

Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet*: A Schleiermacherian Interpretation

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This article will discuss the application of Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher's (1768–1834) hermeneutical methods to a general reading of Tchaikovsky's fantasy-overture, *Romeo and Juliet*. The German philosopher gave a lecture series on hermeneutics at the University of Berlin in 1819, and from his research on the subject he invariably redefined this field of philosophical thinking. The central elements of his 'whole and parts' theory will be discussed as an alternative mode of investigative music analysis.

Richard E. Palmer presents six modern definitions of hermeneutics as follows:

- 1) The theory of biblical exegesis
- 2) General philological methodology
- 3) The science of all linguistic understanding
- 4) The methodological foundation of *Geisteswissenschaften*
- 5) Phenomenology of existence and of existential understanding
- 6) The systems of interpretation, both recollective and iconoclastic used by man to reach the meaning behind myths and symbols.¹

The term 'hermeneutics' is a word which is prominent in theological, philosophical and literary circles but relatively new to the discipline of musicology.² Ian Bent asserts that it 'came to prominence in writing about music implicitly in the nineteenth century and explicitly in the early twentieth century'.³ He remarks that no author in the nineteenth century

¹ Richard E. Palmer.: *Hermeneutics: Interpretation Theory in Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Heidegger and Gadamer* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1969), 33. Hereafter referred to as Palmer: *Hermeneutics*.

² For a more in-depth discussion of hermeneutics see Kurt Mueller-Vollmer: *The Hermeneutics Reader: Texts of the German Tradition from the Enlightenment to the Present* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986).

³ Ian Bent: 'Hermeneutics', *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* xi, 2nd edn, ed. Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell (London: Macmillan, 2001), 419.

wrote about music under the specific title of hermeneutics. Bent puts forth the opinion that it is unlikely that many of the commentators on music were aware of the theories of philosophers such as Schleiermacher, Johann Gustav Droysen (1808–1884) or Philip August Boeckh (1785–1867), aside from E.T.A. Hoffmann (1776–1822), who was acquainted with Schleiermacher.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries hermeneutics embraced a number of fields: biblical, classical literary and juridical. These served as ‘scholarly aids to the explanation of the scriptures, to the elucidation of language in ancient Greek texts, and to the identification of the “meaning” or “intent” of the law and the realisation of “how best to apply it to the circumstances at hand”’.⁴ Schleiermacher assimilated these three central strands of hermeneutics into the one discipline by basing hermeneutics on the concept of understanding. *Verstand*, the capacity to understand and *Verstehen*, the act of understanding, were both central components in the realisation of this school of thinking.

‘In the hermeneutics of the Enlightenment period, the author was only a shadowy figure lurking behind the real focus of the interpreter, the “text”’.⁵ Schleiermacher, however, included both text and author as objects of interpretation, and stipulated that the text must be penetrated in order to discover the author’s intent. Kramer asserts that this field of interpretation ‘was strictly a text-based discipline’ and ‘to music it was simply oblivious’.⁶ This article will demonstrate the validity of Schleiermacher’s whole and parts theory in relation to musical interpretation.

The philosopher constructed his concept of hermeneutics in the form of aphorisms, and the notes from his course on the subject at the University of Berlin are quite fragmentary, due primarily to the fact that he did not publish his teaching notes in a single body of work. However, his students collected various transcriptions from his lecture series and combined them with handouts from each class in order to present a written account of the philosopher’s thoughts and ideas.

⁴ Abigail Chantler: *E.T.A. Hoffmann’s Musical Aesthetics* (England: Ashgate, 2006), 52.

⁵ Ian Bent (ed.): *Music Analysis in the Nineteenth Century Volume II: Hermeneutic Approaches* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 7. Hereafter referred to as Bent: *Music Analysis*.

⁶ Lawrence Kramer: *Musical Meaning: Toward a Critical History* (London: University of California Press, 2002), 11.

The concept of the dialectical relationship between the whole and its parts is fundamental to Schleiermacher's understanding of hermeneutics. The idea of understanding something in relation to a whole and parts equation has its roots in the writings of the ancient philosophers. Plato's theory of recollection argued that all knowledge is already pre-existent in your memory and that if we need to know something new we must re-collect what we already know and fit it into the contextual whole. Early Biblical hermeneutics contended that an understanding of any particular passage in scripture must be guided by an understanding of the whole – and this whole can be reached only through an understanding of its parts.

Ian Bent translates Schleiermacher's whole and parts theory into 'that of a listener-interpreter who has expectations of the whole that are based on his prior knowledge of the piece's declared form or genre – who then, as he hears the moment-to-moment details of the piece in performance, repeatedly shifts back to his expectation and modifies it. This modified view of the whole in turn colours the way he hears the subsequent particulars; and so on, back and forth, until the end is reached, when preconception of the whole and experience of the bar-by-bar details fuse into a single, fully mediated understanding of the work'.⁷ This shifting between the whole and its parts is known as a hermeneutic circle.⁸ Schleiermacher maintained that 'complete knowledge always involves an apparent circle', and 'that each part can be understood only out of the whole to which it belongs, and vice versa'.⁹

The concept of the hermeneutic circle as an aid to the illustration of the 'whole and parts' theory can often lead to an 'impasse' or *aporia* and when this happens Schleiermacher 'shifts levels' by 'treating as a part what has previously been a whole, or vice versa'.¹⁰ Ian Bent argues that 'by shifting levels in this way' Schleiermacher 'can later work his way back to the impasse and find his way through it', thus gradually filling out the picture piece by piece 'until the totality stands clear before him'.¹¹ However, this alternation between hermeneutic circles can be used in a

⁷ Bent: *Music Analysis*, 5.

⁸ The interpreter can shift either forwards or backwards within the circle.

⁹ Ian Bent (ed.): *Music Theory in The Age of Romanticism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996, 2005), 113. Hereafter referred to as Bent: *Music Theory*.

¹⁰ Bent: *Music Theory*, 111.

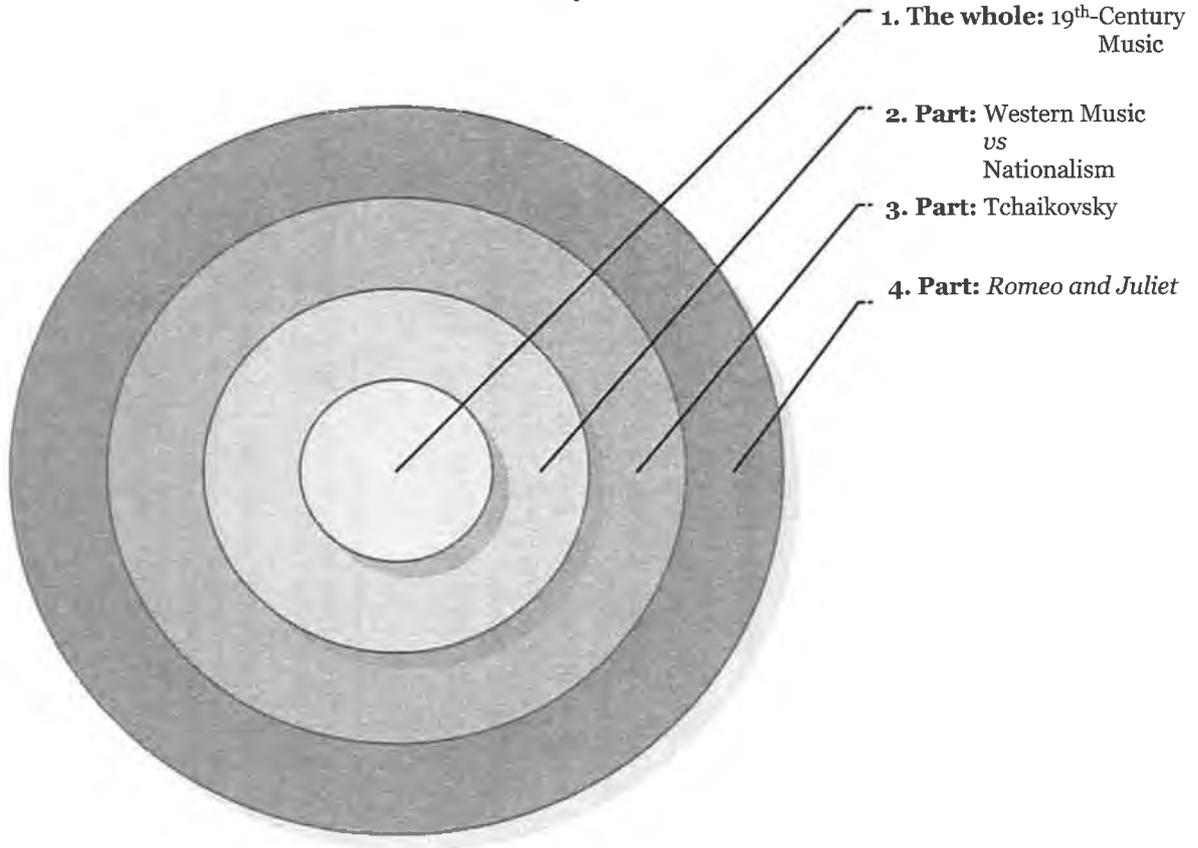
¹¹ *Ibid.*, 111.

manipulative manner to demonstrate how certain aspects of a text or score can be forced to fit into a specific analytical model.

In the application of Schleiermacher's whole and parts theory to Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet* it is necessary first to decide upon the whole itself, which will serve as a single system that is the product of its parts. I have taken nineteenth-century music as a model for the whole in which the unification of its parts ('Western music vs Nationalism', 'Tchaikovsky' and '*Romeo and Juliet*'), make up the structure of the nineteenth-century whole:¹²

¹² This illustration (Illustration 1) is only a single realisation of the whole and parts theory. If the interpreter takes *Romeo and Juliet* as a whole then its parts consist of the musical elements of the score such as melody, rhythmic patterns, harmony and so on. The same whole may also be constructed from different parts in relation to form. As the overture is a veritable melting-pot of forms one may interpret the parts as sonata form, fantasy form and symphonic poem.

Illustration 1. The Whole: Nineteenth-Century Music



The Whole: Nineteenth-Century Music

The nineteenth century was an era in which the validity of programme music and the ability of music to represent anything other than itself were passionately debated. At this time, several writers set about defining the content of music.¹³ In his treatise *The World as Will and Representation* (1819) Arthur Schopenhauer (1788–1860) set forth the idea that instrumental music had the ability to reflect the Absolute, and he ‘ascribed to music the sole capacity among all the arts to reflect not merely an idea of the Will, but rather the Will itself’.¹⁴ The German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831) asserted that ‘music’s content is the subjective inner self, the pure resounding of the inner life’.¹⁵ He believed that music ‘extends its range to cover every specific emotion of the soul, every degree of happiness, merriment, humour, moodiness, rejoicing and jubilation’.¹⁶

In 1837 Ferdinand Gotthelf Hand (1786–1851) stated in his *Aesthetik der Tonkunst* (Aesthetics of Musical Art or The Beautiful in Music) that content in music was ‘the direct expression of inner life’ and as ‘feelings having become sound’.¹⁷ For those such as E.T.A. Hoffmann (1776–1822), Johann Ludwig Tieck (1773–1853), Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder (1773–1798) and Friedrich Schlegel (1772–1829) music was ‘unique among the arts precisely for its transcendent qualities’.¹⁸ Hoffmann asserted that music’s ‘sole subject’ lay in ‘the infinite’. He believed that music had ‘nothing in common with the external sensual world,’ including ‘definite feelings’.¹⁹

¹³ For a more detailed discussion on meaning in music see Lawrence Kramer: *Musical Meaning: Toward A Critical History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

¹⁴ Mark Evan Bonds: ‘Idealism and the Aesthetics of Instrumental Music at the Turn of the Nineteenth Century’, *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 50/2 (Summer–Autumn, 1997), 418.

¹⁵ Lee A. Rothfarb: ‘Hermeneutics and Energetics: Analytical Alternatives in the Early 1900s’, *Journal of Music Theory* 36/1 (Yale: Yale University Department of Music, Spring 1992), 43. Hereafter referred to as Rothfarb: ‘Hermeneutics and Energetics’.

¹⁶ Rothfarb: ‘Hermeneutics and Energetics’, 43–44.

¹⁷ From *Aesthetics of Musical Art, or the Beautiful in Music* (1837–1841).

Rothfarb: ‘Hermeneutics and Energetics’, 44.

¹⁸ Rothfarb: ‘Hermeneutics and Energetics’, 43.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 43.

The year 1854 marked the publication of *Vom musikalisch-Schönen* (On the Musically Beautiful) by the Viennese critic Eduard Hanslick (1825–1904). This was the catalyst that sparked off the debate on form and content in music within the nineteenth century asserting that music cannot express anything other than itself. The philosopher and musicologist Theodor Adorno (1903–1969) also ‘repeatedly denied the validity of programme music on the grounds that’ ‘the programme intrudes upon the listener’s freedom of imagination, simply telling him what he is meant to feel at any given point’.²⁰

Part: Western Music vs Nationalism

The nineteenth century was a time of definition and identification within the world of music. Musicians, writers and philosophers sought an understanding of music and the conflict that arose from such debate was reflected within the musical climate of Russia at this time. Composers who had been heavily influenced by European, and in particular Italian, trends were gaining a sense of musical independence as a new Russia emerged from the ashes of the Napoleonic Wars.

Alfred Einstein reports that in the first quarter of the nineteenth century composition was perceived and exalted as a ‘dilettante pastime’ in Russia, and St Petersburg enjoyed the virtuosic expressive art of Muzio Clementi (1752–1832) and John Field (1782–1837).²¹ Italian opera was the predominant genre extolled by the Russian court and the elitist following of the Tsar invited western musicians over to perform their works. St Petersburg subsequently became ‘an obligatory stop on the itineraries of distinguished virtuosos’ such as Field, Johann Nepomuk Hummel (1778–1837), Karl Joseph Lipinski (1790–1861), Clara Schumann (1819–1896) and Hector Berlioz (1803–1869).²²

In Russia there were no ‘flourishing concert societies, no large orchestras, no broad musical education, no critical press, and above all no public eagerly anticipating every new composition, every new talent on the platform’.²³ Maes surmises that at this time:

²⁰ Nicholas Cook: *Music, Imagination and Culture* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 12.

²¹ Alfred Einstein: *Music in the Romantic Era* (London: J.M. Dent, 1947), 303.

²² Francis Maes: *A History of Russian Music—From Kamarinskaya to Babi Yar* trans. Arnold J. Pomerans and Erica Pomerans (California: California Press, 2002), 31. Hereafter referred to as Maes: *A History of Russian Music*.

²³ Maes: *A History of Russian Music*, 31.

...musicians belong to the lowest rank, but their calling had no official status, no place in the hierarchy. Whereas painters, sculptors, and actors could lay claim to the title of 'free artist', a title that carried a number of privileges, including exemption from the poll tax and from military service, musicians had no more rights than peasants.²⁴

The only way for a musician to earn a living during this period was to be a wealthy member of the aristocracy, a teacher in an academy or an instrumentalist in an imperial theatre. Russian musicians of this era had limited technical skills and were forced to go abroad to be educated in musical training, as there were no such institutions available in their country.

On 27 November 1836 the first tragic opera in the Russian repertoire based on a national subject and set to a Russian text was premiered. The work in question was Glinka's *A Life for the Tsar* and Francis Maes remarks that he was the 'first Russian composer to gain the ear of the West'.²⁵ Glinka synthesized authentic Russian folk idioms with the heritage of Western music and achieved international stature with Berlioz and Liszt, the principal Western advocates of his music.²⁶

In 1855 the Viennese journal, *Blätter für Theater Musik und Kunst*, published a damning article, written by Anton Grigoryevich Rubinstein (1829–1894), on the condition of Russian music. The year in question witnessed the inauguration of the new Tsar, Alexander II, who was a promoter of national talent and brought about great reform within the country. He founded the Russian Musical Society in 1859 and appointed Rubinstein as its director. The objectives of the society were concerned with 'the development of music education', 'the taste for music in Russia and the encouragement of native talent'.²⁷

The Russian Musical Society served as a concert-giving organisation and Rubinstein subsequently began to arrange free music classes for the public in the spring of 1860. He set up the St Petersburg Conservatory in October 1862 with the help and patronage of the

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 33.

²⁵ Maes: *A History of Russian Music*, 28.

²⁶ Rey M. Longyear: *Nineteenth-Century Romanticism in Music* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 3rd edn, 1988), 213.

²⁷ Maes: *A History of Russian Music*, 35.

Grand Duchess, Yelena Pavlovna (1784–1803). The foundation of Russia's first conservatory was greeted with hostile polemics from the influential critic Vladimir Vasilievich Stassov (1824–1906). He argued that the Western educational model that had inspired Rubinstein's conservatory threatened to undermine the indigenous development of a Russian national music.²⁸

The year 1862 marked a dualistic presence in Russian music in which its composers found themselves divided between national and international musical strains. A group of amateur composers united under the direction of Mily Alexeyevich Balakirev (1837–1910) and adopted the name of 'Moguchya Kuchka' or 'mighty handful'. This group of composers consisted of Alexander Borodin (1833–1887), Cesar Cui (1835–1918), Modest Mussorgsky (1839–1881) and Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (1844–1908). In the early stages of their careers an independent national identity served as their inspiration, and they rebelled against western European schools of musical thinking. These Russian nationalists advocated the form of the symphonic poem, made popular by Berlioz and Liszt, as an effective medium to represent their love of story-telling.

Part: Tchaikovsky

Pytor Il'ich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893) entered the Russian music scene via the St Petersburg Conservatory in 1863 where he studied until 1865. On completion of his tuition, Tchaikovsky took up a teaching position at the newly established Moscow Conservatory under the directorship of Nikolay Grigoryevich Rubinstein (1835-1881) in 1866. At this time the composer was engaged in correspondence with Balakirev. As their relationship developed the Nationalist composer suggested to Tchaikovsky the composition of an overture based on Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. The work was completed during the months of October and November of that year, extensively revised in 1870 and finalised in 1880. Both first and final versions serve as programmatic responses to the Shakespearean play.²⁹ The original piece depicts the

²⁸ Marina Frolova-Walker: 'Russian Federation: Art Music', *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, xxi, 2nd edn, ed. Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell (London: Macmillan, 2001), 927.

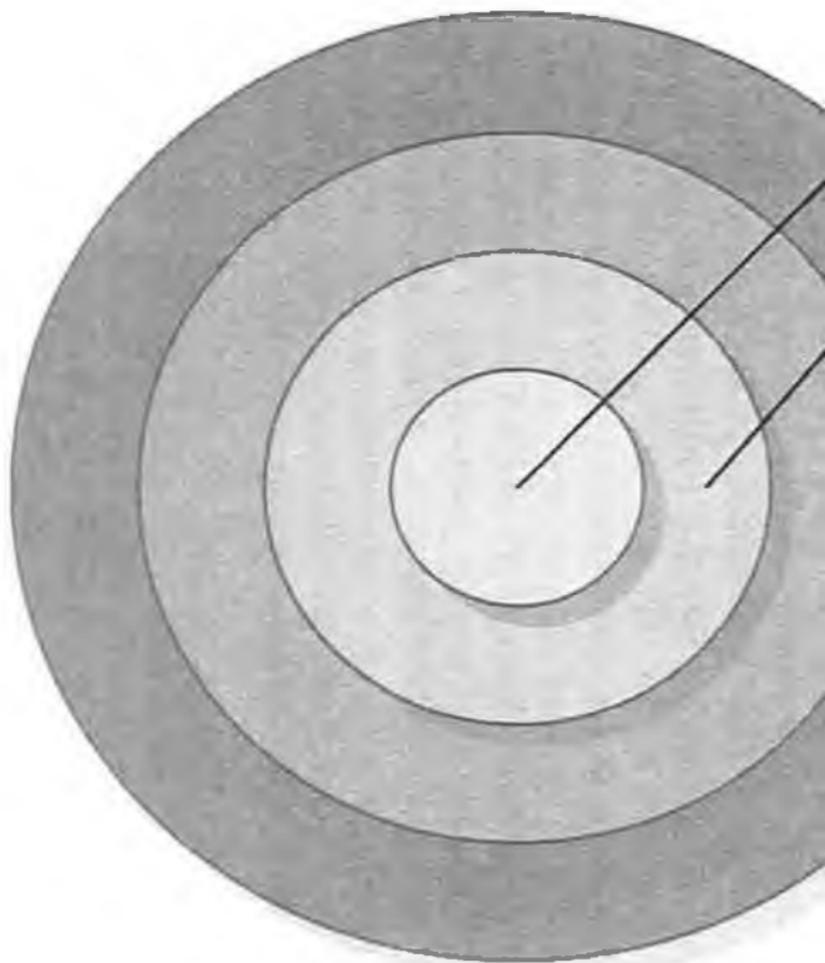
²⁹ The 1870 version is exactly the same as the 1880 score aside from the recapitulation and final section.

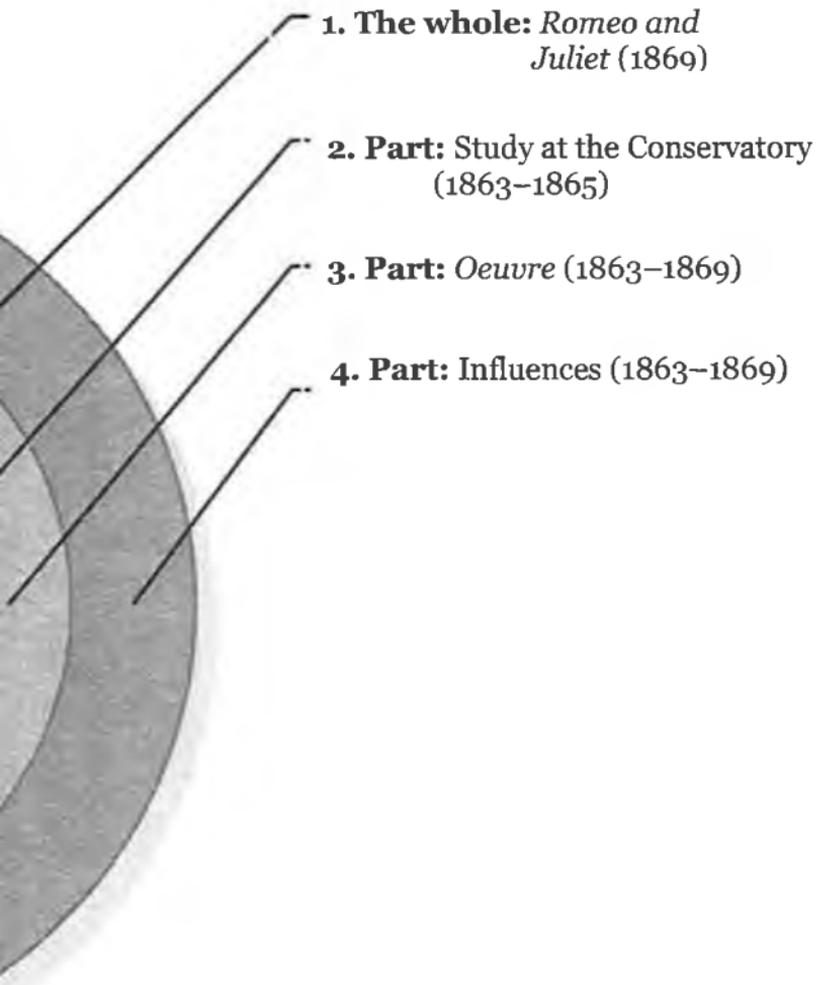
action of the tale in a musical scene-like manner, whereas the latter conveys the overall sense of tragedy rather than a specific musical account of the events of the story. This article will only deal with a general analysis of the 1869 version.

In order to understand the musical style of *Romeo and Juliet* it is necessary to situate the fantasy-overture within Tchaikovsky's compositional output up to 1869, thus alternating movement within the previous hermeneutic circle. The 'part', *Romeo and Juliet*, now becomes a 'whole' constructed from new individual parts ('Study at the Conservatory', 'oeuvre', and 'influences'):³⁰

³⁰ All of these parts are set within the time frame of 1863–1869, which encompasses Tchaikovsky's compositional life from his entry into the Conservatory to the writing of *Romeo and Juliet*.

Illustration 2. The Whole: Romeo and Juliet





Part: Study at the Conservatory

As a scholar of the St Petersburg Conservatory Tchaikovsky studied harmony, strict counterpoint, composition and instrumentation. Nikolay Ivanovich Zarembo (1821–1879), a teacher at the school, extolled the works of Beethoven and Mendelssohn and dismissed the writings of Mozart and Glinka in his classes, much to the abhorrence of the young Tchaikovsky. The director of the institution, Anton Rubinstein, was revered by Tchaikovsky despite his coolness towards his student as a composer.³¹ The concert repertoire of the institution boasted the works of Mozart, Beethoven, Field, Berlioz, Glinka, Wagner, Liszt and Rubinstein, to name but a few. On numerous occasions Tchaikovsky and his classmate Herman Avgustovich Laroche (1845–1904) would play piano reductions of the major works of these composers.

Part: Oeuvre

Tchaikovsky's compositional output up to 1869 was quite sparse. Aside from various music assignments, he wrote an overture in 1863 entitled *The Storm*, which was based on the play by Alexander Nikolayovich Ostrovsky (1823–1886). In 1865 Tchaikovsky wrote an overture in F major and a string quartet in B flat major; however, only one movement remains as the composer destroyed the others at a later date. A cantata for chorus and orchestra based on Schiller's *Ode to Joy* was also written for his end of year performance at the conservatoire. The composer's compositional output during the years 1866 and 1867 was rather limited. He produced an overture in c minor, which did not gain approval for performance at the conservatoire.³² He also wrote a festival overture on the Danish national anthem op.15, a Russian Scherzo and Impromptu op.61 and three piano pieces entitled *Souvenir de Hapsal* at this time. The following year saw the composition of his first symphonic poem, *Fatum* op.77, his first symphony *Winter Dreams* op.13 and the opera *Voyevode* op.3. In 1869 Tchaikovsky wrote the opera *Undine*, the first version of *Romeo and Juliet* and an arrangement of Rubinstein's overture *Ivan the Terrible* for piano four hands.

³¹ For more information on Tchaikovsky's student days at the St Petersburg Conservatory see Alexander Poznansky: *Tchaikovsky Through Others' Eyes*, trans. Ralph C. Burr, Jr and Robert Bird (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1999).

³² Tchaikovsky wrote the words 'awful rubbish' on the top of the score.

Part: Influences

From this list of works it is obvious that Tchaikovsky's early writing focused primarily on western classical forms. The majority of teachers employed at the conservatory were European and their teaching methods invariably influenced the fledgling composer. However, Tchaikovsky's music began to adopt a more Russian identity when he left St Petersburg and took up the post of professor of harmony at the Moscow Conservatory in 1866.

Three years later Tchaikovsky drew inspiration from Balakirev's collection of Russian songs as the model for the majority of his pianoforte duet arrangements that appear in the second volume of his collection of fifty Russian folksongs. A working relationship developed between the pair, through correspondence, and they eventually met in Spring of 1869. Balakirev suggested to Tchaikovsky the composition of *Romeo and Juliet* and even drew out a structural plan for the piece based on elements from his own overture, *King Lear*. Tchaikovsky was reluctant at first to engage in such a project but he eventually succumbed, after some gentle coaxing from the leader of the nationalist group, and *Romeo and Juliet* was composed within a few short months.

The hermeneutic circle serves as a valid mode of investigative analysis as it presents a historical and musical context for any composition. Through a review of each individual 'part' a greater understanding of the 'whole' becomes apparent. A discussion on western and nationalistic schools of musical thought, in conjunction with Russian composers, contributes to a greater comprehension of the status of music in the nineteenth century as a whole. The knowledge acquired from such consideration enhances the understanding of a particular piece of music that sits within a hermeneutic circle, by informing the interpreter that specific musical nuances from differing schools of musical tradition may be present within a work before an actual notational analysis begins.

In his lecture series, Schleiermacher speaks of two kinds of explication within his hermeneutical method: subjective and objective or 'grammatical' and 'psychological'. The grammatical approach is one of a linguistic investigate nature in which 'the meaning of each word of a passage must be determined by the context in which it occurs'.³³ In

³³ Andrew Bowie (ed.): *Friedrich Schleiermacher: Hermeneutics and Criticism and Other Writings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 24. Hereafter referred to as Bowie: *Friedrich Schleiermacher*.

musical terms, this theory can be interpreted in two ways. Firstly, in order to comprehend the musical language of a given work, it is necessary to explore the composer's *oeuvre* up to the point of writing that piece. Secondly, the details of the musical climate and social background of the era in which the composer was writing must be understood in order to comprehend the work within a stylistic and historical contextualisation. The grammatical approach may be realised through the construction of hermeneutic circles similar to those previously discussed in this article.

The psychological aspect of Schleiermacher's method of explication depends primarily on entering into an empathetic state with the author. The philosopher insists that 'putting oneself in the place of the author is implicit' in a realisation of his whole and parts theory.³⁴ Such a method involves understanding the personal details of Tchaikovsky at the time of writing *Romeo and Juliet* and interpreting the composition as a reaction to the extra-musical elements of the composer's life, thus illustrating a shift between grammatical and psychological explication.

Schleiermacher maintains that 'the interpreter who bases his interpretation of a literary work exclusively on a precise examination of language, while having no sense of the life of the author's mind, exhibits what he calls "pedantry". He proceeds to argue that he who concentrates on the author's psychological process to the neglect of linguistic matters 'we have to call by a name that has been used' 'in the sphere of artistic productivity...:a "nebulist". To ensure a balanced approach, Schleiermacher asserts that the 'interpreter must approach the message of a text from two opposite ends simultaneously, from the linguistic fabric of the communication, and from the mind of the writer or speaker,' thus operating on the principle of the hermeneutic circle.³⁵

If the interpreter takes on board Schleiermacher's thoughts on authorial empathy then it is necessary to investigate the personal details surrounding the composer up to the point of the composition in question. Tchaikovsky suffered greatly from the torments of a troubled emotional and psychological sensitivity to the world and his surroundings. He was tortured by a sexuality that could not be fully expressed in the era to which he belonged.

Alexander Poznansky remarks that some Tchaikovsky scholars have concluded that the fantasy-overture actually 'arose out of

³⁴ Bowie: *Friedrich Schleiermacher*, 24.

³⁵ Bent: *Music Theory*, 114.

Tchaikovsky's "agonizing and unrequited" love for Vladimir Gerard,³⁶ who was a student at the School of Jurisprudence ten years previous to the writing of the composition.³⁷ Alexandria Orlova asserts that Modest Tchaikovsky revealed, in unpublished reminiscences, that his brother was able to write the fantasy-overture 'solely because in his youth he had suffered the torments of an unrequited love for his school-fellow Vladimir Gerard'.³⁸ In 1869 Tchaikovsky had a failed romance with the French mezzo-soprano Désirée Artôt (1835–1907), and during the early 1870s he was also involved in a passionate love affair with a student at the Moscow Conservatoire, Eduard Sack, which ended in Sack's suicide on 2 November 1873.

Such events contributed in the emergence of a dualistic persona, which is reflected in his diaries, letters and music.³⁹ The fact that Tchaikovsky took a European literary work as his subject and treated it in both a Russian and a Western musical style is testimony to his sense of dualism, while his choice of generic classification, the 'fantasy-overture', unites the conflicting movements of exoticism and classicism within Russian music in the nineteenth century.

³⁶ Poznansky asserts that Gerard and Tchaikovsky became close only in the composer's senior year at the School of Jurisprudence. Gerard later became a lawyer and public activist.

³⁷ Poznansky: *Tchaikovsky: The Quest*, 40.

³⁸ Orlova: *Tchaikovsky: A Self – Portrait*, xi. Orlova mentions that at the time of her writing Modest's references to this subject are held in the archives of the Tchaikovsky Museum at Klin and access to them is not currently granted. The author studied these papers and diaries while working at the Museum in 1938–1939.

³⁹ Fortunately, a significant amount of Tchaikovsky's writings have been translated into English. For more information on the composer's personal thoughts and views on music see: William Lakond (trans.): *The Diaries of Tchaikovsky* (New York: Norton, 1945); Alexandra Orlova: *Tchaikovsky: A Self-Portrait*, trans. R.M. Davison (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1990); Anatol Tchaikovsky: 'Recollections of Tchaikovsky', *Music and Letters*, 21/2 (4/1940); Modeste Tchaikovsky: *The Life and Letters of Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky* ed. Newmarch, Rosa Harriet Jeaffreson (Honolulu, Hawaii: University Press of the Pacific, 2004, first edn, 1904); Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky: *Letters to His Family – An Autobiography* trans. Galina Von Meck (New York: Stein and Day, 1982).

By applying Schleiermacher's whole and parts theory to Tchaikovsky's fantasy-overture, via the realisation of hermeneutic circles, the interpreter is given a general overview of the work before an actual notational analysis of the score is begun. Through a consideration of nineteenth-century music as the 'whole' of a hermeneutic circle the general history of the period and the condition of music in Russian culture is presented. Such knowledge leads to an understanding of the context in which *Romeo and Juliet* was written and aids the comprehension of particular compositional styles and structures, which were derived from both Western and Nationalistic schools of musical practice.

By contextualising the work and empathising with the condition of the composer, we learn that the piece was written in an era of conflicting musical understanding and personal conflict. The composer's dualistic persona is invariably reflected in his manner of cross-cutting between dissimilar musical themes and his predilection towards intensifying differences of tonality and texture within his music. Tchaikovsky further illustrates the dichotomies of the era through the way in which the first and final versions of the fantasy-overture adhere to the sense of a programme in two distinctly different manners. The 1869 work attempts to musically dramatise the action of the play by representing each major scene as it occurs in the tale, whereas the 1880 adaptation reflects the overall tragic mood and tone of the play. The first composition illustrated Tchaikovsky's skill of contrapuntal writing and knowledge of Western classical forms while the 1880 score demonstrated his imaginative ability to portray the general emotional sense of tragedy within a musical context. Each version reflects varying aspects of musical thought that existed within the nineteenth century and the personal life of Tchaikovsky.

It is interesting to note that Schleiermacher's name literally means 'maker of veils' and it is up to the analyst to decide whether this is manifest in the application of his hermeneutical ideas to a reading of a score. In conclusion, a Schleiermacherian reading of a composition can serve as a valid alternative means of investigation, which presents an overall interpretation of a musical work before an actual music analysis of the form and structure begins. When one applies this knowledge or contextualisation to a study of the score it may be revealed that the knowledge acquired is already inherent within the music. By

subsequently conducting a musical examination of the work, the interpretative results may be analogous to those determined by a hermeneutical analysis. Both forms of inquiry may reveal the same information but the 'whole and parts' theory can illuminate certain aspects of musical style which the interpreter may not notice through a purely musical analysis.

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