Text and structure in Schoenberg's Op. 50, and an original composition, symphony #1

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TEXT AND STRUCTURE IN SCHOENBERG’S OP. 50,
AND
AN ORIGINAL COMPOSITION, SYMPHONY #1

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The School of Music

by

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B.M., Loyola University-New Orleans, 1990
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1994
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS............................................................................................................................ ii

PERFORMANCE NOTES.......................................................................................................................... iv

ABSTRACT ............................................................................................................................................. v

PART ONE  TEXT AND STRUCTURE IN SCHOENBERG’S OP. 50..............1

   I. INTRODUCTION.......................................................................................................................... 2
   II. *DREIMAL TAUSEND JAHRE*, OP. 50A ................................................................. 11
   III. *DE PROFUNDIS*, OP. 50B ................................................................................. 40
   IV. *MODERN PSALM*, OP. 50C .......................................................... 63
   V. CONCLUSION......................................................................................................................... 85

PART TWO  AN ORIGINAL COMPOSITION, SYMPHONY #1 ..............92

   I. OVERTURE............................................................................................................................. 93
   II. SCHERZO ..................................................................................................................... 117
   III. ADAGIO ..................................................................................................................... 142
   IV. FINALE ....................................................................................................................... 154

REFERENCES ..................................................................................................................................... 183

LETTERS OF PERMISSION ............................................................................................................. 185

VITA .................................................................................................................................................. 188
PERFORMANCE NOTES

All instruments in the score, with the exception of octave transposing instruments, appear at concert pitch. It is recommended that the vocal soloist sit on the side of the stage during the first three movements. The text used in the fourth movement is from the Sara Teasdale poem, “A Seagull in the City.”

Symphony #1 is scored for the following instrumentation: 2 flutes, 2 oboes (one doubling on English horn), 2 B♭ clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns in F, 3 B♭ trumpets, 3 trombones (2 tenor, 1 bass), tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, tenor drum, snare drum, suspended cymbal, triangle, wood block, crotales, marimba, and xylophone), baritone voice, and strings (minimum recommended 8/8/6/4/3). The approximate duration of the work is 21’30” (I. 7’, II. 3’45”, III. 4’, IV. 6’45”).
ABSTRACT

Part One of this document provides an analytical study of Schoenberg’s final opus, Op. 50, three religious choral works written in the serial style: *Driemal Tausend Jahre*, Op. 50a (1949), *De Profundis*, Op. 50b (1950), and *Modern Psalm*, Op. 50c (1951). This study is divided into five chapters: an introduction, a conclusion, and a chapter of analysis for each of the three pieces. Analysis of these pieces reveals three significant conclusions: 1) Schoenberg consistently incorporates areas of relative consonance and pitch emphasis into his serial structures; 2) these areas of pitch emphasis, together with other musical devices are used to illuminate the text setting; and 3) the three works of Op. 50 represent a unified artistic endeavor on a par with Schoenberg’s other large-scale religious works, *die Jakobsleiter* and *Moses und Aron*.

Part Two of this document is an original composition, Symphony #1, for orchestra with a vocal soloist (baritone). The work consists of four movements, which loosely follow the traditional symphonic model: Overture, Scherzo, Adagio, and Finale. In the tradition of Mahler, a vocal soloist is included in the final movement. The text for this movement is drawn from a Sara Teasdale poem “A Seagull in the City.” The primary musical material for all four movements is drawn from two motivic sets (m2+m3) and (M2+m3). A non-literal or hidden program is used to generate elements of the overall form. Musical ideas drawn from the (m2+m3) set correspond to areas of greater tension in the program, while ideas drawn from the (M2+m3) set are used in places of lessening tension. Symphony #1 is generally lyrical in character and is
scored for a medium sized orchestra (woodwinds-2/2/2/2, brass-4/3/3/1, percussion, and strings).

The two parts of this dissertation are unified by a common artistic heritage in the German Romantic tradition and also through such musical elements as the use of the (m2+m3) motivic set, which appeared frequently in the music of Schoenberg and his school.
PART ONE TEXT AND STRUCTURE IN SCHOENBERG’S OP. 50
I. INTRODUCTION

Arnold Schoenberg is a major figure in the history of twentieth century music, but in many ways he remains an enigmatic figure. A great innovator who nonetheless expressed a deep commitment to musical tradition, Schoenberg’s life and works embody a number of seemingly contradictory elements. He was famous for developing a highly systematic method of composition which promised unprecedented compositional control, yet he believed in a form of divine inspiration. He was a pioneer of modernism who maintained a strong, if often despairing, connection with religious belief throughout his life.

Schoenberg’s musical innovations have generally been considered his greatest contribution to Western art music. 1 His foray into the realm of “atonality” in 1908-1909 and his introduction of the “Method of Composition Using Twelve Tones” in 1923 are both considered important landmarks in the history of musical thought. This emphasis on Schoenberg as innovator tends to overshadow the more traditional aspects of his music, and has had a distorting effect on the study and performance of his music.

In the period after the Second World War, a group of young composers led by Pierre Boulez challenged Schoenberg’s position as the great musical innovator, idolizing instead his pupil Anton Webern. Musical culture in the two decades following the death of Arnold Schoenberg in 1951 was dominated by this school of ultra-modernism, the views of which shaped the appreciation of Schoenberg’s music. Schoenberg’s atonal and early serial works were

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accepted into the musical canon based on their status as great innovations.

Several works that Schoenberg composed in the 1930’s, such as the Variations for Orchestra, Op. 31 (1932), and the String Quartet no. 4, Op. 37 (1936) are also widely studied, mainly as examples of Schoenberg’s mature serial technique.² Schoenberg’s later works, on the other hand, were not needed as stepping-stones on the path to the “New Music”. Boulez, in his article “Schoenberg is Dead,” went even further, condemning all of Schoenberg’s American works:

How could we, without weakness, relate ourselves to an oeuvre manifesting such contradictions? If only it manifested them within a rigorous technique, the only safeguard! But what are we to think of Schoenberg’s American period, during which the greatest disarray and the most deplorable demagnetization appeared? How could we, unless with a supplementary -- and superfluous -- measure, judge the lack of comprehension and cohesion, that reevaluation of polarizing functions, even of tonal functions? Rigorous writing was abandoned in those works. In them we see appearing again the octave intervals, the false cadences, the exact canons at the octave. Such an attitude attests to maximum incoherence -- a paroxysm in the absurdity of Schoenberg’s incompatibilities. Ought one not to have pressed forward to a new methodology of the musical language instead of trying to reconstitute the old one? So monstrous an uncomprehending deviation leaves us perplexed: in the Schoenberg “case” a ruinous “catastrophe” occurred which doubtless will remain cautionary.³

The only work of Schoenberg’s final years that received much public notice was A Survivor from Warsaw, Op. 46 (1947), a piece that has been acclaimed more for its raw dramatic value that for the subtleties of its construction. This exclusion of Schoenberg’s late works from the mainstream of musical thought is primarily due to the fact that they embody many of the more conservative and traditional aspects of Schoenberg’s compositional output, an intense lyricism and overt references to tonality. In addition, there is a preponderance of religious themes, which may have proved unpalatable to adherents of the modernist aesthetic like Boulez, who was overtly antagonistic

to religion as to other institutions and systems of thought based on tradition.

Schoenberg’s final three works, *Dreimal Tausend Jahre*, Op. 50a, *De Profundis*, Op. 50b and *Modern Psalm*, Op. 50c, have been given significantly less scholarly attention than his earlier compositions. The final work of a prominent composer has traditionally been given a respect that borders on reverence, especially in the German Romantic tradition, to which Schoenberg believed he was a successor. In his 1947 essay “Brahms the Progressive”, Schoenberg had the following to say about the final work of a “Great” composer:

> If a man who knows that he will die soon makes his account with earth and with heaven, prepares his soul for the departure, and balances what he leaves with what he will receive, he might desire to incorporate a word -- a part of the wisdom he has acquired -- into the knowledge of mankind, if he is one of the Great. One might doubt about the sense of life if it then would be a mere accident that such a work, a life-terminating work, would not represent more than just another opus. Or is one entitled to assume that a message from a man who is already half on the other side progresses to the utmost limit of the still expressible? Is one not entitled to expect therefrom perfection of an extraordinary degree, because mastership, a heavenly gift, which cannot be acquired by the most painstaking assiduity and exercise, manifests itself only once, only one single time in its full entirety, when a message of such importance has to be formulated?  

Schoenberg, it must be assumed, intended the works of his Op. 50 to be the final statement of his personal beliefs, and the final step of his musical journey as a composer. It is clear that consideration of this musical and personal legacy is essential in order to gain a complete and unbiased understanding of Schoenberg, both as a composer and as a historical figure.

It is interesting to trace the genesis of Op. 50. Beginning with the composition of *A Survivor from Warsaw* in 1947, Schoenberg composed mainly on Jewish themes. On April 20, 1949, less than a month after the completion of the *Phantasy* for violin, Op. 47, Schoenberg completed a short four-part a capella

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work entitled *Dreimal Tausend Jahre*. The text, written by his friend Dagobert D. Runes, was inspired by the creation of the state of Israel. The work was originally labeled Op. 49b, a grouping that placed it with the tonal *Three Folksongs*, Op. 49 (1948). The brief duration of *Dreimal Tausend Jahre* may have prompted this initial labeling. At any rate, the Op. 49b label seems to indicate that Schoenberg had not formulated any plans for a final large-scale religious work in early 1949. *Dreimal Tausend Jahre* was first published in the Swedish periodical Prisma, and was premiered shortly after by a Swedish chamber choir.

During the spring of 1949 Schoenberg was working on another piece that dealt with the recent foundation of the Jewish state, *Israel Exists Again*. Schoenberg worked on this piece, scored for chorus and chamber orchestra, from March to June, then abandoned it. Schoenberg completed the second work of what was to become Op. 50 in June 1950. *De Profundis*, Op. 50b, a six-part a capella setting of Psalm 130 in Hebrew, was composed for inclusion in an *Anthology of Jewish Music* at the request of the collection’s editor Chemjo Vinaver. It was around this time that Schoenberg changed the designation of *Dreimal Tausend Jahre* from Op. 49b to Op. 50a.

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8 Reich, 230.
On October 2, 1950, Schoenberg began to work on his final composition, *Modern Psalm*, Op. 50c, for narrator, chorus, and chamber orchestra. This piece shares two common traits with the fragmentary *Israel Exists Again* of the previous year: almost identical performing forces and the same opening pitch material, a C-E♭-E trichord.\(^{10}\) It seems possible that the later work is the realization of a musical gesture that had its genesis in the earlier work. *Modern Psalm* is a partial setting of the first of a series of “Psalms, Prayers, and other Conversations with and about God” that Schoenberg worked on throughout the final year of his life. Alexander Ringer referred to these writings (fifteen complete texts and one fragment) as Schoenberg’s “Literary Last Will and Testament.”\(^{11}\) The process that started with the composition of a short choral work, therefore, developed gradually into a major religious and musical testament.

The fundamental issue that arises in attempting to evaluate Schoenberg’s Op. 50 is the choice of an analytical approach. A study of the citations related to Schoenberg’s Op. 50 in the literature reveals three avenues of research: an analytical approach that deals purely with issues of musical structure, a historical/religious approach that deals mainly with extra-musical issues, and a performance-based approach that deals with the works primarily as pieces of choral literature.


Schoenberg. Spies points out some interesting surface features, such as pitch palindromes, that play an important role in the piece. His reading of the series, however, is strongly suspect because it relies on a “subsidiary ordering” of the row to explain large portions of the piece.

The first significant analytical study of De Profundis, Op. 50b is found in George Rochberg’s 1959 article “The Harmonic Tendency of the Hexachord.” The article explores certain properties inherent in the row that lend themselves to the creation of areas of harmonic emphasis. To illustrate his point, Rochberg finds a passage in the music that contains a quasi-tonal progression that results from combining two transformations of the original hexachord. Rochberg does not provide any additional analysis of the piece, but he does assert that the serial procedures in this work are loosely applied and use a hexachord as its source material instead of a complete series.

A more detailed analysis of Op. 50b is provided by Robert Suderberg, a student of George Rochberg, in his 1966 dissertation, Tonal Cohesion in Schoenberg’s Twelve-tone Music. Suderberg’s dissertation focuses on Schoenberg’s use of a variety of intervals to create pitch emphasis. Suderberg traces patterns of harmonic emphasis created this way throughout De Profundis. He affirms Rochberg’s views about the looseness of Schoenberg’s use of serial procedure in this work.

Modern Psalm, Op. 50c, has, until recently, not been the subject of a published analysis. This is most likely due to the fact that the work was left incomplete at Schoenberg’s death. A summary of the serial procedures and some brief analytical commentary is given for all three pieces of Op. 50 in Robert Specht’s 1976 dissertation Relationships between Text and Music in the Choral Works of Arnold Schoenberg.15 Specht’s work is not primarily analytical in its orientation; it provides information primarily about text setting issues, giving only the basics about the serial techniques used. It focuses on the Op. 50 mainly in its relationship to the choral literature. Mark P. Risinger, in his 2000 article, focuses on Schoenberg’s inability to complete major religious works.16 The article provides some interesting insights, but the analysis provided is rather superficial.

Schoenberg’s religious beliefs and their relationship to his musical output have been the subject of a significant amount of scholarly writing. As Risinger and several others have noted, Schoenberg seemed unable to finish his large-scale religious works. The most famous example cited is the third act of Moses und Aron, which exists as a libretto but was never set to music. Willi Reich, in his biography of Schoenberg, notes the similarity in spiritual imagery between the final act of Moses und Aron, the ending of the second scene of Die Jakobsleiter, and the text of the Modern Psalm.17 Reich also notes that all three works were left incomplete. Alexander Ringer, in his article “Faith and

17 Reich, 233.
Symbol,” notes that Schoenberg consciously collected his final three works into a single opus, to give them added weight as a unit and to place them on a par with his earlier large religious compositions *Moses und Aron* and *Die Jakobsleiter*.

Ringer had the following to say about the endings of these three works.

Each of these breaks off with the protagonist in a prayer-stance, manifestly unable to find fulfillment through prayer. In all three, moreover, a single melodic strain endures to the last, as if such solitary prayer obviated the necessity for any harmonic or polyphonic enhancement. In the last completed measures of the oratorio, in an inconclusive two-dimensional soprano solo, the soul dissolves almost physically into the heavens, ascending ever higher on the ladder of prayer. In the opera, the last completed act ends with a rising string melody that settles on a sustained middle F# only as Moses sinks to the ground, destroyed by his inability to make verbal sense of the prophetic visions that had shaken him to his innermost depths: *O Wort, du Wort, das mir fehlt*. And the last scored phrase of “A Modern Psalm” remains hauntingly suspended in musical time and space on the words “and yet I pray”, a choral soprano line lost, as it were, in eternity.18

Ringer’s argument in his essay is that these large-scale religious works are imbued with elements of numerology and religious mysticism. His main contention is that Schoenberg made a symbolic connection between the number six, the *numerus perfectus*, and divinity. He notes that Schoenberg’s series for Op. 50c is constructed from a hexachord and its transposed retrograde, which combine to make a variety of different orderings of the same six note collection. While it can be argued that such a procedure might arise naturally from Schoenberg’s usual method of hexachord-based row construction, the fundamental idea of the article, that Schoenberg included elements of symbolic importance into the music of Op. 50, is certainly worthy of examination.

Many interesting avenues of inquiry into the nature of Schoenberg’s Op. 50 have been opened in the writings surveyed here, but there has never been a comprehensive study of these works. It is the purpose of this dissertation to

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18 Ringer, 176-77.
provide an analytical study of Schoenberg’s Op. 50 that will draw relationships between the musical structure and the extra-musical elements such as the text, and Schoenberg’s religious beliefs. This analysis will focus on the following elements: musical structure, patterns of pitch emphasis, text/music relationships, and the possible influence of Schoenberg’s religious beliefs on the structure of the music. The three chapters that comprise the body of the paper will examine these issues in each of the works of Op. 50 individually. The final chapter will discuss the findings of the earlier chapters, draw connections between the works of the Op. 50, compare these findings to other writings about Schoenberg’s later works.
Schoenberg took the text for *Dreimal Tausend Jahre* from the poem "*Gottes Wiederkehr*" (God’s Return) by Dagobert D. Runes. The poem had been written the year before and was most likely inspired by the creation of the state of Israel. Schoenberg made a number of changes to the text in order to make the overall tone of the poem more emphatic.\(^1\) The poem, which moves from a mood of despair to one of rejoicing, is laid out in three stanzas. The first stanza laments the long separation of the people of Israel from the Temple. The second stanza speaks of the land beyond the Jordan becoming "a new shoreland", invigorated and green. The final stanza describes how the hills are softly ringing with the news of God’s Return. Schoenberg effectively conveys this journey from despair into salvation in his musical setting through a variety of techniques: serial structures, rhythmic usage, texture, word painting, and pitch emphasis. *Dreimal Tausend Jahre* is an effective composition because Schoenberg is able to convey clearly the changes of mood in the poetry in every aspect of the music.

The brevity of *Dreimal Tausend Jahre* belies the subtleties of its construction. Each of three different scholars gives a different pitch series for the piece; the lack of agreement seems to stem from the different criteria each analyst has for determining what passage in the score reveals the row. As I will show, the actual source row is constructed as shown in Example 2.1.

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Claudio Spies draws his row from the first four bars of the soprano part (Example 2.2).² His reasoning seems to be that an aggregate that is stated thematically at the beginning of the composition must reveal the row. Schoenberg, as I will show, consistently interchanges hexachords from different row forms that have the same pitch content but different orderings. The second hexachord of Spies’ row (soprano, mm. 3-4) is an inversion of the first at $T_5$, which greatly limits the compositional usefulness of the row, due to the fact that the hexachords in the $P_0$ and $I_5$ forms of Spies’ row that share the same

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pitch content would also have the same ordering. In fact, Spies asserts that the entire piece is drawn from only one row form. In order to analyze the remainder of the work Spies relies on a "subsidiary" ordering scheme in which the two hexachords of the row are each consistently reordered using a 2-5-1-3-4-6 ordering pattern. The arbitrary character of this solution greatly compromises Spies' analysis.

Example 2.2
Source Row Form for *Dreimal Tausend Jahre*, Op. 50a Proposed by Claudio Spies

Clytus Gottwald, on the other hand, asserts that the prime form of the row appears in the alto part in mm. 5-7 (Example 2.3). The benefit of this reading is that it allows analysis of the entire piece to be drawn from a single row that is explicitly stated in the music. The pitch material of the entire piece, in Gottwald's analysis, can be drawn from a combinatorial pair of row forms, $P_0$ and $I_9$.

The major problem with Gottwald's choice of a prime row form is that the construction of the piece does not flow naturally from it. An examination of the music reveals that the most prominent hexachord of the piece is G-A-F#-E-F-B. This hexachord appears in the soprano as the principal melody in mm. 1-2, and the first four notes of this hexachord return as a quasi-ostinato in mm. 17-21. In Gottwald's series this hexachord is the first hexachord of $R I_9$. Since Schoenberg tends to treat the row as a motive, as opposed to a collection of

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3Clytus Gottwald, "Dreimal Tausend Jahre, op. 50a und Psalm 130, op. 50b für gemischten Chor a capella" in *Arnold Schönberg: Chorus Music*. (Sony Classical S2K 44571), pp. 21-22.
pitch and interval classes, it seems logical to assume that the most prominent thematic material of the piece should be closely related to the unaltered or prime form of the row.\(^4\) Gottwald's \(P_0\) lacks a strong motivic connection to the music and is therefore unconvincing.

Example 2.3
Row Form Proposed by Clytus Gottwald in his Analysis of Op. 50a

Robert Specht proposes a row that combines the best properties of the rows given by Spies and Gottwald (Example 2.4). Specht, like Spies, begins his row with the more motivically significant G-A-F#-E-F-B hexachord, but his row uses a second hexachord ordering that corresponds to Spies' "subsidiary" ordering pattern.\(^5\) The resulting row is identical to Gottwald's \(RI_5\) row form. Therefore Specht's row, like Gottwald's, can explain the serial structure of the entire piece from a single pair of combinatorially related row forms, which for Specht are \(P_0\) and \(I_5\). This pairing is even more common in Schoenberg's serial works than the \(P_0/I_9\) pairing discovered in the piece by Gottwald. Spies' row can also be derived from the initial hexachords of the \(P_0\) and \(I_5\) forms of Specht's row.

\(^4\)Stein, Erwin, Ed. *Arnold Schoenberg Letters*. Faber and Faber: London. p. 248. Schoenberg describes the row as a "unifying succession of tones which should function at least like a motive."

\(^5\)Specht, p. 360.
The only disadvantage of Specht’s row is that the whole of the prime form of the row is never stated explicitly in the piece. The only complete linear statements of row forms in the piece are $R_{I_5}$ (mm. 5-7, alto), $R_0$ (mm. 5-8, soprano), and $I_5$ (mm. 9-11, soprano). As I will show, the lack of an explicit appearance of Specht’s row in the music does not disqualify it, especially since it is the only one of the three proposed rows that facilitates an analysis of the entire piece and is convincing as the source of all the piece’s motives.

Example 2.4
Row Form Proposed by Robert Specht in his Analysis of Op. 50a

Fortunately, Schoenberg’s original sketches definitively resolve the dispute about which series was used to create *Dreimal Tausend Jahre*. There are three relevant sketches in the collected works. The first sketch (Example 2.5) corresponds to the first hexachord of Specht’s $P_0$ together with its inversion at the interval of a fifth below (which is the first hexachord of Specht’s $I_5$). The two hexachords form an aggregate. This sketch, if taken by itself, is strong evidence for Spies’ reading of the row.

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The second sketch (Example 2.6) shows, however, that Schoenberg was searching for another ordering of the second hexachord of his series. The second sketch is essentially a reordering of the two hexachords in the first sketch; the inverted (lower) hexachord of the second sketch forms an aggregate with the upper hexachord of the first sketch. Although the bottom hexachord ordering found in this sketch is not found in the row Schoenberg eventually decided upon, this hexachord does begin with a (0257) tetrachord, a segment of the circle of fifths, $E_b-B^b-D^b-A^b$. This is the largest such segment that can be drawn out of the six pitch classes remaining after the formation of the first hexachord of the piece. Schoenberg seems to have been experimenting with the idea of incorporating sonorities based around perfect fifths into this piece at an early stage. As we shall see later, such sonorities are of central importance to the composition’s sound world.
The third sketch (Example 2.7) has Schoenberg's final version of the series in the upper voice. The row in this sketch matches the one given by Specht. The ordering of the second hexachord in the final row differs from the version in the second sketch in that it contains only a three-note circle of fifths segment, $D^b-E^b-A^b$. Schoenberg's final decision to use this ordering for the second hexachord might be based on the fact that it divides more easily into two distinct trichords, one drawn from a segment of the circle of fifths and the other drawn from a segment of the whole tone collection. Another possible reason for Schoenberg's reordering of the second hexachord was to de-emphasize the interval of the tritone, prominently positioned at the end of the first hexachord, in order to create a greater sense of contrast between the two hexachords. In Schoenberg's final version of the row the tritone at the end of the first hexachord starkly contrasts with the P4/P5 at the end of the second hexachord.
One feature held in common between the two hexachords of this row is the inclusion of diatonic subsets. The first hexachord has a close kinship to the pitch collection that defines G major. The first tetrachord, G-A-F#-E, is a subset of the G major collection, and allows for the composition of melodic fragments in the piece that emphasize G. The remaining F-B dyad could be used to imply a tonicization of the subdominant, C, which is also the initial pitch of the I₅ row form. The last four notes of the second hexachord, C-Dᵇ-Eᵇ-Aᵇ, are a subset of the Aᵇ major collection. In particular, the Eᵇ/Aᵇ dyad strengthens the possibility of emphasizing Aᵇ.

*Dreimal Tausend Jahre* may thus be seen as constructed entirely from a single pair of combinatorially related row forms, P₀ and I₅ (Example 2.8). Schoenberg treats the four hexachords drawn from these rows as separate units, used in either their prime or retrograde forms. For this reason, it is useful in most cases to label each of these hexachord separately (P₀A, P₀B, I₅A, I₅B). The serial structure of the piece can most clearly be understood by tracing the appearance of these hexachords and their method of presentation.
There are two principal ways in which Schoenberg presents these component hexachords. When a hexachord is presented melodically in a single voice, I call this a *linear presentation*. Schoenberg may also divide a hexachord between two or three simultaneous voices, creating what I refer to a *vertical presentation*. Two- and three-voice vertical presentations will be distinguished by the labels (2v., 3v.).

There are two important varieties of linear presentation used in *Dreimal Tausend Jahre*, one of which is the immediate repetition of a hexachord in reverse order, which I will term a *palindromic presentation*. Non-palindromic linear statements of hexachords will be referred to as *direct presentations*. Both vertical and linear (direct and palindromic) presentations may also appear with certain unsystematic pitch reorderings; I will refer to these as *modified presentations*. The majority of these modifications involve displacing or omitting certain pitch classes.
Example 2.9
Hexachord Presentation Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>m. 1</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
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<td>$P_0B$</td>
<td>$P_0A$</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>$I_5B$</td>
<td>$I_5A$</td>
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<td>$P_0B(3v)$</td>
<td>$P_0B(3v)$</td>
<td>$I_5A(2v)$</td>
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<td>$P_0B(2v)$</td>
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<td>$I_5A(2v)$</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>$P_0B(p)$</td>
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<tr>
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<td>$I_5A(2v)$</td>
<td>$P_0A(3v)$</td>
<td>$P_0A(3v)$</td>
<td>$I_5A(2v)$</td>
<td>$P_0B(2v)$</td>
<td>$P_0A(p)$</td>
<td>$P_0B(m)$</td>
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<tr>
<td>$I_5A(p)$</td>
<td>$I_5B$</td>
<td>$I_5A(2v)$</td>
<td>$P_0A(2v)$</td>
<td>$P_0B(2v)$</td>
<td>$I_5A(3v)$</td>
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<td>$I_5A$</td>
<td>$I_5A$</td>
<td>$I_5A$</td>
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Example 2.9 displays the scheme of hexachord presentation in this piece. Linear (d-direct, p-palindromic) and vertical (2v., 3v.) are labeled; modified presentations are marked with an m.

The piece can be divided into three sections, each of which sets a stanza of the text. The stanza breaks are marked by thick vertical lines in Ex. 2.9. The first stanza takes up four measures of music (mm. 1-4), the second eight measures (mm. 5-12), and the third thirteen measures (mm. 13-25). Schoenberg varies the method of hexachord presentation in each stanza as a means of conveying the meaning of the text and creating musical contrast. In addition to hexachord voicing and presentation, the use of rhythm, texture and density also support the text setting and reveal Schoenberg’s understanding of and sympathy with the structure and themes of Runes’ poem.
Linear hexachord presentations are used exclusively in the first stanza (Example 2.10), which consists of a pair of two-bar phrases. In each phrase, one hexachord is presented in each voice. The opening phrase (mm. 1-2) is set using a palindromic presentation of $P_0A$ in the soprano, a modified palindromic statement of $P_0B$ in the alto, and a modified palindromic presentation of $I_5B$ in the tenor. The bass has a modified direct presentation of $P_0B$. Schoenberg, in order to avoid pitch doubling between the two different versions of $P_0B$, leaves out the Bb in the alto and slows down the statement of the row in the bass by anticipating the arrival of the $A^b$.

The second phrase (mm. 3-4) has a very similar construction to the first. Three voices have palindromic hexachord presentations: soprano ($I_5A$), tenor ($I_5B$), and bass ($P_0B$), while the alto has a modified direct statement of $I_5B$ with its last pitch class presented early. $I_5A$, absent in the first phrase, makes its dramatic appearance in the soprano part at m. 3. It is significant that both of the unmodified presentations in this section occur in the soprano part, giving it additional importance.

Specht suggests that Schoenberg uses palindromes, particularly in the first stanza, as a musical depiction of the longing for God's return.\footnote{Specht, p. 360.} An additional consequence of their use is that each of the two phrases in mm. 1-4 are melodically and harmonically static since the end of each phrase is nearly identical to its beginning. The one non-palindromic statement in each phrase might be thought of metaphorically as "struggling" against the other voices.
This conflict between motion and immobility is an effective musical depiction of the despair conveyed in the text.

Example 2.10
Schoenberg, Op. 50a, mm. 1-4

The mood of despair in the first stanza is also conveyed in Schoenberg’s use of rhythm and texture. The texture is uniformly thick, and each of the four voices sings throughout with great rhythmic and melodic independence, creating a feeling of heterophony. There is an attack on every eighth note of the first measure and a half of each phrase, and there is a correspondingly rapid shift in the number of different vertical sonorities present. This hectic motion slows somewhat at the melodic cadence point (beat 4 of mm. 2 & 4) of each phrase. The overall effect is of a mournfully intense soprano melody struggling to emerge from a heterophonous turmoil of harmonies and rhythms. The melodic emphasis on G in the first phrase and C in the second both contrasts with the pervasive dissonance within each phrase and establishes the importance of these two pitch classes in the work as a whole.

A few moments of relative consonance do occur within the jumble of motion that characterizes the first section. These points of stability occur near
the beginnings and ends of phrases; in such places, Schoenberg tends to introduce triads with added seconds and fourths and minor seventh chords. When the tenor moves from A to F on the second beat of the first m., a minor seventh chord built on G results. The second phrase begins with a sonority that could best be described as an F major chord with a B♭ in the bass. The sonorities at the cadence points of both phrases are triads with added notes. The two sonorities also belong to the same set class (0247). Schoenberg masterfully conveys the anguish of the text by moving to more dissonant sonorities on the two beats following each cadence point (beats 5-6 of mm. 4 and 6) so that both phrases end with a high degree of dissonance (Example 2.11).

The brightening text of the second stanza is drastically different in mood from the darkness of the text in the first stanza. The poetry, which on one level describes the beauty of the promised land, also contains the imagery of the countryside becoming green, perhaps a reference to the Negev Desert irrigation project begun in the 1940’s, and also a metaphor for the blooming of new hope and new possibilities. The change of mood in the second stanza is clearly
delineated by a change in hexachord selection and presentation. Palindromic
presentations are entirely absent from the second section, allowing a sense of
forward motion. Schoenberg uses only unmodified presentations in the second
section, a clarity of hexachordal unfolding that suggests a feeling of lightness
and motion.

The second section also contains the only complete linear statements of
row forms in the piece. It is interesting to note that Schoenberg presents three
of his four chosen row forms for the piece (R₀, I₅, R₁₅) but fails to state P₀
unambiguously. The absence of the prime form of the row may be symbolic of
the poem’s announced, but still unfulfilled, return of God.

The second section also contains a shift from linear to vertical
presentation of the hexachords. In mm. 5-7 (Example 2.12), the linear row
statements in the soprano and alto are accompanied by two-voice presentations
in the tenor and bass. In mm. 8-10 the linear row statement in the soprano is
accompanied using three voice presentations. Linear hexachord presentation
disappears entirely in the final two measures, which are set using a pair of two-
voice presentations. The shift toward vertical voicing found in the second
stanza suggests the increasing importance of the harmonic element as this point
in the piece. Schoenberg uses the relative consonance and stability created by
this shift in voicing as a musical embodiment of the "new shoreland".
Schoenberg’s selection of hexachords also helps to create a new mood in the second stanza. The first stanza is dominated by the thematic statement of the first (A) hexachord of both $P_0$ and $I_5$. The second stanza emphasizes the second (B) hexachord of $P_0$ and $I_5$, whose prominent opening $P4/P5$, realized as ascending intervals, helps to convey a lighter mood. All of the hexachords at the opening of the second stanza are B forms (the soprano and alto statements occur as presentations of $R_0$ and $RI_3$). In addition, all three hexachords are also presented in retrograde so that their most prominent feature, the circle of fifths segment, is heard first. It is evident that Schoenberg considers this (027) trichord to be important because throughout the piece he uses retrograde orderings almost exclusively to set linear presentations of the B hexachord. The B hexachord ordering is also found very prominently in the lower voices in mm. 9-10. $I_5B$ and $P_0B$ are set using three-voice presentations that allow Schoenberg to accompany the soprano melody entirely with whole tone and perfect fifth based sonorities. On the downbeat of m. 10, where the phrase
setting the words "neues Uferland" (new shoreland) begins, the soprano drops out so that the phrase begins with an unobscured (027) sonority. The connection between this trichord and the idea of a new shoreland is confirmed in mm. 11-12 where a (027) trichord is used to set the same text in the soprano. The top two voices in mm. 11-12 are set using a two-voice presentation of I₅B, so that the stanza ends as it began, with a prominent setting of a B hexachord.

As he did in the first section, Schoenberg, carefully controls the appearance of relatively consonant vertical sonorities at the beginnings and ends of phrases to embody the meaning of the text in the second section. The stanza begins with some relatively consonant sonorities, an Aᵇ minor chord in second inversion followed by a root position Dᵇ minor chord. The first phrase of the stanza follows the pattern of consonance and dissonance established in the first stanza, in which each phrase begins and ends with more consonant sonorities. The phrase closes on the final beat of m. 7 with a sonority that can be described as a C major chord in second inversion. The next phrase (Example 2.13) breaks this pattern by beginning with an unmistakably dissonant sonority, a tritone spread over two and a half octaves between the bass and soprano. Schoenberg uses a motion from dissonance to consonance in this phrase to musically embody the concept of gardens becoming green. The phrase begins in m. 8 with an exposed tritone sonority that is especially striking because of its wide spacing (it also contains the highest note of the piece). Measure. 8 also contains two other prominent tritones: A-Eᵇ (soprano/bass) and D-Aᵇ (alto/tenor). P₀A and I₅A are used in this measure as the source of these tritones. The phrase becomes progressively more consonant and ends with a
beautiful (0247) sonority that can be described as a B minor chord with an E in the bass.

The final three bars of the stanza contain two settings of the text "neues Uferland" (Example 2.14). These phrases function as an antecedent/consequent pair that encompasses a motion from consonance toward dissonance and back again.\(^8\) The first phrase begins with (0247) sonorities (m.10, b. 2&4) and cadences on a (0246) sonority on the downbeat of m. 11. The second phrase is elided to the first; and where the second verse starts (m. 11, b. 3) a (0123) sonority is created. The second phrase ends with a motion from a (0246) (m. 12, b. 3) to a (0358), which can in this be described as a half-diminished chord built on A\(^b\).

\(^8\) The relative dissonance of a set is determined here, for purposes of comparison, by the number of dissonant interval classes (i.c. 1, i.c. 2, i.c. 6) in its interval vector.
The use of texture and rhythm also supports the lighter mood of the stanza. At the beginning of m. 5 the texture thins briefly to two voices. Similar breaks in the texture occur in mm. 6, 8, and 11. These breaks contribute to the feeling of lightness. The overall rhythmic scheme of the second stanza moves from activity to greater relaxation, which can be seen as a musical embodiment of attainment of the restful safety of the new land. Beginning in m. 5, the rhythmic independence of the voices begins to break down, with voices frequently paired rhythmically. The overall rhythmic activity of the second stanza becomes even simpler in m. 10 where the three lower voices provide a homorhythmic accompaniment to the soprano melody. The rhythmic motion of the piece is stopped entirely by the lengthening note values and fermatas in m. 12.

The final stanza of the poetry, which speaks of the hills softly ringing with songs announcing God’s return, assumes a more urgent and active tone that the first two stanzas, which are more descriptive. Schoenberg makes three
alterations in the original text to accentuate this change of tone. Two of the changes involve substituting more active verbs: *klingen* (ring) in the place of *rauschten* (rustle), and *Künden* (announce) instead of *flüstern* (whispering). Schoenberg also changes the words *alt verschollnen* (old forgotten) to *allverschollnen* (completely forgotten). This special emphasis on the word forgotten, reminiscent of the "forgotten creed" of *A Survivor from Warsaw*, seems related to Schoenberg’s re-conversion to Judaism, which he considered a reaffirmation of the forgotten faith of his ancestors.

A number of serial and non-serial techniques are used to effectively portray the mood and meaning of the text in the third stanza. As in stanza two, Schoenberg uses changes in hexachord selection, voicing and presentation to articulate a new musical idea. Hexachords with the A ordering are predominant at the beginning of stanza three (Example 2.15), with the first non-retrograde linear statement of $P_0A$ since m. 1 set in the bass, $I_5A$ set in the tenor, and $P_0A$ set in the soprano and alto. The B hexachord form is used in all the voices in m. 15 and then is completely absent until the last two bars of the piece, where there is a partial statement of $P_0B$ in the bass and a modified statement of $I_5B$ in the tenor and soprano. Specht suggests a connection between the use of $P_0$ and the idea of God. Internal evidence suggests, rather, that linear statements of the A hexachord ordering (especially $P_0A$) are musical depictions of prayer. The mournful prayers sung by the sopranos in the first stanza, in this

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10 Specht. p. 362.
view, return in stanza three as the joyful songs of praise that echo through the hills.

Example 2.15
Op. 50a, mm. 13-15

One of the most apparent changes between the second stanza and the third can be found in the area of hexachord presentation. Palindromic presentation, absent in the second stanza, returns in the third stanza. In mm. 13-14 palindromic presentation occurs in both the bass and the tenor. There are also a number of palindromic fragments in the soprano and alto voices in m. 13. A fourth pitch palindromic segment occurs in the bass in mm. 19-20, and in the soprano in mm. 20-21. A complete palindromic presentation of \( P_0 A \) can be found in the tenor in mm. 20-23. Pitch palindromes, which were associated with the longing pleas in stanza one, serve now as a musical depiction of God’s announced return.

Linear and vertical hexachord presentations are also used in this section to underscore the meaning of the text. The third stanza, like the second, begins
with two linear hexachord presentations accompanied by a two-voice presentation. This pattern is repeated in m. 14-15, with the linear presentations moving to the upper two voices and the two-voice presentation moving to the lower two voices. Measures 16-17 consist entirely of two-voice presentations. On the last two beats of m. 17 a method of hexachord voicing that has not been seen before in this piece appears. At this point the soprano voice has a linear presentation of the first four notes of $P_0A$. The remaining tritone dyad is set in the alto and tenor, below the first note of the soprano. The resulting sonority on the last two beats of m. 17 (Example 2.16) can be thought of as a G major-minor seventh with the fifth omitted. This new voicing is used to set the text *künden Gottes wiederkehr* (announcing God’s return). Specht suggests that the use of the major-minor seventh sonority here recalls its traditional function in tonal music of "announcing" the arrival of the tonic.\(^\text{11}\) This special voicing appears three more times in the next four measures, twice using $P_0A$ (soprano, alto/tenor) and once using $I_3A$ (bass, alto/tenor).

\(^{11}\) Specht, p. 367.
The last five measures of the piece contain linear statements of $P_0A$ and $I_5A$ accompanied by two-voice presentations. The only discrepancy in the voicing pattern comes in the last two measures. There is a three-note segment of $P_0B$ in the bass (Example 2.17). Specht suggests that the use of an incomplete hexachord here is a musical depiction of the incomplete nature of God's return.\textsuperscript{12} The source of the music in the soprano and tenor parts in the last two measures cannot clearly be identified, although the B-E dyad present in each voice strongly suggests $P_0B$. This ambiguity of construction supports Specht's contention and, together with other factors such as the progressive truncation of the text of the last line, gives the impression that the music is fading out before it reaches its ultimate goal.

\textsuperscript{12} Specht, p. 352-54.
Example 2.17  
Op. 50a, mm. 22-25

One of the most unique features of *Dreimal Tausend Jahre* is that there are strong indications of a clearly audible pattern of pitch emphasis that coincides with the sectional divisions of the setting. These areas of pitch emphasis are made possible by three things: the presence of aurally identifiable four note diatonic subsets in three of the four hexachords used in the piece, the motivic use of the interval class 5 (P4/P5), and the use of relatively consonant sonorities at points of tonal emphasis. The first two of these elements are inherent possibilities of the serial construction.

The P₀ A hexachord begins with a four-note subset that could be used to compose a 1–2–7–6 melodic fragment in G major (Example 2.18). The P₀ B hexachord, when used in retrograde form, begins with a four-note subset that suggests a 1–5–4–3 melodic fragment in A♭ major. A 5–1–2–3 melodic fragment in E minor is suggested by the first four notes of the retrograde form of I₅ B. These three fragments, when used melodically, are effective in creating pitch emphasis because they contain either an implied fifth scale degree or an
implied leading tone. The $I_5A$ hexachord does not meet these conditions in either its prime or retrograde form. There are three prominent occurrences of interval class 5 that can be generated from Schoenberg’s four hexachords. The $P_0B$ and $I_5B$ hexachords both contain this interval between their last two notes. The first note of the $P_0A$ and the $I_5A$ hexachords are also related by interval class 5. The i.c. 5 dyads generated by these relationships are $A^b$-$E^b$, B-E, and G-C.

Example 2.18
Op. 50a, Diatonic Subsets in $P_0$ and $I_5$

![Musical notation](image)

The overall pattern of pitch emphasis supports the overall scheme of statement, departure and return, which is made most audible through the use of the palindromic statements $P_0A$ in the first and third section of the work. In the area of pitch emphasis the first and third section focus primarily on emphasizing the pitches G and C, while the second stanza focuses on emphasizing $A^b$, and to a much lesser extent E. These areas of pitch emphasis manifest themselves most prominently in the outer voices, and primarily at the start and end of phrases.
Example 2.19
Areas of Pitch Emphasis in *Dreimal Tausend Jahre*, mm. 1-12

The palindromic statements of $P_0A$ in the soprano in mm. 1-2 and $I_5B$ in mm. 3-4 create an emphasis on $G$ in the first two bars and of $C$ in the second two bars (Example 2.19). The $G$ is emphasized through the use of the diatonic fragment inherent in $P_0$, while the P4 leap in the soprano from m. 2 to m. 3 creates an emphasis on $C$. The emphasized pitches are supported by relatively consonant sonorities at the beginning and end of each phrase. Tension is created by the conflict of this $G/C$ emphasis in the soprano against a less clearly stated emphasis of $A_b$ in the bass. The use of $P_0B$ in the bass throughout mm. 1-4 contributes greatly to this $A_b$ emphasis, which is most clearly heard in the $4\hat{5}\hat{1}$ motion in m. 2. The interpolation of the $A_b$ (approached by the leap of a seventh) in m. also helps to strengthen $A_b$. The $B_b$ in the bass, which begins and ends the first section, is also related by i.c. 5 to the $E_b$ in the bass at the opening of the second section in m. 5.

In the second section the emphasis on $A_b$ moves from the bass to the highest sounding voice, and its prominence is now uncontested. In m. 5 the tenor is scored above the alto and in the extreme upper range, giving the $A_b$ a considerable prominence. This $A_b$ is then passed to the soprano in the same
register. A\textsuperscript{b} emphasis is also strengthened in m. 5 by the use of the harmonic A\textsuperscript{b}/E\textsuperscript{b} dyad (ten./bass) and the melodic A\textsuperscript{b}/E\textsuperscript{b} dyad in the soprano. In addition, triadic sonorities diatonic to A\textsuperscript{b} minor occur in the first four beats of m. 5.

The G/C dyad makes an appearance at the first cadence point at the end of m. 7, this time in the bass. The first phrase ends with a G in the bass which descends directly to C at the beginning of the next measure. This G/C motion is echoed in the ascending G/C motion in the soprano part over the bar line of m. 9. The second phrase cadences in m. 9 on a consonant sonority with E in the bass. The E-B dyad occurs harmonically at this point (tenor/bass) and is echoed melodically by the soprano in mm. 11 (which at this point is an inner voice) and 12. The bass note at the cadence in m. 11 is C, but by the final cadence of the section in m. 12, the A\textsuperscript{b} has returned to the bass. It is possible to view the bass motion of the second stanza as an elaboration of the P5 descent between the opening E\textsuperscript{b} in m. 5 and the A\textsuperscript{b} in m. 12 through a series of descending thirds.

In the final stanza the G/C dyad returns to prominence, starting in m. 13 in the lower voices (Example 2.20). The palindromic statements of I\textsubscript{5}A and P\textsubscript{0}A in the tenor and bass parts in mm. 13-14 create a strong emphasis on these two pitches. In the last two beats of m. 17 the pitch G returns to the soprano line, while the bass line emphasis remains on C for the rest of the work. It is an indication of the subtlety of Schoenberg’s setting that the appearance of the G in the soprano (m. 17, beat 5) and the C in the bass (m. 19, beat 4) occurs first in
inner voices and then emerge into prominence. The pitches G/C are emphasized in the last eight measures primarily through their presence at the beginning and ending of palindromic segments. The pitch C is the bass note of the consonant cadential sonority in m. 23, and G and C are in the outer voices at the final cadence.

Example 2.20
Areas of Pitch Emphasis in *Dreimal Tausend Jahre*, mm. 13-25

The conflict between A♭ and G, characterized by the vertical G/A♭ dyad (soprano/bass) at the end of m. 2, has been resolved into a more harmonious linear relationship in the final section. The G/A♭ connection first appears in the soprano part in m. 14 between the end of one phrase and the beginning of another. This same G/A♭ phrase link also appears in the bass voice across the bar line to m. 15. The bass and tenor in m. 15-16 have a beautiful duet (reminiscent of a series of suspensions) that emphasizes A♭. In the second half of m. 16 the bass moves from outlining the pitches A♭-C to outlining G-B, thus creating a slightly larger scale G/A♭ connection. The pitch A♭ emerges from the texture again on the last beat of m. 21. The soprano drops out and a sonority identical to the A♭ minor triad found in m. 5 (this time with the alto on top) appears. The juxtaposition of G and A♭ is also clearly heard here. The pitch A♭
makes its last prominent appearance in the final sonority of the piece where, in a symbolic statement on the inconclusiveness of God’s return, it is again placed vertically against the G.

Example 2.21
Essential Patterns of Pitch Emphasis in *Dreimal Tausend Jahre*

It is possible to draw parallels between Schoenberg’s use of pitch emphasis and the references to God in the text. The G/C pitch emphasis in the first and third stanzas (Example 2.21) corresponds to the poem’s references to God. The longing prayers evoked in the first stanza of *Dreimal Tausend Jahre* are embodied in Schoenberg’s setting by a soprano melody constructed from the initial hexachord of $P_0$ and $I_5$. $P_0A$ consists of a four-note diatonic subset of the G major collection and a tritone dyad that “resolves” to the initial C of $I_5A$ (Example 2.22). Schoenberg makes explicit use of this relation in his setting of the final stanza, where an implied dominant built on G is used three times to embody the long forgotten songs that announce God’s return. The harmonic goal of these sonorities is the C minor seventh chord that occurs on the second half of m. 23.
A♭ pitch emphasis, which is in conflict with the G/C emphasis in the first stanza, predominates in the second stanza, where the divine is not mentioned directly. In the final stanza the A♭ emphasis is greatly reduced, remaining only as a reminder that true unity with the divine can never be attained.
III. DE PROFUNDIS, OP. 50B

There are many points of similarity between *De Profundis* and *Dreimal Tausend Jahre* that justify their being included within a single opus number. They are both a capella religious choral works that deal with the concepts of prayer and redemption. The two works also feature sonorities and progressions that make reference to tonal practices. The works diverge mainly in focus and scope. *Dreimal Tausend Jahre*, due to its brevity and its more subdued mood, takes a more introspective approach to its subject matter. The *De Profundis*, with its greater length, wide dynamic range and contrasting vocal textures, is much more expansive in its musical gestures and extroverted in its statement of faith. This distinction can also be seen in the texts that Schoenberg chose for each work. *Dreimal Tausend Jahre* sets a poem written by Schoenberg’s friend Dagobert D. Runes, while the *De Profundis* is a setting of a biblical psalm in Hebrew, dedicated to the State of Israel. The biblical text and the unfamiliar language are both consistent with the more extroverted gestures found in *De Profundis*.

The text of the *De Profundis*, Psalm 130, can be categorized as a psalm of ascent.¹ This type of psalm is traditionally associated with religious pilgrimage. Psalms of Ascent were sung by travelers to Jerusalem. This choice of text seems particularly appropriate for a piece dedicated to the recreation of the Jewish State.

1. Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord.
2. Lord, hear my voice: let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications.
3. If thou shouldest mark iniquities, Lord, O Lord, who shall stand?
4. But with thee there is forgiveness, that thou mayest be feared.
5. I wait for the Lord, my soul waiteth, and in his word do I hope.
6. My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch, for the morning: they that watch for the morning.
7. Let Israel hope in the Lord: for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him plenteous redemption.
8. And he shall redeem Israel from all their iniquities.²

Psalm 130 portrays a spiritual journey from individual anguish to national redemption. This psalm is comprised of eight lines which are grouped into four two-line strophes.³ The first strophe is the psalmist’s plea to the Lord for prayers to be answered. The next strophe contrasts the unworthiness of humanity with the great forgiveness of God. The third strophe speaks of the psalmist’s great faith in the Lord. The final strophe is an appeal for the nation to share the faith of the psalmist in order to receive the promised salvation.

Robert Specht divides the structure of the text into three sections instead of four. He labels the first three lines as being “concerned with the negative aspects of the speaker’s condition and his need for God.” The next three lines deal with hopefulness, and the final two lines are an appeal to the nation. The three part reading of the text follows the change of mood, while the four part division more closely mirrors the themes of the four strophes: supplication, unworthiness, waiting, and redemption.

Schoenberg’s musical setting embodies this journey from despair to salvation using a wide variety of techniques. The common element that drives

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² Specht, p. 476.
³ Terrien, 181-82.
and unifies the musical setting is the use of contrast: loud vs. soft dynamics, spoken vs. sung declamation, consonant vs. dissonant harmonies, and horizontal vs. vertical structures. This emphasis on contrast can be seen in Schoenberg’s row design in which the consonant major third is clearly contrasted with the dissonant tritone.

The use of contrast, in addition to being musically effective as a structural device, directly mirrors the many contrasts found in the text: despair vs. hopefulness, individual vs. community, and humanity vs. divinity. Schoenberg’s musical setting is effective because the tension created by the various contrasting musical elements is resolved over the course of a “musical journey” necessitated by the composer’s choice of pitch materials and textures. This musical journey parallels the spiritual journey found in the text.

This analysis will begin with a study of the construction and harmonic implications of Schoenberg’s row. A section-by-section analysis dealing with the elements of row selection, pitch emphasis, musical texture and timbre will follow. The final part of the analysis will summarize and draw larger-scale connections.

An analysis of the inherent structures and harmonic possibilities of the row of this work is a necessary starting place in a discussion of the piece as a whole. Both hexachords of the row are constructed of three dyadic units, two based on major thirds and one based on the tritone (Example 3.1).
Were the tritone dyad in each hexachord presented in a tonal context, it could resolve to either of the major third dyads in the same hexachord (Example 3.2). It seems clear that Schoenberg designed his row to maximize possible tonal implications.

Another important feature of the series is that in sixteen of the forty-eight possible row forms the pitch class content of each of the two hexachords remains invariant. In addition, the pitch class content of the three dyads within each hexachord of these sixteen row forms remains invariant. Because of this property of invariance it is useful to group the hexachords from these sixteen row forms into two groups. The hexachords that contain the same pitch collection as the first hexachord of $P_0$ will thus be labeled Hexachord 1, with those having the complementary collection being labeled Hexachord 2 (Example 3.3). To a large extent, Schoenberg uses the hexachords drawn from these sixteen row forms as independent compositional units. This hexachordal method of presentation gives him the ability to freely order the three dyads within each hexachord while staying within the bounds of his serial method.
Example 3.3
Sixteen Row Forms used in De Profundis (Symmetrical forms are in bold type)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hexachord 1</th>
<th>Hexachord 2</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>P₀</strong></td>
<td>E♭ A G# E D B♭</td>
<td>G B C F# F D♭</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P₆</strong></td>
<td>A E♭ D B♭ G# E</td>
<td>D♭ F F# C B G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I₀</strong></td>
<td>E♭ A B♭ D E G#</td>
<td>B G F# C D♭ F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I₆</strong></td>
<td>A E♭ E G# B♭ D</td>
<td>F D♭ C F# G B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>R₃</strong></td>
<td>E G# A E♭ D B♭</td>
<td>D♭ F G B C F#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>R₉</strong></td>
<td>B♭ D E♭ A G# E</td>
<td>G B D♭ F F# C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RI₃</strong></td>
<td>G# E E♭ A B♭ D</td>
<td>B G F D♭ C F#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RI₉</strong></td>
<td>D B♭ A E♭ E G#</td>
<td>F D♭ B G F# C</td>
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Scholars have taken a number of differing approaches to analyzing the serial structure of this work. George Rochberg, in his discussion of the work, asserts that the fundamental structural unit in the piece is the hexachord, not any given twelve-tone row.¹ Robert Suderberg posits a row that is identical to the one found in Schoenberg’s sketches as the basis of his analysis, but he claims that no row is literally present in the music and that hexachordal analysis will yield the same results as twelve tone analysis. Robert Specht claims that the pitch structure of the piece can be drawn entirely from the primary form of the row and its combinatorial inversion, I₃. Rochberg’s

analysis of the row has some merit, given the importance of the hexachord as a compositional unit in the piece, but it is directly contradicted by the presence of the \( P_0 \) and \( I_3 \) forms of the row in Schoenberg’s sketches. Specht and Suderberg’s analyses, while acknowledging the existence of row, postulate widespread reordering of the row in the piece, which makes their analyses less than satisfying. As I will show, the specific ordering of Schoenberg’s row is important and it is not necessary to posit widespread reordering of the row to analyze the piece.

There are many aspects of Schoenberg’s row that allow references to be made to the harmonic practices of tonal music. The row design allows for certain pitch classes to be given special emphasis. By placing the tritone dyad in differing relationships with the major third dyads it becomes possible to place harmonic emphasis on the implied root of any of the latter: \( G, B^b, D^b, \) and \( E \), each of which can function as harmonic goals in a symmetrical structure of minor thirds.

George Rochberg postulates a harmonic progression, drawn from the voice leading in m. 48, which consists of two major/minor (0347) “tonic” chords built on \( G \) and \( C# \) respectively, which are linked by a fully diminished seventh chord (0369) which forms their chromatic complement. This progression can be generated from the row by combining the first hexachord of \( R_3 \) and the first hexachord of \( R_{10} \), with each of the hexachords arranged with the tritone in the center and stacked on top of each other (Example 3.4). Although the chromaticism and implied tritone root relationship between the boundary chords in this progression make it unconvincing in a purely tonal context, the
ear does recognize the relative stability of the boundary chords and the sense of harmonic motion between them. Thus the construction of the series, and this progression drawn from it, allow Schoenberg a way to create contrasting areas of harmonic motion and stability in the composition.

Example 3.4
Op. 50b, m. 48 and Rochberg’s Progression

Rochberg’s progression illustrates how the ordering of the dyads within the hexachords allows Schoenberg to use serial structures to guide the harmonic activity of the piece. The strongest sense of harmonic motion comes when the tritone dyad is placed in the center as in the second hexachord of $P_0$ (Example 3.5). When the tritone dyad is in the central position this will be referred to as a symmetrical presentation of the hexachord. When the tritone dyad is at the beginning or end of a hexachord, as in the first hexachord of $P_0$, the three dyads are not able to function as a single harmonic unit and the tritone relationship between the two major third dyads is not smoothed over by the implicit half step linear motion from one i.c. 4 dyad to another. This ordering will be referred to as a non-symmetrical presentation of the hexachord. The distinction between symmetrical and non-symmetrical ordering is clearly
audible and is an important consideration in studying the pattern of row
presentations in the piece.

Example 3.5
Op. 50b, Symmetrical and Non-Symmetrical Hexachord Orderings

Schoenberg’s choice of row and his ordering of the component dyads
within each hexachord give him the opportunity to create areas of harmonic
contrast and pitch centricity in this work in many ways. At the most
fundamental level this can be seen in the use of the consonant major third and
the dissonant tritone as the building blocks of the series. The use of the
progression formed by superimposing the symmetrical ordering of Hexachords
1 and 2 makes possible two different levels of contrast: first, between the
major/minor chords and the less consonant (0369) sonorities, and second,
between points of harmonic arrival and clear pitch-center emphasis and less
stable areas that lead to them.

Tonal allusions aside, the large-scale formal structure of *De Profundis* is
not created by harmonic motion but by the non-pitch elements of dynamics and
texture. The serial structures are incorporated within and support the large-
scale structure of the piece, as articulated by these and other non-pitch
elements. The form of *De Profundis* can be described as a series of five textural
and dynamic crescendos (Example 3.6).
The first section (m. 1-6), which sets the initial line of the text, opens up a sonic space that is progressively filled and elaborated in the next four sections, which build steadily in intensity until the climactic closing gesture. The six bars of the opening section introduce all of the contrasting elements that are developed in the rest of the work. In addition, the harmonic scheme of the work is also foreshadowed in the first section.

The first phrase opens up a sonic space by introducing many contrasting elements (Example 3.7). The linear presentation of the E♭/A tritone in m. 1 is followed by the vertical presentation of the major thirds E-G♯ and B♭-D in mm. 2 and 3 respectively. A contrast between horizontal and vertical presentation can be seen by comparing how the two hexachords of the row are presented. In mm. 1-3 the first hexachord of P₀, which is ordered non-symmetrically, is set using a series of linear segments of the row. The second hexachord of P₀, which unlike the first hexachord uses the symmetrical ordering, is set in mm. 4-6 with each of its three dyads presented together as vertical sonorities. A wide registral and dynamic space is opened up by the contrast between the fortissimo setting of the word “Adonai” (Lord) in m. 4 and the music that proceeds it. This gesture is a musical depiction of the cry to the Lord found in the text.
The pattern of pitch emphasis found throughout the piece is also established in the first section. Each of the four major third dyads found in the row is set as a vertical sonority (E/G#, m. 2, B♭/D, m. 3, G/B and D♭/F, m. 4). These points of harmonic stability are prominently placed at the beginning and ending of each phrase. The two tritone dyads in the row also support the establishment of this pattern of pitch emphasis by resolving in mm. 2 and 4 to the E/G# and D♭/F dyads respectively. Schoenberg’s prominent setting of the D♭/F dyad in m. 4 establishes D♭ as the most important of the structural pitches of the first section, with G, B♭ and E playing lesser roles. This emphasis on D♭ is immediately confirmed by the tritone resolutions to D♭ in the women’s and men’s voices in m. 7.

Another contrast brought out in these opening bars is between sung tone and unpitched chanting. Robert Specht postulated that this unusual unpitched chanting might represent a spoken response to a sung prayer as is found in the
Jewish liturgy known as “davening.” This chanting is generally marked at a lower dynamic level that the sung parts and is used throughout the piece as a backdrop to the greater intensity of the singing voices.

The second section, which sets the second and third lines of the text, is defined by a texture/dynamic crescendo that spans from m. 7 to m. 17. The row presentation in this section is characterized by an alternation between two-voice horizontal presentation of the hexachords in m. 7 and m. 17 and the linear presentations found in mm. 8-16. The musical gestures in the first two sections are presented by pairs of voices grouped together. The single exception occurs when the bass enters in m.15 with a statement of P₀A that leads directly into the four voice progression in m. 17 that emphasizes Dᵇ (Example 3.8). This sudden movement to a dynamically emphasized Dᵇ sonority is reminiscent of the gesture in m. 6 that marks the end of the opening section.

The harmonic emphasis on Dᵇ found in m. 7 returns in m. 17 where a root position Dᵇ triad on the downbeat gives consonant support for the G♯ in the first soprano. A Dᵇ major/minor triad also appears on beat 3. Hexachords with the symmetrical ordering are at work here, facilitating a harmonic movement from Dᵇ to G by the end of the measure. This movement between Dᵇ and G, which occurred in a two-voice texture in m. 4, occurs here in a four-voice texture. The harmonic progression revealed here, created by stacking a

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5 Unpitched chanting of this type also plays an important role in A Survivor from Warsaw.
pair of symmetrically ordered complementary hexachords, is a variant of the one proposed by Rochberg.

Example 3.8  
Op. 50b, mm. 15-17

Schoenberg uses a number of methods to musically depict the meaning of the text in this section. The most important gesture in the setting of the third line, which asks the Lord to be attentive to the voice of the psalmist, is a duet between the first soprano and the tenor in measures 8-12. The melodic gestures of this duet are characterized by the extensive repetition of a two-note half-step motive that is very plaintive in character. Another correlation between the text and the music is the abundance of consonant sonorities in these measures. In m. 9, a C major/minor sonority is implied by the alternation of E and Eb in the tenor against G and C in the soprano. In m. 11, a Bb major/minor sonority is created in a similar way. These consonances are used to musically depict the supplications found in the second line of the text. Consonant sonorities and
areas of pitch emphasis seem to be used throughout the work to symbolize hope or prayer. The third line, “If thou shouldest mark iniquities, Lord, O Lord, who shall stand?,” is set in mm.13-15 using imitative counterpoint, a style that Schoenberg seems to use to depict God’s divine justice. P₀A is stated thematically in the alto in m.13, accompanied by another theme in the second soprano. Schoenberg marks the second soprano part as a Hauptstimme, suggesting that it is equal in importance to the alto melody. Starting in the second half of m. 13, these two voices are imitated, in inversion, by the first soprano and the baritone. At the point where each pair of voices enter, the interval of a compound perfect fifth is created (alto, second soprano -Eᵇ/Bᵇ, baritone, first soprano -B/F♯). Schoenberg seems to use consonant perfect intervals to depict the psalmist’s hope that the Lord will be attentive to the pleas of his people. The setting of the third line continues in the bass in m. 15 and suddenly explodes to a forte four-voice texture in mm. 16-17. This dynamic figure, taken together with the return of the pitch emphasis on Dᵇ at this point recalls the cry to the Lord in the first section. The second section can be seen to musically embody the contrast between the justice of the Lord and humanity’s unworthiness. Schoenberg emphasizes this contrast by using non-symmetrical hexachord presentations in mm.14-16 and symmetrical presentations in m. 17.

The third texture/dynamic crescendo, which sets the fourth and fifth lines of the text, also uses the contrast between two-voice vertical hexachord presentations and horizontal presentations to convey the meaning of the text. The first part of the fourth line, “but with the lord there is forgiveness”, is set in
mm. 18-19 using two-voice presentations. All four major third dyads are brought together and stated as vertical sonorities (in a passage marked *dolce*) to emphasize the forgiveness of the Lord. The imitative contrapuntal texture returns in mm. 20-22 to set the text “that thou mayest be revered,” creating another musical reference to God’s divine justice. Robert Suderberg points out that the fully diminished seventh chord created by the final note of each of the paired voices in m. 19 resolves, in the correct register to a D♭ major/minor sonority on the third beat of measure 20 (Example 3.7).\(^6\)

Example 3.7

![Example 3.7](image)

This progression helps to link the two parts of the fourth line, and it also foreshadows the strong emphasis on D♭ that characterizes the setting of the fifth line.

The hopeful tone of line five coincides with the increased use of consonant sonorities and areas of pitch emphasis in the music. A fully diminished seventh chord resolves to a D♭ major/minor chord on the fourth beat of measure 23, which is immediately followed by a G major/minor chord.

in the next measure. Measures 25-26 contain a progression from a major/minor chord based on G that moves through an F#-A-C-\textsuperscript{b} fully diminished sonority at the end of m. 25 to a D\textsuperscript{b} major/minor sonority on the third beat of m. 26. The two bass parts in m.26 are not a part of the progression in the upper voices. At the point of arrival on D\textsuperscript{b} they sing the pitches B and G, obscuring the motion in the upper voices. The delayed arrival of bass support for the D\textsuperscript{b} emphasis finally occurs in m. 27. This obscuring of the progression and delayed arrival in the bass could be symbolic of the “waiting” expressed in the text. The forte arrival of D\textsuperscript{b} emphasis in m. 27 marks the climax of the third texture/density crescendo.

The texture at the beginning of the fourth section changes from singing in all six voices to unpitched chanting, which helps to smooth the transition between the dynamic climax in m. 27 and the pianissimos of m. 29. The fourth density/texture crescendo (mm. 29-41) sets lines six and seven of the text which deal with hopeful expectation. The setting of line six follows the same soft to loud pattern that was used in the setting of line three. The voices enter pianissimo in a four-voice texture that makes use of the repetitive half-step motive, first seen in mm. 9-10, that seems to be associated with waiting. It is possible, moreover, to draw a D\textsuperscript{b} major/minor sonority out of the texture at this point by treating one note from each half-step motive as a neighbor tone. This area of pitch emphasis can be seen as a musical depiction of hopefulness. The second part of line six, which sets the text “more than they that watch for the morning,” is set very emphatically beginning in the second half of m. 31 using
voices that are paired in rhythmic unison. This passage begins with $D^b$ and F in the tenor and baritone voices, but then places no further emphasis on the $D^b/F$ dyad, either as the resolution of a tritone or through metric emphasis. The lack of a $D^b$ emphasis, which was present at the climax of the first three texture/density crescendos, seems to rob this forte passage of any sense of closure and leaves the listener waiting for the “real” climax to the fourth crescendo.

An emphatic arrival on $D^b$ finally occurs in the setting of the seventh line, which begins in m. 34. A new texture appears at this point: a solo bass voice. The use of the solo texture here may be symbolic of the lone psalmist exhorting the nation to share his hope in the Lord. At the climax of this solo in measure 36, where the bass reaches a high $D^b$ on the last syllable of the word “Adonai” (Lord), a solo soprano enters on F5. The two voices together create the same $D^b$-F tenth that was used to set the same word in measure five. The word “Adonai” is sung again by a solo quartet in measure 37 to an F#-A-C-$E^b$ fully diminished sonority resolving to a $D^b$ major/minor sonority, a climactic gesture that continues through m. 38 where the soprano solo reaches a high $B^b$ accompanied by the five lower voices in block sonorities.

The fifth section begins in m. 42 and sets the final line of the text. The mood of the final texture/dynamic crescendo moves gradually from quiet, joyful anticipation to overt exultation. The sense of anticipation in mm. 42-45 is most clearly embodied by a descending half-step motive that begins in the soprano parts as A-$G#$ in m. 42, is inverted to B-C in the next measure (first
soprano, alto), changes in measure 44 to E-E\textsubscript{b}, and then is echoed at that pitch level by the tenor in mm. 45 and 48. The pitch emphasis on D\textsubscript{b} that might be expected to set such a hopeful text is submerged in this passage, being apparent only in the D\textsubscript{b} bass note in m. 42 and the D\textsubscript{b}/F dyad found in the first soprano in m. 43.

In m. 46 there is a shift in the texture, from three- and four-voice presentations to two-voice vertical presentations in the form of a baritone/bass duet. The emphasis on D\textsubscript{b} also returns at this point. The final sonority in m. 45, an A\textsubscript{b} dominant seventh chord over a A\textsuperscript{9} in the bass, creates a harmonic connection between this section and the previous one. If the A is reinterpreted as a B\textsuperscript{bb}, an inverted dominant ninth is briefly created (Example 3.9).

Example 3.9
mm. 45-48

All the active tones in this chord seem to find resolution in the passage that follows: the E\textsubscript{b} in the tenor moves down by step to the C# (D\textsuperscript{b}) in the baritone,
the G♭ in the second soprano resolves to the F in the bass, the A♭ in the baritone moves to A♯ in m. 47, the A♭ is resolved by the prominent G# (A♭) in the bass in m. 47, and the C in the first soprano is resolved by the return of C# (D♭) in the upper register in m. 49.

An unobscured statement of Rochberg’s progression finally occurs in m. 48, with the D♭ major/minor sonority clearly stated in root position for the first time. This point is the harmonic goal of all the music that came before it, and at this point the dynamic ascent to the final climax begins.

The texture of a soprano duet above block sonorities, first seen in mm. 42-45, returns in m. 50, climaxing in m. 52 with the first sopranos singing a high B against unison shouting. The unpitched chanting, first heard in m. 2, which had been gradually displaced by the increasing intensity reflected in the sung tone, returns here in full force to remind the listener of its contrasting role. All six voices finally join together as a unit in the last two measures to set the first half of the last line: “And he shall redeem Israel.”

This stunning affirmation is the culmination of a textural and dynamic journey that began with the opening tritone motive. Emphases on D♭ and G are present in the D♭-A♭ and G-D boundary notes of the first and second sonorities of the final phrase (Example 3.10). It was noted in the analysis of Dreimal Tausend Jahre that Schoenberg is able to achieve an intense dramatic effect by reversing the paradigm of “dissonance resolving to consonance” normally seen at cadential points. The compound perfect fifth interval between the outer voices in the first two sonorities changes in the final two sonorities to a
compound minor second. This sense of incompleteness in the final cadence was also seen in *Dreimal Tausend Jahre* and might be symbolic of the unfinished nature of both Schoenberg’s religious journey and the redemption of Israel.

Example 3.10
mm. 54-55

Schoenberg uses the six invariant dyads motivically throughout the composition. Two of these dyads, $D^b/F$ and $A/E^b$, are given special treatment and seem to achieve a symbolic importance in the piece. It has been noted earlier that the $D^b/F$ dyad has been repeatedly used to set the word “Adonai” (Lord), and has also been associated with the concepts of hopefulness and prayer. The $A/E^b$ (in German notation $A/S$) dyad, which is well known as a musical cipher for Schoenberg’s name, seems in this piece to be symbolic of Schoenberg as psalmist and, in a larger sense, of humanity. It is useful to examine the use of these two symbolic elements in the music.
This symbolic analysis supports the view of the first section of the piece (mm. 1-6) as a microcosm of the entire piece. The first section begins with the A/S dyad and reaches upward, in a representation of the spiritual journey of the nation, toward the D♭/F dyad at the end of m. 4. The A/E♭ dyad is prominently placed in the setting of the third line of the text (alto in m. 13 and bass in m. 15), which deals with humanity’s inability to stand before God’s judgment. These statements of the A/S dyad are, as in the first section, placed before and below the prominent D♭/F dyads in m. 17. This same pattern is repeated more forcefully in the next section, where the A/S dyad in m. 23 (tenor and first soprano) begins a phrase that culminates in a strong D♭ emphasis. The setting of line six, which involves waiting faithfully for the Lord, ends with two prominent vertical settings of the Schoenberg dyad in m. 33. This gesture is followed immediately by the emphatic D♭/F dyad setting the word “Adonai” in m. 36. It is interesting to note the first appearance of the text “for with him there is mercy and forgiveness” in m. 36 starts with the Schoenberg dyad, showing that humanity is the object of this forgiveness. The Schoenberg dyad appears prominently in m. 42 (alto and first soprano) where the setting of the final line of the text begins. A new element is added at this point. The A♭ in the soprano resolves downward to G♯ in a motivic gesture that dominates this section of the music. This resolution seems to be symbolic of the promise of redemption being expressed in the text. In m. 48, where the D♭ emphasis is given its purest expression, the A/S dyad occurs in the tenor as an integral part of the progression. It is significant to note that Schoenberg
places a *Hauptstimme* indication above the tenor part at this point. This interweaving of the $D^b/F$ and $A/S$ motives signals the completion of the spiritual journey that was set in motion in the first six measures of the piece.

After examining the overall formal design of the piece it is useful to reconsider the progression drawn from m. 48 by George Rochberg. This progression is built entirely from half-step motions and has many symmetrical qualities. There are, however, two asymmetrical qualities to this progression. The first chord, built on $C#$, is, if one considers it as triad with both a major and minor third, in root position, while the final $G$ major/minor chord is in first inversion. The second chord also contains a dissonance between an upper voice and the bass while the first chord doesn’t. It seems logical to conclude that the $C#$ is more strongly emphasized in this progression than the $G$. This closely mirrors the harmonic construction of the piece. Throughout the setting, the pitch $C#$ is given primary emphasis, while the pitch $G$ is given secondary emphasis. Thus Rochberg’s progression can be seen to be a microcosm of the harmonic functioning of the piece as a whole.

Schoenberg, in this piece, seems to have developed a system in which the harmonic motion and voice leading of the tonal system can be transferred into the atonal medium in a way that is very effective and strikingly different than the references to tonality found in the serial music of other composers, for instance Alban Berg. The use of the technique of dyadic invariance and the establishment of patterns of pitch emphasis creates the possibility of harmonic motion. The selective use of hexachord presentation allows for the creation of areas of greater harmonic flux, an integral part of a formal structure that is
primarily articulated by the use of texture and dynamics. The emphatic $D^b$ emphases that occur in measures 5, 17, 27, and 36 act as structural pillars that support and articulate the formal divisions of the piece. They also foreshadow the clear $D^b$ emphasis in m. 48 that signals the beginning of the final climax. In this way Schoenberg integrates pitch emphasis into the variety of motivic elements used to create the structure of *De Profundis*.

The relationship between pitch emphasis and divinity, seen earlier in *Dreimal Tausend Jahre*, is also apparent in *De Profundis*. The $D^b$-F dyad is repeatedly associated with the word “Adonai” (Lord), thus creating a connection between the consonant third and the divine. The opening gesture of the piece, in which the supplicant cries out to the Lord, is set using an A-$E^b$ tritone dyad, Schoenberg’s musical anagram. The tritone dyads, which as a part of the quasi-tonal “Rochberg” progression move to a $D^b$ major/minor chord, are symbolic of Schoenberg’s (and humanity’s) quest to reach God through prayer.

The entire formal structure of *De Profundis* seems to grow organically from the major third and tritone dyads, initial “seeds” that Schoenberg uses to create his row. The smallest form generating motivic unit this work is the dyad. Study of the relationship between text and row usage reveals that the tritone dyad represents humanity while the major third dyad represents divinity. On a slightly larger scale, the first hexachord of $P_0$, which is dominated by the A/$S$ tritone dyad, also represents humanity, while the second hexachord of $P_0$, with its harmonic movement toward $D^b$, evokes divinity. All of these elements are
incorporated into the first texture/dynamic crescendo, which is progressively modeled, extended and elaborated in a process that generates the remainder of the work. The harmonic design of the piece can be seen as progressive variations on the “Rochberg” progression which reach their purest form in m. 48. Schoenberg’s use of contrasting elements as formal generators fits in closely with the themes of the text, which makes for an extremely effective musical setting.
IV. **MODERN PSALM, OP. 50C**

The third work in the Op. 50 set, *Modern Psalm*, Op. 50c is scored for narrator, mixed chorus and orchestra. The text is the first of a series of fifteen “Psalms, prayers and other conversations with and about God” written by Schoenberg in the final year of his life.¹ Schoenberg set three-fourths of the text to music in 86 measures before leaving the work apparently incomplete at his death. There are many similarities between the *Modern Psalm* and the two earlier works of the Op. 50. All three pieces are religious choral works that utilize the twelve-tone technique, and incorporate within their serial structures references to elements of tonal music.

Schoenberg’s text for *Modern Psalm* envisions prayer as a sacred gift that can bridge the vast gulf between the insignificance of humanity and the inexpressible greatness of God. A close thematic relationship exists between the texts of *De Profundis* and *Modern Psalm*. This can be seen by the fact that Schoenberg’s original impulse was to designate the text of the *Modern Psalm* as Psalm 131, as if it were a natural continuation to the biblical psalm (no. 130) that he had just finished setting.

There is an abundance of evidence that Schoenberg intended Op. 50c to be the culmination of the textual and musical ideas expressed in the earlier two pieces. The scope of Schoenberg’s plans to set fifteen or more psalms, together with the larger performing forces and expansive musical gestures used in *Modern Psalm* suggest that it was intended to be the first part of a major and comprehensive work. The idea that Op. 50c is part of a set of related works is

supported not only by the musical and textual similarities, but by the fact that Schoenberg himself placed the *Modern Psalm* in his catalogue of works with that opus number.\(^2\)

It is significant that Schoenberg made the decision to assign *Modern Psalm* an opus number and record it in the list of his works even before it was complete. It even suggests that Schoenberg may have intended to leave the work incomplete at his death, and assigned it an opus number to indicate its symbolic completeness even despite its musical incompleteness. Alexander Ringer, in his study of the religious aspects of Schoenberg’s life, claims that the Op. 50c was “fated” never to be completed.\(^3\) He notes that Schoenberg was never able to finish a major religious work. His two other substantial efforts, *Moses und Aron* and *Die Jakobsleiter*, were laid aside by Schoenberg for many years, as if he could not find a way to complete them. The theme of the incapacity of humanity to express the true grandeur of God is contained within all of these works. It is possible that given Schoenberg’s use of silence to express the inexpressible, that these works are, in some sense, complete.

An examination of Schoenberg’s partial setting of the *Modern Psalm* will reveal several factors which support the contention that the work can be analyzed as a complete entity, all of which address a curious dialectic present in the work between completeness and incompleteness. There is a progressive slowing of the rate of the text setting. This drawn out incompleteness in the text setting is contrasted with a curious symmetry and sense of closure found in


the existing portion of the musical setting, as if the music found its natural conclusion before the setting of the text was complete. Schoenberg heightens this effect by bringing back a fragment of the text stated earlier at the end of the setting. There is also a tension between motion and stability in Schoenberg’s incorporation of tonal elements into his serial structures, a synthesis that is achieved by using inherently symmetrical structures designed to create areas of tonal emphasis. All of these elements combine to suggest that *Modern Psalm* could be, at one and the same time, physically incomplete and symbolically complete. The following analysis of *Modern Psalm* is divided into three sections: the first will deal with the structure and meaning of the text, the second with the construction of Schoenberg’s row and his use of serial procedure, and the third will be a section-by-section analysis of the setting.

The text to *Modern Psalm* addresses the issue of the meaning of prayer. The greatness of God seems to make the prayer of any human individual insignificant, but Schoenberg resolves to pray anyway, extolling prayer as divine gift that creates a bond between God and humanity. It is clear from Schoenberg’s manuscript that he divided his text into seven paragraphs.\(^4\) Each of the first three paragraphs consists of a single sentence, the fourth consists of two sentences, the fifth and sixth of one sentence apiece, and the seventh paragraph of two sentences.

The narrative scheme of the text can be described as follows: statement, questioning, elaboration of questioning, reply, and elaboration of reply. The first paragraph establishes the universality of prayer. The second and third

paragraphs question, respectively, the usefulness of the prayers of humanity, and of Schoenberg the individual. The fourth paragraph expands upon the motivation behind the questions, namely the overwhelming majesty of God. Paragraphs five and six reply to the questions posed in paragraphs two and three, giving a universal and an individual answer, respectively. Paragraph seven elaborates on the motivation behind the reply, the importance and usefulness of prayer as a divine link. Schoenberg’s setting stops after the fifth paragraph.

This narrative scheme is made clear by Schoenberg’s use of grammar and word repetition. The first and seventh paragraphs are linked by the use of the invocation “O, du mein Gott” (O, you my God). The three paragraphs that question the usefulness of prayer are linked by an alliterative relationship between their initial word “was” (what), “wer” (who), and “wenn” (if). Repetition of the word “trotzdem” (yet) helps to link paragraph five and six, which both reply to the questioning.

The row that Schoenberg uses for Op. 50c is unusual in the fact that it can be derived from a set smaller than a hexachord, in this case from four (014) trichords (Example 4.1), a level of self-derivation more commonly associated with Webern’s serial music. The row is also unusual because, while composing his setting of the text, Schoenberg wrote a one page theoretical paper about the properties of this row entitled Die Wunder-Reihe (The Miracle Set). The feature of this row that interested Schoenberg was the fact that an aggregate could be formed by combining the original hexachord not only with its inversion at $T_5$,
but with its retrograde at $T_{10}$, making it second order combinatorial.\(^5\)

Schoenberg was very interested in having the ability to mix and match hexachords from different row forms in order to have a variety of hexachord orderings which share a similar interval content.

**Example 4.1**

$P_0$ Row Form from *Modern Psalm*

![Diagram of hexachords](image)

Specht believes that this essay is proof that Schoenberg conceived the row as a theoretical construct independent of a musical composition.\(^6\) It is more likely that Schoenberg was searching for a row to use in his setting of *Modern Psalm* and the theoretical article was a side effect of this process. There are several factors which support this view. Schoenberg wrote the article in October 1950, after writing the text of the psalm, which was completed on September 23 of that year.\(^7\) The interest Schoenberg shows in the article in mixing and matching hexachords from different row forms is very similar to the compositional technique that he used in *De Profundis*. In addition, the fact that Schoenberg adopted triadic derivation of his row indicates that he was planning to use this row to create a serial piece with tonal implications in a manner similar to the other two pieces of Op. 50. These factors clearly show

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that the “miracle set” was not an abstract theoretical concept but a tool which allowed Schoenberg to continue many of the same compositional procedures he had explored in the previous two compositions. The fact that Schoenberg took the unusual step of writing a theoretical paper about the source set of Op. 50c seems to indicate that he considered *Modern Psalm* a new and important step in his compositional journey.

In *De Profundis*, Schoenberg used a row which allowed him to freely combine a series of hexachords all of which contain a set of pitch class invariant dyads. The row used in *Modern Psalm* also allows him to interchange a number of hexachords with identical pitch-class content and different ordering; in addition, the interval content of the pair of trichords contained within each hexachord remains constant. These trichords all belong to the set class (014) (Example 4.2).

**Example 4.2**
Row Forms Used in *Modern Psalm*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hexachord Group 1</th>
<th>Hexachord Group 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( P_0/R_2 )</td>
<td>( E )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>( )</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>( D# )</td>
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<td>( C )</td>
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<td></td>
<td>( A^b )</td>
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<td>( B )</td>
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<td></td>
<td>( G )</td>
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<tr>
<td>( P_4/R_6 )</td>
<td>( F )</td>
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<td></td>
<td>( A )</td>
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<td>( F^# )</td>
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<td>( C^# )</td>
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<td>( D )</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>( F^# )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( P_8/R_{10} )</td>
<td>( R_0/P_2 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( C )</td>
<td>( G )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( B )</td>
<td>( A^b )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( E )</td>
<td>( G )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( E^b )</td>
<td>( E^b )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( C^# )</td>
<td>( F )</td>
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<tr>
<td>( D )</td>
<td>( F )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( F^# )</td>
<td>( A )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( B^b )</td>
<td>( R_4/P_6 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( R_{11}/I_{3} )</td>
<td>( G )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( G^# )</td>
<td>( B )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( E^b )</td>
<td>( E )</td>
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<tr>
<td>( C )</td>
<td>( D )</td>
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<tr>
<td>( B^b )</td>
<td>( C^# )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( A )</td>
<td>( F^# )</td>
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<tr>
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<td>( I_{1}/RI_{3} )</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>( B )</td>
<td>( C )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( E^b )</td>
<td>( G )</td>
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<td>( A^b )</td>
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<tr>
<td>( F^# )</td>
<td>( D )</td>
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<tr>
<td>( F )</td>
<td>( C^# )</td>
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<tr>
<td>( B^b )</td>
<td>( A )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( I_{5}/RI_{7} )</td>
<td>( I_{9}/RI_{11} )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

68
An examination of the 48 permutations of the row used in Modern Psalm reveals that the 24 row forms listed above share hexachords with the same pitch content. Hexachords that share the same pitch content will be said to belong to the same hexachord group. Modern Psalm, like De Profundis and Dreimal Tausend Jahre, is constructed entirely from a pair of complementary hexachord groups. Since, as was noted earlier, $P_0$ and $R_2$ are identical, the number of different row orderings possible is essentially reduced to 12. Schoenberg’s article focuses on the fact that any of the six orderings of Hexachord Group 1 (and their retrogrades) can be combined with any of the six orderings of Hexachord Group 2 (and their retrogrades) to create an aggregate. Schoenberg’s tendency in Op. 50b to freely retrograde individual hexachords is thus incorporated into the serial structure of Op. 50c.

Another feature which Modern Psalm shares with the other works of Op. 50 is the tonal implications that are inherent in the construction of the row. Six triads (three major, three minor) can be generated from each of the hexachord groups of Schoenberg’s row (Example 3.3). It is interesting to note that the roots of the chords generated from each hexachord group combine to create an augmented triad (048), and that the chord roots generated by combining both hexachord groups form a whole tone scale.

Example 3.3
Triads Generated from Op. 50b Hexachord Groups
Each hexachord can also be heard as a triad with both a major and minor third, the leading tone, and the lowered 6th scale degree (Example 4.4).

Example 4.4
Tonal Implications of the Hexachord

A hexachord can also be verticalized as a major/minor chord with a M7 and an added sixth, or as a polychordal structure consisting of a major chord and a minor chord whose roots are separated by the interval of a major third.

Example 4.5
Vertical Hexachord Structures

In addition to the row’s tonal implications, it is important to note its many symmetrical qualities. Both hexachords of the row belong to the symmetrical set class (014589). The symmetrical quality of this hexachord weakens its ability to create large scale areas of tonal emphasis, since any of the three half steps present can be interpreted as a motion from leading tone to tonic, depending on the context. A number of important symmetrical subsets, such as (0145), (0347), and (048), can also be drawn from each hexachord. Mapping the two hexachord groups on a pitch wheel (Example 4.6) reveals
that they form an interlocking pattern that can be bisected by three different axes of symmetry (Example 4.6).

Modern Psalm differs from the other works of the Op. 50 in that, though the sectional divisions are related to the layout of the text, there is not a direct correlation between the setting of the various paragraphs of the text and the layout of the musical sections. This incongruity is caused primarily by the fact that most of the text is stated twice, once by the narrator and once by the chorus. Musical structures in Modern Psalm are articulated, as they were in De Profundis, primarily through climactic gestures. The existing music can be divided into five sections. The first section is thirteen measures in length and sets the first line of text, which is stated by both the narrator and the chorus. The second section takes up nineteen measures and includes the statement of
the second line by the chorus and the second through fourth lines by the narrator. The third section is eighteen measures in duration and sets the fourth line of the text in the chorus. The fifth and sixth lines of the narrator’s part are given in section four, which is nineteen measures long. The final section is thirteen measures in length and includes the fifth line of the text in the chorus (Example 4.7).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example 4.7</th>
<th>Text Setting Comparison Graph</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Line 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 1</td>
<td>13 m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An interesting relationship emerges by comparing the length of the musical sections with the time that is taken to set each line of the text. The musical sections form a regular pattern that is symmetrical in design: 13, 19, 18, 19 and 13 measures respectively. Conversely the text setting follows an expanding pattern: line 1 is set in 13 measures, line 2 in 5 measures, lines 3 and 4 in 32 measures, and lines 5 and 6 are not complete when the setting ends after an additional 36 measures. This slowing of the declamatory rhythm, easily measured against the relative stability of the musical sections, gives the impression that the setting will never reach a conclusion. This impression is strengthened by the fact that, in the last four measures, the chorus begins to repeat the fifth line, instead of moving onward to the sixth line.

Schoenberg uses the orchestra in *Modern Psalm* for three main purposes: 1) to give pitch and intonation support by doubling the choir, 2) to support the
dialogue between narrator and the chorus with accompanying figures, and 3) to function independently as a third voice.

The first section of the music (mm. 1-13) is, like the first section of De Profundis, both an invocation of God and an exposition of the component hexachords of the prime form of the row. Measures 1-8 use $P_0A$ exclusively, while $P_0B$ figures prominently in mm. 9-13. The piece begins with a setting of the text “O, Du mein Gott!” in the women’s voices, on the first trichord of $P_0A$ (E, D#, C), accompanied by a staccato gesture in the men’s voices on the second trichord of $P_0A$ (A, B, G#). Schoenberg sets this gesture with the only homophonic choral texture in the entire work. The narrator’s statement follows the chorus in rhythmic imitation. The text that begins the second part of the first paragraph, Alle Völker preisen dich . . . (All people praise you) is set with one-voice presentations of $P_0A$. The women’s voices enter in m. 3 in a rhythmically varied stretto pattern, which seems to portray the multitude of people giving praise referred to in the text. The alto finishes its setting of the first line in mm. 5-8 by moving back through $P_0A$, thus creating a palindromic presentation. The initial statement of $P_0A$ is completed in m. 8 where it is verticalized as a six-voice sonority in the vocal and instrumental parts.

$P_0B$ appears for the first time in the soprano in mm. 9-10, followed by a palindromic statement of $P_0B$ in the basses, which is accompanied by a palindromic statement of $I_3B$ in the tenor. Five of the six pitch-classes of $P_0B$ appear vertically in m. 12. The missing pitch-class, $G^b$, appears unaccompanied in m.13, and the entire hexachord is verticalized at the beginning of the next section in m. 14.
The opening section manages to emphasize all six of the pitches given in example 3 that are available for emphasis. The opening gesture in mm. 1-2 gives special emphasis to the pitch class C, due to its constant repetition and as the implied root of a C-E\textsubscript{b}/E-(G) sonority that is implied. In mm. 3-7 A\textsubscript{b} is emphasized according to the model seen in example 4, in which the non-triad members of the hexachord, E (F\textsubscript{b}) and G, are treated like the minor form of the sixth scale degree and the leading tone respectively. It is also possible to hear the first seven measures in relation to C: I/i (mm.1-2)-bVI/bvi (mm.3-5)-V (m.6)-bVI (m. 6)-I/i (m. 7). In m. 8 the verticalized hexachord is presented as a polychordal structure, with an A\textsubscript{b} major triad in the lower register and an E minor triad in the upper register. Of the three pitches (C, E, G\#) C is the most emphasized.

The most strongly emphasized pitch in mm. 9-13, as might be expected from the prominent statements of P\textsubscript{0}B, is G\textsubscript{b}. This emphasis can be seen in the G\textsubscript{b} major triads outlined in the soprano in m. 9 and the bass in m. 10. A G\textsubscript{b} major triad (with an added \textit{b}\textsubscript{♯6}) is also present in the woodwinds on the last beat of mm. 9 and 10. The pitch D is given emphasis by the C#-D melodic motion in m. 10 (soprano) and m. 11 (bass). In addition, a clear statement of a D minor triad appears in the first half of m. 10. The pitch B\textsubscript{b} is slightly emphasized in the second part of m. 12, where the prominence of the pitches B\textsubscript{b}, D\textsubscript{b}, and F in the sonority at this point suggests an emphasis on B\textsubscript{b}. The emphasis on C is also still evident in mm. 9-11 in the statement of I\textsubscript{3}B in the tenor, and the C-E\textsubscript{b}-
G-B sonority in the high strings in m. 11. The first section seems to establish a system of pitch hierarchy based around the whole tone collection C-D-E-F#-G#-A#, with the tritone related pitches C and F# being the most important.

Schoenberg’s tendency in the Op. 50 to use sonorities that can be thought of as triads with added pitches, seen especially in Dreimal Tausend Jahre, occurs here also. A number of sonorities of this type, which belong to set class (0148), can be found in the first section. The first occurs in the strings and winds on the second beat of m. 6 (A♭-C-E♭-E). This is a verticalization of the first four notes of P₀A, which figures prominently in the melody at this point. Another prominent (0148) set can be heard in the clarinet part on the third beat of mm. 9 and 10 (G♭-B♭-D♭-D). A final example is the (C-E♭-G-B) sonority present in the violin parts in m. 11. This set is inversionally related to the two previous examples.

The second section (mm. 14-32) does not contain the large areas of clear pitch emphasis that characterized the first section. The two notable exceptions are mm. 16-18, where a palindromic canon on I₅B creates a C emphasis, and mm. 30-32, where a fortissimo statement of R₀A creates an emphasis on D. This might be explained by the fact that the second section sets lines two through four, which question the importance of prayer. This makes sense if, as was noted in the previous chapter, Schoenberg is making a connection between pitch emphasis and the concept of prayer. The second paragraph of the text is set in mm. 14-18, with the narrator stating the text first, followed by the choir. The third paragraph, which contains an even more pointed question than the second, begins with the injunction “Wer bin ich(?)” (Who am I(?)), stated by the
narrator in m. 18 and then repeated at a higher level of inflection over an energetic punctuation by the chorus. This choral gesture sets a (014) trichord in each voice, which creates, on the last beat of m. 19, the fifth-based sonority $E^b-B^b-G#-F$ (0257). At this point the voices drop out, and the remainder of the text of this section is spoken by the narrator. It is probably symbolic that the chorus never sings the remainder of the third paragraph. It is as if Schoenberg becomes the narrator at this point and reproaches himself.

One of the things that contributes to the lack of tonal emphasis in this section are the passages, such as the one in mm. 20-24, where Schoenberg focuses on the (014) trichord, thus diminishing the importance of the imbedded triads in each hexachord. Schoenberg uses this effect throughout the piece to create a sense of harmonic flux.

In the second and fourth sections, where the narrator states text that is later sung by the choir, Schoenberg anticipates the thematic material of the upcoming choral section in the accompaniment. This technique first occurs in mm. 24-25, with two canons in inversion between the woodwinds and the strings.

Robert Specht claims that Schoenberg “does not seem to inflect single words or other details of the text.” In addition to those already mentioned, mm. 26-32 provide three additional examples of text painting. Tremolos are used in mm. 26-27 to represent the “Unvorstellbaren” (unimaginable) God of the text, who should not be literally represented. It is possible that the use of two melodic gestures in parallel augmented triads, generated by superimposing one-voice statements of hexachords related by $T_4 (P_0 A, P_4 A, P_8 A/RI_3 A, RI_7 A,$
RI_{11}A), is used here by Schoenberg to represent the inability to make a claim against God; relating it to the impossibility of assigning a root to an augmented triad. A more likely example of text painting is the use of the violent melodic gesture in the upper voices in mm. 30-32 to accompany the text “der mein heisstes Gebet erfüllen oder nicht beachten wird” (who will grant or disregard my most fervent prayer). This violent musical gesture is similar to many found in A Survivor from Warsaw, suggesting the idea that this line of the text was influenced in some way by Schoenberg’s impressions of the Holocaust, an event that was horrible enough to test the faith of any rational person. This climactic gesture leads to the end of the section marked by the fermata in m. 32.

The third section begins softly in m. 33 with the tenors and basses entering with a canon in inversion that was forshadowed in the instrumental parts in m. 24 (Example 4.8). The voices are doubled by the celli in divisi, and echoed by the horn and the bass clarinet at the interval of two eighth notes. The ascending melody in the tenor, a setting of I\_{9}A, conveys the impression of a pitch emphasis on D, while the descending melody, which sets P_{4}A, gives the impression of being in C. This C/D emphasis was also present at the end of the previous section, where the D centered melody in the upper voice occurs over a sustained C in the lowest voice in mm. 31-32. The C/D balance between the tenor and the bass continues in mm. 34-37, with the line bearing an emphasis on C switching to the tenor in m. 35. This shift is achieved smoothly by the chromatic motion B^{b}-C^{b}-C that is formed by the last notes of the tenor and bass parts in the previous measure moving to the C in the tenor in m. 35.
The alto and soprano parts enter the canon in m. 38, using I_{11}A and P_{10}A respectively. The alto’s ascending entry (dux), this time in the alto has moved up a major ninth from its previous statement, creating an emphasis on E. The descending entry (comes), in the soprano, has moved up a compound tritone, creating an emphasis on F#. Schoenberg uses this whole step relationship between simultaneous areas of pitch emphasis throughout the piece (C/D, E/F#). This is a logical strategy for Schoenberg, since there is a whole step relationship built into the structure of the row (P_0 = R_2).

It is possible to view Schoenberg’s use of pitch emphasis in these passages in relation to the pitch wheel in Example 4.9, with its threefold axes of symmetry. Each hexachord group contains three half step dyads separated by a major third, with the two hexachord groups interlocking to create an aggregate. When, in the context of the music, one half step dyad of a hexachord is primary (as in the formula leading tone-to-tonic), it causes a weighting or an alignment on that dyad. Schoenberg’s tendency to emphasize dyads that are separated by a whole step creates a symmetrical alignment around one of the three possible axes. The emphasis patterns C/D and F#/G# would align along axis 1, D/E.
and G#/A# around axis 2, and E/F# and B♭/C around axis 3. Seen in this
case, the tenor/bass entry of m. 33 aligns around axis 1, and the
alto/soprano entry of m. 38 aligns around axis 3.

Example 4.9
Pitch Wheel Emphasis Patterns

The vocal counterpoint increases gradually in rhythmic activity until m.
45, where the voices drop out and an agitated orchestral interlude begins. This
disturbance occurs at the same point in the text as in the previous section (mm.
14-32). The violin melody in mm. 45-46 centers around D. The lowest voice in
the texture shifts from D in m. 45 to C in the next measure, creating a C/D
relationship (axis 1). The upper part in mm. 47-49 switches to an emphasis on
G♭, while the lower voice switches to an emphasis on E, creating a E/F#
relationship (axis 3). Section 3 closes with an intense trombone solo that returns
to D emphasis.
The fourth section, like the third, begins softly after a violent orchestral passage, with the narrator speaking paragraph five, which begins “und trotzdem bete ich” (and yet I pray). The figuration in the bass clarinet and second violin in mm. 51-53 clearly emphasizes F#. The clarinet enters on the last beat of m. 51 with a sustained lyrical three note gesture E-C-A♭ (048), the first in a series of lyrical gestures that embody the lighter mood of this section. It is significant, however, that Schoenberg uses an augmented triad here, as if to point out that he prays despite God’s inaccessibility. A prominent augmented triad also appears in the violins in mm. 69-70 (F-A-C#), at the high of the climactic gesture that closes the fourth section, perhaps with the same symbolic purpose.

The lyrical gestures which pervade this section appear in pairs of melodic hexachord statements that share the same hexachord group. In mm. 53-55 two of these pairs are present. The piccolo and the trumpet state hexachords from Group 1 that emphasize C, while the B♭ and E♭ clarinets unfold hexachords from Group 2 that emphasize D.

In m. 57-59, the rhythmic activity diminishes and the flute enters with an ascending gesture whose dotted rhythm that anticipates the rhythm of the choral setting of the text “Erfüllungen” (Fulfillment). This gesture is imitated in the trumpet in mm. 58-59, and together the two voices create an emphasis on Bb. The violins in m. 59 have a sustained sonority that centers on C, thus creating a Bb/C relationship (axis 3).

The lyrical gesture (with a sixteenth-note triplet interpolated in it) is taken up by the lower instruments in mm.59-63. In mm. 64-69, Schoenberg again switches to the technique of isolating the (014) trichord, in a passage that
builds to the climax of the section. The motive, two sixteenth notes followed by a sustained note, is a transformation of the lyrical motive.

In m. 70, the climax of the section is reached. The second hexachord group is divided into augmented triads, F-A-C# in the violins, and D-F#-A# expressed as tremoli in the upper woodwinds. The first hexachord group is expressed as a punctuating chord that can best be described as a C major/minor sonority with added b6 and M7. This dual interpretation of the same hexachordal set as both symmetrical and pitch-referencing embodies the conflict between doubt and prayer that in the theme of the text. In mm. 71-72 the violins sustain a high D, while the winds and lower strings articulate two gestures, one descending and the other ascending to create a D/E compound second sonority at the cadence.

The choral parts enter in mm. 73-77 with two new melodic ideas, the soprano and tenor melodies characterized by dotted rhythmic figure first seen in the flute in mm. 57-59, and the alto and bass melodies characterized by triplet figures. In m. 73, G#-E-C augmented triad figure in the soprano echoes the augmented triad figure found in the flute in mm. 51-52.

While the voices move forward with new material, the violin descant seems to be recapitulating earlier material, first with a statement of R0A in m. 73 and more importantly with a statement of P0A in mm. 76-77 that is a varied rhythmic diminution of the music that was used to set the text “alle Völker preisen dich” (all people praise you) in mm. 3-5.

In mm. 78-80 rhythmic activity drops off dramatically as the voices sing the words “Wunder” (miracles) and “Erfüllungen” (fulfillment), a musical
depiction of restfulness (Example 4.10). On the second beat of m. 79 the choral parts coalesce briefly on a $G_b$-$B_b$-$D$ (048) augmented triad sonority, perhaps as a symbolic depiction of the impossibility of achieving fulfillment. The “fulfillment” motive is used in the lower instruments in mm. 81-82 as a bridge to the last gesture of the music.

Example 4.10

mm. 78-80

The last four measure of the music are dominated by the imitative entry of a theme setting the works “und trotzdem bete ich” (and yet I pray) in each of the four voices. Each entry clearly emphasizes a given pitch. In m. 83 the alto accompanied by the bass states $I_3A$, and emphasizes C. In the next measure the tenor (with the violins) states $I_5A$, centering on D. In m. 86, the tenors accompanied by the double basses unfold $I_7A$, and emphasizes E. In the last
measure the unaccompanied soprano repeats the alto statement of I₃A an octave higher, with its corresponding emphasis on C. The music thus stops in m. 86 as it began, by emphasizing the pitch-class C.

Areas of clear pitch emphasis in *Modern Psalm* are less pronounced that in *De Profundis*. This seems to correspond to the difference in tone between the surety and passion of the biblical psalm and the more doubtful and introspective text of Schoenberg’s "modern" psalm. The association between pitch emphasis and divinity, however, is still present in this work. The first two lines, which deal with prayer, emphasize C. The setting of the text "Wunder: Erfüllungen" (Miracles: Fulfillment) in mm.78-80, emphasizes D. The final four repetitions of the text "Und trotzdem bete ich" (and yet I pray) in mm. 83-86 begin and end with pitch emphasis on C.

The striking setting in mm. 78-80 of the word “Erfüllungen” (fulfillment) seems to be the place where the musical setting loses its forward drive. The return of areas of clear pitch emphasis in mm. 83-86 certainly serves to release the harmonic tension that was created in the intervening three sections. Another sign of the sense of recapitulation achieved in the closing measures is the punctuations found in the violins and the winds in mm. 82 and 83. The violins in m. 82 play a punctuating sonority that sets the first trichord of P₀A (E-D#-C) as it was voiced in the opening acclamation, only an octave higher. The second trichord of P₀A is played melodically in the clarinet. A similar texture sets P₀B in m. 83. This clear exposition of the hexachords of P₀ is another link between the opening and the final measures.
V. CONCLUSION

One of the most striking features found in each of the three pieces of Op. 50 is Schoenberg’s use of consonant sonorities and areas of pitch emphasis. Ethan Haimo, in his article on Schoenberg’s late works, notes his “interest and willingness to make explicit triadic and tonal references, suggesting some kind of reconciliation between serialism and tonality.”¹ The argument that Schoenberg was trying to reintroduce consonance and pitch emphasis into his twelve-tone music is supported by the development of his serial technique seen in Op. 50. In each of the works of Op. 50, Schoenberg takes a progressively more systematic approach to the inclusion of elements of tonality into his serial style.

In Dreimal Tausend Jahre, Op. 50a, Schoenberg’s incorporates pitch emphasis in a direct and uncomplicated way through the use of diatonic subsets contained within a single combinatorial pair of row forms, P₀ and I₅.

Example 5.1
Source Row Forms for Dreimal Tausend Jahre

In *De Profundis*, Op. 50c, pitch emphasis is created by the relationship between the tritone dyads and major third dyads within the source row form. The row for *De Profundis* is all combinatorial, with the result that sixteen different row forms keep these dyads invariant.

Schoenberg’s method of creating pitch emphasis in *Modern Psalm*, Op. 50c, is similar in many ways to the method he used in *De Profundis*. The row for Op. 50c is constructed from (014) trichords, which makes the minor second, the minor third and the major third the most prominent intervals used in the piece. Schoenberg uses the minor seconds present in the row as quasi-leading tones that create area of pitch emphasis that focus on the bottom notes of the third dyads. The source row form for *Modern Psalm*, like that of *De Profundis*, is also
all combinatorial, which allows Schoenberg to make use of twenty-four related row forms where the content of the hexachords remain invariant.

Example 5.3
$P_0$ Row Form from *Modern Psalm*

Another interesting aspect of pitch emphasis found in Op. 50 is that it occurs in symmetrical patterns. David Lewin notes that Schoenberg had an interest in symmetrically based tonal structures that dates back to *Harmonielehre*, and that this technique of inversional balance can also be seen to affect set relationships in Schoenberg's twelve-tone compositions. In *Dreimal Tausend Jahre*, the pitch emphasis pattern consists of two perfect fifths separated by a half step, G-C-$A^b$-$E^b$. The pattern in *De Profundis* is based around the lower notes of the major third dyads, which form a series of minor thirds, G-$B^b$-$D^b$-$E$. *Modern Psalm* has three axes of symmetry which are each separated by a major third.

In a 1947 letter to René Liebowitz, Schoenberg addressed the issue of incorporating consonances and tonal references into serial music:

Under the term of loosening the ‘rigor’ of the treatment of the twelve tones you mean probably the occasional doubling of octaves, occurrence of tonal triads and hints of tonalities. Many of the restrictions observable in my first works in this style, and what you call ‘pure’, derived more theoretically than spontaneously from a probably instinctive desire to bring out sharply the difference of this style with preceding music. [ . . . . . ] As regards hints of a

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tonality and intermixing of consonant triads one must remember that the main purpose of 12-tone composition is: production of coherence through the use of a unifying succession of tones which should function at least like a motive. Thus the organizational efficiency of the harmony should be replaced. It was not my purpose to write dissonant music, but to include dissonance in a logical manner without reference to the treatment of the classics: because such a treatment is impossible.

Schoenberg seems to be implying that a true “emancipation of dissonance” would allow consonance and dissonance to be treated equally within the overarching coherence of the serial structure. Thus, he may have seen the increased use of consonance and elements of tonality in Op.50 as the final step in his serial odyssey, a sign that his twelve-tone method was fully developed. Another explanation may be that the attempt to incorporate tonality into the serial system, a fundamentally impossible task, is a symbolic depiction of the equally impossible attempt of humanity to reach God.

Peter Gradenwitz notes that, while many composers turn to religious composition at the end of their careers, Schoenberg’s final opus should be seen as the culmination of a lifetime’s effort to find God through music.3 Two themes pervade Schoenberg’s religious compositions; the incomprehensible grandeur of God and the importance of prayer as a means of approaching the divine. One of the most striking example of the importance Schoenberg placed on prayer can be seen in A Survivor from Warsaw, where it is a prayer that achieves the symbolic victory over the forces of darkness. All three works of Op. 50 share this focus on the importance of prayer. In Dreimal Tausend Jahre, the sorrowful lamentations expressed in the opening section are transformed into prayers of thanksgiving. The text of De Proundis expresses the psalmist’s belief that prayer and faithfulness will assure salvation, despite humanity’s

unworthiness. The text of the *Modern Psalm* addresses the issue of prayer directly, envisioning prayer as a sacred gift that can bridge the vast gulf between the insignificance of humanity and the inexpressible greatness of God.

The inability of humanity to express the grandeur of God, one of the most fundamental ideas expressed in *Moses und Aron*, is also a central theme in *Modern Psalm*. The texts of *Dreimal Tausend Jahre* and *De Profundis* focus on expectation and the promises of a deity who is not observably present. This spiritual longing resonates well with the text that Schoenberg wrote for the final piece.

One of the most daunting obstacles to accepting the concept that Schoenberg’s Op. 50 is a musically unified whole is the question: why was *Modern Psalm* left incomplete? The most common reason that composers leave their final works incomplete is simple: death interrupts the compositional process. Malcolm MacDonald, in his biography of Schoenberg casts doubt on this simple explanation:

> Here, again, the incompleteness is somehow artistically satisfying, its open-endedness expressing the yearning, rather than the achievement. Perhaps Schoenberg sensed this, for in the last months of his life he made no attempt to return to the unfinished score. ⁴

Mark P. Risinger, goes even further, making the claim that Schoenberg made a conscious decision to end the piece because he was unable write music that could express the “divine union” described in the final lines of the text. ⁵ Risinger cites as additional evidence the progressive slowing of the text setting

and the C minor pitch emphasis that is present at both the beginning and ending of *Modern Psalm*.

There are a number of reasons why Schoenberg left *Modern Psalm* incomplete. Schoenberg’s inability to complete large-scale religious works and his idea of an unrepresentable God are well established. The question arises, therefore: could Schoenberg have harbored any illusions from the beginning that he could finish a work that addressed such an issue? There is also an abundance of evidence in the music of Op. 50 that Schoenberg created a symbolic ending for *Modern Psalm*. In addition to the “rounding off” and return to C emphasis noted by Risinger, the sense of completeness in Op. 50c is strengthened by the symmetry of the sectional divisions in the music (see p. 59). It is interesting to note that C minor is also given strong emphasis in the first work of Op. 50, *Dreimal Tausend Jahre*, which suggests that this gesture toward harmonic closure was intended from the conception of Op. 50c. Further evidence of Schoenberg’s premeditation concerning a gesture toward a C emphasis is evident from the fact that *Israel Exists Again*, the unfinished fragment noted earlier as a possible precursor to *Modern Psalm* (p. 4), also begins with a strong emphasis on C. Schoenberg uses pitch emphasis in Op. 50 both to symbolize divinity and to provide a sense of harmonic closure that spans all three works.

Risinger notes that the ending of *Modern Psalm* seems to embody the combination of contradictory elements, a gesture that moves towards closure, yet retains a sense of continued searching. Examples of this type of gesture, where a consonant point of arrival is undermined by an immediate motion away, can be found in each of the works of Op. 50, a feature that acts to unify
the three pieces. This can be seen on the smallest scale in the cadential gestures of the first two phrases of *Dreimal Tausend Jahre*, which begin on points of relative consonance the move away into greater dissonance (see p. 19). The same type of gesture appears, in a larger context, at the end of Op. 50a, where the symbolic arrival on the C minor seventh chord in the second half of m. 23 is transformed into the more ambiguous symmetrical final sonority, C-A♭-B-G (0145). The point of symbolic arrival in *De Profundis* occurs in m. 48, where, at the culmination of an intensely lyrical passage, the “Rochberg” progression is given its clearest statement. This gesture also begins the final texture/density crescendo, which culminates in a final dissonant shout of affirmation. The point of symbolic arrival in *Modern Psalm* can be found in m. 80, where the choir cadences on a D-F# dyad after singing the text "Wunder: Erfüllungen" (Miracles: Fulfillment). Schoenberg, as Risinging notes, can go no further after this symbolic arrival, so he turns back to an earlier line of the text and leaves the piece with an ending that is both complete and incomplete at the same time.

Schoenberg stated in “Brahms the Progressive” that the final work of a “great” composer should reach for “the uttermost limit of the still expressible.” Schoenberg’s Op. 50 should be seen as an artistic and personal last testament, a work that reaches for the unreachable: a reconciliation between serialism and tonality, an expression of the inexpressible grandeur of God, and a symbolic union between humanity and the divine. Schoenberg was faced with many challenges at the close of his life: poor health, difficult finances, and artistic isolation. The great faith and optimism expressed in his final opus is a fitting ending to a distinguished career.
PART TWO  AN ORIGINAL COMPOSITION, SYMPHONY #1
I. OVERTURE

Flute 1&2

Oboe 1&2

Bb Clarinet 1&2

Bassoon 1&2

Horn in F 1&2

Horn in F 3&4

Bb Trumpet 1

Bb Trumpet 2&3

Trombone 1&2

Trombone 3/Tuba

Percussion 1

Percussion 2

Percussion 3

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viol

Celli

Double Bass

marimba

timp.

< mus. notation >
II. SCHERZO

Flute 1&2
Oboe 1&2
Bb Clarinet 1&2
Bassoon 1&2
Horn in F 1&2
Horn in F 3&4
Bb Trumpet 1
Bb Trumpet 2&3
Trombone 1&2
Trombone 3/Tuba
Percussion 1
Percussion 2
Percussion 3
Violin 1
Violin 2
Viola
Cello
Double Bass

\[ \text{\textcopyright \textregistered} \]
75

5

Fl. 1&2
Ob. 1&2
Cl. 1&2
Br. 1&2
Horn 1&2
Hn. 3&4
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2&3
Tbn. 1&2
Tbn. 3/Tba.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Perc. 3
Fl. 1&2
Ob. 1&2
Cl. 1&2
Br. 1&2
Horn 1&2
Hn. 3&4
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2&3
Tbn. 1&2
Tbn. 3/Tba.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Perc. 3

Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vnc.
D.B.
75

130
[Sheet Music Image]
IV. FINALE

Flute 1&2
Oboe 1&2
Bb Clarinet 1&2
Bassoon 1&2
Horn in F 1&2
Horn in F 3&4
Bb Trumpet 1
Bb Trumpet 2&3
Trombone 1&2
Trombone 3/Tuba
Percussion 1
Percussion 2
Percussion 3
Baritone
Violin 1
Violin 2
Viola
Cello
Double Bass
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Composer: Arnold Schoenberg
Portions Requested: measures 33, 78-80

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Thomas Michael Couvillon, Jr., a native of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, spent much of his childhood and attended high school in Houston, Texas. He earned his Bachelor of Music degree in theory and composition from Loyola University-New Orleans and his Master of Music in composition from Louisiana State University. He has taught composition and music theory at Nicholls State University, Tulane University, Arizona State University, and Sam Houston State University. In addition to teaching and composing, he is active as a church musician and is an avid hiker and cyclist. He will receive the degree of Doctor of Philosophy on December 20, 2002.