

THE POSITIVISTIC MYSTICISM OF ALEXANDER SCRIABIN:
AN ANALYSIS OF THE THREE ÉTUDES, OP. 65

LANA FORMAN

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN MUSIC
YORK UNIVERSITY
TORONTO, ONTARIO

May 2017

© Lana Forman, 2017

ABSTRACT

*The Positivistic Mysticism of Alexander Scriabin:
An Analysis of the Three Études, opus 65.*

Lana Forman
2017

Over the past several decades, scholarly writings on Scriabin's late piano music have largely focused on one topic: the pitch organisation of his unusual sonorities. A great variety of analytical techniques and methodologies has disregarded the extramusical aspects of Scriabin's mysticism and his esoteric theory of sound-colour correspondence, considering them irrelevant to an understanding of his music.

This thesis argues that the three essential components of the composer's late creative practice – the harmony, the underlying secret esoteric meaning, and the implicit correspondence of sound-colour ideas to the harmonic content – are interrelated and crucial to understanding Scriabin's late piano works.

The last three études of Scriabin, opus 65, are examined as a fragment of the composer's plan of consecutive and consistent execution of ideas first sketched by him in *L'Acte préalable* (ca. 1912-1915). The concepts drawn from Helena Blavatsky's metaphysical texts establish the conceptual framework in which Scriabin's rationalism and mysticism merge.

To my Mother. In Memoriam.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am very grateful to all my teachers, past and present, who, over the years have contributed in many different ways to this project. Without their impeccable professional guidance and everlasting encouragement this thesis would not be possible.

I would like to especially thank my supervisor, Dr. Dorothy de Val, for her countless suggestions, her patient demands for accuracy of detail and linguistic clarity.

I would also like to thank the members of my thesis examining committee, Dr. Mark Chambers and Dr. Marina Erechtkhoukova, as well as the Graduate Music Program Assistant Tere Tilban-Rios, who provided me with support and critical assistance during the final stage of this project.

Many thanks are to the two people who helped me to digitize my musical examples: Nina Soyfer and Mario Morello. I am also grateful to my friends and family in Russia and Germany who helped me locate and obtain rare Scriabin-related documents: Dr. Elena Sawtschenko (Regensburg, Germany) and Sergey Kamyshnikov (Moscow, Russia).

Finally, I am deeply grateful to all my Toronto-based colleagues and friends, especially to Dr. Manuela Tatilon, whose cordial companionship and boundless inspiration guided me throughout the years of my graduate studies at York University.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	ii
Dedication	iii
Acknowledgments	iv
Table of Contents	v-vi
List of Tables.....	vii
List of Figures.....	viii
List of Examples.....	xi-x
List of Plates.....	xi
INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER ONE: Walking Around a Chord	7
Historical Overview of Theoretical Approaches to Scriabin’s Late Harmony.....	8
Dernova’s Theory.....	21
Dernova-based Analysis of Scriabin’s Études op. 65.....	28
Étude op.65, no. 1.....	28
Étude op. 65, no. 2.....	34
Étude op. 65, no. 3.....	37
Closing Remarks on Dernova-Based Analysis and Her Theory.....	42
Critical Overview of Three Different Analytical Studies on Scriabin’s op. 65.....	46
Jay Reise’s analysis of op. 65, no.1.....	46
Kenneth Smith’s analysis of op. 65, no.2.....	49
Thomas Noll’s analysis of op. 65, no.3.....	51
Postlude.....	52
CHAPTER TWO: Possibilities of the Impossible.....	54
To the Question of Numbers.....	58
Number Three and Scriabin’s Concept of Theurgy.....	65
To the Question of the Order of Études in the Cycle.....	67
To the Question of Microcosm of op. 65 and the Doctrine of Seven Races.....	72
CHAPTER THREE: Vers le Contrepoint de Lumière.....	80
Scriabin’s ‘Synthetic’ Synesthesia in the Context of the Russian Culture of his Time.....	83
The Primary Sources of Literature on the subject.....	91
Scriabin and Theosophical Interpretations of Colour-Sound Correspondence.....	98
The Law of Polarity, Dernova’s Dual Modality and Scriabin’s Implicit Colour-Hearing....	108

CLOSING REMARKS.....	117
Bibliography	120
Appendix	133

List of Tables

TABLE 1: Blavatsky's Root Races associated with Scriabin's works op. 61-74.....74-77

List of Figures

FIGURE 1: Summary of Scriabin's most common Dominant-type sonorities identified by Dernova.....	22-23
FIGURE 2: The planets, the days of the week, metals, parts of the body, colour and number correspondence.....	101
FIGURE 3: Principles, colours, notes, numbers, and state of matter correspondence.....	102
FIGURE 4: Numbers, metals, planets, the Human Principles, the days of the week, colours, and sounds of musical scale correspondence.....	103-104

List of Examples

EXAMPLE 1: Overtone series above C and Prometheus chord.....	9
EXAMPLE 2.1: Dernova's tritone link.....	24
EXAMPLE 2.2: Dernova's major enharmonic sequence.....	26
EXAMPLE 2.3: Dernova's minor-third linked progression.....	27
EXAMPLE 3.1: Theme 1 (exposition, mm. 1-2).....	29
EXAMPLE 3.2: Theme 2 (exposition, mm. 23-26).....	29
EXAMPLE 3.3: Theme 2 (recapitulation, mm. 87-90).....	30
EXAMPLE 4.1: Theme 1 (development, mm. 35-37).....	30
EXAMPLE 4.2: Theme 2 (development, mm. 47-50).....	31
EXAMPLE 5.1: Theme 1 (coda, mm. 99-100).....	31
EXAMPLE 5.2: Theme 2 (coda, mm. 109-113).....	31
EXAMPLE 6.1: Two pairs of enharmonically equivalent tritone links, second theme in exposition (mm. 23-24 and 29-30).....	32
EXAMPLE 6.2: Three pairs of enharmonically equivalent tritone links, second theme in recapitulation (mm. 53-54, 55-56, and 59-60).....	33
EXAMPLE 7: Second element of Theme 1, underlying major enharmonic sequence.....	33
EXAMPLE 8.1: First minor-third linked progression (mm. 2-6).....	35
EXAMPLE 8.2: Second minor-third linked progression (mm. 15-16).....	35
EXAMPLE 9.1: Theme 1 (mm. 1-6).....	37

EXAMPLE 9.2: Theme 2 (mm. 17-20).....	38
EXAMPLE 10.1: Tritone links (TL) and major enharmonic sequence (MES) in Section A...	38-39
EXAMPLE 10.2: Scheme of the “triple -within- duple” distribution of TL and MES in Section A.....	39
EXAMPLE 11: TL and corresponding themes in Section B.....	40-41
EXAMPLE 12: TL and the minor-third-linked progressions (-3 LP) in the coda	41-42
EXAMPLE 13: Sequence of odd numbers in the op. 65 cycle	72
EXAMPLE 14: Comparison of Scriabin’s tonality-colour correspondence in Sabaneev (1911), Parisian Score manuscript and Vanechkina-Galeev “Musico-Chromo-Logo” Schemata (1975).....	95
EXAMPLE 15: Scriabin’s key-colour correspondence in Myers (1914-15).....	106
EXAMPLE 16: Correspondence of tritone links and colours within the formal structure of the Three Études op.65.....	112-113

List of Plates

PLATE 1: Title page of op. 65 Jurgenson edition (1912).....82

INTRODUCTION

The publication of Scriabin's *Études* opus 65 in the summer of 1912 received little attention in the Russian and western European musical press. The annals of that year were full of far more striking events than the appearance of the three rather bizarre yet didactic piano pieces, as suggested by their description as "études." Today it is impossible to say to what extent Scriabin, preoccupied with the idea of his masterwork, *Mysterium*, during the last period of his creative life, was aware of or influenced by the 'real' world around him.¹

Scriabin's life in 1912 revolved around his grandiose project of *Mysterium*, a festival of "omni-art" that would fuse music and speech, coloured lights and perfume, dance and gesture with his theosophically inspired beliefs.² The performance of the *Mysterium* was to take place in

¹ Beginning with the first extensive English language monograph on Scriabin written by A. E. Hull (1916), Scriabin's music is usually divided into three compositional periods: early (Romantic, Chopinesque, ending ca. 1902-3), middle (increasingly chromatic, ending ca. 1907-10), and late (moving toward atonality, beginning with op. 60, 1910-15). This chronology was later adopted by Hull's successors: Alfred J. Swan (1923), Faubion Bowers (1969 and 1973 volumes), Hugh Macdonald (1978), and James M. Baker (1986). The boundaries of these chronological divisions vary, however, from one scholar to the next. Baker (1986:82), for instance, identifies the middle period of "highly experimental works" (from op. 32, No.2 to op. 57, or from 1903 to 1907), whereas Jonathan Powell sees it as ca. 1903-1909, up till the *Feuillet d'album*, op. 58 (1909). See Jonathan Powell, "Skryabin, Aleksandr Nikolayevich," in *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/25946> (accessed February 17, 2017). The interpretation of Russian scholar Yury Kholopov who also divides Scriabin's music into three compositional periods: 1) op. 1-29, an early period (1886-1901); 2) op. 30-57, a middle period (1903-1908); 3) op. 58-74, a late period (1910-1914), appears to be most logical as he notes unnoticed in English sources presence of a roughly one year of *compositional caesura* between the first two periods; the same can be observed after the 'end' of the third period: the *Five Preludes* op. 74 were written in early months of 1914 and became Scriabin's last opus as the composer died in April of the following year. See in Yury Kholopov, "Scriabin and the Harmony of the 20th Century," *Scholarly Notes* (Moskva: Izdatel'skoe Ob"edinenie Kompozitor, 1993), 1-25. The article is available on line at http://www.anscriabin.ru/index.php?catid=57:publications&id=109:scriabin-and-harmony-of-the-xx-century&Itemid=133&option=com_content&view=article

² Gawboy succinctly summarizes Schloezer's thoughts on the subject of "omni-art": "Scriabin believed that there had once been a divine, primal unity which had been broken to form the diversity of the material world. Art, too, had once been unified, but had since been fragmented to form the separate genres of music, painting, dance, and poetry. Scriabin's belief in the fundamental correspondence between art and life led him to theorize that by

a specially built temple in India. It would re-enact the evolution of the universe and humankind and, with the power of music, speed up the time to end the material world and arrive to an entirely spiritual state of being. The firsthand accounts of several of Scriabin's contemporaries provide many colourful details on the project, the production of which "would lead to cosmic collapse and universal death."³ Sabaneev,⁴ for instance, recalls Scriabin talking about using "imaginary" sounds, written down in a "special notation."⁵ Schloezer writes about Scriabin's intentions to "introduce tactile sensations into the score of the *Mysterium*, so as to transform the entire human body into a sounding instrument."⁶ Goldenweiser talks about Scriabin's description of the use of incense, mists and lights to modify the architectural contours of the cathedral in which the performance was to take place.⁷

reuniting the arts in the *Mysterium*, his "omni-art" could bring about the primal unity which had existed at the beginning of the cosmos." In Anna Gawboy, "Alexander Scriabin's Theurgy in Blue: Esotericism and the Analysis of *Prometheus: Poem of Fire*, op. 60." Ph.D. dissertation (Yale University, 2010), 38.

³ Boris de Schloezer, *Scriabin: Artist and Mystic*, translated by Nicholas Slonimsky (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 177. Boris de Schloezer (1881-1969) was a Russian-French writer on music. Since his sister Tatiana Schloezer was the second wife of Scriabin, Schloezer became an intimate friend of Scriabin, who confided in him his theosophical and musical ideas. His originally published monograph on Scriabin in 1923.

⁴ Leonid Sabaneev (1881-1968) was a friend of Scriabin, about whom he wrote a monograph *Vospominaniya o Skryabine*, 1925. In the absence of English translation the Anglophone Scriabinists may refer to the *Erinnerungen an Alexander Skryabin*, translated by Ernst Kuhn (Berlin: Verlag Ernst Kuhn, 2005). Sabaneev published a great number of articles on Scriabin between 1909 and 1915 and later on. Among his publishing venues were *Russian Music Gazette*, *Muzykal'ny Sovremennik* [Music Contemporary] and the popular journal *Muzyka*. According to *Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians* he compromised himself when he wrote a devastating review of Prokofiev's *Scythian Suite* at a concert that never took place. Yet his early writings on Scriabin have remained the most reliable and authentic primary sources for Scriabin's studies worldwide.

⁵ Sabaneev quotes Scriabin saying: "Silence has a sound. ... I think there can be a musical composition consisting of silence. ... In the *Mysterium* I want to use these 'imaginary' sounds that will not sound in reality, but only in one's imagination. ... I want to write them down using a special notation, a code of a sort..." In Sabaneev, *Vospominaniya*, 220.

⁶ Schloezer, *Artist and Mystic* (1987), 84.

⁷ Anna Goldenweiser, undated diary entry, in *A.N. Scriabin. Pis'ma* [Scriabin's Letters] edited by A.V. Kashperov (Moskva: Muzyka, 1965/2003), 612.

By 1912, Scriabin, realizing the impracticality of his creative ambitions, was working on the so-called “Safe Mystery,” *Predvaritel’noe Deistvie*, the *Acte préalable*, or *Preparatory Act*.⁸ According to Boris de Schloezer, a prolific writer on the composer, “Scriabin felt that he had to accomplish something tangible, here and now, so the *Acte préalable* became an abridged version of the *Mysterium*. In it Scriabin returned to the obsessive image of cosmic death in a state of ecstasy, along the lines of his opera libretto but elevated to a much higher plane.”⁹ A draft of the libretto and musical sketches for the *Acte préalable* has not been published in Russia since 1915; the French version of the libretto made available by Manfred Kelkel (1978) was translated into English by Simon Morrison (2002).¹⁰ A number of fairly recent studies on the composer suggests the presence of close and unequivocal correspondence of Helena Blavatsky’s theosophical teachings with all Scriabin’s works written after *Prometheus* op. 60.¹¹ These works are seen as a consecutive and consistent execution of the ideas sketched by Scriabin in his *L’Acte préalable*, a sort of proto-Mysterical ‘synthetic’ experiment or a series of carefully planned

⁸ In 1966, Sabaneev, who became rather critical of Scriabin’s more than half-a-century old plans for the *Mysterium*, wrote that Scriabin was persuaded by his friends (himself and Vyacheslav Ivanov) “that he should for the time defer his great Mystery, which was to culminate in the ‘annihilation of the world in a fiery ecstasy’ and write an interim work to be called the ‘Initial Act.’ This was to be a grandiose cantata on the same theme, but without the cataclysmic finale. Scriabin agreed to this and we nicknamed it the “Safe Mystery.” In Sabaneev, “A.N. Scriabin: A Memoir,” in *Russian Review* 25/3 (July 1966): 265-66.

⁹ Schloezer, *Artist and Mystic* (1987), 292.

¹⁰ See Manfred Kelkel, *Alexandre Scriabine: sa vie, l’ésotéricisme et le langage musicale dans son œuvre*, volume three (Paris: Editions Honoré Champion, 1978); and Simon Morrison, *Russian Opera and the Symbolist Movement* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002), 313-47.

¹¹ Among them are James M. Baker, “Scriabin’s Music as Prism for Mystical Philosophy,” in *Music Theory in Concept and Practice*, ed. James M. Baker, David Beach, and Jonathan W. Bernard (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 1997), 53-96; Andrei Bandura, “Tale of Seven Races: Evolution of a Man in the Musical and Literary Legacy of A. N. Scriabin,” *Delfis Journal*, no.3-11 (1997): 1-12; “Skryabin i novaya nauchnaya paradigma XX veka” [Skryabin and the new scientific paradigm of the 20th century], *MAk* 4 (1993): 175–80; and Marina Lobanova, *Theosophist – Theurg – Mystic – Magician: Alexander Scriabin and his Time* (St. Petersburg: Petroglif, Pis’mena Vremeni Series, 2012).

works that would ‘prepare’ the world for a final transfiguration: its ‘dematerialization’ and rebirth at a new plane of existence.

This thesis is an investigation of a small fragment of this ‘alternate reality’ presented by Scriabin in his opus 65. My work brings together three essential and interrelated components of the composer’s late creative practice: his harmonic language, the underlying secret esoteric meaning, and the implicit correspondence of his sound-colour theory with the harmonic content of the works.

Chapter One, “Walking Around a Chord,” is dedicated to the paramount and far-reaching aspect of Scriabin’s musical language of the late period – his harmony. It begins with a brief historical overview of theoretical approaches to the subject starting from the earliest theories of the second decade of the twentieth century up to the most recent analytical models including Artificial Intelligence. The next section presents a harmonic analysis of the three études opus 65 performed by applying the methodology proposed by the Russian theorist, Varvara Pavlovna Dernova. The basic tenets of her theory (1968) are outlined prior to my analysis. An Appendix provides complete scores of the études accompanied by the schemata of the analytical elements involved. I argue that the application of this theory lays a historically relevant foundation for understanding Scriabin’s late music. Two terms used by Scriabin – “harmonie-melody” and “harmonic polarity” – receive a concise commentary followed by some remarks on Yury Kholopov’s concept of “neotonicity” as applied to Scriabin’s music. The final section of this chapter presents a critical overview of three substantially different analytical interpretations of Scriabin’s opus 65.

The importance of the philosophical mysticism of Theosophy as presented in the writings of Helena Blavatsky guided Scriabin’s creative endeavours throughout the late period of his life.

Much of the scholarly literature on the subject since 1915 has been dedicated to *Prometheus* op. 60.¹² Even though no explicit guidelines for theosophical interpretations related to the works written after 1911 were left by the composer, I argue that the understanding of his musical structures can be broadened and enlightened by viewing them in a theosophical framework, which brings the musical analysis closer to the aesthetic principles that shaped his music. This topic will be discussed in Chapter Two, “Possibilities of the Impossible.” My argument will pertain to several specific areas. They are: first, the esoteric meaning of numbers and their correspondence to the structure of the chord “around which Scriabin walks” (a term to which we will return in Chapter One); secondly, the numerical allusions to his self-defined spherical form [*forma shar*]; thirdly, the significance of the number and the order of pieces in the cycle. The third supposition will be further connected with Scriabin’s concept of theurgy¹³ and the placement of the cycle within Blavatsky’s model of anthropogenesis, the Doctrine of Seven Races.

In the Chapter Three, “Vers le Contrepoint de Lumière,” we shall see that Scriabin’s colour hearing was deeply influenced by theosophical teachings of Madame Blavatsky and her

¹² The examples are numerous starting with the earliest publication of Leonid Sabaneev, “Scriabin’s *Prometheus*,” in *The Blaue Reiter Almanac*, ed. Wassily Kandinsky and Franz Marc, trans. Henning Falkenstein (London: Thames and Hudson, 1974), 127-414. Among most recent studies are Anna Gawboy, “Alexander Scriabin’s Theurgy in Blue: Esotericism and the Analysis of *Prometheus: Poem of Fire*, op. 60.” Ph.D. dissertation (Yale University, 2010); Marina Lobanova, “Zahlen, Mystik, Magie. Neueste Erkenntnisse zu Skrijabins «Prométhée»,” in *Das Orchester* 1/2002; Lincoln M. Ballard, “A Russian Mystic in the Age of Aquarius: The U.S. Revival of Alexander Scriabin in the 1960s,” in *American Music* 30, no. 2 (Summer 2012):194-227; James M. Baker, “Prometheus and the Quest for Color-Music: The World Premiere of Scriabin’s Poem of Fire with Lights, New York, March 20, 1915,” in *Music and Modern Art*, ed. by James Leggio. (New York: Routledge, 2002), 61-95; and Maria Carlson, “Fashionable Occultism: The Theosophical World of Russian Composer Aleksandr Scriabin,” *Journal of the Scriabin Society of America* 12, no. 1 (Winter 2007–8): 54–62.

¹³ The theosophical concept of theurgy, the act of divine creation, in Scriabin means apocalyptic transformation of the universe and human spirit through his art.

disciple and successor, Annie Besant.¹⁴ At the same time I present the issue of Scriabin's synesthesia as peculiar to Russian culture at the *fin de siècle*. The primary sources of literature on the subject as well as a theosophical interpretation of Scriabin's Law of Polarity will shed new light on Dernova and Yavorsky's concept of dual modality and Scriabin's implicit meaning of colour in his opus 65. Consolidation of the three main topics of this thesis, Scriabin's harmony, his esoteric philosophy and the system of sound-colour correspondence will be offered at the end of this chapter.

All references to Blavatsky's *The Secret Doctrine* are given according to an electronic version of the text made available by the Theosophical University Press Online Edition.¹⁵ All translations from Russian sources are mine unless otherwise indicated. The online versions to the books, articles, and other web-based sources in Russian receive electronic links whenever possible.

¹⁴*Occultism of the Secret Doctrine*, published soon after Blavatsky's death in 1891, is also known as the third volume of the *Secret Doctrine*. It was largely Besant's compilation of the materials not included in the first two volumes. My citation of this work refers to its original version: Helena Blavatsky and Annie Besant, *Occultism of the Secret Doctrine* (Whitefish, MT: Kessinger Publishing, 1993).

¹⁵ This edition is a digital reproduction of Helena Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine: The Synthesis of Science, Religion, and Philosophy*. Two volumes (London: The Theosophical Publishing Company, Ltd., 1888). Available at <http://www.holybooks.com/wp-content/uploads/The-Secret-Doctrine-by-H.P.-Blavatsky.pdf> http://blavatskyarchives.com/theosophypdfs/blavatsky_the_secret_doctrine_3rd_volume_1897.pdf

CHAPTER ONE

Walking Around a Chord

This chapter aims to present a harmonic analysis of the last three piano études written by Alexander Scriabin in Switzerland during the summer of 1912.¹⁶ I use Varvara Dernova's methodology, which allows me to establish connections and to show possible implications of Scriabin's harmonic thinking onto two other important components of his creative process: his esoteric philosophy and his theory of sound-colour correspondence. A discussion of those follows in chapters two and three of this thesis. This chapter begins with a historical overview of theoretical approaches to Scriabin's late harmony. I proceed with a brief outline of the main propositions of Dernova's theory. The next section presents the harmonic analysis of the three études opus 65, based on Dernova's approach. An Appendix provides the complete scores of the compositions supplemented by a two-fold schematic presentation of the corresponding analytical elements. Later, Scriabin's concept of *Polarity* in relation to his harmony receives a brief discussion in the section subtitled 'Closing Remarks on Dernova-Based Analysis and Her Theory'. The topic of "harmonic polarity" is further discussed in connection with Yury Kholopov's concept of "neotonicity." The final part of this chapter presents a critical overview of three substantially different analytical interpretations of Scriabin's opus 65: No. 1 – by Jay Reise (octatonic/whole-tone approach), No. 2 – by Kenneth Smith (gendered musical analysis

¹⁶ A. Kashperov comments on Scriabin's letter to Sabaneev of July 21 (August 3), 1912 (No. 686) by saying that this letter quite precisely determines the time of writing of opus 65. On a hand-written copy of the second étude (done by T.F. Schloezer-Scriabina) there is an inscription by Scriabin's hand: "July 18, 1912, city of Beatenberg." See *Scriabin's Letters*, ed. A. Kashperov (Moskva: Muzyka, 2003), 594.

informed by post-Freudian psychoanalytical theory), and No. 3 – by Thomas Noll (AI and sieve-theoretical method of computational musicology).

Historical Overview of Theoretical Approaches to Scriabin's Late Harmony

It is astonishing to see how many different analytical methods and models seeking to explain Scriabin's unique musical language of the late period have been introduced since the beginning of the twentieth century. In 1988 Richard Taruskin stated that "every musical scholar who has looked into Scriabin's scores has drawn different conclusions about his technical idiom."¹⁷ As of today, the battlefield of Scriabin's analysts remains fairly active. It appears, however, that Scriabin's late sonorities once considered to be "resistant to explication"¹⁸ are not 'resistant' but rather accommodating to nearly any applied methodology, always producing some sort of logical explanation to the structure of Scriabin's sonorities. The following section will provide a brief historical overview of purely theoretical and blended, multidisciplinary approaches to Scriabin's music composed between 1910 and 1914.

The earliest writings on the subject were presented by the members of Scriabin's Russian entourage, notably Leonid Sabaneev, Boris de Schloezer and Vyacheslav Karatygin.¹⁹ They

¹⁷ Richard Taruskin, "Reviews of *The Music of Alexander Scriabin* by James M. Baker and *Scriabin: Artist and Mystic* by Boris de Schloesser," *Music Theory Spectrum* 10 (Spring 1988): 144 -69.

¹⁸ Taruskin, Review of Baker, 145.

¹⁹ Vyacheslav Karatygin (1875-1925) was a broad-minded amateur musician, prominent music critic from 1907 until 1917 and one of the organizers of the *Evenings of Modern Music*. He welcomed the music of Scriabin, Stravinsky and Prokofiev at a time when most Russian critics regarded them as unacceptable. A memorial collection of his articles, *V.G. Karatygin, His Life and Work*, was published by the Russian Institute for the History of Art (Leningrad, 1927). The *Great Soviet Encyclopedia* (1979) states that Karatygin graduated from the natural sciences section of the Department of Physics and Mathematics at the University of St. Petersburg in 1898 and worked as a chemist until 1907. He also published several works on agricultural subjects. See Yury Keldysh, "Vyacheslav

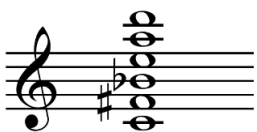
attempted to explain the Prometheus or ‘synthetic’ chord as having its origins in the acoustic scale originating from the row of overtones or harmonic series used to construct the ‘vertical’ sonorities.²⁰ Thus, according to Sabaneev,²¹ Scriabin’s intuitive selection of the overtones 8 to 14, resulted in the final six-sound form identical to the ‘synthetic’ chord:

EXAMPLE 1: Overtone row of C and Prometheus chord.

Overtone row (Harmonic series) of C

C2	C3	G	C4	E	G	B \flat	C5	D	E	F \sharp	G	A	B \flat	B \natural	C6
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16

Prometheus Chord (in quartal form)



C5	F \sharp	B \flat	E	A	D
8	11	14	10	13	9

Karatygin,” in *The Great Soviet Encyclopedia* online edition: http://gatchina3000.ru/big/059/044_bolshaya-sovetskaya.htm

²⁰ Scriabin himself called it the "chord of the pleroma" (*akkord pleromy*) apparently referring to the Gnostic meaning of the word (pleroma as the spiritual universe, the abode of God and of the totality of the divine powers and emanations). Morrison (1998: 314) writes that this chord “was designed [...] to reveal what was in essence beyond the mind of man to conceptualize.”

²¹ Sabaneev, *Vospominaniya*, 74. Sabaneev, who focuses exclusively on the vertical aspect of this sonority, does not describe it in relation to any kind of scale. The term acoustic or overtone scale that generally refers to a seven-note collection made of 8th to 16th overtones of C was coined later by a Hungarian music theorist, Ernő Lendvai, in his analysis of Béla Bartók’s music. See Ernő Lendvai, *Béla Bartók: An Analysis of His Music* (London: Kahn & Averill (1971), 27.

This explanation was further tied into the theory of ultra-chromaticism or omnitonicity, a subject that produced a lengthy debate between Sabaneev²² and Arseny Avraamov²³ between the years 1910 and 1916. In 1914 the theory of ultra-chromaticism, very popular at the time in England, was featured in Rosa Newmarch's commentaries on Scriabin's concert programs in London.²⁴ A remarkable side issue of all these writings was the authors' consideration of aesthetic and 'philosophical' aspects of Scriabin's late harmonies. In other words, it was the 'mystical-philosophical' aura of the articles, using the terms such as "The Eternal Essence", "The Playful Spirit", "The Dark Waves of Chaos" that initially received such widespread attention in the West.²⁵ This theory, although important from a historical perspective, can hardly

²² See multiple articles by Leonid Sabaneev, e.g., "Pis'ma o muzyke: ul'trakhromaticheskaya polemika" [Letters about music: the ultrachromatic polemic], *Muzykal'niy sovremennik* no.6 (1916): 99–108; numerous *Muzykal'nye Besedy* [Musical Conversations] published in the *Muzyka* journal: no. 112 (1913): 36-37; no. 114 (1913): 67-68; no. 117 (1913): 119; "Printsipy tvorchestva A. Skryabina" no. 194 (1914): 482-85; no. 202 (1914): 611-16, no. 203 (1914): 628-29; and no. 209 (1915): 83-103.

²³ Arseny Mikhaylovich Avraamov (1886-1944) was a Russian composer and theorist. Marina Lobanova's article in *Oxford Music Online* informs us that Avraamov studied theory at the music school attached to the Moscow Philharmonic Society with I.N. Protopopov and A.M. Koreshchenko (1908–11) and took private composition lessons with Sergey Taneyev. Avraamov sought to overcome equal temperament and tonality by his creation of an 'ultrachromatic' 48-tone system. This method was proposed in a thesis entitled *Universal'naya sistema tonov* ('The Universal System of Tones') and was realized in his demonstrations which took place in 1927 in Berlin, Frankfurt and Stuttgart. He is considered a precursor of the *musique concrète* movement with his *Simfoniya gudkov* ('Symphony of Factory Sirens'), 1923. Among his articles related to the Sabaneev-Avraamov debate are "Puti i sredstva tvorchestva" [Ways and means of creativity], in *Muzyka*, no.164 (1914):39–43; no.172 (1916): 215–17; "7–1–13," in *Muzyka*, no. 232 (1915): 476–9; "Gryadushchaya muzykal'naya nauka i novaya era v istorii muzyki" [Music science of the future and a new era in music history], in *Muzykal'niy sovremennik* no.2 (1916): 80–103; "Smychkovyy polikhotd" [The String Polychord], in *Muzykal'niy sovremennik* no.3 (1915): 44-52; and "Ul'trakhromatizm" ili "omnitonal'nost,'" in *Muzykal'niy sovremennik* nos.4–5 (1916): 157–68; Accessed on 27. 09. 2016.
http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/subscriber/article/grove/music/52713?q=arseny+avraamov&search=quick&pos=1&_start=1#firsthit

²⁴ Rosa Newmarch: "Prometheus, the Poem of Fire," *The Musical Times*, April 1914: 227-32. Another popularizer of Sabaneev's theory was George Howard Clutsam, a British pianist and composer of Australian birth. He published several articles in *The Musical Times* in 1913. See George Clutsam, "The Harmonies of Scriabine," in *The Musical Times* 54, no. 841 (Mar. 1, 1913): 156-58; "More Harmonies of Scriabine," in *The Musical Times* 54, no. 845 (Jul. 1, 1913): 441-43; and "More Harmonies of Scriabine (Continued)," in *The Musical Times* 54, no. 846 (Aug. 1, 1913): 512-14. Accessed: 29-09-2016 01:09 UTC, Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/906336>

²⁵ As quoted in Varvara Dernova, *Garmoniya Scriabina* [Scriabin's Harmony] (Leningrad: Muzyka, 1968), 16.

be considered as a serious analytical study, since none of its proponents was qualified to present an objective analysis of Scriabin's works or even any general principles of his compositional procedures. The recent revival of the overtone-multichromatic theory by Marina Lobanova²⁶ likewise lacks any sound theoretical basis, yet it does provide a convincing argument regarding the relationship of the 'overtone vertical constructs' and the composer's theosophical convictions. In addition, Lobanova's chapter on Scriabin's harmony avers that Sabaneev's claim to have introduced Scriabin to acoustics was not the case, since it was the composer himself who explained the overtone origin of his Prometheus chord to Sabaneev in 1910, and not vice versa as suggested in Sabaneev's *Reminiscences*.²⁷

Shortly after Scriabin's death the first extensive monograph on the composer was written in English by A. Eaglefield Hull (1916). He summarized Sabaneev's theories on the Prometheus Chord in the chapter titled "The Mystic Chord", the name that has been used ever since to describe this chord in the English literature.²⁸ Around the same time significant studies of Scriabin's musical language were undertaken by his Russian compatriot Boleslav Yavorsky. His *Exercises in the Formation of Schemes of Modal Rhythm* were published in Moscow in 1915, but fell into obscurity after the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917.²⁹ Yavorsky's theory of Modal

²⁶ Marina Lobanova, *Theosophist – Theurg – Mystic – Magician: Alexander Scriabin and his Time*. (St. Petersburg: Petroglif, Pis'mena Vremeni Series, 2012), 193-202.

²⁷ Sabaneev, *Vospominaniya*, 73-74.

²⁸ A. Eaglefield Hull, *A Great Russian Tone-Poet: Scriabin*. (New York: AMS Press, 1970).

²⁹ Yavorsky's theories received brief summary in English by Gordon D. McQuerre, "The Theories of Boleslav Yavorsky," in *Russian Theoretical Thought in Music*, ed. Gordon D. McQuerre, (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1983), 109-164. Boleslav Leopoldovich Yavorsky (1877-1942) was a Russian musicologist, music educator and pianist of Polish descent. He graduated from the Kiev College of Music, having specialized in piano with Pukhal'sky (1894-8); he also studied mathematics at Kiev University, 1897-8. He then attended the Moscow Conservatory (1898-1903), studying the piano (with N.Y. Shishkin) and composition (with Ippolitov-Ivanov and Taneyev) and attending Smolensky's course in the history of Russian church music. From 1921 to 1931 he was a member of the State Academy of Artistic Studies (later the State Academy of Arts), and in 1941 he was awarded an honorary doctorate. His celebrated 'theory of modal rhythm' examined the systems of *lad* ('modes') developed during the

Rhythm was popularized in England by two enthusiastic musicologists, Eaglefield Hull (mentioned above) and Alexander Brent-Smith, who wrote extensively on Scriabin.³⁰ The 1923 publication of another Englishman, Alfred J. Swan, displays a hyperbolic language, undoubtedly a reflection of Swan's true admiration for the 'Titan', the 'Messiah among men' etc.³¹ His occasional brief analytical comments were largely based on earlier Russian publications of Evgeny Gunst.³²

20th century. The study established for the first time the general principles according to which these systems function, examining the inner coherence and the 'objective' effect of atonal systems built primarily on augmented and diminished intervals. His work paved the way for V.P. Dernova's groundbreaking *Garmoniya Skryabina*, published in 1968 but written in 1948. Yavorsky's theories were later expanded by Protopopov to include quarter tones. Messiaen also studied Yavorsky's writings, and Messiaen's idea of intonation as a first principle of expressive musical form reflects the writer's influence. Among his other writing that affected Scriabin's scholarship in Russia are *Stroyeniye muzikal'noy rechi* [The Construction of Musical Speech] (Moscow, 1908), *Uprazhneniya v obrazovanii ladovogo ritma* [Exercises in the formation of schemes of modal rhythm], (Moscow, 1915, 2/1928), and 'Zametki o tvorcheskom mışhlenii russkikh kompozitorov ot Glinki do Skryabina' [Notes on creative thinking in Russian composers from Glinka to Skryabin], 'Vospominaniya o Sergeye Ivanoviche Taneyeve' [Reminiscences of Sergey Ivanovich Taneyev], *B. Yavorskiy: izbranniye trudi*, ed. D.D. Shostakovich (Moscow, 1987), 41–235, 241–348. See Tat'yana S. Kyuregyan's article *Yavorsky, Boleslav Leopoldovich* in <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/subscriber/article/grove/music/30691?q=boleslav+yavorsky&search=quick&pos=1&start=1#firsthit> Accessed: 29-09-2016 11:09.

³⁰ Some of this material can be found in *The Musical Times*. See Arthur Eaglefield Hull, "The Pianoforte Sonatas of Scriabin (Continued)," in *The Musical Times* 57, no. 886 (Dec. 1, 1916): 539-42; "Scriabin: A Comment," in *The Musical Times* 67, no. 1005 (Nov. 1, 1926): 993-99; Alexander Brent-Smith, "Some Reflections on the Work of Scriabin (Concluded)," in *The Musical Times* 67, no. 1002 (Aug. 1, 1926): 692-94; "Some Reflections on the Work of Scriabin," *The Musical Times* 67, no. 1001 (Jul. 1, 1926): 593-95. Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/stable/911826> Accessed: 04-11-2016 02:30 UTC.

³¹ The book contains a brief outline of Scriabin's life and career, and the list of his published works. It is comprised of two parts, biographical and critical. Curious and very Swan-like are subheadings in some chapters, such as *A Soaring Elf* (Chapter 9), *The Elf v. The Titan* (Chapter 9), or *A Streak of Diabolism* (Chapter 10). See Alfred J. Swan, *Scriabin*. New York: Da Capo Press (1969).

³² Evgeny Gunst's book *Skryabin i yego tvorchestvo* [Skryabin and his work] (Moscow, 1915) is available online at http://imwerden.de/pdf/gunst_skryabin_1915_text.pdf Evgeny Ottovich Gunst (1877-1950), a lawyer by education, was a Russian musical critic, pianist and composer who befriended Scriabin around 1907. After the revolutionary upheavals, he emigrated in 1920 via Estonia to Paris. Although he was active in the Parisian cultural environment during his exile, he died there unrecognized and impoverished in 1950. Today his name hardly appears in any encyclopedia of Russian music. His biography seems to have been as much deleted from general consciousness as from official music history. Long after his death his library, undiscovered for many decades, was found in 2010 in the basement of the University of Basel's Musicological Institute. Research on the life and works of this remarkable individual has not been forthcoming yet. Swiss pianist Susanne Lang's recent recording of Gunst's compositions proves that the oblivion of Evgeny Gunst has been completely undeserved. This information is available at http://www.susannelang.eu/?nav=cd_einspielungen

In the 1930s the notable writers on Scriabin's harmony were German musicologists Paul Dickenmann and Kurt Westphal, and Polish theorist Zofia Lissa. The Germans described Scriabin's harmony as a "loosening" of the classical major-minor tonality, "die Auflockerung der Dur-moll Tonalität." Dickenmann's book on Scriabin, *Die Entwicklung der Harmonie bei A. Skrjabin* (1935) dealt extensively with 'Rückung', or shift, the movement of the chords belonging to distantly related keys, thus completely abandoning the classical concept of tonality. Kurt Westphal (1935) recognized the dominant origins of Scriabin's sonorities; the author did not, however, provide any systematic framework of their functions. Zofia Lissa's dissertation on Scriabin's harmony (1929) defended at the Lvov Conservatory (Ukraine) was an interesting forerunner of Dernova's work. It dealt largely with the quartal interpretation of Scriabin's harmonies. Her later analysis on Scriabin's harmony in "Geschichtliche Vorform der Zwölftontechnik," published in *Acta Musicologica* in 1935, was a serial analysis. Lissa's methodology dealing with the quartal harmonies and quasi-serial approaches became most influential in the North America starting from the early 1970s.

In 1948 the Russian theorist Varvara Dernova completed her dissertation on Scriabin's harmony which expanded Yavorsky's ideas of Dominant-type sonorities separated by a tritone.³³ Her work was finally approved and published twenty years later when the political realities of the Soviet regime loosened up at the time of Nikita Khrushchev's *Otpepel'*.³⁴ Dernova's theory,

³³ More on Dernova's theory will be presented later in this chapter.

³⁴ Curiously, the significant interest in Dernova's theory in North America since the late 1980s did not produce any biographical entry in any of the English-language musical dictionaries or encyclopedias. *The Great Soviet Encyclopedia* (1990) states that Dernova was born in 1906 in the city of Elabuga. She defended her doctoral dissertation on Kazakh folk music in 1974. From 1948 to 1981 she taught at the conservatory of Alma-Ata. Beyond any doubt her first attempt to defend the dissertation on Scriabin's harmony in 1948 in St Petersburg (Leningrad) conservatory had secured this long-term professorship geographically far removed from the Soviet and former Russian capitals – Moscow and Leningrad. The majority her *published* works were dedicated to Kazakh and Kyrgyz folklore. The *Harmony of Scriabin* (1968) and *The Last Preludes of Scriabin* (1988) are at the bottom of the list with no accompanying comments. See <http://www.music-dic.ru/html-music-keld/d/2211.html>

discussed and continuously ‘amended’ by many Russian theorists, most notably Nikolai Skrebkov, Sergei Pavchinsky and many others, received the most comprehensive and culturally appropriate explication in the writings and lectures of Yury Kholopov.³⁵ Kholopov abandoned Derno’s idea of ‘implied tonality’ by proposing the existence of a newly-understood tonic, the fusion of the two tritone-separated and identically-sounding dominants which he termed the *Central Element*.³⁶ The idea of the Central Element was most likely borrowed from a German musicologist Gottfried Eberle, who published his *Zwischen Tonalität und Atonalität: Studien zur Harmonik Alexander Skrjabin* in 1978.³⁷ Eberle, in turn, was basing his ‘Klangzentrum’ postulate on earlier theories of Hermann Erpf, who first published his *Studien zur Harmonie und*

Several websites provide bits and pieces of information on Derno’s family and its tragic destiny after the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution. According to these sources at the age of 12 Derno, the daughter of the local priest in Yelabuga, had witnessed the brutal execution of her father and three older brothers by the soldiers of the Red Army. In 1976 she wrote her *Reminiscences of my Father and my Brothers* part of which can be read at

<http://www.kazeparhia.ru/zhurnal/?id=26292>

Among other web-based sources available are the site of the Yelabuga Historical Museum at

http://www.elabuga.com/kraev/_dernov.html

<http://www.rusvera.mrezha.ru/566/4.htm> (web periodical journal) and the

http://new.rusarchives.ru/guide/lf_ussr/dav_der.shtml

³⁵ Yury Nikolayevich Kholopov (1932–2003) was an outstanding Russian scholar and music teacher. He taught at the Moscow Conservatory for over forty years and had influenced the musical development of several generations of his many students in and outside of his alma mater, the author of this thesis included. In her article on Kholopov in the *Oxford Dictionary On-line* Tat’yana S. Kyuregyan writes that Kholopov reformed the music theory courses he taught, abandoning biases which had built up during the ‘struggle against formalism’ and created new composition and piano exercises to aid the student’s understanding of theory. In his two dissertations, Kandidat (*Sovremenniy chert’i garmonii Prokof’yeva*) and Doctoral (*Ocherki sovremennoy garmonii* (‘Essays on Contemporary Harmony’), and in many other writings, Kholopov sought to resolve the problems associated with contemporary harmony. He broadened the field of inquiry in his later work to include modality in medieval and Renaissance music and the harmonic systems of Classical and Romantic music, offering fresh insights into the latter, which he related to musical form (*Garmoniya: teoretichesky kurs*, 1988). In an attempt to grasp the essence of music, he presented an overview of the entire history of musical thought to trace the ‘invariable factor’ linking music of all ages. See in Tat’yana S. Kyuregyan, “Kholopov, Yury Nikolayevich” at http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/subscriber/article/grove/music/48252?q=kholopov&se arch=quick&pos=1&_start=1#firsthit

Throughout his illustrious career Kholopov published over 800 articles including 10 monographs. Some of his works (in Russian and German) are available at Kholopov’s online library: <http://www.kholopov.ru/index.html>

³⁶ Холопов Ю., *Гармония. Теоретический курс*. М., 1988 [Yury Kholopov. *Harmony. Theoretical Course*. Moskva: Muzyka (1988)]. See Chapter 11 of this book.

³⁷ Gottfried Eberle, *Zwischen Tonalität und Atonalität: Studien zur Harmonik Alexander Skrjabin*. (Salzburg: Katzbichler, 1978).

Klangtechnik der neueren Musik in Wiesbaden in 1927.³⁸ Manfred Kelkel (1929-1999), a German-born French musicologist, published his massive dissertation *Alexandre Scriabine: sa vie, l'ésotéricisme et le langage musicale dans son œuvre* in the same year as Eberle, 1978. It did not, however, entail any comprehensive discussion on Scriabin's harmonic conundrum of the works after 1910. According to Kelkel, the continuous 'evolution' of the composer's harmonic language brought him to new shores of the serialism years before the crystallization of the 12-tone technique in the works of the composers of the Second Viennese School.³⁹

The proto-serial approach to Scriabin's late sonorities became dominant in North American studies on the subject soon after the publication of Allen Forte's *The Structure of Atonal Music* (1973).⁴⁰ The strict pitch class set methodology was adopted by James Baker in his Ph.D. dissertation written under Forte's supervision. In 1986 it was published as *The Music of Alexander Scriabin* and became a seminal study for generations of Anglophone analytical writers on the composer. In the following decades the application of Fortean theory resulted in a variety of analytical outcomes describing and classifying the 'statistical data' on Scriabin's 'pitch-tone collections' via IC (interval class) external and Z relations⁴¹ or, more perceptively, as

³⁸ Hermann Erpf, *Studien zur Harmonie und Klangtechnik der neueren Musik*. (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1927).

³⁹ Manfred Kelkel, *Alexandre Scriabine: sa vie, l'ésotéricisme et le langage musicale dans son œuvre* (Paris: Editions Honoré Champion, 1978). The third volume of this work is an attempt at an analysis of Scriabin's late harmonic idiom. It does not present any new hypothesis to approach the subject and largely deals with the long-suffering 'accord synthétique' (Mystic, Prometheus, Klangzentrum etc.) and its 'evolution,' i.e., the types of scales generated by particular versions of this sonority. Taruskin's biting commentary on Kelkel reads: "Having made a preliminary survey of the sketches [*of the Preparatory Act*], Kelkel rushed into print to announce that it was Scriabin, not Alfredo Casella and not Alban Berg, who had been first to write "aggregate simultaneities," that is, chords containing all twelve notes of the chromatic scale." See in Taruskin, "Scriabin and the Superhuman", 315.

⁴⁰ Allen Forte, *The Structure of Atonal Music*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973).

⁴¹ This refers to a pair of sets with the same interval vector (i.e. the same intervallic content), but which are not reducible to the same prime form (a set in normal order, transposed, so that the first integer is 0). In Forte, *Structure of Atonal Music*, 210.

derivations from various scales, e.g. octatonic, whole-tone, acoustic etc. and correlating the linear and vertical aspects of Scriabin's harmony, often with the aid of Schenkerian theory, into specific sets according to Forte's set-class numbers. Among the most distinguished writings in this category are George Perle's "Scriabin's Self-Analyses." (1984), Anthony Pople's *Skryabin and Stravinsky, 1908-1914: Studies in Theory and Analysis* (1989), and Cheong Wai-Ling's "Scriabin's Octatonic Sonata" (1996). The following excerpt from the last of the above three papers is typical of analysis of this type:

That the Sixth Sonata is the most octatonic among Scriabin's sonata output is based on a survey of pure octatonic writing lasting four or more consecutive bars: of its 386 bars, (58.8%) are purely octatonic in basis. The 343-bar-long Seventh Sonata, op. 64 (1911), next, with its gamut of pure octatonic passages adding up to 155 bars (45.2%). If we take into account Scriabin's entire oeuvre, however, *Guirlandes*, op. 73/1 (1914), impresses us as astoundingly octatonic, for up to 48 (73.8%) of its 65 bars display sheer octatonicism.⁴²

Since the mid-eighties and early nineties, many followers of Forte's theory produced a vast body of set-theoretical literature exploring previously untouched topics of centrality, symmetry and formal geometry. In these works multiple variations of existing 'purely' Scriabinesque pitch-related numerical data were examined in connection with the formal structure of Scriabin's late music.⁴³ Further, in various publications the so-called "constellation of nine," or a new sonority comprised of nine tones presumably to be used in composing Scriabin's *Mysterium* (in contrast to the six-sound "Prometheus" or "Mystic" Chord), was

⁴² Cheong Wai-Ling, "Scriabin's Octatonic Sonata," in *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 121, no. 2 (1996): 206, footnote 2.

⁴³ See, for example, Herbert Harold Wise, Jr., "The Relationship of Pitch Sets to Formal Structure in the Last Six Piano Sonatas of Scriabin," Ph.D. dissertation (University of Rochester, Eastman School of Music, 1987); Kip Wile, "Collection in Neocentric Music: A Study in Theory and Analysis of the Music of Debussy, Stravinsky, Scriabin, Bartok, and Ravel" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1995); John Ritter, "Between Harmony and Geometry: Structure and Form in the Music of Scriabin" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California at Santa Barbara, 2001).

segmented and interrelated into multiple Fortean combinations such as the mystic pentachord 5-24: [0, 1, 3, 5, 7], the French-sixth tetrachord 4-25: [0, 2, 6, 8], the whole-tone hexachord 6-31: [0, 1, 3, 5, 8, 9], the diminished tetrachord 4-28: [0, 3, 6, 9], the dominant trichord 3-8: [0, 2, 6], etc.⁴⁴ Yet, as the selection of sets has remained bound to the analysts' "informed guess based upon [their] experience with this music,"⁴⁵ the choice of sets had varied significantly from one author to the next.⁴⁶ The equivocality of this methodology has appeared to increase with passing decades presenting the 'purely' technical studies, such as those of Cyprus-born Vasilis Kallis, which combines set-theoretical tools with newly-defined types of non-diatonic modes presumably 'enriching' Scriabin's 'pitch material' that elucidates the overall formal structure and creates "an elaborate scheme of larger-scale transpositional operations within and across the Sonata's main sections."⁴⁷

In my view the application of the pc set theory, designed for analysis of atonal repertoires, is rather misleading for understanding Scriabin's musical intentions as the methodology of any analysis of a certain type of music should be related to and based upon the historical background, the composer's cultural environment as well as contemporary compositional theory and practice. Thus, my understanding of Scriabin's late idiom is in

⁴⁴ See Gawboy (2010): 21-23.

⁴⁵ Forte, *The Structure of Atonal Music*, 16.

⁴⁶ The examples are numerous. See, for instance, Perle's classification of the "constellation of nine" as a combination of octatonic and Mystic chords, placed in the class 9-10. See George Perle, "Scriabin's Self-Analyses," in *Music Analysis* 3, no. 2 (1984): 101-22); and Cheong Wai-Ling's classification of the same sonority as similar to Messiaen's limited mode of transposition number three, placed in the class 9-12. In Cheong Wai-Ling, "The Late Scriabin: Pitch Organization and Form in the Works of 1910-14" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1990), 125-26.

⁴⁷ Vasilis Kallis, "Pitch Organisation in Scriabin's Tenth Sonata," in *Music Analysis* 34/1 (March 2015): 3-46. Available on line at <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/musa.2015.34.issue-1/issuetoc> Kallis's personal website is available at <http://vasiliskallis.simdif.com/>

agreement with that of Roy J. Guenther, who wrote in 1983 regarding the atonal interpretation of Scriabin's late music:

It seems to be a catch-all term which takes over when more traditional analytical terminology is thwarted by Skryabin's failure to provide a concluding tonic, frequently between Op. 51 and Op. 60, and consistently from Op. 61 to Op. 74. Despite the somewhat widespread use of the term, little in the way of supporting evidence has been supplied to justify its validity or to explain how 'atonal' music can have both a pitch and a chord structure as a focal point.⁴⁸

In 1988 Richard Taruskin offered his view on Baker's statistical set-theoretical approach as well as the use of Schenkerian analysis for Scriabin's late music. He argued that "the overall use to which the Ursatz model is put in [Baker's] book is extremely unconventional – perhaps unprecedented – and questionable...the Ursatz model is operationally equated with tonality itself."⁴⁹ What I find very important is Taruskin's understanding of Baker's approach of making "a model of composition as analysis in reverse", where "the fundamental structure is not being deduced from the piece, it is being *imposed on it*."⁵⁰

Following Taruskin's critique of Baker and, in a broader sense, the nature of Anglo-American Scriabin scholarship divided into 'pure' theorists and cultural historians unable to meet on the common ground of Scriabin's creative process, the new hybrid-theoretical approaches to

⁴⁸ Roy J. Guenther, "Varvara Dernova's System of Analysis of the Music of Skryabin," in *Russian Theoretical Thought on Music*, ed. Gordon D. Mc. Quere (Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1983), 168.

⁴⁹ See Richard Taruskin, "Reviews of *The Music of Alexander Scriabin* by James M. Baker and *Scriabin: Artist and Mystic* by Boris de Schloesser," in *Music Theory Spectrum* 10 (Spring 1988): 152.

⁵⁰ Taruskin, "Reviews of Baker and Schloezer," 153 (my emphasis). A. Gawboy aptly notes that "Taruskin's critique of Baker may be read as part of a larger ongoing dispute between Taruskin and Baker's thesis adviser, Allen Forte. For the particulars of the Forte/Taruskin debate, see Taruskin's review of Forte's *The Harmonic Organisation of The Rite of Spring* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978) in *Current Musicology* 28 (1979): 114-29; Forte's "Pitch-Class Set Analysis Today," *Music Analysis* 4/1-2 (1985): 36-37; "Letter to the Editor from Richard Taruskin," *Music Analysis* 5/2-3 (1986): 313-20; "Letter to the Editor in Reply to Richard Taruskin from Allen Forte," *Music Analysis* 5/2-3 (1986): 321-37. Taruskin's final word in the matter was presumably his monumental, two-volume *Stravinsky and the Russian Traditions: A Biography of the Works through Mavra* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996)." In Anna Gawboy, "Alexander Scriabin's Theurgy in Blue: Esotericism and the Analysis of *Prometheus: Poem of Fire*, op. 60." Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University (2010): 20.

Scriabin's late work started to combine traditional musical analysis with other branches of knowledge in an attempt to provide a fuller, interdisciplinary explanation of Scriabin's harmonic phenomenon. This new wave, relatively small in comparison to the previous 'technocratic' efforts, has been growing significantly since the late 1990s.

Clifton Callender (1998), in his examination of voice-leading proximity, blended Neo-Riemannian theory⁵¹ with transformation theory.⁵² Richard Cohn (2012) connected the "mystic chord" transformations with the "Generalized Weitzmann Region."⁵³ Kenneth Smith (2013) applied transformation theory combined with his own theory of harmonic functions in *fin-de-siècle* music, inspired by the psychoanalytic writings of Jacques Lacan and Julia Kristeva. Few studies of the current decade present the most recent works of "computational musicology" developing in Europe since the early 1960s. Atte Tenkanen (2009) offered a study that uses an automatic, computer-aided analytical method called Comparison Structure Analysis (CSA) which he applied to different dimensions of music. Thomas Noll's paper (2014) introduced the Computer-aided Transformational Analysis with tone sieves.

⁵¹ This theory is represented in writings of music theorist such as David Lewin, Richard Cohn, and Henry Klumpenhouwer. It is pertinent to the analysis of the chromatically -rich harmonies of the late Romantic period.

⁵² Transformational theory is a branch of music theory developed by David Lewin in the 1980s, and formally introduced in his 1987 work, *Generalized Musical Intervals and Transformations*. The theory, which models musical transformations as elements of a mathematical group can be used to analyze both tonal and atonal music.

⁵³ Generalized Weitzmann Region (GWR) is a collection of all of the *nearly even* chords [major or minor triads] related to a single *perfectly even* chord [augmented triad] by a *single semitonal displacement* [a relation between two chords of cardinality n that share $n - 1$ common tones and whose remaining tones are a semitone apart; or, the motion between two such chords]. See Richard Cohn, *Audacious Euphony: Chromatic Harmony and the Triad's Second Nature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 212.

At this point of the discussion, returning to Scriabin's own remark about his unusual sonorities, "You have to be able to walk around a chord" (nado chtobī akkord mozhno bīlo oboyti krugom), raises the question of what is it that analysts of Scriabin walk around?⁵⁴

For some time the analytical approaches to Scriabin's music were far removed from the cultural surroundings and uniquely Russian historical context of the composer's life, or indeed from the composer's own attempts to explain his late harmonic idiom. More recently, analysts have embraced the idea of 'total unity', the all-inclusive approach where nothing is off-limits. In a way, 'walking around a chord' became 'beating around the bush' or rather, in a set-theoretical realm – counting and classifying the size/shape and colouration of multiple leaves of an exotic plant or – in later technology-inspired applications – determining the chemical composition of individual leaves and correlating the obtained data with that on similar type of vegetation worldwide.

The re-invented 'tonal' essence of Scriabin's late harmony allowing the focus on a 'chord-itself' can be seen in writings of several theorists, most notably – Jay Reise,⁵⁵ the proponent of the octatonic/whole-tone approach, and Peter Sabbagh, who published his dissertation "The Development of Harmony in Scriabin's Works" in 2001.⁵⁶ Yet Varvara

⁵⁴ Quoted as a conversation between the grandson of N.A. Rimsky-Korsakov and Scriabin in Taruskin, "Scriabin and the Superhuman," 330.

⁵⁵ His analysis of op. 65, no. 1 will be discussed later in this chapter.

⁵⁶ Sabbagh's study is essentially German in its approach as it follows the way of thinking of Carl Dahlhaus, G. Eberle, M. Kelkel, et al. He organizes his discussion into three parts: The Structure of the Chords, Tonal Progressions, and The Development of the Symmetrical Tone-System. The first part that examines the vertical aspect of harmony establishes three lines of development, namely, dominant formations, solidifying of the dissonances and the resultant colour-like effect within the chord, and the formation of quartal chord structures as an expansion of tertian structures. The second part of the book dealing with the horizontal factors of the harmony discusses the system of tonal progressions. It also attempts to trace the historical models of ambiguous chords, and minor-third circles in the light of gradual departure from the functional harmony. Sabbagh cites many fascinating sources, among which are G.J. Vogel's (1776) and E.A. Förster's (1805) models of "Teufelsmühle", followed by examples from J.S. Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert and, inevitably, Liszt and Wagner. The brief third

Dernova's theory and especially her idea of added/alterd tones to a Dominant-type sonority that ceased to function in a sense of traditional functional harmony, points out, very explicitly, a chord around which Scriabin might have 'walked'. Further, Dernova's explications of the 'functioning' of this sonority does present the ideas of *how* the composer might have 'walked around' it. The following section is a brief outline of the major points of Dernova's theory I will consider in my analysis.

Dernova's Theory

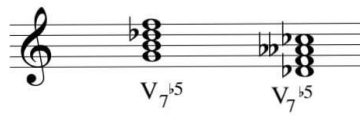
The initial basic proposition of Dernova's theory is the *tertian* structure of Scriabin's late harmonies. She uses the term Dominant as referring to the origin of the chord in terms of its structure, not its implied function. This Dominant-type sonority is altered and embellished by additional tones that in turn can be raised or/and lowered. Thus, three versions of the fifth are possible: the natural, lowered and raised, or so-called 'split fifths' (the last one is enharmonically equivalent to the lowered sixth); the added sixth (or thirteenth) which becomes a lowered third in a tritonal transposition: she terms these two additions as *V* and *W*. Next, the addition of two versions of a ninth (natural and lowered), the eleventh and the raised seventh comprise the full twelve-tone gamut of the equally-tempered sound-space used by the composer to create his works.

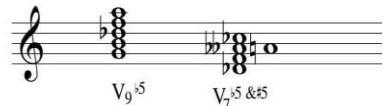




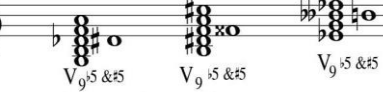

part sketches the development of symmetrical tone system where the author attempts to establish the relationship of the Prometheus Chord and the tonal progression, using Messiaen's three modes of limited transposition as the post-Scriabin or Scriabin-inspired later development. See Peter Sabbagh, *The Development of Harmony in Scriabin's Works*. (Boca Raton: Universal Publishers, 2003), *passim*.

In Dernova's system the regrouping of up to six pitches creates a number of chords that have the same pitch-class content in tritone, whole-tone and two-whole-tone (or four-semitone) transpositions. These chords are identified by the way in which they are notated, i.e. built up in thirds from corresponding roots. Enharmonic respelling of (double)-sharped and (double)-flattened pitches often serves to facilitate the reading.

According to Dernova, a basic role in Scriabin's late harmony is played by enharmonic equivalence of dominants with lowered fifths: a dominant seventh chord and a dominant ninth chord with either major or minor ninth. The lowered fifths of these harmonies can be combined with the raised and/or perfect fifths, or with a major thirteenth, which she identifies as an added sixth. Regrouping the pitches in one of the three transpositions can produce a dominant eleventh chord or dominant seventh with a lowered third. In regards to a raised seventh, a relatively rare type of alteration, Dernova's precise idea is not clear. She interprets it as a leading tone to the root of the dominant it is a part of. As such, this note normally resolves by moving a semitone up to a metrically stronger part of a measure. Below is a summary of Dernova-defined building blocks of Scriabin's late harmony.

FIGURE 1: Summary of Scriabin's most common Dominant-type sonorities identified by Dernova.

<p>Dominant seventh chord with a lowered fifth is enharmonically equivalent to the second inversion of a dominant seventh of the same structure a tritone away. (In the Western European tradition this is known as one of the augmented sixth chords – French 6th.) (p. 21, ex. 2)</p>	
--	--

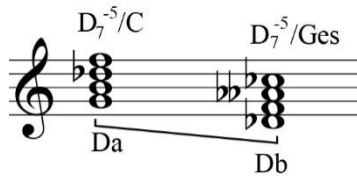
<p>Major ninth dominant chord with a lowered fifth is enharmonically equivalent to the dominant seventh chord with raised and lowered fifths a tritone away. (p. 22, ex. 3)</p>	
<p>Minor ninth dominant chord with a lowered fifth is enharmonically equivalent to the dominant seventh chord with lowered and perfect fifths (tritone transposition). (p. 22, ex. 4)</p>	
<p>Major ninth dominant chord with lowered and raised fifths is enharmonically equivalent to itself in a tritone transposition. (p. 23, ex. 6a)</p>	
<p>Minor ninth dominant chord with lowered and perfect fifths is enharmonically equivalent to itself in a tritone transposition. (p. 23, ex. 6b)</p>	
<p>Major ninth dominant chord with lowered and perfect fifths becomes a minor ninth dominant chord with lowered and raised fifths in a tritone transposition, or a dominant eleventh chord with a raised fifth a whole tone above the root of the first chord, or a two-tone below the root of the second chord. (p. 27, ex. 11)</p>	
<p>Major ninth dominant chord with lowered and raised fifths is enharmonically equivalent to the major ninth dominant chord with lowered and raised fifths in a two-tone transposition above or below. Dervova calls it a major third (or a minor sixth transposition) (p. 25, ex. 9 and 9a – combined).</p>	
<p>Major ninth dominant chord with lowered fifth and added sixth (13) is enharmonically equivalent to the dominant seventh chord with lowered and raised fifths and two versions of a third (major and minor). Tritone transposition. (p. 27, ex. 13a)</p>	

The combinations of these chords are arranged into three types of often interlocking series which Dervova terms the *tritone link*, *major enharmonic sequence*, and *minor-third linked progression*.

- 1) The *tritone link* (*tritonoveoye zveno*) is a progression of two enharmonically equivalent dominant seventh chord a tritone apart.

The example in Dernova's book notates the dominant seventh chord D_7^{-5}/Ges which is equivalent to the North-American version of V_7^{b5} of G flat major.⁵⁷ The original German notation used by Dernova is preserved in the following examples (see footnote 64 on page 27). The Da stands for Departure⁵⁸ Dominant (*iskhodnaya dominanta*); Db is Derived Dominant (*proizvodnaya dominanta*).

EXAMPLE 2.1: Dernova's tritone link.



The indication of Departure and Derived dominants points out the presence of Yavorsky's *dvazhdy-lad*, a “duplex mode”⁵⁹, or a “dual modality”⁶⁰. In Dernova's underlying tonal thinking this “duplex mode” does not, however, combine the properties of the keys involved, but rather

⁵⁷ Dernova, *Garmoniia Scriabina*, 21.

⁵⁸ Termed “initial dominant” in Guenther's translation. See in Roy J. Guenther, “Varvara Dernova's *Garmoniia Scriabina*: A Translation and Critical Commentary,” Ph.D. dissertation (Catholic University of America, 1979), 113.

⁵⁹ This Russian term has received various translations over the years. The closest to the original is that of Richard Taruskin, “Reviews of Baker and Schloezer,” 147; i.e., ‘duplex mode’. Guenther translates it as “Polar Attraction”, providing a lengthy justification for his word choice. (Guenther, “Varvara Dernova's *Garmoniia Scriabina*, 25-37). As logical as his explanation is, it considers mainly Scriabin's harmonic phenomenon, leaving Yavorsky's principles of melody, rhythms and musical form out of the discussion. Taruskin's translation will be used in this paper, to avoid further confusion when discussing Scriabin's *Law of Polarity* later on in this and the final chapters of this thesis.

⁶⁰ Baker, *Music of Alexander Scriabin*, 4-6 and 28-29.

allows them to function on an abstract, imaginary level. The dominants remain unresolved in any of their enharmonic permutations. Further, *dvazhdy-lad*, impossible to present in a scalar form, is an expression of harmony itself and can occur within a harmonic progression only. She writes:

...duplex mode is not quite a paired tonality in which principles peculiar to a simple mode such as the major could have remained valid. Duplex mode is a new way of tonal organization, a tonal unity formed on the basis of the enharmonic equality of two dominants. It is also a mistake to think that a duplex mode can be expressed in scale form as the major or minor is expressed. Duplex mode is a harmonic phenomenon and finds full expression only in a harmonic setting. If its basis is the tritone link, then all other new, uniquely duplex modal principles will be derived from the tritone link, will be created by it, and will be subordinate to the new laws arising from the system of duplex-modality. This applies to the character of chord progressions, to the understanding of harmonic completeness in cadences, to the construction of melody, whether harmonically derived or independent, and, finally, to the construction of harmony itself, which partly exhibits such traditional principles as the invertibility of chords as well as special principles inherent to a duplex mode. Thus, everything which Scriabin's duplex-mode system inherited from traditional harmony will have its own specific duplex-mode designations in order to conform to a new context with new possibilities and new conditions characteristic of duplex mode.⁶¹

- 2) The *major enharmonic sequence* (*bol'shaya engarmonicheskaya sekvenntsiya*) is a series of major-second progressions that expand to a tritone in each direction.

Here the dominant ninth chords with the split (raised and lowered) fifths are enharmonically equivalent within the whole-tone scale, as seen in Dernova's schemata.⁶²

⁶¹ Dernova, *Garmoniya Scriabina*, 48-49.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 23-24.

EXAMPLE 2.2: Dernova's major enharmonic sequence

a)

b)

- 3) The *minor-third linked progressions* (*malaya, or tsepnaya sekventsiya*) are a series of tritone progressions connected by minor thirds.

Dernova's rationale for these progressions, not equivalent enharmonically, is based on the minor third's location between the tritone links.⁶³

⁶³ Dernova, *Garmoniya Scriabina*, 51-52.

EXAMPLE 2.3: Dernova's minor-third linked progression⁶⁴

The image shows two musical examples, (a) and (b), on a single staff. Part (a) consists of five chords: Des, E, G, B, and Des. A slur connects the E, G, and B chords, with an arrow pointing from E to G. A square bracket is placed above the G and B chords. Part (b) consists of four chords: G, Des, G, and Des. A slur connects the two G chords, with an arrow pointing from the first G to the second. A square bracket is placed above the two Des chords. Below the staff, the chord labels are written: Des, E, G, B, Des for part (a), and G, Des, G, Des for part (b). The lowest staff in each part shows the altered and added tones for each chord.

Since Dernova's treatise does not aim to provide a full harmonic analysis of any complete work, I find it interesting to apply her theory to an actual work. Further, my analysis aims to establish the correlation between Dernova's pitch-organization techniques and the formal structure of the pieces. The Appendix provides the full score of each étude accompanied by two additional staves. The first one shows the incomplete dominant seventh chords in root positions, an idea adopted from Dernova's schemata. The tritone links, minor-third linked progressions and major enharmonic sequences are marked by a square bracket, a slur and an arrow respectively. The lowest staff classifies the altered and added tones in order to prove Dernova's implicit idea of non-existence of non-chord notes in Scriabin's late harmony.

⁶⁴ In the examples 2.1 – 2.3 Dernova's original notation (in German) is preserved. Thus, the suffix *-is* is used to notate a sharp (eg.: F sharp – Fis) and *-es* to notate a flat (eg. E flat –Es). The exception stands for B flat, which is B, and B which is H. Major (dur) generally starts with an upper-case letter (eg.: B = B dur or B flat major), minor (moll)– with lower-case letter (h = h moll or B minor). In examples 2.1 and 2.2 this notation refers to the implied key of resolution of the dominant seventh chord. In example 2.3 it designates the root of the dominant seventh chord rather the key of its resolution.

Dernova-based Analysis of Scriabin's Études op. 65

Étude op.65, no. 1

Dernova mentions op. 65 no. 1 in her discussion of minor-third linked progression.⁶⁵ According to her, this type of technique is the structural foundation of this particular piece. Indeed, the two opening measures of the *Allegro fantastico* present a whimsical, bizarre image created by juxtaposing the rapidly ascending major ninths in the right hand and the beat-punctuating chords forming a descending minor-third linked sequence in the left hand. In my analysis I will attempt to establish the correlation between Dernova's pitch-organization techniques and the formal structure of this étude.

The piece is based on two themes, *Allegro fantastico* and *Meno vivo*. At first glance the themes seem to be presented in a strict alternating order, creating a sectional form where each theme appears four times. A closer look at the underlying tritone links and the types of transposition of the larger sections reveals a more sophisticated structure resembling a full sonata-allegro form with coda. The "main theme" of the "exposition" (mm. 1-22) returns at the same pitch in its third appearance (mm. 65-86), marking the beginning of the "recapitulation".

⁶⁵ Dernova, *Garmoniya Scriabina*, 51.

EXAMPLE 3.1: Theme 1 (exposition, mm. 1-2)

Allegro fantastico ♩ = 144-160

1 *pp*

The second theme, *Meno vivo* (mm. 23-34), is restated in the “recapitulation” (mm. 87-98) precisely a diminished fourth higher.

EXAMPLE 3.2: Theme 2 (exposition, mm. 23-26)

Meno vivo ♩ = 50

23 *pp* *très doux avec langueur*

legato 4 *legato* 4

EXAMPLE 3.3: Theme 2 (recapitulation, mm. 87-90)

Meno vivo

87 *pp*

This leaves the second appearances of both themes (mm. 35-46 and mm. 47-64) as parts of the “development”, and their final brief return (mm. 99 and 109) as the “coda”.

EXAMPLE 4.1: Theme 1 (development, mm. 35-37)

Tempo I

35 *pp*

EXAMPLE 4.2: Theme 2 (development, mm. 47-50)

Meno vivo

47 *pp*

legato

EXAMPLE 5.1: Theme 1 (coda, mm. 99-100)

99 *pp*



EXAMPLE 5.2: Theme 2 (coda, mm. 109-113)

dolciss.

109 *ppp subito*

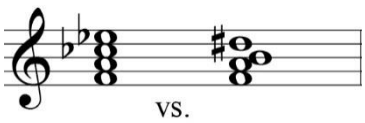
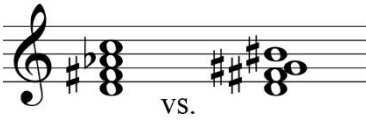
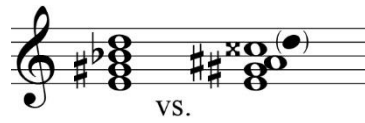
The pitch placement of the tritone links in the corresponding sections confirms the overall sonata-like design of the piece. The minor-third linked sequence of the first theme in exposition and recapitulation appears in various enharmonic spellings: E-C[#]-A[#]-G (mm. 1-3), and B^b-D^b- (B^b-C[#])-G-(B^b-G)-E (mm. 3-10). The second theme has no minor-third sequences in the exposition. It is based on just two tritone links, F[#]-B[#] and A-E^b. Apparently, the *Meno vivo* refers not only to tempo but also to the less rapid harmonic change. The latter slows itself down even further as the enharmonic respelling of the dominant seventh chords with the lowered fifths in each link produces no actual change in sound:

EXAMPLE 6.1: Two pairs of enharmonically equivalent tritone links, second theme in exposition (mm. 23-24 and 29-30)

mm. 23-24	mm. 29-30
 <p style="text-align: center;">vs.</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">vs.</p>

In the recapitulation, however, the expansion of the second theme (26 bars instead of 12) creates a widely -spaced minor-third linked sequence D-F-G[#]-B (mm. 52-56). This minor-third sequence is placed over the constant ‘stillness’ of three new tritone links: D-G[#], B-F and E-B^b (A[#]):

EXAMPLE 6.2: Three pairs of enharmonically equivalent tritone links, second theme in recapitulation (mm. 53-54, 55-56, and 59-60)

mm. 53-54	mm. 55-56	mm. 59-60
		

Further analysis of the opening theme reveals an interesting whole-tone correlation between its two elements: a rapidly ascending chromatic scale in major ninths (mm. 1-2) repeated three times in varied forms and the second, sinuous element (mm. 3-4) developed more extensively throughout. The repetitions of the second element produce a new, whole-tone-separated chain of segments, suggesting the underlying presence of the major enharmonic sequence B^b-C-D-E in measures 11-21:

EXAMPLE 7: Second element of Theme 1, underlying major enharmonic sequence.

measure	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
-3 LP	B ^b	D ^b	B ^b		C	E ^b	C				
TL				G ^b	C			A ^b	D		
+3 step			B ^b	G ^b			C	A ^b			B [#] (C)-E
MES	B ^b		B ^b		C		C		D	E	E

Thus, despite the obvious whirling movement of this section, the stillness or “oneness” prevails as the whole-tone transpositions of a dominant ninth chord with split fifths retain the effect of one sonority the whole time. The same paradox can be observed with the three entrances of the first element: on E (m.1), on B^b (m.9) and on B[#] (m.22). The coda, nonetheless, confirms the supremacy of the minor-third linked sequence as the structural foundation of the piece. It appears here the last time and covers both themes of the étude and re-establishes the “key” of

E-B flat, Dernava's "*dvazhdy-lad*".

In summary, the three main points of Dernova's theory of pitch-organization in late Scriabin can also be applied to the analysis of a formal structure. In the first étude of op. 65 it reveals a compact, clear-cut version of a sonata-allegro form of the late Romantic period.

Étude op. 65, no. 2

The second étude falls neatly into Dernova's theory. The tritone links form two minor-third linked progressions in the first half of the piece (mm. 1-18). The second half (mm. 19-36) is an exact transposition a tritone below. Bars 37-39 repeat the final chord three times. It is fascinating to observe how these linked progressions interact with different structural elements of the composition: harmonic rhythm (I use this term rather figuratively in the absence of better alternative), overall formal proportions, and melody.

The first sequence C#- B^b- G (mm. 2, 4, and 6) features the descending bass line combined with ascending melodic figure on the strong beats.

Thus, the overall distribution of these three elements appears to dissect the first section into two subsections of equal length (9+9), where the four-measure stay on G acts as a link, or a non-modulating bridge between two subjects of a sonata form. The “second theme” is further differentiated by a noticeable change in texture in the left hand, dynamics (crescendo), and an increased tempo (*molto accelerando* to *presto volando*). Repeating the entire “exposition” a tritone below creates a “recapitulation” of an abridged sonata form, the whole being enclosed into Dernova’s *dvazhdy-lad*, F sharp – C – (G flat), as the underlying dominants suggest.

Another interesting aspect of this composition is the interaction between the melody and the harmony. As the two have merged into one “harmonic-melody,” the “gliding” parallel intervals in the right hand complement the absent notes in the right hand and vice versa.⁶⁶ This can be observed in the example with split thirds in measures fifteen and sixteen. The absence of thirds in the left hand on odd beats is supplemented by providing two versions of it in the right hand; the presence of a major third on even beats in the left hand eliminates the need for it in the right hand. A similar technique is used in measures ten to fourteen: the two versions of a third – major/minor – are contrasted with the two versions of a ninth; the major third in the harmony is consistently juxtaposed with the minor ninth in the melody, as is the minor third with the major ninth. On a different level, the roughly square two-bar phrases indicated by slurs create yet another metro-rhythmic layer nonaligned with the harmonic change throughout the piece.

In summary, the harmonic language of the *Étude* op. 65 no.2 can be seen as an ultimate expression of an underlying vertical structure in melody, rhythm, and form creating a unique multidimensional musical space, static and ever-changing at the same time.

⁶⁶ See Dernova, *Garmoniya Scriabina*, 34, and 68-83.

Étude op. 65, no. 3

The third étude of op. 65 corroborates all three major points of Dernova's theory: tritone links, major enharmonic sequences and linked progressions. In her brief description of the opening section of the piece Dernova states that it is built on major enharmonic sequence.⁶⁷ My analysis of the complete work aims to reveal the impact of these three compositional devices on the broader concept of form and structural proportions.

The étude is based on two contrasting themes, *Molto vivace* and *Impérieux*, which seem to be at odds with each other.

EXAMPLE 9.1: Theme 1 (mm. 1-6)

Molto vivace ♩ = 144

pp

cresc.

⁶⁷ Dernova, *Garmoniya Scriabina*, 49.

EXAMPLE 9.2: Theme 2 (mm. 17-20)

The initial juxtaposing of the two leads to an unequivocal victory of the *Impérieux* in the coda (mm. 79-102). The formal design falls into a sizable ternary structure where the opening section (mm. 1-16) returns unchanged as *Prestissimo étincelant* (mm. 63-78). The large middle section (mm. 17-62) is comprised of two parts, *Impérieux* (mm. 17-38) and *Subito meno vivo* (mm. 39-62), where the short two-measure intrusions of the opening section persistently attempt to interrupt the grandeur of the second theme.

It is interesting to see how the even periodic proportions of the opening section interact with the placement of the tritone links and the steps of the major enharmonic sequence, which always come in threes. Below is a bar-by-bar scheme of the Section A.

EXAMPLE 10.1: Tritone links (TL) and major enharmonic sequence (MES) in Section A.

Bar	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
TL	G D \flat	G D \flat	G D \flat	A E \flat	B E \sharp	B E \sharp	B E \sharp	(B)
MES			G	A	B			

Bar	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
TL	E \flat A	E \flat A	E \flat A	F B	G C \sharp	G C \sharp	G C \sharp	G C \sharp
MES			E \flat	F	G			

In addition, the number of repeated links overlapping with the number of the transpositional steps in the sequence create another triple-within-the-duple sublevel:

EXAMPLE 10.2: Scheme of the “triple -within- duple” distribution of TL and MES in Section A.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
GD \flat			<u>G A B</u>			BE \sharp	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
E \flat A		<u>E\flat F G</u>			GC \sharp		

Both parts of Section B, *Impérieux* and *Subito meno vivo*, abandon the “triple sublevel” idea and feature clear-cut eight-bar formal divisions with consistent four-bar phrasing of the second theme and two-bar “intrusions” of the first theme. The repetition of the tritone links remains even in number throughout, with a closing segment of section b1 (mm. 33-38) that somewhat deviates from the scheme. The number of the dominant seventh chords involved in this segment remains eight, however. Below is a bar-by-bar scheme of the Section B (b1 and b2) identifying the tritone links and the corresponding themes.

EXAMPLE 11: TL and corresponding themes in Section B.

Section b1

Bar	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
TL	C#	G	C#	C#	C#	G	C#	C#
Theme	B							

Bar	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
TL	C#	G	C#	C#	C#	G	E	E
Theme	B							

Bar	33	34	35	36	37	38
TL	E	B \flat	E	E	E B \flat	F#C
Theme	A		B		A	

Section b2

Bar	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46
TL	F#	C	F#	F#	F#	C	A	A
Theme	B							

Bar	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54
TL	A	E \flat	A	A	A E \flat	B F	B	B
Theme	A		B		A		B	

Bar	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62
TL	B F	B F	B	B	G	C#	G C#	(G E#)
Theme	A		B					

As seen from these schemes, the intrusions of the first theme become more frequent in Section b2, as if it struggles to win the battle. Theme A gets some temporary relief (or the final agony?) in the following *Prestissimo étincelant*. Nonetheless, the *Impérieux* reigns in the coda bringing the piece to a magnificent fortissimo ending.

In the coda, the tritone link G-C# is repeated within the same eight-measure format leaving the last two bars of the second eight-bar section filled with rests. The final eight measures present a rapidly ascending melodic wave in the right hand accompanied by a descending minor-third linked progression in the left hand. Below is the final scheme identifying the tritone links and the minor-third sequence in the coda.

EXAMPLE 12: TL and the minor-third-linked progressions (-3 LP) in the coda.

Bar	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86
TL	C#	G	C#	C#	C#	G	C#	C#

Bar	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94
TL	C#	G	C#	C#	C#	G	Rest	Rest

Bar	95	96	97	98	99	100	101	102
TL	C# E	D ^b A#	G E	G E	C#	C#	Rest	Rest
-3 LP	C#	(D ^b) A#	G E		C#			

In her discussion of Departure and Derived Dominants, Dernova notes that sometimes they can exchange their roles in the process of composition, as it happens in op. 65, no. 3. She also states that the tritone link G-D flat, the “key” of this étude, is inherently connected with C major where G and D^b are the enharmonically equivalent departure and derived dominant.⁶⁸

Closing Remarks on Dernova-Based Analysis and Her Theory

Dernova’s theory on Scriabin’s harmony proves to be very solid when applied to the analysis of op. 65. Assigning dominant functions to the components of a tritone link, a major enharmonic sequence and a linked progression, creates a paradox of never-resolved dominants that have lost their function in the traditional sense. Yet, as in traditional functional harmony, Scriabin’s ‘non-functioning’ dominants find their ultimate expression in other aspects of composition: melody, rhythm and form. As demonstrated in the example of three études of op.65, the underlying vertical structures express themselves in clear classical forms of sonata (no. 1 and 2) and a large ternary form (no. 3). Dernova’s idea of altered/added tones accounts for every note in the piece,

⁶⁸ See Dernova, *Garmoniya Scriabina*, 50.

as seen in the Appendix. The voice-leading procedures are not part of Dernova's theory since numerous enharmonic permutations of the vertical constituents permit an endless array of connections creating a kaleidoscope-like texture. Undoubtedly, Dernova's emphasis on the vertical aspect of Scriabin's late works, and her term 'garmoniia-melodiia' [harmony-melody] came directly from Scriabin's views expressed to Sabaneev on several occasions. Sabaneev's 1915 article quoted in her text states very clearly that "all notes [*of this melody*] can and must be labeled in accordance with its engendering altered dominant harmony."⁶⁹ Furthermore, in Sabaneev's *Vospominaniia* Dernova must have read the passages such as: "This is both melody and harmony at the same time. This is how it should be – [...] since these are two aspects of the same principle, of one essence. [...] For me there is no difference between melody and harmony – they are one and the same. This system is [...] absolutely perfect – and there is not one note unaccounted for."⁷⁰

Another important aspect of Dernova's theory intrinsically connected with Scriabin's music itself as well as with the 'unmentionable' or rather 'irrelevant' in her treatise – the composer's esoteric world views – is Scriabin's concept of *Polarity*. In strictly theoretical terms of harmonic analysis it refers to the relationship of tritone-separated chords, the opposition and unity of the two components of a tritone-link. According to Dernova these 'dominants' still imply 'imaginary' resolutions into the two corresponding major keys "sounding [...] in a distant perspective."⁷¹ Returning to Sabaneev's *Vospominaniia*, we read Scriabin's interpretation of this 'new sensation', new 'principle' of harmonic thinking:

⁶⁹ In Leonid Sabaneev, "Printsipy tvorchestva A. Skryabina," *Muzyka Journal* no. 209 (1915): 89.

⁷⁰ Sabaneev, *Vospominaniia*, 54.

⁷¹ Guenther, "Varvara Dernova's *Garmonia Scriabina*," 191.

Why were harmony and melody separated in Classical music? – because there was a polarity between tonic and dominant: dominant harmony gravitated towards the tonic... [...] My polarity is not that of tonic and dominant, but rather of these two chords separated by a diminished fifth. It is completely analogous to the tonic-dominant progression, the cadence in the Classical system, only on a different level, one ‘storey’ higher.⁷²

Yavorsky and Dernova’s idea of coexisting functional resolutions of a tritone are presented as important historically contextualized values, reflecting the ‘new’ type of polarity described by Scriabin in the above quotation. It also confirms Guenther’s translation of the term *dvazhdy-lad* as ‘polar attraction’, i.e., the confrontation and mutual dependence of stability (the imaginary resolution of the dominant harmony) and instability (the actual sonority).⁷³ Yet, Scriabin’s Law of Polarity was a much broader concept spilling over into his interpretations of sound-colour correspondences and the generalized esoteric views on the universe and the role of creative humanity in it. The discussion of Scriabin’s ‘polarity’ in terms of his colour-sound theories will be presented in Chapter three. At this point, returning to the original topic of ‘harmonic polarity’ it is important to mention the valuable contribution of Yury Kholopov, who discussed the issue in his concept of *Neotonicity*.

In his article “Scriabin and the Harmony of the 20th Century” (1993) Kholopov explains his theory of a ‘dissonant tonality’ and presents a convincing argument against Dernova’s assignment of *dominant* functions to Scriabin’s late sonorities.⁷⁴ The inevitable citations from

⁷² Sabaneev, *Vospominaniya*, 260-61.

⁷³ The following passage from Dernova (as translated by Guenther) clarifies the issue: “... it would be a mistake to think that the tritone link replaced the tonic, or became the “tonic” of dual polarity. It both was and remained “dominant,” since the non-resolution of the dominant and all its enharmonic transformations is understood to be at the basis of Skryabin’s dual-polarity. Every such dominant implies a tonic, but this tonic either does not appear at all, sounding only in the imagination in a distant perspective, or else it changes into a dominant of resolution, one of the traditional functional features of dual-polarity.” In Guenther, “Varvara Dernova’s *Garmonia Scriabina*,” 189-91.

⁷⁴ The article is available on line (in Russian) at http://www.anscriabin.ru/index.php?catid=57:publications&id=109:scriabin-and-harmony-of-the-xx-century&Itemid=133&option=com_content&view=article

Sabaneev providing Scriabin's clear understanding of his tritone-separated chords as a 'new tonic' creates a formation of a new 'dissonant tonic' in Kholopov's theory. He sees it as a result of the 'functional inversion' where the dominant transforms itself into the stable 'Central Element', the unified two-fold polarity, Scriabin's *soft, new sensation*. The parallels to Dernova's theory are numerous, the differences lying largely in terminology and the general logic of harmonic progressions within the formal structure of composition. In Kholopov, the twelve degrees of the chromatic scale are given the traditional functions of Tonic, Subdominant, Dominant, etc., their 'doubles' indicated by the upper and the lower-case letters in their original and inverted forms. As such, Dernova's Departure and Derived Dominants become the Departure and Derived Tonics (Ta, and Tb) of a *tritone link*: Ta, Tb, Tc and Td in the 'diminished mode' or the *minor-third linked progression*; Ta, Tb, and Tc in the 'augmented mode' or the *major enharmonic sequence*. The relevance of this re-defined chord function to Scriabin's own thoughts on his harmonies is quite striking. The overall logic of these chord-progressions within this Neotonality is similar to that of traditional major-minor system with the addition of the secondary-degree chords now compliant to the primary functions in both the 'original' and the 'double' form.⁷⁵

Kholopov's analytical system amending the 'weakest link' in Denova's theory, the "implied distant tonics", does not venture into the areas of Scriabin's 'extra-musical' aspirations – theosophy and the sound-colour correspondence. This is not surprising given the political and

An English version of the article is available in Philip Ewell, "Scriabin and the Harmony of the 20th Century," Annotated translation of article by Yury Kholopov, in *Journal of the Scriabin Society of America* 11, no. 1 (Winter 2006- 2007): 12-27.

⁷⁵ An excellent summary of Kholopov's neotonality (in English) and a brief discussion of application of this theory to Scriabin's Piano Sonatas nos. 7 and 9 can be seen in Philip Ewell, "Scriabin's Seventh Piano Sonata: Three Analytical Approaches," in *Indiana Theory Review* 23 (Spring/Fall 2002): 56-67.

ideological realities of Soviet and post-Soviet Russia strikingly immutable to any real change and ever unwearied of persistent persecution and elaborate elimination of its own heterodox.

My own understanding of Scriabin's late creative process stresses the interdependence of the three essential elements: the notated scores or the 'music itself', Scriabin's sound-colour theories, and his esoteric philosophy, 'secretly' worked into all his compositions after opus 60. The last two will be considered in chapters two and three, respectively.

The final portion of this chapter will provide a critical overview of three substantially different analytical writings on Scriabin's op. 65. They are: the analysis of the first étude by Jay Reise, the second by Kenneth Smith, and the third by Thomas Noll.

Critical Overview of Three Different Analytical Studies on Scriabin's op. 65

Jay Reise's analysis of op. 65, no.1⁷⁶

Jay Reise sees the harmonic structure of Étude op.65, no.1 as tonally derived from whole-tone and octatonic scales. In his view the formal design of this piece outlines symmetrical chords of tonal music: the diminished seventh chord and the augmented triad. The tones foreign to these scale collections he treats as "chromatic", which are resolved by a "half-step" into the corresponding scales. These are definitely valid observations. As seen previously, in Dernova's theory the minor-third linked progression and the major enharmonic sequence do imply the

⁷⁶ See Jay Reise, "Late Scriabin: Some Principles Behind the Style," in *Nineteenth-Century Music* 6, no. 3 (1983): 220-31.

presence of octatonic and whole-tone scales, respectively. Reise also discounts the proposal that the “mystic chord”, found often in this étude, is anything more than a favourite sonority which does not have any formative function. He identifies it with the French sixth, or its enharmonic sonority V_7^{b5} - the chord contained in both octatonic and whole-tone scales. Reise identifies two contrasting sections, *Allegro fantastico* and *Meno vivo*, “each of which is stated, with variation, four times” (p.228). Further he states that *Allegro fantastico*’s second transposition [m. 35] forms “an incomplete augmented triad [E to B sharp]”. Reise provides no logical reason for this transposition since his sectional concept of the form does not involve the implications of the classical sonata allegro form with its necessary pitch shifts in the corresponding sections of development and recapitulation. Further, his fixation on the vertical aspect of the scale collections does not allow for the expansion of the *Allegro fantastico* theme in its singular transposition (mm. 47-64), undoubtedly the effect of the “development” and the resultant change of the first theme transitioning to *Meno vivo* in the middle section of the form.

Another important point missing in Reise’s analysis is the identification of the two thematic elements within the first section and the pitch-correlation between them which creates a whole-tone pattern governing the transposed repetitions of the two motivic units (as indicated earlier in my analysis). However, Reise does state that this piece “is based primarily on the whole-tone scale” (p. 230). His rationale for this is not clear. Examining the first two measures of the étude he asserts that “the pitch content of the left hand is...octatonic, although the pitch content of each discrete beat [including the notes in the right hand] is whole-tone.” Later, on page 231, he contradicts himself, saying that “this Étude contains both symmetrical scales. And in the binding areas both scales sound simultaneously although their identities remain clear”. This is a somewhat arbitrary statement, as is Reise’s account for “nonharmonic” tones and their

resolutions. Many of these resolutions are not very convincing as they are located in different voices (mm.26-27), or are rather short-lived, returning immediately after resolving into a proper scale to their original pitch which is outside of that particular collection; or, they occur after a long period of time (mm.18-19).

Reise's identification of the starting bass pitches of the four appearances of *Meno vivo* theme (on F#, D, B^b and B^b) prompts him to see an outline of an augmented triad that is "different from the incomplete one on which the *Allegro fantastico* is based" (p.230). There is, again, a bit of confusion in this statement. According to what Reise says in the very next paragraph, it is not the *section*, but its *repetition within the form* that presents this "incomplete augmented triad."

Finally, I find it difficult to accept Reise's "unresolved" chromaticism (p.231) the function of which is "to enrich the sonority". Also, Reise's desire to fit the music into his octatonic/whole-tone scheme produces some rather amusing conclusions such as the one on page 231: "A literal restatement of *Meno vivo* [mm.47-58] would lead to the *Allegro fantastico* on G#, nicely completing the structural augmented triad E - B# - G#, but would make the piece too long and repetitious. It seems significant that despite the necessary [for whom? the composer or the analyst?] structural and harmonic shifts at this point the resolution of B [?] has a high priority."

In short, the octatonic/whole-tone approach to Scriabin's harmony can certainly provide some valuable insights into his pitch-organization and voice-leading techniques. Whether or not it gives a clear understanding of how and why the musical elements function as they do is, I believe, a decision of a listener/analyst.

Kenneth Smith's analysis of op. 65, no.2⁷⁷

Kenneth Smith's interpretation of op. 65, no.2 is an example of so-called "gendered musical analysis", informed by psychoanalytical theory in music where the pitch structure is seen as based on hierarchically codified 'drives'. In applying these techniques to this étude Smith operates in traditional tonal music terms supplemented by psychoanalytic models of Lacan and Kristeva. Thus, in Smith's view, the dominant seventh chords (a nod to Dornova) are furnished with a "libidinal charge" (p. 135). According to Smith, a 'drive', which he identifies in Freudian terms, with reference to Freud's *Instincts and Their Vicissitudes* (1915), works its way into Scriabin's harmony in the form of "suspended harmonic tension" (p. 136). On the same page Smith asserts that manipulating the pitches of this dominant sonority can increase or decrease its "tension value". The less usual alterations of tones, such as 3^b or 7[#], "would lower its tension value". At this point Smith arrives to the notion of 'chora' (derived from Kristeva) – "a synchronous mass of possibilities" of Scriabin's altered dominants. These hold an "intrinsic potential to discharge diatonically given the right opportunity [which never arrives, however], and reach into multiple keys simultaneously. They are the "libidinal impulses...fully ordered and regulated through the antagonism between drive activity and stasis" (p. 143). Smith's introduction of Lacan's graphical representation of the 'drive circuit' illustrates the case in point. Lacan's model shows a loop-shaped path that seemingly cuts through the 'drive circuit'. The loop is "the 'aim' of the drive, which shoots like an arrow for the object it imagines to satisfy [the top of the loop]; the 'goal' is revealed as the circular path it returns to after failing to achieve the 'aim'" (p. 144).

⁷⁷ See Kenneth M. Smith, *Skryabin, Philosophy and the Music of Desire*. (Farnham, UK and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013), 135-46.

The fascinating part of Smith's analysis is his effortless manipulation of the terminology taken from inherently different analytical systems: the octatonic derivations (in the case of the minor-third sequence, which he calls "the cyclic bass nodes" (p. 145) or the pc set theory (as in T₆ and T₃, or a tritone and a minor-third transpositions (p. 145-6). In Smith's view, the strict transpositional interval cycles act as a "deep gravitational force" that anchors "harmonic drive energies...flying off in all directions" (p. 144). Further, the étude's "clean bisection [*sic*] into halves" [which is not quite so, given the three extra measures following the transposition of the first section], suggests the presence of a "strong 'chora' of the drive energies struggling for recognition" (p. 144). Smith's final point of interest, the "melodic intervals" of the right hand that introduce the "new opportunities for emerging and receding drives" (p. 146) is a rather poetic way to describe the "marginalised expectations" of the accompanying chords. At this point the reader becomes quite certain that the *desire* cannot ever be gratified on its own terms due to the perpetual motion from one Lacanian loop to the next.

Smith's analysis is certainly interesting from the interdisciplinary point of view. Is it convincing? It might be for some. I found it fascinating, though rather overbearing with too many great names and concepts condensed into only ten pages of the text. After references to Freud and Schopenhauer, Lacan and Kristeva, Schenker and Perle, and finally Taruskin, hiding in a footnote on page 138, I longed for a simpler approach.

Thomas Noll's analysis of op. 65, no.3⁷⁸

Thomas Noll uses a sieve-theoretical method in his analysis of op. 65, no. 3. The sieve theory, originally introduced to music by Iannis Xenakis in his essay “Vers une métamusique” (1967), is generally applied to various aspects of musical language such as pitch, rhythm, and formal structure through sieve-theoretical algorithms. In Noll's paper the formulas of algebraic geometry are applied to create sieve-theoretical models which are further implemented in the *OpenMusic* programming language. The focus point of Noll's analysis is pitch. The computer-designed graphical presentation visualizes the chord structures and the transformations between them.

Noll's analysis departs from identification of two complementary whole-tone sieves and three minor-third sieves associated with the octatonic scales. Both are derived from the basic formula of the affine line: $ab = \{ka + b, k \in \mathbb{Z}\}$. From there he constructs further formulas displaying the unions and intersections of the sieves. The six sieve pairs obtained as a result are introduced in the arrow notation that reveals their perfectly symmetrical configurations. As seen from Noll's diagrams, the horizontal and vertical connections correspond to the transposition (rotation) of either octatonic or whole-tone scales; the diagonal connections involve a simultaneous transposition of both components. Further, the étude is interpreted in terms of sieve pairs and the elementary transformations between them. The interaction of the segments of the piece with the sieve pairs results in what Noll calls a “two-voice sieve counterpoint”. The concluding application of these sieve constructions in *OpenMusic* displays the sieves by means

⁷⁸ See Thomas Noll, “From Sieves of Tones to Sieves of Transformations - Analytical Perspectives on Scriabin's Study for Piano Op. 65 No.3”, in *Workshop on Mathematical and Computational Musicology*, ed. Timour Klouche, Berlin: Staatliches Institut für Musikforschung, 2005, 1-6. <http://architexte.ircam.fr/textes/Noll06a/index.pdf> Accessed August 12, 2015.

of a circular representation. The author admits that op. 65, no.3 chosen for his analysis does not represent a poietic perspective, apparently referring to the literal meaning of the word as inherent to a creative process of ‘making’ or ‘producing’ music by Scriabin-the-composer, far removed in time from the technological innovations of modern era.

As complicated as it might be for a reader (like myself) without an advanced degree in mathematics or computer science, this type of analysis does allow us to visualize some structural musical properties in a geometric way and to observe the relevance of various segmentations in music analysis. I find Noll’s analysis to be a fascinating example of the new interdisciplinary domain of modern musicology faced with the task of unifying different branches of knowledge, in this case the use of computational techniques. I am not sure, however, to what extent models as such, being the result of sophisticated human-machine interaction, can relate to the essence of Scriabin’s music.

Postlude

Reflecting on the analyses mentioned above brings us to an unresolved question. In recent decades, musicological preoccupation with historical and cultural relevance of musical analysis to the actual musical score led scholars to expand the contextual horizons in order to ‘construct’ the truth. In the case of Scriabin’s late harmony, is there only one ultimate truth presented in the theory of Varvara Dernova, who finally “cracked Scriabin’s code”⁷⁹ or is there a multitude of truths that constitutes the essence of human cognition?

⁷⁹ Reise, “Some Principles,” 220-31.

I believe it is up to the analysts to create their own versions of Scriabin's creative process, to freely discuss what one believes in, no matter how controversial or nonviable it might appear to others. I think Alexander Scriabin would have agreed with this approach. After all, he himself said once: "There is no truth. The truth is created by us. It is constructed by a creative individual, and the higher the mind, the more independent the truth is. This is hard to understand, yet it is precisely so. Complete freedom. And the truth, whatever it would be, excludes the freedom. [...] Little attention is enough, and you'll see that world you create gradually becomes the one you want to have."⁸⁰

⁸⁰ Sabaneev, *Vospominaniya*, 178-79.

CHAPTER TWO

Possibilities of the Impossible

One of the dominating forces in Scriabin's 'doctrine' of the late period was theosophy, a branch of philosophical mysticism popular among the Russian intelligentsia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This chapter aims to apply some of the theosophical constructs to the analysis of the three études op. 65, or, in broader terms, to examine Scriabin's concept of music as materialization of the occult.

Such an approach historically has been viewed as somewhat inappropriate, unworthy of any serious consideration by both Russian and Western musicology alike. For the former it defied the very tenets of the Soviet ideology and marred the image of the 'revolutionary' composer caught up in the lunatic ramblings of Madame Blavatsky and the Russian idealistic philosophies of the Silver Age.⁸¹ In the post-Soviet era, Russian society has been relentlessly moving toward greater patriotic hysteria in an attempt to establish a new-Russian pan-Orthodox, pan-Slavic national identity imposed on nearly two hundred ethnic groups constituting the state;

⁸¹ The Soviet musicological writings on Scriabin took an extremely negative attitude toward theosophy and theosophists, Sabaneev and Schloezer rendering them as mystics and obscurantists that were very 'harmful' and 'unhealthy' for the composer. The term 'sabaneevshchina' (the suffix 'shchin' added to a surname or a noun expresses the phenomenon of similar subsequent works in pejorative terms, e.g. Khovanshchina (Moussorgsky's opera) – 'The Khovansky affair', or Tsiganshchina – excessively emotional performing style, or "gypsy style" associated with a bad taste). Among these writings are: Igor Glebov (Boris Asafiev) (1884-1949), *Scriabin, Opyt Kharakteristiki [An Attempt of Characteristics]* (Petersburg: Muzyka, 1921) and Arnold Alshvang (1898-1960), *Zhizn' i tvorchestvo A. N. Skryabina [Life and Creative Works of A.N Scriabin]* (Moskva: Muzgiz, 1945). Later monographs critiquing Sabaneev's and Schloezer's writings include Victor Delson, *Scriabin, Essays on his Life and Music* (Moskva: Muzyka, 1971), Dmitry Zhitomirsky, *A.N. Scriabin* (Moskva: Muzyka, 1977), Igor Belza, *A.N. Scriabin*, (Moskva: Muzyka, 1982), Maria Pryashnikova and Olga Tompakova, *Letopis' zhizni i tvorchestva A. N. Skryabina [Chronicle of the life and work of A. N. Scriabin]* (Moscow, Muzyka, 1985), and multiple compilations of Elena Rudakova, Tatiana Rybakova and Valentina Rubtsova, the long-time head of research at Scriabin Memorial Museum in Moscow and editor of *Uchonye Zapiski [Scholarly Notes]*. Valentina Rubtsova's latest monograph on Scriabin was *A.N. Scriabin* (Moskva: Muzyka, 1989).

thus, theosophy has continued being considered an unhinged fringe of idealistic pseudo-philosophy, unfit for any type of serious academic investigation.⁸² For the last five decades North -American and English writers on Scriabin, free of any ideological constraints, have focused on the ‘cultural meaning’ of Scriabin’s music, examining the composer’s dilettantish poetic outbursts and linking them to the analysis of his music. Others tried to disentangle the ‘Russian’ background of inherently ‘Russian’ folkloristic mythologems popular in the poetry of Konstantin Balmont, Andrej Belyj, or Velimir Khlebnikov.⁸³ The interaction between those concerned with the ‘structure’ and those concerned with the ‘cultural meaning’ has proved to be oftentimes mutually dismissive and, on occasion, rather hostile. The first North American Scriabin enthusiast, Faubion Bowers, casually notes in his second book on Scriabin: “... there have been few specifically mystical composers such as Scriabin. Most of them have kept the heavy opiate, smokefilled [*sic*], joss house atmosphere of mysticism outside of the concert hall.”⁸⁴ Hugh Macdonald, one of the earlier English writers on Scriabin, is certain that “... it

⁸² The standing of two most significant modern Russian writers on Scriabin and the importance of theosophical ideas in his later works, Marina Lobanova and Andrei Bandura, is quite exemplary of the late-Soviet and post-‘perestrojka’ cultural and ideological policies of the Russian Federation. Lobanova (b.1953), the author of multiple articles and a book on Scriabin, Roslavets, Schnittke, Denisov and other members of the Russian avant-garde of the twentieth century, was able to immigrate to Germany in 1991 after a prolonged period of persecution, accusations of chauvinism, Zionism, religious anti-Russian propaganda, plagiarism, copyright infringement, etc. topped with the standard diagnosis of ‘sluggish schizophrenia’ which in the late eighties and early nineties meant the complete ban on emigration rather than compulsory treatment in a psychiatric hospital or a sentence to the labour camp characteristic of earlier decades. Bandura (b.1962), who wrote many articles and books on Scriabin, after a brilliant defence of his Master’s thesis at The Russian Academy of Music in 1992, had to avoid the mainstream musical establishment in order to publish his theosophy-related findings on Scriabin. He was never offered a professorship in any Russian Conservatory and has worked as a music literature teacher at one of the Moscow Children’s Music schools since 1993. Bandura’s personal website can be accessed at <http://banduramus.wixsite.com/5555>

⁸³ Examples of this type of writing include Cooper (1985), Matlaw (1979), Brown (1979), Rosenthal (1983), Leikin (2002), Adamenko (2007), as well as numerous Ph.D. dissertations, e.g. Damaré (2008).

⁸⁴ Bowers, *The New Scriabin: Enigma and Answers* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1973), 114. Faubion Bowers (1917-1999) produced two books on Scriabin, *Scriabin: A Biography of the Russian Composer, 1871-1915* (1969), titled *Scriabin: a biography* in the second Dover publication (1996) and *The New Scriabin; Enigma and Answers* published by St. Martin’s Press in 1973. Both volumes are considered unreliable sources by Scriabin scholars. See G. Abraham’s review in *Music and Letters* 52, No. 3 (Jul., 1971): 311-14); see also Malcolm H. Brown, *Scriabin: A*

would be a pity if appreciation of music required us to follow Skryabin into his world of cosmic ‘hocus-pocus,’⁸⁵ confirming his statement dating nearly a decade earlier declaring that “his [*Scriabin’s*] quasi-religious convictions must be eliminated from any possibility of serious consideration, now or even in the future...”⁸⁶ James Baker, an emblematic figure in North American Scriabin scholarship, states: “Although his visions were the primary motivation for his experimentation and innovation, what remains today is his music. Scriabin’s art survives because he was a master of the craft of musical composition. Much as he might have been disappointed, *it is through the study of his musical structures that we can best know him today.*”⁸⁷ Richard Taruskin’s forthright comment on Baker’s study as “a three hundred-page insult on Scriabin’s self-image” shows of the magnitude of the battle over constructing the ‘meaning’ of Scriabin’s late works.⁸⁸

My own fascination with Scriabin’s late sonorities led me, at this point of my journey, to the previously unthinkable task of exploring the *possibilities of the impossible*, i.e., the application of Blavatsky’s concepts to the analysis of Scriabin’s music.⁸⁹ Before embarking upon my discussion, a short introduction to theosophy is essential.

Biography of the Russian Composer, 1871-1915, in *Journal of Research in Music Education* 21, no. 4 (Winter, 1973): 377-78.

⁸⁵ Hugh Macdonald, *Skryabin* (London: Oxford University Press, 1981), 14.

⁸⁶ Macdonald, “Words and Music by A. Skryabin,” in *Musical Times* 113, no. 1547 (January 1972): 22.

⁸⁷ James Baker, *The Music of Alexander Scriabin* (1986), 270 (my emphasis).

⁸⁸ Richard Taruskin, “Scriabin and the Superhuman: A Millennial Essay,” in *Defining Russia Musically: Historical and Hermeneutical Essays* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 314.

⁸⁹ The idea for the title of this chapter came from two articles published fourteen years apart: Simon Morrison, “Skryabin and the Impossible,” in *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 51, no. 2 (1998): 283-330 and Anne Gawboy and Justin Townsend, “Scriabin and the Possible,” in *MTO: A Journal for the Society of Music Theory* 18/2 (June 2012).

Theosophy, or ‘the wisdom of God’, generally refers to any type of mysticism that purports to be mathematically or scientifically based. Scriabin’s theosophical interests were shaped by writings of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky also known as HPB (1831 – 1891), an eccentric Russian lady, a self-proclaimed devoted disciple of remote Indian adepts, the granddaughter of a Russian princess, and an American citizen from 1878. This remarkable woman, a genius according to some and a charlatan⁹⁰ according to others, produced her magnum opus *The Secret Doctrine* in 1888. Blavatsky claims the text of *The Secret Doctrine* to be a “synthesis of Science, Religion, and Philosophy” based on an ancient manuscript called The Book of Dzyan. This artifact was supposedly given to Blavatsky by her spiritual teachers, Koot Hoomi and Master Morya. The Book of Dzyan, allegedly ‘translated’ from an ancient language by Blavatsky herself, is the basis of the *The Secret Doctrine*, which is structured as a commentary to the manuscript. The two volumes of this doctrine, subtitled Cosmogogenesis and Anthropogenesis respectively, explain “the universally diffused religion of the ancient and prehistoric world;”⁹¹ i.e., to reveal the mystery of the Absolute, or Absolute Thought as the unifying agent of all existence, cosmic and human. This process of evolution and involution throughout time traces the continuum to the single ineffable essence that emanates out and in to create the material out of the spiritual and the spiritual out of the material ‘at the end of time’. Blavatsky’s analogy of

⁹⁰ The titles of the books and articles advocating the pros and cons of HPB and theosophical teaching in general tend to speak for themselves. Among them are Gertrude Marvin Williams, *Madame Blavatsky: priestess of the occult* (New York, NY: Lancer Books (1946), Maurice Leonard, *Madame Blavatsky: Medium, Mystic and Magician* (London and New York: Regency Press, 1977), Marion Meade, *Madame Blavatsky, the Woman behind the Myth* (New York: Putnam, 1980) as well as William Emmette Coleman, "The Sources of Blavatsky's Writings," in *A Modern Priestess of Isis* by Vsevolod Sergyeevich Solovyoff (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1895), 353-366. <http://www.blavatskyarchives.com/colemansources1895.htm>, accessed 3/7/16, and John Nevil Maskelyne, *The Fraud of Modern "Theosophy" Exposed: a Brief History of the Greatest Imposture Ever Perpetrated Under the Cloak of Religion* (London: G. Routledge & Sons, 1912), also available as an electronic source at YUL.

⁹¹ See Gananath Obeyesekere, *The Awakened Ones: Phenomenology of Visionary Experience* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 358.

‘out-breathing’ and ‘in-breathing’ of Brahma places this many-staged process cyclically into eternity.

The complex ontology of the *The Secret Doctrine* engages in discussion and ‘explanation’ of sciences, the world’s religions and beliefs of the past. According to Coleman, the sources of the borrowed materials are an eclectic mix of science, mysticism, religions, and cults, as well as figures such as the Buddha, Paracelsus, Sir Thomas More, Jakob Böhme, Newton, Darwin, and Jesus.⁹²

This chapter will look into three areas pertinent to the discussion of opus 65: firstly, the esoteric meaning of numbers and their correspondence to the structure of Scriabin’s mystic chord ‘around which he walks’, the numerical allusions to his spherical form, ‘forma shar,’ the significance of the *number* and *order* of études in the cycle; secondly, the embodiment of theosophical triadic constructs in Scriabin’s concept of theurgy, where the opus 65 is a small model of Scriabin’s theosophical cosmogenesis; and lastly, the placement of the ‘musical world’ of opus 65 within Blavatsky’s model of anthropogenesis, the doctrine of Seven Races.

To the Question of Numbers

Out of twenty-six Scriabin’s Études there are only three stand-alone pieces: op. 2, no. 1, written by the fifteen-year old pre-conservatory composer and op. 56, no. 4 and op. 49, no.1, the two études of the middle period. The remaining twenty-three are grouped in three opuses: op. 8, consisting of twelve études, op. 42 – eight études, and op. 65 – three études. In his short book

⁹² Coleman, “The Sources,” 353-66.

intended for a general reader, *Scriabin's Études* (1963), Dmitry Blagoy points out, however, the carefully thought-out tonal plan in the op. 8 cycle.⁹³ With regard to opus 65, the author states the last three études written in Switzerland in the summer 1912 “display the images similar to contemporary symbolist writers.”⁹⁴ Further he quotes the famous letter to Sabaneev in which Scriabin informs his friend of his three new daring creations: “In fifths (Horrors!), in ninths (How depraved!), and in major sevenths (the *last* fall from the Grace!?). What will the world say?”⁹⁵

From the analytical and historiographical points of view the question that comes to mind is: was it simply Scriabin's desire to explore the previously unexplored in terms of the sound or was it also a way to convey some concealed esoteric meaning, un-emphasized and cleverly hidden from the ‘uninitiated’? In other words, did Scriabin's ‘empty’ parallel fifths and consistently unresolved ninths and sevenths aim only to shock the conservative Russian musical establishment rigorously nurtured by Scriabin's former counterpoint teacher Sergei Taneev,⁹⁶

⁹³ Blagoy points out the characteristic for early Scriabin tonal development marking the expansion of Subdominant area, as the keys of the études indicate: Cis, fis, h, H, E, A, b, As, gis, Des, B, and dis. In Dmitry Blagoy, *Étude Skryabina* (Moskva: Gosudarstvennoe Muzykal'noe Izdatelstvo, 1963), 26.

⁹⁴ Blagoy, *Étude Skryabina*, 38.

⁹⁵ The given translation can be found in F. Bowers, *Scriabin, A Biography* (New York: Dover, 1996), 236. This translation, however close to the text in Russian, does not quite reflect the subtleties of the original. “Horrors!” is better translated as “oh, Horror!” which retains Scriabin's original grammatical interjection; “How depraved!” should be “what a lechery!” and “the last fall from Grace” is simply “the final downfall!?” Also, none of these three phrases are capitalized in the original letter of Scriabin (No. 686, p. 594, ed. Kashperov). Finally, the last sentence cited carries some ironic meaning as it is the quotation from the famous comedy by A. Griboedov, *Woe from Wit* (1823), a satire on Russian aristocratic society. In the original Russian version the last phrase cited, “Что скажет свет?..” [Chto skazhet svet?..], the word *svet* means, in the context, the high society, or the conservative musical elite of both Russian capitals at the time, Moscow and St. Petersburg.

⁹⁶ Sergey Ivanovich Taneev (1856-1915) was a prominent Russian music theorist, teacher, composer and an intimate of the Leo Tolstoy family. He taught at the Moscow Conservatory for over twenty-five years (1878-1905). His most famous pupils also include Rachmaninov and Medtner.

who had already felt “as if [he] had been beaten with sticks”⁹⁷ after the Moscow premiere of the *The Poem of Ecstasy* in 1909? Or, perhaps, was there more to this story than it appeared on the surface?

With regard to Blavatsky’s chapter on the Sacred Numbers it is interesting to note that the structure of Scriabin’s “Central Element” (Kholopov), the altered Dominant ninth chord, corresponds to the “Numbers of Creation” in *The Secret Doctrine*. Stanza 4 in “The Sacred Science of Numerals” declares: “From the efulgency of Light – the ray of the ever-darkness – strung in space the re-awakened energies: The one from the egg, the six and the five; then the three, the one, the four, the one, the five – the twice seven, the sum total.”⁹⁸ Taking, for instance, G as a point of departure and a whole tone as a unit of measure Scriabin’s Dominant ninth chord with a lowered fifth appears as the following:

1 6 5 3 1 4 1 5
G – G – F – B – D flat – A – B – A

Further, the sum of the numerals excluding the first three is fourteen, or ‘twice seven total’.

Whether or not this is a mere coincidence cannot be said with an absolute certainty.⁹⁹ A compositional process of many of the greatest composers has always alternated between intuition and calculation. In Scriabin’s words “...mathematics has to play a big role in music. Sometimes

⁹⁷ Sabaneev, *Vospominaniya*, 36.

⁹⁸ Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. 1, 30.

⁹⁹ Perhaps some coincidences are inevitable, as I discovered in the final stages of working on this thesis. The ‘computation’ of Scriabin’s dominant ninth chord with lowered fifth out of Blavatsky’s ‘Numbers of Creation’ was performed by Andrei Bandura more than twenty years prior to my personal discovery. It appears that two human minds separated by distance in space and time can come to the same conclusion about the nature of a certain phenomenon. See Andrei Bandura, “A.N. Scriabin. Mystika tvorchestva i magiya svetozvuka.” [Mysticism of Creativity and Magic of the Sound-Colour] (1993). Available online at <http://www.theosophy.ru/lib/skr.htm>

I even do calculations when composing, calculations of the form.”¹⁰⁰ Yet, according to Sabaneev Scriabin says: “I find my chords and harmonies by intuition, and many acoustic scientists teach whatever they want. It pleases me when scientific facts coincide with my intuition, and, in the end, that cannot be avoided. Intuition has always been my priority. Of course, the principle of unity demands that science and intuition coincide.”¹⁰¹ Indeed, in Scriabin’s own philosophy of music as the driving force of the universe, science and intuition seem to coincide on several occasions. The four years of formal general education at the Second Cadet Corps in Moscow could not have provided him with a solid academic training in mathematics and/or sciences, let alone in music, which was always his primary interest. Still, his insatiable curiosity constantly sought out explanations and confirmations of his own visions and beliefs. Blavatsky’s pronouncements on the ‘ancient’ meaning of numbers must have been very attractive to him as they required him to accept the teachings of *The Secret Doctrine* without questioning, or, at least to adapt those of her concepts that filled the gaps in his own doctrine.¹⁰²

One of Blavatsky’s interpretations of the last five digits in the Numbers of Creation – 3 1 4 1 5 (refer back to page 60) – as π (pi), the ratio of a circle’s circumference to its diameter,¹⁰³ might have confirmed Scriabin’s idea of his musical form as a spatially-circular “forma shar”, i.e., a three-dimensional sphere, “perfect as a crystal, [...] felt more than calculated.”¹⁰⁴ In opus

¹⁰⁰ Sabaneev, *Vospominaniya*, 123.

¹⁰¹ Sabaneev, *Vospominaniya*, 74.

¹⁰² Schloezer writes that “...Scriabin used theosophical terms quite loosely. He adapted them to his own ideas, aspirations and yearnings and employed theosophical postulates as formulas to describe his own experiences.” In Schloezer, *Scriabin*, 67.

¹⁰³ Blavatsky, in fact, inverts the terms of the ratio in her text, saying that it is “the ratio of the diameter to the circumference of a circle”, perhaps due to her vague awareness of the order-importance of antecedent and consequent in a ratio. (In *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. I, 90).

¹⁰⁴ Sabaneev, *Vospominaniya*, 122.

65 this form, in theosophical terms, becomes as irrational in its nature as the irrational number¹⁰⁵ pi itself; it never settles down into a permanent repeating pattern, thus becoming transcendental in essence – a constructed mystery in its own eternal ambiguity. Blavatsky’s Masters¹⁰⁶ confirm: “...The primordial form of everything manifested, from atom to globe, from man to angel, is spheroidal, the sphere having been with all nations the emblem of eternity and infinity...”¹⁰⁷

Thinking further, as any ‘form’ develops in a span of ‘time’, can we, analyzing Scriabin’s music, overemphasize either ‘being’, i.e. the notated score, and ‘becoming’, i.e. the ideas that were driving the process of ‘coming into being’, as two discrete entities? Becoming without being is meaningless; being without becoming is impossible. It is likely that Scriabin’s mind was somehow able to perceive ‘time’ simultaneously in both these ways (being and becoming), creating a true chronosophy,¹⁰⁸ or, in metaphysical terms, a new type of musical composition *sui generis*.

With regard to opus 65 the next question concerning the numbers falls into three interdependent parts: firstly, the meaning and the significance of the number of pieces in the

¹⁰⁵ In mathematics, an irrational number is a number that cannot be expressed as a ratio of integers, i.e. as a fraction. Therefore, irrational numbers, when written as decimal numbers, do not terminate, nor do they repeat.

¹⁰⁶ Blavatsky claimed that in her writings "... every word... comes from the teachings of our Eastern Masters; and... many a passage in these works has been written by me under their dictation. In saying this no supernatural claim is urged, for no miracle is performed by such a dictation. . . . Space and distance do not exist for thought; and if two persons are in perfect mutual psycho-magnetic rapport, and of these two, one is a great Adept in Occult Sciences, then thought-transference and dictation of whole pages, become as easy and as comprehensible at the distance of ten thousand miles as the transference of two words across a room..." In Helena Blavatsky, introduction to *Isis Unveiled: A Master-Key to the Mysteries of Ancient and Modern Science and Theology* (Pasadena: Theosophical University Press, 1998), 37.

¹⁰⁷*The Secret Doctrine*, vol. 1, 65.

¹⁰⁸ Chronosophy is the interdisciplinary and normative study of time. The term (from Ancient Greek: *chronos*, "time" and *sophia*, "wisdom" was invented by Thomas Julius Fraser and discussed in Thomas J. Fraser, *The Voices of Time: A Cooperative Survey of Man's Views of Time as Expressed by the Sciences and Humanities* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1981).

cycle; secondly, the importance of the order of études in the printed editions; and finally, the esoteric theosophical meaning of ‘The Triad of Being’ and its materialization within the opus 65 cycle, one of the small musical worlds on the way to *Mysterium*.

To address the first question it is useful to look through the list of Scriabin’s music composed after op. 60, *Le poème du feu* (1910).¹⁰⁹ One can immediately notice the strict order of alternation of the larger forms (sonatas) and the smaller pieces. It is remarkably consistent starting with opus 60, which is also in sonata form. Further, the last five sonatas occupy the even opus numbers: No. 6, op. 62, No. 7, op. 64, No. 8, op. 66, No. 9, op. 68 and No. 10, op. 70; *Vers la flamme* op.72 is in sonata form as well. The smaller pieces, the intermezzos between the sonatas, take odd opus numbers. The majority of them are sets of two: Two Poems op. 63 (*Masque* and *Etrangeté*), Two Preludes op. 67, Two Poems op. 69 and Two Preludes op. 71. The only exceptions in the diptych series are Poème-Nocturne op. 61, Three Études op. 65, and Five Preludes op. 74. Again, are these groupings unintentional or are they carefully planned, i.e., is this yet another coincidence as in the case with Scriabin’s chord ‘around which he walks’, emerging from the Numbers of Creation or as in his ‘spherical’ music form and Blavatsky-interpreted value of π ? In my view this type of serendipity is not very likely for a composer who used to spend long hours ‘calculating’ the forms, drawing geometrical diagrams and ‘philosophical’ schemes as well as writing lengthy literary and poetic commentaries on his larger works.¹¹⁰ Another piece of the puzzle is the fact that starting with opus 60, Scriabin refrained

¹⁰⁹ M. Montagu Nathan, *Handbook to the Piano Works of A. Scriabin*. (London: J. & W. Chester Ltd., 1922), 14-16.

¹¹⁰ Boris de Schloezer writes that “Scriabin’s metaphysical convictions were not only logical, but also graphical; he drew them out, using ruler and compass, with great diligence and accuracy. He endeavored to represent in lines and geometric figures the interrelations he intuitively perceived between the world and the individual, between God and reality, in art, religion, and science.” In *Scriabin, Artist and Mystic*, 58.

from providing any verbal programmatic descriptions to any of his music, often merely referring to them obliquely in the title or the initial indication of the tempo or/and character. Once again, Sabaneev informs us that “the late works of Scriabin are covered by a great shadow, or, maybe, by the luminescence of the *Acte préalable*”, which for Scriabin was the last terrestrial step to the transformation of the universe.¹¹¹ “I don’t understand how one can write ‘just music’ these days... This is so uninteresting... Music only makes sense when it becomes a *link* in one *indivisible plan*, in the wholeness of our contemplation of the universe...,” confessed the composer to his friend in 1910.¹¹²

In order to ‘investigate’ Sabaneev’s ‘shadow of the *Acte préalable*’ in Scriabin’s opus 65, looking into Blavatsky’s numerous interpretations of the number Three can provide a variety of clues to the symbolic meaning of number three. Could any one of them have made sense to Scriabin? It appears that at this point of investigation the question must remained unanswered, just as the one asked by Scriabin’s American contemporary, Charles Ives.¹¹³ The following possibilities must be listed, however.

¹¹¹ Sabaneev, *Vospomimamiya*, 173.

¹¹² Sabaneev, *Vospominaniya*, 139 (my emphasis).

¹¹³ Ives wrote his *The Unanswered Question* in 1908, just a few years prior to Scriabin’s op. 65. Leonard Bernstein (1976) writes that the woodwinds, represented "Fighting Answerers," and after a time "realize a futility and begin to mock "The Question" before finally disappearing, leaving "The Question" to be asked once more before "The Silences" are left to their "Undisturbed Solitude." In *Leonard Bernstein, The Unanswered Question: Six Talks at Harvard* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 1976), 268-69.

Number Three and Scriabin's Concept of Theurgy

The number three is the first of the odd numbers, as the triangle is the first of the geometrical figures. This number is truly the number of mystery *par excellence*. It is on the occult properties of the three equal lines or sides of the Triangle that the famous masonic society of the Trinosophists was founded.¹¹⁴ In the First Fundamental Proposition of *The Secret Doctrine* Blavatsky states that the “*Meta-physical (or Absolute) Triad*...the Root from which proceeds all manifestation”¹¹⁵ is formed by Be-ness or Absolute, Absolute Abstract Space, and Absolute Abstract Motion, also termed The Great Breath. The *Pre-Cosmic triad*, the first “highest trinity that is capable of understanding” since the Absolute triad only “transcends the power of human conception and... is beyond the range and reach of thought.”¹¹⁶ The *Cosmic triad* consists of Cosmic Ideation, Cosmic Substance and Cosmic Energy (or Fohat), which are manifestations of the two pre-cosmic Ideation and Substance, and the "light of the Logos."¹¹⁷ The *Human Triad* (sometimes called in the text ‘higher’ or ‘upper’ triad) is formed by the three ‘higher principles’: Atma (the Higher Self or Spirit), Buddhi (the divine Soul) and Manas (the Mind-Principle, or the human Soul), the fruition of the latter assimilated by the first two after every ‘terrestrial life cycle.’¹¹⁸ Among the further trinities is the one of *Chaos – Theos – Kosmos [sic]*¹¹⁹ where the three are “the containment of Space”, “the primary embodiment of simply Unity... boundless

¹¹⁴ *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. 2, 575.

¹¹⁵ *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. 1, 15.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 15-16.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 73-74.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 237.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 342. In *The Secret Doctrine*, “Kosmos” almost always refers to the Universe while “Cosmos” generally refers to our solar system alone.

extension”, “the triple deity” that is “all in all.”¹²⁰ Finally, Blavatsky’s *Triad of Being*,¹²¹ consisting of Matter, Energy and Information, seems to be of the utmost importance from Scriabin’s point of view on cosmogenesis and his personal understanding of the mystical experience and creativity expressed in the mysterious super-task of bringing into existence unmanifested, unrealized magical sound. Blavatsky’s ideas of the evolution of the universe as a self-conscious spirit reveals an unexpected resemblance to the process of creating a musical composition according to Scriabin, and thus allows us to lay the groundwork for defining his ‘mysterious’ creative process as theosophical cosmogenesis. From Scriabin’s point of view on the evolution of the world, the primary subjects of the Triad of Being, Information, Spirit, and the Unconscious are the only subjective realities. The Spirit, an endless unity in itself, descending into Matter (the material world) manifests itself in an innumerable array of phenomena. This ‘materialized’ Spirit is thus the Consciousness, the continuous source of Information on the Unconscious, propels the creator (the composer) into the multitude of the other worlds existing in the space-time continuum. In other words, Blavatsky’s Energy may correspond to Scriabin’s ‘will to live’, the creative activity ‘liberating’ the musical ideas from the sonic chaos. To further substantiate this idea it is necessary to proceed to our second question, namely the importance of the order of études in the opus 65 cycle.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 347.

¹²¹ Ibid., vol. 2, 542-70. In the teachings of Theosophy, H.P. Blavatsky describes the human being as consisting of *Seven Principles*, divided into a *Higher Triad* and a *Lower Quaternary*. These seven principles or seven parts of our nature are the divine part, the spiritual part, the intellectual part, the passional part, the vital part, the astral part, and the physical part. The first three of these comprise the *Higher Triad of Being* and they last forever, while the lower four last just for one lifetime and are new in each lifetime that we have.

To the Question of the Order of Études in the Cycle

It is curious to note that in the letter to Sabaneev quoted earlier Scriabin talks about the études in fifths, ninths and sevenths, in that order. In the first printed edition published by Jurgenson the order of the études is different, however: the first one is in ninths, the second one is in sevenths, and the last one is in fifths. What was Scriabin's rationale for putting the pieces in this particular order? Was it the logic of the 'roundness' of the cycle, where the second étude, slower in tempo and smaller in size, was to be surrounded by two larger and faster pieces? Was it the demand of his 'forma-shar', where the rapid, volatile energies of the first and the last études surround the quiet flexible centre, the second étude?¹²² Or could it be a certain 'hidden' message imbedded in the sequence of numbers nine, seven and five, discussed in *The Secret Doctrine*, which, according to Sabaneev, Scriabin kept on this bedside table for nearly ten years?¹²³

To summarize the Blavatskian meanings of numbers nine, seven, and five, one faces a daunting task of wading through the entire text of *The Secret Doctrine*, a staggeringly eclectic compilation of Egyptian, Gnostic, Christian, Hebrew, Hindu and many other exotic scriptures and teachings, stories and myths. Below is a précis of the pertinent information, or the result of an ordinary human to overcome what Blavatsky termed the 'willing ignorance' by a voluntary self-immersion into exoteric and esoteric traditions of various kinds.¹²⁴

¹²² Blavatsky writes that "... to realize the meaning of the sphere," it "must be thought of as seen from its centre. The field of vision or of thought is like a sphere whose radii proceed from one's self in every direction, and extend out into space, opening up boundless vistas all around. It is the symbolical circle of Pascal and the Kabalists, 'whose centre is everywhere and circumference nowhere' (...)". In *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. I, 65.

¹²³ Sabaneev, *Vospominaniya*, 139.

¹²⁴ The phrase 'willing ignorance' was Blavatsky's answer to the sceptics who wondered why, if Theosophy was so ancient and universal, it was so unknown until 1875. According to her, we, ordinary humans, have lost "real spiritual insight" because we are too devoted to "things of sense" and have for too long been slaves "to the dead letter of dogma and ritualism." In H.P. Blavatsky, *The Key to Theosophy*, section IV. Originally published in 1889.

Nine

“The number nine or the triple ternary. It is the number that reproduces itself incessantly under all shapes and figures in every multiplication. It is the sign of every circumference, since its value in degrees is equal to 9, *i.e.*, to 3 + 6 + 0.”¹²⁵ Nine also represents the end of a cycle completed, the final number after which the sequence of numbers reverts to zero. Or, to quote the source, “Every Cosmogony began with a circle, a point, a triangle, and a cube, up to number 9, when it was synthesized by the first line and a circle -- the Pythagorean mystic *Decade*, the sum of all, involving and expressing the mysteries of the entire Kosmos.”¹²⁶ The ancient Mayans speak of nine underworlds each ruled by God.¹²⁷ There are nine spheres and nine rings of hell in Christian religion.¹²⁸ For Hindus the nine is a number of Agni, or fire, a symbol of spirituality.¹²⁹ The square of nine forms the mandala, a circle of eighty-one squares enclosing the Universe. For Hebrews¹³⁰ nine is the pure intelligence; for Egyptians it represents The Ennead, the nine deities in Egyptian mythology.¹³¹ There are nine gods and nine muses in the ancient Greece.¹³²

See in the Theosophical University Press electronic version at
http://blavatskyarchives.com/theosophypdfs/blavatsky_the_key_to_theosophy_1889.pdf

¹²⁵ *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. 2, 580-81.

¹²⁶ *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. 1, 339.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 238.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, 230-1.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 378.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, vol.1, 239 and vol. 2, 73.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 310-11.

¹³² *Ibid.*, vol. 2, 383.

Seven

The number seven bears a deep significance since the dawn of times as it points out the union of the Deity with the Universe. It was considered sacred by nearly all ancient cultures of the East and later, of the West. In Kabbalah "...at the time that the Holy... created the World, he created 7 heavens above, 7 earths below, 7 seas, 7 days, 7 rivers [*etc.*]. The Holy is the seventh of all."¹³³ The *Seven Planes* correspond to the seven *states* of consciousness in man.¹³⁴ The Egyptians¹³⁵ had seven original and seven higher gods; their dogma of metempsychosis or the transmigration of souls taught that there were seven stages of purification and progressive perfection, the idea similar to the Buddhist¹³⁶ doctrine of seven stages of progressive development of the disembodied soul. The Persians worshipped the seven sacred horses of Mithra; for the Parsees, it was seven angels opposed by seven demons, and seven celestial bodies paralleled by seven lower regions.¹³⁷ The priests of many Oriental nations were subdivided into seven degrees; seven steps led to the altar and in the temples burnt candles in seven-branched candlesticks.¹³⁸ The seven planetary spheres served as a model for state divisions and organization. China was divided into seven provinces, ancient Persia into seven satrapies.¹³⁹ There are seven sages in ancient Greece, seven free arts in the Christian Middle Ages, seven

¹³³ Ibid., vol.1, 348.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 199.

¹³⁵ Ibid., vol. 2, 23.

¹³⁶ Ibid., vol.1, 35.

¹³⁷ Ibid., vol.2, 36 and 394.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 36.

¹³⁹ Ibid., 35.

pipes in the syrinx of the god of Nature, Pan; Apollo's lyre has seven strings etc.¹⁴⁰ Every aspect of the universe is comprised of seven parts, which Blavatsky introduces as *structures* when they relate to the human aspects of life, and *chronologies* when applied to the more abstract ideas of cosmology and human evolution within it. Suffice to say, the seven is the most significant number in the Secret Doctrine, as can be seen from simply looking through the titles and subtitles of the chapters: Seven Cosmic Elements and Seven Races of Mankind,¹⁴¹ The Seven Eternities,¹⁴² The Fiery Whirlwind and the Primordial Seven,¹⁴³ The Septenary Element in the Vedas,¹⁴⁴ The Seven Souls of the Egyptologists,¹⁴⁵ etc. Thus, this sevenfold structure is found in all manifestations of the universe. In its *divine* aspect this 'number of the Eternal' symbolizes the perfection of the Macrocosm connected to the microcosm.

Five

The number five expresses the idea of the 'perfect man', the microcosm, the "the universal Quintessence, the vital fluid of Life."¹⁴⁶ In its 'divine' aspect it is a symbol of the spark of the Absolute, the Monad, or a part of the whole. As the symbol of the incarnated consciousness it governs the process of spiritualization of the cosmos, where the four, 'quaternary, or the square', the material representation of 'all sides of the world' are combined with the one, '... a single-top

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 581.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., vol. 1, 12.

¹⁴² Ibid., 36.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 106.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., vol. 2, 605.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 630.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 576.

tier – Spirit at the center.¹⁴⁷ Five is also the spirit of life eternal and the spirit of life and love terrestrial.¹⁴⁸ Thus, as the union of the even (female) and odd (male) numbers (2+3) it represents the sacred cosmic marriage of heaven and earth. Other citations of five are found in the description of the pentagram, the five-pointed star symbolizing the five limbs of man “not only five-limbed, but rather the *thinking, conscious MAN*”¹⁴⁹ which in Blavatsky corresponds to the Hindu ideas of Makara and Kumara (pentagon in Sanskrit) as well as the Buddhist concept of the ‘five mystic words or vowels’ uttered by Brahma at ‘creation.’¹⁵⁰ Among numerous references to many other religions and beliefs are the five commandments and five wounds of Jesus on the cross of the Christian church,¹⁵¹ the Five Ministers of Poseidon of the Peratae Gnostics,¹⁵² the five principles in the man of the ancient Greeks,¹⁵³ and the multiple occurrences of this number in the ‘unknown’ Chinese manuscript, The Secret Book of Dzyan,¹⁵⁴ where The Five Elements, or the fivefold conceptual scheme explaining a wide array of phenomena is the most prominent.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 576.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 579.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 576.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 579 and vol.1, 106-09.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., vol.2, 580.

¹⁵² Ibid., 577.

¹⁵³ Ibid., 579-80.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., vol.1, 27-34.

To the Question of Microcosm of op. 65 and the Doctrine of Seven Races

If Scriabin had indeed ‘composed’ the cosmos in his opus 65 according to his concept of music as the materialization of the occult, leading us into irrational, mystical, and ‘other-worldly’ domains of existence, what kind of existence, or a ‘small universe’ can opus 65 represent? It appears that in these three études the *one* world is created with the ‘cosmic’ trinity (*three* pieces in the cycle). The numbers *nine*, *seven* and *five* are, respectively, the ‘triple deity’ ending the preceding cycle; the ‘Eternal’, expressing the connection of the macro and the micro, and the Microcosm of a ‘conscious’ man manifesting his creative will. This numerical chain can also be depicted in a descending sequence of the odd numbers as such:

EXAMPLE 13: Sequence of odd numbers in the opus 65 cycle.

9	7	5	3	1
1 st Étude in 9 ^{ths}	2 nd Étude in 7 ^{ths}	3 rd Étude in 5 ^{ths}	Total number of pieces in the opus	One complete cycle Opus 65

Once again, Blavatsky’s Secret Doctrine informs us that “the odd numbers are *divine*; the even numbers are *terrestrial*.”¹⁵⁵ Yet, as the odd and the even are the integral part of the complete order of numbers, the existence of either of them is impossible in the absence of the other. The idea of the union of terrestrial and divine or, in Schloezer’s words, “of humanity with divinity

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., vol. 2, 574 (my emphasis).

and the return to the world of oneness”,¹⁵⁶ was embodied in Blavatsky’s notion of The Seven Races. For Scriabin it was intrinsically connected with the concept of Theurgy, the act of ‘divine creation’ as a mystical experience, the synthesis of matter and spirit. Thinking along these lines, we can interpret Opus 65 as one of the evolutionary cosmic cycles in the history of humanity, a small universe emerging out of the *Chaos* (the aftermath of the collapse of the previous cycle, the ‘end’ symbolized numerically by nine), introducing the *Theos* (seven) that manifests itself into *Cosmos* (five) in the composer’s ‘logical’ chain of events. Schloezer quotes Scriabin saying to him: “You may not accept the doctrine of Seven Planes as the ultimate truth, but to me it serves as a convenient framework for classifying natural phenomena and for creating the order out of the chaos of factual data.”¹⁵⁷

This type of direct application of Blavatsky’s theosophical concepts to the late works of Scriabin, rather novel to North American Scriabin scholarship,¹⁵⁸ has been recently developed by a prominent Russian Scriabin scholar, Andrei Bandura.¹⁵⁹ In his article “Tale of Seven Races: Evolution of a Man in the Musical and Literary Legacy of A. N. Scriabin” (1997) he proposes a fascinating theory of correspondence of the Seven Stages of Blavatsky’s doctrine of the Root Races with Scriabin’s last seven compositions in a sonata form. During his work as the theory

¹⁵⁶ Schloezer, *Scriabin*, 67.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁸ An outstanding dissertation by Anna Gawboy, “Alexander Scriabin’s Theurgy in Blue” is a rare exception. It argues that the seven slow colour stages in the *luce* correspond to Blavatsky’s seven-stage conception of human evolution.

¹⁵⁹ Andrei Ivanovich Bandura is the author of over seventy articles and four books on Scriabin. Very few of them have been translated into English so far. His article “Tale of Seven Races: Evolution of a Man in the Musical and Literary Legacy of A. N. Scriabin,” *Delfis Journal*, no.3 (1997): 37-42 can be accessed on line (in Russian: А.И. Бандура, “Сказание о семи расах. Эволюция человека в музыкально-литературном наследии А.Н. Скрябина,” *Дельфис*, № 3 (1997): 37-42 at <http://www.delphis.ru/journal/article/skazanie-o-semi-rasakh> For further titles refer to the Bibliography.

consultant at the Scriabin Memorial Museum in Moscow in the late 1980s, Bandura was able to decipher Scriabin’s writings, pictures, diagrams, and musical sketches in all five of his Notebooks preserved at the museum; only two of them were published by Schloezer in 1923 (1987 in English). Bandura also had direct access to Scriabin’s personal copy of *The Secret Doctrine*, which, according to him, has 513 handwritten notes by the composer in both Russian and French. Finally, he discovered another source of Scriabin sketches, eight one- or two-page manuscripts (OΦ 26 098 No. 11-18) dedicated to the evolution of the races. After careful studying of these documents he concluded that Scriabin’s text to the *Acte préalable* became the ‘universal programme’ to all works in sonata form composed after *Prometheus*. According to him, every one of those pieces reflects either the principles of creation or the most important moments in Blavatsky’s history of the Root Races as individually seen and interpreted by the composer himself. Below is a brief summary of Bandura’s associations:

TABLE 1: Blavatsky’s Root Races associated with Scriabin’s works op. 61-74.¹⁶⁰

<p>1st Race</p> <p><i>Polarian</i>, as it existed around the North pole.</p> <p>This was a Race of astral entities with translucent or ethereal bodies, ovoid, yet somewhat fluid in form. They propagated by fusion.</p>	<p><i>Poème-nocturne</i> op. 61¹⁶¹</p> <p>*Reference to the nine fragments in <i>The Secret Doctrine</i> underlined and commented on by Scriabin.</p> <p>*Reference to the character of the piece in the Notebooks A (p. 16, 21), B (p. 71, 75) and OΦ 26 098 No. 14 (p.2).</p>
--	--

¹⁶⁰ The description of the Races (not part of Bandura’s article) is based for the most part on the summary of “Cycles of Time and the History of Root Races” (HPB, *SD*, vol. 2) offered by Prof. Asianada. It can be accessed at http://institutespiritualsciences.org/blog_ss/root_racestwo.php

¹⁶¹ This is an ‘odd’ opus number written in a form that can be loosely interpreted as a sonata. Its designation somewhat falls out of the Bandura-proposed scheme.

	<p>*Multiple indications in the score similar to the wording in Scriabin's poetic texts in the above Notebooks, such as: <i>comme une ombre mouvante, avec une volupté dormante, comme en un rêve</i>, etc.</p>
<p>2nd Race</p> <p><i>Hyperborean</i> or 'golden yellow'.</p> <p>Their watery bodies assumed remarkably diverse monstrous shapes as they experimented with existence in the physical world. They reproduced by gemmation, or budding as they lived in a tropical climate. They had no self-conscious minds and were guided by spiritual instinct.</p>	<p>Sonata No. 6 op. 62</p> <p>*Reference to the six fragments in <i>The Secret Doctrine</i> underlined and commented on by Scriabin.</p> <p>*Reference to the character of the piece in the Notebooks C (p. 17, 21, 22) and E (p. 3).</p> <p>*Indicated correspondence between the two above reference with the dark and mysterious character of the music emphasized by in-score indications such as sudden interruptions of slower <i>piano</i> sections (<i>le rêve prend forme, appel mystérieux</i>) by faster <i>forte</i> episodes (<i>l'épouvante surgit, effondrement subit</i>).</p> <p>E.g.: "It's not the death that will destroy us, but the arousing desires – the future monsters of passion..." (C, p. 22)</p>
<p>3rd Race</p> <p><i>Lemurian</i>, or 'black' race lived in 'Lemuria'.</p> <p>They were giant ape-like creatures with the eyes at the back of their heads. The first three sub-races of the Lemurians reproduced by laying eggs, but the fourth sub-race, later beginning reproducing like modern humans. The <i>Lemurians</i> possessed exceptional psychic powers that were put to everyday use. Their self-conscious minds began to awaken as their physical forms had become sufficiently developed to express the latent mental powers. This important event is referred to as the 'incarnation of the <i>manasaputras</i>', or 'sons of light'.</p>	<p>Op. 64 Sonata No. 7</p> <p>*Reference to the fifteen fragments in <i>The Secret Doctrine</i> underlined and commented on by Scriabin.</p> <p>*Reference to the character of the piece in the Notebooks B (p. 68, 82), C (p.5), and OФ 26 098 Nos. 13 and 15.</p> <p>*Interpretation of this grandiose sonata as the historical development of the giants of the third race.</p> <p>Importance for Scriabin's conception of the <i>Mysterium</i>, since "the fire of the soul awakens and the Sons of Light appear on Earth" as the "first park of conscious enjoyment of creation lights up a man" (C: 5).</p>

	Correlation of the Scriabin texts in the Notebooks with the in-score indications.
<p>4th Race</p> <p><i>Atlantean</i> (a name derived from Plato's lost continent of Atlantis) or bronze-skin race.</p> <p>Atlanteans produced one of the most brilliant civilizations of a purely material character that this globe has seen. On the whole, they were unspiritual, with strong material instincts. Many of them worshipped the dark and evil powers of nature, and misused their innate psychic powers for selfish ends – practices which were opposed by the wiser among them. The majority of them perished (submerged) due to earthquakes.</p>	<p>Op. 66 Sonata No. 8</p> <p>*Reference to the nine fragments in <i>The Secret Doctrine</i> underlined and commented on by Scriabin.</p> <p>*Reference to the character of the piece in the Notebook C (p. 33, 36) and OФ 26 098 No. 12.</p> <p>*Enigmatically contemplative images of this Sonata reveal the features of the 4th Race where, in Scriabin's words "personal desires lead to the evil, to self-destruction." The process of development of this race ends in the creation of the humankind as we know it today: "...the final grasp of self-awareness and the utter oblivion of the past personifications" (C: 33).</p>
<p>5th Race</p> <p><i>Aryan</i> or, our current race.</p> <p>It emerged from the the Atlanteans who escaped the deluge. The psychic powers of the people are nearly depleted since they are comfortable living in the physical realm of existence.</p> <p>As with previous Root Races, the Fifth Race will decline, too. Two indications for such a decline are the lack of psychic powers and the lack of respect for the human self.</p>	<p>Op. 68 Sonata No. 9</p> <p>*Reference to the character of the piece in the Notebook C (p. 44, 45, 47).</p> <p>*The darkest and the most demonic of all Scriabin's creations, this sonata portrays the world contemporary to the composer. As the representative if the 5th Race, Scriabin identifies his personal mission: to overcome the material through imprinting in it the divine idea: the goal of the spiritual awakening through art, rhythm, and dance.</p>
<p>6th Race</p> <p>Presumably will appear in the 28th century in North America where a new continent will arise in the Pacific Ocean that will be the future home of the sixth root race, or the 'spiritual' race.</p>	<p>Op. 70 Sonata No. 10</p> <p>*Reference to the character of the piece in the Notebooks B (p.99) and C (p. 55, 56, 57).</p>

	<p>*In this luminous, bright sonata the images of the forest, light and insects reflect Scriabin's vision of the beings of the 6th Race. The polarity of the male-female is finally vanquished as the vibrant trills portray a blazing vision of the new light. Evocation of the insects are also interpreted as manifestations of human emotions (C: 55-57).</p>
<p>7th Race</p> <p>It will arise from the seventh subrace of the sixth root race and will inhabit a new South-American continent esoterically called <i>Pushkara</i>.</p> <p>According to Blavatsky the Seventh Root Race marks the end of the evolution of human consciousness on Earth before humanity migrates to Mercury to continue its evolution.</p>	<p>Op. 72 <i>Vers la flamme</i></p> <p>*Reference to one fragment in <i>The Secret Doctrine</i> underlined and commented on by Scriabin.</p> <p>*Reference to the character of the piece in the Notebook C (p. 64, 67, 68, 74).</p> <p>*Radiant ecstasy of op.72 reveals the result of the Earth's evolution – the 7th Race coming to the <i>fiery transformation</i>. Its ultimate goal is 'gushing [<i>poryv</i>] to the impersonal, absolute' (C: 68). The events of the seventh day lead the 'sacred mystery of disappearance' to the 'mystery of conception of the new Universe' (C: 64).</p>

Such is Bandura's interpretation of Scriabin's vision of esoteric anthropogenesis implemented in the form of a one-movement sonata starting with opus 62.¹⁶² As it is, the history of the races is associated with the history of an individual consciousness, One Man, the Initiated Observer consistently reincarnated in each race and becoming Scriabin himself in the 5th Race.

¹⁶² Bandura's rationale for this approach is based on the importance of sonata form throughout Scriabin's creative life. He provides a quotation from Sabaneev, who called Scriabin's last seven works in a sonata from the 'little mysteries, fragments of the general plan' [of *l'Acte préalable*]. Thus he associated these larger even-numbered opuses after *Prometheus* with seven stages of Blavatsky's anthropogenesis whereas the smaller odd-numbered opuses – with the state of the universe and human consciousness between these transformations. See Bandura, "Tale of Seven Races" (1997): 37-42.

Schloezer writes that Scriabin might have thought that he was a Mahatma himself, as he [Scriabin] found

vindication for his own mission in the lives of the consecrated votaries, missionaries of superior powers sent to earth to reveal the secret truth in its various aspects for the benefit of humanity. He regarded himself as a member of this select fraternity of messengers of the Unique and as a custodian and restorer of ancient wisdom. During the last years of his life he even thought of assuming a formal title in that fraternity, known in the mystical lore as the 'White Loge,' in whose existence he earnestly believed and which, he was sure, secretly awaited his coming.¹⁶³

Scriabin's own hand-written confirmation in his Third (C:2) Notebook reads: "The main idea is given as a *mood*, a principal *tone* of our *manvantara*, experienced by the Absolute Consciousness."¹⁶⁴ Referring to the topic of the Seven Races, Schloezer writes that

In the winter of 1907-1908, he formalized the content and the subject of his *Mysterium* [...] as an evolutionary psychology of the human races. This phase of Scriabin's spiritual development owed most to theosophy, which supplied him with the necessary formulas and schemes, particularly in the notion of Seven Races, which incarnated in space and time the gradual descent of psyche into matter.¹⁶⁵

Returning to opus 65, Bandura, who noticed the peculiar order of alternation of odd and even opus numbers on Scriabin's late works nearly twenty years prior to my personal discovery, suggests that the odd opus numbers could illustrate a broad spectrum of phenomena: from the process of re-orientation of consciousness of the mystic into different layers of time to the glances from terrestrial history into the history of others universes developing in parallel realities.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶³ Schloezer, *Artist and Mystic* (1987), 218.

¹⁶⁴ Quoted in Bandura, "Tale of Seven Races" (1997): 41.

¹⁶⁵ Schloezer, *Artist and Mystic*, 67-68.

¹⁶⁶ Bandura, "Tale of Seven Races," 39.

Strangely enough, the data on the esoteric number symbolism pertaining to Scriabin's opus 65 and presented earlier in my discussion confirm Bandura's hypothesis. The number of the pieces in the cycle may be seen as an implementation in miniature of Scriabin's theosophical cosmogenesis: the trinity of all cosmic creations, or, for the composer, the 'mysterious' creative process of musical composition defined as Information, Spirit, and Unconscious, or the Triad of Being. Another trinity of Chaos – Theos – Kosmos points toward Scriabin's understanding of theosophical anthropogenesis and places the opus 65 in between the Lemurian and Atlantean races. The 'divine' numbers of nine, seven, and five, thus, portray the end of the 3rd race (first étude), followed by the manifestation of Absolute (second étude) into the microcosm of a man (third étude), as we know him today and who, according to Blavatsky's teachings, came into existence in the 4th, or Atlantean Race.

Such are the *possibilities of the impossible*, or the theosophical constructs seen as illuminating the compositional process of a daring Russian genius who believed that music could change the world. Yet these possibilities are simply potentials with no guarantees as they are seeking to explain the work of art, undoubtedly, one of the most mysterious and obscure gifts of humanity. As Adorno eloquently puts it in his *Aesthetic Theory*: "Art works are like the sphinx: they seem to promise meaning through the logic of their form, but it is a meaning which remains concealed. In this way construction and expression converge, paradoxically, in their extremes."¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁷ Theodor W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, edited and translated by Robert Hullot-Kentor (London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), 164.

CHAPTER THREE

Vers le Contrepoint de Lumière

*“Il y a des illusions touchantes qui sont peut-être des réalités sublimes.”*¹⁶⁸
Victor Hugo

“The whole world is inundated with the waves of my being,” – wrote the composer in his private notebook in 1905.¹⁶⁹ Indeed, the ripple effect of a single completed work, *Prometheus* op. 60 and the ideas for the never-written *Mysterium*, has produced a great number of fascinating academic and popular writings on Scriabin’s colour-hearing, oftentimes called synesthesia, his ‘colour wheel’, and *tastiera per luce*, or *clavier à lumières* (keyboard with lights). The early sources of Sabaneev and Myers will be discussed later in the chapter as they had been the foundation of all subsequent biographical and historiographical writings on the topic since 1915.¹⁷⁰ Since the early nineties Scriabin’s colour-hearing has been a subject for discussion amongst international scholars undertaken by *Leonardo/The International Society for the Arts, Sciences and Technology (Leonardo/ISAST)*. A considerable amount of research has been presented by Russian musicologists, most of it remaining untranslated into English with the

¹⁶⁸ Victor Hugo, “Les Rayons et les Ombres,” in Victor Hugo, *Oeuvres complètes* (Arvensa, France : Arvensa editions, 2013), 1422.

¹⁶⁹ Quoted in Bowers, *Scriabin* (1996), 101.

¹⁷⁰ Rosa Newmarch’s article “‘Prometheus’: The Poem of Fire” published in *The Musical Times* 55, no. 845 (1914): 227-31) is not on the list of the ‘primary literature on the subject’ as it repeats, for the most part, Sabaneev’s article of 1912.

exception of the writings of the two foremost Russian specialists on the subject, Irina Vanechkina and Bulat Galeev.¹⁷¹

In North America, frequent writers on the subject are Kenneth Peacock (1985) and Greta Berman (1999). A relatively recent publication of Anna M. Gawboy and Justin Townsend includes a real-time visual analysis of the *Prometheus* performed by the Yale Symphony Orchestra in 2010.¹⁷²

The study of implicit correspondence of Scriabin's schemata of colour with the harmonic content of his late piano works, an unexplored territory in the composer's scholarship, will be presented in this chapter using opus 65 as an example. In order to grasp the meaning of Scriabin's compositional procedures in the context of Russian culture of his time, my chapter will discuss the following:

- 1) Scriabin's 'synthetic' Synesthesia in the context of the Russian culture of his time.
- 2) The primary sources of literature on the subject.
- 3) Scriabin and Theosophical interpretations of colour-sound correspondence.
- 4) The *law of polarity*, Dernova's *dual modality* and Scriabin's implicit colour-hearing in his opus 65.

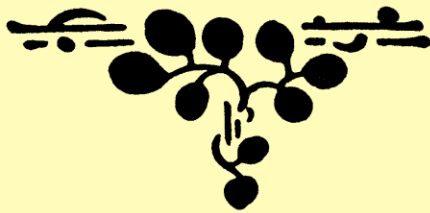
Since Scriabin's colour-hearing was based on key or/and tonality, it is essential to note that these three études first published by Jurgenson in 1912 did indicate, apparently with the composer's blessing, the keys of the pieces: B flat, C sharp, and G major for the three studies, respectively. Below is the title page of the original publication:

¹⁷¹ For the full list of works (in English) by Irina Vanechkina and Bulat Galeev, refer to the official *Leonardo* site at <http://www.leonardo.info/isast/leobib275.html>

¹⁷² Kenneth Peacock, "Synesthetic Perception: Alexander Scriabin's Color Hearing," *Music Perception: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 2, no. 4 (1985): 483-505; Greta Berman, "Synesthesia and the Arts," *Leonardo* 32, no. 1 (1999): 15-22; Anna M. Gawboy and Justin Townsend, "Scriabin and the Possible" in *MTO: A Journal for the Society of Music Theory* 18, No. 2 (June 2012). Available at http://mtosmt.org/issues/mto.12.18.2/mto.12.18.2.gawboy_townsend.html

PLATE 1: Title page of op. 65 Jurgenson edition (1912).

A. SCRIBINE



TROIS ETUDES

pour Piano

1. B. 2. Cis. 3. G.

op. 65.

Propriété de l'éditeur

P. Jurgenson à Moscou.

Petrograde, J. Jurgenson. Varsovie & Kiew, L. Idzikowski.

Sole Agents for the British Empire
J. & W. Chester, London & Brighton.

Prix 4 Rb

Scriabin's 'Synthetic' Synesthesia in the Context of the Russian Culture of his Time

Throughout my research on the subject I came to a rather surprising and stark realization of the immense “Russianness” of this most ‘un-Russian-sounding’ composer of the early twentieth century. According to Richard Taruskin and James Baker, Scriabin, the “most interdisciplinary” of all “interdisciplinary composers who ever lived,”¹⁷³ hardly ever renounced the ‘extra-musical’ content of his creations; instead, as “a master of the craft of musical composition,”¹⁷⁴ he “consciously modified his style so as to enable his music to serve the spiritualistic purposes his religious and philosophical beliefs demanded.”¹⁷⁵ On this point, I concur with both Taruskin and Baker, if only to emphasize what may be called the enigma of Scriabin’s Russian soul (*zagadochnaya russkaya dusha*). This type of mentality can be understood as the one that strives for all or nothing, that lacks moderation in any endeavour it undertakes, and strongly upholds the idea of Russian Messianism, the sacred role of Russia to save the world. After all, according to Scriabin, his personal godlike magnetism and omnipotence in addition to his music would galvanize the whole of humanity to join him in the final mystery, the ecstatic transcendence to a higher plane of existence.

As noted and discussed in many writings on Scriabin, this type of perception of music as art-form had stood in direct correlation with the important artistic and philosophical tendencies of the time.¹⁷⁶ The ideas of *vse-edinstvo* (total unity) of Russian religious philosopher Vladimir

¹⁷³ Richard Taruskin, “Scriabin and the Superhuman: A Millennial Essay,” in *Defining Russia Musically: Historical and Hermeneutical Essays* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 313.

¹⁷⁴ Baker, *Scriabin*, 270.

¹⁷⁵ Richard Taruskin, *The Oxford History of Western Music*, vol. 4 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 203.

¹⁷⁶ Among the most comprehensive accounts are Malcolm H. Brown, “Scriabin and Russian ‘Mystic’ Symbolism,” *Nineteenth-Century Music* 3, no. 1 (1979): 42-51; Simon Morrison, “Scriabin and the Impossible,” *Journal of the*

Solovyov (1853–1900) certainly resonated with Vacheslav Ivanov’s concept of *Sobornost’*, the word that had received multiple translations such as ‘absolute conciliarity’, ‘togetherness’, and ‘communal art’. Close to the turn of the century Solovyov defined artistic beauty as the “transfiguration of material through the embodiment in it of some other, higher-than-matter principle.”¹⁷⁷ The concept of the role of the poet who would liberate humanity through the mystery of music, colour, dance, scents etc., i.e., through the experience of true synesthesia, proposed by Ivanov (1866-1945), one of the major poets and theoreticians of the Russian Symbolism movement, resonated with Scriabin as well, undoubtedly magnified by Ivanov’s deep respect for and considerable praise bestowed upon his friend’s music.¹⁷⁸ “All creativity of the future will arise from the spirit of music and flow into her all-embracing bosom,” – wrote Ivanov in his collection of essays *Po Zvezdam* (Above the Stars), presented to Scriabin during their meeting in St Petersburg in 1909.¹⁷⁹ Another influential figure of Scriabin’s circle at the time was Prince Sergei Nikolaevich Trubetskoy, whom the composer met around 1898.¹⁸⁰ Prince Trubetskoy (1862–1905), credited with introducing Scriabin to the German idealistic philosophies of Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Fichte and Kant, was professor of Philosophy at

American Musicological Society 51, no. 2 (Summer 1998): 283-330; and James West, *Russian Symbolism: a Study of Vyacheslav Ivanov and the Russian Symbolist Aesthetic* (London: Methuen, 1970).

¹⁷⁷ Cited in Brown, “Skriabin and Russian ‘Mystic’ Symbolism,” 48.

¹⁷⁸ Ivanov is mentioned in Sabaneev’s *Vospominaniya*, 190, 191-93, 195, 247, 293, 333, 347-48, 365-66.

¹⁷⁹ Ivanov, *Po Zvezdam*, St. Petersburg: Izdatel’stvo OPBI (1909), 198. The book is available on line (In Russian) at http://imwerden.de/pdf/ivanov_po_zvezdam_1909.pdf
Cited in Brown, “Skriabin and Russian ‘Mystic’ Symbolism,” 51. On Scriabin’s meetings with Ivanov see Morrison, “Scriabin and the Impossible,” 288-90.

¹⁸⁰ In his discussion of Scriabin’s philosophical creative quest Brown notes that composer’s “lifelong philosophical bent [...] gained direction and systematic encouragement“ at the time his of moving into “social and intellectual orbit of the Prince Trubetskoy. In Brown, (1979): 43-45.

Moscow University who attempted to “reconcile the objective idealism of Hegel and mystic idealism of Vladimir Solovyov.”¹⁸¹

These philosophical views fuelled tremendous activity in poetry, arts, theatre and music, during the period known today as the Russian Silver Age (*Serebryany Vek*, ca. 1898–1917). Engrossed in the irrational, mythical and mystical aspects of creation and being, Russian Symbolists embraced the spiritual side of the Western *sine qua non* as well as the multiplicity of inspirations of their French and Belgian counterparts. The first decade of the twentieth century in Russia witnessed the blossoming of lavish literary and art periodicals. Among them, the illustrious *World of Art* (*Mir Iskusstva*, 1899–1904), *The Golden Fleece* (*Zolotoe Runo*, 1906–1909), and *Apollo* (*Apollon*, 1909–1917)¹⁸² were providing the New Theory of Symbolist Art to the Russian avant-garde intelligentsia alongside Western publications such as *Mercure de France*, *La Plume*, and *La Revue Belge* and many others.¹⁸³ Following the new poetic principles of French Symbolism emphasizing the musical nature of the language, Russian poets of an early Silver Age re-interpreted many of the main postulates of their Western counterparts. Thus, Stéphane Mallarmé’s *pure musique poétique* and Paul Valéry’s concept of pure poetry became the ‘poetry as the primary aim of poetry’ in writings of one of the founders of Russian Symbolism, a poet, a writer, a scholar and an editor of another important symbolist magazine *Vesy* (*The Scales*, or *The Libra*), Valery Bryusov.¹⁸⁴ Largely influenced by the mystical

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 43.

¹⁸² See a recent study by a Canadian scholar Hanna Chuchvaha (PhD, 2012, University of Alberta) published as *Art Periodical Culture in Late Imperial Russia (1898-1917): Print Modernism in Transition*, Boston, MA: Brill (2015).

¹⁸³ Daniel Laqua and Christophe Verbruggen’s article “Beyond the Metropolis: French and Belgian Symbolists between the Region and the Republic of Letters,” in *Comparative Critical Studies* 10, no. 2 (July 2013): 241-58, provides a thorough account on the subject. Access to the article is available at <http://www.eupublishing.com/doi/full/10.3366/ccs.2013.0090>

¹⁸⁴ Brown, (1979): 46.

idealistic teachings of Solovyov, Russian Symbolist poetry became a means of irrational, theurgic creative process aiming to transform and transcend Bryusov's 'empirical realias'.¹⁸⁵ Another seminal figure of the movement, Vyacheslav Ivanov, preached the abandonment of Théophile Gautier's motto *l'art pour l'art* in favour of creativity as *ancilla theologiae* expressed through the true synthesis of arts.¹⁸⁶

An unprecedented number of brilliant works in literature, art and theatre created by the Russians at the *fin de siècle* demonstrated the multiplicity of the vivid forms of "complex synthetic types of sensitivity" eloquently described nearly half a century after Scriabin's death by the famous Russian neuropsychologist Alexander Luria.¹⁸⁷ Following in the footsteps of the 'musical score' of Mallarmé's *Un coup de dés* (1897) and Verlaine's "De la musique, avant toute chose," Scriabin's contemporaries, many of them his close friends, created works such as *The Red Sound* and *The Chords* (Jurgis Baltrušaitis, 1909),¹⁸⁸ *Green Vertograd. The Kissing Words* and *White Architect. Mystery of Four Lanterns* (Konstantin Balmont, 1909 and 1914). Ivanov's *Translucency* (*Prozrachnost'*, 1904), Bryusov's *Urbi et Orbi* (*To the City and the World*, 1903), *All Melodies* (1908) and *The Fiery Angel* (1908), Andrej Belyj's *The Northern*

¹⁸⁵ Bryusov's 'empirical realias' were the primary goals of poetry. According to him "the words are designed to create images and the images are designed to point beyond themselves to the divine mysteries." See Ronald F. Thiemann, *The Humble Sublime: Secularity and the Politics of Belief* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2014), 50.

¹⁸⁶ See Vyacheslav Ivanov, *Rodnoe i Vselenskoe* (Moskva: Respublika, 1994). Available on line (in Russian) at http://teatr-lib.ru/Library/Ivanov_vyacheslav/Rodnoe_i_vselenskoe/

¹⁸⁷ Alexander Romanovich Luria, *The Mind of a Mnemonist: A Little Book About A Vast Memory* (New York, London: Harvard University Press, 1978), 24.

¹⁸⁸ Baltrušaitis is mentioned in Sabaneev's *Vospominaniya* (2000), 128, 154, 188, 189, 190, 194. Baltrušaitis (1873-1944) was a Lithuanian-born poet, a diplomat, a translator who knew 15 foreign languages, and one of the Russia's foremost experts in iconology. Bryusov, Ivanov, Chekov, Stanislavsky, Vruble and Pasternak were an integral part of his artistic and intellectual circle.

Symphony (Severnaya Simfoniya, 1902),¹⁸⁹ *Gold in Azure* (Zoloto v lazuri, 1904). Those are but a few of the works representing the glorious times of Russian poetic Silver Age which, for many poetry lovers, including myself, culminated in works of the poet's poet – Alexander Blok (1880 - 1921).¹⁹⁰ Markedly, more than a decade after the 'official' Death of Symbolism in Russia, many of the synesthetic ideas were still in the air. Andrej Belyj's variations on the theme of Rimbaud's *Voyelles* (1871), *Glossolalia. The Poem about Sound* (1922), had presented a philosophical, poetic and esoteric reenactment of the creation of cosmos through the expansion of the boundaries of language, genres and artistic conventions.¹⁹¹ Osip Mandelstam's *Conversation about Dante* (1933) 'orchestrating' the *The Divine Comedy* through the reflections on the nature of poetry,¹⁹² Marina Tsvetaeva's (1892–1941) famous dedication to Blok that played with the sound of his surname,¹⁹³ the colourful language of one of the greatest writers of

¹⁸⁹ This work is a unique prose poem, representative of an attempt to combine prose, poetry, music, and painting. See in Irina Paperno, *Creating Life: The Aesthetic Utopia of Russian Modernism* (Stanford University Press, 1994), 99-102.

¹⁹⁰ In Blok's poetry, the colour element was essential. Blue or violet was the colour of frustration, yellow – the colour of street lanterns, windows and sunsets – was the colour of treason and triviality. Black hinted at something terrible, dangerous but potentially capable of esoteric revelation. The Russian words for yellow and black are spelled by the poet with a long O instead of YO [Ё], in order to underline "a hole inside the word". An excellent book on A. Blok was written by a British scholar and translator of Russian Literature, Avril Pyman (b.1930), (aka Dr. Avril Sokolov), *The Life of Aleksandr Blok: the Release of Harmony, 1908-1921* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979). Dr. Pyman is also the author of the first comprehensive history of Russian Symbolism written in English, *A History of Russian Symbolism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006) and a book on Scriabin's contemporary and one of his closest friends, Father Pavel Florensky: *Pavel Florensky: A Quiet Genius: The Tragic and Extraordinary Life of Russia's Unknown Da Vinci* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2010).

¹⁹¹ See Andrej Belyj, *Glossalalie/Glossolalia: Poem über den Laut/A Poem about Sound*, trans. Thomas R. Beyer Jr. (Dornach: Pforte Verlag, 2004).

¹⁹² Osip Mandelstam, *Selected Poems*, trans. Clarence Brown and W.S. Mervin (New York, NY: Macmillan Publishing, 1974).

¹⁹³ This poem, *Имя твое — птица в руке* (1910), one of my personal favourites, deserves a citing of at least one stanza, as its synesthetic allusions are quite remarkable even in English translation:

*Имя твое — птица в руке,
Имя твое — льдинка на языке.
Одно-единственное движение губ.
Имя твое — пять букв.*

*Your name is a—bird in my hand,
a piece of ice on the tongue.
The lips' quick opening.
Your name—five letters.*

the twentieth century and a self-described synesthete, Vladimir Nabokov (1899-1977), this list of the Russian writers who carried on Scriabin's fascination with colour as a means of amalgamation of creative expression is not even remotely comprehensive due to an exceptional abundance of the creative works that emerged after the year 1915. An extraordinary and somewhat inexplicable aspect of Russian cultural history raises the question of how a nation capable of producing so many brilliant minds was and has been equally gifted in the persistent ostracizing and/or the deliberate annihilating of its own intellectual treasure. The destinies of many Russian men of letters, artists, and musicians who survived the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 were subject to an inherently Russian peculiarity: the absolute congruence of being on either end of one stick; i.e. an inevitability of two outcomes – a tragic death or a permanent departure from the mysterious Motherland.¹⁹⁴ Among those who left Russia in 1921 was Vassily Kandinsky, an artist integral to this discussion as his primary goal was to convey multiple cross-

*Мячик, пойманный на лету,
Серебряный бубенец во рту.*

See Marina Tsvetaeva, *Selected Poems*, trans. Ilya Kaminsky and Elaine Feinstein (London and New York: Penguin Classics, 1994), 26.

*A ball caught in flight,
a silver bell in my mouth.*

¹⁹⁴ The appalling facts of the Russian post-1917 history are numerous. To list a few of the outrageous suicides and ill-fated political prosecutions is to reflect on what could have awaited Scriabin should he not have died in 1915 and was not allowed to leave the country like many of his, ironically, less -fortunate contemporaries. Thus, here are some facts. One of the beloved Russian poets of the early twentieth century, Sergei Esenin (1895-1925), hanged himself after writing his famous farewell poem *Good-bye my Friend, Good-bye* in his own blood. The 'Poet of Revolution,' Vladimir Mayakovsky (1893-1930) shot himself through the heart. Osip Mandelstam (1897-1938) was executed in a Siberian labour camp eight years after the execution and burial in an unidentified mass grave of Nikovai Gumilev (1886-1921), a poet and a husband of another famous poet, Anna Akhmatova (1889-1966). Akhmatova and her son endured the persecution of the Soviet regime for 36 years after Gumilev's death. Marina Tsvetaeva committed suicide in 1941 after the execution of her husband, Sergei Efron, on charges of espionage. Maksim Gorky (1868-1936) was rumoured to have been killed by Stalin's NKVD (*Narodnyi Komissariat Vnutrennikh Del* or People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs) agents in his own apartment in Moscow in 1936. The tragic life and death of Nikolai Roslavets (1880-1944), a great admirer and to a certain extent, Scriabin's follower, is just one example of the destiny of 'a cosmopolitan' composer unable to leave the country on time. Among multiple English -language sources on the subject matter see Evelyn Bristol, *A History of Russian Poetry* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991). Also Avril Pyman, *A History of Russian Symbolism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 181-304; Donald Wesling, "The Speaking Subject in Russian Poetry and Poetics since 1917;" *New Literary History* 23, no. 1, *Versions of Otherness* (Winter, 1992): 93-112. Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/469160>. Accessed: 20-02-2017. Among recent books on Roslavets see Marina Lobanova, *Nikolaj Andreevic Roslavets und die Kultur seiner Zeit* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang GmbH, 1997).

sensory experiences embodied in the idea of synthesis of arts. A remarkable painter and theoretician of modern art, Kandinsky published his magnum opus, “Concerning the Spiritual in Art” in *Der Blaue Reiter* in 1912, the same year of Sabaneev’s publication dedicated to Scriabin’s *Prometheus*. Although Kandinsky’s theories on colour-sound correspondence outlined in the sixth chapter of his treatise were quite dissimilar to those of Scriabin, the major commonality of both conceptions is rather striking: both, the artist and the composer proposed, in essence, the idea of *counterpoint in different arts*. Irina Vanechkina notes that Kandinsky “points out that the usual force of influence of synthetic art lies just between ‘consonance’ and ‘anti-consonance’, i.e. between unison and counterpoint of the means used.”¹⁹⁵ The ‘visual music’ of Kandinsky’s contrapuntal *Compositions, Improvisations* and the *Fugue*¹⁹⁶ was clearly influenced by a Russian avant-garde artist and personal acquaintance of Scriabin, Aristarkh Lentulov (1882-1943).¹⁹⁷ M. Lobanova quotes the artist describing his 1915 painting, *Bell-ringing. Ivan the Great Bell-Tower* as the “circular, wave-like surfaces transmitting the sensation of the buzzing sound, the repeated structural elements of the composition as the pulled arrows that create an impression of an organ or a giant *gusli*. The entire painting is saturated with a purely musical feeling.”¹⁹⁸ This ‘musical feeling’ was much to Scriabin’s liking in the

¹⁹⁵ Irina L. Vanechkina, “Where does “The Blue Rider” Gallop? Schönberg, Kandinsky and the Synthesis of Art,” in *Schönberg and Kandinsky. An Historic Encounter*, ed. Konrad Boehmer (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1997), 96.

¹⁹⁶ These works can be viewed on MoMA’s and Beyeler (Basel, Switzerland) Foundation’s websites at <http://www.moma.org/calendar/exhibitions/448?locale=en> (Compositions) <http://www.moma.org/search?query=kandinsky+improvisation> (Improvisations) <http://www.fondationbeyeler.ch/en/collection/wassily-kandinsky> (Fugue and Improvisation 10, 1915)

¹⁹⁷ Lobanova writes that Lentulov was particularly proud of Scriabin’s opinion of him as the artist closest to the composer’s own conceptions of colour-sound correspondences. In 1918 Lentulov participated in the grandiose production of Scriabin’s *Prometheus* at the Bolshoi Theatre, vividly described in the same source. See Marina Lobanova, *Theosophist – Theurg – Mystic*, 255.

¹⁹⁸ Lobanova, *Theosophist – Theurg – Mystic*, 254-55.

works of two other frequent visitors to the hospitable apartment at Nikolopeskovsky Lane No. 11, Mikalojus Konstantinas Čiurlionis and Nikolai Sperling. In Sabaneev's *Vospominaniya* both men received multiple mentions, many of them not without a hint of disdain as the author apparently did not enjoy sharing his affection for the composer with those who, in his view, were unworthy of such an immoderate consideration and respect.¹⁹⁹ Čiurlionis (1875-1911), in Messiaen's words an "extraordinary composer of music and paintings"²⁰⁰ was deeply involved in Theosophy and the occult teachings of the Renaissance. His many paintings of a delicate opaque-bluish hue bear musical names, such as several sets of *Preludes and Fugues* of 1906-1907 or *Sonatas of the Stars, of the Sea, of the Pyramids* etc. from 1907-1908.²⁰¹ Beyond any doubt, the 'mystical' esoteric inclinations of this self-proclaimed synesthete who was trying to blend his paintings with his musical compositions, resonated with Scriabin immensely during the last few years of his life. As for Nikolai Sperling (1881-1944), to date he has remained a man of mystery as very little is known about his life and works. The Scriabin Memorial Museum's official website provides a brief description of Sperling as the author of works on literary and religious subjects who had a fancy for Nietzsche's teachings on Zarathustra, and the occult sciences of Renaissance and Eastern philosophies.²⁰² Sabaneev attests that Scriabin adored the

¹⁹⁹ Sabaneev, *Vospominaniya*, 66, 96-7, 101, 182-83 (Sperling) and 168-69, 289-90 (Sperling and Čiurlionis).

²⁰⁰ Olivier Messiaen, *Conférence de Notre-Dame*. (Paris: Leduc, 1978), 8. Cited in Almut Rössler, ed. *Contributions to the spiritual world of Olivier Messiaen: With original texts by the composer* (Duisburg, Germany: Gilles & Francke, 1986), 57-66.

²⁰¹ For information on the artist refer to the website of *M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art* in Kauna, Lithuania. <http://www.ciurlionis.lt/about-the-museum>

²⁰² See Scriabin' Memorial Museum website at <http://www.russianmuseums.info/M290> Bowers' revelations of Sperling as the one who "drank human blood and ate human flesh at the front during the War in an effort to derive mystical experience" can certainly not be taken seriously. In Bowers, *Scriabin* (1996), 48. The short article by *Irina Zhalnina-Vasilkioti* "Artist Nikolai Shperling and Collector Antonis Benaki" (*PII*, 2:2016) [*Russian Art Journal*. Theme of issue: Russia - Greece. Dialogue of cultures] informs us that Sperling "mysteriously dropped out of sight after the Civil War in Russia" to appear years later in Greece. His creative career in Russia "came to an end after the outset of World War I; with Baron Wrangel's Russian Army he evacuated from the

mysterious and somewhat sinister flavour of Sperling's paintings, *Eastern Sage*, which Scriabin called 'The Black One' [*Cherny*], and the *Knight de Rais*, an enigmatic hero of J.-K. Huysmans' novel *Là Bas*.²⁰³ Both paintings have remained on the walls of Scriabin's study uncannily divulging a late-Scriabinesque artistic palette at the Russian *fin de siècle*. Was it a source of inspiration for the composer or a source of confirmation to already 'known' or perceived intuitively? The following discussion of theosophical interpretations of colour-sound correspondences will suggest that it was, most likely, a peculiar combination of both. Prior to that discussion, however, I will address the subject of primary sources/documentary materials on Scriabin's colour-hearing.

The Primary Sources of Literature on the subject

The most accurate summary of primary-sources/documentary materials on Scriabin's colour-hearing frequently cited in the English-language literature on the subject belongs to B. Galeev and I. Vanechkina.²⁰⁴ The authors list and describe seven basic reliable sources on which all subsequent research has been based, as "no other reliable material exists except for particular passages in the reminiscences of his [Scriabin's] contemporaries."²⁰⁵ Six of them come from Leonid Sabaneev's articles published between 1911 and 1915. The earliest of these papers, "On

Crimea, landing in Turkey, then moved to France and afterwards lived in Serbia, Germany and Egypt, where he met Antonis Benaki, a Greek businessman and collector who commissioned the artist to execute watercolours for the albums «Greek National Costumes» on which Sperling worked for almost 15 years." Available at http://www.rusiskusstvo.ru/content/files/2016_2/Zhalnina-Vasilkioti.pdf

²⁰³ In Sabaneev, *Vospominaniya*, 169.

²⁰⁴ Bulat Galeev and Irina Vanechkina, "Was Scriabin a Synesthete?" in *Leonardo* 34, no. 4 (2001): 375-61.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 358.

Sound-Colour Accordance” appeared in the Russian magazine *Muzyka* on January 29, 1911, coincident with first Russian publication of the score of *Prometheus*. On February 26 of the same year, Sabaneev mentioned Scriabin’s ‘colour-hearing’ in *Muzyka* once again, in connection with the discussion of the “light symphony” idea.²⁰⁶ In 1912 the text of two of the above articles combined was translated into German and reprinted in the famous *Der Blaue Reiter*, thus, making this information available to Western readers for the first time.²⁰⁷ The next two publications by Sabaneev came out a year after Scriabin’s death, the first in the famous Russian journal *Muzikal’ny Sovremennik*²⁰⁸ [Music Contemporary], and the second, as a separate chapter on the ‘light-symphony’ in his monograph on Scriabin of 1916.²⁰⁹ Finally, Sabaneev’s *Reminiscences about Scriabin*²¹⁰ first published in 1925, shortly before his emigration to France, is considered of greatest importance as they contain Sabaneev’s diaries of 1910-1915, in which he recorded his meetings with Scriabin. Another reliable source is a paper written in 1914 by the English psychologist Charles Myers, who met Scriabin in Cambridge during the composer’s last visit to England.²¹¹ Sabaneev quotes a clear and succinct explanation of Scriabin’s colour theory given by the composer himself in one of their conversation:

At first not all the colours were distinctly visible to me. Only some tonalities had given me a sharp image, – said Alexander Nikolaevich. They were Fis – blue, bright and dark, saturated,

²⁰⁶ Leonid Sabaneev, “Prometheus,” *Muzyka* no. 9 (January 29, 1911): 196-200. (In Russian)

²⁰⁷ Sabaneev, “Prometheus von Skriabin,” in *Der Blaue Reiter*. Munich (1912): 57-68. The English translation came out 62 years later with the first North American revival of Scriabin in the early 1970s: “Scriabin’s *Prometheus*,” in *The Blaue Reiter Almanac*, ed. Wassily Kandinsky and Franz Marc, trans. Henning Falkenstein, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1974): 127-414.

²⁰⁸ Sabaneev, “Scriabin and the Phenomenon of Coloured Hearing in Connection with the Light Symphony ‘Prometheus,’” *Muzikal’ny Sovremennik*, no.4-5 (1916): 169-75 (In Russian).

²⁰⁹ Sabaneev, *Scriabin*. Moscow: Skorpion (1916) (Second Ed. 1923) (In Russian).

²¹⁰ Sabaneev, *Vospominaniya O Scriabine* [Memories of Scriabin (or Reminiscences about Scriabin)] (Moscow: Muzsector Gosizdata, 1925). The latest publication is by Moscow: Klassika-XXI, 2000.

²¹¹ Charles Myers, “Two Cases of Synesthesia,” *The British Journal of Psychology* 7, Part I (1914): 112-17.

somewhat solemn and complete, the color of Reason. Then it was clear to me that D is golden, sunny, the plain jour color, and F – red, the bloody colour of Hell. So, out of these three it was necessary to draw a conclusion. But, I could only do it when I built up the following syllogism: the colours correspond to the harmonies, the tonalities. The relationship of the keys – in the circle of fifths, is such that the most closely-related keys are a fifth removed from each other. And, the closest in shade colours are adjacent in the spectrum. After that everything became very clear. The three distinct colours gave me my three fulcrums, the rest I deduced logically. And after I've done that, I saw that it was so, indeed; I saw that it couldn't be otherwise...²¹²

The important message of this quotation is that Scriabin's 'colour hearing' was deliberately created; it underwent some changes and alterations as the plans for *Mysterium* were taking shape. Scriabin's extraordinary idea of a new type of *Gesamtkunstwerk* aimed to include the new element, the 'counterpoint of light.' According to Sabaneev, in *Mysterium* Scriabin planned to use contrapuntal combinations of elements of different arts, as well as magical incantations, aromas and the colour element that would have not always be correspondent to the harmony, as it did in *Prometheus*, but would develop according to its own logic. "In *Prometheus* I wanted parallelism – I wanted to impose the colour impressions onto the sound. Now, I need the colour as the counterpoint... [...] Light represents its own melodies, the sound – its own." – said Scriabin to Sabaneev in 1911.²¹³ This notion embodied for the composer the universal principle of oneness, imperative to everyone. He considered his system of colour-sound analogies all-encompassing, unquestionably true and indisputable. "It cannot be personal...

²¹² Sabaneev, *Vospominaniya*, 237. Scriabin's settled convictions about the validity of his theories had always aimed to establish a concordance between the 'extra-musical' and the 'music itself.' Schloezer commented on this aspect of the composer's personality saying, "Theories that he constructed had no other aim but to coordinate and formulate in rational terms his own musical experience. When Scriabin set to work, he was concerned not with the solution of metaphysical problems, but technical problems; not with modeling the world according to his fancy, but manipulating musical sounds. He did what all composers must do; he created sonorous forms that he could later attribute extramusical significance to and interpret in the light of his ideology." In Schloezer, *Scriabin*, 316.

²¹³ Sabaneev, *Vospominaniya*, 239.

There must be a principle, must be oneness. A freak of chance – is a ripple on the surface, yet, the essential must be common.”²¹⁴

Thus, out of three colours Scriabin admitted he ‘heard’ – red, yellow, and blue, corresponding to C major, D major, and F-sharp major respectively, the others were deduced rationally, juxtaposing the ‘allied’ colours, arranged in a spectrum, and the ‘allied’ tonalities, arranged in the circle of fifths.²¹⁵ To visualize Scriabin’s colour-key schemata, the following table combines the classifications of:

- 1) Sabaneev, given in his first article of 1911.
- 2) Scriabin, found in the ‘revised version’ (1913) of *luce* part in the first edition of *Prometheus*, also known as *Parisian Score*.²¹⁶
- 3) Vanechkina, known as “Musico-Chromo-Logo” Schema, developed in collaboration with Galeev in 1975.²¹⁷

²¹⁴ Ibid., 48.

²¹⁵ It is curious to note, as the authors proceed with their report, they say at some point that “In the Scriabin’s Museum’s archives there is a list [...] without a date or a title, written in Scriabin’s own hand. It includes several *different* versions of correlations between various notes and colours. One can see that the composer tried to build up a conception of some kind. It is hard to judge to what exactly it applies, but the connection of this list with ‘colour hearing’ [...] is obvious.” Galeev and Vanechkina, “Was Scriabin a Synesthete?” (2001): 358.

²¹⁶ In 1978 the score of *Prometheus* with Scriabin’s handwritten notes was archived at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France. The full text of Scriabin’s annotations with the corresponding bar numbers is presented in Marina Lobanova (2004/2012), as she was able to obtain the photocopy of this manuscript, still unpublished today, and thus unavailable otherwise. See in Lobanova, *Theosophist – Theurg – Mystic*, 263-74.

²¹⁷ Vanechkina-Galeev’s schema is included in this table because of its frequent appearances in Scriabin’s sound-colour related literature. It is often presented as Scriabin’s own on the popular Scriabin’s websites, such as at <http://notationnotes.tumblr.com/post/4332176057/scriabin-key-colour-scheme-a-system-of> Irina Vanechkina, “O stvetovom slukhe Skriabina” [“On Scriabin’s Coloured Hearing”], in *Materialy Tret’eikonferentsii Svet i Muzyka*. (Kazan’, 1975), 31-33. (In Russian) Ванечкина И. Л., О “цветном слухе” А. Н. Скрябина, в сб.: *Материалы Всесоюзной школы молодых ученых по проблеме “Свет и музыка”. Третья конференция* (Казань, 1975), 31-33.

EXAMPLE 14: Comparison of Scriabin’s tonality-colour correspondence in Sabaneev (1911), Parisian Score manuscript and Vanechkina-Galeev Musico-Chromo- Logo” Schemata (1975).

Tonalities	Sabaneev 1911	Scriabin Parisian Score 1913	Vanechkina/Galeev “Musico-Chromo- Logo” Schemata 1975
C major	Red	Plain red	Will (Human) <i>Red (Intense)</i>
G major	Orange-pink	Orange (red-yellow), fiery	Creative Play <i>Orange</i>
D major	Yellow	Sunny yellow	Joy <i>Yellow</i>
A major	Green	Grass green	Matter <i>Green</i>
E major	Glittering dark blue	Dark blue-greenish (light blue)	Dreams <i>Sky Blue (Moonshine or Frost)</i>
B major	Similar to E major	Dark blue with light blueness (light blue)	Contemplation <i>Blue (or Pearly Blue)</i>
F-sharp/G-flat major	Dark blue, bright	Deep dark blue with a shade of violet	Creativity <i>Bright Blue or Violet</i>
C-sharp/D-flat major	Violet	Pure violet	Will (of the Creative Spirit) <i>Violet or Purple</i>
A-flat major	Magenta-violet	Lily coloured (reddish)	Movement of Spirit into Matter <i>Violet or Lilac</i>
E-flat major	Steely, With a metallic shine	Steely blue, metallic	Humanity <i>Flesh (Glint of Steel)</i>
B-flat major	Similar to E-flat major	Metallic leaden grey	Lust or Passion <i>Rose (or Steel)</i>
F major	Dark red	Dark red	Diversification of Will <i>Deep Red</i>

Comparing the key-colour mappings in these three tables reveals only minor variations in shade, such as, red – plain red – intense red, or glittering dark blue – dark blue-greenish – sky blue etc. A consistent use of ‘metallic’ hue in E flat major (steely, with a metallic shine – steely blue, metallic – glint of steel), and in B flat major (steely, with a metallic shine – metallic leaden grey – rose or steel) is curious. Equally peculiar are the before-colour captions in Vanechkina-Galeev’s schemata, e.g. Human Will, Creative Play, Joy, Matter etc. The question that arises from these observations is: what could be the source(s) of these associations?

A partial answer to the first part of the query presents itself in Sabaneev’s *Reminiscences*. As a proponent of the idea that sharped notes sounded higher than the flatted notes, i.e. the pitches went consecutively as C – D flat – C sharp – D etc., Scriabin built his theory of ‘enharmonic differences’ on the “elusive hues that cannot be expressed in words.”²¹⁸ In his conversation with Sabaneev Scriabin gives an example of his first Étude op. 8, originally written in D flat major and later transposed, on Safonov’s²¹⁹ recommendation, into C sharp major, to reflect its ‘true colour’. Further, he explains that the flat- and sharp-keys possess very different shades of colour: “Flat keys have some sort of *metallic* sheen, while sharp keys are bright, saturated with colour and without any of the metallic hue.”²²⁰

As to Vanechkina-Galeev’s semantically-laden descriptions of colours, connotations of theosophical interpretations of the correspondence of colour with a wide variety of objects and notions are self-evident. The authors, undoubtedly familiar with the theosophical teachings of

²¹⁸ Sabaneev, *Vospominaniya*, 173.

²¹⁹ Vassily Safonov was Scriabin’s piano teacher at the Moscow Conservatory. The link to his concise biography on the official site of the Moscow Conservatory is <http://www.mosconsv.ru/ru/person.aspx?id=129660>

²²⁰ Sabaneev, *Vospominaniya*, 173.

H.P. Blavatsky and Annie Besant, chose not to expand their research into the suspect area of mysticism, synonymous with obscurantism, and further ‘deface’ an image of an ‘impressionable and naïve’ Scriabin, surrounded by his ‘evil geniuses’, Sabaneev and Schloezer. Vanechkina’s dissertation²²¹ (2006), written thirty-three years after the publication of the article referred to above, takes a very definite attitude toward this issue; in the introductory chapter it states:

In the recent conditions allowing the freedom of speech and expression, Scriabin studies, unfortunately, have witnessed the surge of occult and esoteric interpretations of his works and even his life. They are based on the *exploitation* of composer’s fascination with theosophy and mysticism, creating the movement of *Mystical Scriabinism* which is far removed from reality and *has remained the subject of sharp criticism.*²²²

It is anyone’s guess whether Scriabin’s theosophically-derived ideas on colour-sound correspondence will become an accepted approach in musical analysis. It is unquestionably new and it is extraordinarily compelling. Although there are no clear directions or indications left by the composer regarding any connection between his colour-related ideas and his late music for the piano, I believe such connections can be identified and rationalized, thus proving the possibility of the existence of Albert Einstein’s ‘spooky action at a distance,’²²³ or, in our case,

²²¹ Irina Leonidovna Vanechkina, “Scriabin’s *Prometheus*: to the Problems of Synthesis of Music and Light.” Master’s Thesis, Kazan Zhiganov’s State Conservatory, 2006. (In Russian) [Ванечкина, Ирина Леонидовна, «Прометей» А.Н. Скрябина: Проблема синтеза музыки и света. Автореферат диссертации на соискание ученой степени кандидата искусствоведения. Казанская государственная консерватория (академия) им. Н.Г. Жиганова: 2006.]

²²² Vanechkina, “Scriabin’s *Prometheus*,” (2006): 6. (My emphasis)

²²³ The phrase, as a joke, appeared as a result of Albert Einstein’s famous critique of quantum mechanics. In a 1935 paper, Einstein, Boris Podolsky and Nathan Rosen created a thought experiment known as the EPR paradox (after the initials of their last names) to show some of the absurd implications of the fundamental quantum mechanics wave equation. According to the rules of quantum mechanics, entangled particles (which occur when two particles are so deeply linked that they share the same existence) travel in a kind of superposition of all their possible states. But even stranger, the wave equation implied that once measured, two entangled particles could somehow instantly communicate, much faster than the speed of light, to link up their states. Discounting this “spooky action at a distance,” Einstein and his colleagues instead argued that some hidden variable must somehow affect the states of both particles. See in Hrvoje Nikolic, “EPR before EPR: a 1930 Einstein-Bohr thought experiment revisited,”

two aspects of compositional conception that seemingly cannot merge, yet – they do, against all odds. In Pierre Boulez’s words, “More and more I find that in order to create effectively one has to consider delirium and, yes, organize it.”²²⁴

Scriabin and Theosophical Interpretations of Colour-Sound Correspondence

According to Andrei Bandura,²²⁵ the complete five volumes of Blavatsky’s *The Secret Doctrine* were part of Scriabin’s personal library, preserved today (with some omissions) in the Scriabin Memorial Museum in Moscow. Sabaneev and Schloezer inform us that while living in Switzerland between 1903 and 1909, Scriabin received the theosophical periodical *Le Lotus Bleu*. As he returned to Russia in 1909, he subscribed to the popular *Vestnik Teosofii*.²²⁶ Yet the third volume of *The Secret Doctrine* was, most likely, the primary source for Scriabin’s colour-sound analogies as this is the volume that contains the majority of esoterically-understood colour-sound analogies. Apparently not only was he familiar with these writings, but he might have met Annie Besant in London in March of 1914. In his letter from London to his wife, Tatiana Schloezer, he mentioned the forthcoming ‘dinner with theosophists’ and making acquaintance with “a lady in whose arms Blavatsky died.”²²⁷ He must have meant Besant, since

European Journal of Physics 33, no. 5 (2012): 1-16. Accessed at Cornell University Library, 2012. arXiv:1203.1139 [quant-ph] <https://www.technologyreview.com/s/427174/einsteins-spooky-action-at-a-distance-paradox-older-than-thought/>

²²⁴ Ronald Hayman, *Artaud and After* (London: Oxford University Press, 1977), 144.

²²⁵ Бандура, “А. Н. Скрябин и Е. П. Блаватская,” *Учёные Записки Государственного Мемориального Музея А. Н. Скрябина*. Вып. 2, М., 1995:16. [A. Bandura, “A.N. Scriabin and H.P. Blavatsky,” in *Scholarly Notes of Scriabin’s Memorial Museum* 2 (1995):16.]

²²⁶ In Sabaneev, *Vospominaniya*, 241 and Schloezer, *Scriabin*, 68.

²²⁷ A.N. Scriabin, *Pis’ma*, ed. A. Kashperov (Moskva: Izdatel’stvo Muzyka, 2003): No. 723, 630. Sabaneev writes that Scriabin met Besant’s secretary during his last visit to London. (*Vospominaniya*, 305). Whether or not ‘the dinner with theosophists’ mentioned in this letter took place, is yet to be confirmed.

Blavatsky died in her home in London in 1891.²²⁸ Among other early sources presenting the correspondence of colour and sound from a theosophical viewpoint are the *Thought-Forms*²²⁹ published by Besant and Charles W. Leadbeater in 1905 and Alexandra Unkovskaya's *The Method of Colour-Sound-Numbers*,²³⁰ published in *Vestnik Teosofii* in 1909.²³¹

To return to our subject of Scriabin's theosophically-infused sound-colour schemata, let us consider the three colours Scriabin said he 'heard' – red, yellow, and blue. The very same triad of red, blue, and yellow represents the three fundamental colours in *The Secret Doctrine*, where they are expressed as underlying essence of the three (of seven) Human Principles comprising the body, soul and spirit.²³²

- Red, as *Kâmâ Rupa*, the seat of animal instincts and passions, vehicle of Lower *Manas* (Sanskrit for 'the mind', the mental faculty which makes a man an intelligent mortal being). This is also a boarder-line between the mortality and immortality, the agent of Will during the lifetime. This colour corresponds to Do on the 'musical scale'.

²²⁸ The following link provides an access to Blavatsky's obituary published on May 9, 1891 in the *New-York Daily Tribune* the day after HPB died. <http://www.blavatskyarchives.com/anonmmeblav91.htm>

²²⁹ The online edition of this work published by The Theosophical Publishing House (Adyar, Madras, India and Wheaton, Illinois, USA) is available at http://www.anandgholap.net/Thought_Forms-AB_CWL.htm

²³⁰ Aleksandra Unkovskaya, "Метода Цвето-Звуко-Чисел" [The Method of Colour-Sound-Numbers], *Vestnik Teosofu* 1/3 (1909). Available on line at <http://www.vnikitskom.ru/antique/auction/82/35740/>

²³¹ These two sources, mentioned in Gawboy's dissertation (2010:180) are questionable, however. I found no information on whether the Besant-Leadbeater volume was translated into Russian or French at that time (Scriabin did not read or speak English). In regards to the Unkovskaya's article, its impact on Scriabin, if he ever read it, could not have been of any significance since this publication dealt with pedagogical issues of development in children's visual and oral abilities, logic, memory and keenness of observation through perception of colours, sounds, and numbers.

²³² Helena Blavatsky and Annie Besant, *Occultism of the Secret Doctrine* (Whitefish, MT: Kessinger Publishing, 1993), 360.

- Blue, as *Linga Sharira* (Astral Body, the vehicle of life) expressed in *Auric Envelope*, the essence of man both physical and divine. It is interchangeable with *Violet* and corresponds to Si on a diatonic scale.
- Yellow, as *Prana*, the Breath of Life, its vital power. It is also the colour of *Buddhi*, the connection point between Atma and Manas. Corresponds to Mi on the ‘musical scale.’²³³

Could Scriabin's colour/sound analogies have been taken directly from Blavatsky? Looking through the keys of the *Études* op. 65 indicated by Scriabin in the original Jurgenson edition presents the hues of these three primary colours: B flat and C sharp as variations of blue in the first two études, and a yellow/red combination in the last piece of the cycle. Was it a rational or a subconscious choice? In a 1929 article Sabaneev stressed the theosophy-acquired nature of Scriabin's colour schemata. He said:




There exists, again, the sphere of purely mystical correspondences between sounds and colours, based on the ancient occult symbolism and the teachings which arose in connection with the Egyptian temples concerning the associations of the planets and the days of the week and the notes of the scale, of the zodiac and the months. I must remark, for the sake of scientific accuracy, that the influences of these mystical associations were often encountered in my investigations, especially with Skryabin, who, as we know, was a mystic and a theosophist in his form of thought, and whose sound-colour conceptions were partly conditioned by them.²³⁴

In the third volume of *The Secret Doctrine* the notion about the correspondences of colour and sound is extended to the occult mysteries attached to the numbers, shapes, planets, metals, parts of body, and states of matter (ether, air, steam or vapour, water, ice etc.). Below are three figures from the Blavatsky-Besant volume to be considered in the following discussion.

²³³ Blavatsky and Besant, *Occultism*, 357-60.

²³⁴ Sabaneev, "The Relation Between Sound and Colour," trans. S.W. Pring, *Music and Letters* 10/3 (July 1929): 267.

FIGURE 2: The planets, the days of the week, metals, parts of the body, colour and number correspondence.²³⁵

PLANETS	DAYS	METALS	PARTS OF BODY	COLOURS	NUMBERS
 Saturn	Saturday	Lead	Right Ear, Knees and Bony System	Black	1
 Jupiter	Thursday	Tin	Left Ear, Thighs, Feet and Arterial System	Purple	2
 Mars	Tuesday	Iron	Forehead and Nose, the Sex-functions and Muscular System	Red	3
 Sun	Sunday	Gold	Right Eye, Heart and Vital Centers	Orange	4
 Venus	Friday	Copper	Chin and Cheeks, Neck and Reins, and the Venous System	Yellow	5
 Mercury	Wednesday	Quick-silver	Mouth, Hands, Abdominal Viscera and Nervous System	Dove or Cream	6
 Moon	Monday	Silver	Breasts, Left Eye, the Fluidic System, Saliva Lymph, etc.	White	7

²³⁵ In Blavatsky-Besant, *Occultism*, 497 and 461.

FIGURE 3: Principles, colours, notes, numbers, and state of matter correspondence.²³⁶

PRINCIPLES	COLOURS	NOTES	NUMBERS	STATES OF MATTER
<i>Chhâyâ</i> , Shadow or Double	Violet	Si	1	Ether
<i>Higher Manas</i> , Spiritual Intelligence	Indigo	La	2	Critical State, called Air in Occultism
<i>Auric Envelope</i>	Blue	Sol	3	Steam or Vapour
<i>Lower Manas</i> , or Animal Soul	Green	Fa	4	Critical State
<i>Buddhi</i> , or Spiritual Soul	Yellow	Mi	5	Water
<i>Prâna</i> , or Life- Principle	Orange	Re	6	Critical State
<i>Kâma-Rûpa</i> , the seat of Animal Life	Red	Do	7	Ice

²³⁶ In Blavatsky-Besant, *Occultism*, 476.

FIGURE 4: Numbers, metals, planets, the Human Principles, the days of the week, colours, and sounds of musical scale correspondence.²³⁷

Numbers	Metals	Planets	The Human Principles	Days of the Week	Colours	Sound Musical Scale
1 and 10 Physical Man's Keystone	Iron	Mars The Planet of Generation	Kâma Rûpa The Vehicle or seat of the Animal Instincts and Passions	Tuesday <i>Dies Martis,</i> or Tiu	1-Red	Do
2 The Spiritual and Life Physical	Gold	The Sun The Giver of Life physically, Spiritually and Esoterically, the substitute for the inter- Mercurial Planet, a sacred and secret planet with the ancients	Prâna or Jiva Life	Sunday <i>Dies Sola</i> or Sun	2- Orange	Re
3 Because BUDDHI is (so to speak) Between Atma and Manas, and forms with the seventh, or AURIC ENVELOPE, the Devachanic Triad	Mercury Mixes with Sulphur, as Buddhi is mixed with the Flame of Spirit	Mercury	Buddhi Spiritual Soul, or Atmic Ray, vehicle or Atma	Wednesday <i>Dies Mercuri,</i> or Woden Day of Buddha in the South, and of Woden in the North - Gods of Wisdom	3- Yellow	Mi
4 The middle principle - between the purely material and purely	Lead	Saturn	Kama Manas The Lower Mind, or Animal Soul	Saturday <i>Dies Saturni,</i> or Saturn	4-Green	Fa

²³⁷ In Blavatsky-Besant, *Occultism*, 463.

spiritual trias. The conscious part of <i>animal</i> man.						
5	Tin	Jupiter	Auric Envelope	Thursday Dies... or Thor	5- Black	Sol
6	Copper When alloyed Becomes Bronze (the <i>Dual</i> principle)	Venus The Morning and the Evening Star	Manas The Higher Mind, or Human Soul	Friday Dies...	6- Indigo or Dark Blue	La
7 Contains in itself the reflection of Septenary Man	Silver	The Moon The Parent of the Earth	Linga Sharira The Astral Double of Man; the Parent of the Physical Man	Monday, Dies Lunae or Moon	7- Violet	Si

Studying these tables reveals many inconsistencies between like components. For instance, Saturn is black in the first figure and green in the third one; Jupiter is purple (1) and black (3); Venus is yellow (1) and dark blue (3); Moon is white (1) and violet (3), etc.²³⁸ The colour-sound correlations are more regular, with the exception of Sol, blue in Figure 2 and black in Figure 3. Equally entangled are the analogies among the celestial and terrestrial bodies, colours and occult-understood ‘states of matter’, metals and the systems of the human body, as well as many components in numerous other charts presented further in Blavatsky/Besant’s text:²³⁹ various shapes and geometrical figures, rates of vibration of prismatic colours and the corresponding sounds in different registers.²⁴⁰ The numbering sequence of Blavatsky’s seven-

²³⁸ Blavatsky’s explanation of this phenomenon is the ‘mess’ made by the ‘Ancients’ (Christians, Jews, Hindus, Arabs, etc.), who were unaware of the ‘true knowledge’ that is “of the Spirit and Spirit alone, and cannot be acquired in any other way except through the religion of the higher mind,” presented to her by the Mahatmas. In Blavatsky and Besant, *Occultism*, 357.

²³⁹ Blavatsky-Besant, *Occultism*, 376-77.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 416-19.

fold nature of the universe and a man is entirely arbitrary and bears no particular significance; she advises the student to “work out for himself the number appropriate to each of the principles, when the time comes ... to enter upon *practical study*.” Later, in the same chapter Blavatsky insists that what is important is “the necessity of knowing the principles by their names and their appropriate faculties *apart from any system of enumeration*, or by association with their corresponding centres of actions, colours, sounds, etc., until these become inseparable.”²⁴¹ Yet, in the Figure 2 ‘Human Principles’ are organized as ascending from the material to the spiritual, notwithstanding the relative importance of each principle to any particular man for whom any number (of seven) can be uppermost. “Numbering here is a question of spiritual progress and natural predominance of one principle over another”²⁴² as the table is to be read from the bottom upwards because of ‘illusory’ reality of human plane, or plane of reflection.

Beyond any doubt, the breadth of these theosophical analogies, however obscure at times, was immensely attractive to Scriabin, consumed with the idea of synthesis, relating and interconnecting a magnitude of aspects of all existence, creating, or re-creating the fundamental unity of Universe with the Music as its driving force. However, Blavatsky’s septenary schemata of sound-colour correlation had to be ‘amended’ to include the twelve tones of the equally-tempered system Scriabin used to notate his creations. It appears that the composer took the ‘outer limits’ of Blavatsky’s linear representation of the scale where the opposite ends are the most ‘material’ and the most ‘spiritual’ part of man, *Kâmâ-Rûpa* (Do/red) and *Linga Sharira* (Si/violet).²⁴³ The Si, thus, became the Do sharp, the ‘blackest’ key on the piano keyboard,

²⁴¹ Ibid., 363 (my emphasis).

²⁴² Ibid., 375.

²⁴³ Multiple references to the ‘material’ (red) and ‘spiritual’ (dark blue/violet) colours can be found in Sabaneev, *Vospominaniya* (2000), 53, 55-56, 67,70, 123-24, 237-38, 261-62.

while the remaining ten were organized, most likely, according to the principle revealed by Scriabin in his conversation with Charles S. Myers in 1914.²⁴⁴ Myers's article is particularly interesting for two reasons: first, it differs somewhat from Sabaneev's early reports; second, it presents the very last version of the colour-hearing given by composer himself. It says:

The stronger colours for Scriabin appear to be those relating to the keys of C major, D major, B major and F# major, placed respectively in the red, orange, yellow, blue and violet. Starting, however, from C at the red end of the spectrum, Scriabin finds that as he passes from hue to hue, the successive colours correspond to tonalities rising by a series of fifths. Thus the key of C is red, of G red to orange-red, of D orange to yellow, of A yellow to green, of E green to blue, of B blue to violet, and of F# violet. The colours of the remaining keys D \flat , A \flat , E \flat , B \flat and F are believed by Scriabin to be extra-spectral, - either ultra-violet or infra-red. Thus the key of F is "on the verge of red," giving the effect of metallic lustre.²⁴⁵

In Myers's scheme the 'last' key is F# major:

EXAMPLE 15: Scriabin's key-colour correspondence in Myers (1914/1915).

Red	Orange	Yellow	Green	Blue	Violet
C	G	D	A	E	B
					F#

The question that arises at this point concerns the inconsistency of Scriabin's labeling 'the most spiritual key'. Is it F# major or C# major? In Sabaneev we read that F# was "blue,

²⁴⁴ In Charles Myers, "Two Cases of Synaesthesia," *British Journal of Psychology* 7 (1914-1915): 112-17, accessed August 10, 2016, http://www.daysyn.com/Myers_1914.pdf

²⁴⁵ Myers, "Two Cases," 114.

bright and dark, saturated, somewhat solemn and complete, the colour of Reason.”²⁴⁶ In Myers “the (violet) key of F# is spiritual and ethereal.”²⁴⁷ In the Parisian score the F# is ‘deep dark blue with a shade of violet’, the C# is ‘pure violet’. The explanation of this phenomenon must have been rooted in Scriabin’s *Law of Polarity*, discussed in Chapter 1 in relation to the composer’s harmonic thinking. It is very likely that this ambiguity about the violet keys, C# or F#, stemmed from a desire to preserve the visual symmetry in his circular diagram (generally referred to as Scriabin’s colour wheel) where any two keys separated by a tritone are placed straight across from each other. This way, the ‘farthest end’ from C, C# is opposite to G, which does not disturb the symmetrical correspondences of the remaining keys moving clockwise from C. Yet, it does bring a hint of confusion into the composer’s colour scheme by preserving the ‘polar relationship’ between the keys separated by a tritone.

Scriabin’s ambivalence about the violet key, C# or F# major, noted in Gawboy’s dissertation (2010) is also argued to be grounded in the composer’s underlying harmonic thinking, namely “the association of the polar opposition with polar Pleroma chords a tritone removed from each other.”²⁴⁸ My discussion of colour-sound polarity will consider the

²⁴⁶ Sabaneev, *Vospominaniya*, 237.

²⁴⁷ Myers, “Two Cases,” 115.

²⁴⁸ Gawboy (2010), 199. An interesting point in the author’s discussion of Scriabin’s *Law of Polarity* is the consideration of the colour theory of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (*Zur Farbenlehre*, 1810) as the possible source of inspiration for the composer’s colour wheel. Goethe’s colour wheel, which juxtaposes diametrically opposite pairs of ‘warm’ and ‘cold’ colours, seems to be somewhat aligned with the colour-sound correlation scheme of Scriabin. Gawboy admits that Scriabin’s familiarity with Goethe’s colour theory is unknown, though she believes that the composer could have had some knowledge about it through his friendship with the Belgian Theosophical painter (and symbolist) Jean Delville (who created the title page for *Promethée* score in 1912), and more importantly, through the writing of Rudolf Steiner, a former acolyte of Blavatsky. Gawboy’s reference to Sabaneev (*Vospominaniya*, 70) does not, however, suggest that “Scriabin knew Steiner’s Anthroposophic writings” (Gawboy, 194). Further, on page 248, Sabaneev mentions Steiner again, in connection with the superficial nature of Scriabin’s reading habits; according to Sabaneev, Steiner’s *Theosophy* was one of Scriabin’s ‘table books,’ some sort of

opposition and unity of Dernova-defined tritone links that becomes associated with the Theosophical paradox of duality-within-unity, or the opposition and unity of the spiritual and the material.

The Law of Polarity, Dernova's Dual Modality and Scriabin's Implicit Colour-Hearing

“Spirit (or Consciousness) and Matter are [...] to be regarded not as independent realities, but as the two facets or aspects of the Absolute (Parabrahm), which constitute the basis of conditioned Being whether subjective or objective,” – writes Blavatsky in the first volume of *The Secret Doctrine*.²⁴⁹ Scriabin thinks along the same lines when he explains to Sabaneev his compositional procedures: “In *Prometheus* I have an entirely different system. Polarity no longer exists between dominant and tonic, but rather between chords separated by a diminished fifth. [...] In fact, the same happens with lights. Take, for example, C-major, which is the red colour. An augmented fourth above it is F#, the dark blue; and they are complementary colours in optics!”²⁵⁰ As Sabaneev, undoubtedly aware of the complementary colours in optics, did not want to argue with his friend about the validity of his last statement, I assume that Scriabin might have referred to some ‘esoterically-understood’ complementary colour. After all, Blavatsky’s explanations of the meaning of colours in the second diagram presented earlier are nothing less than bewildering. She states, for instance, that Saturn (black) is esoterically green; Jupiter

literary paratext, i.e., the necessary ‘after-the fact’ [of actual process of composing the music] inspiration for the composer’s creativity.

²⁴⁹ Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. 1, 15.

²⁵⁰ Sabaneev, *Vospominaniya*, 260.

(purple) is light blue since in occultism “he is son of Saturn, which is green.”²⁵¹ Further, the “true colour of Sun (orange) is blue, and it appears yellow only owing the effect of the absorption of vapors (chiefly metallic) by its atmosphere.”²⁵² Venus (yellow) esoterically is indigo or dark blue, Mercury (dove or cream) is yellow “because the colour of the sun is orange, and Mercury now stands next to the Sun, in distance, as it does in colour. All is Mâyâ [illusion] on our Earth.”²⁵³ Perhaps it is true. Perhaps “only poets and philosophers can see the world as it really is, for only to them is it given to live without illusions,” as one of the twentieth-century greatest literary talents, Fernando Pessoa, said in his *Book of Disquiet*.²⁵⁴ Or, perhaps, music itself is the greatest illusions of all, as Scriabin’s celebrated contemporary Leo Tolstoy wrote in his novella, *The Kreutzer Sonata*:

Music makes me forget myself, my true condition, it carries me off into another state of being, one that isn't my own: under the influence of music I have the illusion of feeling things I don't really feel, of understanding things I don't understand, being able to do things I'm not able to do (...) Can it really be allowable for anyone who feels like it to hypnotize another person, or many other persons, and then do what he likes with them?²⁵⁵

To shed some light the peculiarities of the three études opus 65 in terms of colour-related analogies between Scriabin’s *Law of Polarity* and Dernova-defined harmonic structures as realization of ‘dual modality’, it is worth making the following observation: it appears that the first étude of op. 65 cycle, seen in Chapter Two as a world or a state of being in between the Third and Fourth Races of Scriabin’s musically devised theosophical anthropogenesis, displays

²⁵¹ Blavatsky and Besant, *Occultism*, 364.

²⁵² *Ibid.*, 365.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, 549.

²⁵⁴ Fernando Pessoa, *The Book of Disquiet*, trans. and ed. Richard Zenith (London: Penguin Books, 2002), 237.

²⁵⁵ Leo Tolstoy, *The Kreutzer Sonata and Other Stories*, trans. David McDuff (London: Penguin Books, 1985), 121.

the ‘final glimpse’ of the esoteric colour yellow, the colour of Mercury that “becomes invisible at the close of the Third Race.”²⁵⁶ The key of this piece, identified by Scriabin as B flat major, becomes a ‘dual mode’ of B flat - E in Dernova’s schema. In terms of colour this ‘dual mode’ represents a concurrence of the *blue* and *yellow*. In all four sources presented earlier (Sabaneev, Parisian score, and Vanechkina-Galeev), B flat and E (in Myers’s account) are associated with hues of *blue*. Yet in Myers the B flat is the extension of the ‘ultra-red’, or orange-red, which is esoterically *yellow* in Blavatsky’s metaphysics. According to *The Secret Doctrine*, orange, the colour that occurs between red and yellow, is complementary to azure, or a ‘light greenish blue’ (as E in the Parisian score). In Theosophical terms, this is the colour combination that creates a balance in ‘subtle bodies’ in both conceptual and logical forms. Furthermore, the correspondence of the *physical* human body (column four in the second figure) to the planet Mercury offers another analogy to the visceral area of the body, the Second Chakra,²⁵⁷ or Spleen, “one of the seven vital centres that radiate Seven Rays of Logos.”²⁵⁸ Seen as such, the *blue*, the Fifth Chakra, tied to creativity and communication (the Third Eye²⁵⁹ in *The Secret Doctrine*), and

²⁵⁶ Blavatsky and Besant, *Occultism*, 365 (my emphasis).

²⁵⁷ In the *The Key to Theosophy*, 1889 and *E.S. Instruction, No. 1 and 3 (Esoteric Papers)* Blavatsky teaches that there is a certain correspondence between the seven chakras or ‘energy centres’ in the astral body (*Linga Sharira*) and the Seven Principles of the human constitution. The sevenfold nature of man is divisible into the Higher Triad (*Atma-Buddhi-Manas*) and the Lower Quaternary (*Kama-Prana-Linga Sharira-Sthula Sharira*). The lower *Kundalini* (Sanskrit for the ‘coiled up like a snake,’ a primal energy, or *shakti*, located at the base of the spine) and the lower chakras relate to the sensual, animal, and material parts of human nature which comprise the Lower Quaternary. The higher *Kundalini* is something which awakens and arises naturally, on its own accord, as men [humans] develop and advance in spirituality, consciousness, and self-purification. See Helena Blavatsky, *The Key to Theosophy* (1889): 134-36 and 175-76; and in “*E.S. Instruction, No. I: 96-104, and No. III: 607-08*, in *Collected Writings*, vol. XII, ed. Boris de Zirkoff (Wheaton, IL: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1980).

²⁵⁸ Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, vol.1, 572.

²⁵⁹ Blavatsky uses various terms to describe this phenomenon, e.g., The Eye of Dangma (Ibid., vol. 1, 27), or The Eye of Shiva (vol. 1, 45; vol. 2, 294-95). Curiously, in the second volume Blavatsky writes: “The possession of a physical *third* eye, we are told, was enjoyed by the men of the Third Root-Race down to nearly the middle period of Third SUB-race of the Fourth Root-Race, when the consolidation and perfection of the human frame made it disappear from the outward anatomy of man. Psychically and spiritually, however, its mental and visual perceptions

the *orange*, complementary to the blue, together create a balance in human existence, according to Blavatsky's writings.

Further, the idea of the opus 65 as an implementation of Blavatsky's Theosophical triad of *Chaos – Theos – Kosmos*, discussed in Chapter 2, appears to be confirmed by Scriabin's 'grand design' of the 'principal keys' of the études and the sequential order of the pieces within the cycle. It also conforms to Dernova's schemata of 'dual modes' and their implicit colours. The first étude representing the *Chaos* state that in *The Secret Doctrine* contains all potentialities of human existence and creativity, is followed by the *Theos* of the 'violet' Étude No. 2. The 'farthest spiritual key' of Si, which became C# in Scriabin's design of sound-colour correspondence, is purple or violet in Blavatsky (Figures 2-4). Yet, "purple is a compound of red and blue, and *blue* in Eastern Occultism is *the spiritual essence* of the colour *purple*, while *red* is its *material basis*."²⁶⁰ Thus, the colour red, associated with the second component of Dernova's C# – G 'dual mode,' manifests itself as a 'complementary' or 'polar' colour to the blue according to Scriabin's theory. Interestingly, the third étude (G major) presenting the same colour combination as the second étude, switches the emphasis from violet to red (G – C# according to Dernova's theory). Moreover, the subtle 'spiritual' energy of the essentially monothematic Étude No. 2 that 'contains in itself the reflection of 'Septenary Man', *Linga Sharira*'s designated 'Parent of the Physical Man' (refer to Figure 3), is followed by the fast-paced third étude, the *Kosmos*, or a new, to-be-born man of the Fourth Race, united in its two-fold nature represented by *Molto vivace* and *Impérieux*.

lasted till nearly the end of the Fourth Race, when its functions, owing to the materiality and depraved condition of mankind, died out altogether before the submersion of the bulk of the Atlantean continent." Ibid., vol. 2, 306.

²⁶⁰ Ibid., vol. 3, 549 (my emphasis).

Within each étude the progressions of the tritone links and the corresponding pairs of colours reveal several straightforward and consistent logical patterns. They can be viewed as virtually invisible and inaudible layers of contrapuntal texture or, in exoteric terms, as the ‘multidimensional planes of aura’ of Scriabin’s Études opus 65. The following summary aims to facilitate visual perception of the elements presented in the frame of their correlative forms.

EXAMPLE 16: Correspondence of tritone links and colours within the formal structure of the Three Études op.65.

Étude No. 1

	Exposition		Development		Recapitulation		Coda
	Theme 1	Theme 2	Theme 1	Theme 2	Theme 1	Theme 2	Theme 1/2
Measure	1-22	23-34	35-46	47-64	65-86	87-98	99-113
TL	EA#(Bb) C#G BbE GbC AbD D#A CF#	F#B# AEb F#B#	B#F# D#A CF# AEb F#C AbD	DG# FB DG# EBb (A#) GC# BbE	EA#(Bb) C#G BbE GbC AbD BbE FxC# EBb	BbE DbG BbE	EBb FxC# EBb
Colour	blue-yellow violet-yellow yellow-blue reddish-yellow bluish-green red-violet	violet-red green-bluish violet-red	red-violet bluish-green red-violet green-bluish violet-red reddish-yellow	yellow-reddish red-violet yellow-reddish bluish-blue orange-violet blue-bluish	blue-orange violet-yellow yellow-blue reddish-yellow yellow-blue orange-violet blue-orange	yellow-blue violet-orange yellow-blue	blue-yellow red-violet blue-yellow

Étude No. 2

	Section A		Section A'	
Measure	(1)2-9	10-18	10-27	29-39
TL	C#F \times (GC#)	GDb FbBb GDb BbE DbG	GC# (DbG)	DbG BbE DbG EBb GDb
Colour	violet-red	red-violet yellow-blue	red-violet	violet-red yellow-blue red-violet

Étude No. 3

	Section A	Section B		Section A'	Coda
	T1 <i>Molto vivace</i>	T2 <i>Impérieux</i>	T2 <i>Subito meno vivo</i>	T1 <i>Prestissimo</i>	T2 <i>Meno vivo</i>
Measure	1-16	17-38	39-62	63-78	79-102
TL	GDb A Eb BE# EbA FB GC#	C#G EBb F#C	F#C AEb BF GC#	GDb EbA BE# EbA BF GC#	C#G EA# GC#
Colour	red-violet blue-green blue-blue blue-green red-blue orange-violet	violet-orange blue-yellow violet-red	violet-red green-blue red-blue red-violet	red-violet blue-green blue-blue blue-green red-blue orange-violet	orange-violet blue-orange orange-violet

As mentioned earlier, the specific ‘colour’ of each étude indicated by Scriabin’s assignment of the key (B^b – blue, C[#] – violet, and G – yellow-red (orange or fiery)), receives its ‘esoteric’ colour undertone, the second component of the tritone links: yellow, red, and violet, respectively. Within each piece every distinctly different musical idea is accompanied by a new harmonic treatment, and, therefore, a new colour at the corresponding stages of traditional Classical musical forms: sonata-allegro, binary, and ternary. The opening theme of the first étude is blue-yellow (E-B^b) in both exposition and recapitulation, while the second theme, red-violet (C-F[#]) in the exposition, takes on the ‘colour’ of the main theme in recapitulation. The development section, the area of designated tonal wanderings in classical sonata form, displays, in this particular étude, the ‘deepening’ of colours and their larger variety due to the increased number of harmonic ‘polar links’ used. The brief second étude takes a similar approach: both of its two sections follow the pattern of Scarlatti-type binary forms, where the opening section ‘modulates’ to a new key and then returns to the home-key at the end of section two (violet to red and red to violet in Scriabin’s op. 65, no. 2). The peculiar aspect of this composition is a rather clear visual (in-score) and audible (prolonged stay on one sonority, changes in tempo starting in measure 15) division of the essentially monothematic texture into two equal parts in both sections, A and A’, emphasizing in turns either component of the tritone link and its corresponding colour-pair. C[#]-F[#]:(G) becomes G-D^b in measures 1-9 and 10-18, which reminds us of the key-contrasting procedure in a classical sonata form. Seen as such, this form becomes ‘abridged’ in the second étude, while the ‘development’ idea pertains to expansion of harmonic variation in the second sub-section in both halves of the form. Further, ‘deepening’ of the ‘flat’ area of tonal spectrum results in a conclusion on D^b, an enharmonic equivalent of C[#], the uttermost ‘violet’ end of Scriabin’s colour-sound conception. This could be seen as the necessity

of continuation, further movement toward the highest spirituality of the colour purple (violet), which is finally achieved at the end of the third étude, ending ‘in violet’ on C#, despite its indicated key of G major. This last étude displays the same type of sound-colour contrasts presented in the first two compositions of the cycle, yet, the clear-cut ternary structure becomes its playground. The majestic second theme is clothed predominantly in red-violet, with the short ‘intrusions’ of the *Molto vivace* accentuating contrasting bluish ‘colours’ (E-B \flat and A-E \flat in mm. 33-34, 37-38, 47-48, 51-52) prior to its surrender to the dominance of the *Impérieux* (*Subito meno vivo*) and becoming the violet and red link of B-F in measures 55 and 56. The only change in the opening theme upon its return in A’ is its increased tempo, *Prestissimo étincelant*.

Another layer of the ‘colour counterpoint’ can be indicated by considering the *prevailing* colour-sound-pairs in the themes of two larger compositions of the cycle. These colours are emphasized by the metric positioning of the tritone links as well as phrasing indicated by Scriabin. Remarkably consistent is composer’s treatment of the second themes in both études. Introducing more ‘human’, sensual and/or strong-willed, forceful characters Scriabin stresses the red end of his colour palette whereas the ‘inhuman’, whimsical and volatile opening themes remain in the blue, spiritual area of the spectrum. To further the idea of moving “Toward the Counterpoint of Light” is to say that even the ‘connective tissues’ between the structural elements within each étude have a certain contrapuntal idea attached to them. In all three compositions the second component of every last tritone link of each theme becomes the first or the dominant colour at the beginning of the following section or theme. This ‘overlapping’ procedure, not unlike the *stretto* technique in a Baroque fugue creates, in Scriabin, a completely different sonic effect, bringing the ideas of *similarity* (identically-sounding chords comprising

the tritone links) and *variety* (melodic development or juxtaposing contrasting themes) to an entirely new level.

CLOSING REMARKS

Conceptualizing Scriabin's opus 65 into the framework of his theosophically-understood *Polarity* and Dernova's concept of the tritone links, uncannily matching esoteric properties of 'duality as a unified unity,' appears to create a cleanly assembled puzzle. All the pieces – sound, colour, and the overall formal design – cleverly complement each other. The question that remains is that of the antithesis between the occult and the rational mentalities involved in the process of creation of op. 65. How do we, and should we at all prioritize either 'intuition' or 'calculation' in assessing Scriabin's compositional method? And, on a different level, even in the course of analytical study of a composition, is it the intellectual or intuitive side that dominates?

Schloezer asserts that in the process of musical composition Scriabin regarded his own formulas and schematic constructions as auxiliary tools, and "very imperfect ones at that."²⁶¹ He further quotes Scriabin saying that he "had more faith in psychology than in logic. ...logical contradictions abound in spiritual life, and I have more confidence in what I feel intuitively than in any ratiocination."²⁶² Alexander Scriabin would probably agree with another Russian composer, Sofia Gubaidulina, who once remarked: "Even in the case when structural support would dominate, still intuition wins; it is more important that intuition would dominate. For me

²⁶¹ Schloezer, *Scriabin*, 62.

²⁶² *Ibid.*

the most important thing is not to interfere with intuition, not to get in the way of intuition.”²⁶³

As for Scriabin, I believe his intellectual side had never overpowered his intuitive side, leaving us his fascinating late musical output to ponder upon for more than a century after his passing.

In 1947 Scriabin’s younger contemporary and compatriot, Igor Stravinsky, said:

The study of the creative process is an extremely delicate one. In truth, it is impossible to observe the inner workings of this process from the outside. It is futile to try and follow its successive phases in some-one else's work. It is likewise very difficult to observe one's self. Yet it is only by enlisting the aid of introspection that I may have any chance at all of guiding you in this essentially fluctuating matter.”²⁶⁴

Alexander Scriabin is no longer here to guide us in the “fluctuating matter” of his compositional process, yet the fascination with his music has remained for many the driving force for understanding and interpreting his creations. During the course of writing of this thesis I found myself balancing between two compelling extremes: the technicalities of the musical “structure” of the études and the multitude of the surrounding “extra-musical” components – certain “philosophical” schemes, related aesthetic values, cultural and literary milieux bursting with an astonishing variety of theories, concepts, notions and convictions. It seems to me that the process of investigating many of the logical possibilities, undoubtedly starting off with certain cut-and-dried assumptions, is guided by intuition not unlike the process of musical composition itself. I think to make an honest attempt to analyze a piece of music requires, to a certain degree, to ‘recompose’ the piece. Thus, to re-create becomes to explain how and why this music came to be, what it embodies and what it could mean.

²⁶³ See in *Sofia Gubaidulina: A Conversation with Bruce Duffie*, Chicago, April 18, 1997. Accessed May 3, 2016. <http://www.bruceduffie.com/gubaidulina.html>

²⁶⁴ Igor Stravinsky, *Poetics of Music in the Form of Six Lessons*, trans. Arthur Knodel and Ingolf Dahl. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1947), 55.

Envoi

Where might scholarship on Scriabin go next? One of the uncharted territories in Scriabin's scholarship presents itself in an interesting theory of *Metrotectonism* developed in the early twentieth century by a Russian music theorist Georgy Konus (1862-1933), who taught piano and harmony to Scriabin as a teenager. Marina Lobanova mentions that Scriabin's sketches to *Prometheus* confirm the composer's familiarity with the analytical methods of his early music teacher.²⁶⁵ Konus's *metrotectonism* propagates strict proportions within a musical form. His Law of Equilibrium of music's time- and space-related parameters is conceived of as universal and absolute for all eras, styles, and types of musical cultures. According to Konus, this type of methodology allows the analyst to provide a rationale for individual principles of metro-rhythmic organization and to reveal hidden periodicity and/or symmetry. In the early 1930s Konus's method was condemned as formalistic and rejected by the Soviets. The unpublished manuscripts of this original theorist are preserved in the archives of the Scriabin Memorial Museum in Moscow. They are waiting to be discovered.²⁶⁶

²⁶⁵ Lobanova, *Theosophist – Theurg – Mystic*, 308-10.

²⁶⁶ Lobanova also writes that Scriabin's "form-calculating" sketches to his *Three Études opus 65* are preserved in the Scriabin Memorial Museum under the number ГЛММК. Ф. 31. See in Lobanova, *Theosophist – Theurg – Mystic*, 305. My numerous requests to the Museum to obtain a copy of these documents fell on deaf ears. I hope that future researchers on the subject will be more successful in communication with this historical institution.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abraham, Gerald. "Review of *Scriabin: A Biography of the Russian Composer, 1871-1915* by Faubion Bowers." *Music and Letters* 52, no. 3 (July 1971): 311-14.
- . *Studies in Russian Music*, London: Faber & Faber, 1935.
- . *Masters of Russian Music*, New York: A.A. Knopf, 1936.
- Adamenko, Victoria. *Neo-Mythologism in Music: from Scriabin and Schoenberg to Schnittke and Crumb*. Hillsdale, NY: Pendragon Press, 2007.
- Adorno, Theodor W. *Aesthetic Theory*. Translated and edited by Robert Hullot-Kentor. London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013.
- Alshvang, Arnold. *Zhizn' i tvorchestvo A. N. Skryabina [Life and Creative Works of A.N. Scriabin]*. Moskva: Muzgiz, 1945.
- Antokoletz, Elliott. "Transformations of a Special Non-Diatonic Mode in Twentieth-Century Music: Bartók, Stravinsky, Scriabin and Albrecht." *Music Analysis* 12, no. 1 (1993): 25-45.
- Asafiev, Boris. *Scriabin, Opyt Kharakteristiki [An Attempt of Characteristics]*. St. Petersburg: Muzyka, 1921.
- Avraamov, Arseny Mikhaylovich. "Puti i sredstva tvorchestva" [Ways and means of creativity]. *Muzyka* no. 164 (1914): 39–43.
- . "Puti i sredstva tvorchestva" [Ways and means of creativity]. *Muzyka* no. 172 (1916): 215–17.
- . "7–1–13." *Muzyka* no. 232 (1915): 476–9.
- . "Gryadushchaya muzykal'naya nauka i novaya èra v istorii muzyki" [Music science of the future and a new era in music history]. *Muzykal'niy Sovremennik* no. 2 (1916): 80–103.
- . "Smychkovïy polikhord" [The String Polychord]. *Muzykal'niy Sovremennik* no.3 (1915): 44-52.
- . "Ul'trakhromatizm" ili "omnitonal'nost.'" *Muzykal'niy Sovremennik* nos.4–5 (1916): 157–68.
- Baker, James M. "*Prometheus* and the Quest for Color-Music: The World Premiere of Scriabin's *Poem of Fire* with Lights, New York, March 20, 1915." In *Music and Modern Art*. Edited by James Leggio, 61-95. New York: Routledge, 2002.
- . "Scriabin's Music as Prism for Mystical Philosophy." In *Music Theory in Concept and*

- Practice*, edited by James M. Baker, David Beach, and Jonathan W. Bernard, 53-96. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 1997.
- . *The Music of Alexander Scriabin*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986.
- . “Scriabin’s Implicit Tonality.” *Music Theory Spectrum* 2 (1980): 1-18.
- . *Alexander Scriabin: The Transition from Tonality to Atonality*. Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1977.
- Bakst, James. *A History of Russian-Soviet Music*. New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1962.
- Ballard, Lincoln M. “A Russian Mystic in the Age of Aquarius: The U.S. Revival of Alexander Scriabin in the 1960s.” In *American Music* 30, no. 2 (Summer 2012): 194-227.
- Bandura, Andrei Ivanovich. *Aleksandr Skryabin*. Moskva: Izdatel’stvo Arkaim, Biographical Landscape Series, 2004.
- . *Alexander Scriabin – Tatiana Schloezer*. Moskva: Klassika – XXI, Opus d’Amour Series, 2007.
- . *Scriabin. Le Poème de l’extase*. Moskva: Klassika – XXI, History of One Masterpiece Series, 2009.
- . “Tale of Seven Races: Evolution of a Man in the Musical and Literary Legacy of A. N. Scriabin.” *Delfis Journal*, no. 3 (1997): 37-42.
- . “Skryabin i novaya nauchnaya paradigma XX veka” [Skryabin and the new scientific paradigm of the 20th century]. *MAk* 4 (1993): 175–80.
- . “А. Н. Скрябин и Е. П. Блаватская.” *Учёные Записки Государственного Мемориального Музея А. Н. Скрябина*, Вып. 2, М., (1995):1-16. [“A.N. Scriabin and H.P. Blavatsky.” In *Scholarly Notes of Scriabin’s Memorial Museum*, 2 (1995)].
- Belyj, Andrej. *Glossolalie/Glossolalia: Poem über den Laut/A Poem about Sound*. Translated by Thomas R. Beyer Jr.. Dornach: Pforte Verlag, 2004.
- Belza, Igor. *A.N. Scriabin*. Moskva: Muzyka, 1982.
- Bernstein, Leonard. *The Unanswered Question: Six Talks at Harvard*. Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 1976.
- Besant, Annie and Charles W. Leadbeater. *Thought-Forms*. London and Benares: Theosophical Publishing Society, 1905.
- Blagoy, Dmitry. *Scriabin’s Études [Etudy Skryabina]*. Moskva: Gosudarstvennoe Muzykal’noe

Izdatelstvo, 1963.

Blavatsky, Helena. *The Secret Doctrine: The Synthesis of Science, Religion, and Philosophy*. Two volumes. London: The Theosophical Publishing Company, Ltd., 1888.

———. *Isis Unveiled: A Master-Key to the Mysteries of Ancient and Modern Science and Theology*. Two volumes. Pasadena: Theosophical University Press, 1998.

———. *The Key to Theosophy, Being A Clear Exposition, in the Form of Question and Answer, of the Ethics, Science, and Philosophy, for the Study of which the Theosophical Society Has Been Founded*. Pasadena: Theosophical University Press, 1987.

——— and Annie Besant. *Occultism of the Secret Doctrine*. Whitefish, MT: Kessinger Publishing, 1993.

———. “E.S. Instruction.” In *Collected Writings*, volume XII. Compiled by Boris de Zirkoff. Wheaton, IL: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1980.

Bowers, Faubion. *Scriabin, a Biography*. Second edition, revised. New York: Dover, 1996. Originally published as *Scriabin: a Biography of the Russian Composer, 1871-1915*. Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1969).

———. *The New Scriabin: Enigma and Answers*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1973.

Brent-Smith, Alexander. “Some Reflections on the Work of Scriabin.” *The Musical Times* 67, no. 1001 (Jul. 1, 1926): 593-95.

———. “Some Reflections on the Work of Scriabin (Concluded).” *The Musical Times* 67, no. 1002 (Aug. 1, 1926): 692-94.

Bristol, Evelyn. *A History of Russian Poetry*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.

Brown, Malcolm. “Scriabin and Russian ‘Mystic’ Symbolism.” *Nineteenth-Century Music* 3, no. 1 (1979): 42-51.

———. Review of *Scriabin: A Biography of the Russian Composer, 1871-1915* by Faubion Bowers. *Journal of Research in Music Education* 21, no. 4 (Winter, 1973): 377-78.

Callender, Clifton. “Voice-Leading Parsimony in the Music of Alexander Scriabin.” *Journal of Music Theory* 42, no. 2 (1998): 219-33.

Carlson, Maria. *No Religion Higher than Truth: A History of the Theosophical Movement in Russia, 1875–1922*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993.

———. “Fashionable Occultism: The Theosophical World of Russian Composer Aleksandr Scriabin.” *Journal of the Scriabin Society of America* 12, no. 1 (Winter 2007–8): 54–62.

- Chuchvaha, Hanna. *Art Periodical Culture in Late Imperial Russia (1898-1917): Print Modernism in Transition*. Boston, MA: Brill, 2015.
- Clutsam, George Howard. "The Harmonies of Scriabine." *The Musical Times* 54, no. 841 (Mar. 1, 1913): 156-58.
- . "More Harmonies of Scriabine." *The Musical Times* 54, no. 845 (Jul. 1, 1913): 441-43.
- . "More Harmonies of Scriabine (Continued)." *The Musical Times* 54, no. 846 (Aug. 1, 1913): 512-14.
- Cohn, Richard. *Audacious Euphony: Chromatic Harmony and the Triad's Second Nature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Coleman, William Emmette. "The Sources of Blavatsky's Writings." In *A Modern Priestess of Isis* by Vsevolod Sergyeevich Solovyoff, 353-366. London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1895.
- Compleston, Frederick C. *Russian Religious Philosophy: Select Aspects*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988.
- Coon, Arthur M. *The Theosophical Seal: A Study for the Student and the Non-Student*. Adyar, India: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1958.
- Cooper, Martin. "Scriabin's Mystical Beliefs." *Music and Letters* 16, no. 2 (1935): 110-15.
- . "Alexander Skriabin and the Russian Renaissance." In *Slavonic and Romantic Music: Essays for Gerald Abraham*. Edited by M. H. Brown and R. J. Wiley, 219-40. Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1985.
- Damaré, Brad M. "Music and Literature in Silver Age Russia: Mikhail Kuzmin and Alexander Scriabin." PhD. diss., University of Michigan, 2008.
- Delson, Victor. *Scriabin: Essays on his Life and Music*. Moskva: Muzyka, 1971.
- Dernova, Varvara. Гармония Скрябина [*Scriabin's Harmony*]. Leningrad: Muzyka, 1968.
- . "Garmoniya Skriabina." In *A. N. Skriabin: Sbornik statei*, edited by Sergei Pavchinsky and Viktor Tsukkerman. Moscow: Sovetskii kompozitor, 1991.
- Dickenmann, Paul. *Die Entwicklung der Harmonik bei A. Skrijabin*. PhD. diss. Bern-Leipzig, 1935 (Reprint Nendeln 1978).
- Eberle, Gottfried. *Zwischen Tonalität und Atonalität: Studien zur Harmonik Alexander Skrijabins*. Salzburg: Katzbichler, 1978.
- Erpf, Hermann. *Studien zur Harmonie und Klangtechnik der neueren Musik*. Wiesbaden:

- Breitkopf und Härtel, 1927.
- Ewell, Philip. "Scriabin and the Harmony of the 20th Century." Annotated translation of article by Yury Kholopov. *Journal of the Scriabin Society of America* 11, no. 1 (Winter 2006- 2007): 12-27.
- . "Scriabin's Seventh Piano Sonata: Three Analytical Approaches." *Indiana Theory Review* 23 (Spring/Fall 2002): 56-67.
- . "Scriabin's Dominant: The Evolution of a Harmonic Style." *The Journal of Schenkerian Studies* 1 (2006): 118-48.
- Forte, Allen. *The Structure of Atonal Music*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973.
- . "Pitch-Class Set Analysis Today." *Music Analysis* 4/1-2 (1985): 36-37.
- . "Letter to the Editor in Reply to Richard Taruskin from Allen Forte." *Music Analysis* 5/2-3 (1986): 321-337.
- Fraser, Thomas Julius. *The Voices of Time: A Cooperative Survey of Man's Views of Time as Expressed by the Sciences and Humanities*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1981.
- Frolova-Walker, Marina. *Russian Music and Nationalism: From Glinka to Stalin*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007.
- Galeev, Bulat and Irina Leonidovna Vanechkina, "Was Scriabin a Synesthete?" *Leonardo* 34, no. 4 (2001): 357-361.
- Gawboy, Anna. "Alexander Scriabin's Theurgy in Blue: Esotericism and the Analysis of *Prometheus: Poem of Fire*, op. 60." Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 2010.
- and Townsend, Justin. "Scriabin and the Possible," *MTO: A Journal for the Society of Music Theory* 18/2 (June 2012).
- Grove, Paul R. "Doctrine of the Canon: An Annotated Translation of the Second Counterpoint Book of Sergei Ivanovich Taneev." Ph.D. diss., University of Arizona, 1996.
- Guenther, Roy J. "Varvara Dernova's System of Analysis and the Music of Skryabin." In *Russian Theoretical Thought in Music*, edited by Gordon D. McQuere, 168-74. Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1983.
- . "Varvara Dernova's *Garmoniia Skriabina*: A Translation and Critical Commentary." Ph.D. diss., Catholic University of America, 1979.
- . "An Examination of Analytical Approaches to Harmonic Organization in the Late Piano Works of Alexander Scriabin" M.A. diss., Catholic University of America, 1974.

- Gunst, Evgeny. *Skryabin i yego tvorchestvo* [Skryabin and his work]. Moskva: Mysl', 1915.
- Hayman, Ronald. *Artaud and After*. London: Oxford University Press, 1977.
- Hugo, Victor, "Les Rayons et les Ombres." In Victor Hugo: *Oeuvres complètes* (Arvensa, France: Arvensa editions, 2013) : 1356-1539.
- Hull, A. Eaglefield. *A Great Russian Tone-Poet: Scriabin*. New York: AMS Press, 1970.
- . "Scriabin's Scientific Derivation of Harmony Versus Empirical Methods." *Proceedings of the Musical Association* 43 (1916 - 1917): 17-28.
- . "The Pianoforte Sonatas of Scriabin (Continued)." *The Musical Times* 57, no. 886 (Dec. 1, 1916): 539-42.
- . "Scriabin: A Comment." *The Musical Times* 67, no. 1005 (Nov. 1, 1926): 993-94.
- Ivanov, Vyacheslav. *Rodnoe I vselenskoe*. Moskva: Respublika, 1994 [Иванов В. И.. *Родное и вселенское* /Сост., вступит. ст. и прим. В. М. Толмачева. М.: Республика, 1994. Мыслители XX века)].
- Kallis, Vasilis. "Pitch Organisation in Scriabin's Tenth Sonata." *Music Analysis* 34/1 (March 2015): 3-46.
- Karatygin, Vyacheslav. *Skryabin*. Petrograd: Muzyka, 1915.
- Kelkel, Manfred. *Alexandre Scriabine: sa vie, l'ésotéricisme et le langage musicale dans son oeuvre*. Three volumes. Paris: Editions Honoré Champion, 1978.
- . "Les esquisses musicales de l'Acte préalable de Scriabine," *Revue de Musicologie* 17 (1971): 40-48.
- Kholopov, Yury. *Гармония. Теоретический курс*. Moskva: Музыка, 1988 [*Harmony. Theoretical Course*]. Moscow: Muzyka, 1988.
- . "Скрябин и гармония XX века [Scriabin and the Harmony of the Twentieth Century]." In *Ученые Записки* [Scholarly Writings], 1-25. Moskva: Izdel'skoe Ob'edinenie Kompozitor (1993).
- Klumpenhouwer, Henry. "Dualist Tonal Space and Transformation in Nineteenth-Century Musical Thought." In *The Cambridge History of Western Music Theory*, edited by Thomas Christensen, 456-74. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- Laqua, Daniel, and Christophe Verbruggen. "Beyond the Metropolis: French and Belgian Symbolists between the Region and the Republic of Letters." *Comparative Critical Studies* 10, no. 2 (July 2013): 241-58.

- Lee, Kuo-Ying. "An Examination of Innovations in Alexander Scriabin's Late Etudes for Piano." DMA diss., University of North Texas, 2013.
- Leikin, Anatole. "From Paganism to Orthodoxy to Theosophy: Reflections of Other Worlds in the Piano music of Rachmaninov and Scriabin." In *Voicing the Ineffable: Musical Representations of Religious Experience*, 25-46. Hillsdale, NY: Pendragon Press, 2002.
- . *The Performing Style of Alexander Scriabin*. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2011.
- Lendvai, Ernő. *Béla Bartók: An Analysis of His Music*. London: Kahn & Averill, 1971.
- Leonard, Maurice. *Madame Blavatsky: Medium, Mystic and Magician*. London, New York: Regency Press, 1977.
- Lewin, David. *Generalized Musical Intervals and Transformations*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987.
- Lissa, Zofia. "Geschichtliche Vorform der Zwölftontechnik." *Acta Musicologica* 7 (1935): 15-18.
- Lobanova, Marina. *Mystiker, Magier, Theosoph, Theurg: Alexander Skrjabin und seine Zeit*. Hamburg: Bockel Verlag, 2004.
- . *Theosophist – Theurg – Mystic – Magician: Alexander Scriabin and his Time*. St. Petersburg: Petroglif, Pis'mena Vremeni Series, 2012.
- . "Alexander Skrjabin: Mysterium und Musik." *Das Orchester* (May 1996): 2-7.
- . "Zahlen, Mystik, Magie. Neueste Erkenntnisse zu Skrjabins «Prométhée»." *Das Orchester* (January 2002): 6-13.
- . *Nikolaj Andreevic Roslavec und die Kultur seiner Zeit*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang GmbH, Internationaler Verlag der Wissenschaften, 1997.
- Luria, Alexander Romanovich. *The Mind of a Mnemonist: A Little Book About a Vast Memory*. New York and London: Harvard University Press, 1978.
- MacDonald, Hugh. *Skryabin*. London: Oxford University Press, 1978.
- . "Words and Music by A. Skryabin." *The Musical Times* 113, no. 1547 (January 1972): 22-27.
- Mandelstam, Osip. *Selected Poems*. Translated by Clarence Brown and W.S. Mervin. New York: Macmillan Publishing, 1974.

- Maskelyne, John Nevil. *The Fraud of Modern "Theosophy" Exposed: a Brief History of the Greatest Imposture Ever Perpetrated Under the Cloak of Religion*. London: G. Routledge & Sons, 1912.
- Matlaw, Ralph E. "Scriabin and Russian Symbolism." *Comparative Literature* 21/1 (Winter 1979): 1-23.
- Martins, Jose Eduardo. "Quelques aspects comparatifs dans les langages pianistiques de Debussy et Scriabin." *Cahiers Debussy* 7 (1983): 24-37.
- McQuere, Gordon. "The Theories of Boleslav Yavorsky." In *Russian Theoretical Thought in Music*, edited by Gordon D. McQuere, 109-64. Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1983.
- Meade, Marion. *Madame Blavatsky, the Woman behind the Myth*. New York: Putnam, 1980.
- Messiaen, Olivier. *Conférence de Notre-Dame*. Paris: Leduc, 1978.
- Mickey, Daniel Dewitt, III. "An Analysis of Texture in Selected Piano Etudes of Chopin and Scriabin." M.A. Thesis, Ohio State University, 1980.
- Montagu Nathan, Montagu. *Handbook to the Piano Works of A. Scriabin*. London: J. & W. Chester Ltd., 1922.
- Morgan, Robert. "Symmetrical Form and Common-Practice Tonality." *Music Theory Spectrum* 20, no. 1 (1998): 1-47.
- Morris, Mitchell Bryan. "Musical Eroticism and the Transcendent Strain: The Works of Alexander Skryabin, 1898-1908." Ph.D. diss., University of California at Berkeley, 1998.
- Morrison, Simon. "Skryabin and the Impossible." *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 51, no. 2 (1998): 283-330.
- . *Russian Opera and the Symbolist Movement*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: The University of California Press, 2002.
- Murray, David. "Distorted Vision." Review of *Scriabin: Artist and Mystic* by Boris de Schloezer, translated by Nicolas Slonimsky." *The Musical Times* 129 (May 1988): 248.
- Myers, Charles. "Two Cases of Synaesthesia." *British Journal of Psychology* 7 (1914-1915): 112-17.
- Newmarch, Rosa. "Prometheus, the Poem of Fire". *The Musical Times* 55, no. 854 (April 1914): 227-32.
- Nikolic, Hrvoje. "EPR before EPR: a 1930 Einstein-Bohr thought experiment revisited." *European Journal of Physics* 33, no. 5 (2012): 1-16.

- Noll, Thomas. "From Sieves of Tones to Sieves of Transformations - Analytical Perspectives on Scriabin's Study for Piano Op. 65 No.3." In *Workshop on Mathematical and Computational Musicology*. Edited by Timour Klouche, 1-6. Berlin: Staatliches Institut für Musikforschung, 2005.
- Obeyesekere, Gananath. *The Awakened Ones: Phenomenology of Visionary Experience*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2012.
- Paperno, Irina. *Creating Life: The Aesthetic Utopia of Russian Modernism*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994.
- Perle, George. *Serial Composition and Atonality: An Introduction to the Music of Schoenberg, Berg, and Webern*. 6th ed. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991.
- . "Scriabin's Self-Analyses." *Music Analysis* 3, no. 2 (1984): 101-22.
- Pessoa, Fernando. *The Book of Disquiet*. Translated and edited by Richard Zenith. London: Penguin Books, 2002.
- Pople, Anthony. *Skryabin and Stravinsky, 1908-1914: Studies in Theory and Analysis*. New York: Garland, 1989.
- . "Skryabin's Prelude, Op. 67, No. 1: Sets and Structure." *Music Analysis* 2, no. 2 (1983): 151-73.
- Poznansky, Alexander. *Tchaikovsky Through Others' Eyes*. In *Russian Music Series*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999.
- Pryashnikova, Maria and Tompakova, Olga. *Letopis' zhizni i tvorchestva A. N. Skryabina [Chronicle of the life and work of A. N. Scriabin]*. Moscow, Muzyka, 1985.
- Pyman, Avril. *The Life of Aleksandr Blok: the Release of Harmony, 1908-1921*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979.
- . *A History of Russian Symbolism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- . *Pavel Florensky: A Quiet Genius: The Tragic and Extraordinary Life of Russia's Unknown Da Vinci*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2010.
- Reise, Jay. "Late Scriabin: Some Principles Behind the Style." *Nineteenth-Century Music* 6, no. 3 (1983): 220-31.
- Ritter, John. "Between Harmony and Geometry: Structure and Form in the Music of Scriabin." Ph.D. diss., University of California at Santa Barbara, 2001.
- Rochberg, George. "Polarity in Music: Symmetry and Asymmetry and Their Consequences."

- Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 141, no. 2 (1997): 169-76.
- Rosenthal, Bernice G., ed. *The Occult in Russian and Soviet Culture*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997.
- . “The Spirit of Music in Russian Symbolism.” *Russian History* 10, No. 1 (1983): 66-76.
- Rössler, Almut, ed. *Contributions to the spiritual world of Olivier Messiaen: With original texts by the composer*. Duisburg, Germany: Gilles & Francke, 1986.
- Rubtsova, Valentina. *A.N. Scriabin*. Moskva: Muzyka, 1989.
- Sabaneev, Leonid. *Vospominaniya O Scriabine [Recollections about Scriabin]*. Moscow: Klassika-XXI, 2000.
- . “A. N. Scriabin – A Memoir.” *Russian Review* 25, no. 3 (1966): 257-67.
- . *Scriabin*. Moscow: Skorpion, 1916.
- . “The Relation Between Sound and Colour.” Translated by S. W. Pring. *Music and Letters* 10, no. 3 (July 1929): 266-67.
- . *Modern Russian Composers*. Translated by Judah A. Joffe. New York: International Publishers, 1927.
- . “Pis'ma o muzyke: ul'trakhromaticheskaya polemika” [Letters about music: the ultrachromatic polemic]. *Muzykal'niy sovremennik [Music Contemporary]* no.6 (1916): 99-108.
- . ”Muzykal'nye Besedy” [Musical Conversations]. *Muzyka Journal* no. 112 (1913): 36-37.
- . ”Muzykal'nye Besedy” [Musical Conversations]. *Muzyka Journal* no. 114 (1913): 67-68.
- . ”Muzykal'nye Besedy” [Musical Conversations]. *Muzyka Journal* no. 117 (1913): 119.
- . “Printsipy tvorchestva A. Skryabina.” *Muzyka Journal* no. 194 (1914): 482-85.
- . “Printsipy tvorchestva A. Skryabina.” *Muzyka Journal* no. 202 (1914): 611-16.
- . “Printsipy tvorchestva A. Skryabina.” *Muzyka Journal* no. 203 (1914): 628-29.
- . “Printsipy tvorchestva A. Skryabina.” *Muzyka Journal* no. 209 (1915): 83-103.

- . Prometheus.” *Muzyka Journal* no. 9 (January 29, 1911): 196-200.
- . “Scriabin and the Phenomenon of Colored Hearing in Connection with the Light Symphony ‘Prometheus.’” *Muzykal’ny Sovremennik* no.4-5. Petrograd (1916): 169-175.
- Sabbagh, Peter. *The Development of Harmony in Scriabin's Works*. Boca Raton: Universal Publishers, 2003.
- Samson, Jim. *Music in Transition: A Study of Tonal Expansion and Atonality, 1900-1920*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977. Reprint, 2002.
- . “Scriabin: The Evolution of a Method.” *Soundings* 4 (1974): 64-75.
- Savenko, Svetlana. *Sergey Ivanovich Taneev (1865-1915)*. Moskva: Izdatelstvo Muzyka, [Series: Russian and Soviet Composers], 1985.
- Schloezer, Boris de. *Scriabin: Artist and Mystic*. Translated by Nicolas Slonimsky. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987.
- Schonberg, Harold Charles. *The Great Pianists from Mozart to the Present*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1963.
- Schuster-Craig, John. “Contrasting Collections in Scriabin’s Etudes Op. 65.” *Theoretically Speaking* 7 (1992): 99-124.
- Scriabin, Alexander. *Études for Fortepiano*. Leningrad: Musyka, 1981.
- . *Trois Études pour Piano, op. 65*. Moscou: P. Jurgenson, 1912.
- . Pis’ma [Scriabin’s Letters]. Ed. Kashperov. Moskva: Muzyka, 1965/2003.
- Smith, Kenneth. “‘A Science of Tonal Love’? Drive and Desire in Twentieth-Century Harmony: the Erotics of Skryabin.” *Music Analysis* 29, nos. 1-3 (2010): 234-63.
- . “Desire and the drives: A New Analytical Approach to the Harmonic Language of Alexander Skryabin.” Ph.D. diss., University of Durham, 2008.
- . *Skryabin, Philosophy and the Music of Desire*. Farnham, UK, and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013.
- Stravinsky, Igor. *Poetics of Music in the Form of Six Lessons*. Translated by Arthur Knodel and Ingolf Dahl. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1947.
- Swan, Alfred. *Scriabin*. New York: Da Capo Press, 1969.
- Taruskin, Richard. “Scriabin and the Superhuman: A Millennial Essay.” In *Defining Russia*

- Musically: Historical and Hermeneutical Essays*, 308-59. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997.
- . "Review of Forte's *The Harmonic Organisation of The Rite of Spring*." *Current Musicology* 28 (1979): 114-29.
- . "Letter to the Editor from Richard Taruskin." *Music Analysis* 5/2-3 (1986): 313-20.
- . "Reviews of *The Music of Alexander Scriabin* by James M. Baker and *Scriabin: Artist and Mystic* by Boris de Schloesser." *Music Theory Spectrum* 10 (Spring 1988): 143-69.
- . *Stravinsky and the Russian Traditions: A Biography of the Works through Mavra*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996.
- . *The Oxford History of Western Music*. Volume four. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- . "Some Thoughts on the History and Historiography of Russian Music." *The Journal of Musicology* 3, no. 4 (1984): 321-39.
- Tenkanen, Atte. "Tracking Features with Comparison Sets in Scriabin's Study op. 65/3." In *Mathematics and Computation in Music*. Berlin and Heidelberg: Springer Verlag, 2009.
- Thiemann, Ronald F. *The Humble Sublime: Secularity and the Politics of Belief*. London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2014.
- Tolstoy, Leo. *The Kreutzer Sonata and Other Stories*. Translated by David McDuff. London: Penguin Books, 1985.
- Tsvetaeva, Marina. *Selected Poems*. Translated by Ilya Kaminsky and Elaine Feinstein. London and New York: Penguin Classics, 1994.
- Tymoczko, Dmitri. *A Geometry of Music: Harmony and Counterpoint in the Extended Common Practice*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Unkovskaia, Aleksandra. "Метода Цвето-Звуко-Чисел" [The Method of Colour-Sound-Numbers]. *Vestnik Teosofii* 1/3 (1909).
- Vanechkina, Irina L. "Where does "The Blue Rider" Gallop? Schönberg, Kandinsky and the Synthesis of Art." In *Schönberg and Kandinsky. An Historic Encounter*, edited by Konrad Boehmer, 95-100. Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1997.
- . "On Scriabin's Coloured Hearing." In *Proceedings of the Third 'Light and Music' Conference* (Kazan: KAI, 1975).
- . "Scriabin's *Prometheus*: to the Problems of Synthesis of Music and Light." Master's

- Thesis, Kazan Zhiganov's State Conservatory, 2006. (In Russian) [Ванечкина, Ирина Леонидовна, «Прометей» А.Н. Скрябина: Проблема синтеза музыки и света. Автореферат диссертации на соискание ученой степени кандидата искусствоведения. Казанская государственная консерватория (академия) им. Н.Г. Жиганова: 2006.]
- Wai-Ling, Cheong. "Scriabin's Octatonic Sonata." *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 121, no. 2 (1996): 206-28.
- . "Orthography in Scriabin's Late Works." *Music Analysis* 12, no. 1 (1993): 47-69.
- . "The Late Scriabin: Pitch Organization and Form in the Works of 1910-14." Ph.D. diss., University of Cambridge, 1990.
- Wait, Mark. "Liszt, Scriabin, and Boulez: Consideration of Form." *Journal of the American Liszt Society* 1 (1977): 9-16.
- Wesling, Donald. "The Speaking Subject in Russian Poetry and Poetics since 1917." *New Literary History* 23, no. 1, *Versions of Otherness* (Winter, 1992): 93-112.
- West, James. *Russian Symbolism: a Study of Vyacheslav Ivanov and the Russian Symbolist Aesthetic*. London: Methuen, 1970.
- Westphal, Kurt. *Die Harmonik Scriabins. "Anbruch."* Wien: II Jahrgang, Heft 2, 1935.
- Wetzel, Don. "Alexander Scriabin in Russian Musicology and its Background in Russian Intellectual History." Ph.D. diss., University of Southern California, 2009.
- Wile, Kip. "Collection in Neocentric Music: A Study in Theory and Analysis of the Music of Debussy, Stravinsky, Scriabin, Bartok, and Ravel." Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1995.
- Williams, Gertrude Marvin. *Madame Blavatsky: Priestess of the Occult*. New York, NY: Lancer Books, 1946.
- Wise, Herbert Harold Jr. "The Relationship of Pitch Sets to Formal Structure in the Last Six Piano Sonatas of Scriabin." Ph.D. diss., University of Rochester, Eastman School of Music, 1987.
- Zhalnina-Vasilkioti, Irina. "Artist Nikolai Shperling and Collector Antonis Benaki" (*PII* [*Russian Art Journal*. Theme of issue: Russia - Greece. Dialogue of cultures], 2:2016.
- Zhitomirsky, Dmitry. *A.N. Scriabin*. Moskva: Muzyka, 1977.

Appendix

3 ЭТЮДА

3 ETUDES

№1

Соч. 65, №1
Op. 65, №1
(1911-12)

Allegro fantastico $\text{♩} = 144 - 160$

Handwritten musical score for the first system. It consists of three staves: a grand staff (treble and bass clefs), a bass staff with chord diagrams, and a single treble staff with a bass line. The grand staff contains a circled number '7' in the first measure. The bass staff shows four chords: G, Bb, G, and F. The bottom staff contains a sequence of notes with accidentals: $\flat 6$, $\flat 6$, $\flat 9$, $\flat 9$, $\flat 3$, $\flat 3$ | $\flat 6$, $\flat 9$, $\flat 9$, $\flat 3$, $\flat 3$, $\flat 5$, $\flat 6$, $\flat 6$, $\flat 7$, $\flat 7$, $\flat 9$ || $\flat 3$, $\flat 6$. There are additional markings $\flat 2$ and $\flat 6$ below the final notes.

Handwritten musical score for the second system. It consists of three staves: a grand staff (treble and bass clefs), a bass staff with chord diagrams, and a single treble staff with a bass line. The grand staff contains a circled number '11' in the first measure. The piece is marked *pp* and *dolciss.*. The tempo marking *poco rit.* appears at the end of the first staff. The bass staff shows four chords: Bb, Db, Bb, and Gb. The bottom staff contains a sequence of notes with accidentals: $\flat 6$, $\flat 6$, $\flat 9$, $\flat 9$, $\flat 5$, $\flat 3$, $\flat 3$, $\flat 6$, $\flat 6$, $\flat 5$, $\flat 6$, $\flat 7$, $\flat 7$ | $\flat 6$, $\flat 6$, $\flat 9$, $\flat 9$, $\flat 5$, $\flat 3$, $\flat 3$ | $\flat 6$, $\flat 9$, $\flat 5$, $\flat 5$. There are additional markings $\flat 2$ and $\flat 6$ below the final notes.

15

dolciss.

C Eb C Ab

6 6^b 9 9^b 3^b 5 | 6^b 9 9^b 3^b 5^b 6^b 6 6^b 6 6^b 9 9^b 3^b 5 | 5^b 5 9

Agitato

19

D E B[#](C) E

5^b 9 6^b 6 5 9^b | 6 9 11 5 | 3^b 6^b 9 5^b 9^b 5^b 7[#]

Meno vivo ♩ = 50

22

pp très doux avec langueur

legato

B# D# C A F# B# F#

5b 9 5b 9 3b 11 6 6b 7# 5b 7# 3b 6b 9b 9 6 7# 3b 5b 6

25

m.d.

pochiss. cresc.

B# B# F# F#

3b 5b 6b 9 5b 6b 6b 9 6b 6 7#

29

Handwritten musical score for measure 29. It consists of three staves: a grand staff (treble and bass clefs), a guitar fretboard diagram, and a guitar chord diagram. The grand staff shows a melodic line in the treble clef and a bass line in the bass clef. The guitar fretboard diagram shows the notes on the strings. The chord diagram shows the chord shapes. The notes are: Eb, G, Bb, D, F#.

A Eb F# B# F#

6b 9 6 6b 7# 6b 3b 9b 9 6 7# 3b 5b C

Tempo I

33

Handwritten musical score for measure 33. It consists of three staves: a grand staff (treble and bass clefs), a guitar fretboard diagram, and a guitar chord diagram. The grand staff shows a melodic line in the treble clef and a bass line in the bass clef. The guitar fretboard diagram shows the notes on the strings. The chord diagram shows the chord shapes. The notes are: B#, D#, C, A, F#.

B# B# B# D# C A F#

3b 5b 9b 9 same as n. 22 6 6b 9 9b 3b

38

A A F# Eb C A F#

5b 6b 7# 5b 9 3b 5b 6 6b 5b 9b 9 6 6b 9b 3b 5b 9

poco agitato

43

mp *ppp* *cresc.*

C Ab Ab D B Ab E#

6 6b 9 9b 3b 9 5b 6 6b 9 7 3b 6b 6 6b 7# 5b 9 5b 5b 3b 6 6b 9

D7=3b E=11 6 6b 9

A#-11

Meno vivo

Musical score for measures 47-50. The score is written for piano (pp) and includes a *legato* marking. The music is in 6/8 time and features a complex melodic line in the right hand and a more rhythmic accompaniment in the left hand. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The score includes a circled measure number 47 and a circled measure number 50. The bottom staff contains handwritten chord symbols in red ink: D, G#, D, G#, G#. The bottom staff also contains handwritten fingering numbers: 6b 9b 9 3b 6 7# 3b 5b, 6, 3b 5b.

Musical score for measures 51-54. The score is written for piano and includes a *poco cresc.* marking. The music is in 6/8 time and features a complex melodic line in the right hand and a more rhythmic accompaniment in the left hand. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The score includes a circled measure number 51 and a circled measure number 54. The bottom staff contains handwritten chord symbols in red ink: D, D, F, B. The bottom staff also contains handwritten fingering numbers: 9 5b 6b, 9 6 7# 6b | 6b, 9 | 5b 6b 6 7#.

55 *pp* *cresc.*

6b 9b 3b 9 6 7# 3b 5b | 9 6b | 6b 9 | 6b 9

59 *pp* *rit.* *accel.*

E A# | E A# | E A# E A#

6b 9b 3b 9b 6 7# 5b 3b 6 | 6b 9b 9 6 7# 5b 6 9 | 9b 6b 9 9b 6b 9

Tempo I

Musical score for measures 63-66. The score is written for piano in 12/16 time. Measure 63 is circled. The music features a complex rhythmic pattern with many beamed notes in both hands. Measure 66 is also circled.

Chord diagram and bass line for measures 63-66. The chord diagram shows a sequence of chords: G, C#, Bb, E. Below the diagram is a bass line with notes and accidentals: 9b 3b 6 5b 9 | 9b 3b 6b 9.

Musical score for measures 67-70. Measure 67 is circled and marked with *pp*. The music consists of a steady eighth-note accompaniment in the right hand and a melodic line in the left hand.

Ossia:

Musical score for measures 71-74. Measure 71 is circled. This section is an ossia, providing an alternative melodic line for the right hand while the left hand accompaniment remains the same as in the previous section.

Handwritten musical score for measures 75-79. The score is written on two staves (treble and bass clef). Measure 75 is circled in blue. The music features complex chordal textures with many accidentals (flats and naturals).

Handwritten musical score for measures 80-83. The score is written on two staves (treble and bass clef). Measure 80 is circled in blue. The music continues with complex chordal textures and accidentals.

Handwritten chord diagrams and notes:

A^b

D

$6 \ 6^b \ 9 \ 9^b \ 3^b \ 5$

Poco agitato

Handwritten musical score for measures 84-87. The score is written on two staves (treble and bass clef). Measure 84 is circled in blue. The music is marked *mf* and features complex chordal textures with many accidentals.

Handwritten chord diagrams and notes:

E^b

E

$E - F^x - E - \sharp$

$5^b \ 3^b \parallel 5^b \ 3^b \ 9 \ 5^b \ 6^b \ 6 \ 5^b \ 5^b \parallel$

$9 \ 5^b \ 6 \ 5^b \ 9 \ 6^b \ 3^b \ 9^b$

$9 \ B^{\sharp} = 11 \ \sharp \parallel 9(\sharp) \parallel$

Meno vivo

Musical score for measures 87-90. The piece is in 3/4 time and B-flat major. Measure 87 is marked *pp*. The score features a complex texture with many beamed sixteenth notes and slurs. Measure 89 contains a circled measure number 89.

Musical score for measures 91-94. Measure 91 is marked *poco cresc.*. The score continues with complex rhythmic patterns and slurs. Measure 93 contains a circled measure number 93.

Musical score for measures 95-98. Measure 95 is marked with a circled measure number 95. The score continues with complex rhythmic patterns and slurs. Measure 97 contains a circled measure number 97.

[same as m. 86]
1st half

Musical score for measure 100. The measure is marked with a circled measure number 100. It shows a complex chordal structure with many accidentals.

[same as m. 86]
2nd half

Ossia:

same as m. 86

Bb Db

9 6 6b 3b 6b 5b

across.

105

GRASSA

ppp subito

Bb Db Db Db

9 6 6b 3b 9b 6b 5b 6b 9b 3b 9

Handwritten musical score for piano, consisting of four staves. The first two staves are the grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The third staff shows chord symbols, and the fourth staff shows figured bass notation.

Staff 1 (Treble Clef): Measures 1-4. Measure 1 contains a circled number "110". Measures 2 and 3 feature a slur over a half note and a dotted half note. Measure 4 contains a slur over a dotted half note. The tempo marking *smorz.* is written above the staff in measure 3.

Staff 2 (Bass Clef): Measures 1-4. Measure 1 contains a circled number "110". Measures 2 and 3 feature a slur over a half note and a dotted half note. Measure 4 contains a slur over a dotted half note.

Staff 3 (Chord Symbols): Shows chords for each measure: **Db** (measures 1-2), **Bb** (measures 3-4).

Staff 4 (Figured Bass): Shows figured bass notation for each measure: **6b 7# 6** (measures 1-2), **9 6** (measures 3-4).

No 2

Cor. 65, №2
Op. 65, №2
(1911-12)

Allegretto $\text{♩} = 80$

1 *P dolce*

rit. a tempo

C# Fx C# Fx Bb

5 9 5b 6 5 5b 9b 6 7 6 9 9b

3

5 *poco cresc.*

m. d.

Bb G C# Bb G C#

9b 6 9 3b 5b 6 9 9b 5 3 3b 9 5b 6 9 9b 5 3 3b

Musical score system 1 (measures 10-13). The system includes a grand staff with piano (p) and pianissimo (pp) markings, and a bass line with handwritten red chord symbols: G, G, G, G. The bass line also contains handwritten notes: 6, 9b, 6, 9, 6, 9b, 6, 9.

molto accel.

Musical score system 2 (measures 14-17). The system includes a grand staff with a *cresc.* marking. The bass line contains handwritten red chord symbols: G, Db, G, Fb, Bb, G, Db, Bb, E.

Musical score system 3 (measures 18-21). The system includes a grand staff with handwritten red chord symbols: G, Db, G, Fb, Bb, G, Db, Bb, E. The bass line contains handwritten notes: 6, 9, 3b (b), 6, 3b (bb), 6, 3b, 6, 3b, 6, 9b, 9, 9b.

presto volando

Musical score for piano, measures 17-20. The score is written on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). Measure 17 is marked with a circled '17' and 'pp'. The right hand has a triplet of eighth notes. The left hand has a quarter note followed by a half note. Measure 18 continues the left hand melody. Measure 19 has a circled '19' and a key signature change to C major. The right hand has a triplet of eighth notes. The left hand has a quarter note followed by a half note. Measure 20 continues the left hand melody. Below the grand staff, four chords are indicated in red: Db, G, C#, and G. Below these chords, a line of numbers indicates fingerings: 5, 3b, (b0), 6, 9b, 5, 3b, 3, 9b, 6. The notes on the staff correspond to these fingerings: Bb, Bb, (Bb), C, Bb, Bb, Bb, Bb, Bb, Bb.

rit.

Musical score for piano, measures 21-22. The score is written on a grand staff. Measure 21 is marked with a circled '21'. The right hand has a slur over two notes. The left hand has a quarter note followed by a half note. Measure 22 continues the left hand melody.

Tempo I

Musical score system 1, measures 20-23. Treble and bass staves. Measure 20 starts with a circled number 20 and a triplet of eighth notes. The piece is in a key with one sharp (F#). The instruction *poco cresc.* is written above the staff in measure 23.

Musical score system 2, measures 24-27. Treble and bass staves. Measure 24 starts with a circled number 24. The instruction *m.f.* is written above the staff in measure 24. The instruction *pp* is written above the staff in measure 27. There are triplets in measures 26 and 27.

Musical score system 3, measures 28-31. Treble and bass staves. Measure 28 starts with a circled number 28. There are triplets in measures 29 and 30.

molto accel.

presto volando

Musical score system 4, measures 32-35. Treble and bass staves. Measure 32 starts with a circled number 32. Measure 33 starts with a circled number 33. The instruction *cresc.* is written above the staff in measure 33. The instruction *pp* is written above the staff in measure 35. There are triplets in measures 34 and 35.

Musical score system 5, measures 36-39. Treble and bass staves. Measure 36 starts with a circled number 36. There are triplets in measures 37, 38, and 39. The instruction *mf* is written above the staff in measure 39.

No 3

Molto vivace $\text{♩} = 144$

Соч. 65, №3
Op. 65, №3
(1911-12)

The first system of the musical score consists of three measures. The top staff is a grand staff with treble and bass clefs, containing a piano introduction marked 'pp' and 'cresc.' with triplets of eighth notes. The middle staff shows a harmonic progression with chords G and Db. The bottom staff shows the corresponding fingering for the right hand, with numbers 6, 9, 6, and 9.

The second system of the musical score consists of three measures. The top staff continues the piano introduction with triplets of eighth notes. The middle staff shows a harmonic progression with chords A, Eb, B, and E#. The bottom staff shows the corresponding fingering for the right hand, with numbers 6, 9, 6, 9, 6b, and 3b.

Musical score system 1 (measures 7-9). Includes piano part with dynamics *pp* and chord diagrams for B, E#, B, Eb, and A.

Musical score system 2 (measures 10-12). Includes piano part with dynamics *pp* and *cresc.* and chord diagrams for Eb, A, Eb, A, F, and B.

Musical score system 3 (measures 13-15). Includes piano part with chord diagrams for C# and F#.

Impérieux ♩ = 100

17 *f*

3 3

$\#G$ G $\#G$ $\#G$

$E_b G_b$ $E_b G_b$ $E_b G_b$ $E_b G_b$

21 *m.d.*

3 3

m.d. *m.s.*

$\#G$ G $\#G$ $\#G$

$E_b G_b$ $E_b G_b$ $E_b G_b$ $E_b G_b$

Handwritten musical score for measures 25-28. The score is written on a grand staff with a treble clef on the top line and a bass clef on the bottom line. The key signature is one sharp (F#). Measure 25 is circled and labeled "m. 8.". The notation includes chords, arpeggios, and triplets. Below the grand staff, there are two lines of handwritten notes: a bass line with notes and accidentals, and a line with chord symbols in red ink: C#, G, C#, C#. The bass line notes are: m. 25: F#4, G#4; m. 26: F#4, G#4, A#4; m. 27: F#4, G#4, A#4, B#4; m. 28: F#4, G#4.

Handwritten musical score for measures 29-32. The score is written on a grand staff with a treble clef on the top line and a bass clef on the bottom line. The key signature is one sharp (F#). Measure 29 is circled. The notation includes chords, arpeggios, and triplets. Below the grand staff, there are two lines of handwritten notes: a bass line with notes and accidentals, and a line with chord symbols in red ink: C#, G, E, E. The bass line notes are: m. 29: F#4, G#4; m. 30: F#4, G#4, A#4; m. 31: F#4, G#4, A#4, B#4; m. 32: F#4, G#4, A#4, B#4.

33 *p*

3b

E Bb E E

9b 6b 9 6 3b 6b 9b 3b 6b 9b

34 *p* *cresc.* *poco accel.* *subito meno vivo*

3b

E Bb F# C F# C

9b eb eb 3b 9b 9b 6b 3b 6b 3b 9b 9b 6b 3b 6b 3b 6b

Handwritten musical score for measures 41-44. The score is written on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and includes a bass line with chord symbols and a guitar-style bass line with fret numbers.

Measures 41-44:

- Measure 41: Treble clef has a triplet of eighth notes. Bass clef has a chord with notes $\#0$ and $\#0$. Chord symbol: $\#0$ (bo). Bass line: $\#0$. Fret numbers: $3b$ $6b$ $9b$. Chord symbol: $F\#$.
- Measure 42: Treble clef has a chord with notes $\#0$ and $\#0$. Bass clef has a chord with notes $\#0$ and $\#0$. Chord symbol: $\#0$ (bo). Bass line: $\#0$. Fret numbers: $6b$ $9b$. Chord symbol: $F\#$.
- Measure 43: Treble clef has a chord with notes $\#0$ and $\#0$. Bass clef has a chord with notes $\#0$ and $\#0$. Chord symbol: $\#0$ (bo). Bass line: $\#0$. Fret numbers: $6b$ $9b$. Chord symbol: $F\#$.
- Measure 44: Treble clef has a triplet of eighth notes. Bass clef has a chord with notes $\#0$ and $\#0$. Chord symbol: $\#0$ (bo). Bass line: $\#0$. Fret numbers: $6b$ $9b$ | $3b$ $6b$ 6 . Chord symbols: $F\#$ and C .

Handwritten musical score for measures 45-48. The score is written on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and includes a bass line with chord symbols and a guitar-style bass line with fret numbers.

Measures 45-48:

- Measure 45: Treble clef has a chord with notes $\#0$ and $\#0$. Bass clef has a chord with notes $\#0$ and $\#0$. Chord symbol: $\#0$. Bass line: $\#0$. Fret numbers: $3b$ $6b$ $9b$. Chord symbol: A .
- Measure 46: Treble clef has a chord with notes $\#0$ and $\#0$. Bass clef has a chord with notes $\#0$ and $\#0$. Chord symbol: $\#0$. Bass line: $\#0$. Fret numbers: $3b$ $6b$ $9b$. Chord symbol: A .
- Measure 47: Treble clef has a chord with notes $\#0$ and $\#0$. Bass clef has a chord with notes $\#0$ and $\#0$. Chord symbol: $\#0$. Bass line: $\#0$. Fret numbers: $9b$ $6b$ $3b$. Chord symbol: A .
- Measure 48: Treble clef has a chord with notes $\#0$ and $\#0$. Bass clef has a chord with notes $\#0$ and $\#0$. Chord symbol: $\#0$. Bass line: $\#0$. Fret numbers: 9 6 . Chord symbols: Eb and 6 .

Handwritten musical score for measures 49-52. The score is written on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and includes a piano accompaniment section below. The piano part features chords labeled in red: A, A, A Eb, B, and F. The bass line is annotated with notes 3b, 6b, and 9b.

Measures 49-52:

- Measure 49: Treble clef has a complex chordal texture. Bass clef has a series of chords. Piano part: A (3b, 6b, 9b).
- Measure 50: Treble clef continues the texture. Bass clef has a series of chords. Piano part: A (3b, 6b, 9b).
- Measure 51: Treble clef continues the texture. Bass clef has a series of chords. Piano part: A Eb (9b, 6b, 3b, 6b, 9b).
- Measure 52: Treble clef continues the texture. Bass clef has a series of chords. Piano part: B F (9b, 6b, 3b, 3b, 6b, 9b).

Handwritten musical score for measures 53-56. The score is written on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and includes a piano accompaniment section below. The piano part features chords labeled in red: B, B, B F, and B F. The bass line is annotated with notes 3b, 6b, and 9b.

Measures 53-56:

- Measure 53: Treble clef has a complex chordal texture. Bass clef has a series of chords. Piano part: B (3b, 6b, 9b).
- Measure 54: Treble clef continues the texture. Bass clef has a series of chords. Piano part: B (3b, 6b, 9b).
- Measure 55: Treble clef continues the texture. Bass clef has a series of chords. Piano part: B F (9b, 6b, 6, 9).
- Measure 56: Treble clef continues the texture. Bass clef has a series of chords. Piano part: B F (9b, 6b, 3b, 6, 9).

8

(57)

ff *m.a.*

B B G C#

3b 6b 9b 3b 6b 9b 6 6 9 6b 3b 9b 9 6

8

ff **Prestissimo et incalzant**

G C# G C#

9 6 6b 3b 9 6 6b 3b

Musical notation for measures 65-68. The piece is in 2/4 time. Measure 65 is circled. The music features a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. A *cresc.* marking is present above measure 66.

Musical notation for measures 69-72. Measure 69 is circled. The music continues with melodic and bass lines. A *pp* marking is present above measure 70.

Musical notation for measures 73-76. Measure 73 is circled. The music continues with melodic and bass lines. A *cresc.* marking is present above measure 73.

Musical notation for measures 77-80. Measure 77 is circled. The music continues with melodic and bass lines. A *Meno vivo* marking is present above measure 78.

Handwritten musical notation and chord symbols. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 2/4 time signature. The notes are: C# (quarter), G (quarter), Gb (quarter), Gb (quarter), Gb (quarter), Gb (quarter). The chord symbols are: C# (circled in red), G (circled in red), Gb, Gb, Gb, Gb. The notes are written on a staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#).

81

accel. poco

81

82

83

84

a poco

85

m. d.

ferasc.

m. s.

85

86

87

88

89

m. d.

m. s.

89

90

91

92

