

AESTHETICS OF OBJECTIVISM IN  
IGOR STRAVINSKY'S NEOCLASSICAL WORKS

by

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## THESIS ABSTRACT

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Title: Aesthetics of Objectivism in Igor Stravinsky's Neoclassical Works

This thesis examines Stravinsky's aesthetics of objectivism, as described in his own book and displayed in three different genres from his neoclassical period: *Symphonies of Wind Instruments* (1920), *Perséphone* (1933), and *Orpheus* (1947). My research has significance, in that I combine aesthetics and musical analysis in examining Stravinsky's objectivism. Drawing on Stravinsky's book, *Poetics of Music in the Form of Six Lessons*, I define his objectivism as the structural organization of musical materials, the denial of expression of subjective emotion, the importance of the composer's invention, and the concept of limitation.

Stravinsky's objectivism appears in various ways in the different genres. The instrumental piece *Symphonies of Wind Instruments* presents the lack of linear continuity and development. The melodrama *Perséphone* represents his objectivism through his rearrangement of French text, and the ballet *Orpheus* shows his restrained expression in reduced orchestration, quiet dynamics, and cool tone colors.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION .....	1
The Aesthetics of Organization .....	6
Stravinsky’s Objectivism in Neoclassicism.....	10
The Spatialization of Music .....	15
Cubism’s Influence on Stravinsky’s Neoclassicism.....	17
Conclusion .....	19
II. OBJECTIVISM AND ITS PHILOSOPHICAL BACKGROUND.....	20
Adorno’s Attitude toward Stravinsky’s Objectivism.....	20
“The Alienation of Music from the Subject” .....	22
The Music Itself .....	26
Conclusion .....	29
III. “MOMENT FORM” AND DISCONTINUITY IN <i>SYMPHONIES OF WIND INSTRUMENTS</i> .....	30
Introduction.....	30
“Moment Form” and Discontinuity .....	32
The Lack of Linear Continuity and Development .....	35
The Juxtaposition of the Independent Blocks (R0-R5).....	36
The Flute Theme (R6-R7) and the Bassoon Theme (R8).....	43
Final Chorale: Synthesis and Discontinuity.....	46
Conclusion .....	50

Chapter	Page
IV. PERSÉPHONE.....	51
Introduction.....	51
Stravinsky’s Text-Setting and His Objectivism.....	52
Greek Myth and Stravinsky’s Objectivism.....	56
Stravinsky’s Rearrangement of Andre Gide’s Text.....	57
Aesthetics of Organization: “Ostinato with Additive Construction”.....	67
An Additive Ostinato and the Repetition of the Notes (R74-R78).....	71
Conclusion .....	75
V. ORPHEUS .....	77
Introduction.....	77
Stravinsky’s Reserved Expression.....	78
Juxtaposition of the Unrelated Blocks .....	81
Randomly Organized Music .....	84
The Paradoxical Simultaneity of His Objectivism and the Subjective Expression .....	87
“Cross-Cutting Construction” .....	90
Conclusion .....	93
VI. CONCLUSION.....	95
REFERENCES CITED.....	100

## LIST OF MUSIC EXAMPLES

Example	Page
1. <i>Symphonies of Wind Instruments</i> , Block Construction, R0-R5 .....	37
2-a. <i>Symphonies of Wind Instruments</i> , Contrasting Musical Features between R0 and R1 .....	39
2-b. <i>Symphonies of Wind Instruments</i> , Contrasting Musical Features between R0 and R1 .....	40
3. <i>Symphonies of Wind Instruments</i> , Octatonic Collection, R0, R1, and R5 .....	41
4. <i>Symphonies of Wind Instruments</i> , Wild Dance at R3: Interpolation between R2 and R4 .....	43
5. <i>Symphonies of Wind Instruments</i> , Flute Theme, R6-R7 .....	44
6. <i>Symphonies of Wind Instruments</i> , Bassoon Theme, R8.....	44
7. <i>Symphonies of Wind Instruments</i> , The Conflict of Octatonic and Diatonic Collections, Final Choral, R69-R70.....	48
8. <i>Symphonies of Wind Instruments</i> , Final Chorale, R71, R74 and R75 .....	49
9-a. <i>Perséphone</i> , No Musical Pause When Period Occurs in the Text, R5+3.....	58
9-b. <i>Perséphone</i> , No Musical Pause When Comma Occurs in the Text, R13+1 .....	59
9-c. <i>Perséphone</i> , No Musical Pause When Comma Occurs in the Text, R71+1 and R72+1 .....	60
10-a. <i>Perséphone</i> , The Different Accents and Rhythm in the Same Word, “ <i>Perséphone</i> ,” R22+1 .....	61
10-b. <i>Perséphone</i> , The Different Accents and Rhythm in the Same Word, “ <i>Perséphone</i> ,” R43+2 .....	62
10-c. <i>Perséphone</i> , The Different Accents and Rhythm in the Same Word, “ <i>Perséphone</i> ,” R21+1 .....	62

Example	Page
11-a. <i>Perséphone</i> , Irregular Rests in the Middle of Words, R24+4 and R25+1-2 .....	64
11-b. <i>Perséphone</i> , Irregular Rests in the Middle of Words, R29+1 .....	64
12-a. <i>Perséphone</i> , Emphasis on Unimportant Words, R96+1-3.....	65
12-b. <i>Perséphone</i> , Emphasis on Unimportant Words, R11+2.....	66
13. <i>Perséphone</i> , Emphasis on Unimportant Words in the Circles and No Musical Pause When Comma Occurs in the Text in the Squares, R74-R78 .....	70
14. <i>Perséphone</i> , Additive Ostinato and the Repetition of Notes, R74-R78 .....	73
15. <i>Orpheus</i> , Scene 1, R1:1-5 .....	80
16. <i>Orpheus</i> , Scene 1, R2:1-5 .....	82
17. <i>Orpheus</i> , Octatonic Subset, Scene 1, R2:1 .....	83
18. <i>Orpheus</i> , Scene 1, R3:1-6 .....	83
19. <i>Orpheus</i> , ‘Air de Danse,’ Scene 1, R4-R6.....	85
20. <i>Orpheus</i> , ‘Air de Danse,’ Scene 1, R8-R10.....	86
21. <i>Orpheus</i> , ‘Apothéose,’ Scene 3, R143-R146.....	89

## LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. The French Text and English Translation, R24-R25 .....	63
2. The French Text, Stravinsky's Rearrangement, and English Translation, R74-R80 .....	68
3. Stravinsky's Rearrangement of the Text and English Translation, R74-R78.....	71

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

When I heard Igor Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* for the first time, I was struck by its distinct and original musical style including the lack of development, the quality of stasis, its rhythmic structure, block construction, and the juxtaposition of musical materials. These qualities led me to ask: "What is the aesthetic background that made Stravinsky create this original and innovative music?" Through my research on his music, I have realized that his original musical style is closely related to his aesthetics of objectivism. Several scholars such as Theodor W. Adorno and Richard Taruskin have considered Stravinsky's objectivism in opposition to the concept of subjectivity or subjectivism, claiming that Stravinsky rejected the expression of feelings or emotions in music and pursued objective musical language. Nevertheless, we need to develop a better understanding of his aesthetics of objectivism through the deeper study of specific works.

My thesis has significance, in that I attempt to combine aesthetics and musical analysis in Stravinsky's music. Some scholars such as Gretchen Horlacher, Maureen Carr, Jonathan Kramer, and Edward Cone have analyzed Stravinsky's music. However, they have rarely connected aesthetics and musical analysis.

I explore Stravinsky's aesthetics of objectivism, by examining his own perspectives on music and aesthetics, which are described in his book, *Poetics of Music*

*in the Form of Six Lessons*.<sup>1</sup> The philosophical dictionary generally defines objectivism as the value that pursues the inherent qualities of the object itself, as an opposite concept of “subjectivism” that focuses on the subject.<sup>2</sup> Drawing on Stravinsky’s ideas about music in his book, I define Stravinsky’s musical objectivism as a style of composition that rejects the expression of emotion or feelings, in which musical materials are structurally organized by a composer’s speculative ability.<sup>3</sup> It necessarily involves the composer’s conscious act, which constructs musical materials into a concrete order.<sup>4</sup> Some readers might argue that many composers have structurally organized musical materials through their conscious acts. For example, one might say that since Schoenberg structurally organized musical materials in the compositions of his twelve-tone music, he should be a composer of objectivism. I acknowledge many composers including Schoenberg organized musical materials. However, organization alone does not equal objectivism; instead it is more related to the expression of subjectivity and emotion, by means of leitmotives, the delivery of text or story, text-painting.

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<sup>1</sup> Igor Stravinsky, *Poetics of Music in The Form of Six Lessons* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003): Igor Stravinsky wrote the book, *Harvard University Charles Eliot Norton Lectures*, with substantial contributions from Alexis Roland-Manuel and Pierre Souvtchinsky, in 1930-40. It was delivered in French and later collected under the title *Poétique musicale sous forme de six leçons*, in 1942, and the French poet, Paul Valéry, helped check its French text. This book was translated by Arthur Knodel and Ingolf Dahl into English under the title, *Poetics of Music in the Form of Six Lessons*, in 1947.

<sup>2</sup> Josef de Vries, “Objective” and “Objectivism,” *Philosophical Dictionary*, trans. Walter Brugger and Kenneth Baker, ed. Kenneth Baker (Spokane, Wash.: Gonzaga University Press, 1972), 284.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

The emphasis in my thesis is on exploring the significance of the aesthetics of objectivism for Stravinsky's music and on examining how his objectivism is reflected in his neoclassical works. I will show that (1) Stravinsky's objectivism is presented in musical features such as discontinuity between independent blocks, (2) his rearrangement of the text, and (3) restrained expression with reduced orchestration, quiet dynamics, and cool tone colors.

After 1918, when World War I ended, political, cultural, and social changes significantly influenced the arts in Europe. In music, despite the differences in their aesthetics and style, many composers such as Schoenberg, Hindemith, and Stravinsky attempted to return to the music of the past, a movement called "neoclassicism," and attempted the combination of modernism with classical forms and styles. The development of Stravinsky's neoclassicism was significantly influenced by the modernism in the other arts other arts such as cubism in painting, Russian formalism in literature, and collage technique in film. His objectivism or tendency to organize musical material was associated with his neoclassicism, thereby creating an original style and technique. Therefore, his objectivism was presented more strongly in his neoclassical period (1920-1954), because he developed features such as the spatialization of musical materials, the rejection of the expression of feelings, organization, reduced instrumentation, quiet dynamics, and cool tone colors in these years.

My thesis is designed to have two major parts; in the first part I will explore the aesthetics of objectivism, and in the second part I will analyze several musical examples



to demonstrate his objectivism in his neoclassical works, *Symphonies of Wind Instruments* (1920), *Perséphone* (1933), and *Orpheus* (1947). In the first part, in examining the philosophical and aesthetic bases of his objectivism, I will first define Stravinsky's own ideas of objectivism, such as "organization or order," "invention, not imagination or inspiration," "the denial of the subjective and emotional expression," and "limitation or constraint." And then I will discuss why he changed his style from Russian elements to neoclassicism, in which he pursued reduced instrumentation, used cool tone colors, and avoided the expression of intense emotion. I will examine how he further developed his objectivism in association with trends in other arts, cubism and Russian *film montage*. The juxtaposition and superimposition of musical materials in Stravinsky's music are similar to "multi-dimensional space"<sup>5</sup> in cubism and "synthesis of partial elements of the theme"<sup>6</sup> in Russian *film montage*.

In the second part, I will primarily focus on three of his neoclassical works, *Symphonies of Wind Instruments* (1920), *Perséphone* (1933), and *Orpheus* (1947), because they represent three decades of his neoclassic works and three different kinds of genres. I will describe specific musical features of form, texture, orchestration, harmony, and rhythm that represent his aesthetics of objectivism. In Chapter III, the *Symphonies of Wind Instruments*, I will point out that the lack of continuity and development of musical

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<sup>5</sup> Mikhail Druskin, *Igor Stravinsky*, trans. Martin Cooper (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 126.

<sup>6</sup> Theodor W. Adorno, *Philosophy of Modern Music*, trans. Anne G. Mitchell and Wesley V. Blomster, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 135.

materials is demonstrated by such musical features as the juxtaposition of the different blocks, interruption of interpolations between the blocks, the different combination of motivic patterns, and the conflict of octatonic and diatonic systems. In Chapter IV, centering on Stravinsky's melodrama, *Perséphone*, I will explore how his text-setting and rearrangement of the French text by André Gide demonstrates his aesthetics of objectivism. He places musical rests and accents, which do not correspond to pauses and accents in the text, and uses different melodies, accents, and dynamics for the same words. His ostinato constructions reinforce his objectivism by keeping listeners from perceiving the meaning of the text. In Chapter V, on Stravinsky's *Orpheus*, I will examine the composer's reserved expression in musical features such as reduced instrumentation, quiet dynamics, cool tone colors, the use of fugue, and the juxtaposition of different blocks.

## The Aesthetics of Organization

The *Philosophical Dictionary* defines “Objectivism” (*Objectivismus*) as follows:

It is, in contrast to subjectivism, the philosophical position according to which the value of knowledge is measured by the object that is independent of the subject. One can likewise speak of objectivism in aesthetics, if the object or the objective order is recognized as normative for beauty. According to Aristotelean-Thomistic realism, the object, which is the measure of knowledge (beauty in aesthetics), ultimately is the existent and existence itself along with the essential orders rooted in existence.<sup>7</sup>

In the philosophical dictionary, objectivism is defined as the value that pursues the existence of the object itself, and which has “essential orders.” In other words, it focuses on the inherent qualities of the object itself. Objectivism is opposed to the term “subjectivism” that focuses on the subject, that is, the viewer, or listener.

In this chapter, drawing on Stravinsky’s book, *Poetics of Music in the Form of Six Lessons*, I define and suggest that his objectivism has several characteristics; first of all, he pursues the aesthetics of organization or order, in which musical materials are structurally organized by the composer’s conscious act. Second, in his objectivism invention is important as opposed to inspiration or imagination. Third, he rejects the excessive expression of emotion found in Wagner’s music through leitmotives, endless melody, chromatic harmony and melody, and a full orchestration. Finally, he values the concept of limitation, through which the composer avoids falling into a state of disorder.

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<sup>7</sup> Josef de Vries, “Objective” and “Objectivism,” *Philosophical Dictionary*, trans. Walter Brugger and Kenneth Baker, ed. Kenneth Baker (Spokane, Wash.: Gonzaga University Press, 1972), 284.

Stravinsky stresses the principle of a composer's organization and speculative ability in his music. He writes as follows:

I conclude that tonal elements become music only by virtue of their being organized, and that such organization presupposes a conscious human act.<sup>8</sup>

Only the integral man is capable of the effort of higher speculation that must now occupy our attention. For the phenomenon of music is nothing other than a phenomenon of speculation. It simply presupposes that the basis of musical creation is a preliminary feeling out, a will moving first in an abstract realm with the object of giving shape to something concrete. The elements at which this speculation necessarily aims are those of sound and time.<sup>9</sup>

Based on Stravinsky's remarks, I consider his objectivism to be dependent on a composer's conscious act, through which musical materials are structurally organized into a concrete shape or order. In this process, structural organization presupposes the composer's speculation and conscious act. His aesthetics of organization is related to his own idea that "art is by essence constructive."<sup>10</sup> He states in the following way:

Art is by essence constructive . . . Now art is the contrary of chaos. It never gives itself up to chaos without immediately finding its living works, its very existence, threatened.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Igor Stravinsky, *Poetics of Music in the Form of Six Lessons*, trans. Arthur Knodel and Ingolf Dahl (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), 23.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

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

Stravinsky considers constructive art to be the opposite of chaos, because chaos moves away from the existence of art. If music goes too far in the direction of expressing emotion or feelings, it loses its constructive force and falls into disorder.

Stravinsky stresses the importance of invention in the process of composition. He remarks that “invention” should be differentiated from “imagination” or “inspiration” in that invention signifies the full realization of a work.<sup>12</sup> By contrast, inspiration produces “capriciousness of imagination,” which should not occur in the creative process of composition.<sup>13</sup> In this respect, Stravinsky strongly opposes Wagner’s music as follows:

Wagner’s work corresponds to a tendency that is not, properly speaking, a disorder, but one which tries to compensate for a lack of order. The principle of the endless melody perfectly illustrates this tendency.<sup>14</sup>

And, as if it were not enough to condemn music to the job of being an illustrator, the century to which we owe what it called “progress through enlightenment” invented for good measure the monumental absurdity which consists of bestowing on every accessory, as well as on every feeling and every character of lyrical drama, a sort of check-room number called a *Leitmotiv* . . .<sup>15</sup>

Stravinsky’s remarks show his criticism of Wagner’s music. Stravinsky considers Wagner’s endless melody and leitmotives as the compositional devices to express

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 53.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 54.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 62.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 77.

emotion in extreme ways and to focus intensely on conveying the text or story. As a result, Wagner's music tends toward a lack of order, and deviates from the essence of music. Here, I believe that the essence of music implies Stravinsky's conception of organization or order and his emphasis on musical sound. Stravinsky rarely used devices such as leitmotives in his neoclassical period in order to create organization and to focus on musical sound. A good example is his ballet *Orpheus* (1947), which I will discuss in Chapter IV. Although the music partially conveys the story, he does not use leitmotives in a continuous way, representing character, idea, and mood as did Wagner. Instead, musical events are presented for musical reasons, regardless of certain characters or actions in *Orpheus*. This feature of his objectivism is distinctly differentiated from Wagner and his contemporaries.

Stravinsky asserts that "the more art is controlled and limited, the more it is free."<sup>16</sup> His aesthetics of objectivism is strongly associated with his ideas about "limitation" or constraint. When a composer has limitations in the compositional process, music attains order and avoids falling into a state of chaos. As an example, Stravinsky claims that "the fugue [is] a pure form in which the music means nothing outside itself."<sup>17</sup>

According to his remark, the fugue is a perfect form for his important concept of organization or order, because the composer can focus on the music itself through the compositional limitations of the fugue, instead of the excessive expression of emotion or

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 63.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 76.

feelings. One might raise questions about whether imposing limitations would keep a composer from having freedom. However, I agree with Stravinsky's assertion that the composer has creative freedom within constraints.<sup>18</sup> As he says, if the composer does not set limitations, he falls into disorder and loses his force.<sup>19</sup> Therefore, his idea of limitations is associated with his opposition to Wagner's leitmotive and endless melody as well as Gustav Mahler's (1860-1911) maximalism, in which Mahler intensified romanticism through the extension of musical form, orchestration, ranges of voices, and the number of performers in order to express subjective emotion. According to Stravinsky's aesthetics, the two composers' excessive emotionalism and hyper-romanticism cause disorder and confusion for the listeners and destroy the essence and existence of music.

#### Stravinsky's Objectivism in Neoclassicism

Stravinsky's aesthetics of objectivism is closely related to his neoclassic style. It is important for my research on his objectivism to focus on his neoclassical works after World War I (1914-1918), because he presented his objectivism more intensely and denied the expression of subjectivity and feelings more strongly in his neoclassical works than in his Russian period. For instance, he replaced the very large orchestra of the ballets in his Russian period with self-contained numbers, reduced orchestration, quiet dynamics,

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 63.

and cool tone colors, and replaced the expression of emotion with the rigorous organization of musical materials.

Stravinsky stresses his aesthetics of objectivism through the contrast between *Dionysus* and *Apollo* in Greek mythology. Stravinsky writes as follows:

What is important for the lucid ordering of the work--for its crystallization--is that all the Dionysian elements which set the imagination of the artist in motion and make the life-sap rise must be properly subjugated before they intoxicate us, and must finally be made to submit to the law: Apollo demands it.<sup>20</sup>

Stravinsky's objectivism belongs to *Apollonian* elements rather than *Dionysian* elements. *Apollonian* elements deny subjective content and pursue "the law," in which the composer objectifies and organizes music. *Apollonian* elements of his objectivism are associated with his neoclassicism. The Russian biographer of Stravinsky, Mikhail Druskin, tells us that at the beginning of the neoclassic era, artists pursued "a new restriction of material range and expression, and the accumulation of sheer volume . . . an assertion of clarity, organization . . . and an interest in mythology, ritual and the conventions of play."<sup>21</sup> These features are in contrast to the *Dionysian* elements of the early ballets in Stravinsky's Russian period such as *The Firebird* (1910), *Petrushka* (1911)

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<sup>20</sup> Igor Stravinsky, *Poetics of Music in the Form of Six Lessons*, trans. Arthur Knodel and Ingolf Dahl (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1947), 80-81; quoted in Mikhail Druskin, *Igor Stravinsky*, trans. Martin Cooper (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983),

<sup>21</sup> Druskin, Mikhail, *Igor Stravinsky*, trans. Martin Cooper (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 76-77.



and *The Rite of Spring* (1913), which express subjective emotion and focus on conveying the story.

Stravinsky's perspective on *Apollonian* elements in Greek mythology stimulated his experiment with a new aesthetics of neoclassicism after World War I. He attempted to change from Russian expressive and subjective music into objectivism and neoclassicism. Europe was undergoing moral, political, intellectual, and artistic changes between 1918 and 1939. World War I (1914-1918) influenced all of the arts in Europe, accelerating their liberation from the traditions of romanticism. Artists avoided subjective or expressive factors and aimed at an objective attitude. Composers pursued the construction of music, through which "they explored the laws of texture and structure," thereby achieving "a clear order or organization."<sup>22</sup>

The English poet Thomas Ernest Hulme (1883-1917) in the essay *Speculations: Essays on Humanism and the Philosophy of Art* (1924) wrote that because romanticism fostered "decadent morality," artists should go back to the classics, and he considered Stravinsky's Octet as a good example of classical style.<sup>23</sup> Hulme negated the "vitalism" of nineteenth-century art and stressed the importance of "geometrical art."<sup>24</sup> According to him, vitalism sought to express subjective feelings in romantic music, while

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<sup>22</sup> Mosco Carner, "Music in The Mainland of Europe: 1918-1939," *The New Oxford History of Music*, ed. Martin Cooper (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), X, 209.

<sup>23</sup> Thomas Ernest Hulme, *Speculations: Essays on Humanism and the Philosophy of Art*, ed. Herbert Read (London: Routledge, 1924), 126-27; quoted in Richard Taruskin, *The Oxford History of Western Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), IV, 468

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 85; quoted in Taruskin, *The Oxford History of Western Music*, 474

geometrical art pursues “pure geometrical regularity,” in which artists tend to present abstract or immovable qualities.<sup>25</sup> As Hulme claims, geometrical art is related to the concept of “a return to the classical style,” in which Stravinsky experimented with neoclassicism and avoided the expression of subjective feelings.

According to Daniel Albright, Stravinsky experimented in his neoclassic style by using “the cool sonorities of wind instruments and by eliminating the human performer in the *Three Japanese Lyrics*.”<sup>26</sup> Albright explains that Stravinsky tried to express nothing and avoided the human performer by using “the pianola, which is operated by compressed air and is governed by holes punched on paper rolls.”<sup>27</sup> Stravinsky worked further with reduced instrumentation and cool tone colors in the chamber works--*Renard* (1917), *L'Histoire du Soldat* (1918) and *Les Noces* (1913-1923). These features stand in contrast to the early ballet, *Rite of Spring* (1913), which had a large orchestra. Although he developed a new style of orchestration in the chamber works, these works still belong to his Russian period and their texts derived from Russian sources. The chamber works could be called transitional works, because they are partly subjective in their expression of emotion and story and partly objective in their use of reduced orchestration and cool tone colors.

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 86-87; quoted in Taruskin, *The Oxford History of Western Music*, 474.

<sup>26</sup> Daniel Albright, *Modernism and Music: An Anthology of Sources* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 281.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

Stravinsky went back and forth between Russia, France, and Switzerland from 1909 through 1914, until he moved with his family to Switzerland in 1914 during the years of World War I. The music of his Russian period, especially the early ballets such as *The Firebird* (1910), *Petrushka* (1911) and *The Rite of Spring* (1913) were subjective in that they expressed the story and their music was closely associated with physical gestures in the dance. During this time, his ballets still demonstrated the Russian elements, but his acquaintance with French composers was a turning point, in which Stravinsky changed from his Russian style to neoclassicism.

The French composers and writers such as Claude Debussy (1862-1918), Erik Satie (1866-1925), and Jean Cocteau (1889-1963) significantly influenced Stravinsky's change to neoclassicism. Stravinsky had become acquainted with Debussy's music in the 1910s, and after he moved with his family back to France in 1920, he further developed his neoclassical style. His connection to French music helped him move away from the subjective expression of his Russian period to pursue an objective detachment from emotion and feeling. He believed that music itself has an inherent value of order, and he explored the principle of organization, characteristics of the Apollonian spirit. The musicologist Mosco Carner (1904-1985) says that Stravinsky attempted a new orchestral style in which wind instruments, piano, and percussion become more prominent, and "the strings moved to the background."<sup>28</sup> Carner remarks as follows:

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<sup>28</sup> Mosco Carner "Music in The Mainland of Europe: 1918-1939," *The New Oxford History of Music*, ed. Martin Cooper (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), X, 228.

Even in the works which have a certain expressive element like *Oedipus Rex*, *Symphony of Psalms*, and *Perséphone*, the emotions present a generic, universal order finding expression in highly formalized music, from which all suggestions of an anecdotal, picturesque, psychological, or philosophical nature are absent.<sup>29</sup>

Stravinsky's *Orpheus* (1947) is also a good example of these features, and will be discussed in more detail in Chapter IV of my thesis. *Orpheus* shows "formalized expression" in that the music partially expresses the story, but it is also objective by means of its cool tone colors, and the blocks of music that are separated from one another.

### *The Spatialization of Music*

During the 1910s, the spatial characteristics in the French composer Debussy's music and Russian cubists' paintings contributed to establishing Stravinsky's neoclassical style. The spatialization in Debussy's music stimulated Stravinsky to objectify musical materials through the spatialization of time in his neoclassical works. Stravinsky's biographer Mikhail Druskin explains the spatial aspect of Debussy's music as follows:

He [Debussy] links together different dynamics and textures in vertical layers, and these evoke an association with nearness and distance, with the extension and the volume of the object portrayed . . . This spatial effect is achieved by the alternating functions of line and background--at one moment the melodic line occupies the more important role, at the next it merges into the background, thus producing a sensation of breadth and depth.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 217.

<sup>30</sup> Mikhail Druskin, *Igor Stravinsky*, trans. Martin Cooper (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 125.

Stravinsky developed the spatial features of Debussy's music further than other composers. Druskin points out that "Stravinsky replaced the continuing process of motivic development by the mutual relating of different planes and volumes; the single vanishing-point by a multiplicity of independent horizon-levels; unicentral, object-central composition by multicentral."<sup>31</sup>

Theodor W. Adorno (1903-1969), a philosopher and musicologist of the early twentieth century, argues that Stravinsky's simultaneity or juxtaposition of musical materials is related to "the spatialization of time" or "a pseudomorphism of the spatial dimension." Adorno believes that in the spatialization, "music establishes itself as an arbiter of time, causing the listener to forget the subjective experience of time in music and to remain in its spatialized dimension."<sup>32</sup>

The spatialization of Debussy's music influenced Stravinsky's neoclassicism presenting a multi-centrality of musical ideas, which is associated with the juxtaposition and superimposition of musical elements in Stravinsky's music. This spatial dimension in music offers listeners various approaches, thereby interrupting their perception of audible time in music. The spatial approach is also closely related to the art of the cubists.

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 133.

<sup>32</sup> Theodor W. Adorno, *Philosophy of Modern Music*, trans. Anne G. Mitchell and Wesley V. Blomster (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 140.

### *Cubism's Influence on Stravinsky's Neoclassicism*

In the early twentieth century, cubism, which was an avant-garde art pioneered by Pablo Picasso, significantly contributed to developing Stravinsky's objectivism and neoclassicism. Robert Rosenblum defines cubism in painting in the following way: "cubism offered an unstable structure of dismembered planes in indeterminate spatial positions."<sup>33</sup> Mikhail Druskin points out the similarities of Stravinsky's *Octet* (1923) and cubists' paintings, since both the music and paintings utilize "the different planes and multi-dimensional space" at the same time, thereby creating "an asymmetrical displacement of features."<sup>34</sup> Druskin also discusses Stravinsky's affinity with cubism in the *Three Japanese Lyrics* (1912) in this way:

He [Stravinsky] shows his interest in perspective and space. In his *Three Japanese Lyrics* he solved these by the varying accentuation of the tonic stress in the vocal line, which forestalls the accompaniment by roughly a quarter of a bar, thus creating an original two-tiered effect in establishing the sonorous perspective.<sup>35</sup>

From the remarks on cubism of Rosenblum and Druskin, I understand that cubists' interest in the different planes and multi-dimensional space influenced Stravinsky's compositions of this period. In other words, just as cubists do, Stravinsky puts together different musical materials in both vertical lines and horizontal lines simultaneously.

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<sup>33</sup> Robert Rosenblum, *Cubism and Twentieth-Century Art*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Abrams, 1966), 9.

<sup>34</sup> Druskin, Mikhail, *Igor Stravinsky*, trans. Martin Cooper (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 126-127.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 126.

Stravinsky used the juxtaposition and superimposition of different musical materials more frequently in his neoclassical works such as the *Symphonies of Wind Instruments* (1920) and *Octet* (1923). Stravinsky's interest in space, which is one of the prominent features of cubism, is also connected to Debussy's spatialization of music.

## Conclusion

I have suggested several features of Stravinsky's aesthetics of objectivism, drawing from his own ideas of music in his book, *Poetics of Music in the Form of Six Lessons*. Such several features are (1) the concept of organization, in which the composer structurally organizes musical materials through his conscious act and speculation, (2) the composer's reliance on invention rather than on inspiration or imagination, (3) his strong rejection of Wagner's music that excessively expresses subjective feelings, and (4) his principle of limitation, through which he prevents the music from falling into disorder.

Stravinsky demonstrated these features of his objectivism more intensely in his neoclassical works than in his Russian period. He pursued reduced instrumentation, small chamber works rather than full orchestration, quiet dynamics, and cool tone colors in his neoclassical period.

Stravinsky's objectivism and neoclassicism were influenced by the French composer Debussy's emphasis on spatialization and by cubists' multi-dimensional space. Debussy's multi-central and cubism's multi-dimensional feature have a common trait, the spatialization of music, in that they seek to describe the object in many angles and different perspectives. The spatialization in Stravinsky's music appears in the juxtaposition and superimposition of different and independent blocks.



## CHAPTER II

### OBJECTIVISM AND ITS PHILOSOPHICAL BACKGROUND

#### Adorno's Attitude toward Stravinsky's Objectivism

Many scholars and philosophers have evaluated and researched Stravinsky's music, but it is particularly important to examine Theodor W. Adorno's perspective in examining Stravinsky's objectivism. He considered the significance of the interplay between modern art and modern society. In his book, *Philosophy of Modern Music*<sup>36</sup> (The original publication, *Philosophie der Neuen Musik*, 1949), Adorno discusses the philosophy and aesthetics of both Arnold Schoenberg's and Stravinsky's music. He displays mostly negative attitudes toward Stravinsky's music because he regards the renunciation of subjectivity and the return to primitive values as regression or anti-progression. However, I argue that his negative attitude overlooks progressive aspects in Stravinsky's music. Although Adorno takes some negative positions toward Stravinsky's music, it is crucial to look closely at Adorno's interpretation because he defines certain aspects of Stravinsky's objectivism more precisely than do other scholars, and highlights significant features of musical objectivism.

In *Philosophy of Modern Music*, Adorno defines Stravinsky's objectivism in the following way:

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<sup>36</sup> Theodor W. Adorno, *Philosophy of Modern Music*, trans. Anne G. Mitchell and Wesley V. Blomster (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

Compositional spontaneity itself is overwhelmed by the prohibition placed upon pathos in expression: the subject, which is no longer permitted to state anything about itself, thus actually ceases to engage in ‘production’ and must content itself with the hollow echo of objective musical language, which is no longer its own . . .

Objectivism designates itself as the proclamation of that which constitutes its entire content. It defines itself as the vain private concern of the aesthetic subject--as a trick of the isolated individual--who poses as though he were the objective spirit.<sup>37</sup>

This remark by Adorno suggests that Stravinsky’s objectivism rejects subjectivity and the expressive character of music. It is important for us to discuss the concept of the “subject.” I believe that the subject refers to three aspects: the first aspect of the subject is the expression of emotion in musical content; the second one is the composer’s intention to express music in the compositional process; and the third concept is the listeners’ sense that feels the expression of emotion in music. In his conception of Stravinsky’s objectivism, Adorno regards the subject as the “isolated individual,” because the subject is not represented by the composer’s intention, and is not appreciated by the listeners. Instead, Stravinsky’s music presents content itself in “objective musical language.”

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 131-132.

*“The Alienation of Music from the Subject”*

According to Adorno’s assertion, Stravinsky’s objectivism is associated with the rejection of subjectivity, the absence of expression, and the isolation of the subject. Adorno describes the isolated state of the subject as “the alienation of music from the subject.”<sup>38</sup> He explains as follows:

Stravinsky’s music does not appear upon the scene as a direct life process, but rather as absolute indirectness. In its own material, his music registers the disintegration of life and, simultaneously, the alienated state of the consciousness of the subject.<sup>39</sup>

Adorno suggests that “the alienation of the subject” presents “absolute indirectness” or the “disintegration of life,” which implies that Stravinsky moved away from the expression of emotion or subjectivity. As a good example, Adorno discusses *L’Histoire du Soldat* (1918), ballet music with a narrator, in which, according to him, the dancers present “the physical feeling of the ego” or the subject, while the music exists in “an alienated state or being-in-itself.”<sup>40</sup> The organic-aesthetic unity is dissociated by the break between the expressive ballet and the alienated music.<sup>41</sup> The dance shows

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 131.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 127.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 126-127.

subjective expression by depicting a story. However, the music is alienated because of the organization of musical materials, the reduced orchestration, and the cool sonorities.

Adorno associates this “inorganic aesthetics” with the pathology of modern society. He identifies the alienation of the music from the subject with the psychiatric theory of schizophrenia or “the indifference of the individual towards the external.”<sup>42</sup>

The alienation of music from the subject and, at the same time, its relationship to physical sensations find a pathological analogy in the illusory physical sensations of those who are conscious of their own body as an alien object.<sup>43</sup>

According to Adorno’s assertion, “schizophrenia” or “the indifference towards the world” is associated with the negation of the expressive subject in Stravinsky’s music just as a schizophrenic patient feels himself/herself isolated from the external world. The organic unity and continuity are dissolved by the gap between the subject and the object in Stravinsky’s music. In other words, listeners are alienated from the music, because the objective musical features disrupt organic unity. Constant interruptions of the musical flow and a non-developmental approach keep listeners from perceiving the continuity in musical time.

Some scholars assert that “the alienation of the subject” partly dissolves the unity of music, but it does not necessarily produce discontinuity and incoherence. The German

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 129.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 127.

musicologist Carl Dahlhaus (1928-1989) refutes Adorno's interpretation about the non-developmental structure of Stravinsky's music as follows:

No one would deny Adorno's premise that an engagement with time is essential for his music, as for all music. However, the consequence, that developing variation is the only legitimate way to fulfill the formal law of music as temporal art, is dogmatic.<sup>44</sup>

Dahlhaus criticizes Adorno's interpretation as focusing only on the developing variation of motives. Jonathan Cross argues that Stravinsky's objective music is differentiated from Schoenberg's subjective music, but it should be evaluated as "a different kind of coherence from the unity of Schoenberg's music."<sup>45</sup> This is because when Stravinsky's "discontinuous musical ideas" are put together, they create "a new coherence."<sup>46</sup>

However, I assert that Stravinsky's music is relatively less coherent or continuous. Even though, as Cross mentions, there are connections between musical events, I consider his music to have a lack of development, because the connections between adjacent musical events lack progression and developmental direction. For instance, Stravinsky's *Symphonies of Wind Instruments* represents non-developmental structures since several blocks have similarities and repetitions, but they establish discontinuity

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<sup>44</sup> Carl Dahlhaus, 'La polemica di Adorno contro Stravinskij e il problema della "critica superior,"' in *Francesco Degrada*, ed., *Stravinskij oggi* (Milan: Edizioni Unicopli, 1982), 47-48; quoted in Jonathan Cross, *The Stravinsky Legacy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 233.

<sup>45</sup> Jonathan Cross, *The Stravinsky Legacy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 240.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

rather than progression and coherence. Adorno's description of Stravinsky's music supports my viewpoint in the following way:

There are only fluctuations of something always constant and totally static in which the irregularity of recurrence replaces the occurrence of something new. Such rhythmic patterns alternate in the smallest possible units of beat.<sup>47</sup>

Adorno claims that Stravinsky's music is static, because motifs are repeated in various guises rather than being developed thematically. The alternations of musical materials create a state of non-direction and a lack of continuity in the process. As Adorno notices, this musical feature recalls the ideas of Sergei Eisenstein (1898-1948), a Russian film director and film theorist, who made "film montages" or "the synthesis of partial elements of the theme that is formed by the juxtaposition of isolated elements."<sup>48</sup>

Although I disagree with Adorno's assertion that Stravinsky's objectivism presents "the alienation of music from the subject," which is associated with "schizophrenia," I agree that Stravinsky's objectivism leads to non-developmental structure, since musical elements are juxtaposed with separated elements, as in other arts such as Eisenstein's Russian film montage and Picasso's cubism. The scholars Dahlhaus and Cross claim that Stravinsky's music cannot always be considered to be non-developmental, and that in part it also presents continuity and coherence. The music

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<sup>47</sup> Theodor W. Adorno, *Philosophy of Modern Music*, trans. Anne G. Mitchell and Wesley V. Blomster, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 112-113.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 135.

theorist Gretchen Horlacher also asserts motivic continuity and development, because she believes that musical elements are continuous with each other and continuity has a direction.<sup>49</sup> However, I disagree with her assertion, because I believe that Stravinsky's musical materials or blocks are separated from each other. As we will see in Chapter IV, even though there are repetitions between the blocks, I cannot view the repetitions as developmental, since the repetitions and juxtapositions of the blocks do not have a continuous progression or direction when one considers blocks that are adjacent to one another.

### The Music Itself

Stravinsky's objectivism parallels the musical aesthetics of the twentieth-century Austrian music critic and aesthetician Eduard Hanslick, in which he denies the expression of emotion or feelings and stresses the significance of music itself. In his book, *The Beautiful in Music: A Contribution to the Revision of Musical Aesthetics*,<sup>50</sup> Hanslick stresses the concept of objectivity as follows:

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<sup>49</sup> Gretchen Horlacher, *Building Blocks: Repetition and Continuity in The Music of Stravinsky* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 174.

<sup>50</sup> Eduard Hanslick, *On the Musically Beautiful: A Contribution towards the Revision of the Aesthetics of Music*, trans. Geoffrey Payzant (Indiana: Hackett Publishing Company, 1986). Its German original book, *Vom Musikalisch-Schönen*, was first published in 1854 and had the ninth edition in 1894. Its ten German editions appeared in Eduard Hanslick's lifetime. The book translated in English in 1986 is the eighth edition.

In fact, to induce these feelings in us is not the task of music or of any other art . . . It is not by means of feeling that we become aware of beauty, but by means of the imagination as the activity of pure contemplation . . . The purpose of arousing such feelings in the listener is no more the specific essence of music than it is the purpose of the arts as a whole.<sup>51</sup>

Hanslick strongly criticizes the expression of the feelings in music, because music is self-contained, and it exists in itself.

Beauty has no purpose at all. For it is mere form, which, of course, according to its content, can be applied to the most diverse purpose, without having any purpose to its own beyond itself.<sup>52</sup>

Hanslick considers the intrinsic elements of music itself as a form. The beauty of music does not depend on anything outside music, but it is formed by the combination of the tone-materials. In this respect, I associate Hanslick's perspective, in which form is the intrinsic element of music itself,<sup>53</sup> with Stravinsky's idea that "tonal elements become music only by virtue of their being organized."<sup>54</sup> Music presents music itself, since it is formed by the intrinsic musical materials of music. In this sense, the composer focuses on organizing musical materials, rather than on expressing emotion or conveying an external

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 4-5.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Igor Stravinsky, *Poetics of Music in the Form of Six Lessons*, trans. Arthur Knodel and Ingolf Dahl (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), 23.



story. Thus, music does not have any purpose (including the purpose of communicating with the listener), but it exists in itself.

The musicologist Richard Taruskin also associates Stravinsky's objectivism with the term, the "music itself," in which music has "an intrinsic value."<sup>55</sup> Taruskin says that Stravinsky used the term "the music itself," which implies that the composer works through "a perceptual process that perceives, selects, and combines musical materials."<sup>56</sup> Taruskin quotes Robert Craft's remark as follows:

All he [the composer] cares about is the apprehension of the contours of form, for form is everything.<sup>57</sup>

Drawing on Hanslick's aesthetics and Taruskin's remarks, I believe that Stravinsky pursues music itself and avoids the direct expression of emotion or a story-line. These perspectives are related to Stravinsky's own idea that a composer organizes musical materials with his perceptual and conscious ability. The purpose of music is not to express emotion or convey a story, because the composer focuses on the intrinsic elements of music itself, which Hanslick designates as "form."

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<sup>55</sup> Richard Taruskin, *Defining Russia Musically: Historical and Hermeneutic Essays* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), 366.

<sup>56</sup> Igor Stravinsky and Robert Craft, *Expositions and Developments* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1959), 116; quoted in Taruskin, *Defining Russia Musically*, 371.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

## Conclusion

Stravinsky's aesthetics of objectivism is strongly connected to writings of at least two philosophers Theodor W. Adorno and Eduard Hanslick. I acknowledge that Adorno's approach to Stravinsky's music is negative, since he considers Stravinsky's music to be a regression to primitive values. However, it is important to examine Adorno's perspectives on Stravinsky's music. I believe that Adorno's standpoint that "the alienation of the music from the subject" is connected to Stravinsky's objectivism, discontinuity of music and the rejection of the expression of emotion. Adorno claims that as in the diagnosis of schizophrenia in psychiatric theory, listeners are alienated from the subject in Stravinsky's music, because objective music dismantles organic unity, thereby preventing listeners from perceiving continuity and subjective emotion in music.

The lack of continuity and the deficiency of development in Stravinsky's music are associated with his tendency to focus on musical sound. Stravinsky's concentration on musical sound rather than on emotional expression parallels Eduard Hanslick's perspectives on music. Hanslick claims that music exists in itself and the intrinsic elements of music constitute the form.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Eduard Hanslick, *On the Musically Beautiful: A Contribution towards the Revision of the Aesthetics of Music*, trans. Geoffrey Payzant (Indiana: Hackett Publishing Company, 1986). 3.

CHAPTER III  
“MOMENT FORM” AND DISCONTINUITY  
IN *SYMPHONIES OF WIND INSTRUMENTS*

Introduction

The *Symphonies of Wind Instruments* (*Symphonies D'Instruments À Vent*, 1920, revised in 1947) uses an ensemble consisting of woodwind and brass instruments. The work represents Stravinsky's aesthetics of objectivism, because it lacks continuity between adjacent sections in musical elements such as melody, pitch, rhythm, harmony, texture, range, orchestration, meter, articulation, rest, and timbre. The lack of continuity and development also appears in musical features such as the juxtaposition and superimposition of different blocks, interruptions caused by interpolation, a different succession of motives between the blocks, and the conflict of octatonic and diatonic pitch collections.

Scholars have argued whether the *Symphonies* presents the principle of discontinuity or continuity. Some scholars claim that the work achieves continuity since the blocks or musical ideas have some elements in common with one another. However, I assert that even though the blocks sometimes show partial connections with each other, the work represents the principle of discontinuity more strongly than that of continuity, thus aligning with his aesthetics of objectivism. My point of view is supported by Jonathan Kramer, whose approach to the *Symphonies* emphasizes the importance of

discontinuity between the different blocks. Kramer mentions that the discontinuity between the blocks establishes “stasis” and does not achieve developmental or linear procedures, because the blocks are separated from each other.<sup>59</sup> But Gretchen Horlacher argues that the blocks establish “directed continuity, because the blocks link with one another and have common elements between the blocks.”<sup>60</sup>

However, I claim that although some musical materials have connections, similarity, and coherence, the *Symphonies* basically is more discontinuous than continuous. In other words, even though, as Horlacher asserts, there are some motivic connections between the blocks that are separated from each other, the adjacent blocks are quite different, thereby keeping listeners from perceiving a linear sense of continuity. These musical features do not have resolution or direction, but just separate the blocks from each other. Even though the blocks establish the relations between motives and chords at a distance from one another, the overall result is a lack of development and continuity in the linear sense. These features prevent listeners from perceiving continuity between the musical ideas. I believe that these musical features are related to Stravinsky’s aesthetics of objectivism, in which the composer organizes musical materials and moves away from the expression of emotion.

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<sup>59</sup> Jonathan Kramer, “Moment Form in Twentieth Century Music,” *Musical Quarterly* 64/ 2 (April, 1978): 188.

<sup>60</sup> Gretchen Horlacher, *Building Blocks: Repetition and Continuity in The Music of Stravinsky* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 174.

### “Moment Form” and Discontinuity

My point of view is supported by Jonathan Kramer’s concept of discontinuity. He defines this discontinuity as “moment form,”<sup>61</sup> a term that was first described by the German composer Karlheinz Stockhausen (1928-2007) in his 1960 article:

Every present moment counts, as well as no moment at all; a given moment is not merely regarded as the consequence of the previous one and the prelude to the coming one, but as something individual, independent and centered in itself, capable of existing on its own. An instant does not need to be just a particle of measured duration. This concentration on the present moment--on every present moment--can make a vertical cut, as it were, across horizontal time perception, extending out to a timelessness I call eternity. This is not an eternity that begins at the end of time, but an eternity that is present in every moment. I am speaking about musical forms in which apparently no less is being undertaken than the explosion--even more, the overcoming of the concept of duration.<sup>62</sup>

I interpret that Stockhausen defines moment form as the juxtaposition of independent blocks that do not relate to each other. The relationship between “the individual and independent blocks” is static, and it lacks the development of musical materials. Stockhausen considers the conception of moment form as “timeless” because the music focuses on “every present moment,” that is, each block. Kramer mentions that

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<sup>61</sup> Jonathan Kramer, “Moment Form in Twentieth Century Music,” *Musical Quarterly* 64/ 2 (April, 1978), 179.

<sup>62</sup> Seppo Heikinheimo, *The Electronic Music of Karlheinz Stockhausen* (Helsinki, 1972), 120-21; quoted in Jonathan Kramer, “Moment Form in Twentieth Century Music,” *Musical Quarterly* 64/ 2 (April, 1978): 179.

the independent blocks establish “assemblages of static or self-contained sections.”<sup>63</sup> Stockhausen’s conception is supported by Kramer’s perspectives, because the independent blocks are not continuous with one another. He writes in this way:

They [the moment forms] are not beginning-middle-end forms . . . A proper moment form will give the impression of starting in the midst of previously unheard music, and it will break off without reaching any structural cadence.<sup>64</sup>

I agree with Kramer’s point of view that moment form is “not beginning-middle-end form.” I consider “beginning-middle-end form” as the process of the connection, development, and resolution of musical elements. If a musical form has a beginning-middle-end, it has main motives or musical ideas and the first motive is connected to the next one by having the same or similar elements. The musical ideas continue to be connected with each other and they are developed by variations of musical ideas and the repetition of musical materials. If a musical form has an ending, the musical ideas have a resolution in a device such as a cadence. Another important factor of the ending form is a return of the musical materials from the beginning. In tonal music, musical materials go back to the original key of the beginning. On the other hand, in atonal music they often return to the main notes at the end of the piece. When I consider this perspective, the *Symphonies* does not continuously connect musical ideas and musical materials, do not develop them, and do not have a resolution such as a conventional cadence.

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<sup>63</sup> Jonathan Kramer, “Moment Form in Twentieth Century Music,” 188.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 180.

I believe that it is appropriate to apply moment form to Stravinsky's *Symphonies*, in which the independent blocks are juxtaposed without transition and are separated by interpolations of several notes or a phrase. These blocks produce static harmonies, the juxtaposition of different blocks, and the conflict of octatonic and diatonic collections, thereby creating a non-linear or non-developmental structure and having no cadence or resolution.

In this respect, I disagree with Horlacher's point of view that the blocks establish "directed continuity," since "the contiguous groups link with one another."<sup>65</sup> She argues that the work does not establish development of the musical materials, but attains continuity because the blocks present connection and continuation by having "common elements" even though interpolations interrupt the blocks.<sup>66</sup> Even though there are some elements of continuity, as shown by Horlacher's analysis, I believe that the discontinuity is more noticeable. This is because because interpolations between the blocks affect the musical flow and interrupt continuation in musical time, so that listeners cannot perceive the connection between the blocks.

The lack of continuity and development is closely related to the discontinuous traits of cubism, in that the independent blocks in Stravinsky's music and the separated shapes in cubists' paintings do not create continuity. As Jonathan Cross discusses, the

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<sup>65</sup> Gretchen Horlacher, *Building Blocks: Repetition and Continuity in The Music of Stravinsky* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 174.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

discontinuity between the blocks in Stravinsky's *Symphonies* parallels the disjunction of the elements in Picasso's *Standing Female Nude* (1910).<sup>67</sup> Cross remarks as follows:

Stravinsky's choice of instruments and the extreme changes in texture find parallels in both the extreme contrasts between light and shade and the changes in density of graphic activity in Picasso.<sup>68</sup>

As Cross mentions, the *Symphonies* presents disconnection through the "extreme change" or separation between the blocks as in Picasso's painting. In Picasso's *Nude*, the whole shape of the female cannot be easily perceived since the lines and arcs, which are roughly depicted without any transition, are discontinuous; in the same way, in Stravinsky's *Symphonies*, the musical blocks present discontinuity because they are separated by interpolations of different motives or other blocks.<sup>69</sup>

#### The Lack of Linear Continuity and Development

I suggest that although there are common elements and motivic connections between the blocks that are separated from one another, the *Symphonies of Wind Instruments* lacks continuity and development, because the adjacent blocks are very different in most of its musical elements. Now, I will analyze several musical examples

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<sup>67</sup> Jonathan Cross, *The Stravinsky Legacy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 19.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*



of (1) the opening blocks (R0-R5), (2) The flute theme (R6-R7) and the bassoon theme (R8), and (3) the final chorale (R69-R74).

*The Juxtaposition of the Independent Blocks (R0-R5)*

The passage at R0-R5<sup>70</sup> of the *Symphonies* presents the juxtapositions of the different blocks (Ex.1). The opening block (R0) reappears in sections R2, R9, R26, R37, and R39, and R1 reappears in R4 and R5. Each block moves successively to the next block without any transition. The block R0 is repeated as the block R2, but the connections between the two blocks are obscured by the surrounding blocks (R1 and R3).

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<sup>70</sup> “R” is a rehearsal number for orchestra.

Ex. 1. Stravinsky's *Symphonies of Wind Instruments*, Block Construction, R0-R5;  
 Reprinted from Igor Stravinsky, *Symphonies D'instruments a Vent: A la Memoire de  
 Claude-Achille Debussy*, Reduction pour Piano par Arlbur Lourié  
 (Berlin: Edition russe de musique, 1926), 1-2

M.M. (♩ = 72)

R0

R1

R2

R3

R4

R5

Più mosso (♩ = 108) R6

The score consists of six systems of music, each representing a different rhythmic block (R0-R6).  
 - **R0**: First system, marked 'M.M. (♩ = 72)'. It features a piano introduction with a forte (f) dynamic.  
 - **R1**: Second system, marked 'p' (piano). It contains triplet markings.  
 - **R2**: Third system, marked 'f' (forte).  
 - **R3**: Fourth system, marked 'f' (forte).  
 - **R4**: Fifth system, marked 'M.M. (♩ = 72)'. It includes a reference to 'N.M.V.423'.  
 - **R5**: Sixth system, marked 'pp' (pianissimo) and 'm.g.' (mezzo-giochiato).  
 - **R6**: Seventh system, marked 'Più mosso (♩ = 108)'. It begins with a mezzo-forte (m.f.) dynamic and includes a piano (p) dynamic later in the system.

Horlacher claims that the musical blocks (R0-R5) present “directed continuity,” since “the contiguous groups link with one another.”<sup>71</sup> Although I acknowledge her assertion that there is a connection between the blocks, the principle of discontinuity is more dominant than that of continuity, because the blocks are separated from one another by interpolations (R1 and R3), and because the block (R0) has different musical elements: motives, rhythms, texture, harmony, orchestration, meters, range, articulation, and timbre from the next block. Therefore, the music lacks linear continuity or motivic development.

The block R0 contrasts with the block R1 in musical features such as melody, harmony, rhythm, texture, range, meter, articulation, timbre and orchestration. R0 presents high pitches, eighth notes and light texture, played by flute, clarinet, trumpets, and trombones, while R1 features lower pitches, long notes and a heavier texture, performed by all the instruments (Ex.2-a and Ex.2-b). In meters, R0 shows frequent shifts in meter: 2/8 - 3/8 - 2/8 - 3/8 - 2/8 - 3/8 - 3/4, whereas R1 does less frequent changes like 2/8 - 3/8 - 3/4. In terms of articulation, there are differences between the blocks. The block R0 presents the strong articulations, staccatissimo in trumpets and trombones in the lower range and frequent accents in clarinets. However, block R1 demonstrates a weak articulation and a restrained timbre because of portamento in all instruments.

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<sup>71</sup> Gretchen Horlacher, *Building Blocks: Repetition and Continuity in The Music of Stravinsky* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 174.

Ex.2-a. Stravinsky's *Symphonies of Wind Instruments*,  
 Contrasting Musical Features between R0 and R1;  
 Reprinted from Igor Stravinsky, *Symphonies d'instruments à Vent*  
 (New York: Boosey & Hawkes, 2001), 39.

**R0** Tempo  $\text{♩} = 144$  ( $\text{♩} = 72$ ) *sempre*

FLAUTI  
 I.  
 II. III.

OBOI I. II.

CORNO INGLESE

CLARINETTI in Sib  
 I.  
 II.  
 III.

Ex.2-b. Stravinsky's *Symphonies of Wind Instruments*,  
Contrasting Musical Features between R0 and R1;  
Reprinted from Igor Stravinsky, *Symphonies d'instruments à Vent*  
(New York: Boosey & Hawkes, 2001), 40.

**R1**

The musical score for R1 consists of eight staves. The top four staves are for woodwinds: Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet II (Clar. II.), and Bassoon (Fag.). The bottom four staves are for strings: Violin I (I.), Violin II (II.), Viola (Vcl. II.), and Cello/Double Bass (C.Fag.). The score is in 3/4 time and begins with a *p* (piano) dynamic. The woodwind parts feature complex rhythmic patterns, with the Clarinet II part having circled numbers 3, 2, 3, and 4 below it, indicating specific rhythmic or articulation markings. The string parts provide a steady accompaniment.

In harmony, the blocks R0 and R1 belong to octatonic collections; R0 uses a subset (01469) and R1 a subset (01369). The subject at R0 (01469) is not a real transposition that is found in the music, but it is an inversion of prime form that belongs to the octatonic collection, as seen in Ex.3. The juxtaposition and superimposition of diatonic and octatonic collections reinforce the principle of discontinuity in the *Symphonies*. The blocks in R0-R5 show the conflict of octatonic and diatonic systems; the vertical harmony is octatonic, while the horizontal line of the soprano is diatonic.

Ex. 3. Stravinsky's *Symphonies of Wind Instruments*,  
 Octatonic Collection, R0, R1, and R5;  
 Reprinted from Pieter van den Toorn, *The Music of Igor Stravinsky*  
 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 340, Analytic notation mine.

The image displays three musical blocks from Stravinsky's *Symphonies of Wind Instruments*, labeled R0, R1, and R5. Each block is enclosed in a rectangular box. Block R0 is marked with a tempo of quarter note = 72 and includes parts for clarinet I and II, clarinet III, trumpet, and trombone. Block R1 is marked *tutti p*. Block R5 is also marked *tutti p*. Below the main score, a single line of music is shown, labeled 'Octatonic Collection 1 [0,1,3,4,6,7,9,10]'. The notation includes various musical symbols such as clefs, notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Kramer claims that “the passage of R0-R5 is one moment, which is divided into five submoments.”<sup>72</sup> However, I assert that although R0 and R1 have some similarities, the wild dance (R3) is a different block rather than a “submoment,” because it has a contrasting motives, harmony, texture, and meter from the surrounding sections (Ex.4).

Another scholar, Alexander Rehding, designates R3 as an ‘interpolation’ since it “breaks up the predominant material and creates a disturbance between the surrounding materials.”<sup>73</sup> The block R3 creates relatively less continuous music, by having different musical features from the previous and subsequent blocks. The interpolation occurs at R39, when the flute theme (R38) and bassoon themes (R40) appear again at R38-R40. The block (R39), which is the same block as the opening block (R0), is interrupted by the bassoon theme (R38) and the flute theme (R40).

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<sup>72</sup> Jonathan Kramer, *The Time of Music* (New York: Schirmer, 1988), 224.

<sup>73</sup> Alexander Rehding, “Towards A ‘Logic of Discontinuity’ in Stravinsky's Symphonies of Wind Instruments: Hasty, Kramer, and Straus Reconsidered,” *Music Analysis* 17/ 1 (March 1998): 48.

Ex. 4. Stravinsky's *Symphonies of Wind Instruments*,  
 Wild Dance at R3: Interpolation between R2 and R4;  
 Reprinted from Igor Stravinsky, *Symphonies d'instruments a Vent: A la Memoire de  
 Claude-Achille Debussy*, Reduction pour Piano par Arlbur Lourié  
 (Berlin: Edition russe de musique, 1926), 1.

*The Flute Theme (R6-R7) and the Bassoon Theme (R8)*

The flute theme (Ex. 5: R6-R7) is differentiated from the bassoon theme (Ex.6: R8) because the two themes have different rhythms and harmonies. Rehding remarks that although the bassoon theme has the new ‘motive c,’ the bassoon theme (R8) has a close connection to the flute theme, because ‘motive a’ and ‘motive b2’ in the bassoon theme come from the flute theme.<sup>74</sup> However, I assert that even though ‘motive a’ and ‘motive

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., 44.



b2' are common elements between the two themes, the new 'motive c' and 'motive b2' appear more frequently in the bassoon theme than in the flute theme, in which 'motive a,' 'motive b,' and 'motive b1 are more prominent. Although the two themes have common motives, they create different music by the combination of the previous motives with the new motives in the bassoon theme. There are also rhythmic differences between the two themes in 'motive a'.

Ex. 5. Stravinsky's *Symphonies of Wind Instruments*,  
Flute Theme, R6-R7; Analytical notation mine.

The image shows two staves of musical notation in 3/4 time. The first staff is labeled [R6] and the second [R7]. Both staves feature a sequence of notes with various rhythmic values. Brackets above the notes group them into motives labeled 'a', 'b', 'a1', 'b1', and 'b2'. Motive 'a' is a quarter note followed by two eighth notes. Motive 'b' is a quarter note followed by a quarter note and an eighth note. Motive 'a1' is a quarter note followed by two eighth notes. Motive 'b1' is a quarter note followed by a quarter note and an eighth note. Motive 'b2' is a quarter note followed by a quarter note and an eighth note. The notation includes stems, beams, and flags to indicate the rhythmic structure.

Ex. 6. Stravinsky's *Symphonies of Wind Instruments*  
Bassoon Theme, R8; Analytical notation mine.

The image shows a single staff of musical notation in 3/4 time. The notation includes stems, beams, and flags. Brackets above the notes group them into motives labeled 'c', 'b2', 'a', and 'b2'. Motive 'c' is a quarter note followed by a quarter note and an eighth note. Motive 'b2' is a quarter note followed by a quarter note and an eighth note. Motive 'a' is a quarter note followed by two eighth notes. The notation includes stems, beams, and flags to indicate the rhythmic structure.

Furthermore, the succession of motives in the bassoon theme is very different from that of the motives in the flute theme. Even though the themes have some motives in common, the different succession of motives creates the principle of discontinuity. For example, the flute theme R6 presents the succession of motives as a – b – a<sub>1</sub> – b<sub>1</sub> – b<sub>2</sub> – a – b – a<sub>1</sub> – b<sub>1</sub>. The succession of motives moves from a before b to passages where b comes before a. The ‘motives a and b’ change slightly, but they do not show a continuous extension, variation, and development of the motives.

The musicologist László Somfai suggests a different idea. He argues that the *Symphonies* achieves “the organic continuity of the small elements and short episodes,”<sup>75</sup> and “organic development” is an important principle in the *Symphonies*.<sup>76</sup> However, I disagree with his idea that the repetition and change of motives produce “the organic continuity of the small elements,” thereby attaining “organic development.” Generally speaking, the development of motives refers to the formation of unity and coherence through the repetition, extension, contraction, and variation of motives from the germinal cell. However, the motives of the *Symphonies* do not establish unity or coherence through the continuous development from a germinal cell.

In the flute theme at R6-R7, the neighbor notes frequently appear in various ways. Kramer writes as follows:

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<sup>75</sup> László Somfai, “Symphonies of Wind Instruments (1920): Observations on Stravinsky’s Organic Construction,” *Studia Musicologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 14 (1972): 382.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 372.

This ‘neighbor note cell’ is not only of local importance, but it also exerts an influence on the structure of the work as a whole. Its origin may be traced back to the beginning of the work, where the ‘neighbor note’ idea is first stated innocuously as a pair of grace-notes.<sup>77</sup>

Kramer emphasizes that the “neighbor note cell” is an “important element, which affects “the structure of the whole piece.” In fact, the wild dance (R3) consists of the neighbor note idea. Even though the neighbor note cell is frequently repeated throughout the piece, it does not achieve continuity and motivic development.

#### Final Chorale: Synthesis and Discontinuity

The final chorale (R69-R75) puts together material from the previous musical elements and blocks. I believe that this process shows the lack of development of musical materials since the musical elements are merely restated, not extended or developed. Furthermore, the conflict of octatonic and diatonic system continues to reinforce discontinuity. László Somfai argues that the *Symphonies* presents “the organic continuity of the small elements and essentially static short episodes.”<sup>78</sup> He asserts that “organic development,” is an important principle in the *Symphonies*, of which the final chorale is a good example.<sup>79</sup> However, I disagree with Somfai’s idea of “organic continuity,” since

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<sup>77</sup> Alexander Rehding, “Towards A ‘Logic of Discontinuity’ in Stravinsky’s Symphonies of Wind Instruments: Hasty, Kramer, and Straus Reconsidered,” *Music Analysis* 17/ 1 (March 1998): 44-45.

<sup>78</sup> László Somfai, “Symphonies of Wind Instruments (1920): Observations on Stravinsky’s Organic Construction,” *Studia Musicologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 14 (1972): 382.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 372.

the melodic and harmonic materials do not develop from a cell, instead they are put together in independent blocks, which are sharply contrasted with one another.

At the final chorale (R69-R75), the melodic line of the soprano is diatonic (do-re-mi), and the chords are octatonic subsets or octatonic relatives (Ex.6). According to Kramer, the conflict of the octatonic and diatonic systems achieves a “synthesis rather than a development, because it exists in moment time.”<sup>80</sup> The “moment time,” which comes from Stockhausen’s concept of “every present moment” implies that the blocks or musical moments do not develop musical ideas. The blocks do not achieve continuity and remain in stasis, which makes listeners focus on “every present moment.”<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Jonathan D. Kramer, “Discontinuity and Proportion in the Music of Stravinsky”, in *Confronting Stravinsky: Man, Musician, and Modernist*, ed., Jann Pasler (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 261.

<sup>81</sup> Seppo Heikinheimo, *The Electronic Music of Karlheinz Stockhausen* (Helsinki, 1972), 120-21; quoted in Jonathan Kramer, “Moment Form in Twentieth Century Music,” *Musical Quarterly* 64/ 2 (April, 1978), 179.

Ex.7. Stravinsky's *Symphonies of Wind Instruments*,  
 The Conflict of Octatonic and Diatonic Collections, Final Choral, R69-R70;  
 Reprinted from Igor Stravinsky, *Symphonies d'instruments a Vent: A la Memoire de  
 Claude-Achille Debussy*, Reduction pour Piano par Arlbur Lourié (Berlin: Edition russe  
 de musique, 1926), 17-18, Analytic notation mine.

The image displays two musical excerpts, R69 and R70, from Stravinsky's *Symphonies of Wind Instruments*. Both excerpts are in 2/4 time and feature a piano accompaniment with a treble and bass clef.   
 R69 consists of two measures. The first measure is labeled '5-31 (01369)' and the second '6-29 (023679)'. A bracket labeled 'Motive a' spans the first two measures.   
 R70 consists of five measures. The first measure is labeled '5-31 (01369)'. The second measure is labeled '3-2 (013)'. The third measure is labeled '3-8 (026)'. The fourth measure is labeled '3-2 (013)'. The fifth measure is labeled '6-Z41 (02368)'. A bracket labeled 'Motive a' spans the last three measures.

The neighbor note notes at R75 are combined with the octatonic (013) trichord, which is juxtaposed with the preceding entirely pentatonic chord at R74 (Ex.7). The octatonic chorale chord (014710) occurs before R71, while the harmony of R71 is changed to an E minor seventh chord. Kramer writes that “the final chord (R75+2) comprises two components, the C major triad with a superimposed G major triad, thereby

synthesizing the two components.”<sup>82</sup> The lower chord (C major component (025) trichord) and the upper half (the G major component) comes from the opening chord (with the octatonic 'dominant seventh' F as top note) in R1.

Ex.8. Stravinsky’s *Symphonies of Wind Instruments*,  
 Final Chorale, R71, R74 and R75;  
 Reprinted from Pieter van den Toorn, *The Music of Igor Stravinsky*  
 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 340, Analytic notation mine.

The image shows a musical score for three measures (71, 74, and 75) from Stravinsky's *Symphonies of Wind Instruments*. The score is written in 2/4 time and features complex chordal textures. Below the main score, three chord diagrams are provided: 'E minor seventh chord', '(02479):Pentatonic', and '(023579):Octatonic'.

<sup>82</sup> Jonathan D. Kramer, “Discontinuity and Proportion in the Music of Stravinsky”, in *Confronting Stravinsky: Man, Musician, and Modernist*, ed., Jann Pasler (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 261.

## Conclusion

Although the blocks that are distant from one another achieve connections and repetition, Stravinsky's *Symphonies of Wind Instruments* generally displays a lack of linear continuity and development, because the adjacent blocks are separated and disconnected by several musical elements. Sometimes the blocks are interrupted by interpolations such as R3, R39. In terms of harmony, the lack of continuity is more distinct because of Stravinsky's use of static harmonies, the juxtaposition or superimposition of different harmonies, and the conflict of octatonic and diatonic systems (such as in R0-R5 and R69-R75). Even though three blocks are similar in the same octatonic collection, they are interrupted by blocks R2, R3, and R4, which are different in terms of harmony, texture, melody, and rhythm. Moreover, the blocks R0, R1, and R5 represent the conflict of diatonic system (in the soprano voice) and octatonic system (in the lower voices).

Somfai argues that "organic development"<sup>83</sup> is an important principle in the *Symphonies*, since the repetition of common motives creates "the organic continuity of the small elements."<sup>84</sup> However, I assert that the blocks lack unity, continuity, development of motives from the germinal cell, because the melodic and harmonic materials do not develop through extension and variation from a generative cell, and because they are put together with sharply contrasting materials.

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<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, 372.

<sup>84</sup> László Somfai, "Symphonies of Wind Instruments (1920): Observations on Stravinsky's Organic Construction," *Studia Musicologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 14 (1972): 382.

## CHAPTER IV

### PERSÉPHONE

#### Introduction

Stravinsky's *Perséphone: Mélodrame en Trois Parties* (1934) is a musical work based on the Greek myth. The work consists of three scenes for narrator, tenor soloists, dancers, chorus and orchestra with a libretto in French written by André Gide (1869-1951). In *Perséphone*, Stravinsky's rearrangement of the text demonstrates his aesthetics of objectivism, since his text-setting focuses on musical sound more than on the expression of the text. I will examine five features of his rearrangement of the text: first of all, punctuation, commas, and pauses in the text often do not coincide with rests or pauses in the music. Second, Stravinsky sets the same words to different melodies, accents, rhythms, and dynamics. Third, his rearrangement includes unexpected and frequent rests in the middle of words. Fourth, he places long note values and accents on unimportant words such as "elles" or "les."

Finally, his ostinato construction at R74-R78 manifests his rearrangement of the text, by having different strata in the different voices using "additive ostinato." As Horlacher has pointed out, an "additive ostinato" presents gradual additions and gradual subtractions of the ostinato patterns or repeating notes.<sup>85</sup> An additive ostinato is part of Stravinsky's emphasis on the principle of organization or order, through which the

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<sup>85</sup> Gretchen Horlacher, "The Rhythms of Reiteration: Formal Development in Stravinsky's Ostinati," *Music Theory Spectrum* 14/2 (1992), 178.



composer structurally organizes musical elements, thus interrupting listeners' understanding of the meaning and message of the words.

Stravinsky's idiosyncratic text-setting is associated with his objectivism, in which the composer seeks to organize musical materials and focuses on musical sound and rhythm, rather than conveying the meaning of the text. He avoids representing the character *Perséphone*'s emotion and expressing her psychological change. Thus, listeners cannot easily recognize the meaning of the words of the text, when they listen to *Perséphone*. Stravinsky pursues the organization of musical materials and musical sound even in text-setting, in which music is heard through the text or words.

#### Stravinsky's Text-Setting and His Objectivism

In setting the text of *Perséphone*, Stravinsky rearranges Gide's poetry by placing different and irregular rests or pauses in the music, using different melodies and accents for the same words. He emphasizes unimportant words with accents and long note values, and structurally organizes musical elements with an additive ostinato. Stravinsky's rearrangement of Gide's text is related to his aesthetics of objectivism, in which the composer avoids the expression of subjectivity, psychology, and emotion. It disturbs the listener's perception of the meaning of the text. His text-setting is remarkably different from that of Verdi and Wagner, who conveyed the meaning of the text and intensely expressed each character's emotion and psychological mood.

Stravinsky describes his perspective on lyricism with regard to his text-setting in this way:

Lyricism cannot exist without rules, and it is essential that they should be strict. Otherwise there is only a faculty for lyricism and that exists everywhere.<sup>86</sup>

From Stravinsky's remark on lyricism, I interpret that even in a genre such as opera, in which music conveys the text or connects music with text, if music has no "rules" or limitations, lyricism loses its essence and force. Robert Craft's comment on *Perséphone* shows how Stravinsky treated Gide's text. Craft describes as follows:

What puzzles the listener in *Perséphone* is. . . his frequent disregard of the spoken verbal requirements of accentuation or stress. Stravinsky's argument was that to duplicate verbal rhythms in music would be dull; but the conflict that sometimes arises in his treatment of syllables as independent sounds, rather than as components of words, continues to disconcert part of his audience.<sup>87</sup>

Craft's comment suggests that Stravinsky focused on the "independent sound" of the syllables of the words rather than the expression of meaning in the text. I associate Stravinsky's emphasis on "independent sound" with his own idea described in his book that "tonal elements become music only by virtue of their being organized."<sup>88</sup> I would suggest that his text-setting shows that he focuses on organizing the sounds of the text, rather than conveying the story and expressing emotion.

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<sup>86</sup> Igor Stravinsky, *An Autobiography* (New York: Norton, 1962), 170.

<sup>87</sup> Robert Craft, *Stravinsky: Selected Correspondence III* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1985), 478.

<sup>88</sup> Igor Stravinsky, *Poetics of Music in the Form of Six Lessons*, trans. Arthur Knodel and Ingolf Dahl (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), 23.

Stravinsky's text-setting also represents his emphasis on rhythm. According to Carr, Stravinsky focused on musical rhythm rather than on the meaning of the text in *Perséphone*.<sup>89</sup> She writes about the composer's emphasis on musical rhythm in text-setting in this way:

Regardless of the language, whether it be French as in *Perséphone* and the *Dialogue between Joy and Reason*, Latin as in *Oedipus Rex*, or Russian as in *Pribaoutki* and so on, Stravinsky's preoccupation with the rhythm pattern of syllables is ever present.<sup>90</sup>

Stravinsky exploited various possibilities of rhythm in the text-setting in his opera, melodramas, and art songs. As Carr says, the unique accents and accentuation are different according to the language, but Stravinsky focused on musical rhythm rather than the unique accents of a particular language. Regardless of the language, he divided the syllables of words, repeated the divided syllables, and changed the accent of the words. He concentrated on sound itself rather than the expression of the meaning and emotion presented in the text or words.

Stravinsky's emphasis on sound itself in the text is closely related to his ideas of "order" or organization. He stressed the importance of "order" in his article about *Perséphone* in the *Excelsior* in April in 1934. He describes it in this way:

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<sup>89</sup> Maureen Carr, *Multiple Masks: Neoclassicism in Stravinsky's Works on Greek Subjects* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002), 196.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*

In *Perséphone* I wanted only syllables, beautiful, strong syllables, and only after that an action. . . . One says “crescendo,” or “diminuendo,” but true music neither inflates nor diminishes itself according to the temperature of the action. I do not externalize. . . . Music is given to us specifically to make order of things, to move from an anarchic, individualistic state to a regulated, perfectly conscious one, which alone insures vitality and durability.<sup>91</sup>

Stravinsky’s remark suggests that music loses its strength and force when music presents only the expression of emotion and a psychological mood, as do the nineteenth-century romantic composers such as Wagner and Verdi. Stravinsky also describes his attitude in his autobiography in this way:

For I consider that music is essentially powerless to *express* anything at all, whether a feeling, an attitude of mind, a psychological mood, a phenomenon of nature, etc. . . . *Expression* has never been an inherent property of music. That is by no means the purpose of its existence. If music appears to express something, this is only an illusion and not a reality.<sup>92</sup>

According to Stravinsky, subjective and emotional expression prevents the composer from revealing the essence of music, because music exists in itself. When a composer follows the inherent force of music, music maintains its own strength without needing to express the text. Therefore, Stravinsky’s text-setting is closely related to his aesthetics of objectivism, because he pursues the independent sound of syllables, musical

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<sup>91</sup> Robert Craft, *Stravinsky: Selected Correspondence III* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1985), 479. The original French article, “Igor Strawinsky nous parle de Perséphone,” was first printed in *Excelsior* (April, 1934).

<sup>92</sup> Igor Stravinsky, *An Autobiography* (New York: Norton, 1962), 53–54.

sound, and rhythm more intensely than he does the *meaning* of the text and the expression of the character's emotion.

### Greek Myth and Stravinsky's Objectivism

Stravinsky's *Perséphone*, which is based on the Greek myth, is comprised of three scenes: Scene 1 is "The Abduction of *Perséphone*," Scene 2 is "*Perséphone* in the Underworld," and Scene 3 is "*Perséphone* Reborn." Taruskin explains the Greek myth as follows:

Gide's original conception was of a 'symphonic ballet' consisting of recitation, dances and choral song. Later, at the composer's suggestion, he added the tenor role, created by René Maison, of the priest Eumolpus, who narrates the myth of the daughter of the earth goddess Demeter, seduced and raped by Pluto, whose yearly peregrinations between surface world and underworld give rise to the seasons.<sup>93</sup>

The mythological story signifies *Perséphone*'s movement between the earth and the underworld. *Perséphone*'s movement is connected to the seasonal changes. Stravinsky's aesthetics of objectivism is shown in his use of Greek myth, in which he presents another world that is distant from the ordinary world through the subjects of the different time and the different culture. I believe that these distant subjects would make

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<sup>93</sup> Richard Taruskin, "Perséphone," *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera*. ed. Stanley Sadie (London : Macmillan, 1980),  
<[http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/O903866?q=persephone&source=omo\\_t237&source=omo\\_gmo&source=omo\\_t114&search=quick&hbutton\\_search.x=0&hbutton\\_search.y=0&pos=1&start=1#firsthit](http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/O903866?q=persephone&source=omo_t237&source=omo_gmo&source=omo_t114&search=quick&hbutton_search.x=0&hbutton_search.y=0&pos=1&start=1#firsthit)>

listeners move away from their ordinary world. Wagner also employed the subjects of German and Norman mythology. However, Wagner's mythological subjects are different from those of Stravinsky, since Wagner's music presents a different time but the same culture as Germany. In Stravinsky's *Perséphone*, certain musical features, such as his emphasis on rhythm, the frequent shift of the accents, and his use of ostinato reinforce the move away from the ordinary world. Stravinsky's music reflects the mythological story, but it lacks the expression of subjective emotion and psychological mood. In this respect, Stravinsky's use of Greek myth is distinctly different from that of Wagner, who usually expressed each character's feelings and psychological changes intensely.

#### Stravinsky's Rearrangement of Andre Gide's Text

Stravinsky's rearrangement of Gide's text represents his aesthetics of objectivism, since he manipulates the text by placing different accents, rhythms, rests, and pauses in the music from those that are used for the words of the text. His text-setting emphasizes music sound itself more than the expression of the text. I will analyze how Stravinsky rearranges Gide's text in *Perséphone*. First of all, even though the text has punctuation, periods [.] , commas [,] , and pauses, the music often does not have a rest or long note value before the beginning of the next phrase. Because the musical pauses do not correspond to the text, the listener cannot easily perceive the meaning of the text. For example, at R5+3, the punctuation comes after 'ri-es' in the text, but there is no rest or

pause in the voice and orchestra (Ex.9-a). R13+1, R71+1, and R72+1 illustrate the same phenomenon (Ex.9-b and Ex.9-c).<sup>94</sup>

Ex.9-a. Stravinsky's *Perséphone*,  
No Musical Pause When Period Occurs in the Text, R5+3;  
Reprinted from Igor Stravinsky, *Perséphone: Mélodrame en Trois Parties*, Réduction  
pour Chant et Piano par Sviatoslav Strawinsky  
(London: Boosey & Hawkes, Inc., 1947), 2.

The image shows a musical score for a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in the upper staff, and the piano accompaniment is in the lower staves. The lyrics are: "Et se plait aux fleurs des prairies. Comment elle -". A box highlights the piano accompaniment during the phrase "es. Com. ment", showing that the music continues without a musical pause despite the period in the text. A circled "5" is in the top left corner.

<sup>94</sup> Since I use the same score in the musical examples throughout this chapter, I will leave out the title of the book that I use for the score from the next musical examples.

Ex.9-b. Stravinsky's *Perséphone*,  
No Musical Pause When Comma Occurs in the Text, R13+1;  
Reprinted from Igor Stravinsky, *Perséphone*, (1947), 5.

The image displays a musical score for Stravinsky's *Perséphone*. It features three staves: a vocal line (Soprano), a vocal line (Cello), and a piano accompaniment. The vocal lines are in G major and 4/4 time. The piano part is in G major and 4/4 time. The text of the vocal lines is: "nous, reste avec nous, Princesse Perséphone. Reste avec nous dans la félicité". A box highlights measures 13 and 14, and a "cresc." marking is visible in the piano part.



Ex.9-c. Stravinsky's *Perséphone*,  
No Musical Pause When Comma Occurs in the Text, R71+1 and R72+1;  
Reprinted from Igor Stravinsky, *Perséphone* (1947), 21.

The image displays two musical excerpts from Igor Stravinsky's opera *Perséphone*. The first excerpt, labeled 'EUMOLPE' and numbered '71', features a vocal line with the lyrics 'C'est ainsi, nous racont.e Ho mè re, Que le roi es hi vers, que l'in fer nal Pluton'. A box highlights the vocal line and piano accompaniment around the comma in 'mè re,'. The tempo is marked 'Tempo' with a quarter note equal to 72. The piano part includes dynamics like 'p' and 'mf'. The second excerpt, labeled 'E.' and numbered '72', features a vocal line with the lyrics 'Ra vit Per sé phone à sa mè re, Et à la ter.re son prin temps'. A box highlights the vocal line and piano accompaniment around the comma in 'mè re, Et'. The piano part includes dynamics like 'poco', 'mf', and 'sfx'.

Second, Stravinsky uses different accents and rhythms for the same words. A good example is the word, “*Perséphone*.” Whereas “ne” is emphasized by a crescendo and high note at R22+1 (Ex.10-a), “Perse” is very short at R43+2, and “pho” has a longer note value (Ex.10-b). “Per” is placed on the downbeat at R22+1 (Ex.10-a), while “Per” appears on the upbeat and “ne” on the downbeat at R21+1 (Ex.10-c).

Ex.10-a. Stravinsky’s *Perséphone*, The Different Accents and Rhythm in the Same Word, “*Perséphone*,” R22+1; Reprinted from Igor Stravinsky, *Perséphone* (1947), 7.

The image shows a musical score for the opera *Perséphone*. It features three staves: a vocal line (Soprano, S.), a vocal line (Cello/Alto, C: a), and a piano accompaniment. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The lyrics are: "Viens, joue a - vec nous - Persépho - ne La brise". A box highlights the word "Perséphone" in the vocal line. Above the box, the word "poco" is written with a crescendo hairpin, and "sub." is written with a decrescendo hairpin. The piano accompaniment consists of chords and arpeggiated figures.

Ex.10-b. Stravinsky's *Perséphone*, The Different Accents and Rhythm  
in the Same Word, "Perséphone," R43+2;  
Reprinted from Igor Stravinsky, *Perséphone* (1947), 14.

43 Sopr. *p*  
Ne cueille pas cet.te fleur\_ Persépho . ne  
*p* Contr.  
*pp*  
*staccatissimo* *simile*

Detailed description: This musical score excerpt shows measures 43 and 44. The soprano part (Sopr.) begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a series of eighth notes. The lyrics "Ne cueille pas cet.te fleur\_" are under the first part, and "Persépho . ne" is under the second part. The alto part (Contr.) also starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic and has similar rhythmic patterns. The piano accompaniment consists of two staves: the left hand plays a series of chords in a staccatissimo style, and the right hand plays a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, marked *simile*. A box highlights the vocal entry of the word "Perséphone" in both parts.

Ex.10-c. Stravinsky's *Perséphone*, The Different Accents and Rhythm  
in the Same Word, "Perséphone," R21+1;  
Reprinted from Igor Stravinsky, *Perséphone* (1947), 7.

21  
*p subito*  
S. sur la terre et sur l'on . de. Viens! . . . joue a . vec nous, Persépho . ne  
C. a. *p subito*

Detailed description: This musical score excerpt shows measure 21. It features two vocal parts: Soprano (S.) and Contralto (C. a.). Both parts are marked *p subito*. The lyrics are "sur la terre et sur l'on . de. Viens! . . . joue a . vec nous, Persépho . ne". The soprano part has a melodic line with some rests, while the contralto part has a more rhythmic accompaniment. A box highlights the vocal entry of the word "Perséphone" in both parts.

Third, Stravinsky sometimes places a rest in the middle of words, and interrupts words in the middle of the sentence. The text at R24-R25 describes as follows:

Table 1. The French Text and English Translation, R24-R25

French Text (R24-R25)	English Translation
Au conseil le plus tender, Et laisse l'avenir Doucement t'envahir.	To our loving counsel, And let the future Gently consume you.

The text has a comma [,] after “tender” at R24, but Stravinsky connects the word “tender” to the next words, “Et laisse” without any pause or break. Instead, he places rests after “Et laisse,” “l’a” of “l’avenir,” and “t’en” of “t’envahir” at R24-R25 (Ex.11-a). These frequent rests in the middle of the phrases and words disrupt the structure of the text, break the words, and create a new rhythm with the words. R29 shows a similar example (Ex.11-b).

Ex.11-a. Stravinsky's *Perséphone*,  
 Irregular Rests in the Middle of Words, R24+4 and R25+1-2;  
 Reprinted from Igor Stravinsky, *Perséphone* (1947), 8.

s. Au conseil le plus ten - dre Et lais - se là - ve - nir Dou - cement t'en - va - hir  
 c. a. *Uis.*

The score shows three staves: Soprano (s.), Contralto (c. a.), and Piano. The piano part is in the lower register. The vocal lines are in the upper register. The lyrics are written below the vocal staves. Three specific measures are highlighted with black boxes: the first box covers measures 24 and 25, the second box covers measure 25, and the third box covers measure 26. The number '25' is written above the second box. The word 'Uis.' is written below the Contralto staff in the first box.

Ex.11-b. Stravinsky's *Perséphone*,  
 Irregular Rests in the Middle of Words, R29+1;  
 Reprinted from Igor Stravinsky, *Perséphone* (1947), 9.

s. - ti - na - le, Rayon nais - sant, pé - ta - le Ruisse - lant de liqueur - Cè - de sans  
 c. a. *Uis.*

The score shows three staves: Soprano (s.), Contralto (c. a.), and Piano. The piano part is in the lower register. The vocal lines are in the upper register. The lyrics are written below the vocal staves. One specific measure is highlighted with a black box: measure 29. The number '29' is written above the box. The word 'Uis.' is written below the Contralto staff in the first box.

Finally, Stravinsky rearranges the text by placing long note values on unimportant words. At R96+1-3, “Elles” in French means “they” in English, but the word is stressed by the accents and ascending notes in three bars (Ex.12-a). Another example is the word “Les,” which means “The” in English. “Les” at R11+2 is emphasized by a longer note value and an accent (Ex.12-b). Likewise, Stravinsky concentrates less on rhythms and accents of words in the text, and focuses more on musical rhythms.

Ex.12-a. Stravinsky’s *Perséphone*,  
 Emphasis on Unimportant Words, R96+1-3;  
 Reprinted from Igor Stravinsky, *Perséphone* (1947), 27.

The image shows a musical score for three parts: C. a. (Soprano), T. (Tenor), and Piano. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 3/4. The score is numbered 96. The lyrics are: "Sans peine et sans en . vi . e ——— El — . . . . . les n'ont pas". A black box highlights the vocal line for the word "El" across three measures. Above the notes in this box are three slurs, each labeled "sub." with an accent mark. The piano accompaniment consists of a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a more complex rhythmic pattern in the left hand.

Ex.12-b. Stravinsky's *Perséphone*,  
Emphasis on Unimportant Words, R11+2;  
Reprinted from Igor Stravinsky, *Perséphone* (1947), 4.

The image displays a musical score for Stravinsky's *Perséphone*. It features three staves: a vocal line for Soprano (S.), a vocal line for Contralto (C: a), and a piano accompaniment. The vocal lines are in G major and 4/4 time. The lyrics are: "con - fi - ée à nous, Par - mi les oiseaux et les fleurs, Les - saisers des ruisseaux,". A box highlights the vocal line for Soprano from measure 11 to measure 12, where the words "fleurs, Les" are written. The piano accompaniment consists of a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes in the right hand and chords in the left hand. The tempo and dynamics markings are "poco sf: sub: meno f: e cantabile".

S.  
C: a

con - fi - ée à nous, Par - mi les oiseaux et les fleurs, Les - saisers des ruisseaux,

poco sf: sub: meno f: e cantabile

### Aesthetics of Organization: “Ostinato with Additive Construction”

In Scene 2, “*Perséphone* in the underworld,” Andre Gide describes the beginning of the scene as follows:

The scene is the Elysian Fields. On the right, the door to Pluto’s palace. *Perséphone* is lying on a bed of state, beneath a dais supported by columns. Near her, still asleep, the Chorus of Shades. On the left the banks of the river overhung with the boughs of an immense tree. Beside the river, the Chorus of Danaïdes, dressed in ashen green, are ceaselessly drawing water from the river, inclining their urns one toward another. The background is obscured by clouds.<sup>95</sup>

The following Table 2 shows André Gide’s French text, Stravinsky’s rearrangement of the text, and the translation of the original in English at R74-R80. As we see, Stravinsky rearranges the French text by repeating several words such as “Encore assoupie, assoupie,” “presse,” and “L’a couquise.”

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<sup>95</sup> André Gide, *My Theater: Five Plays and an Essay*, trans. Jackson Mathews (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1952), 243-244.



Table 2. The French Text, Stravinsky's Rearrangement,  
and English Translation, R74-R80

The French Text <sup>a</sup>	Stravinsky's Rearrangement of the text (R74-R80)	English Translation <sup>b</sup>
Sur ce lit elle repose	Sur ce lit elle repose	She reposes
Et je n'ose	Et je n'ose	And I dare
La troubler.	La troubler.	Not disturb her.
Encore assoupie à moitié	Encore assoupie, (encore assoupie, assoupie) à moitié	She still dozes half awake,
Elle presse sur son cœur	Elle presse, (presse) sur son cœur	and presses to her heart
Le narcissé dont l'odeur	Le narcissé dont l'odeur	The narcissus bloom
L'a conquise à la pitié.	L'a conquise, (l'a conquise) à la pitié.	Whose perfume made her pity start.

a: André Gide, *Proserpine (drame): Perséphone (mélodrame)*, édition critique établie et présentée par Patrick Pollard (Lyon: Université de Lyon II, Centre d'études gidiennes, 1977), 96.

b: André Gide, *My Theater: Five Plays and an Essay*, trans. Jackson Mathews (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1952), 244.

As we see in Ex.13, the unimportant words, “elle” at R74+1, “Elle” at R76+3, and “L’a” at R77+4, are emphasized with long notes and a crescendo. “Elle” in French means “she” (*Perséphone*) in English, and L’a means “the.”) And also, “la troubler” (R75+1) in the text has a period, but the music does not present a rest, break, or a long note value after “la troubler.” In the text, “pie” (R76+1) is followed by a comma, but there is no rest or break in the music. This rearrangement of the text demonstrates that Stravinsky focused on the individual sound of syllables rather than the meaning of the text.

Ex.13. Stravinsky's *Perséphone*, Emphasis on Unimportant Words in the Circles and No Musical Pause When Comma Occurs in the Squares, R74-R78;  
 Reprinted from Igor Stravinsky, *Perséphone* (1947), 22.

74 *Poco meno*  $\text{♩} = 60$   
 Sopr.  
*cant. dolce*

Sur ce li - vel - le - re - po - se - Et je - n'o - se la troubler

75

76 *poco*

En - core as - sou - pie, - en - core as - sou - pie, as - sou - pie - à moitié

77 *poco*

El - le presse, presse sur son - cœur Le narcis - se dont l'o - deur

78

L'a - con - qui - se, l'a conquis à la pi - tié

*An Additive Ostinato and the Repetition of the Notes (R74-R78)*

The passages (R74-R78) are also a good example of Stravinsky's aesthetics of organization because each voice occupies a different stratum and has its own rule of organization or order. First of all, the bass line proceeds in a stepwise motion: D-C#-B-A-G (descending notes) at R74-R75, A-B-C-D (ascending notes) at R76-R77+3, and C#-C-B (descending notes) at R77+4-R78. The alto repeats the same melody in the four phrases (Table 3).

Table 3. Stravinsky's Rearrangement of the Text and English Translation, R74-R78

Stravinsky's Rearrangement <sup>a</sup>	The English Translation <sup>b</sup>
(1) Sur ce lit elle repose Et je n'ose La troubler.	(1) She reposes And I dare Not disturb her.
(2) Encore assoupie, (encore assoupie, assoupie) à moitié	(2) She Still dozes half awake,
(3) Elle presse, (presse) sur son cœur Le narcisse dont l'odeur	(3) She presses to her heart The narcissus bloom whose perfume
(4) L'a conquise, l'a conquise à la pitié. <sup>c</sup>	(4) Made her pity start.

a: André Gide, *Proserpine (drame): Perséphone (mélodrame)*, édition critique établie et présentée par Patrick Pollard (Lyon: Université de Lyon II, Centre d'études gidiennes, 1977), 96.

b: André Gide, *My Theater: Five Plays and an Essay*, trans. Jackson Mathews (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1952), 244.

c: (1)-(4) refer to the phrases in the alto.

The soprano (R74-R78) uses the ostinato patterns (Ex.14). The ① pattern is f#''-f#'-g, the ② pattern is f#''-f#'-g-b', and the ③ pattern is f#''-f#'-g-f#'-b'. The patterns have the following succession: ①-②-③-②-/①-②-③-②-/①-②-③. Horlacher designates the ostinato pattern as “ostinato with additive construction,” in which the notes are added or are subtracted.<sup>96</sup> The “additive ostinato” demonstrates a gradual increase and decrease in the repeating patterns. Finally, the tenor presents an ostinato consisting of three notes, but it is not an exact ostinato, since it repeats similar notes instead of the same notes.

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<sup>96</sup> Gretchen Horlacher, “The Rhythms of Reiteration: Formal Development in Stravinsky’s Ostinati,” *Music Theory Spectrum* 14/2 (1992), 178.

Ex.14. Stravinsky's *Perséphone*,  
 Additive Ostinato and the Repetition of Notes, R74-R78;  
 Reprinted from Igor Stravinsky, *Perséphone* (1947), 22.

74 *Poco meno*  $\text{♩} = 60$  *poco* Alto  
*cant. dolce*  
 Sur ce lit el - le - re - po - se. Et ie n'a se - la troubler

75

Soprano

Bass Tenor

76 *poco*  
 En - core as - sou - pie, en - core as - sou - pie ne couvie à moitié

77 *poco*  
 El - le presse, presse sur son - cœur Le narcis - se dont l'o - deur

78  
 L'a - ... l'a conquis à la pi - tié

The ostinato patterns in the soprano and tenor parts (R74-R78) achieve stasis.

Pierre Boulez explains stasis in this way:

In what sense can a structure be called static? In the sense that it presents--statistically speaking--the same quality and the same quantity of events in its unfolding. This static quality is entirely independent of the number of events, whose constant density is their important feature. Static structure may admit of a large range of all kinds of note values, or a small range; it may be based on extreme, though constant, selectiveness or on a complete absence of selectiveness—but all these criteria must of course remain virtually constant.<sup>97</sup>

As Boulez states, stasis or static structure maintains “the same quality and the same quantity” of musical materials. The repeating notes in the four voices at R74-R78 partly change, but the changes continue to repeat in “the same quantity,” thereby maintaining a static structure. Even though an “additive ostinato” in the soprano adds and subtracts some of the notes, it does not establish a direction for development.

I believe that the passages at R74-R78 demonstrate Stravinsky’s aesthetics of objectivism, in which the musical materials are structurally organized to conform to a certain rule or order. However, the organization of the musical materials is not related to the expression of subjective emotion. Instead, the different strata in the four voices interrupt the delivery of the meaning in the text and the understanding of the words.

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<sup>97</sup> Pierre Boulez, “Form,” *Orientalisms*, ed. Jaen-Jacques Nattiez, trans. Martin Cooper (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985), 91.

## Conclusion

As I have shown in the musical examples, there are five features of Stravinsky's rearrangement of Gide's text in his melodrama, *Perséphone*. The first feature of Stravinsky's rearrangement of text-setting is the musical pause, which frequently does not correspond to that of the punctuation in the text. Even though the text has punctuation, comma, period, or some other punctuation mark, the music does not have a rest or long note value at pauses in the text.

Second, Stravinsky uses different melody notes, accents, dynamics, and rhythms for the same words. For instance, whenever the word "*Perséphone*" appears in the text, the music has different rhythms, accents, or dynamics. This feature of Stravinsky's text-setting is in contrast to Wagner's leitmotives, which usually use the same dynamics, melody, and rhythms for the same character or words in the text. Wagner's leitmotives cause listeners to associate particular sound with the subjective emotion or mood of the same character, thereby conveying the meaning of the words or the message of the text. However, Stravinsky's rearrangement of the text objectifies the musical ideas and musical features for the same character or words.

Third, Stravinsky's rearrangement of the text contains irregular and frequent rests in the middle of the words. The irregular rests in the middle of the words interrupt the listener's perception that connects with the meaning or message of words. Such frequent rests break the expectation of listeners.



Fourth, Stravinsky emphasizes unimportant words by setting long note values, accents, ascending notes, or crescendos on them. Good examples are “elles” (“They” in English) and “les” (“The” in English).

Finally, his rearrangement of the text is associated with his ostinato construction, as shown in Ex.14. The four voices occupy different strata and different repeating patterns. Such superimposition of different musical materials creates stasis. As implied by Horlacher’s term “additive ostinato,” the ostinato presents the gradual increase and decrease of repeating patterns, instead of exact repetitions of the same notes. The superimposition of different strata and the additive ostinato interrupt listeners’ understanding of meaning of the words and their perception of the subjective emotion presented in the text. These features are closely related to Stravinsky’s aesthetics of objectivism discussed in Chapter I, in which he structurally organizes musical materials. His organization of musical materials keeps listeners from perceiving the meaning, mood, image, subjective emotion, which is described in the text.

## CHAPTER V

### ORPHEUS

#### Introduction

Stravinsky's *Orpheus* (1947) is a ballet based on the Greek myth Orpheus and consists of three scenes. *Orpheus* demonstrates Stravinsky's aesthetics of objectivism by means of its reserved expression in dynamics, texture and orchestration. In other words, the composer sometimes expresses the emotion presented in the story, but he does so in a reserved way, because the music maintains mostly quiet dynamics and rarely changes dynamics throughout the work. This reserved expression is sometimes paradoxical, since it demonstrates a subjective expression of the story and an objective organization of musical materials simultaneously. For example, in Scene 3, Apollo's praise to the spirits of music in the bass presents a subjective expression of the story, while the fugue in the upper two voices manifests Stravinsky's objective organization and his principle of limitation at the same time.

The reserved expression used in this piece causes the listeners' attention to move away from the story and focus on the music. His technique is different from his absolute music, such as that of *Symphonies of Wind Instruments*. Because his absolute music is not related to a text or story, it uses the juxtaposition and superimposition of different blocks and the rejection of subjective expression more intensely than does the texted music of *Orpheus*.

### Stravinsky's Reserved Expression

In Stravinsky's *Orpheus*, the opening measures and R1:1-5 present descending scales in the harp and falling notes in the strings utilizing quiet dynamics (Ex.15). Stravinsky wrote at the beginning of the first scene on the score that "Orpheus weeps for Eurydice. He stands motionless, with his back to the audience." The many descending notes in R1, which signify Orpheus's sadness about Eurydice's death, represent its text, but it is expressed in a reserved way with quiet dynamics. Eric Walter White describes Orpheus in this way:

All the music is played *mezza* or *sotto voce* in Orpheus, with the exception of the 'Dance of the Bacchantes' in Scene 2 . . . Even the music for the Furies is soft and constantly remains on a soft level, like most of the rest of the ballet.<sup>98</sup>

My point of view is that the stepwise descending notes in the opening measures and R1 do represent Orpheus's sadness, but the expression of the emotion is restrained because of the quiet dynamics. Stravinsky's reserved expression is different from nineteenth-century music that more emphatically expressed emotion presented in the text or story. For example, in Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde*, the music of the prelude intensely expresses its emotion of unrequited love through the extreme contrast of dynamics and chromatic harmonies. The opening passages begin with quiet dynamics, but the music suddenly changes to forte (*f*) or fortissimo (*ff*). In dynamics, Stravinsky's *Orpheus* is

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<sup>98</sup> Eric Walter White, *Stravinsky: The Composer and His Works* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1966), 441.

distinctly different from the prelude of Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde*. The opening measures of Stravinsky's *Orpheus* maintain quiet dynamics that do not change. By contrast, Wagner's prelude represents frequent and sudden changes in dynamics to express characters' emotion and to convey the story. In this way, Stravinsky's *Orpheus* shows his objectivism, since it presents reserved expression by maintaining quiet dynamics and by seldom changing dynamics during the work.

Ex.15. Stravinsky's *Orpheus*, Scene 1, R1:1-5;  
Reprinted from Igor Stravinsky, *Orpheus: Ballet in Three Scenes Ballet  
en Trois Tableaux*, (New York: Boosey & Hawkes, Ltd., 1948), 1.

# ORPHEUS ORPHÉE

## First Scene

Orpheus weeps for Eurydice.  
He stands motionless, with his back to the audience.

## Premier Tableau

Orphée pleure Eurydice.  
Debout, dos au public, il ne bouge pas.

IGOR STRAVINSKY

Lento sostenuto,  $\text{♩} = 66$  R1

Arpa  
Violini I  
Violini II  
Viola  
Violoncelli  
Contrabassi

Arpa  
VI.I  
VI.II  
Via.  
Vc.  
Co.

### Juxtaposition of the Unrelated Blocks

Another factor leading to the quality of objectivism in this piece is Stravinsky's use of unrelated blocks that are very different from the surrounding music. The music in R2 is interrupted by interpolations of the blocks at bars 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 at R2, which presents different orchestration, melodies and harmonies (Ex.16). Wind instruments--flutes, horn, trumpets, and trombones--play the unrelated blocks in R2:1-2, while the harp continues in its pattern beneath the winds. The melody and harmony are diatonic in R1; by contrast, the unrelated blocks played by the winds are more dissonant in R2:1-2, using an octatonic subset, 4-Z29 (0137) and 4-19 (0148) (Ex.17).<sup>99</sup> The block in R3:5-6 has a subset, 5-22 (01478), which is distant from the diatonic and closer to the octatonic (Ex.18). Likewise, the interpolations of the unrelated blocks interrupt a linear continuity of musical materials, thereby keeping listeners from perceiving continuous musical time.

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<sup>99</sup> I have noticed that Maureen Carr analyzed the blocks in R2; in Maureen Carr, *Multiple Masks: Neoclassicism in Stravinsky's Works on Greek Subjects* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002), 274. My analysis is different from Carr's, but her analysis is useful.

Ex.16. Stravinsky's *Orpheus*, Scene 1, R2: 1-5;  
 Reprinted from Igor Stravinsky, *Orpheus: Ballet  
 in Three Scenes Ballet en Trois Tableaux*, 2.

R2

Some friends pass bringing presents  
 and offering him sympathy.

Passent des amis avec des présents.  
 Compliments de condoléances.

Fl. I, II

Cor. II

Tr. I, II  
 in G♭

I  
 Trb.

II  
 (basso)

Arpa

2

VI. I

VI. II

Vcl.

Vc.  
 4 Vc. Soli

Cb.

*p ma marc.*

*p ma marc.*

*p dolce*

*glissando (full bow)*

*Tutti unis.*

*Tutti unis.*

*p dolce*

*glissando*  
 tout le long  
 de l'archet  
 sans portamento

Ex.17. Stravinsky's *Orpheus*, Octatonic Subset, Scene 1, R2:1;  
 Reprinted from Igor Stravinsky, *Orpheus: Ballet in Three Scenes Ballet  
 en Trois Tableaux*, 2, Analytic notation mine.

R2

Fl. I & II  
 Cor. II  
 Tr. I & II  
 in Bb  
 I  
 Trb.  
 II

4-Z29 4-19  
 (0137) (0148)

Ex.18. Stravinsky's *Orpheus*, Scene 1, R3:1-6;  
 Reprinted from Igor Stravinsky, *Orpheus: Ballet in Three Scenes Ballet  
 en Trois Tableaux*, 2, Analytic notation mine.

R3

Arpa  
 Vl. I  
 Vl. II  
 Vla.  
 Vc.  
 Cb.

5-22 (01478)

non div.



### Randomly Organized Music

In Stravinsky's *Orpheus*, a musical segment sometimes is repeated, but the repetition is seemingly randomly organized, not related to the unfolding of the story. I consider that this randomly organized music signifies Stravinsky's objectivism, since it is not based on the story and does not create a system of leitmotives. For example, in 'Air de Danse' (R4-R27) in Scene 1, the musical segment at R4:1-R6:2 (Ex.19) appears again at R8:1-R10:1 (Ex.20) and at R21:1-R27:3. The musical segment consisting of twelve bars at R4:1-R6:2 is extended to twenty-three bars at R21:1-R27:3. Even though the musical materials are extended, I don't consider the extension of the music materials as development, because the melodies repeat and add the new materials, instead of developing a single motive. Therefore, the musical procedure is non-developmental, one of the traits of objectivism.

Ex.19. Stravinsky's *Orpheus*, 'Air de Danse,' Scene 1, R4-R6,  
Reprinted from Igor Stravinsky, *Orpheus: Ballet in Three Scenes Ballet  
en Trois Tableaux*, Piano Reduction by Leopold Spinner  
(New York: Boosey & Hawkes, Ltd., 1948), 2.

### AIR DE DANSE

4 Andante con moto,  $\text{♩} = 112$

5 *espr.*

6

Ex.20. Stravinsky's *Orpheus*, 'Air de Danse,' Scene 1, R8-R10,  
reprinted from Igor Stravinsky, *Orpheus: Ballet in Three Scenes Ballet  
en Trois Tableaux*, Piano Reduction by Leopold Spinner  
(New York: Boosey & Hawkes, Ltd., 1948), 3.

The image displays a piano reduction of a musical score for 'Air de Danse' from Stravinsky's *Orpheus*. The score is presented in four systems, each with a grand staff (treble and bass clefs).  
- **System 1:** Measures 8-10. Measure 8 is boxed. It features a complex rhythmic pattern with triplets and sixteenth notes. A dynamic marking of *sf* is present. A large bracket above measures 9 and 10 indicates a triplet of sixteenth notes.  
- **System 2:** Measures 11-13. Measure 11 is boxed. The tempo marking *scherzando* is written above the staff. Measure 12 contains a 3/8 time signature change. Measure 13 is boxed and contains a 4/8 time signature change.  
- **System 3:** Measures 14-16. Measures 14 and 15 are boxed. The music continues with intricate rhythmic patterns and triplets.  
- **System 4:** Measures 17-19. Measure 17 is boxed. A *Fl. Solo* marking is placed above the staff. The piece concludes with a final triplet in measure 19.

The Paradoxical Simultaneity of  
His Objectivism and the Subjective Expression

In addition to the non-developmental qualities of *Orpheus*, the opening of Scene 3 shows Stravinsky's objectivism in its restrained expression, since his subjective expression is offset by his use of a fugue that structurally organizes musical materials. The music is paradoxical, because the subjective expression that conveys the story simultaneously occurs with the principle of limitation of the fugue. Stravinsky's principle of limitation makes the listeners concentrate on the musical sound itself, thereby interrupting their recognition of the meaning of the story and their feeling for the subjective emotion of the story.

Scene 3 'Apothéose of Orpheus' (R143-R149) begins with descending notes in the harp, which appeared in the opening measures of R1, but the descending notes are presented in an inversion changing to ascending notes in R144 (Ex.21). Alexander Schouvaloff and Victor Borovsky describe the story of Scene 3 as follows:

Apollo comes to the grave of Orpheus and holds up the golden mask invoking the spirit of Orpheus as the God of Music. . . As he raises his arm, so the lyre, garlanded with flowers, rises from the tomb, symbolizing the tenderness and power of music.<sup>100</sup>

Drawing on the story described by Schouvaloff and Borovsky, I believe that the ascending notes in the bass line in the harp (R144-R146) signify Apollo's action of

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<sup>100</sup> Alexander Schouvaloff and Victor Borovsky, *Stravinsky on Stage* (London: Stainer & Bell, 1982), 176.

praising the spirits of music. The ascending notes in the bass convey the story and present a subjective expression of it.

I claim that the music of this passage is paradoxical in that it presents both the subjective and objective aspects at the same time in R144-R146. The ascending notes in the bass line (R144-146) express the story, as Schouvaloff and Borovsky suggest, of Apollo's praise to the God of music. However, the subjective expression of the story is offset by the fugal upper voices, which illustrate the aesthetics of objectivism. I associate the fugue in R144-R146 with Stravinsky's statement that the composer structurally organizes musical materials. In his book, *Poetics of Music in the Form of Six Lessons*, Stravinsky writes as follows:

Let us take the best example: the fugue, a pure form in which the music means nothing outside itself. . . Strength, says Leonardo da Vinci, is born of constraint and dies in freedom.<sup>101</sup>

The fugue is a good example of his concept of limitation or constraint, which is a feature of his objectivism. The principle of limitation implies that the composer pursues order or organization and prevents him from expressing subjectivity and emotion. I believe that he achieved his objectivism that structurally organizes musical materials and focuses on the music itself in the compositional device of the fugue.

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<sup>101</sup> Igor Stravinsky, *Poetics of Music in the Form of Six Lessons*, trans. Arthur Knodel and Ingolf Dahl (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), 76.

Ex. 21. Stravinsky's *Orpheus*, 'Apothéose,' Scene 3, R143-R146;  
Reprinted from Igor Stravinsky, *Orpheus: Ballet in Three Scenes Ballet  
en Trois Tableaux*, Piano Reduction by Leopold Spinner  
(New York: Boosey & Hawkes, Ltd., 1948), 32.

### Third Scene

#### Orpheus' Apotheosis

Apollo appears. He wrests the lyre from  
Orpheus and raises his song heavenwards.

### Troisième Tableau

#### Apothéose d'Orphée

Apparaît Apollon. Il s'empare de la lyre  
d'Orphée et élève son chant vers les cieux.

143 Lento sostenuto,  $\text{♩} = 69$  Str. 144 Trp. VI. Solo accompagnando

Harp

Hn. I  
*mp cant. maestoso*

Hn. II  
*mp cant. maestoso*

145

146  
*come sopra*

### “Cross-Cutting Construction”

Stravinsky explained the fugue episode in R143:4 and R145:4, in Scene 3, ‘Apothéose d’Orphée,’ in *Orpheus* to his friend, the Russian composer Nicholas Nabokov (1903-1978), as follows:

Cut off the fugue with a pair of scissors. . . . I introduced this short harp phrase, like two bars of an accompaniment. Then the horns go on with their fugue as if nothing happened. I repeat it at regular intervals, here and here again. . . . You can eliminate these harp-solo interruptions, paste the parts of the fugue together, and it will be one whole piece.<sup>102</sup>

Stravinsky’s comment on the fugue shows his process of composition. He organizes the music by separating the musical elements from one another and by interpolating a fugue. Thus, the interpolated fugue prevents the continuous progress of the music, and therefore shows his objective aesthetics. My discussion is supported by the remarks of the theorist Maureen Carr. She mentions that the juxtaposition and superimposition of “the separated musical elements” is related to Boulez’s *sound montage*.<sup>103</sup> Boulez defines *sound montage* in “Sound, Word, Synthesis” in this way:

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<sup>102</sup> Nicholas Nabokov, *Old Friends and New Music* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1951), 203; quoted in Maureen Carr, *Multiple Masks: Neoclassicism in Stravinsky’s Works on Greek Subjects*, 262.

<sup>103</sup> Pierre Boulez, “Sound, Word, Synthesis,” in *Orientalisms*, ed. Jean-Jacques Nattiez, trans. Martin Cooper (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985), 179; quoted in Maureen Carr, *Multiple Masks: Neoclassicism in Stravinsky’s Works on Greek Subjects*, 249.

As far as ensembles are concerned, we should be thinking rather in terms of sound montages, in which elements may be added optionally and the initiative of one performer triggers off that of another and so on.”<sup>104</sup>

Carr remarks that the concept of montage is connected to the term “cross-cutting construction” that Elliott Carter first used to refer to the fugue episode in R143:4 and R145:4, in ‘Apothéose d’Orphée.’<sup>105</sup> Carter’s conception of “cross-cutting construction” can be linked to Gretchen Horlacher’s “cut-and-paste method.” Horlacher explains the interpolations presented by the cut-and-paste method in this way:

The interpolations fill the interior of the passage by creating a series of episodes that lead from one repetition to the next. In other words, Stravinsky's revisions are developmental, drawing individual repetitions into sequential connection with one another and transforming repetitions into an ordered, continuous passage”<sup>106</sup>

In this passage she claims that the interpolations and superimpositions presented by his revisions of the sketches (or the ‘cut-and-paste method’) achieve the development of musical materials rather than creating a stasis. She claims that the repetitions are connected with each other and are transformed, thereby moving forward in a continuous direction.

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<sup>104</sup> Pierre Boulez, “Sound, Word, Synthesis,” in *Orientations*, ed. Jean-Jacques Nattiez, trans. Martin Cooper (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985), 179; quoted in Maureen Carr, *Multiple Masks: Neoclassicism in Stravinsky's Works on Greek Subjects*, 249.

<sup>105</sup> Maureen Carr, *Multiple Masks: Neoclassicism in Stravinsky's Works on Greek Subjects* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002), 262.

<sup>106</sup> Gretchen Horlacher, “Running in Place: Sketches and Superimposition in Stravinsky's Music,” *Music Theory Spectrum* 23, no. 2 (Autumn, 2001): 198.



However, Lynne Rogers has a different view from that of Horlacher. In her research on the sketches of Stravinsky's *Violin Concerto*, Rogers suggests that "the frequent use of interpolation in Stravinsky's revisions separates the layers more from one another."<sup>107</sup> She regards the separated layers as "dissociation" in music, as it is described in her article, *Stravinsky's Break with Contrapuntal Tradition: A Sketch Study*, as follows:

Dissociation, a counterpoint of layers, does not assume such integration. Instead, the audible separation of contrasting, superimposed layers of musical material is primary, prohibiting the formation of a vertically unifying harmonic progression or pattern of simultaneities.<sup>108</sup>

I agree with Rogers' perspective that the separated layers create dissociation in the music. When the contrasting layers are juxtaposed or superimposed, the musical materials are separated from one another and they do not establish its continuous progression in harmony and melody. As a result, the music does not achieve overall integration and coherence. Although I acknowledge Horlacher's claim that there are partial connections between the repetitions, I feel that these connections create stasis rather than development, because the musical materials do not go forward in any one direction.

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<sup>107</sup> Lynne Rogers, "Varied Repetition and Stravinsky's Compositional Process," *Mitteilungen der Paul Sacher Stiftung* 7 (April, 1994): 22-26; quoted in Gretchen Horlacher, "Running in Place," 199.

<sup>108</sup> Lynne Rogers, "Stravinsky's Break with Contrapuntal Tradition: A Sketch Study." *Journal of Musicology* 13, no.4 (Autumn, 1995), 476.

## Conclusion

In Stravinsky's *Orpheus*, the music sometimes presents emotional expression and conveys the story, but it does so in a reserved way. This musical feature fits into Stravinsky's aesthetics of objectivism. In the opening music, the descending scales and falling notes represent Orpheus's sadness about Eurydice's death in quiet dynamics and cool tone colors. The quiet dynamics are maintained throughout the work, except for 'Dance of the Bacchantes' in Scene 2. His reserved expression makes the listeners focus on the music itself rather than the story. However, because of its response to the text, it is different from his absolute music such as that of *Symphonies of Wind Instruments*, which was discussed in Chapter III. Since absolute music is not based on a text or story, it presents more distinctly the juxtaposition of the different blocks and the interruption of interpolations.

In the opening measures in Scene 3, the ascending notes in the bass demonstrate subjective expression by representing that part of the story, in which Apollo raises his hands and praises the God of music. However, the fugue in the upper voices in the same measures illustrates Stravinsky's objectivism, in which he structurally organizes musical ideas. The fugue takes the listener's attention away from the subjective expression in the bass.

The juxtaposition of different blocks and interpolations of different musical elements also represent Stravinsky's objectivism, thereby interrupting the delivery of the story. The melody at R2 is diatonic, but the interpolations of different blocks consist of

octatonic or octatonic relatives, in which the music is dissonant and distant from the surrounding blocks. Furthermore, the musical segments are sometimes repeated and randomly organized. The randomly organized music is not related to leitmotives and is not based on the story. The musical segments are randomly repeated and some new materials are added. However, the new materials do not achieve developing variation, since they are not connected with the main segments and do not form a continuous progression. All of these features add up to an aesthetic of objectivism used to portray a mythological story.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSION

My research has presented evidence that Stravinsky's aesthetics of objectivism appears in the structural organization of musical elements, his rejection of the expression of subjective emotion, an emphasis on musical sound, and the spatialization of music. I have shown that there is a correlation between his objectivism and his neoclassicism, and have examined how his objectivism is presented in several different genres in his neoclassical period, (1) an instrumental piece, *Symphonies of Wind Instruments* (1920), (2) a melodrama, *Perséphone* (1933) with French text, and (3) his ballet, *Orpheus* (1947) with a story out of Greek mythology. My analysis of these three works shows that his objectivism influences the music in various ways: the lack of linear continuity and development, his rearrangement of the text, and his restraint in orchestration and dynamics.

The main purpose of my thesis was to explore a correlation between Stravinsky's objectivism and his neoclassicism, because he presented his objectivism more clearly and rejected the expression of subjective emotion more intensely in his neoclassical period than in his Russian period. It was crucial for my research to focus on his neoclassical works from World War I through the 1940s, since, in this period the correlation of his objectivism and neoclassicism more clearly demonstrated musical features such as the juxtaposition and superimposition of the different blocks, his change from full

orchestration to reduced instrumentation and cool tone colors as well as his use of fugue, the conflict of octatonic and diatonic collections, and his rearrangement or manipulation of the text in text-setting.

The significance of my thesis is that I have shown the varied and multiple relationships between his aesthetics and features of his music. In this respect, my research on Stravinsky's own ideas about music is crucial, based on the perspectives described in his book, *Poetics of Music in the Form of Six Lessons*. Stravinsky's principle of organization or order embodies his objectivism, since the composer seeks to structurally organize musical materials through his speculation and his conscious act. This conception of organization is related to his idea of limitation or constraint. He asserts that if music is not composed according to limitations, the music depends on capricious emotions, thereby falling into disorder. In this respect, Stravinsky criticizes Wagner's leitmotives and endless melody for excessively expressing subjectivity and emotion.

To understand the philosophical background of Stravinsky's aesthetics of objectivism, it was crucial to explore the ideas of two philosophers, Theodor W. Adorno and Eduard Hanslick. One important aspect of Adorno's perspective, which is related to Stravinsky's objectivism, is the alienation of the music from the subject. Adorno believes that listeners are alienated from the subject in Stravinsky's music, because the music itself is dissociated from organic unity, and because the dissociated music interrupts the listeners' perception of continuity in music and their feeling of subjectivity and emotion.

The lack of continuity and development in Stravinsky's music is connected to his tendency to focus on musical sound. Such musical characteristics are associated with his own perspective that music is essentially constructive and with Hanslick's viewpoint that music should focus on the intrinsic elements of music itself that he defines as form. Stravinsky's music parallels Hanslick's philosophy, by emphasizing the importance of sound itself and by strongly denying the expression of emotion and feelings.

I have discussed the new findings from my research on how the three neoclassical works demonstrate Stravinsky's objectivism through my analysis of the musical examples from Stravinsky's neoclassical works, *Symphonies of Wind Instruments* (1920), *Perséphone* (1933), and *Orpheus* (1947).

One of my new findings from my research is that Stravinsky's music demonstrates more discontinuity and less development in the *Symphonies of Wind Instruments*. Even though I acknowledge connections, similarity, and continuity between the blocks that are distant from each other, I claim that the *Symphonies* represents a lack of continuity and development more strongly, because the adjacent blocks are very different from one another in every way: harmony, texture, melody, rhythm, range, and orchestration. Especially, the different successions of motivic patterns, the conflict of octatonic and diatonic systems, and sudden changes of instrumentation, tempo, register, harmony, and rhythm contribute to the lack of linear continuity and development.

Another finding is that his rearrangement of the French text of André Gide in *Perséphone: Mélodrame en Trois Parties* represents his objectivism, since his text-setting

prevents listeners from perceiving the meaning of the text. He rearranges the text by creating different accents, rhythms, rests, and pauses in the music from those in the text. By rearranging the text in this way, Stravinsky focuses on musical sound itself, rather than expressing subjective emotion and conveying the meaning of the text. His text-setting is different from that of romantic composers and many of his contemporaries, who tried to convey the meaning of text or story. Stravinsky's text-setting is distinctly different from Wagner's text-setting, which fits the accents and rhythms of the text and seeks to have the listener as associate a subjective emotion or mood with the same character through leitmotives. Stravinsky's ostinato construction manifests his rearrangement of the text. The superimposition of different strata in four voices and the "additive ostinato" prevents listeners from recognizing the meaning of the text. These musical features are associated with Stravinsky's aesthetics of organization, in which he structurally organizes musical materials and avoids the expression of emotion.

The final crucial finding from my research is his restrained and paradoxical expression in *Orpheus*. Restrained expression can be seen in the reduced instrumentation of the piece, its quiet dynamics, and cool tone colors. His restrained expression is different from the objectivism of his absolute music, which is not based on a story or text. Stravinsky's objective compositional traits are more prominently demonstrated in his absolute music, such as the *Symphonies of Wind Instruments*. Moreover, in *Orpheus* Stravinsky conveys the story in a paradoxical way in the opening bars of Scene 3, because the music expresses subjective emotion and conveys the meaning of the text in

the bass and demonstrates objective organization in the upper voices. Stravinsky's use of fugue manifests his concept of limitation or constraint that structurally organizes musical materials and avoids the expression of subjective emotion.

My research has shown strong connections between Stravinsky's neoclassicism and his objective aesthetics in these three works. Further research remains to be done to connect these ideas to other works of his neoclassic period and perhaps even back to some of his earlier works, such as "Rite of Spring."

For many years I have asked myself "What is the essence of music?" In the past, I thought music should always express feelings or convey story or text. Many people feel that music necessarily has the purpose of expressing something. However, my research has shown that Stravinsky does not always express emotion and that he sometimes focuses on presenting musical sound itself in his composition. Through my research, I hope that listeners and readers will acquire a broader understanding of Stravinsky's music by considering other aspects of music; that is, music exists in itself and it essentially is constructive, rather than necessarily expressing subjective emotion or being connected to story or text.



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