody.

Figure 3 Schnittke, Seid Nuchtern und Wachtet, No.2, "Die vierundzwanzig Jahre", rehearsal 9, © 1983 Universal Edition 17813

### NUMBER 3: "GEHEN ALSO MITEINANDER"

Lilia Khanina states that the third number *Gehen also miteinander* is based on the "simple texture and gracious alternating rhythms of 16<sup>th</sup>-century music."<sup>114</sup> While the rhythms may reflect a sixteenth-century sensibility, the vehement declaration and lyrical melody sung by the tenors and basses leaves a particularly Slavic impression with overtones of the Lutheran Chorales.

<sup>114</sup> Lilia Khanina, "The Faust Legend and its Role in Alfred Schnittke's Work," in *Tempo* Vol. 63/248 (2009): 7, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/203673680?accountid=34741>, doi:10.1017/S0040298209000114.

17 Poco allegretto

ob.

2 Cl. (B) 1 2

2 Fag.

2 Corni (F) 1 2

Tamburino  
Tom-tom

Campanelli

Organo

Celesta

Tenori  
Coro

Bassi

Ge - hem al - so mit - ein - an - der da - him und e - ssen ein Mor - gen - mahl ...

Figure 4 Schnittke, *Seid Nuchtern und Wachtet*, No. 3 "Gehen also miteinander", rehearsal 17. © 1983 Universal Edition 17813

A chorus of men sings the opening lines of the Number 3 "Gehen also miteinander" in which the attending students and friends of Faust go together and share a meal with him, they do not yet know that it will be his last. Beneath the fanfare-like melody of the tenors and basses a diabolical pedal point which combines a tritone on B-natural and F-natural from the bassoons with an open fifth on E-flat and B-flat in the clarinets. This new pedal point combines a dissonant interval with a consonant one, both of which are foreign to the key that is implied by the choral melody. The resulting harmonic structure exhibits a dichotomous relationship between the pedal and the chorale-like melody. The organ replies to this unholy alliance with a motive from *Schedryk*, the

Ukrainian folk-song made famous by Mykola Dmytrvych Leontvych and known in the west as "Carol of the Bells."

#### NUMBER 4: "MEINE LIEBE"

"... there was noted down the awful scream given to the mocking, bleating bassoon, the 'Wail of the Bird'; or perhaps that song and answer, like an antiphony, which on first hearing so gripped my heart—the harsh choral fugue to the words of Jeremiah..."<sup>115</sup>

Although Schnittke does not employ the "bleating" bassoon in the *Faust Cantata* he certainly continues the tradition of associating the ominous and diabolical with low woodwind instruments. First appearing as a *basso continuo* instrument along with the harpsichord, organ, electric bass and occasional tam-tam; the bass clarinet has a certain aspect of the *vox humana* mixed with something otherworldly as well and its dark tones mingle sinisterly with the resonating basso of Doctor Faustus. This unlikely ensemble serves as the *continuo* for Faust's opening recitative in No.4 "Meine Liebe" in which he describes to the gathered students and friends the pact he has made.

At rehearsal 27-3 Faust sings an ascending line which clearly outlines a C major triad. Here, the ascending C major triad occurs on the words: *als die Böse Gessellschaft* and Schnittke seems to be associating "evil folk" with the basic pedal tonality of the entire work.

"Chorus and orchestra are here not clearly separated from each other as symbols of the human and the material world; they merge into each other, the chorus is 'instrumentalized,' the orchestra as it were 'vocalized,' to that degree and to that end that the boundary between man

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<sup>115</sup> Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus*, 359

and thing seems shifted: an advantage, surely, to the artistic unity, yet — at least for my feeling — there is about it something oppressive, dangerous, malignant."<sup>116</sup>

The reaction by the students occurs in two places: first in the middle of Faustus' confession right after he reveals that he has promised his body and soul to the devil: *Ihr mir fürgesetzt, daher ich mich dem Teufel versprechen müssen, nämlich in vierundzwanzig Jahren mein Leib und Seele* [To the devil that is in 24 years — my body and soul.] To which the students represented by the tenors and basses, immediately respond with a layered series of chromatic cells ascending by semitone which are then undercut by the next entrance a whole tone below the preceding cluster in a remarkable depiction of distress and of shock and despair. Schnittke employs chromaticism in specifically ordered ways throughout the piece and this particular section is striking in its power to evoke a similar emotional response in the listener.

The image displays a musical score for rehearsal 30 of Schnittke's 'Seid Nuchtern und Wachtet, No. 4, "Meine Liebe"'. The score is arranged in a system with six staves. The top staff is for Tenors, followed by Baritone and Basses (labeled 'Coro'), Violins (V-le), Cellos (V-celli), and Double Basses (C-bassi). The vocal parts (Tenors, Baritone, and Basses) feature a chromatic ascending line with lyrics 'Ach, Fau - stel' and 'Fau - ste!'. The instrumental parts (Violins, Cellos, and Double Basses) provide a harmonic and rhythmic accompaniment, with dynamic markings such as *f* and *mf*.

Figure 5 Schnittke, *Seid Nuchtern und Wachtet*, No. 4, "Meine Liebe", rehearsal 30, © 1983 Universal Edition 17813

<sup>116</sup> Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus*, 375

## NUMBER 5 "ACH MEIN HERR FAUSTE"

"Here is the deep-drawn sigh at such words as: 'Ah, Faustus, thou senceles, wilfull, desperate herte! Ah, ah, reason, mischief, presumption, and free will...' the recurrent suspensions, even though only as a rhythmical device, the chromatic melody, the awful collective silence before the beginning of a phrase, repetitions such as in that 'Lasciatemi,' the lingering-out of syllables, falling intervals, dying-away declamations — against immense contrast like the entry of the tragic chorus, a capella and in full force, after Faust's descent into hell, an orchestral piece in the form of the grand ballet-music and gallop of fantastic rhythmic variety — an overwhelming outburst of lamentation after an orgy of infernal jollity.

The fictional music described above is parallel to the fifth number of the *Faust Cantata: Ach mein herr Faust*. It doesn't appear as in the novel just after the Devil's mocking, instead this "Ach Faust" occurs earlier in the *Faust Cantata* when the gathered students and friends respond to his confession. This section certainly follows the literary text in that it exhibits rhythmic variation and chromatic melody, as does most of the *Faust Cantata*.

## NUMBER 6 "FAUSTUS KLAGT" OR THE MOCKING DEVIL

The Devil, Mephistopheles is portrayed as a sardonic mocking character, equally sardonic, seductive in turn and ultimately misanthropic. The part of Mephistopheles is sung by a counter-tenor voice, a choice meant to mark the androgynous sensuality of the Devil and to a reference a description of vocal range in the novel. Zeitblom describes the narrator in *Apocalypse* as having almost "castrato-like register, whose chilly crow, objective, reporter-like stands in terrifying contrast to the content..."<sup>117</sup> Schnittke

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<sup>117</sup> Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus*, 377.

chooses to give the Devil this vocal range; although his narrator is also a tenor like that of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*, the reference to the novel is clear.

In the first full appearance of Mephistopheles in the *Cantata* (he/she appears earlier in cameo appearances whenever the Teufel is mentioned) the Devil is two-faced—literally. In Number 5, "Faustus Klagt," the counter-tenor Mephistopheles is joined by a counterpart Devil: Mephistophila, the second part is sung by a female alto voice from offstage using a microphone and sound amplification completing the idea that popular music and the "New" is the embodiment of pure evil.

Another musical section in which the Devil interrupts Faustus with a screeching chromatic howl occurs at rehearsal 45. Faustus explains to the gathered students that he was almost at the point of repentance once, but as soon as he thought of asking for forgiveness the Devil appeared and threatened to make "mincemeat" of him that very instant if he turned to God.

Figure 6 Alfred Schnittke, *Seid Nuchtern und Wachtet* Number 5, "Faustus Klagt," rehearsal 45. © 1983 Universal Edition 17813

We all know that it was the earliest concern, the first conquest of the musician to rid sound of its raw and primitive features, to fix to one single note the singing which in primeval times must have been a howling glissando over several notes, and to win from chaos a musical system. Certainly and of course: ordering and normalizing the notes was the condition and first self-manifestation of what we understand by music. Stuck there, so to speak, a naturalistic atavism, a barbaric rudiment from pre-musical days, is the gliding voice, the glissando, a device to be used with the greatest restraint on profoundly cultural grounds; I have always been inclined to sense in it an anti-cultural, anti-human appeal. What I have in mind is Leverkühn's preference for the glissando...in this work, the *Apocalypse*, he makes exceptionally frequent use of it, and certainly these images of terror offer a most tempting and at the same time most legitimate occasion for the employment of that savage device.<sup>118</sup>

Schnittke makes use of the glissando, in the manner described above, in several remarkable sections. During Mephistopheles' mocking consolation of the weeping Faustus in Number 5, "Faustus Klagt.," the strings create a sort of musical punctuation of the lyrical melodic line. Interjecting fiendish descending lines the first and second violins drop precipitous notes while the violas and cellos sustain expansive 12-tone clusters in the lower register. Each interjection lasts for merely a bar (see figure 4).

<sup>118</sup> Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus*, 374-75.

The image shows a page of a musical score for rehearsal 58. At the top, there are two vocal staves: 'C-alto solo' and 'Contratenore solo'. The alto part has lyrics: 'Faus - te, sei doch nicht so klein mi - ßig. Ob du schon deinen Leib ver - leu - rest, ist doch noch...'. The contratenore part has the same lyrics. Below the vocal staves are four groups of instrumental staves: '8 V-ni I' (8 Violins I), '8 V-ni II' (8 Violins II), '6 V-le' (6 Violas), and '6 V-celli' (6 Cellos). Each group has 8 staves. The score is written in a complex, modern style with many accidentals and dynamic markings like 'p' and 'f'. The rehearsal mark '58' is visible at the bottom of the page.

Figure 7 Alfred Schnittke, Seid Nuchtern und Wachtet, Number 6 "Faustus Klagt" rehearsal 58. © 1983 Universal Edition 17813

But most shattering of all is the application of the glissando to the human voice, which after all was the first target in organizing the tonic material and ridding song of its primitive howling over several notes: the return, in short, to this primitive stage, as the chorus of the Apocalypse does it in the form of frightfully shrieking human voices at the opening of the seventh seal, when the sun became black and the moon became as blood and the ships are overturned."<sup>119</sup>

<sup>119</sup> Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus*, 374-75.

## NUMBER 7: "ES GESCHAH" OR THE TANGO

This wild conception of the carrying-off of Faust as a dance furioso recalls most of all the spirit of the *Apocalypsis cum figuris*; next to it, perhaps, the horrible—I do not hesitate to say cynical—choral scherzo, wherein 'the evil spirit sets to at the gloomy Faustus with strange mocking jests and sayings'—that frightful 'then silence, suffer, keepe faith, abstain; of thy ill lot to none complayne; it is too late, of Gode despair, thy ill luck runneth everywhere.'<sup>120</sup>

As Tremblay has performed an analysis of the tango, Number 7 "Es Geschah," in his discussion of Schnittke's music in "Polystylism and Narrative Potential in the Work of Alfred Schnittke" (1999), I won't repeat his excellent taxonomical play-by-play; however, it is helpful to note the importance of this piece in the totality of the *Faust Cantata*. The Tango as a genre has traditionally represented the erotic, sensual, femme fatale and even diabolical aspects in the music of various composers from Kurt Weill, whose *Three Penny Opera* was an early influence on Schnittke, to Satie's "Tango perpétuel" of *Sports et Divertissements*. The tango in Kurt Weill's opera was the inspiration for Schnittke's use of that style in several of his works; however, the composer Nikolai Karetnikov felt that Schnittke had plagiarized his use of the tango in *Mystery of Paul the Apostle* but Schnittke dismissed the claim by listing several other works in which the tango serves a similarly dark role.<sup>121</sup>

In the *Faust Cantata* the tango is meant to evoke a certain lasciviousness, but also cynicism, cruelty, and fate; it is the dramatic centerpiece of the *Faust Cantata*. Intended

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<sup>120</sup> Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus*, 489.

<sup>121</sup> Alexander Ivashkin, *A Schnittke Reader*, 16.

as a sort of diabolical scandalizing of the audience, Schnittke wrote the Tango in a strikingly similar fashion to Mann's brief description in the novel, the "dance-furioso."

Occurring at the climax of the narrative with the description of Doctor Faust's grisly demise as his students and familiars cower in fear, "Es gescha" is the most structured of the numbers in the *Faust Cantata*. It alternates between two basic melodic themes in a gradually building crescendo until, at the finale all of the forces of the orchestra are employed in a macabre cacophony of pseudo-pop music. Originally Schnittke had intended a famous Russian pop star to sing the piece in the premier at Hamburg in 1995, but after realizing at the last minute that she was literally representing the Devil, the singer backed out for fear that the negative implication would hurt her career. Not everyone shared Schnittke's association of evil with pop music, but Mann did and it is clear in *Doctor Faustus* that hell is not only a place of pain and suffering, but of *shame*.

"The part of the 'Whore of Babylon, the Woman on the Beast, with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication,' is, surprisingly enough, a most graceful coloratura of great virtuosity; its brilliant runs blend at times with the orchestra exactly like a flute.<sup>122</sup>

"Es Geschah" unfolds with alternating 4-measure phrases in an overall arch structure which reaches a climax about two-thirds of the way through the piece which is synonymous with the high-point of the *Faust Cantata*. The "A" melody is conjunct and is predominately in triplet rhythm while the "B" melody contains longer notes in

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<sup>122</sup> Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus*, 376.

duple divisions. The ubiquitous minor second interval is found throughout the piece. Tremblay points out that there is a difference stylistically between the portrayal of Faust as a possessed soul and the Devil who is purely evil. Faust's lines are disjunct and dissonant while Mephistopheles' lines are smooth and seductively lyrical. Lilia Khanina writes that Schnittke first envisioned this episode of the tale as a highly dissonant piece, but that he was influenced by Zeitblom's association of dissonance with lofty ideals.

"He remembered an idea expressed in Mann's book that pushed against normative criteria of defined procedures and added an important dimension of interpretation. In Leverkühn's *Apocalypse*, says Zeitblom 'Dissonance stands for the expression of everything lofty, solemn, pious, everything of the spirit, while consonance and firm tonality are reserved for the world of hell...banality and commonplace.'<sup>123</sup>

Where Bach's contrasts in the *St Matthew Passion* are always constrained by his strict control, Schnittke avoids restrictions to the point that his dynamic contrasts threaten to tear apart the very fabric of the piece as in the high point in "Es Gesah." When all the forces of the orchestra are playing at *fortissimo* the choir parts are indicated as triple-forte. A shouting cacophony of hellish music that indicates the arrival of the Devil in the house to claim Faust's soul suddenly drops out and the brass respond with a fanfare on the words "meanwhile Faust's door opened, he started to cry 'help' and 'murder'" [*Indem gehet Fausti Tür auf der hub an zu schreien um Hülf und mordio!*], which sounds very much like the description of the finale section of Leverkühn's *Apocalypse*

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<sup>123</sup> Lilia Khanina, "The Faust Legend and its role in Alfred Schnittke's Work," 8.

It was shortly before he got to the end, that frightful finis, which demanded all his courage and which, so far from being romantic music of redemption, relentlessly confirms the theologically negative and pitiless character of the whole. It was, I say just before he made part with those roaring brass passages, heavily scored and widely spaced out, which make one think of an open abyss wherein one must hopelessly sink.<sup>124</sup>

On these words the choir responds with *forte* exclamations and then

Mephistopheles sings "murder" [*mordio*] to which the choir responds in a quickly descending glissando: "oh!" Mephistopheles picks up the melody accompanied by celeste, harpsichord, strings, marimba and flexatone.

#### NUMBER 8: DIESE GEMELDETE MAGISTRI

Harpsichord opens Number 8 with a dissonant chord constructed from a tritone above an open fifth; here again is the combination of dissonance and consonance. The lyrical melody sung by the narrator is almost tonal and this short passage from rehearsal 84 to rehearsal 85 is a calm interlude after the cacophony of the previous Tango. The choral response is a descending series of alternating minor and major triads conveying the impression of tonality, but not outlining a definite key area. On the words *haben so viel erlangt dass man ihn in diesem Dorf begraben hat* [They gained permission to bury him in the village], the narrator is accompanied by the low brass in descending triads which alternate major and minor quality. Increasingly dominated by symmetrical intervallic structures the harmony effectively highlights the description of supernatural events in Faust's house after his death. When the students arrive back at

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<sup>124</sup> Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus*, 360.

Faust's house the tell Wagner, Faust's famulus, about his master's demise. *Seinen Famulus. Den wagner, gefunden, der sich seines Herrn halber übel gehabe. Es war auch forthin in seinem Haus so unheimlich dass niemand darin wohnen konnte*, [They found his Famulus, Wagner who was sorely worried about his master. It was also henceforth so peculiar in the house that nobody could live in it.] Schnittke employs various chromatic methods throughout the piece, but here the interlocking of tritones combined with specific orchestration creates a strikingly preternatural mood. After the chromatic celeste line two measures before rehearsal 89, the piece evokes a scenic portrait; the low strings wavering between two tritone-based chords create a melodramatic picture of Faust's disembodied spirit peering through the windows of his abandoned house.

"Yet however discordant or aggressive or even harrowing, the music never bewilders. Discord, heard always as the opposite or absence of concord, functions as a sign (just as it does in Shostakovich), and so do all the myriad stylistic references."<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> Richard Taruskin, "A post-everythingist booms," in *The New York Times*, July 1992.

NUMBER 9: "ALSO ENDET SICH"

90  
12/8 Sostenuto

Organo

Soprani  
Also endet sich die ganze wahrhaftige Historie und Zauberei Doctor Fausti, daraus jeder Christ zu lernen,

Coro  
Also endet sich die ganze wahrhaftige Historie und Zauberei Doctor Fausti, daraus jeder Christ zu lernen,

Alti  
Also endet sich die ganze wahrhaftige Historie und Zauberei Doctor Fausti, daraus jeder Christ zu lernen,

Tenori  
Also endet sich die ganze wahrhaftige Historie und Zauberei Doctor Fausti, daraus jeder Christ zu lernen,

Bassi  
Also endet sich die ganze wahrhaftige Historie und Zauberei Doctor Fausti, daraus jeder Christ zu lernen,

Figure 8 Alfred Schnittke *Seid Nuchtern und Wachtet*, Number 9: "Also Endet Sich," rehearsal 90. © 1983 Universal Edition 17813

The ubiquitous chromatic cell comprised of two minor thirds separated by a minor second appears once again as a primary structure in the choral response to the final narrative. The contrary motion of minor thirds presents a sort of perverse quotation of the *fauxbourdon* or English style from the sixteenth century which was characterized by series' of parallel thirds and also hints at the emphasis on intervallic relationships as opposed to the high-Baroque period during which major and minor tonalities became more solidified. The melody, which is taken from the opening number and the Tango, is harmonized with a succession of minor thirds; instead of remaining in a specific key the thirds oscillate in and out of several key centers, but the continuity of the melodic line lends structure to the phrase. Pure sine waves created by the organ expose the intervals' dissonant beats—sonic beats that pulsate between minor

second intervals impart a menacing quality to the text: "Thus ends the entire true story and wizardry of Doctor Faustus." [*Also endet sich die ganze wahrhaftige Historia und Zauberei Doctor Fausti.*]

You have there, ensembles which begin as 'speaking' choruses and only by stages, by the way of the most extraordinary transitions, turn into the richest vocal music; then choruses which pass through all the stages from graded whisperings, antiphonal speech, and humming up to the most polyphonic song.<sup>126</sup>

#### NUMBER 10: "SEID NUCHTERN UND WACHET" OR THE EPILOGUE

The final number in the *Faust Cantata* is a summation of all that the work stands for; an epilogue which serves as a warning to those who, like the apostles who were with Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, have fallen asleep. For Schnittke, who experienced the real dangers of a totalitarian system, the concept of being watchful and wary of the devouring lion was very real. For Mann, it was the last plea of an artist consigned to perdition: "Forsake me not! Be about me at my hour!"<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus*, 374

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, 492.

## VI. CONCLUSION

*Seid Nuchtern und Wachet* represents the beginning of Schnittke's journey in composing Faust in musical form. Throughout the 1980's Schnittke returned to this material and constructed an entire opera of which the *Faust Cantata* serves as the third act. An uncanny parallel between the fictional book and real life is revealed in the decade between 1985 and 1995. During this period Schnittke suffered a series of debilitating strokes in which he progressively lost most of his physical ability to compose music; in the end he was limited to writing scores with his left hand in a nearly unintelligible scrawl. Unlike Leverkühn, Schnittke did regain some of his health after the first stroke in 1985; however, a second stroke in 1991 left him seriously disabled and he was unable to attend the premier of the opera in Hamburg in 1995 because his health had deteriorated to such an extent that travel was impossible.

The fact that Schnittke's health faded tragically is strikingly similar to the way in which Mann's fictional composer Leverkühn fades away in the final chapters of the book. Leverkühn suffers a stroke right after he confesses to a gathering of friends and acquaintances that he has been living for the past 24 years under a pact with the Devil. The fateful blow signifies the conclusion of his diabolical pact.

Schnittke believed in the life-long struggle for salvation. He felt that people must experience the reality of danger in order to regard themselves critically. He was skeptical about the formalization of life—the crystallization of life because of his

experiences living under the Soviet system where he never had the luxury of a false sense of security. Schnittke believed that people must strive to resist Evil in their lives, he said to Ivashkin:

"They must fight for their salvation throughout their lives. But this fight must be genuine, brought about by contact with real dangers, not with something that only appears dangerous on the surface."<sup>128</sup>

Schnittke is right to remain ambivalent about the crystallization of life in art, and he is right to encourage the individual to resist Evil. In his art he rebelled against the Evils of his time, expressing in his own way, a criticism of flawed systems. The human animal is an irrational creature and the creative artist is uniquely positioned to reveal and engage with this irrationality. This is what Goethe's Faust is struggling with: the ceaseless labor to transform irrationality into something manageable, the constant striving to make sense of the world and the universe. This Evil, in a different form, is what Leverkühn struggles with. Through the dialectic of rationalism and irrationalism in artworks such as Thomas Mann's *Doctor Faustus* and Alfred Schnittke's *Faust Cantata*, we can see expressed our inherent human qualities — our own Faustian dilemmas.

"When I lose the feeling for what I ought to be doing and act according to a piece of advice or a rational idea — doing something that runs against the feeling implanted in me — what I conceive does not work out, and punishment follows...I have no doubt whatever that there is in nature a basic structural law....While the only thing that can give the right answer is irrational consciousness, some basic essence that directs our behavior, telling us whether we are acting well or badly."<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> Alexander Ivashkin, *A Schnittke Reader*, 30.

<sup>129</sup> Alexander Ivashkin, *A Schnittke Reader*, 26.

Any expression of an idea is a limitation of that idea; thoughts translated into signifiers can convey the idea only in a diminished form. Creativity is an act of the individual in which one tenaciously holds onto a thought for as long as possible, making every effort to reify the details of the thought, to bring its shape, form and substance into corporal existence. The development of art is a means to an end, a means to clearer expression. There is a hopeful element to this process; a faith that through striving, expression will come closer and closer to the original thought. Art can never be purely cynical because it is always springing from a fundamental place of expression even lament. Cynicism may come from the outside, but it can only appear after the hopeful reification of the work. Progressive accumulation of knowledge can result in an increasingly nuanced form of expression, but there is always a sense of risk involved. The possibility of failure to create a work that even resembles the idea:

"At the same time, whenever he works, a composer constantly persuades himself that it is utterly impossible to give final realization and expression to any idea. The future composition presents itself to his inner imagination in a completely different form...by comparison what is achieved later seems like a translation into a foreign language, a translation from the original text which, in general proves to be irretrievable."<sup>130</sup>

To eulogize experience, to embody it, to explore it, to give it form in words and music is to lay flesh on the bones and ligaments of experience so that in the light of day we might better understand what we are and by leaving a record of that, we can be better understood for what we were.

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<sup>130</sup> Alexander Ivashkin, *A Schnittke Reader*, 94.

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