

**Compound tintinnabulation
in the music of Arvo Pärt**

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ABSTRACT

Arvo Pärt's music is often characterized as simple, even minimalistic in style. Indeed, his tintinnabulation technique, developed in the early 1970s, consists of only two basic elements: a melody (usually a scale) and a triad. The myriad ways in which Pärt employs tintinnabulation to build each composition, however, are anything but simplistic. For example, one important piece-building strategy Pärt employs is "compound melody." A "compound melody" consists of two independent voices combined into a single melodic line. In Pärt's tintinnabuli music, those two voices consist of the melodic and triadic elements (the M-voice and T-voice, respectively). For this reason, I identify Pärt's use of compound melody as a distinct technique, which I call "compound tintinnabulation." In this thesis, I define the compound tintinnabulation technique and explore its uses in a number of Pärt's tintinnabuli pieces. My definition of compound tintinnabulation and analyses of four tintinnabuli works constitute an original contribution to scholarship.

The thesis is divided in two parts. Part 1 provides background on the tintinnabulation technique and methodological information. In the methodology section, I enumerate the various ways to identify and parse a compound tintinnabulation melody. To accomplish this, I briefly analyze some tintinnabuli and pre-tintinnabuli works, such as *Sarah was Ninety Years Old*, *Variationen zur Gesundheit von Arinuschka*, *Summa*, and *The Woman with the Alabaster Box*. Part 2 comprises four detailed analytical essays, which employ the methodology that I developed in Part 1. The essays investigate two instrumental and two vocal works, whose dates of composition span approximately thirty years. These compositions

are: *Tabula Rasa* (1977), *Annum per Annum* (1980), *Es sang vor langen Jahren* (1984), and *L'Abbé Agathon* (2004).

I cover a wide-ranging sample of Pärt's compositional output in order to reveal the importance of compound tintinnabulation for his tintinnabulation aesthetic as a whole. Throughout this thesis, I investigate interactions of Pärt's spirituality and religious narratives with the compound tintinnabulation technique. In my score analyses, accompanied by illustrative figures and examples, I show how examining the surface manifestations of the tintinnabulation technique in each piece is essential to understanding the richness of meaning in Pärt's music.

ABSTRAIT

La musique d'Arvo Pärt est souvent caractérisée par son style simple, même minimaliste. Sa technique de « tintinnabulement », développée dans les années 1970, se compose de seulement deux éléments très simples : une mélodie (généralement une gamme) et une triade. Il y a de multiples façons dont Pärt emploie le tintinnabulement pour construire chaque composition, cependant, elles sont toutes sauf simplistes. Par exemple, pour former certaines œuvres qui tintinnabulent, Pärt utilise des « mélodies composées ». Des « mélodies composées » se composent de deux voix indépendantes, s'alliant en une seule ligne mélodique. Dans le tintinnabulement, ses deux voix se composent d'éléments mélodiques et triadiques (le M-voix et T-voix, respectivement). Pour cette raison, je définis le genre de « mélodie composée » utilisé par Arvo Pärt comme une technique distincte, que je nomme le « tintinnabulement composé ». Dans cette thèse, j'utilise pleinement le « tintinnabulement composé » et j'explore les usages de cette technique dans un assortiment de compositions en style de tintinnabulement. Ma définition du « tintinnabulement composé » et aussi mes rédactions analytiques constituent ma propre contribution originale à la littérature intellectuelle.

La thèse est divisée en deux parties. La première partie explique le contexte du style du tintinnabulement et explique ma méthodologie. Dans la section méthodologique, j'énumère les façons d'identifier et d'analyser le tintinnabulement composé. J'atteins cet objectif en analysant brièvement quelques compositions de la période de tintinnabulement et des années précédentes, par exemple *Sarah was Ninety Years Old* , *Variationen zur Gesundung von*

Arinuschka, *Summa*, et *The Woman with the Alabaster Box* . La deuxième partie contient quatre analyses de quatre compositions, faite à partir de la méthodologie originale développée dans la première partie. Deux sont des compositions instrumentales et deux sont des compositions pour voix, créées durant presque trente ans. Les compositions sont : *Tabula Rasa* (1977), *Annum per Annum* (1980), *Es sang vor langen Jahren* (1984), et *L'Abbé Agathon* (2004).

Je donne plusieurs exemples musicaux pour montrer l'importance du tintinnablement composé dans la musique d'Arvo Pärt. A travers cette thèse, j'analyse les interactions entre les récits spirituels ou religieux et le tintinnablement composé. À partir de figures et d'exemples, je montre comment le tintinnablement composé peut être important dans chaque œuvre pour comprendre la définition de la musique de Pärt.

– *Translated with the help of Thomas Dunckel.*

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Thank you Christa, for your unerring presence through the many small disasters and joys of my degree. Finally, I dedicate this thesis to my parents, for not merely demanding excellence, but expecting it as the natural consequence of my abilities. I suspect that in reality, my success is an effect of being born to two such exceptionally talented and remarkable human beings.

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PART 1: Background and Methodology

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

I am confident that one thing stands for all. One is all.

– Arvo Pärt (Smith 1999, 20).

Arvo Pärt has likened his music to a painting whose many brushstrokes give the illusion of complexity when viewed directly, but whose simple meaning becomes clear when viewed out of the corner of one's eye.¹ The coexistence in a single work of complexity and simplicity, detailed surface manifestations and a deeper, divine mechanism, is characteristic of Pärt's tintinnabulation style. In his book on the composer, Paul Hillier identifies the "sense of a single element expanding and contracting, as opposed to the confrontation of two or more separate elements" as a defining feature of Pärt's compositions (1997, 68). In this thesis, I identify a specific technique that especially exemplifies this concept: Pärt's systematic use of compound melody, or as I more specifically call it, "compound tintinnabulation."

¹ Personal communication with the composer at the Baltic Musics and Musicologies conference, Canterbury, UK, May 2011.

In this document, I define the compound tintinnabulation technique, investigate its uses in works from both the vocal and instrumental genres, and discuss its broader implications for the analysis of Pärt's music. By analyzing four works, each of which employs compound tintinnabulation to a different effect, I provide an account of the technique's development throughout Pärt's music after 1976.

In Part 1, I review the relevant scholarly literature on Arvo Pärt's music. Since my research deals exclusively with works from Pärt's tintinnabulation period (1976 – present), I will not spend much time discussing the details of his life and works before 1976; instead, I will focus on the most current analytical procedures for understanding his tintinnabuli music. In my review of research on the tintinnabulation technique in Chapter 2, I discuss the work of Paul Hillier, John Roeder, Thomas Robinson, and Hermann Conen. I also include a discussion of the literature that I deem relevant for the analysis of narrative or plot in Pärt's music. Many of my analyses deal with Pärt's philosophies and how they unfold through his use of compound tintinnabulation procedures in individual pieces. For this reason, I felt it was important to address some issues concerning conducting narrative analyses of minimalist music. I draw upon the work of Byron Almén, Susan McClary, and Douglass Seaton in this section.

Chapter 3 outlines the methodology I use in the analyses of Part 2 of this thesis. In this chapter, I provide a definition of compound tintinnabulation, propose three different musical features that enable the analyst to parse a compound tintinnabulus melody, and provide an example of compound tintinnabulation in an early, proto-tintinnabulation piece, *Sarah was Ninety Years*

Old. I also use excerpts from the works *Variationen zur Gesundheit von Arinuschka*, *Summa*, and *The Woman with the Alabaster Box* to demonstrate the various compound tintinnabulation techniques employed by Pärt.

In Part 2, I analyze four tintinnabuli pieces in detail. In order to demonstrate the importance of compound tintinnabulation throughout Pärt's post-1976 works, I have selected these compositions from both the instrumental and vocal genres. Their dates of composition span approximately thirty years. I have chosen these works because they use the tintinnabulation technique in innovative ways, and they represent the majority of ensembles used most frequently by Pärt (the only common ensemble missing from my selection is the chorus). I begin Part 2 (Chapter 4) with an analysis of the first movement of the instrumental work *Tabula Rasa* (1977). *Tabula Rasa*, according to Paul Hillier, forms part of a "sudden spate of works" in the tintinnabuli style, produced immediately prior to Pärt's emigration to the West in 1980:

Many of these works now appear to be something in the nature of études, working through a series of ideas, or, rather, the different ramifications of one central idea: the tintinnabuli process. This is not to suggest that there is anything tentative or experimental about them. While they sometimes seem like part of a larger process, each work focuses on a self-contained musical concept and, with one exception, neither repeats nor depends upon any of the other works. (1997, 87-90)

The first movement of *Tabula Rasa*, as part of this early succession of étude-like pieces, works through one particular ramification of the tintinnabuli process: compound tintinnabulation. In this work, the compound tintinnabulation technique is presented simply and clearly in the two solo violins. As the piece progresses, the technique grows in complexity, introducing inverted contours, imitative entries, and more. This movement provides the starting point for all the

following analyses of compound tintinnabulation. For this reason, it constitutes the first full analysis I undertake in this thesis.

The second instrumental work I analyze in Chapter 4 is *Annum per Annum* (1980), a popular work for solo organ. Since Pärt's four works for solo organ have received a significant amount of attention in the scholarly literature (Dobbs 2000, Bostonia 2009, Robinson 2012), they deserve consideration in any extensive analysis of Pärt's oeuvre. I chose *Annum per Annum* specifically because the work's right hand part has eluded explanation by both Dobbs and Bostonia. In my analysis, I show how the mysterious right hand part can be thoroughly explained by differentiating between its two distinct voices, which form a compound tintinnabulus melody.

Chapter 5 presents analyses of two vocal works. The first of these is *Es sang vor langen Jahren* (1984), one of the first vocal works to employ the tintinnabulation technique. In my analysis, I expound upon the research of Hillier and Conen, refining their analyses and adding my own interpretation of the work's dramatic structure. I propose that attention to the work's compound melodies can significantly enhance a narrative reading.

The final work I present for analysis is also the most recently composed: *L'Abbé Agathon*, a work for soprano and eight cellos, was first published in 2004 and subsequently arranged for soprano, four violas and four cellos in 2006. *L'Abbé Agathon* also presents the most advanced, complex use of compound tintinnabulation thus far. In it, Pärt uses two different tintinnabulating triads to represent the story's two characters: Agathon and the leper. As the piece progresses, the voices undergo a process that merges them, until finally the leper

reveals himself to be an angel of God, and the heavenly and human combine at the end of the work. This multifaceted and beautiful vocal work lights the way for future tintinnabuli music by demonstrating the endless variations made possible by compound tintinnabulation.

Purpose of this Study

The main purpose of this thesis is to provide an exhaustive account of the compound tintinnabulation technique in its various manifestations. My identification of the compound tintinnabulation technique is new to the field, having only been briefly discussed previously in the writings of Hermann Conen. Since compound tintinnabulation is present throughout Pärt's oeuvre after 1976 and hence a solid grasp of it is important for accurately analyzing many of his pieces, a thorough account of the technique is overdue in the scholarly literature. More broadly, however, I aim to promote the kind of detailed analysis that is often lacking in discussions of Pärt's music. Thomas Robinson has pointed out that since the tintinnabulation technique is so clear and unambiguous, "critics of Pärt's music might conclude that the 'how' is already answered and is presented forthrightly on the surface of the piece, leaving the analyst with nothing to do" (forthcoming, 77). My goal is to provide thorough analyses of the surface and background structures of Pärt's music, in order to show how each piece uniquely expresses the tintinnabulation aesthetic.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Tintinnabulation Technique

We've been in the West for twenty years now. Since then there has been a growing number of texts on Arvo's music but very little of it is musicologically founded. In effect, almost nothing. This deficit in musicological methodology is always smoothed over by biographical or personal information which cannot necessarily be linked to Arvo's music directly. Naturally, you can always connect ideas - biographical or not - with Arvo's music. Yet the meaning of the music is purely musical. Arvo is predominantly concerned with musical forms and structure.

– Nora Pärt (Smith 1999, 21).

As the above quote suggests, Arvo Pärt has experienced a distinctly problematic relationship with music theory and musicology since his development of the tintinnabulation style in the early 1970s. As Mrs. Pärt observes, his music has been understudied in the scholarly literature. This is due in no small part to the clarity of the tintinnabuli technique, which appears to have been entirely explained by Paul Hillier, leaving nothing for the would-be Pärt analyst to discuss. Analyses of Pärt's music have continued to surface in the scholarly literature, however, in the form of dissertations, articles, and books over the past two decades. In this chapter, I summarize the principal contributions to this body of scholarship and demonstrate how my own project is situated in this area of research.

Paul Hillier's book *Arvo Pärt* (1997), which was prepared in close collaboration with the composer, provides an excellent introduction to Pärt's life and works. Hillier covers Pärt's compositional development from his early collage and serial works to his development of the tintinnabulation technique, providing excerpts from his conversations with the composer and examples from major works. Hillier makes available a number of biographical details of Pärt's life, from his birth on September 11, 1935 in Paide, Estonia, through his childhood in the shadow of war and Soviet occupation, to his education at the Music Middle School under the tutelage of Harri Otsa and Veljo Tormis, and eventually under Heino Eller at the Tallinn Conservatory. Hillier goes on to analyze Pärt's early works, from his neoclassical piano pieces to his first use of the serial technique in *Nekrolog* (1960-1), ultimately leading to the scandalous *Credo* (1968) and Pärt's years of compositional silence. Since Pärt's tintinnabuli works form the subject of my thesis, however, I will not spend much time discussing the analyses of these earlier compositions. Rather, I will summarize Hillier's description of the tintinnabulation technique, which remains the principal method for understanding Pärt's music after 1976.

Tintinnabulation, a style developed by Arvo Pärt in the 1970s, is based on the sustained sound of the notes of a triad, which is reminiscent of the sound of bells. As Hillier discusses, the style's most distinct feature is the "eternal dualism of body and spirit, earth and heaven" and their synthesis into "one voice, a twofold single entity" (96). Pärt has described to Hillier his "view that the [melodic] voice always signifies the subjective world, the daily egoistic life of sin and suffering; the [triadic] voice, meanwhile, is the objective realm of

forgiveness” (96). The tintinnabulation technique, as defined by Hillier, represents these concepts through a triadic tintinnabulus voice (T-voice) and a modal, melodic voice (M-voice). The voices often sound in counterpoint, as in **Figures 2.2 and 2.3**, but each voice may also sound alone. The M-voice usually consists of fairly simple scales, which Hillier separates into four 5-note modes (**Figure 2.1**). M-voices are generally based around a pitch center (in **Figure 2.1**, the pitch center is A). The modes are merely ways of moving by step towards or from the central pitch. In **Figure 2.1**, two modes begin on A and two modes end on it, but A remains the central pitch in all four modes.

The other element of Pärt’s signature style is the T-voice, which arpeggiates the notes of a triad. The notes of the triad are placed in a variety of relationships to the melody: they can be placed in first or second position above or below the melody notes (superior or inferior) or they can circle around the melodic voice (alternation). In first position, the T-voice plays the notes of the triad that are nearest to the notes of the M-voice, while in second position the T-voice provides the notes that are nearest but one to the melody. **Figure 2.2**, excerpted from Hillier’s book, demonstrates first and second position superior and inferior. The other T-voice option is the alternating treatment, shown in **Figure 2.3** (also excerpted from Hillier’s book).

Figure 2.1: Melodic modes in tintinnabulation, where A is the central pitch (Hillier 1997, 95).



Figure 2.2: T-voice in first and second positions (Hillier 1997, 94).

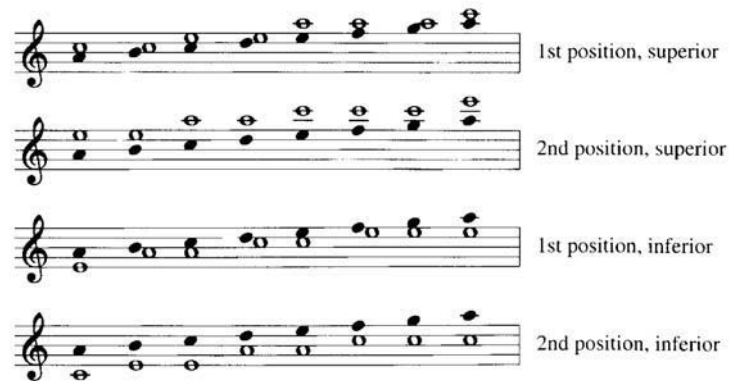


Figure 2.3: T-voice in first position alternating (Hillier 1997, 94).



As I have noted, Hillier’s detailed description of the M- and T-voices has been accepted as the principal guide for understanding Pärt’s tintinnabuli music. The book covers so much historical and musical ground, however, that the space for analyses of individual works is limited. Possibly because of these restrictions, Hillier does not discuss Pärt’s use of compound melody at all. He mentions the technique briefly in passing, while describing the M-voice of *Stabat Mater*: “The scale in this case is not a straightforward descent, but carefully articulates the A minor triad and intermediate pitches, thus encompassing both T- and M-voices into one line” (146). No detailed analyses of the technique are provided in the book. I attempt to fill this gap here by focusing on the compound tintinnabulation in detail, analyzing only a few pieces. This narrow focus allows for in-depth analytical engagement with the various ramifications of the technique.

There is something to be said for Hillier's strategy of gleaning the analytical method from the music itself. Indeed, Pärt has stated that "the answer is written into the music itself," and "for the listener, there is a chance of a very valuable experience in decoding this information" (24). Efforts to situate tintinnabulation in relation to other analytical methods have also proven effective, however. I will discuss two such scholarly endeavours here: the first is John Roeder's adaption of transformational theory, and the second is Thomas Robinson's overview of several different methods for analyzing Pärt's music.

John Roeder has successfully applied transformational theory to the analysis of Pärt's music in a recent article in the *Journal of Music Theory* (Roeder 2011). One of the most important aspects of Roeder's theoretical apparatus is its ability to define a field of melodic and harmonic possibilities, a "space" in which "changes can be heard as meaningful in relation both to themselves and to the text" (27). Roeder emphasizes the importance of this unified theoretical treatment since it provides a more "precise and consistent expression" of Pärt's melodic and harmonic constraints (36). In order to provide such a unified theory, Roeder treats Pärt's tintinnabuli procedures as functions, beginning with simple equations for the ordering of the melodic voice and proceeding to model the T-voice and, later, the tintinnabuli principles governing entire works. He identifies one essential characteristic of the M-voice, its cyclical organization, and shows the basic operation that defines this characteristic: "Definition 1: For any set S, a step function on S, symbolized STEPS, is an operation (invertible function) that organizes all the members of S into a cycle" (4). Roeder provides examples of

step functions that reveal how “Pärt’s techniques are particular instances of a larger family of possibilities” (5).

Roeder makes the compelling case that tintinnabulation, rather than being understood as consisting of two separate voices acting out related patterns, should be seen as acting out one larger pattern of transformations. Analyzing compound melody in Pärt’s music, however, requires me to consider the two voices as separate. This problem arises due to the methodological differences in our approaches: as I have already noted, I am interested in the surface manifestations of the tintinnabulation technique, while Roeder focuses on tintinnabulation more broadly conceived as enacting transformational procedures. Nevertheless, Roeder’s work has proven quite useful in my own, more surface-oriented analyses, since his transformational approach allows him to challenge several traditional notions about the tintinnabulation technique. For example, Roeder makes the crucial point that the T-voice need not necessarily be a subset of the work’s principal scale since Pärt, he notes, “sometimes uses a tintinnabulating triad that does not belong entirely to the M-voice collection” (13). This assertion is important for the analyses in this thesis since some of the compound tintinnabuli melodies I identify feature T-voices that are not part of the work’s original M-voice collection (for example, see my analysis of *L’Abbé Agathon* in Chapter 5). Roeder’s conception of the triadic voice’s function as “rounding up” or “rounding down” also allows him to show that “Hillier’s statement about third position is not quite correct; there does exist a third position distinct from first position in the opposite direction” (10). **Figure 2.4**, reproduced from Roeder’s article, demonstrates the special tintinnabulation rounding functions as performed on a d-

minor scale and d-minor triad. The *firstup*, *secondup*, and *thirdup* columns correspond to first, second, and third positions.

Figure 2.4: “Rounding” functions (Roeder 2011, 10).

$S = \{D, E, F, G, A, Bb, C\}$, $CHORD = \{D, F, A\}$

s	$firstup(s)$	$secondup(s)$	$thirdup(s)$	$firstdown(s)$	$seconddown(s)$	$thirddown(s)$
D	F	A	D	A	F	D
E	F	A	D	D	A	F
F	A	D	F	D	A	F
G	A	D	F	F	D	A
A	D	F	A	F	D	A
Bb	D	F	A	A	F	D
C	D	F	A	A	F	D

$u = u^4$ u^2 u^3 $d = d^4$ d^2 d^3

(columns related by rotation)

Most recently, Thomas Robinson has provided an overview of analytical techniques for Pärt’s music in the *Cambridge Companion to Arvo Pärt* (in press). In his chapter, as mentioned earlier, Robinson identifies a major problem that has resulted in a lack of analysis of Pärt’s music: “Because the tintinnabuli technique is so crystal clear, critics of Pärt’s music might conclude that the ‘how’ is already answered and is presented forthrightly on the surface of the piece, leaving the analyst with nothing to do.” In order to counter this false assumption, Robinson makes an important distinction between the tintinnabulation technique as a procedure and as a style: “while it is at one level merely a ‘procedure’ that allows its user to generate music from music, the tintinnabuli technique no more explains how Pärt’s music works than the twelve-tone technique explains how Arnold Schoenberg’s works” (77).

As Robinson’s research has shown, the procedures Pärt uses to generate pieces, and the individual works themselves, are worthy of more systematic analysis. Robinson provides his own analyses in the second part of his chapter,

entitled “multiplicity and process.” In this section, Robinson defines two types of processes in minimalist music: “rules of the game” and “machine set in motion.” Pieces using the “rules of the game” process “can establish both independent and dependent variables. For example: ‘If X happens in one voice, then Y must happen in another.’ In such cases, the composer uses other means (outside the process itself) for determining what X is.” Conversely, “machine set in motion” processes require more extensive pre-compositional planning, resulting in the “unfolding in time of a multiplicity of events, all resulting from a pre-established formula, algorithm, or pattern” (93–4). Robinson makes an excellent point about both types of process:

Either type of process can be misconstrued sometimes as a relinquishing of control on the composer’s part, but with Pärt we always must consider exactly how closely he controls the process even when it appears entirely automatic. (94)

Pärt controls this process in a number of ways: through different methods of correlating rhythm and melody, through orchestration decisions, and, I propose, through his use of compound melody. As Robinson explains, “some processes yield a great diversity of results, others a more modest production” (95). Using compound tintinnabulation is one way in which Pärt increases the diversity of his output. Although Robinson describes a number of techniques that yield diverse results (the possibility of combining multiple tintinnabuli processes is one example), he does not address Pärt’s use of compound tintinnabulation in his article. In fact, the only scholar who has explicitly addressed Pärt’s combination of M- and T-voices into a single melodic line is Hermann Conen.

In his book *Arvo Pärt: Die Musik des Tintinnabuli-Stils* (2006), Conen provides a detailed overview of Pärt's compositional techniques, from his use of silence and drones to his chromaticization of the melodic voice. The main concern of the book, Conen declares, is "to offer tangible knowledge about music of the tintinnabuli style and thus to provide a discourse based on principles derived from the music itself" (14).² The book is split into two main parts: the first, written by Conen, provides a systematic analysis of Pärt's aesthetic, and the second, written by Leopold Brauneiss, thoroughly delineates the technical aspects of tintinnabulation. The first half describes each component part of the tintinnabulation style, while the second half explores more detailed aspects of composing using the tintinnabulation technique, individually addressing each possible combination of voices and specific melodic techniques.

In the text's introduction, Conen asks the pertinent question, "why a book about such music?" More specifically, why an *analytical* book about such music as Pärt's, which is usually described as embracing simplicity and transparency? To answer this question, Conen points to the historical role of music theory in establishing and developing new music. Since Pärt himself actively engaged with early music and music theory in the development of his new style, it is especially appropriate to theorize about Pärt's music. As a result, "whoever wants to penetrate the depth of Pärt's poetics, the interior of his style and his creative approach," would do well to approach it through detailed, rigorous music

² Original text in German: „So bleibt das hauptsächliche Anliegen dieses Buches, handfestes Wissen über die Musik des Tintinnabuli anzubieten und damit den Diskurs auf Grundlagen zu stellen, die aus der Musik selbst gewonnen wurden“ (14). All translations of Conen's text are my own.

analysis.³ To that effect, Conen diligently exposes the principal techniques of the tintinnabuli style. He characterizes the T- and M-voices as separate but alike, both based on the diatonic scale and usually starting on the same pitch (the tonic) (46). The voices combine to form the fundamental structure (*Ursatz*). Conen spends a number of pages describing the various possible degrees of proximity of the M- and T-voices in the *Ursatz*, forming a kind of continuum between the poles of most closely linked and furthest apart. Close to the center of that continuum, Conen identifies what he calls the “combination of M- and T-voices in temporal succession within a single voice” or “hybrids” (*Mischformen*), which I call “compound tintinnabulation.”⁴

In the same interview from which the opening quote of this chapter was taken, Mrs. Pärt mentions that the media and recording industry often interpret her husband’s music in ways beyond his control. “This is a sad story. Arvo tries very consciously to stay in the shadow of his music” (Smith 1999, 22). Taking my cue from Nora Pärt, I aim to let the music “speak for itself” in this thesis, to analyze it closely using only tools that are derived from the music. Although studies which place Pärt’s music within broader musical movements are certainly valuable and provide new insight into the tintinnabuli style, the compact, reduced environment of tintinnabulation can be measured, as Nora Pärt remarks, “only in millimetres” (22). The heart of Pärt’s music is found in the smallest units, the simplest relationships. By focusing on the details of one aspect of Pärt’s music, his use of

³ „Wer in die Tiefe der Poetik Pärts, ins Innere seines Stils und seiner künstlerischen Haltung vordringen will, ist gut beraten, diesen Weg nachzuvollziehen“ (11).

⁴ Original section title in German: „Verbindungen von M- und T-Stimme im zeitlichen Nacheinander innerhalb einer Stimme“ (55).

compound melody, I delve deeper into the specific manifestations of the tintinnabulation technique. Such an in-depth exploration of individual works has naturally led to questions about each piece's dramatic structure, and how a greater understanding of compound tintinnabulation contributes to our perception of the music.

Arvo Pärt and Narrative

The importance and the value of the tintinnabuli style actually lies not in the technical aspect so often emphasized. [...] The concept of tintinnabuli was born from a deeply rooted desire for an extremely reduced sound world which could not be measured, as it were, in kilometres, or even metres, but only in millimetres. According to my experience, the listener becomes increasingly sensitized in the process once he is drawn into this dimension. By the end the listening attention is utterly focused.

– Nora Pärt (Smith 1999, 22).

Formal questions about narrative structure or plot in Pärt's music have not often been raised in the scholarly literature. Although there has been much speculation about the relationship between the composer's life, spirituality, and works, the dramatic trajectories of individual pieces are not usually the subject of analysts' discussions. More often, scholars treat Pärt's music as the clinical acting out of processes, and not as stories or locations for dramatic interpretations. As I will show, however, Pärt's music fulfills many of the basic requirements for narrative analysis. It is important to note that my thesis is not ultimately concerned with the finer points of narrative analyses of minimalist music in general or Pärt's music in particular. As I have delved deeper into Pärt's music, however, I have come to feel that drama is an essential aspect of the

tintinnabulation style. In this section, I will attempt to address this facet of Pärt's music through an exploration of some current theories of musical narrative.

Byron Almén's article, "Narrative Archetypes: A Critique, Theory and Method of Narrative Analysis," provides an overview of arguments for and against narrative analyses of music in the past two decades. Almén calls one such argument against the invocation of narrative in music analysis the "verbal cue argument." The verbal cue argument suggests that musical narrative always requires accompanying text, but Almén argues that narrative listening can be cued in a number of ways, including musical ones. Almén even goes so far to suggest that an awareness of musical style and genre is the primary way through which a listener orients him/herself in a piece. He proceeds to point out that a given musical work may elicit different listening strategies, depending on its function. In other words, background or ritual music is less likely to invite a narrative listening strategy. Music that does invoke narrative listening would probably include specific features: a syntax that groups elements into dialogic or conflicting relationships that remain coherent over time, at least one significant change in the relationship between elements, and cultural conditions that invite the listener to be attentive to these features.

In a later article, Almén expands upon his requirements, asserting that narrative analyses are not appropriate for pieces in which change does not play an expressive role, since narrative is expressively dynamic (2004, 13). Depending on the degree of opposition and contrast present in a work, then, narrative may be more or less strongly embedded in the composition. Almén further suggests that minimalist styles, since they "frequently deemphasize contrasts (in the sense of

topical or narrative oppositions),” may not strongly encourage narrative listening. This view of minimalist music, and of experimental or avant-garde music in general, is found throughout the literature on music and narrative. According to Susan McClary, only music that aspires to narrative coherence independent of any external factors is capable of sustaining a true narrative. More recent music, she asserts, “does not usually resemble narrative. In fact, beginning with Debussy, Stravinsky, and Schoenberg and extending to the experiments of John Cage, the avant-garde music of the twentieth century has been self-consciously ANTI-narrative” (1997, 21). Of course, many scholars of contemporary music would take issue with this statement, especially those who study the highly expressive music of Schoenberg. McClary attributes the alleged impossibility of narrative in contemporary music to “a way of experiencing time that involves the repetition of tiny units,” citing Philip Glass’s opera *Akhmaten* and “gangsta rap” as examples of this “cyclic mode of parsing time.” McClary goes on to identify only one kind of music that is capable of narrating: the European canon from 1700 to 1900. Minimalist music falls firmly outside of this narrow period, and Pärt has often been associated with the minimalist aesthetic, especially the “holy minimalists.” One obstacle preventing scholars like McClary and Almén from pursuing narrative analyses of minimalist music is the aura of suspended time such an aesthetic evokes.

Pärt’s music certainly conjures a sense of timelessness due to the constant presence of a single triad in the tintinnabuli works. Temporality has traditionally played an important role in studies of drama and music. For example, Almén writes that an analysis of musical narrative must include an assessment of both the

semantic characteristics of musical elements and of how these elements influence and define each other as they progress in time. Pärt's invocation of timelessness through the ever-present triad, then, would not seem to support a narrative interpretation of tintinnabulation. As Wilfrid Mellers has pointed out, however, in Pärt's music "time and timelessness are connected. This instant and eternity are struggling within us. And this is the cause of all of our contradictions, our obstinacy, our narrow-mindedness, our faith and our grief." We should not, therefore, consider the suspension of time by the tintinnabulating triad to be a disqualifying factor for a potential narrative analysis of Pärt's music.

According to the conditions outlined by Almén, Pärt's music provides an excellent site for narrative analysis despite its association with the minimalist aesthetic. Pärt himself, in his conversations with Paul Hillier, has encouraged the listener to be attentive to how the tintinnabulation technique could construct musical drama. The composer has described to Hillier his view of the individual voices' roles in tintinnabulation:

The M-voice always signifies the subjective world, the daily egoistic life of sin and suffering; the T-voice, meanwhile, is the objective realm of forgiveness. The M-voice may appear to wander, but is always held firmly by the T-voice. This can be likened to the eternal dualism of body and spirit, earth and heaven; but the two voices are in reality one voice, a twofold single entity. (Hillier 96)

The tintinnabulation technique itself is a system precisely designed to consistently group elements into dialogic and conflicting relationships, and most pieces that employ the technique feature at least one major change in the relationship between elements. Furthermore, Pärt's music is firmly situated in the context of serious art music. His early struggles with serial and collage music, his years of

silent reflection, his development of a new aesthetic that seeks to “re-establish tonality as the common basis for musical expression;” all of these encourage our perception of Pärt’s music as requiring the listener’s undivided attention.

In a recent review of Almén’s book, *A Theory of Musical Narrative*, Douglass Seaton questions Almén’s identification of certain “narrative universals.” The following passage from Almén’s book summarizes these “foundational principles” of narrative:

I will understand narrative as articulating the dynamics and possible outcomes of conflict or interaction between elements, rendering meaningful the temporal succession of events, and coordinating these events into an interpretive whole. (13)

As Seaton points out, this definition could be applied more convincingly to the term “plot,” since Almén’s “narrative subject” is the protagonist and not the narrator. If, Seaton argues, “the adjective ‘narrative’ only means ‘plotted,’ then we might use the latter term instead—as well as “plottedness” rather than “narrativity”—and avoid unnecessary confusion” (72). Seaton goes on to propose the following solution to this labeling problem:

“Perhaps we could construct a difference between a “weak” or broad definition of narrativity, meaning simply plottedness, which is Almén’s interest, and a “strong” or focused definition, in which the study of narrativity would focus more properly on those works for which we can investigate both the role of narrator as well as plot” (74).

Taking my cue from Seaton, I propose to consider narrative in Pärt’s music using its “weak” definition, by focusing on how compound tintinnabulation can express “plottedness.” While Pärt’s music fits nicely into some definitions of musical narrative, it clashes with others, such as McClary’s. For the purposes of my own analyses, though, it suffices that Pärt’s tintinnabuli music fulfills many of the

features necessary to form a musical narrative or plot, under their “weak” definitions.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

*At the point after the music has faded away it is particularly remarkable to hear your breath, your heartbeat, the lighting or the air conditioning system, for example. The composer draws us into this dimension with seemingly ‘familiar’ and harmless musical material. This deception, which is often realized too late by many excellent musicians, has unfortunately led to several performance disasters. We have made similar experiences with musicologists. They question the scores for their ‘secret.’ Arvo would then point out things in the score, or I do sometimes, but with the disappointing result that they wonder: ‘And this was it, was it?’ The minute steps which are vital to him leave musicologists doubtful as to their potential effect. **And yet, these small steps cause everything!** For twenty years we have supplied these explanations. This only proves that time has not yet come for people to be able to perceive and to appreciate a ‘full-stop’ or a ‘comma.’*

– Nora Pärt, emphasis added (Smith 1999, 22, 24).

When I first embarked upon this thesis project several years ago, my goal was to come to a deeper understanding of one of my favourite works by Pärt, *Tabula Rasa*. While examining the piece’s first movement, the solo violin parts struck me as a site of analytical interest, and I was surprised to find that other analysts had not yet studied them closely. Once I had determined that the lines were structured as compound melodies, or “compound tintinnabuli melodies” as I termed them, it became clear that these solo parts were organized in a precise manner expressing perfectly the movement’s title: “Ludus.” Where Hillier merely identifies a playful, humorous quality to the overall form, I began to see a narrative of spirited battle emerging between the string orchestra and solo violins,

where the solo violins become more solidly linked throughout the movement's odd-numbered variations, while in even-numbered variations they separate further from the string orchestra. My construction of this plot through the detailed study of compound tintinnabuli structures inspired me to view Pärt's other works in a similar manner. Analyzing multiple instrumental and vocal tintinnabuli works confirmed that "compound tintinnabulation" is an important technique that helps define Pärt's style. The recognition of the importance of compound tintinnabulation in Pärt's music is one of the principal contributions this thesis makes to the scholarly literature.

In this chapter, I will define compound tintinnabulation using the simple example of *Variationen zur Gesundheit von Arinuschka*. I will then discuss how I parse compound melodies when they are more complicated; namely, I will explain how to identify melodic, triadic, and rhythmic patterns within compound tintinnabulation constructions. Finally, I analyze an early, limited case of compound tintinnabulation in the work *Sarah was Ninety Years Old*.

Compound Tintinnabulation

In a compound melody, two melodic lines are combined into a single voice. Robert Morris provides a concise explanation for the phenomenon:

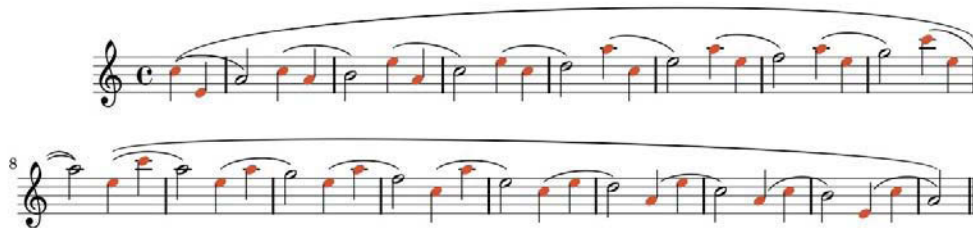
Steps are the basis for continuity within melodies or contrapuntal lines, whereas leaps often partition the melodic flow into simultaneously evolving strata, with the non-temporally adjacent notes in each strata connected by steps. Lines with multiple strata are called compound melodies. (1998, 177)

Similarly, I propose that in compound tintinnabulation, a single melodic line consists of two strata: one melodic and one triadic. As I explained in Chapter 2,

tintinnabulation is widely considered to include at least one M-voice and one T-voice, as defined by Hillier. The T-voice is usually placed in a consistent relationship to the M-voice, whether first, second, or third position, superior, inferior, or alternating (the existence of third position has been confirmed by John Roeder). In compound tintinnabulation, these two fundamental voices are combined into a single line. In the examples provided throughout this thesis, I will indicate T-voices through the use of coloured noteheads. Only in the work *L'Abbé Agathon* is the specific colour of the noteheads relevant to the analysis: the different colours of the noteheads indicate different voices.

The technique of compound tintinnabulation is expressed with clarity and simplicity in an early tintinnabulation work, *Variationen zur Gesundung von Arinuschka* (1977). In this work for solo piano, each note of a simple M-voice, consisting of an ascending and descending A-aeolian scale, is combined with two A-minor T-voices in first position superior and inferior. The M- and T-voices together form a single melodic line in the right hand of the piano. This easily parsed compound tintinnabulus melody grows more complex in the subsequent five variations, but its basic structure remains as expressed in the work's theme (Example 3.1).

Example 3.1: *Variationen zur Gesundung von Arinuschka*, movement 1, right hand.



Parsing Compound Tintinnabulation

In this section, I identify melodic, triadic, and rhythmic features that can help the analyst parse a compound tintinnabulus construction. In order to examine these features, I use examples from both vocal and instrumental works. I also explain some of the obstacles I have encountered in my analysis, and how I have refined my methodology to deal with those problems.

Melodic Features

Strict use of the tintinnabulation technique often results in a pronounced divide between the melodic contours of the M- and T-voices. Since the T-voice melodically expresses one or more triads, it is naturally much choppier than the M-voice, which usually moves by step. This poses something of a problem in vocal music, where the large leaps necessitated by the triadic nature of the T-voice are not always easy or pleasant to sing. As Hermann Conen points out, however, T-notes can be inserted into M-phrases in order to “achieve a steady rise or fall” (55). Conen uses the example of a choral passage in *Te Deum* to demonstrate this effect (**Example 3.2**, excerpted from Conen). Other examples of smooth but varied vocal lines created by compound tintinnabuli melodies can be found in the alto and bass parts of *Summa*, in *Es sang vor langen Jahren* and in *L’Abbé Agathon* (see Chapter 5). Of course, many of Pärt’s vocal works do feature a separate T-voice, regardless of the technical difficulties involved in singing such a triadic construction (for example, *Summa*, *An den Wassern zu Babel saßen wir und weinten*, *And one of the Pharisees...*, *The Beatitudes*). *Summa* is a particularly interesting case, since it contains a separate T-voice in the soprano and tenor, and a mixture of mostly M- and some T-voice notes in the alto

and bass (**Example 3.3**). Still other vocal works avoid the problem altogether by assigning the T-voice to an instrumental part (for example, *Cantate Domino Canticum Novum, Missa Syllabica*).

Example 3.2: *Te Deum*, rehearsal 12 (modified from Conen 2006, 55).



Example 3.3: *Summa*, mm.1–2.

S
Credo in u-num De - um. Pa - trem om - ni - po - ten - tem, fac - to

A
Credo in u-num De - um. Pa - trem om - ni - po - ten - tem, fac - to

T
Pa - trem om - ni - po - ten - tem, fac - to

B
Pa - trem om - ni - po - ten - tem, fac - to

Example 3.4: *The Woman with the Alabaster Box*, bass voice, mm.31–39.

31
Why trouble ye the wom-an? For she hath wrought a good work up-on me,

35
for ye have the poor al-ways with you; but me ye have not al-ways.

39
For in that she hath poured this oint-ment on my body, she did it for my bur-ial.

Example 3.5: *The Woman with the Alabaster Box*, bass voice, mm.43–51.

43
Whereso - ev - er this gos - pel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall al - so this,
47
that this wom an hath done, be told for a memo - rial of her.

Pärt does not only use the compound tintinnabulation technique in order to avoid the technical difficulties of assigning the T-voice to a vocal part. Sometimes, rather than providing an easier vocal line, compound tintinnabulation can create large, difficult leaps. In *The Woman with the Alabaster Box* (1997), Jesus' speech is dramatically depicted through a clear compound tintinnabuli melody in the bass voice (**Example 3.4**). In this case, though, Pärt chooses to maintain a single note, D, as a T-voice. The result is a series of ever-widening melodic intervals, up to a minor ninth, followed by a reversal of the process. The widening and narrowing process is then repeated, this time only achieving a minor sixth at its peak (mm. 39). At m.43, the M- and T-voices attain their most proximal state: the basses split, one taking the T-voice and the other the M-voice, so that the two sound as one (**Example 3.5**). In this case, Pärt uses simultaneous tintinnabuli voices in order to represent the unification of the divine and the human or worldly into a single being, Jesus. Pärt employs a similar technique in the work *L'Abbé Agathon*, where the T- and M-voices of a man and an angel combine gradually over the course of the entire piece (see Chapter 5).

To summarize, compound tintinnabuli melodies can often be identified in vocal works by their characteristic mix of steps and leaps, which can create

relatively smooth lines while maintaining melodic interest. In exceptional cases, where the T-voice does not relate to the M-voice in the usual fashion, the use of compound tintinnabulation can result in large melodic leaps. In instrumental music, though, compound tintinnabuli melodies are used to create different effects. For example, in *Tabula Rasa*, the compound tintinnabulation in the solo violins does not result in a smooth melodic line (**Example 3.6**). Analyzing the compound tintinnabulation technique in instrumental works often requires the identification and examination of a melodic pattern. Sometimes we can easily identify M-voice patterns because they are expressed more simply elsewhere in the work. In *Tabula Rasa*, for example, the string orchestra plays the same M- and T-voices as the solo violins. The string orchestra plays each voice separately, though, whereas each solo violin combines the two voices into a compound tintinnabulus melody. In other cases, such as *Annum per Annum*, the compound melody's M-voice is not found elsewhere in the piece. In these instances, it becomes necessary for the analyst to consider other factors in the parsing of the compound melody, such as the T-voice's patterning and the work's rhythmic design.

Example 3.6: *Tabula Rasa*, solo violin, rehearsal number 1.




Triadic Features

In the above examples from *The Woman with the Alabaster Box*, the T-voice is in a unique relationship with the M-voice, one that Pärt rarely uses in his tintinnabuli music: the T-voice in the compound melody consists of only one note,


which does not change depending on the note in the M-voice. Identifying this kind of T-voice pattern is often essential to analyzing compound tintinnabulation. In *Annum per Annum*, for example, the relationship of the T-voice to the M-voice is the same in every movement save the climactic one, regardless of how the M-voice rotates through various motives (see Chapter 4). To determine the specific patterning of the M-voice, we can then remove the T-voice from the compound melody, since it remains consistent throughout the work. **Figure 3.1** demonstrates the process of reducing the right hand part in *Annum per Annum* and identifying the T-voice. My analytical process in the particular case of *Annum per Annum* is elaborated upon in Chapter 4. In the complete analysis of *Annum per Annum*, I show the results of applying this methodology to the entire piece, which allows me to identify motivic patterns in the compound melody's M-voice.

Figure 3.1: Reduction of *Annum per Annum*, Movement K, m.1.


1. Original material



2. Eliminate octave displacement



3. Reduce embellishment and identify voices



At times, it is difficult even to identify the T-voice. In the last section of the measure in **Figure 3.1**, the last note could finish either the T-voice or the M-voice; in fact, one could argue that the note belongs to both voices. In the third section of the measure, I have identified the eighth-note D as a T-voice. Some

may wonder at this decision, since this D is simply a repetition of the preceding note, which I have identified as belonging to the M-voice. This problem brings me to the final feature involved with parsing compound tintinnabulation: rhythm.

Rhythmic and Metric Features

Rhythmic cues are often helpful in parsing a compound tintinnabulus melody. In the example of *Variationen zur Gesundung von Arinuschka*, the two elements of the compound tintinnabulation are always placed in the same part of the bar and consistently have the same rhythmic value. In **Example 3.1**, there is a pronounced rhythmic contrast between the T- and M-voice elements (the T-voice moves in quarter notes, the M-voice in half notes), and the M-voice notes are consistently placed on the downbeat. As the piece progresses, the manner in which Pärt separates the T- and M-voices at the beginning aids in our later understanding of more complex passages. The example of *Variationen* is particularly extreme in this respect, since the same compound tintinnabulus melody from the first movement is repeated in each of the five subsequent variations; the only changes are timbral, dynamic, and accompanimental. In movements two and five, a second T-voice is added in the left hand. In the third and sixth movements, additional T- and M-voices are added in the left hand. The left hand of the third movement provides one T-voice and one M-voice, while the left hand of the sixth movement provides two M-voices and one T-voice. These additional voices are always rhythmically offset from the original compound tintinnabulus melody. In the sixth movement, the lower left-hand M-voice moves in whole notes and is not associated with a T-voice. The other voice in the left

hand part imitates the right hand's compound tintinnabulus melody one octave lower and two beats later (**Example 3.7**).

Example 3.7: *Variationen zur Gesundung von Arinuschka*, movement 6.

6.

When the extra parts are added, the resulting effect is that of three voices: the right hand acting as the upper voice, the upper part of the left hand acting as a middle voice, and the single low melodic voice in the left hand acting as a kind of bass line. The onset of the “bass line” on the second beat of the right hand’s compound melody (which is the second note of the T-voice) results in a metric shift: we no longer hear the right hand’s M-voice as articulating the downbeats.

Rather, the entrance of the left hand's "bass line" signals the new downbeat. In **Example 3.7**, red circles indicate the first note of each M-voice, showing the different potential downbeats. Regardless of this metrical shift, we can still easily identify the M- and T-voices in the compound melody, since their metric placement and melodic pattern were so clearly established in the first movement.

Rhythm and meter are also essential to parsing compound tintinnabuli melodies in other works. In *L'Abbé Agathon*, for example, the T-voice is always anacrusic to the M-voice, which helps the listener parse the compound melodies even when there are two distinct T-voices present (see Chapter 5). In *Annum per Annum*, the consistent placement of the triadic eighth notes on off beats solves the problem of identifying the T-voice that I identified in my discussion of **Figure 3.1**.

Early Compound Tintinnabulation

Compound melody played an integral role in tintinnabulation even before Pärt fully embraced the style. In order to demonstrate this, I turn to one of the earliest proto-tintinnabuli works: the 1976 composition *Modus*, later renamed *Sarah was Ninety Years Old*, which was written shortly before the first acknowledged composition in the tintinnabulation style, *Für Alina*. In Hillier's analysis of *Sarah was Ninety Years Old*, he notes that the tenor melodies seem to foreshadow the tintinnabulation aesthetic without actually containing distinct M- and T-voices. If we disregard the notion that the melodic and triadic materials must exist in separate voices, however, it becomes clear that *Sarah was Ninety Years Old* does, in fact, feature distinct M- and T-voices, which Pärt combines to create fluid vocal lines (**Example 3.8**). I have identified particular notes as

belonging to a T-voice since they provide the only intervals larger than a major second in the melodic pattern. Each leap provides a note from the A minor triad; it is not unreasonable, therefore, to argue for the presence of a rudimentary triadic voice in *Sarah was Ninety Years Old*.

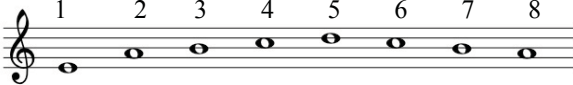
Example 3.8: *Sarah was Ninety Years Old*, movement 2, m.1.



It is important to note at this juncture that the compound tintinnabulation in *Sarah was Ninety* is extremely limited. Thomas Robinson has identified a more salient compositional process that plays out in the course of the work. Robinson describes *Sarah was Ninety* as a “machine-in-motion” type of piece, where the piece consistently works out a larger scheme based on rules set in place pre-compositionally, systematically exhausting the combinational and permutational possibilities of those rules. In his analysis of the work, he explains how “Pärt merges a twelve-note durational pattern with an eight-note pitch pattern, forming a tenor melody” (96). **Example 3.9**, reproduced from Robinson’s article, shows these two melodic and rhythmic configurations. Robinson explains that Pärt combines the two patterns “by repeating the last pitch of one twelve-note rhythmic statement at the beginning of the next” and is thus able to “give each of the eight pitches exactly one turn at each of the twelve rhythmic positions” (96). This type of fixed rhythmic and melodic patterning is reminiscent of the talea and color in isorhythmic motets. Pärt’s affinity for employing medieval techniques has

frequently been discussed in the scholarly literature (see Pinkerton 1996, Yri 2004). Although the quasi-isorhythmic process that Robinson identifies is ultimately the more obvious and important one for the analysis of *Sarah was Ninety*, acknowledging the shadowy presence of the T-voice is essential for understanding the composition of the 8-note melody itself.

Example 3.9: Excerpted from Robinson 2012, 97.

PITCH: 

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

DURATION: 

Example 3.10: *Sarah was Ninety Years Old*, movement 4.



Although the compound tintinnabulation in **Example 3.8** is limited, it is still quite clear. As the piece progresses, though, the compound tintinnabulation becomes much less obvious. At the beginning of movement four, for example, the distinct M- and T-voices become more difficult to parse since they are so closely linked. These melodic fragments could consist of a number of different combinations of M- and T-voice patterns. For example, the potential interpretation I have provided in **Example 3.10** maintains a single melodic mode (mode 1) throughout the passage, but is by no means the only way to parse this melody. Finding the correct ordering may not even be relevant in this case, since

the main purpose of the passage is to exhaust the possible orderings of these four notes that begin with A. Parsing can cause major problems in analyzing compound tintinnabuli structures within Pärt's vocal music; I will encounter it as an obstacle once again in my analysis of *Es sang vor langen Jahren* in Chapter 5. As I have explained, vocal lines in Pärt's music are often comprised of some combination of M- and T-voices, but since this creates a fluid melodic line it is often difficult to clearly define these voices. Nonetheless, keeping the concept of compound tintinnabulation in mind has interesting implications for many of Pärt's vocal works, as I shall discuss later.

PART 2: Analysis

Chapter 4

ANALYSIS OF COMPOUND TINTINNABULATION IN TWO INSTRUMENTAL WORKS

Introduction

Pärt's instrumental compositions constitute some of his most beloved works. The two works analyzed in this chapter are written for the instruments most often employed by Pärt: organ and strings. Both works were written in the early years of tintinnabulation, *Tabula Rasa* in 1977 and *Annum per Annum* in 1980. *Tabula Rasa* provides a thorough working-out of the compound tintinnabulation idea in the first movement. Although the compound tintinnabuli patterns increase in complexity as the movement progresses, the two voices are clearly and consistently expressed by the two solo violins. In *Annum per Annum*, the compound tintinnabulus melody is much less clear because the M-voice's motives constantly shift and change, with no discernible pattern.

Both of the analyses in this chapter take a relatively narrow view of the pieces involved. In my analysis of *Tabula Rasa*, I concern myself only with the patterns of the solo violins in the first movement, and in *Annum per Annum* only

with the right hand's melody. Such a limited perspective does not necessarily result in the most holistic analysis. The reason I have conducted these focused studies, however, is to show how a thorough understanding of compound melody in these works can help us understand their broader purpose or message. Other scholars have conducted analyses of both works that are less limited in scope. Dobbs (2000) and Bostonia (2009) both consider aspects of *Annum per Annum* in their dissertations, while Mattner (1985) and Hillier (1997) provide analyses of *Tabula Rasa*.

Tabula Rasa

Tabula Rasa (1977) is a work in two movements, "Ludus" and "Silentium," for two solo violins, string orchestra, and prepared piano. One of the best-known early instrumental tintinnabuli pieces, *Tabula Rasa* has enjoyed a small but significant presence in the scholarly literature. Paul Hillier and Lothar Mattner have both conducted analyses of the work. Hillier describes *Tabula Rasa* as "a summing up of the instrumental tintinnabuli works composed thus far," with "no new processes" introduced in the work (1997, 114). Whereas he describes the tintinnabulation technique in the string orchestra in detail, Hillier only mentions the solo violins once; he notes that compared to the other strings, they "exchange more animated figuration based on the A minor triad" (115). Hillier also remarks that when new notes are added to the melodic voices in the string orchestra, those same notes are added to the solo violin lines, but he says nothing more about the composition of their figurations. In an article in *The Musical Times*, Hillier

describes the second violin as entering the piece with “an animated tintinnabuli figure, answered in triplets an octave lower by the first soloist” (1989, 136).

What does Hillier mean when he describes this animated tintinnabuli figure played by the solo violins? Are the solo violins mere extensions of the triadic tintinnabuli figuration already being played by the string orchestra? Clearly not, since, as Hillier mentions, Pärt adds melodic notes to the solo lines that correspond to the melodic line played by the other strings; this is not characteristic of a purely triadic voice. In other words, Pärt’s solo violin lines in *Tabula Rasa*’s first movement are comprised of compound tintinnabuli melodies. These compound melodies increase in complexity as the movement progresses: while they begin as a relatively simple combination of an M-voice and a first position alternating T-voice, the figurations expand to include multiple M- and T-voices with a rhythmic offset and multiple T-voice positions.

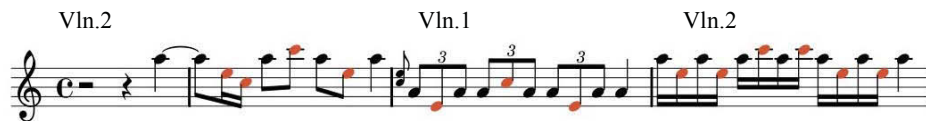
In Hillier’s analysis of *Tabula Rasa*, he notes that at the beginning of the first movement, “Ludus,” “the orchestral voices sound the note A four times with T-pitches (1st position, alternating)” (1997, 115). Hillier shows that after the initial A in the solo violin parts and the following silence, lasting eight half notes, each subsequent variation on the central pitch A gets longer while the following silence gets shorter by a half note. By the eighth and final variation, all of the M-voice notes have been added to the scalar pattern, and the movement culminates in a prepared piano cadenza, followed by the addition of the only chromatic pitches in the movement, F \sharp and E \flat . Gradually the chromatic pitches are subsumed by the A-minor triad that dominates the movement and it ends with a long A-minor chord, leading into the second movement, “Silentium.”

In my analysis of *Tabula Rasa* I have chosen to focus solely on the first movement, “Ludus.” While “Silentium” provides the balance necessary to the aesthetic of the piece as a whole, the movement is characterized largely by its stillness and repetition, and the compound tintinnabulation featured in the first movement is not present in the second. In my analysis, I trace the development of the compound tintinnabulation technique in the solo violin lines of the first movement. I show how the soloists’ figurations weave ever closer as the movement progresses, while distancing themselves from the string orchestra. As will become clear, I support my argument by showing the regularity of changes in the compound tintinnabulation, where in odd-numbered variations the solo violins become more closely linked and their patterns more intricate, and in even-numbered variations the tension grows between the two groups. My aim in this analysis is to show how compound tintinnabuli constructions can express the message of an entire work; in the case of *Ludus*, the compound tintinnabulation of the solo violins contributes to the comical spirit indicated by the movement’s title (“play”).

In *Ludus*, the solo violins play a three-part melody: in the first variation (number 1 in the score), for example, the second violin begins with an eighth-note version, then the first violin enters with triplets, and finally the second violin enters again with sixteenth notes. Throughout the piece this three-part structure remains intact, but the solo violins alternate sections, so that in the second variation the first violin rather than the second begins with the eighth-note section. Upon seeing these initial violin figurations, it is easy to dismiss them as mere arpeggiations of an A-minor triad. A closer look, however, reveals that even in the

work's very first variation, the solo violins present a compound tintinnabuli structure with distinct M- and T-voices (**Example 4.1**). The T-voice in **Example 4.1** is in first position alternating, except for one sixteenth-note of second position inferior in the second solo violin (**Example 4.1**, second measure, fourth sixteenth-note of beat one). This sixteenth-note is ornamental; the E occurring halfway through beat one is the true T-voice note.

Example 4.1: *Tabula Rasa*, solo violins, rehearsal number 1.



The solo violin lines begin to reveal their compound structure more explicitly at rehearsal number 2, where the M-voice encompasses the notes immediately surrounding the pitch center of A: G and B. Here, the tintinnabuli figuration, which begins in the first violin's eighth note pattern, starts on the note G, ascends to A and B, and then descends back to G and ends on a repeated A. Already, the addition of the G at the very beginning of the line competes with the M-voice of the string orchestra, which begins on A and rises to B before descending to G (**Example 4.2**). After the string orchestra has finished its figurations, the final emphatic statement of the M-voice in the first solo violin, accompanied sporadically by a prepared piano T-voice, emphasizes this opposition by repeating the “descending” variant of the M-voice, which provides the lower note of the melodic pattern before higher note (**Example 4.3**).

Example 4.2: *Tabula Rasa*, solo violin 1, number 2, letter D.



String orchestra, M-voice, number 2.

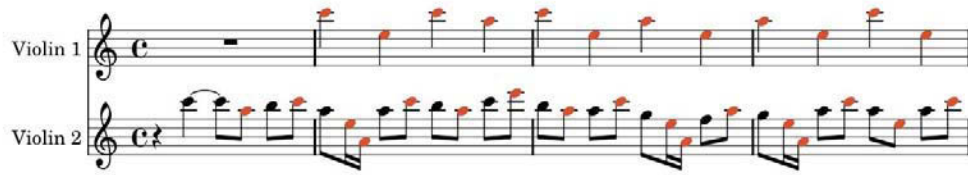


Example 4.3: *Tabula Rasa*, solo violin 1, four measures before number 3.



The compound tintinnabulus melody has, up to this point, been quite simply expressed by the solo violins. By the third variation, however, the second solo violin's M-voice not only continues to contradict the string orchestra by descending where the orchestra ascends, but the first violin also enters a measure after the second violin with another alternating T-voice. Now a double T-voice surrounds the melodic notes sounded by the second violin, providing alternations opposing those found in the original compound T-voice. In other words, where the second violin sounds the melodic note A and the triadic note C above it, the added T-voice in the first violin provides the triadic note E beneath the M-voice's A (m.2, beat 2 of **Example 4.4**).

Example 4.4: *Tabula Rasa*, solo violins, number 3.



The added T-voice in **Example 4.4** switches between the violins for each of the internal solo violin sections mentioned above – the eighth-note, triplet, and sixteenth-note sections. In the sixteenth-note section of the third variation, another opposition to the string orchestra becomes apparent: in this last figuration, the string orchestra imitates the solo violins’ descending M-voice figure, while the second violin now plays the *ascending* figure. Even when the string orchestra “catches up” to what the soloists are playing, then, the soloists change their minds and start to do the opposite. This cat-and-mouse game between the soloists and the orchestra adds another dimension to the ludic, playful quality of the first movement.

The fourth variation adds no further complexity to the tintinnabuli structure of the solo violins, but it does add yet another layer to the growing opposition between the string orchestra and the soloists. Here, the second solo violin enters with a T-voice that not only complements the alternating T-voice in the first violin’s compound M- and T-voice, it also opposes the already present T-voice being played at that moment by half of the first violins and the violas. These string orchestra T-voices provide an alternation that begins with a downward leap, while the solo violin plays a T-voice that begins with an upward leap (**Figure 4.1**).

Figure 4.1: *Tabula Rasa*, opposition between solo violin 2's T-voice and the string orchestra's T-voice at letter J.



Pärt adds the next layer of complexity to the solo violin lines at number 5, the fifth variation (**Example 4.5**). Here, the second violin begins the compound tintinnabuli figure, and when the first violin enters, we expect another T-voice, similar to what we heard in the third and fourth variations. What we hear, however, is not merely another T-voice but another compound tintinnabuli figure, with an additional M-voice offset from the second violin's original M-voice by one eighth note! This new compound tintinnabuli figure is comprised of an ascending M-voice with a T-voice in second position alternating. In relation to the preexisting compound T- and M-voice figuration in the second violin, however, the combination of the T-voices of both violins creates a composite alternating T-voice. The composite T-voice alternates lower and higher positions, as well as first and second positions. **Figure 4.2** shows this alternative way of looking at the eighth-note section of the fifth variation solo violin lines.

The second section of the soloist part in the fifth variation consists of the triplet figuration. Here, the original compound M- and T-voice structure is in the first solo violin, with the added compound tintinnabulation in the second soloist's line offset by two triplet eighths. The first violin now plays an M-voice and a double alternating T-voice providing the two first-position triadic pitches. The

second violin's figuration provides a large-scale alternating T-voice in second position in relation to the M-voices of both violinists (**Example 4.6**). The rhythmic position of the T-voices results in a constant triadic presence, linking the two violins together even though their parts oppose each other melodically. This subtle linking is part of a gradual alignment of the solo violins, extended over all the odd-numbered variations.

Example 4.5: *Tabula Rasa*, solo violins, rehearsal number 5.

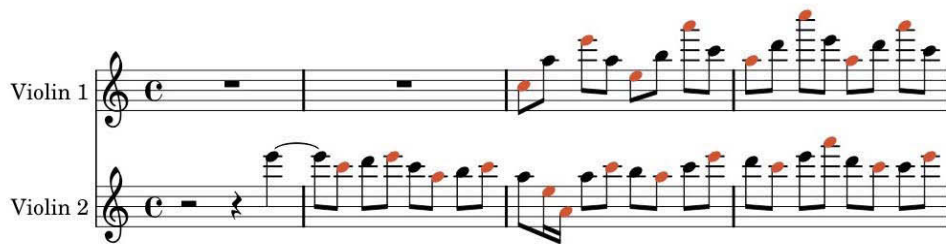
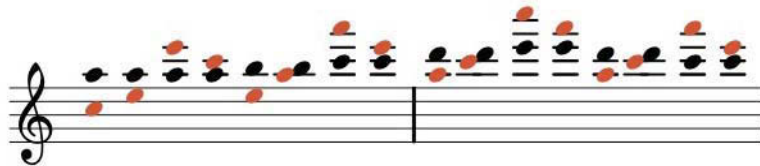


Figure 4.2: *Tabula Rasa*, solo violins, rehearsal number 5.

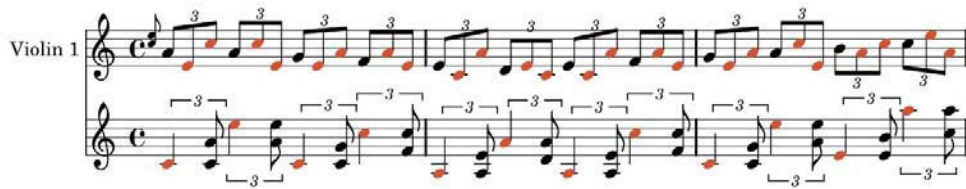
The T-voices of the first and second violins combined form a composite T-voice alternating above and below and in first and second positions.



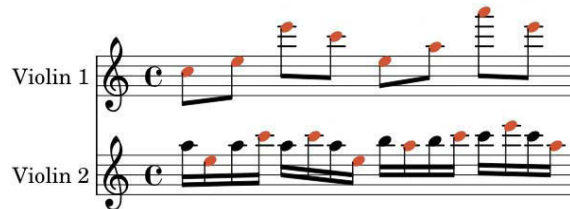
The final section of the fifth variation is the sixteenth-note section, where the second violin plays the compound T- and M-voice figuration and the first violin plays a T-voice figuration without an M-voice. The T-voice in the first violin provides a large-scale alternating T-voice in both first and second position, surrounding the first position alternating T-voice in the second solo violin.

Example 4.7 clarifies this T-voice placement.

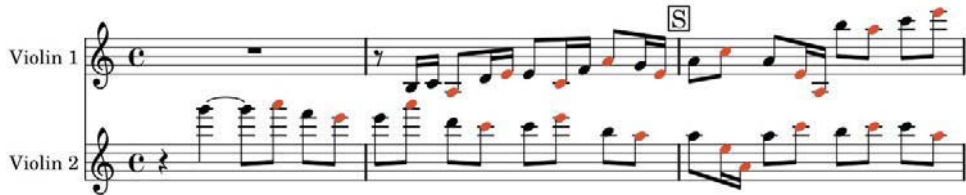
Example 4.6: *Tabula Rasa*, solo violins, letter N.



Example 4.7: *Tabula Rasa*, solo violins, letter O.



Example 4.8: *Tabula Rasa*, solo violins, two measures before S. Opposing alternations: when the soloists align at S, one T-voice rises where the other falls.



Variation six is based on the same principles as number five, but variation seven provides new material once again. Here, the second solo violin begins to play on the second quarter note of the bar, increasingly encroaching on the string orchestra's tintinnabulation. The first violin enters with a mix of sixteenth and eighth notes and a rising M-voice as a complement to the descending second violin melody. At letter S, a measure after the first violin enters, the two solo violin parts come into alignment and create a double T-voice on the second eighth

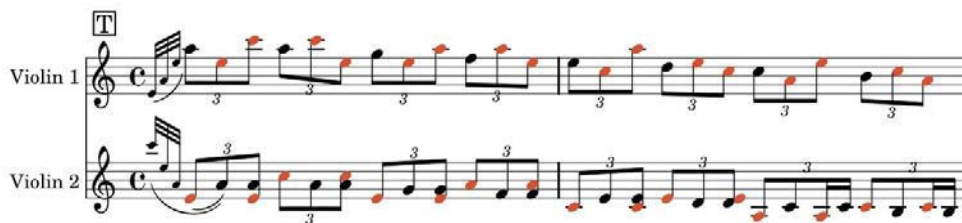
note of every beat because of the opposing alternations of the two T-voices

(**Example 4.8**).

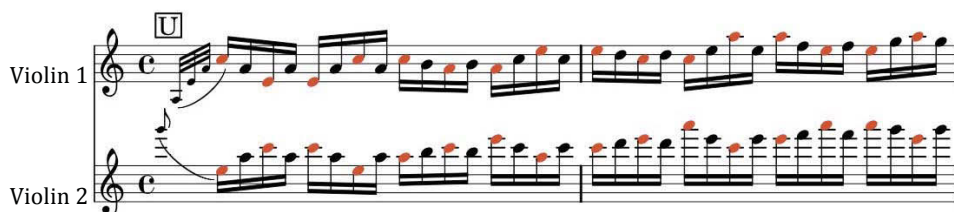
The solo violins' triplet section begins at letter T, where both violins have compound tintinnabulation figurations with the second violin's M-voice now only offset by one triplet eighth note. There is once again a double alternating T-voice in the first violin, with a third large-scale alternating T-voice in the second violin, similar to the one in **Example 4.6**. This time, however, the second violin's T-voice is in first position in relation to its compound M-voice, and thus in third position in relation to the first violin's M-voice. Thus, the second violin T-voice doubles one of the compound T-voices already present in the first violin.

Example 4.9 provides the triplet section of the seventh variation at letter T. The solo violins come into closer alignment in **Example 4.9**: in this iteration of the melody, the M-voices are only displaced by one triplet eighth note and the third T-voice doubles tintinnabuli notes that are already present.

Example 4.9: *Tabula Rasa*, solo violins, letter T.



Example 4.10: *Tabula Rasa*, solo violins, letter U.

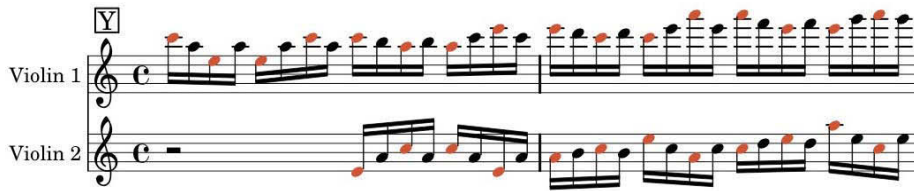


The last section of the seventh variation (letter U), which consists of frantic sixteenth notes for both soloists, demonstrates a new tintinnabuli technique: the violinists' tintinnabuli figurations mirror each other (**Example 4.10**). While their T-voice contours are inverted, though, their M-voices are in alignment, creating the sense that they are acting almost as one force. In the corresponding section in the eighth variation, however, the pattern is dramatically altered.

Before the eighth variation, a pattern emerged throughout the variations: in each odd-numbered variation, the tintinnabulation pattern changed in a distinct way. In even-numbered variations, the solo violinists' opposition to the string orchestra was intensified, but no extended tintinnabulation techniques were added. The eighth variation presents the turning point of the work, and thus deviates from the established pattern. In my explanation of Hillier's analysis of *Tabula Rasa*, I pointed out that the piece begins with a long A followed by eight half notes of silence, and that in each subsequent variation the duration of the silent measure shrinks by a half note. By the eighth variation, then, the silent measure has been reduced to one half note, and there is no pause at all between the end of this final variation and the beginning of the cadenza at rehearsal number 9. While Pärt begins the eighth variation like any other even-numbered variation, without discernibly altering the preexisting tintinnabulation structure, in the soloists' final sixteenth-note section he injects tension into the solo patterns by surprising the listener with double compound tintinnabulation, placed in a canon with inverted contours (**Example 4.11**). The second violin enters two beats after the first violin

in imitation. Each voice consists of a double first-position alternating T-voice and an ascending M-voice, and their contours are related by inversion.

Example 4.11: *Tabula Rasa*, solo violins, letter Y.



The separation of the two solo violin lines at a crucial moment seems to contradict what I have proposed throughout this analysis: that the violin lines come closer into alignment with each variation. This is quite true; I would argue, however, that Pärt has placed the solo violin lines in canon at this moment in order to surprise the listener with their dramatic separation, heightening the moment's suspense, and most importantly emphasizing that the eighth variation *continues* rather than subsiding like the previous variations. Indeed, the eighth variation transitions into the cadenza by cutting out the M-voice, leaving pure arpeggiations on the A-minor triad in all voices.

In Hillier's analysis of the end of the first movement of *Tabula Rasa*, he writes the following:

The prepared piano takes a major role here, leading the way in a three octave descending scale, with rapid tremolos from all three soloists while individual pitches are sustained in the orchestra. This progression is arrested on the penultimate note, B, leading to a ninth variation in which two pitches are added, F# and Eb, to form a diminished seventh chord. (1997, 115)

This notion of the movement's climax "ending" on the penultimate pitch comes to the fore once again in Hillier's analysis of the second movement, *Silentium*.

Hillier writes that “the last pitch actually sounded is E, the penultimate in the scale, just as happened at the end of the first movement’s cadenza. This time, however, it leads into silence” (118). Once again, though, Hillier neglects to attend to the solo violin parts, which provide, as he notes, the same pitch material as the prepared piano in the first movement’s cadenza. Thus, when the prepared piano ends on the penultimate note, B, so too does the second solo violin. The difference, however, is that the second solo violin, after a crescendo and a dramatic pause, *does* in fact reenter on a fortissimo, accented A, the final of the mode (**Example 4.12**). The arpeggiation that follows, with accents on each A that falls on the beat, is repeated for the duration of two measures (the first violin plays the same figure a third higher, see **Example 4.12**). The joke is that the violins, having contradicted the rest of the orchestra at every turn, preempt them here as well, by achieving the final note before the rest of the strings. And from here until the end of the movement, the solo violins are the perfect partners in crime: the first violin is treated like an M-voice and the second violin matches each note perfectly with a first position inferior T-voice (**Example 4.13**).

Thus linked, the two solo violins finish off the movement with a final high A, doubled five octaves apart just as it was at the beginning of the piece – except that at the end of the movement, it arrives half a measure before the rest of the orchestra enters. As the orchestra scrambles to catch up by playing a full A-minor chord, the solo violins, having lost interest by now, cease to sound their note immediately as the other strings enter, effectively ending the movement four bars before the rest of the orchestra.

Example 4.12: *Tabula Rasa*, solo violins, number 9.

Violin 1

Violin 2

ff

9

Example 4.13: *Tabula Rasa*, solo violins, 4 after number 9.

Violin 1

Violin 2

1

2

3

4

The ludic qualities of the solo violin parts in the first movement of *Tabula Rasa* are evident in both Hillier's analysis and my own. Hillier emphasizes the larger structure of the piece while my own analysis has focused largely on minutiae. Honing in on only the workings of the two solo violins in the first movement has provided support for a larger argument proposed by Hillier. Regarding the relationship between the two movements of *Tabula Rasa*, he writes:

The underlying unity of these two movements is perhaps the most significant feature of the work as a whole, and serves to substantiate the tintinnabuli principle as something pervading all aspects of a composition, the larger structural elements as well as phrase-to-phrase construction, and not merely a means of moving from note to note. (114)

As my analysis has shown, the tintinnabuli principle truly does permeate every aspect of Pärt's *Tabula Rasa* – but instead of proving this by beginning with an idea about the larger structure, I began by looking at the details of Pärt's compound melodies. Although Hillier and I have come to the same conclusions about the depth to which the tintinnabuli principle permeates *Tabula Rasa*, I feel that by ignoring the solo violins, he does the work a disservice in his analysis. Because it is a perfect example of the tintinnabulation style, Hillier regards *Tabula Rasa* as “a summing up of the instrumental tintinnabuli works” in which “no new processes are introduced” (114). As I have discussed, however, this is not exactly the case: the structures created by the solo violin lines are quite complex and novel, and the details of their figurations are crucial to a fuller understanding of the work. With each variation, Pärt introduces new processes to the tintinnabuli technique: large-scale alternation over already-sounding smaller scale alternation, double alternations, M-voice offset, multiple T-voice positions

in different alternating patterns, T-voice inversion, and tintinnabulation in canon are just a few of the possibilities that Pärt explores in *Tabula Rasa*. Studying these complicated manifestations of the compound tintinnabulation technique allows us to better understand the ludic properties of *Tabula Rasa*'s first movement and the ability of compound tintinnabulation to help define structures in Pärt's music.

Annum per Annum

Pärt composed the organ mass *Annum per Annum* in 1980 to commemorate the 900th anniversary of the Speyer Cathedral. *Annum per Annum*, or “year by year,” consists of five movements framed by an introduction and a coda. The five central movements are titled with single letters, representing the Ordinary sections of the Mass: K(yrie), G(loria), C(redo), S(anctus), A(gnus Dei). Bostonia accurately describes the modal trajectory of the work as beginning in D Aeolian/Dorian and modulating to D Ionian/Lydian halfway through the Credo (2007, 81). The time signature is 13/4 in the left hand and pedal parts and 39/8 in the right hand. Each large measure is divided into four smaller parts, marked in my examples, as in the published scores, by a dotted bar line. All of the middle movements are exactly the same length except for the Agnus Dei, which contains a two-bar extension leading into the coda. Each of the five movements is split into two halves, marked by a note or chord tied over the bar line and a rest. The two halves of each movement are demarcated in the score with a thin double bar line. Several scholars have already published analyses of *Annum per Annum*, which is the most popular of Pärt's four works for solo organ (Hillier 1997, Dobbs 2000, Bostonia 2007). These analysts have provided thorough and convincing accounts

of the work's larger structure and the construction of the left hand and pedal parts, but the nature of the right hand's mesmerizing melody has so far eluded explanation. Hillier has described the left hand as presenting an "isorhythmic cantus firmus with sequentially changing pitch sequences" while the right hand performs "a series of variations based on a similar melodic line" (1997, 173). By contrast, Dobbs characterizes the right hand as a T-voice, noting how the melody outlines various triads from the key of D (2000, 65). Bostonia presents the most detailed analysis, suggesting that the right hand may consist of a "hybrid M/T-voice." She notes that the right hand part seems to express "a single line M-voice due to its lyrical quality, and not being limited to a triad structure." At the same time, though, the figure seems "to migrate and change its triadic center according to similar movement of the middle M-voice," relating to the middle voice "just like a T-voice in superior position" (2007, 82). The existing scholarly literature on *Annum per Annum* generally agrees, however, that the work's uppermost line does not adhere to the kind of strict, all-encompassing compositional principle typically featured in tintinnabulation works.

Figure 4.3: *Annum per Annum*, reduction of movement K, m.1.

1. Original material
2. Eliminate octave displacement
3. Reduce embellishment and identify voices

Figure 4.4: *Annum per Annum*, reduction of movement K, where “s” and “i” stand for “superior” and “inferior” T-voices, respectively.



Upon closer examination, it becomes evident that the right hand part consists, quite simply, of a compound tintinnabulation melody. **Figure 4.3** shows how the first line of the Kyrie can be reduced, eliminating octave displacement and extracting the concealed M-voice (see also Chapter 3: Methodology). Extracting the M-voice from the right hand line of the entire first movement results in the patterning found in **Figure 4.4**. As this example clearly shows, each measure of 39/8 in the right hand consists of two ascending three-note scale

fragments, followed by a four-note motive characterized by an initial descending third followed by two ascending seconds, and concluding with another ascending three-note scale fragment. This pattern accounts for the right hand's M-voice in every movement of *Annum per Annum*. The only change in the M-voice occurs in the Sanctus, where the third section of each measure eliminates the final note of the pattern, replacing it with a T-voice note (indicated by parentheses surrounding the missing M-note in **Figure 4.5**). This replacement of the third section's final M-note with a T-note continues through the Sanctus and into the work's last movement, the Agnus Dei. In my analytical charts, I have replaced the final T-note in these sections with the implied M-note.

At times, the missing M-voice note in the third section of each measure may potentially be interpreted as a T-voice note. For example, in the third section of the first measure of **Figure 4.5**, the missing note in parenthesis is an F#, while the T-voice note is a D. One might protest that the F# could be interpreted as part of a D-major triad, rather than the final note of a melodic fragment. It is important to bear in mind, however, that the melodic component of a piece that uses the tintinnabulation technique will almost always share notes in common with the triadic voice. In order to determine whether the note is a T- or M-voice, one must identify the melodic and triadic patterns at play. Luckily, *Annum per Annum* features a fairly simple pattern in both M- and T-voices until the beginning of the Sanctus. The third section of every measure in the work's first three movements features the same melodic pattern: a descending third, an ascending second, and another ascending second. We can assume, therefore, that this pattern continues in the fourth and fifth movements. If we do assume the continuation of the pattern

and add the final note to the third section of every measure, we find that the T-voice note of that third section is in a particular relationship to the implied final M-voice note (first position superior, “s,” or inferior, “i”). That relationship between the T-voice and the implied M-voice in the third section of each measure in the Sanctus is identical to the relationship between the T-voice and M-voice in the same part of the measure in the first three movements. I will explore the patterning of the T-voices in *Annum per Annum* in greater depth later in this analysis, but for the moment it seems reasonable to assume that the final, implied note of the third section of each measure in the Sanctus and Agnus Dei is, indeed, an M-voice note with an associated T-voice note.

Figure 4.6 shows the M-voice construction of every movement of *Annum per Annum*. In this example, the first and second parts of each measure have been separated in order to better show the large-scale relationships between movements. These sections are labeled Part A and Part B. Each bar in Part A, marked with a dashed bar line, represents the first two cells of a 39/8 bar in the score (18 eighth notes). Each bar in Part B represents the second two cells of a 39/8 bar in the score (21 eighth notes). The internal bars are labeled with letters in order to show motivic connections based on intervallic content. Each system is labeled with the title of the movement and numbered 1 or 2 corresponding to Pärt’s division of each movement in half. For example, when I reference measure 3 of K₁(A), I mean the initial two melodic cells in the third measure of the first half of movement K.

Figure 4.5: *Annum per Annum*, reduction of movement S.

Typically of the tintinnabulation style, Pärt rotates the M-voice motives through the diatonic scale, often introducing modal inflections. For this reason, I have labeled motives as equivalent based on diatonic interval type (i.e. second, third), and not on quality (i.e. perfect, major, minor). Pärt also transposes motives diatonically; I have chosen to consider these transpositions as essentially equivalent to the original motives. **Figure 4.6** reveals several interesting patterns in the pitch material of the right hand M-voice. K_1 is identical to C_2 (save for chromatic inflections), K_2 to C_1 , and G_1 to G_2 , for example. In other words, the

second three sections of *Annum per Annum* present the material of the first three sections in reverse order. Furthermore, the motives in $A_1(A)$ present a reordered version of the motivic material found in $S_1(A)$: f b g c becomes g b f c (motives b and c are transposed). Similarly, the material of $K_2(A)$ is reordered to form $A_2(A)$: d b e c becomes e b d c (motives b and c are transposed). Across all movements, the b motive is always used to begin the second measure and the c motive is used to begin all final measures. Since b and c are constants, the transformations from $A_1(A)$ to $S_1(A)$ and from $K_2(A)$ to $A_2(A)$ are identical: in each case, the first and third motives are exchanged, leaving b and c in place. If we focus our attention on Part B, we find that all sets of four measures end with motive y. We also find that $S_2(B)$ contains the same configuration of motives previously heard in $C_2(B)$.

To summarize, the M-voices of *Annum per Annum* shift and transform throughout the piece, but every configuration of motives is somehow linked to another section. No section of any movement is left without a partner elsewhere in the piece. The M-voice of the right hand seems to fulfill its typical role in the tintinnabulation style, representing the everyday and “year by year” struggles of human existence, the present day seemingly unique in its complexity but still tied inextricably to the past. In Pärt’s tintinnabuli compositions, the restlessness of the M-voice generally finds its stable counterpart in the T-voice. Such is the case with *Annum per Annum*, where the T-voice of the right hand’s compound tintinnabulation provides a consistent, stable base for the ever-changing M-voice configurations. Other analysts have rightly pointed out that there is no discernible pattern that determines which triad is outlined in the right hand’s melody. **Figures 4.7 and 4.8** support these previous analyses, showing how the right hand’s T-

voice, extracted from the compound melody of the first two movements, touches on major and minor triads based on D, F, G, A, and B^b in no particular order.

Annum per Annum is not, in fact, the only work in which such T-voice migration occurs; Roeder points out Pärt's use of the same technique, where "the diatonic collection and tintinnabulating triad change from segment to segment," in his analysis of *The Beatitudes* (30). That work was written in 1990, ten years after *Annum per Annum*. This technique is, therefore, not as "unusual" as Roeder claims it is, although it is certainly not terribly common in the tintinnabulation style. Roeder documents all of the T-voice changes in *The Beatitudes* with interesting results, but for an analysis of the compound tintinnabulation in *Annum per Annum*, scrutinizing this particular characteristic of the T-voice does not produce particularly fascinating results. Considering the T-voice as it relates to the M-voice, however, does provide more interesting results for analysis.

Reducing the M- and T-voices in the Kyrie (**Figure 4.4**) reveals that the T-voice in each small cell centers on the final melodic note. When there are two T-notes present, as in the first and last cells of each measure, the second T-note always provides a note a fifth away from the first T-note. Whether the second T-note is a fifth below or a fifth above the first T-note depends on whether the first is placed either superior or inferior to the final M-note. For this reason, I have considered the first T-note in these cases to be the dominant note. Above every melodic cell in **Figure 4.4**, I have included a label indicating the T-voice's position in relation to the final note of the cell's M-voice. An "s" indicates a superior placement while an "i" indicates an inferior placement. All T-voices are in first position throughout the work. There is no discernible pattern among the internal T-voice placements

Figure 4.6: *Annum per Annum*, all movements, reduction of M-voice.

	Part A	Part B
K ₁	a b a c	w x w y
K ₂	d b e c	z z x y
G ₁	b b c c	z z x y
G ₂	b b c c	z z x y
C ₁	d b e c	z z x y
C ₂	a b a c	w x w y
S ₁	f b g c	z x z y
S ₂	c b b c	w x w y
A ₁	g b f c	x x z y
A ₂	e b d c	x z z y

in the Kyrie. Looking beyond the Kyrie, however, reveals that every other movement replicates this exact ordering of T-voice placements in the right hand. The only exception is the Sanctus, where the simultaneous sounding of T- and M-voices makes it difficult to discern the exact placement of T-voices in relation to the melody. The first half of the Sanctus seems to maintain the pattern, while the second half is slightly altered (**Figure 4.5**). The T-voice pattern is subsequently reestablished at the beginning of the Agnus Dei.

Figure 4.7: *Annum per Annum*, movement K, T-voice reduction.



Figure 4.8: *Annum per Annum*, movement G, T-voice reduction.



The consistent patterning of T-voice placement in the right hand's compound tintinnabulus melody plays two important roles in the analysis of *Annum per Annum*. First, the stability of the T-voice reinforces the message of the piece, and of the tintinnabulation style in general: while the struggles and problems of humanity seem to change endlessly, the presence of the divine is eternal and unchanging. Second, the consistency with which the T-voice relates to the M-voice provides a means of parsing the compound tintinnabulus melody

throughout the work. Often, ornamentation of the compound melody complicates a work's surface and can cast doubt on which notes belong to the M- or T-voice. This is especially true of *Annum per Annum*, where the T-voice in the right hand constantly shifts between triads based on D, F, G, A, and B \flat . The consistent patterning of motives in the M-voice and the repetition of T-voice placements across movements confirm that I have correctly identified the components of the compound melody. This type of confirmation becomes more and more important as one analyzes tintinnabuli works of increasing complexity.

By contrast, the lack of consistency in both the M- and T-voices of *Annum per Annum* plays an equally important role in accurately interpreting the work's narrative. In fact, the sudden changes found in the Sanctus provide a crucial turning point, or even a kind of climax, for *Annum per Annum*'s narrative trajectory. In the Sanctus, Pärt alters the third section of each measure by replacing the final M-voice note with a triadic note. Pärt also changes the T-voice patterning in the second half of the Sanctus and alters the texture by introducing a thicker sound with more chords. The Sanctus provides the work's dynamic climax: the Kyrie is played *pianissimo*, the Gloria *mezzo forte*, the Credo *forte*, and the Sanctus *fortissimo*. Finally, the right hand's range expands throughout each movement, gradually leaving the initial two-octave range of the Kyrie. In the Agnus Dei, Pärt reestablishes the T-voice pattern, thins out the texture once more, and returns to a *piano* dynamic. The Agnus Dei does not fully return to the initial state found in the Kyrie, however. Rather, the events of the climactic Sanctus have forever altered the musical landscape. The final note of each measure's third section is still missing, and the right hand's range remains undeniably expanded.

With the reestablishment of the important tintinnabuli elements and their associated patterns comes the loss of the Kyrie's initial state, while allowing the listener to gain a renewed appreciation of the T-voice's stability. This type of narrative, which I discuss in Chapter 4, also plays an important role in Pärt's vocal works. In Chapter 4, I explore two vocal works where the compound tintinnabulation technique interacts in subtle ways with the text. In these pieces and many others by Pärt, finding patterns and narrative structures like those featured in *Annum per Annum* will be crucial to understanding the structure and drama of the work.

Conclusion

On the surface, the two works presented for analysis in this chapter have little in common. One is for a solo instrument, the other for an ensemble; one is for a wind instrument, the other for strings. The only musical feature these pieces have in common is their shared use of the compound tintinnabulation technique. In fact, as different as they are, both pieces use the technique extensively. Pärt uses compound tintinnabulation in order to express structural elements of each piece. In both works, changes to an established compound tintinnabulation pattern emphasized climactic moments and turning points. The solo violins separate suddenly in *Tabula Rasa*, where the compound tintinnabuli melodies had previously been moving towards a closer alignment. In *Annum per Annum*, changes to the M- and T-voice patterns in the Sanctus result in a moment of confusion, whereupon the Agnus Dei reestablishes the previous order. Understanding how the compound tintinnabulation is constructed also plays a

significant role in narrative readings of both *Tabula Rasa* and *Annum per Annum*. Their equal reliance on compound tintinnabulation speaks to the technique's versatility and its ubiquity in Pärt's music. Such versatility is similarly evident in Pärt's use of compound tintinnabulation in his vocal works. In the next chapter I will discuss two of these vocal works: *Es sang vor langen Jahren* and *L'Abbé Agathon*.

Chapter 5

ANALYSIS OF COMPOUND TINTINNABULATION IN TWO VOCAL WORKS

Introduction

As both Hillier and Robinson have emphasized in their own research, text is of utmost importance in Pärt's vocal works. Robinson identifies two approaches to text setting, each of which "dramatically foregrounds the words of the text in its own manner":

In some pieces the word length and the number of words direct the melodic and formal material, and in others the pitch-melodic machinations are set in motion, acquiring one syllable or one word of text at a time.
(101)

Text seems to play an equally important role in Pärt's decision to use compound tintinnabulation in a vocal work. In my analysis of *Es sang vor langen Jahren*, I argue that Pärt weaves the M- and T-voices together and subsequently separates them in order to express the poem's theme of a lost relationship. *L'Abbé Agathon* uses compound melody quite differently, but still in order to express a feature of the text: the two characters of Father Agathon and the leper, and the gradual revelation of the leper as an angel. As I described in Chapter 3, the vocal work *The Woman with the Alabaster Box* also features compound tintinnabulation, which Pärt uses to represent Jesus' speech. Compound tintinnabulation, then, provides one more way for Pärt to express the meaning and narrative of texts that

are of great importance to him. What follows in this chapter are my analyses of these works, with careful attention to how the text is set using compound tintinnabulation.

Es sang vor langen Jahren

Es sang vor langen Jahren (1984) is the first of Pärt's compositions to feature a German text.⁵ The piece is set for violin, viola, and alto, and is one of the earliest vocal works employing the tintinnabulation technique. **Table 5.1** provides the work's text, written by Clemens von Brentano, in both German and English (Pinkerton 2010).

Hillier briefly describes *Es sang vor langen Jahren* in his book on the composer, defining Pärt's compositional process for the vocal line as follows: "The melodic arc simply adds a pitch in turn above and below the voice's E pitch centre, but fills in the intervening spaces or not as the words require" (1997, 164). This technique can be found in the voice's opening phrase (**Example 5.1**). Hillier describes the piece's form as two-part, the "ending being an almost exact musical repeat of the comparable lines in the first part" (164). This is an undeniably accurate, but to my mind incomplete, account of the work's form.

Example 5.1: *Es sang vor langen Jahren*, voice, mm.8–16.



⁵ Almost all of Pärt's previous vocal tintinnabuli works were set in Latin. The only non-Latin vocal works written before *Es sang vor langen Jahren* are the two cantatas *Meie Aed* and *Maailma Samm*, which both set Estonian texts.

Table 5.1: *Es sang vor langen Jahren*, lyrics in German and English.

Es sang vor langen Jahren Wohl auch die Nachtigall, Das war wohl süßer Schall, Da wir zusammen waren.	Long years ago indeed, as now There sang the nightingale; The sound was truly sweet; Then, we were together.
Ich sing' und kann nicht weinen Und spinne so allein Den Faden klar und rein So lang der Mond wird scheinen.	I sing and cannot weep, And thus, alone, I spin The bright, clean threads As long as the moon shines.
Als wir zusammen waren Da sang die Nachtigall Nun mahnet mich ihr Schall Dass du von mir gefahren.	When we were together, Then sang the nightingale; Now her sound reminds me That you are gone from me.
So oft der Mond mag scheinen, Denk' ich wohl dein allein, Mein Herz ist klar und rein Gott wolle uns vereinen.	However often the moon shines, I think on you alone; My heart is bright and clean; God grant we be united!
Seit du von mir gefahren, Singt stets die Nachtigall, Ich denk' bei ihrem Schall, Wie wir zusammen waren.	Since you have gone from me, The nightingale sings constantly; Her sound makes me think How we were together.
Gott wolle uns vereinen Hier spinn' ich so allein, Der Mond scheint klar und rein, Ich sing' und möchte weinen.	God grant we be united Where, so alone, I spin; The moon shines bright and clean; I sing, and would weep.

Hermann Conen provides a more detailed account in his book by explaining how Pärt “provides a musical answer to the intimate linkage of the text with a melodic construction that picks up on the verbal model’s paradox of the simple/complex through a complicated system of reflections” (56).⁶ In his analysis, Conen explains how Pärt divides the text of the poem into half-verses, the first and second halves of which are related to each other by inversion (see

⁶ Original text in German: „Pärt antwortet musikalisch auf die innige Verfassung des Textes mit einer Melodie-Konstruktion, die das Paradox des Einfach-Komplizierten des sprachlichen Modells durch ein komplexes System von Spiegelungen aufgreift.“ All of the translations provided are my own.

Example 5.2, reproduced from Conen’s book). He compares the gradual expansion of the ambitus in the first verse to a fan that gradually opens but constantly returns to the central tone E. When the outer limits are achieved at the beginning of the second verse, “the development proceeds in retrograde order from that of the first verse: from the greatest distance the melody swings back to the central note” (58).⁷ The addition of wider intervals between diatonic groups of two, which Conen identifies as a key characteristic of an M-voice, “leads organically in the third verse to the ‘structural exchange’ of the M-and T-voices.”⁸ Now the melody swings through the notes of the A-minor triad, just as it moved through the scale before: melody and triad have switched roles.

Example 5.2: *Es sang vor langen Jahren*, first verse (Conen 2006, 57).



After the third verse, the violin and viola provide an instrumental interlude.

As Conen demonstrates, this interlude contains a compound melodic construction

(**Example 5.3**).⁹ And as Hillier notes, the second half of the work almost literally

⁷ Original text in German: „Von da an verläuft die Entwicklung krebsgängig zur 1. Strophe, aus der größten Entfernung pendelt die Melodie wieder zum Zentralton zurück.“

⁸ Original text in German: „Diese allmähliche Weitung der Intervalle führt in der 3. Strophe organisch zum ‚Systemwechsel‘ von der M- und T-St.“

⁹ I have put this example into my own notational style in order to remain consistent. Conen does not use coloured noteheads to indicate T-voices. In addition, the c’s in parentheses in the final measure are from the violin part, but they clearly form part of the viola’s melody, since they are marked with tenuti and lines connect them to the viola part, much like in example 5.5.

repeats the first half. I contend, however, that the second half is in fact perceptually different from the first due to the compound tintinnabulation structure that emerges throughout the work's opening pages, including the compound melody that Conen observes in the instrumental intermission. In order to demonstrate this, I will expand upon Conen's analysis by providing an alternative analysis of the work's vocal line.

Example 5.3: *Es sang vor langen Jahren*, viola, mm.70–74.



In order to better understand the structure of *Es sang vor langen Jahren*, Hillier's description of a simple additive process for the work's melody needs to be complicated. First, the notion of adding only one pitch in turn is thwarted at measure 28, where two notes at a time are added above and below the central pitch E (**Example 5.4**). Second, Hillier neglects to mention the strings, which play the compound melody in the interlude and provide the full A-minor melody at the end of the piece (**Example 5.5**, mm.187–208). Thus, the strings establish A as a pitch center in addition to E, bringing Hillier's claim of a single pitch center into question. The full statement of the A-minor melody shows that Pärt considered the piece's background to be an A-minor triad and an A-minor scale, spanning all four of Hillier's modes and ringing throughout the work.

Example 5.4: *Es sang vor langen Jahren*, voice, mm.28–34.



From these thoughts I propose to develop a richer narrative of *Es sang vor langen Jahren*, based upon an understanding of Pärt's philosophy as well as close attention to the work's text. Hillier describes the words of the poem as “not ‘religious,’ though in their fusion of human love and spiritual purity they are far from worldly” (164). The word “fusion” is essential to understanding Pärt's work in general and this piece in particular. The fusion of the human and the divine into one element is a central theme in his tintinnabuli music. In the case of *Es sang vor langen Jahren*, Pärt exploits this element in the poem, which moves from fond remembrance of a past relationship to feelings of loneliness and desolation (see **Table 5.1**).

Pärt's musical setting separates the poem into two halves, separated by the instrumental passage described by Conen. The piece begins with an A-minor chord played by the two stringed instruments, *forte*, *tremolo*, and *con sordino*. After the strings fade to nothing, the voice enters with the melody defined by Hillier and Conen, adding notes one at a time above and below E. When the second verse begins, however, the pattern breaks: now the vocalist adds two notes above and two notes below the central pitch without actually singing the note E until near the end of the phrase. Without the presence of the central pitch E, our focus turns to the construction of the added melodic notes and the pattern that they form. Suddenly, with the words “Ich sing und kann nicht weinen und spinne

so allein,” we have the distinct impression of a compound melody (**Example 5.4**). In this case, the compound melody we hear is not a compound tintinnabulation construction; rather, it consists of melodically expressed dyads separated by large intervals, forming two perceptible strata. When the next verse is comprised entirely of the A-minor T-voice, our notion of a simple additive melody has been significantly complicated (**Example 5.6**). As Conen notes, the melody transforms so that the third verse consists of a T-voice acting as an M-voice.

Hearing the T-voice unfold melodically brings us back to the triadic space that began the work and allows us to hear the A-minor triad ringing in the background. Following this melodic statement of the T-voice, the first section comes to a close and the string interlude begins. As I have explained, this interlude provides a compound tintinnabulus melody. The clear statement of the A-minor T-voice in the voice and the subsequent compound tintinnabulation in the strings provide a new context for the repetition of the first half’s vocal melody in the second half. When the simple additive melody reenters, we may not hear it as such; instead, the non-triadic notes sound dissonant against the background triad, creating the effect of a compound melody. The M- and T-voices are not easily separated here, however, since they are linked through the central note. **Example 5.7** shows one way of parsing the melody, but the two parts are so closely entwined that it is only possible to perceive glimpses of individual voices. Like the corresponding phrase in the first part of the song, the opening stanza of the second half speaks of togetherness with the words, “Gott wolle uns vereinen.”

Example 5.5: *Es sang vor langen Jahren*, mm.175–226.

The musical score is presented in six systems, each with a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (bass clef). The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 3/4. Measure numbers 175, 183, 191, 200, 208, and 217 are indicated at the start of their respective systems. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings. The first system (measures 175-182) includes the instruction "(weinen!)" above the vocal line and "ppp" below the piano line. The second system (measures 183-190) includes a "4/3" time signature change in measure 187. The third system (measures 191-199) continues the vocal and piano parts. The fourth system (measures 200-207) shows the vocal line with long slurs. The fifth system (measures 208-216) continues the vocal and piano parts. The sixth system (measures 217-226) features a tremolo effect ("trem.") in both the vocal and piano lines, with a "pppp" dynamic marking in the piano line. The score concludes with a double bar line and a "4'" marking at the bottom right.

Example 5.6: *Es sang vor langen Jahren*, voice, mm.46–53.



Example 5.7: *Es sang vor langen Jahren*, voice, mm.114–132.



With our understanding heightened by the first half's compound melodies and statement of the T-voice, we can now understand “togetherness” in Pärt’s setting as the combination and interweaving of M- and T-voices, of the human and the divine. At the beginning of the setting, the T-voice generated the M-voice through the note E, and they were linked so closely as to be inseparable. As the poem’s narrator, despairing, laments his inability to weep in the second verse, the melody rends itself into two voices, revealing the original state of unity only upon its loss. With the third verse, the T-voice alone expresses the sentiment, “Daß du von mir gefahren.” The entire second half is tinged with our new knowledge, our regret at the loss of the innocent togetherness of voices that began the piece. The final verse encapsulates the compositional process of the entire work: “God grant we be united / Where, so alone, I spin; / The moon shines bright and clean; / I sing, and would weep.” The voice, swinging melodically through the notes of the A-minor triad, perfectly expresses the despairing loneliness of the poem’s subject.

By acknowledging that the original melody consisted of the melody and the triad intertwined in a compound melody, we can understand the final, solitary expression of the triad as representing the solitude of the poem's abandoned lover.

L'Abbé Agathon

L'Abbé Agathon (2004), a work for soprano and eight cellos, tells the story of Father Agathon's encounter with an angel of God, disguised as a leper. Since *L'Abbé Agathon* was composed in 2004 and edited in 2005, it has not received any consideration in the scholarly literature until now. I will therefore provide a brief description of the work's text and form to provide some context for the analysis. The text, which explains the tests through which the leper/angel puts the Father, is reprinted in both French and English in **Table 5.2**. Pärt sets the poem in three parts (ABA') followed by a coda section. Part A begins at rehearsal mark A, part B at H, and part A' at L. The coda begins at M. These sections are delimited by significant changes in both tempo and the cello accompaniment figures. The A sections feature a simple accompaniment pattern in the cello parts, consisting of quarter, half, and whole notes. This accompaniment pattern consists of passing and neighbouring notes surrounding the principal triad, F# minor (**Example 5.8**). As the work progresses, the pattern shifts to focus on supporting harmonies. At letter C, for example, the main triad is B minor. The cellos always return to F# minor, however, ensuring that the principal triad rings through the piece. At rehearsal D, the pitch E# is introduced as the raised third of the dominant, C#, changing the mode from F# natural minor to F# harmonic minor (**Example 5.9**).

At letter H, the texture changes dramatically, alternating between a figure featuring large intervals and a more fluid, melodic figure (**Example 5.10**).

Table 5.2: *L'Abbé Agathon*, text in both French and English.

<p>L'abbé Agathon, se rendant un jour dans la ville pour vendre de menus objets, trouva le long de la route un lépreux qui lui demanda: «Où vas-tu?»</p> <p>L'abbé Agathon lui dit: «A la ville vendre des objets.»</p> <p>Le lépreux lui dit: «Par charité, porte-moi là-bas.»</p> <p>L'ayant pris, le vieillard le porta à la ville. L'autre lui dit alors: «Dépose-moi à l'endroit où tu vends tes objets.» Et l'abbé Agathon fit ainsi.</p> <p>Quand il eut vendu un objet, le lépreux lui demanda: «Combien l'as-tu vendu?»</p> <p>«Tant.»</p> <p>«Achète-moi un gâteau.» Il l'acheta.</p> <p>Quand il eut vendu un autre objet, l'autre lui dit: «Et celui-ci, combien l'as-tu vendu?»</p> <p>«Tant.»</p> <p>«Achète-moi telle chose.» Le vieillard l'acheta encore.</p> <p>Quand il eut vendu tous ses objets et qu'il voulut partir, le lépreux lui dit: «Tu t'en vas?»</p> <p>«Oui.»</p> <p>«Je t'en prie, par charité, reporte-moi à l'endroit où tu m'as trouvé.»</p> <p>L'abbé Agathon prit le lépreux et le reporta à cet endroit.</p> <p>Celui-ci lui dit alors: «Béni es-tu, Agathon, par le Seigneur du ciel et de la terre.»</p> <p>Agathon leva les yeux mais il ne vit plus personne, car le lépreux était un ange du Seigneur venu le mettre à l'épreuve.</p>	<p>Going to town one day to sell some small items, Father Agathon met a leper sitting by the roadside who asked him, 'Where are you going?'</p> <p>Father Agathon replied, 'To town to sell some things.'</p> <p>The other said, 'Do me the favour of carrying me there.' So he carried him to the town.</p> <p>The leper said to him, 'Put me down where you sell your wares.' He did so.</p> <p>When he had sold an item, the leper asked, 'How much did you sell it for?'</p> <p>And he told him the price.</p> <p>Then the other said, 'Buy me a cake.' And he bought it. After Father Agathon had sold a second item, the leper asked, 'How much did you sell it for?'</p> <p>And he told him the price of it.</p> <p>Then the other said, 'Buy me this.' And he bought it. When Agathon, having sold all his wares, wanted to go, he said to him, 'Are you going back?'</p> <p>And he replied, 'Yes.'</p> <p>Then he said, 'Do me the favour of carrying me back to the place where you found me.'</p> <p>Once more picking him up, he carried him back to the place. Then the leper said, 'Agathon, you are filled with divine blessings, in heaven and on earth.'</p> <p>Raising his eyes, Agathon saw no man; it was an angel of the Lord, come to test him.</p>
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Example 5.8: *L'Abbé Agathon*, cellos 1–4, mm.1–20.

Example 5.8 shows the musical score for cellos 1–4, measures 1–20. The score is written in bass clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a common time signature (C). The first system includes staves for Cello 1, 2 and Cello 3, 4. The second system includes staves for Cello 1, 2 and Cello 3, 4, with a measure number 11 indicated at the start of the first staff. Red markings (accents) are present on several notes and rests throughout the score.

Example 5.9: *L'Abbé Agathon*, cellos 1–8, mm.64–68.

Example 5.9 shows the musical score for cellos 1–8, measures 64–68. The score is written in bass clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a common time signature (C). The first system includes staves for Cello 1, 2; Cello 3, 4; Cello 5, 6; and Cello 7, 8. A measure number 11 is indicated at the start of the first staff. A box labeled 'D' is placed above the first staff. Red markings (accents) are present on several notes and rests throughout the score.

Example 5.10: *L'Abbé Agathon*, cellos 1–8, mm. 225–29.

Example 5.10 shows the musical score for cellos 1–8, measures 225–29. The score is written in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a common time signature (C). The first system includes staves for Cello 1, 2; Cello 3, 4; Cello 5, 6; and Cello 7, 8. A measure number 11 is indicated at the start of the first staff. A box labeled 'H' is placed above the first staff. Red markings (accents) are present on several notes and rests throughout the score.

Example 5.11: *L'Abbé Agathon*, voice, mm.24–27.



short T-voice notes usually act as pick-ups to long M-voice notes. In addition, the T-voice in *L'Abbé Agathon*, as presented in mm. 29–39, is not a traditional T-voice in that its position does not consistently relate to the M-voice. Instead, Pärt chooses just one note at a time from the F \sharp -minor triad to act as the T-voice, making traditional distinctions about T-voice placement useless in this context. Pärt employs similar alterations of the tintinnabulation technique in *Summa*, as described by Paul Hillier, in *The Woman with the Alabaster Box* (Chapter 3), and in *Es sang vor langen Jahren*, as described above. All of these special features of *L'Abbé Agathon* will play increasingly important roles for the analysis as the piece becomes more complex.

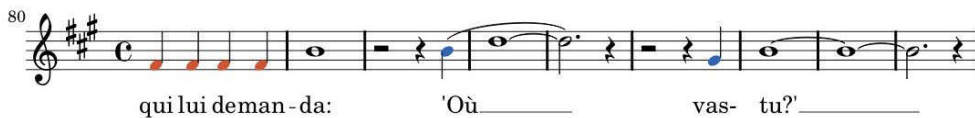
After a string interlude, the voice reenters at the end of m.69 with a similar compound melody, whose T-voice note is once again F \sharp (**Example 5.13**). In this case, however, the M-voice itself begins to outline another triad by alternating between the pitches G \sharp and B. Not coincidentally, this emphasis on another triad comes with the first mention of the leper. When the leper first speaks, the F \sharp -minor triad is completely absent, leaving only a G \sharp diminished triad in the vocal line (**Example 5.14**). The strings provide the final note, E \sharp , forming a fully diminished seventh chord. In **Example 5.14**, the leper's speech is punctuated by blue noteheads, marking the diminished chord as a distinct T-voice, independent from Father Agathon's F \sharp -minor T-voice. The rhythmic pattern established by the compound melody in **Example 5.12** persists, encouraging us to view the shorter notes as a new T-voice, anacrusic to the longer M-voice notes, rather than as a continuous melody. Of course, the M-voice in this case is also triadic; another feasible interpretation of the passage would identify all of the notes in the leper's

speech as part of the new T-voice. Regardless, both interpretations agree that the leper's speech establishes a new T-voice, a fully diminished seventh chord, which is linked to that character just as the F#-minor T-voice is linked to the Father's character.

Example 5.13: *L'Abbé Agathon*, voice, mm.69–77.



Example 5.14: *L'Abbé Agathon*, voice, mm.80–88.



Example 5.15: *L'Abbé Agathon*, voice, mm.119–132.



The link between the leper's character and the diminished seventh chord is confirmed when next the leper speaks, at m. 119. In this passage, the leper asks Father Agathon to carry him to the village where Agathon is selling his goods. Once again, the entire passage outlines the diminished seventh chord, with the quarter notes acting as a T-voice anacrusic to the M-voice (**Example 5.15**). Just as Agathon's character was marked by a particular arrangement of T-voice notes in **Example 5.11** (up a fifth, descending by third back to the root), so too is the leper's character marked by a characteristic repeated note followed by a descending third.

With the start of the B section at letter H comes the next major change to the established structure of M- and T-voices. In this section, Agathon sells one item, and the leper asks the Father to buy him a cake. As he does so, the once-distinct T-voices begin to blend together in the leper's speech (**Example 5.16**). The established pattern encourages us to interpret the quarter notes in mm. 245–46 as a T-voice, except that the F# is part of Agathon's triad while the D and B belong to the leper's. The leper's T-voice in m. 246 is even identical to the T-voice in m. 119, emphasizing the distinct repeated note and descending third (**Example 5.15**). When the leper actually speaks, beginning in m. 248, only the diminished seventh T-voice is present, although the M-voice contains pitches common to the F#-minor triad. After Agathon responds with a melodic fragment that includes an E# (m. 253), revealing the influence of the diminished seventh chord, the leper speaks again (m. 254). This time, the leper uses the C# from the Father's F#-minor T-voice while outlining the diminished seventh chord as the M-voice. The mixture of the two T-voices is all the more striking for the meaning of the words themselves: here the characters of the leper and Agathon seem to diverge most strongly, since the Father shows a generous spirit and the leper seems to show a greedy one. Yet their T-voices have begun to blend together, leading us to question the motives of the two characters.

The B section ends with Father Agathon having sold all of his objects. The two T-voices have now become mixed to such an extent that it is difficult to tell the difference between the M- and T-voices (**Example 5.17**). Then the leper makes his final request of Agathon, just before the return of the A section at letter

L. In making this final statement, the leper reverts completely to the diminished seventh chord T-voice, as if asserting his identity one last time (**Example 5.18**).

Example 5.16: *L'Abbé Agathon*, voice, mm.245–260.

245 le lépreux lui demanda: 'Com-bien l'as-tu ven-du?

252 'Tant.' 'Achè-te - moi un gâ-teau.' Il l'ache-ta.

Example 5.17: *L'Abbé Agathon*, voice, mm.317–30.



317 Quand il eut vendu tous ses objets et qu'il voulut par - tir,

324 le lépreux lui dit: 'Tu t'en vas?' 'Oui.'

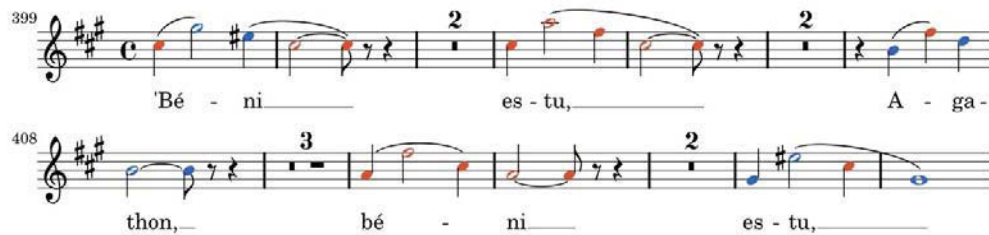
Example 5.18: *L'Abbé Agathon*, voice, mm.333–40.



333 'Je 'ten prie, par cha-ri-té, re-por-te-moi

337 à l'en - droit où tu m'as trou - vé.'

Example 5.19: *L'Abbé Agathon*, voice, mm.399–417.



399 'Bé - ni es - tu, A - ga -

408 thon, bé - ni es - tu,

The A' section brings the return of the cello accompaniment found in **Example 5.8** and the Father's clearly stated T-voice, identical to the passage in **Example 5.11**. At 56 measures, the A' section is significantly shorter than the 224-measure A section, but the return of the cellos' accompaniment pattern and the words "L'abbé Agathon" accompanied by the F#-minor T-voice both strongly suggest that the A material has returned. At letter M, after two grand pauses, the mood suddenly changes: now marked *con festività*, or "festive," the voice enters alone, *forte*, with the leper's blessing. At this point the two T-voices are fully combined, forming a joyous C#-major triad, the first major triad of the piece (**Example 5.19**, mm. 399-400).

Example 5.20: *L'Abbé Agathon*, voice, mm.436–48.

436 A-ga-thon le - va les yeux mais il ne vit plus per-sonne,
444 car le lé-preux é-tait un ange du Sei-gneur ve-nu le mettre à l'é-preu-ve.

Example 5.21: *L'Abbé Agathon*, voice, mm.452–56.

452 1, 2
3, 4
5, 6
7, 8

The Father and the leper are linked first through triads and then, with the revelation of the leper as an angel, through a full statement of the F# melodic minor ascending scale (**Example 5.20**). The characters thus entwined, the soprano ascends to the highest sung note in the work, connecting the realms of heaven and earth. Meanwhile, the second and fourth cellos each sound one note of the Father's triad and the leper's seventh chord—C# and D—until finally the voice reaches its zenith and the two cellos subside into silence. From that silence emerges the final, tutti statement of the Father's motive in the cellos, the pure F#-minor triad now representing not only the man Agathon himself, but also his link to the divine (**Example 5.21**).

Conclusion

In *L'Abbé Agathon*, as in *Es sang vor langen Jahren*, compound tintinnabulation plays an essential, not merely ornamental, role in conveying Pärt's message. In both pieces, compound melody is strongly tied to the requirements of the text. In *Es sang vor langen Jahren*, the compound tintinnabulation structure became clear only through consideration of the emotional journey of the poem's protagonist: from fond reminiscence of a past relationship, through despair, and finally towards praying to God to be united with the lost loved one. In *L'Abbé Agathon*, the characters are clearly and audibly defined by the soprano. Without considering how Pärt uses compound tintinnabulation, however, it is difficult to formally distinguish between the two characters, or to show how they merge at the end of the piece.

Compound tintinnabulation is a particularly useful technique for vocal music, since it creates melodies that are smooth, yet slightly more interesting and unpredictable than purely scalar constructions (see Chapter 3, Methodology). This special quality leads to analytical difficulties, however, when relatively smooth melodic passages are assumed to consist of only one voice, rather than two distinct strata. In his analysis of *Es sang vor langen Jahren*, Hillier makes this very assumption, in describing the melody as simply adding “a pitch in turn above and below the voice’s E pitch centre” throughout the work (1997, 164). By conducting an alternative analysis and pointing out the compound tintinnabulation patterns present in the piece, I show how both analyses are correct and work in tandem: the vocal melody is derived both from the E pitch centre in the manner Hillier describes, and from a compound tintinnabulation pattern based on an A pitch centre. In my analysis of *L’Abbé Agathon*, I avoid the same problem by focusing on the rhythmic pattern that Pärt establishes at the beginning of the work, which supports a compound tintinnabuli interpretation even in fairly smooth passages, such as in **Example 5.16**. In both *Es sang vor langen Jahren* and *L’Abbé Agathon*, understanding the development of the compound tintinnabulation is essential to understanding the broader message of the works themselves, and of Pärt’s aesthetic as a whole. Although the works take different paths through the tintinnabulation technique, they both arrive at the same conclusion: the “eternal dualism of body and spirit, heaven and earth,” a “twofold single entity” represented by the equation $1 + 1 = 1$ (Hillier 1997, 96).

Chapter 6

CONCLUSION

Imagine, for example, you look at a substance or an object through an electron microscope. A thousand-fold enlargement will obviously look different from a million-fold enlargement. Moving through the different stages of enlargement you can see incredible landscapes. Somewhere, though, there is a limit (let's say at the thirty million-fold enlargement). The landscapes then will have disappeared. What you can see now is a cool geometry: very particular and very clear. Most importantly, however, this geometry will be similar for most substances or objects. At first glance, this geometry has very little to do with the variety of those fantastic landscapes. Landscapes and geometry are, nevertheless, inseparable. The geometry is the point where everything starts. Geometry and landscapes are not independent from each other but relate as starting point and process. This geometry is an abstraction not unlike a mathematical formula.

– Arvo Pärt (Smith 1999, 20).

The reader has probably noticed that I have strayed quite far from the traditional conception of “compound melody” in the course of my analytical essays. In Chapter 3, I provided Robert Morris’ definition of a compound melody:

Steps are the basis for continuity within melodies or contrapuntal lines, whereas leaps often partition the melodic flow into simultaneously evolving strata, with the non-temporally adjacent notes in each strata connected by steps. Lines with multiple strata are called compound melodies (1998, 177).

Morris gives a typical example of compound melody, reproduced in **Example 6.1**.

My own definition of compound tintinnabulation began with the following simple statement: “in compound tintinnabulation, a single melodic line consists of two strata: one melodic and one triadic” (Chapter 3). Although I began with a basic

example of compound tintinnabulation in the work *Variationen zur Gesundung von Arinuschka*, I quickly moved beyond this simple type of construction in my analyses of *Tabula Rasa* and *Annum per Annum*. In *Tabula Rasa*, the compound tintinnabuli lines of the solo violins are quite plain at first, developing into more complex patterns as the first movement progresses. *Annum per Annum* features compound tintinnabulation in the right hand melody, which is rather obscured because of the constant changing of the M-voice patterning and the smoothness of the compound tintinnabuli line.

Example 6.1: From Morris 1998, pg. 178.



Pärt's vocal works provide even more uses for the compound tintinnabulation technique. *Es sang vor langen Jahren* presents one of the most difficult cases to parse, since the melody is more obviously constructed around the central pitch E than as compound tintinnabulation. As I have shown in my analysis, however, it is worthwhile paying close attention to the compound melodic features of the work, for the sake of the narrative expressed by the text. In *L'Abbé Agathon*, the compound tintinnabulation is more clearly presented, although it is still complicated by the presence of two T-voices, which represent the work's two main characters. Regardless of the difficulties in understanding these compound constructions, their presence is clearly integral to Pärt's tintinnabuli style. This kind of structure can be found in every type of tintinnabuli music: in both instrumental and vocal genres, from the very earliest tintinnabuli

works to recent compositions, from “rules of the game” pieces to “machines set in motion.”

The importance of compound melody throughout Pärt’s oeuvre is symptomatic of a broader theme in his music: that of simplicity joined with complexity. From the simple rules of tintinnabulation, Pärt develops intricate patterns, so that the listener remains always just on the edge of understanding. Robinson discusses this phenomenon when he defines Pärt’s “machine set in motion” and “rules of the game.” When I asked Pärt whether he thought of his music in such a way, as an endlessly complex structure stemming from the most humble of rules, he responded by asking me, in turn, whether truth was simple or complicated. When I had no response, he told me that while the path to truth may seem complicated when viewed directly, its simplicity emerges when the larger picture is perceived at last.

In order to gain an understanding of the broader landscape of Pärt’s compositions, I have found it rewarding to follow the entire intricate path, with all the richness of detail it brings. In this document, I have tried to bring those details, and through them the larger picture of Pärt’s music, into clearer focus. To accomplish this, I have examined four different works spanning almost thirty years through the narrow lens of a single technique: compound tintinnabulation. My definition of that technique and my subsequent illustration of its importance in Pärt’s music present a novel contribution to the scholarly literature. In each analysis, I have revealed how a close reading that highlights the compound tintinnabulation technique helps the analyst understand both the internal structure of the piece and the work’s relationship with Pärt’s larger compositional

philosophies. This type of analysis could also be conducted using other techniques as starting points for refining our understanding of the tintinnabulation aesthetic. The identification and exploration of other ways in which the tintinnabulation technique manifests itself in Pärt's music would provide an interesting and welcome addition to the scholarly literature. Only by examining both the landscape and the minute geometries from which it blossomed can we begin to grasp the truly complex forces at play behind a humble scale and a single, ringing triad.

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