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An Analysis of Symphony No. 19 ("Vishnu") by Alan Hovhaness, and "Kshetrajna", an Original Composition for Orchestra.

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An analysis of Symphony No. 19 ("Vishnu") by Alan Hovhaness, and "Kshetrajna", an original composition for orchestra

Young, Phillip E., D.M.A.
The Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical Col., 1990
An Analysis of Symphony No. 19 (Vishnu)  
by Alan Hovhaness, and  
Kshetrajna, an Original Composition for Orchestra

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 Musical Arts

In  
The School of Music

by  
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Acknowledgements

Examples from Alan Hovhaness, SYMPHONY NO. 19 (VISHNU)
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Abstract

This dissertation consists of two parts, both of which share a common link through their inspiration from Hinduism. Part I is an analysis of Hovhaness's Symphony No. 19 (Vishnu). Part II is an original composition in three movements for orchestra entitled Khetraija.

Hovhaness's Symphony No. 19 (Vishnu), composed between July and August, 1966, in Luzern, Switzerland, is a single movement work of tripartite structure, for symphony orchestra. The title, Vishnu, refers to the second person of the Hindu trinity, whose name is a remarkable metaphor for the explosive energies and sustaining forces of the universe. The work is impressionistic in a sense; Hovhaness achieves a great wealth of "atmospheric" effects, highly suggestive of cosmic space and events (viz., exploding galaxies, vast emptiness and timelessness). Hovhaness is very much a mystic, and this one quality is poignantly manifested in Vishnu through the many Eastern and mesmeric devices employed in the work.

In the following analysis the various parameters of form, tonality and modality, "senza misura" practices, melody and vertical sonority found in Hovhaness's 19th symphony are described in depth.

The second part of the dissertation, Khetraija, is an
original orchestral composition in three movements by the author. The title, Kshetrajna, is a Sanskrit term meaning knower of the field. The work draws its inspiration from the thirteenth chapter of the Bhagavad Gita in which Krishna relates to Arjuna knowledge about the field (physical manifestation in its totality) and its knower (the conscious ego). Two basic motives are thus interwoven through the course of the work, and manipulated in diverse ways. The three movements generally adhere to the scheme, fast-slow-fast, respectively. The movements are essentially through-composed, and follow no traditional formal outlines.
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In the following analysis the various parameters of form, tonality and modality, "senza misura" practices, melody, and vertical sonority found in Hovhaness's 19th
symphony are described in depth. Rhythmic organization is examined in connection with "senza misura" practices and melody. Orchestral color, instead of being examined separately, is described in connection with the above parameters. Little attempt is made to examine the impact of Hovhaness’s mysticism. Many Eastern devices employed in the work are highly evocative of a mystical atmosphere as mentioned above; however, expressive effect is a highly subjective matter, and varies markedly from one listener to another. While it is Hovhaness’s self professed aim to express spiritual and transcendent qualities in his music, this is a problem of aesthetics which defies the fragmented analytical approach which characterizes the present study.

The symphony is scored for the following instruments: 3 flutes (piccolo), 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, bass drum, giant tam tam, glockenspiel, 2 vibraphones and 2 chimes, 2 harps, celesta and string orchestra.

The second part of the dissertation, Kshetrajna, is an original orchestral composition in three movements by the author. The title, Kshetrajna, is a Sanskrit term meaning knower of the field. The work draws its inspiration from the thirteenth chapter of the Bhagavad Gita in which Krishna relates to Arjuna knowledge about the field.
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One unique addition in the work's instrumentation is that of the soprano saxophone to the woodwinds. In cases in which the soprano saxophone may not be available, a third flute may be added to perform this part, or the part may be transposed for B♭ clarinet. The instrumentation consists of the following: (1) in the woodwinds—two flutes (the second alternating with piccolo), two oboes, English horn, soprano saxophone, three B♭ clarinets, bass clarinet, and two bassoons; (2) in the brass—four horns in F, three trumpets in C, three trombones, and tuba; (3) in the percussion—timpani, xylophone, triangle, vibraphone, gong, bass drum, crotales, bass drum, tom tom, cowbell, brass wind chimes, temple blocks, cymbals, harp and piano; and (4) strings.
Part I

An Analysis

of

Symphony No. 19 (Vishnu)

by

Alan Hovhaness

4
Vishnu is a single movement work, the vast majority of which is comprised of "senza misura" music, metered sections being relegated to a very subordinate role. Hovhaness has written the following about form:

Perhaps the form of this single movement could be represented by the classical Japanese concept of "Jo-Ha-Kyu" or three-part form. Thus it might be expressed as a vast triptych:

1) Cosmic Adoration
2) Cosmic Processional-Dance
3) Cosmic Death and Glorification

Jo-ha-kyu is an aesthetic theory which has deep roots in Japanese culture. The term appears in the sixth volume of the Sokyoku Taiisho, a collection of kumiuta (vocal pieces comprised of two or more short poems) published in 1779 by physician and Koto player, Yamada Shokoku. This aesthetic concept was used in ancient Japanese court dances called bugaku, and in a form of Buddhist chanting.

' Alan Hovhaness, Record Liner Notes, Symphony No. 19 (Vishnu) op.217, (Poseidon 1012)
called shomyo. Zeami, a No-playwright (1363-1443) refined the concept in his theoretical writings. Jo—ha—kyu denotes a three-part structure: jo corresponds to an exposition; ha, which means "scattering" or "breaking apart", is a development towards a high point; and kyu represents a partial reprise, and a sudden climactic finish. The concept of Jo—ha—kyu may be applied to a single phrase, or to entire compositions comprised of numerous sections within the basic tripartite structure.

In Vishnu the "'senza misura" sections (frequently ranging from fifteen to twenty seconds duration each) present a rich and bewildering variety of modality, texture, and orchestral color. Two major melodies are developed throughout the work and even become intertwined at points; yet, thematic statements do not help elucidate formal aspects well. There are numerous canonic statements and developments of thematic material; but, these appear as randomly dispersed as the stars they probably represent. An element of recurrence is


4 Hovhaness has written that the symphony "is an unfolding giant melody of adoration to the immensity and sublimity of limitless stellar universes," and that the melodic line is "interspersed with myriad interludes of
prominent throughout the work; however, there are never exact duplications. The opening material with its prominent trombone glissandi reappears at great frequency in much the manner of a ritornello; yet, it too is altered (always fresh amidst constant flux). Thus, the work appears to be through-composed.

One could loosely divide the work into two relatively equal divisions with "senza misura" music prevailing in the first half, $[1 \text{-- } 51]$; and metered sections becoming more prevalent in the second half, $52$ to the end. The metered section at $52$ (in 4/4) also provides a drastic and spirited contrast to preceding material.

One aspect which may reveal a three-part division is that of pitch-centricity. The pitch-centricity of $F$ pervades from the opening to $29$, and subsequently from $56$ to the end. The pitch of $A$ prevails at $30$; yet, it switches back and forth with $F$ for a few sections until $C$ pandiatonic emerges only to give way to $A$ again. $E$ dorian arrives at $41$, and is followed by $A$ aeolian in a lengthy and metered climax at $45$. The middle section closes in $D$ dorian. The last three pitch-centricities move in a path of descending fifths. These divisions are further substantiated by the use of $B*$ in the key signature for parts one and three and $F#$ in the middle section.

whirling clouds of sounds, volcanic clouds, storm clouds, celestial clouds, nebula clouds, star clouds." Hovhaness, Record Liner Notes.
SCALAR RESOURCES

Hovhaness draws upon a great wealth of modal and tonal resources: major and minor tonality, various diatonic modes, synthetic scales of a raga-like nature, the diatonic pentatonic scale, and even altered pentatonic scales. These resources are used in a context of constant flux.

As mentioned above, F retains the status of a pervading pitch centricity for the majority of the first and last divisions of the work; however, the modal form around this pitch centricity frequently changes—for example, F mixolydian may give way to F dorian, followed by F major, or F pentatonic. F is also tonicised in a synthetic raga-like scale of seven pitches with a characteristic augmented second:

\[ e \]

---

Hovhaness has studied Indian music profusely; however, instead of using exact raga scales he prefers to create his own. The irregular intervallic sequence of the "raga-like" scale employed in Vishnu (augmented second, semitone, semitone, wholestep, wholestep, semitone, wholestep) is highly characteristic of raga scales.
Fig. 1. Raga-like scale with first and second degrees forming an augmented second

The pitch, F, finds emphasis, too, in an altered pentatonic scale (essentially a fragment derived from the above scale) with a characteristic augmented second:

Fig. 2. Altered pentatonic scale with augmented second

The dominance of F is frequently disguised with conflicting tonalities or modalities, occurring simultaneously. Polytonality and/or polymodality, when complex enough, lend an atonal character to the music. A very striking example of the foregoing may be found at 3 (see Ex. 3 in Chapter 2, p. 21), where the percussion present the following six pentatonic scales (4th mode) simultaneously:

---

* The use of the term "mode" refers here to the degree tonicised within the pentatonic scale (i.e., if the second degree of a pentatonic scale is tonicised, then it is in second mode). This terminology is used by Vincent Persichetti, *Twentieth Century Harmony*, (N.Y., W.W. Norton and Co. Inc., 1961), p. 51.
Fig. 3. Pentatonic scales emphasizing the fourth mode

All twelve pitches of the chromatic scale are generated from the above sound-web. To the ear the effect is quite atonal. Hovhaness has mentioned that he will use atonality, but only briefly--perhaps in a section or for background. It is Hovhaness's firm conviction that everything in nature has a center (i.e., planets revolving around a central sun, etc.). He also feels the same conviction for musical tonality. Hovhaness has expressed his use of atonality as "passing through the valley of the shadow of death," but he doesn't "want to stay there."7

The use of pandiatonicism is very important in Vishnu. It is not only used in the major tonality; it is extended to modal and nondiatonic modal sections also.

Modal material is frequently used in a pandiatonic-like manner. At 56 (see Ex. 1, p. 11) the entire section is exclusively (white-note or white-key) pandiatonic on F lydian. The parts consist of scalar runs and fragments. For initial pitches in these patterns, only F, A, and C are used, with F receiving by far the most emphasis.

7 Alan Hovhaness, Lecture at the University of Southwestern Louisiana, 1986.
Ex. 1. Pandiatonic-like treatment of material in F lydian.
Non-diatonic modal material is treated in the same pandiatonic fashion at $\text{63}$ (see Ex. 2, p. 13). The above mentioned raga-like scale is embodied in the string parts. The first part in the first violins' divisi a 4 contains all the pitches of the mode with the exception of $E^\flat$. The remaining string parts have material containing only fragments of the mode. The harps present at the same time patterns based on the pentatonic fragment (see fig. 2) of the raga-like scale.

Further aspects of modality and tonality are covered in chapters 2 ("Senza misura" Music), and 3 (Melody).
Ex. 2. Pandiatonic-like treatment of material derived from raga-like scale.

Excerpt from a musical score with annotations and musical notation.
CHAPTER II

"Senza Misura" Music

A feature most unique to Hovhaness's musical style is his use of passages consisting of multiple parts marked "senza misura." An excellent description of this technique may be found in the preface to Vishnu, in which Hovhaness writes the following:

Senza Misura passages... are to be played completely ad lib. without rhythm, and should be repeated over and over again as many times as necessary until the next bar-line is indicated by the downbeat of the conductor. It is very important to note the word "STOP." All players should play very rapidly, allegro, and not together. Each player should play at his own individual speed, paying no attention to other players. This produces sounds of confusion and chaos, like a great crowd of people whispering, speaking, shouting in mass confusion.1

The sound effect is one of great fluidity, especially when applied to the strings using multiple divisi.

Hovhaness has coined a great number of terms for this technique. The two most prevalently encountered (and yet self contradictory in light of the great rhythmic diversity in "senza misura" sections) are "rhythmless" and "free-rhythm" music. Hovhaness's mystical leanings are readily apparent in his use of such terms as "spirit

murmur" and "controlled chaos" for this technique.²

Hovhaness used the "senza misura" technique for the first time in 1944 (in Lousadzak, a concerto for piano and strings). This date is significant in that it easily predates by over a decade the use of "senza misura" practices as a compositional technique by such notables as Penderecki and Lutoslawski. Hovhaness specifies the duration in seconds at the top of each score of "senza misura" music, which is similar to Lutoslawski's method; however, he notates "senza misura" patterns in the following manner:

Fig. 1. Notation of "senza misura" passages

or he uses the symbol, after the repeating melodic cell. He avoids white scoring altogether.³ This "senza misura" technique is Hovhaness's unmistakable signature (especially when applied to strings) and stands out as the achievement he is most proud of.⁴

² Alan Hovhaness, Lecture given at the University of Southwestern Louisiana, 1986.

³ White scoring is a practice of leaving vacant on the score the staves of parts which consists wholly of rests.

⁴ Ibid.
In *Vishnu*, each "senza misura" section is highly colorful and complex in and of itself. It is the norm for each part to be different. The groupings of individual sixteenth note series in each part are mostly random, and odd numbered groupings are more frequent, thus avoiding any sensation of periodic effect. Frequently, these sections exhibit an enormous diversity of rhythmic values, despite the fact that each part is played at a different pace. Pattern-groupings of thirty-seconds, sixteenths, eighths, or mixed groupings of various rhythmic values abound in conjunction with each other.

The mystical allure of mountains (a profound inspiration to Hovhaness) finds prevalent expression in "senza misura" passages through the dynamic pattern, pp--ff--pp. Hovhaness specifies that in such dynamic arches, the musicians are to "make only one great crescendo," and subsequently, one great decrescendo. The entire dynamic arch is not always used; however, and in such instances only half of the pattern (ff-pp, or pp-ff) is used.

The opening rhythmic block (see Ex. 1, p. 18) represents a mixed texture provided by trombone, tuba, timpani, bass drum, and tam tam roll. The pitch center on F is established in the timpani and reinforced by an agogic accent on low F in the tuba. The glissando in the

---

trombone ends on the tones of C (dominant influence) and E (leading tone). The three glissando cells begin on B♭, G♯, and B♭, respectively. Each is separated by rests. The low F in the tuba is followed by short cells (three and two member cells, respectively) comprised of semitones which complement the character of the trombone glissandi.

After a gradual crescendo, one horn and two trumpets enter at mf, thickening the texture. The horn part is particularly heraldic in spirit, and brilliant in its high register. It begins with octave leaps on a concert C which is emphasized by agogic accent, and continues with varying pitch interpolations between the octave C's and concludes with an upward trill on C. The first trumpet's pattern is essentially a trill (primarily in sixteenths) on F, encompassing the first four notes of the mode (emphasizing the third and fourth scale degrees towards the end of the pattern); meanwhile the second trumpet introduces a three-note cell which begins on F, and includes the two scale degrees below, and subsequently above, the modal center. All pitch material with the exception of that in the glissandi cells conforms to the same mode. The passage comes to a sudden stop after all eight parts crescendo to ffff.

The next "senza misura" sound-block, 2 (see Ex. 2, p. 19), ushers in a total color change with the entrance of twenty different parts in the strings, which enter pp, and
Ex. 1. Opening Score

SYMPHONY No. 19
Vishnu
ALAN HOVHANESS Op. 217

Senza misura Allegro 15 seconds [only one cresc.]

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Ex. 2. "senza misura"

2 Senza misura  15 seconds  [only one crew]
then crescendo to fff and decrescendo subsequently to pp (the symbolic mountain). Each section of the strings is divided four ways: two parts (in eighth values) consist of pitch glidings; the remaining two of stepwise runs up and down (in sixteenths).

The following section (3) observes the same dynamic pattern, yet the scoring is now for bell-like percussion instruments (glockenspiel, two vibraphones, two chimes, two harps, and celesta). Each part is constructed on a pentatonic scale, each of which is built, in turn, on a different pitch center. The tones generated from all the parts yield the entire chromatic scale. A more numerically logical order appears in the sixteenth note groupings in this section. Each subsequent pattern in each part (with the exception of two parts) is diminished by one sixteenth-note value—the largest is nine sixteenths, while the smallest is three. This ordering, however, is a rarity in the course of the work—the norm is for randomized groupings (see Ex. 3, p. 22).

The next "senza misura" section, 4, is a simplification of 2 (Ex. 2, p. 19). The strings are only divided into ten different parts, and while most of the groupings are comprised of scalar patterns (in thirty-second notes), three parts conclude their scalar patterns with pitch glidings (in eighth notes). The following is an excerpt depicting the parts of the first violins:
The aural impression is much akin to 2, yet the modality is different. The strings continue using pitches from the same pentatonic patterns centered on different pitches which the bell-like percussion instruments ushered in with the previous "senza misura" block. The dynamic scheme is only half the dynamic arch (pp--ff) of that found at 2. The subsequent "senza misura" block, 5, is a return to the opening patterns supplemented by two additional trombone parts. In fact, throughout the first section of the work, the opening "senza misura" block with its characteristic trombone glissandi recurs in much the same manner as a ritornello, even though there are slight permutations with each presentation (it is never duplicated exactly). The other sound-blocks are repeated in a manner usually undergoing subtle permutations (as pointed out in 2 and 4). The foregoing "senza misura" examples are well illustrative also of an underlying back and forth cycle of recurrence -- if Ex. 1 is labelled A; and Ex. 2 as B; and Ex. 3 as C; plus an additional "senza misura" section, D (examined below), then there emerges
Ex. 3. "Senza misura" 3

3 Senza misura  15 seconds

P. 1
Bdr.

P. 2
Glock.

P. 3
Vibr. I

P. 4
Vibr. II

P. 5
Chim. I

P. 6
Chim. II

Hp. I

Hp. II

Cel.

Always hold pedal

Allegro

Always hold pedal

Continue

Continue

Continue

Continue

Continue

Continue

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the following scheme (the approximate durations are listed beneath each section):

A  B  C  B'  A  /  B''  C'  D  B''  C''
30"  15"  15"  15"  30"  15"  20"  1'30"  15"  25"

When the above scheme is divided, the two halves reveal a palindrome (in the first half), and an A-B-A form (in the second half). This is more than likely accidental given Hovhaness’s temperament—that of one who has abandoned the "artifice in music."

The D section represents yet another kaleidoscopic color change (see Ex. 4, p. 24). An exact canon in the flutes is introduced against the "senza misura" ostinati in the two harps and the celesta (marked allegro). The canonic theme is an alluring and mesmeric variant of the trombone glissandi at the opening (Ex. 1, p. 18). It is also suggestive of some wailing chant an Armenian Priest might sing in which one syllable might last a whole page. It is here, too, that the influence of Eastern music is most poignant. Except for the entrances of the canon (which are exactly specified), the rest of the theme is freely performed. A sense of freedom will result in most

Ex. 4. "Senza misura" and incipit of
any performance—a freedom of spontaneity much akin to the marvelous accident of which the Indian musician is so very fond. Jhalla, a specific Indian device in which one tone is rapidly reiterated with the melody surfacing at strategic points, is introduced for the first time in the celesta, although two pitches are rapidly reiterated here—the tonic and dominant. The result is a throbbing, drone-like effect. The religious element in Hovhaness's music is readily apparent in such a section. It is religious in the sense that its goal is self-edification, and in Hovhaness's mind the purpose of all his music is surely to arouse just such a response. This "senza misura" section most certainly reveals a spirit of timelessness.

The opening material receives its most complex treatment at 27 and 28. A series of "senza misura" sections beginning at 23 (each of fifteen seconds duration) increase in density prior to this climax (see Ex. 5, pp. 28-31). In the first section of this series, the string basses (div. a 4) present scalar runs in thirty-second notes from F major at the beginning of their parts and conclude with glissandi (each part glides on a different string). This occurs in conjunction with an F

---


second-inversion major/minor chord-drone in the cellos (also divided into four parts). The cellos crescendo from p to ff, while the string basses crescendo from pp to fff. At 24 and 25, the complete strings are divided into ten different parts based upon multiple pentatonic scales (as was done at 4), while the timpani emphasizes a pervading model center of F. At 26, the ten different string parts abruptly switch to F Mixolydian, emphasizing scalar patterns. The strings continue the same material into 27, where the texture suddenly thickens with the addition of woodwinds, horns, and trombones. The woodwinds emphasize three-note cells on various pitches (B–F–G in the bassoons and contra-bassoons; D–E–F in the bass clarinet; G–A–B in the clarinets; G–A–B in the English horn; G–A–B in the oboes; and G–A–B in the flutes and piccolo), creating sharp dissonances. The four horns present heraldic-like material again—this time pandiatonic on B♭. The trombones present multiple glissandi of an enormously atonal nature, while the tuba emphasizes a solid modal center of F in material derived from the work's opening. The tuba part also receives numerous chromatic interpolations. At 28, the trumpets are added to this truly "multi-planar" texture,
emphasizing yet again a three-pitch cell (F-G#-A).

The final crescendo in this climax is to ffff. Only a minute and thirty seconds has transpired from 23 to the climax. At 29, a sudden shift to bell-like percussion instruments with multiple pentatonic scales brings the first division of the work to a pp ending in twenty-five seconds.

Further discussion of "senza misura" music will be reserved for Chapter 3, which pertains to melody. This covers "senza misura" accompaniment to metered melody, and "senza misura" melody.

"Multi-planar" is a term used by Arnold Rosner in reference to Hovhaness's juxtaposition of different modes, meters, melodies, and textures simultaneously. Analytical Survey, p. 28.
Ex. 5. "Senza misura" section 23

Vn. 1

Vn. 2

Va.

Vc.

Cb.

Senza misura 15 seconds
Ex. 5. cont. "Senza misura" sections 24 and 25
Ex. 5. cont. "Senza misura" sections 28 and 29
CHAPTER III

MELODY

Melody is the most vital aspect of the work, whether it be in the context of twenty or more different melodies simultaneously, or one melody emphasized against a drone background, or still other variations. The following traits characterize melodic construction in metered sections:

1) Stepwise motion predominates

2) Use of the highly characteristic interval of the augmented second

3) Always legato

4) Always begins on beat one

5) Conforms to a given mode with a bare minimum of non-diatonic elements. If there are non-diatonic elements they usually occur near the end of the melodic passage, and in some rare instances, in the middle.

The following traits characterize melodic construction in "senza misura" sections:

1) Scalar fragments (frequently pentatonic)

2) Portamento

3) Predominant stepwise motion

4) Repeated notes exuding a throbbing drone effect
There are two basic melodic ideas which pervade the entire work: one, an arch-shaped melodic phrase; and the second, a melisma-like melodic figure. These melodic ideas appear in various forms, and undergo numerous permutations—sometimes numerous and varied simultaneous presentations of the same melody result in dense soundblocks, which may be contrasted with linear or canonic presentations in adjacent sections. At points the two melodic ideas are even combined. In this chapter, these two melodic ideas will be examined at their inception, and then their subsequent appearances and development will be examined.

**MELODY ONE**

At $\boxed{8}$, a "senza misura" section lasting 20 seconds, pentatonic-based melodic material is introduced by five bell-like percussion instruments (glockenspiel, two vibraphones, and two chimes), which appear prominently at points throughout the work. The melody occurs at its simplest in the second chime part, and can be divided into three distinct motivic fragments which outline a general inverted arch that begins on C, and dips down an octave, and then returns to the high C:
Fig. 1. Melody one at its simplest

Fragment A is comprised of a simple back and forth reiteration of two pitches, C and D. Fragment B consists of a downward and upward scalic presentation of the pentatonic scale (and as a result of a pitch centricity on C, all parts are constructed on the fourth mode of the F diatonic pentatonic scale). Fragment C is an embellishment of fragment A with an upper F substituting for C, in addition to a chromatic inflection of the penultimate pitch (which marks the only nondiatonic element in the melodic material).

The five different instrumental parts incorporate a varying number of reiterations of the waving C-D pattern in fragment A—three parts begin on D instead of C. The lengthiest passage is in the first vibraphone, which begins with four reiterations of fragment A an octave higher. The B fragment is greatly expanded, as shown below:

Fig. 2. Expansion of fragment B
The downward and upward patterns of fragment B are reiterated two times and are grouped as sixteenth-notes, while the pivot point at the bottom of the inverted arch remains in eighth-note values and assumes much the character of fragment A, with its interpolated reiterations of C and D. An element of asymmetry is introduced with the interpolated pitches marked with the + above (see Fig. 2). The circled pitches at the beginning of the ascending sixteenth-note patterns represent another veiled interpolation of fragment A. The C fragment is extended as shown below:

Fig. 3. Simple interpolation of fragment C

The same material returns with the same instrumentation at 12. The glockenspiel and the second vibraphone, however, have moved to the fourth mode of A pentatonic (pitch centricity on B), while the first vibraphone is in the fourth mode of D pentatonic (pitch-centricity on A). The two chimes remain in the fourth mode of F pentatonic as at 8 (see Ex. 1, p. 36). A simplification of fragment C occurs in all parts with their deletion of the chromatic inflection on the penultimate pitch.

The patterns in "senza misura" sections are often of a
Ex. 1. "Senza misura"
similar nature as the above patterns. The material is constructed into a variety of combinations resulting in montages of various randomized groupings of additive and subtractive patterns. At \( 24 \), ten different string parts utilize ascending pentatonic scalar patterns in thirty-second note values. The string patterns are divided among four different pentatonic scales:

\[ \text{Fig. 4. Pentatonic scales in the strings} \]

Six parts emphasize the fourth mode, while four emphasize the first.

At \( 25 \) (fifteen seconds after \( 24 \)), the strings continue with the same texture while varying the tonality. The fourth mode of the \( F \) pentatonic from \( 24 \) is maintained, while the other three are replaced with the following two scales in the fourth mode:

\[ \text{Fig. 5. Pentatonic scales in fourth mode} \]

At \( 29 \), the original bell-like percussion instruments return using only the descending part of the \( B \) fragment. Each part has its pentatonic scale centered on a different
pitch (each in the fourth mode again) with a further alteration—the fourth degree is raised in each, resulting in augmented seconds (occasionally spelled as a minor third):

![Pentatonic scales with augmented seconds](image)

Fig. 6. Pentatonic scales with augmented seconds (or minor thirds)

The complete melody returns at 30, and is placed for the first time in the woodwinds. It undergoes a novel transformation with its canonic treatment in the first oboe and the first and second clarinets, respectively (in contrast to the previous montages). In the background the first and second strings, each divisi a 4, have a drone chord based upon the verticalization of A phrygian (lacking only C) with A as the root, while the first harp has an ostinato consisting of the same pitch content. Hovhaness's thinking in this section appears to be extrasytemic—the melody is based on the following KUMOI pentatonic scale: G, A, B\(^\flat\), D, E. Even though these five pitches belong to A phrygian, the aural impression is convincingly pentatonic due to the exclusive use of these pitches (with the one exception of a portamento at the very end) in the melody. The emphasis on A as a pitch center, however, places the melody in the second mode. With the entrance of the second harp (as the third canonic...
statement begins) the final pitch (C) of A phrygian is introduced along with one non-diatonic element, E₅. The entire pitch content of the second harp part consists of the following pitches: D, E₅, G, A, B₅, and C. This is essentially D phrygian (without F). Each absentee pitch represents the third degree of their respective phrygian scales. This lends credence to an extra-systemic theory. The same arched contour as used in the initial presentation of the melody (at [A], etc.) is adhered to in two complete statements (see fig. 7. below). The falling part of the B fragment is disguised with an interpolated sequence of fragment A on the pitches E and D, while the rising portion of fragment B is in additive groupings of sixteenth notes (3, 4, and 5, respectively). The modal change distinguishes the C fragment from previous presentations—minor second above the pitch center is consistently used until the very end of the passage. In previous statements the minor second appeared as the penultimate pitch only.

![Fig. 7. Melody one used as a canonic melody](image)
Lower chromatic inflections of E appear briefly in the second statement adding tonal variety, in addition to a glissando from B♭ to B at the very end of the passage. This passage marks the first appearance of this highly characteristic device in this melody.

A similar treatment of the melody occurs again at 37 in a three-part canon for flutes. The background is similar—only the mode is changed (the chord in the strings is a verticalization of C major). The melody is presented in three statements and is based on the fourth mode of the pure diatonic pentatonic scale on F (instead of the Kumoi scale). The A fragment is characterized by an upper neighbor (in contrast to the lower neighbor at 30); and again is veiled, even within the B fragment (as indicated by the circled pitches below):

![Musical notation]

**Fig. 8.** Second appearance of melody one as a canonic melody

Beginning with the second statement, there is a greater degree of embellishment and repetition (as marked in
brackets):

Fig. 9. Embellishment of second canonic statement

The introductory embellishment of the third statement is expanded to cover the whole pentatonic in two octaves, while the waving pattern of the A fragment receives more reiterations, one of which is accented with a grace note. The downward slope in the inverted arch of the B fragment is marked also by repetition, in addition to a quality of wandering (as depicted in the box and the brackets below). The sixteenth-note groupings (six, seven, and eight, respectively) which follow have an even stronger drone effect than previous appearances of these groupings as a result of eight additional sixteenth values and the more numerous back and forth reiterations of G and A. The statement ends with the characteristic half step inflection above the pitch center gliding down to the center (instead of up, as was the case at the end of 30).
Rising pentatonic scalar patterns derived from fragment B punctuate four "senza misura" passages between the canonic treatments of the melody at 30 and 37. At 31, the original five bell-like percussion instruments return with a different (pitch-centered) pentatonic scale for each part. The pitch centers are B, F, A, C, and E, respectively. Little significance can be drawn from this sequence other than the composer's aural preference. The sequence of linear enfoldment in the scale is comprised of the following: semitone, minor third (or augmented second), minor third, and wholestep. The percussion instruments continue with their patterns into 32 in conjunction with the entrance of the brass in a variant of the opening ritornello. At 34, ten different string parts have patterns distributed among the same five pentatonic centers. However, at 35, only the string basses (divisi a 4) continue the patterns (on the pitch centers of F, C, G, and D, respectively), while the cellos and violas maintain a drone on the pitches, C, D, F, G, A, and B.

At 52 (see following Fig. 11), the most dramatic transformation of the melody takes place. Marked Allegro
giusto $\frac{\text{d}}{\text{D}} = 120$, it is very spirited, and is placed in a meter (4/4) for the first time. The modality is dorian on D, and a pervading drone on D occurs in the brass and string basses at piano level, while the harps take white-note modal patterns in opposite directions. The changing accents (at forte level) in the timpani and bass drum add greatly to the spirited nature of the section. The melodic line, taken by the first and second violins, is again strongly stepwise, as has been the case with all previous appearances. The opening pitch is displaced at the octave and strongly accented, as are all the first beats until two measures before $53$. The inverted arch which characterized previous presentations is absent here. The characteristic element that remains is primarily the undulating stepwise motion of fragment A. For the first eleven beats, there is a bare minimum of four different pitch classes (E, D, C, and B), and these find ample reiteration in the repeated sixteenth-note groupings (bracketed in Fig. 11). The last six beats are equally restrictive in their range and end accenting the modal final (on beat one), which also marks the beginning of the next statement. There is less rhythmic activity in these six measures. The only sixteenth values occur in two different groups of two, each of which is approached and left in the same stepwise direction.
The violins reinforce the melodic line with the entrance of the second statement. The first two and a half measures are identical to the opening; however, monotony is avoided through rhythmic displacements in the form of sequences lasting 3 1/2 beats:

Fig. 12. Sequential treatment of fragments lasting 3 1/2 beats

The sequence at 53 (Fig. 13) is taken from the opening fragment with its characteristic octave displacement. The last sequence has an interpolated eighth-note value (marked with the +), which serves also as the middle of the shorter sequence of three ascending groups of two eighths:
The third statement begins on beat three, and is identical to the opening. It is reinforced by the cellos and bassoons. Afterwards, Hovhaness returns to the sequential treatment of the opening fragment in units of 3 1/2 beats. The texture thins with the deletion of the cellos, bassoons, and violas. As the violins decrescendo to piano, and the drone on D ceases, the woodwinds employ the melody (forte) in stretto at every two beats (see Ex. 2, p. 46). The stretto treatment exudes a complex drone effect, which lasts to the end of the section. The same material; however, does not remain in stretto. Five measures before 55 , the flutes embark on the stretto treatment of fragment A on pitches B and A (circled in Fig. 14) grouped into ascending patterns of five sixteenth-notes—thus obscuring the meter again:

Fig. 14. Development of fragment A
Ex. 2. Sequential treatment of melody one in metered context
A subsequent sequence on G and F follows, which gives way in turn to the following inexact (units of 3 1/2 beats) sequence:

![Fig. 15. Inexact sequence of units in 3 1/2 beats](image)

The opening fragment is treated sequentially in a rhythmic cycle of 3 1/2 beats for the duration of the section (for seven measures). Hovhaness's use of the rhythmic cycle is closely akin to the Indian use of tala—repetitive rhythmic cells utilized in a raga. The basic pulse in the above rhythmic cycle is the eighth note. This basic pulse is analogous to the matra, or basic rhythmic unit of the Indian tala.

Much later at Ex. 3 (see Ex. 3, p. 48), the original inverted arch shape of the melody returns in the five bell-like percussion instruments in a "senza misura" section of 25 seconds duration. Each part is constructed on the fourth mode of the diatonic pentatonic scale, and again each is centered on a different pitch—E, A♭, G♯, C, and B♭, respectively. Each part is also exclusively in sixteenth-note values. A jhalla-like effect is utilized with fragment C at the end of each pattern. Usually the
**jhalla technique** is more random in its rhythmic groupings, but here groupings of three are used with the exception of the very last one, which uses four.

At \( \text{E}_7 \) (see Ex. 4, p. 50), Hovhaness incorporates glissandi into every aspect of the melody (in its original contour again) taken by the trombones in three-part canon, while patterns based on the B fragment are given to the bell-like percussion instruments (which are strictly in the diatonic pentatonic scale on F). The trombone glissandi consist of the following pitches: C, D\(^\flat\), F, G\(^\flat\), and A with occasional G\#'s resulting in augmented seconds. Each glissandi cell ends or begins on the active tones of C (dominant influence), or F (tonic)—emphasizing these pitches in the same manner as done in the trombone parts at the very opening of the work (see Chapter 2 on "senza misura" music). The augmented second, F-G\# presents a minor third/major third clash with the major third, F-A; within the linear cell as well as when considering the vertical aspects of the parts together.

The bell-like percussion instruments take the melody at \( \text{E}_7 \) in, again, the jhalla-like technique. While at \( \text{E}_7 \) each part was on a different pitch center in the diatonic pentatonic scale (fourth mode), there are only three centers in this "senza misura" section—E, A\(^\flat\), and C. Also, the jhalla-like technique is used at the beginning and middle of the melody as well as the end. Most of the
Ex. 4. "Senza misura"

Allegro

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groupings are in three sixteenths; however, the first vibraphone's is in four, while the second chimes' is in two.

The percussion instruments continue their jhalla-like patterns into \( \text{76} \), in conjunction with the entry of the trumpets taking the entire melody in three part canon. The percussion instruments are yet again in five different pitch centers—F, C, E\(^\flat\), G, and B\(^\flat\). The material in the brass is very similar to the trombone parts at \( \text{72} \), only the glissandos are absent, and the scale is the altered pentatonic of F, G, B, C, and D. Thus the opening fragment is in whole steps instead of half steps. The characteristic chromatic alteration on the penultimate pitch (B\(^\flat\)) is maintained.

At \( \text{79} \), the percussion instruments continue the jhalla-like patterns—this time all parts are uniform on F pentatonic. The chromatic inflection on the penultimate pitch reappears—previously it had been deleted in the percussion instruments parts.

The percussion instruments delete the jhalla-like technique with their reappearance at \( \text{84} \). Only the B fragment is used, and here mostly in descending patterns in groups of diminishing sixteenths.

At \( \text{89} \), the final soundblock in the work (and a most tranquil one at that), the flutes take the melody in three part canon on F pentatonic (fourth mode). In the
background the harps and celesta have soft ascending ostinato patterns, while the violins, divided into eight parts, sustain a full white-note drone. At the bottom pivot point of the inverted arch, chromatic inflections return, resulting in halfstep reiterations of the interpolated A fragment. The complete fragment C concludes the statement (with a closing element of glissandi), in addition to a final G# nondiatonic element gliding up to A (see Ex. 5, pp. 53-54).
The second major melody of the work is introduced at 10 by the flutes in a three-part canon. Marked allegretto espressivo, it is in a "senza misura" section, and stands out from a background of soft "senza misura" ostinato accompaniment in the harps and celesta, which emphasizes F as a tonal center. The following raga-like scale defines the tonality:

Fig. 16. Raga-like scale defining the tonality of melody two

However, a case for polymodality could be made in light of the emphasis A receives in the canonic melody.

Each point of imitation is at the unison, and is precisely determined at the point marked X below:

Fig. 17. Incipit of melody two

The unrolling of the melodic line has many similarities to
a wailing chant as practiced by an Armenian priest—one syllable can be sung for the duration of an entire page. Hovhaness’s melodic line here seems to have the same basic concept behind its unfolding—its pitches oscillate around the third degree of the scale in the opening few seconds as shown above. The subsequent melodic passage pivots on D:

![Fig. 18. Continuation of melody two](image)

The pitches of the scale are only gradually revealed. The apparent tonal center, F, is the very last to appear, and also lies in a most inconspicuous position (circled in Fig. 19). This lends credence to the possibility of a dual modality. One could conveniently visualize the phrygian on A with a lowered fifth, and raised seventh degree as non-diatonic elements of the mode. The melodic range also widens with the subsequent passages as a result of the arabesque element at the beginning of each:

![Musical notation](image)
Fig. 19. Expansion of melody two

All voices interacting result in a harmonic blur. Dynamics are linearly uniform, but not vertically uniform. The augmented second is avoided entirely (save for the "senza misura" accompaniment). The harmonic blur, in combination with the drone-like ostinato and pitch glidings, lend a truly haunting quality to the section.

The melody returns in a more crystallized form at 13. Marked Largo solenne $d = 60$, it is metered in 2/2, and retains the same tonality as at 10. The pitch centricity on F is strongly apparent as a result of its sole drone in the string basses and lower brass for 56 measures. Again, the pitches of the scale are only gradually introduced—only four different pitches ($A$, $G\#$, $B\flat$, and $C$) appear in the first four measures. The motion in the first four measures is also exclusively stepwise. A skip to the sixth degree marks the beginning of the second phrase, which also continues for four measures exclusively in stepwise motion. An agogic accent on the fifth degree marks the end of the phrase. The third phrase is double in length—beginning on the third scale degree, $A$, it progresses stepwise down to $F$ (again the last scale degree to be introduced), then reversing direction, it proceeds...
up to D, and then back to A. On the written score the motion is completely stepwise (with the exception of the minor third, B to D, in the 3/2 measure); however, the G#-F is an augmented second (aurally a minor third). There is only one meter change, and that is to 3/2 for only one measure (four measures into the third phrase).

Fig. 20. Melody two in metered context

The fourth phrase, opens with a skip of a fourth, C-F, and is followed by an augmented second, which in turn leads to A, the apex of the melodic range. Here, Hovhaness dwells on A for six measures, inserting only two different pitches, F and G#. The effect is again much akin to that of a wailing chant.

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In the foregoing there are essentially three basic melodic patterns:

\[ A \]

\[ B \]

\[ C \]

Fig. 21. Continuation of melody two in metered context

Fig. 22. Three basic melodic patterns in melody two

The direction of melodic motion in the fragments above as they occur in the present section is the same, yet it may not be intervalically exact. There are also numerous instances of retrograde, inversion, and rhythmic alteration.

As for frequency of occurrence, the minor third occurs thirteen times; the minor sixth occurs only once; stepwise motion occurs ninety-nine times (out of which the
augmented second occurs ten times). The overall effect is one of great fluidity. The melodic range is greatly narrowed in comparison to that at 10, and the pitch glidings are also absent in the present passage. The varying phrase lengths also add to the fluidity of the passage. The melodic scoring juxtaposes different instrumental pairs from phrase to phrase, or between phrase divisions: two bassoons; two horns; English horn and bass clarinet; or clarinet and bass clarinet.

At 21, the melody returns, again metered in 2/2, yet with "senza misura" accompaniment in the harps. The melody is taken by the flutes in three-part canon, and provides a synthesis of the material at 10 with that at 13. The canonic and glissando elements at 10 are combined with the metrical structure at 13 (see Ex. 6, p. 61).

Just as melody one was fragmented into the montage textures of "senza misura" sections, so also is melody two. Note the use of fragments A and B of melody two in the first trombone part at 32 (see Ex. 7, p. 62).

A transformation of the melody occurs at 39, 41, and 43 (all "senza misura" sections), involving pitch glidings and arabesque elements. At 39, three solo violins are in three-part canon at the unison against a white-note drone in the violins (divided into eight parts) and ostinatos in the harps. Note the canonic melody in figure 23, p. 63.
Ex. 6. [21], Melody two in 2/2 with "senza misura" accompaniment
Ex. 7. "Senza misura" 32

Cl.
1

Trb. 2
f

3
f

Tba.
mf

Timp.

P. 1
Tam.

P. 2
Glock
Allegro

P. 3
Vibr. I

P. 4
Vibr. II

P. 5
Chim. I

P. 6
Chim. II

32 Senza misura Allegretto 15 seconds

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At 41, two oboes and two clarinets take the melody in a four-part canon at the unison against a drone in the violins (divided into eight parts again). The tonality is E dorian with occasional non-diatonic elements. The arabesque elements receive greater attention here:

At 43, a canon exists simultaneously between the woodwinds (oboe and two clarinets) and the trombones. The woodwinds imitate at the unison with each other as do the trombones, yet the woodwinds are a fifth above the brass. Also, after the first five notes, the melody in the trombones continues with glissandi, whereas the woodwinds
employ an arabesque and then return to pitch glidings (see Ex. 8, p. 65).

A synthesis of melody one and two is achieved at $46$, in a 7/4 metered section, marked Andante con moto maestoso $J = 100$. Fragment A of melody one and the melisma quality of melody two are combined in a lengthy and climactic melodic presentation in the trumpets and strings (covering four octaves) against a drone background on A. The section is exclusively in A aeolian, with no tonal interferences. The influence of Renaissance melodic practices is most evident in this section with its legato treatment of a predominantly stepwise moving melody—even the rhythmic values are a throwback to Renaissance melodic writing. The opening presentation of the melody may be precisely broken down into antecedent and consequent—each phrase is two measures long and of parallel construction. The bracketed melodic fragment (towards the end of the consequent) in the figure below, reveals the motive most frequently manipulated throughout the section.

![Fig. 25. Melody two transformed into a parallel period](image-url)

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Ex. 8. "Senza misura" Simultaneous canon in brass and woodwinds

Allegretto

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The rhythmic emphasis is \( \downarrow \downarrow \downarrow \downarrow \downarrow \) at the beginning of each phrase. The significance of this rhythmic pattern has been pointed out by Arnold Rosner (in his dissertation on Hovhaness) as that of a rhythmic signature, which corresponds to the composer's name in the following manner:

\( \downarrow \downarrow \downarrow \downarrow \downarrow \)

Alan Hovhaness

Fig. 26. Rhythmic signature

The subsequent presentations of the melody are varied and expanded by simple interpolations, sequential episodes (bracketed in the figure below) of varying lengths and melismatic passages. The sequential fragments frequently obscure the barline—some sequences (depicted in broken brackets below) incorporate overlapping motivic fragments.

---

At $64$, melody two returns again in an exclusively metered setting ($7/4$), and continues over a period of time with intermittent interruptions from "senza misura" passages. The melody is marked Andante—noble and heroic—$J=80$, and at each subsequent appearance ($66$, $70$, $74$, and $78$) it receives the same specification. The context is similar to that at $13$—also the scale is identical along with the drone on $F$. 

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Within the phrasing, the quicker note values precede the slower ones (\( \frac{3}{4} \) \( \frac{3}{4} \) \( \frac{3}{4} \) \( \frac{3}{4} \) \( \frac{3}{4} \)), until \( \textbf{78} \), where the melody shifts to \( \frac{3}{4} \) \( \frac{3}{4} \) with a meter change to 5/4, in conjunction with rapid "senza misura" accompaniment in the strings (see Ex. 9, p. 69). At \( \textbf{80} \), with a new designation, Largo solenne \( \textbf{\dot{d}} \) =60, the meter also switches to 12/8, and the melodic pace slows down even more:

At \( \textbf{86} \), the melody returns to 5/4 meter (Andante \( \textbf{\dot{d}} \) =80), and also to three-part canonic treatment in the
Ex. 9. 78, Melody two in 5/4 with "senza misura" accompaniment
flutes, in conjunction with "senza misura" accompaniment (in the harps and celesta). The prevailing rhythmic cycle, \( \frac{3}{4} \), returns as well.

Fig. 30. Return of melody two in \( \frac{5}{4} \) meter
CHAPTER IV

VERTICAL SONORITIES

In many works, Hovhaness makes great use of rich and chromatic progressions consisting of consonant and triadic chords. Vishnu, however, is not such a work. Indeed, harmony is essentially static throughout the work. Any sense of harmonic progression must be found in the shifting in pitch centricities from one section to another, and not within individual sections. (These shifts were discussed in the section on scalar resources of Chapter 1). In Vishnu, harmonic stasis is achieved in two ways:

1) through tonally complex, and repetitive textures in "senza misura" sections which are essentially immense soundblocks;

2) through drones with their inherent time suspending qualities. These range from simple single-pitch drones to drone-chords comprising all the pitches of a particular mode.

In this chapter, these drone-chords are examined in detail.

The first appearance of chordal simultaneities occurs
at 13. A total of three different added-note chords appear in this metered section, yet any sense of progression is nullified through the use of a pervading consonant F, common to each aggregate:

![Added-note chords](image)

Fig. 1. Added-note chords

The distinguishing quality of the first chord is its dual modality (although Hovhaness resorts to the enharmonic spelling of the minor third as an augmented second). Occasionally this chord receives an added member, B♭, adding to a general cluster effect. Arnold Rosner, in his dissertation on Hovhaness, refers to these chords as "constructed chords." He specifies that each chord has an integral consonant interval, or triad, to which additional pitches may be included only when they are a half-step above or below that consonant interval. In the second chord of the example above, D♭ is the added pitch (1/2 step) above the consonant F–C. The third chord, a cluster consisting of the pitches, D#, E, and F, however, is an exception to the above, and contains no consonant interval.

The scoring places the F consistently in the string.

1 Rosner, *Analytical Survey*, pp. 70-78.
basses, with occasional support from the tuba at points. The remainder of the chord is then equally distributed among the glockenspiel, two harps, and celesta. The scoring is shown in Ex. 1 (p. 74).

At 30, a drone-chord consisting of six pitches is presented by the first and second violins. Its pitches represent (with the exception of an absent third degree, C) the phrygian mode on A. Its scoring renders a thick and rich sound—the spacing may be noted below:

Fig. 2. Drone-chord consisting of six pitches

A drone-chord consisting of six pitches appears again at 35, this time scored in the cellos and violas. C is the lowest sounding pitch, and with the absence of E, the pitch content represents the verticalization of C major. The spacing of the notes yields again a thick and rich sound (as at 30), yet the intervallic relationships are slightly altered:

Fig. 3. Drone-chord, of six pitches, built on C

A very ethereal effect is achieved at 36 (Largo d = 60), in a chord comprising all the pitches of C major.
Ex. 1. Largo solennel d\textsuperscript{3}-60

Scoring of added-note chords

- EH.
- Bcl.
- Bsn.
- Cbsn.
- Hrn.
- Tba.
- Timp.
- P.1
- Bdr.
- P.2
- Glock.
- Hp.I,II
- Cel.
- Cb.
This verticalized mode is presented in the first and second violins through five different repetitions. C consistently serves as the lowest sounding pitch, while the remaining pitches of the mode constantly shift with each repetition in the upper voices through alternate verticalizations. The motion is essentially stepwise through these shifting verticalizations, which present an illusion of progression, even though the chord remains the same amidst such flux (see Ex. 2, p. 76). The final iteration of the above chord is tied over into the next section, \( \text{37} \), where it is sustained as a complex drone for the duration of that section, (and even into the opening of \( \text{38} \)). At \( \text{37} \), the drone functions as a background for a three-part "senza misura" canon in the flutes.

A permutation of \( \text{36} \) ensues at \( \text{38} \) (which is also marked Largo \( d = 60 \)). A complex series of chords occurs in succession, and comes the closest (thus far in the work) to creating any sense of progression; however, here too there is a drone-chord sustained through much of the section. The drone (which appears in the cellos, and is duplicated in the violas an octave higher) consists of only four pitches—C, F, G, and A. C again is the lowest sounding pitch; hence, the chordal identity of F 6/4 with an added G emerges (see Ex. 3, p. 77). The chordal movement in the first and second violins represents
Ex. 2. Verticalized mode of C
Ex. 3. Verticalized pentatonic scales over a sustained F 6/4 with added two
verticalizations of the pentatonic scale on A, D#, and E, respectively:

![Fig. 4. F 6/4 and verticalized pentatonic scales](image)

The three subsequent simultaneities represent various verticalizations of white-note harmony with A as the root; however, with E being the lowest sounding pitch, A 6/4 with varying added notes emerges more distinctly as the chord's identity:

![Fig. 5. Varying verticalizations of white-note harmony](image)

The last chord is tied over into 39, where it too will function as a drone for that section's duration.

The section at 39 (as in 37) also employs a three-part canon, in this instance, however, for three solo violins (in conjunction to the three-part canon there is a four-part canon in the woodwinds.) The same chord marks the beginning point at 40 (Largo \( \text{d} = 60 \)) for a very rich glissando to D major with added 2 and 4. The third chord, E minor with added 2 and 4, is sustained into the next
section, where it also serves as a drone (this is yet again an instance of the last chord of one section used as a drone for the duration of a subsequent section).

At 42, the diatonic pitches of G are verticalized in the cellos, and violas. It is constructed in seconds with the exception of the lowest two pitches, which are a minor third (E-G). This drone is repeated again at 43.

At 44, the first and second violins verticalize the pitches of E dorian (with the exception of D). The pitch spacing is in minor thirds in the higher range; mostly secundal in the middle range; and B, the lowest sounding pitch, forms a perfect fourth at the base of the aggregate.

A drone of identical structure (only transposed a whole step) ensues at 45. It verticalizes the pitches of C major with the one exception of C itself. The "senza misura" passages in the section include C, however, and are exclusively pandiatonic on C.

The "senza misura" soundblock, 57, marks the beginning of a series of accumulating second inversion triads, each of which has a dual modal quality (see Ex. 4, p. 80). In each, the enharmonic minor third is spelled as an augmented second. The cellos usher in the first chord, F 7/4 M/m; the violas introduce the second chord, D♭ 6/4 M/m at 58; the second violins present the third chord, A 7/4 M/m, at 59; and the first violins at 60 reiterate
Ex. 4. "Senza misura" sections 57 - 60.
"Constructed chords"
F 7/4 M/m. The motion from one chord to another has been in ascending minor sixths, yet with each chord reiterated with each new chord's entrance the final aggregate renders only six pitches in all (F, G#, A, C, C#, and E). The basic consonant triad of the final aggregate is F major. Each additional pitch, in conformity with Kosner's "constructed chord" theory, is a half-step from one of the consonant intervals:

![Diagram of constructed chord on F]

Fig. 6. "Constructed chord" on F

At 67, F 7/4 M/m is presented uniformly in the strings through four octaves. About ten seconds later, at 68, the lower strings (string basses and cellos) are dropped, while the chord is reshuffled vertically in the higher strings, with the addition of a new pitch, D, into the sonority. A further reduction in density occurs with the elimination of the violas (again only ten seconds later, which has uniformly marked the duration of each sonority between 47 and 68), leaving only the violins.

F M/m returns at 80 (Largo Solenne J. = 60) with an
added flat sixth (Db•):

![Music notation of added flat sixth chord]

Fig. 7. F M/m with added flat sixth

The chord is scored for two harps, and is arpeggiated with each reiteration. Each attack is equidistantly spaced (two per measure in 12/8). F pervades in the string basses and timpani throughout the section. An element of contrast is provided by an occasional addition of B♭ to the aggregate, in conjunction with an alternate verticalization:

![Music notation of F 6/4 with added flat fourth and sixth]

Fig. 8. F 6/4 with added flat fourth and sixth

One could easily specify the chord as B♭ minor with an added second and seventh; however, the B♭ is half-step above the consonant interval, F–A. Thus it conforms to Rosner's "constructed chord" category.

The final sonority of the work occurs at [89] and lasts for the duration of the work. It comprises the
verticalized mode of C. It is secundal with the exceptions of the outer pitches—C, the lowest sounding pitch; and A, the highest, each of which forms a perfect fourth with the adjacent pitch. This results in the strong implication of F 6/4.

In summary, there are two basic chord types found in Vishnu: (1) added-note chords, and (2) verticalized scales. The last category may consist of white-note harmony, pentatonic scales, or modal scales. Alternative verticalizations of the same chordal content lends a particular richness to these chords, which consistently function as drones. The scoring for most chords will frequently emphasize a perfect fourth in the lower two voices, thus rendering second inversion implications.
CONCLUSION

Vishnu is an aurally impressive work. The "senza misura" sections, which constitute the majority of the work, yield a bewildering and kaleidoscopic diversity of color, density and effect. The use of such Indian devices as jhalla, pitch glidings, drones and tala add greatly to an exotic atmosphere. The practice of each musician playing his or her part at a different speed, will render a quality of freshness and fluidity to any given performance.

Stasis is a very prominent quality in Vishnu. With each part repeated over and over again at separate speeds (in "senza misura" sections) the resultant aural impression is that of a harmonic blur. In essence, the effect is that of a highly complex drone. All vertical aggregates conform to one single function— that of a drone.

Two melodic ideas are brought to prominence in Vishnu: (1) an arch-shaped phrase, and (2) a melisma figure. Each is primarily stepwise in direction, and each is treated to a vast array of thematic processes. These processes consists of the following: mode changes, canonic settings, fragmentation, sequence, ostinatos (usually in the context of multiple simultaneous
presentations as in a montage), a wide range of pitch interpolations (including pitch glidings, additive and subtractive patterns, arabesque elements, scalar fragments). In addition, melody may be found in a "senza misura" or metered context. The meters emphasized are predominantly asymmetrical (7/4, 5/4). The scalar resources include various pentatonic scales (the diatonic pentatonic scale, the Kumoi scale, and an altered scale with an augmented second), the diatonic church modes, and a raga-like scale.

Vertical aggregates consist of the following two basic types: (1) added-note chords, and (2) verticalized scales. The last category may consist of white-note harmony, pentatonic scales, or modal scales. Alternative verticalizations of the same chordal content lends a particular richness to these drones. The scoring for most chords will frequently emphasize a perfect fourth in the lower two voices, thus yielding second inversion implications.

This study is an analysis of the technical musical language of Hovhaness in Vishnu. While such an analysis reveals the compositional elements of the work, it cannot reveal the emotional impact of the structure as a whole. The emotional range, in Vishnu, is vast, often the hideous and horrendous stand juxtaposed side by side with the sublime. These emotions depict quite vividly the dynamic
qualities of the Hindu deity for whom the work is named, and it is in the sphere of emotional impact that Hovhaness’s mystical intent (which pervades the entire work) is encountered. Mysticism, however, is a quality which evades the fragmented analytical approach.
Part II

Kshetrajna,

An original composition for orchestra

by

Phillip E. Young
INSTRUMENTATION

Two Flutes (Fl)  Second Flute interchangeable with Piccolo
Two Oboes (Ob)
English Horn (EH)
Soprano Saxophone (SS)
3 Clarinets in B' (Cl)
Bass Clarinet (B.C1)
2 Bassoons (Bsn)

4 Horns in F (Hrn)
3 Trumpets in C (Tpt)
3 Trombones (Trb)
Tuba

Timpani
Percussion 1 (Perc)
  triangle (△), xylophone (Xylo), vibraphone (Vib),
  gong, bass drum (BD)
Percussion 2
  crotales, bass drum (BD), tom tom, cowbell, wind chimes
  (阊阊阊阊), temple blocks (TB), xylophone, cymbals

Harp
Piano

Strings

SPECIAL SYMBOLS

\(-\) Bend specified note in indicated direction

♀ Snap pizzicato

Quarter Tones:
  + 1/4 up
  ♫ 3/4 up
  ♫ 1/4 down
  ♫ 3/4 down

accelerated note group

♀ High multiphonics
♀ Low multiphonics

The score is in C

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Selected Bibliography


Hovhaness, Alan. Lecture at the University of Southwestern Louisiana. 1986.


Phillip E. Young was born on March 14, 1959, in Jackson, Mississippi. At age seven he moved to Morton, Mississippi, where he remained until completion of high school in 1977. He studied composition with Dr. James Sclater at Mississippi College in Clinton, receiving his B.M. degree in 1981. Later that year he began studying with Dr. Dinos Constantinides at Louisiana State University, and received his Masters there in 1983. He has remained at Louisiana State University working towards the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts. He has filled a number of commissions, the most successful being the award-winning first movement of Kshetrajna, which was performed in 1986 by the LSU Symphony Orchestra under James Yetstadt.
DOCTORAL EXAMINATION AND DISSERTATION REPORT

Candidate: Phillip E. Young

Major Field: Music

Title of Dissertation: An Analysis of Symphony No. 19 (Vishnu) by Alan Hovhaness, and Kshetrajna, An Original Composition for Orchestra.

Date of Examination: March 13, 1990

Approved:

[Signatures]

Major Professor and Chairman

Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

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Date of Examination:

March 13, 1990