

**FROM CHOIR TO STRING QUARTET – SOUND
METAMORPHOSES IN THE COMPOSITION OF THE WORK
OPT BAGATELE PENTRU CVARTET DE COARDE ¹
BY ADRIAN POP²**

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SUMMARY. Among the three string quartets of the Cluj composer, we have chosen to focus on the opus *Opt bagatele pentru cvartet de coarde* [Eight bagatelles for string quartet] (1996), awarded with the “George Enescu” Prize of the Romanian Academy, and whose ideational, thematic, and dramatic ground is a previous choral cycle of the author, *Galgenlieder-Bagatellen* (1987), lyrics from *Galgenlieder / Gallows Songs* by Christian Morgenstern (1905). Notwithstanding the inherent differences between the instrumental and vocal versions, the musical attitudes preserve the predilection and appetite for the vocal composition that Adrian Pop holds so dear, including through the use of certain vocal phonemes, the chromatics of the chordophones in the third bagatelle. The instrumental and chromatic refinement of the eight bagatelles confirms the essential role they play in the creation of one of the most important contemporary composers of Cluj and Romania.

Keywords: Adrian Pop, bagatelle, version, transcription, rewriting, contemporary

¹ *Eight Bagatelles for String Quartet* (our translation).

² The Romanian version of this study was published in the proceedings of the 2021 SIMN Conference titled “2021 - Intersecții în componistica românească – Mihail Jora. Myriam Marbe. Dan Constantinescu, Adrian Iorgulescu, Doina Rotaru, Adrian Pop” (“2021-Intersections in Romanian composing - Mihail Jora. Myriam Marbe. Dan Constantinescu, Adrian Iorgulescu, Doina Rotaru, Adrian Pop”), edition coordinated by Olguța Lupu, Ed. Muzicală, Bucharest, 2022, ISMN 979-0-69491-278-9, ISBN 978-973-42-1258-3, pp. 91-111.

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The well-known and distinguished composer and professor of Cluj, Adrian Pop, general director of the “Transilvania” State Philharmonic of Cluj-Napoca (1991-1995) and former rector of the National Academy of Music “Gh. Dima” (2008-2012), needs no vast preliminary introduction, therefore we shall succinctly synthesize only a few, in our vision, representative aspects that pertain to his activity and creation.

Adrian Pop began his studies of music under the paternal guidance of the renowned choir conductor and professor of Cluj, Dorin Pop, and the triad of the master composers that had a decisive contribution to his musical formation/education gathers incontestable names of the musical arts in the second half of the 20th century: Sigismund Toduță, Cornel Țăranu, but also Ștefan Niculescu.⁴

Without entirely eluding the variety and the symphonic scope⁵, his musical creation, predominantly chamber music, offers an honoured place to the choral creation, by the 70 pieces written until now, which cover the entire range of choral combinations (mixed choir, male voice choir, women’s choir, equal voices choir, choir and piano).

“A modern composer but with traditional depth and consciousness”⁶, Adrian Pop confesses his affinity and obvious predilection for the principles and specificity of the vocal music (to the choral opuses also added are other orchestral works that address the voice, either accompanied by piano or in various vocal-instrumental combinations), encapsulating his artistic, musical credo in a memorable phrase: “to me [...] the melody is the minimum and sufficient condition required for music”⁷.

Among the three string quartets of the Cluj composer, we have chosen to focus on the opus *Opt bagatele pentru cvartet de coarde (Eight bagatelles for string quartet)* (1996), awarded with the “George Enescu” Prize of the Romanian Academy, and whose ideational, thematic, and dramatic ground is a previous choral cycle of the author, *Galgenlieder-Bagatellen* (1987), lyrics from *Galgenlieder (Gallows Songs)* by Christian Morgenstern (1905). Notwithstanding the inherent differences between the instrumental and vocal versions, the musical attitudes preserve the predilection and

⁴ See the interview „De vorbă cu Adrian Pop” (*In Conversation with Adrian Pop*), by Andra Apostu and published in *Muzica* magazine, no. 3/2017, pp. 3-26.

⁵ We recall the works *Etos 1* [Ethos 1] (1976) *Solstițiu* [Solstice] (1979) and *Triptic (Triptych)* (1998), as well as the *Concertul pentru violoncel și orchestră (Concert for cello and orchestra)* (1975, second, amplified version dating from 1987).

⁶ *Opera Omnia. Autoportrete componistice – Adrian Pop sau despre ideal în muzică (Opera Omnia. Compositional self-portraits – Adrian Pop or About the ideal in music)* (Lecturer Anca Sîrbu, Ph.D.), in *Arta* (Journal of the Faculty of Interpretation, Composition and Theoretical Musical Studies, Iași), 2017.

⁷ *Ibidem*.

appetence for the vocal composition that Adrian Pop holds so dear, as one can see also from the evocation of the Renaissance motel in the section *Chiesa del Palestrina*, from a different string quartet *Mătasea și metalul (The Silk and the Metal)* (2011-2013), or from the use of certain vocal phonemes which come to enrich the chromatics of the chordophones in the third bagatelle.

Founded on the same immutable aesthetic principles subjected to “the beautiful” (understood in the medieval key of Thomas Aquinas through clarity, luminosity, equilibrium, proportionality⁸), Adrian Pop’s musical creation offers a sense of homogeneity and continuity, all the while revalorizing the “thematic” and “poetical elements” of certain school works, old sketches or previous pieces⁹. Thus, the work we discuss in this study not only springs from a choral version, but without ending the series of its sound avatars, offers the starting point of one of the parts of the 1998 *Triptych* for orchestra [by transcribing and developing a movement of the *Opt bagatele pentru cvartet de coarde (Eight bagatelles for string quartet)*].¹⁰

Returning to the central focus of this study, we mention that our approach will not revolve around the analytical-aesthetic details of the eight bagatelles, already explored in the existing bibliography¹¹, but we shall follow the reports and transformations of the original choir, in its process of vocal instrumentalization and recreation.

Considering that the composer himself believes that “the performer, as well as the listener, would benefit from knowing the lyrics”¹², even in the case of the instrumental version (that resumes the thematic, poetical imagery, and the cycle dramaturgy of the initial choral), we will also accompany our comparative analytical journey of Christian Morgenstern’s lyrics, which “revitalize the anti-field of the aesthetic sphere at the divide of the 19th and 20th centuries, by responding to the polyvalent and diversified manifestation of the dormant values of the grotesque and the absurd present as significant alternatives of the human condition and its epoch.”¹³

⁸ Apostu, A. *Op. cit.*

⁹ *Ibidem.*

¹⁰ See the interview by Ecaterina Banciu - *Etosuri arhetipale - "Triptic" de Adrian Pop (Archetypal ethos: Triptych by Adrian Pop)*, in the STUDIA UBB MUSICA, LXI, 2, 2016 (p. 257 – 274).

¹¹ See Ștefan Anghi –*Fotografii la minut din creația compozitorilor clujeni (Snapshots from the creation of Cluj composers)*, Arpeggione Publishing House, Cluj-Napoca, 2008, pp. 289-306 and V. Jucan, N. Silaghi, M. Suărășan – *Opusuri camerale pentru coarde de Adrian Pop (Chamber opuses for strings by Adrian Pop)*, MediaMusica Publishing House, Cluj-Napoca, 2012, pp. 7-34.

¹² From the preface of the score *Opt bagatele pentru cvartet de coarde (Eight bagatelles for string quartett)*, MediaMusica Publishing House, Cluj-Napoca, 2012.

¹³ Anghi, Șt. *Op. cit.*, p. 290.

The first bagatelle, *Moderato quieto*, corresponds to the choral piece *Apa (The Water)*¹⁴ of the choral cycle and suggests “the continuity and discontinuity of wisdom, as two metaphorical hypotheses [...] encapsulated in two musical ideas”¹⁵ or “two fundamental motifs”¹⁶.

The first eight measures are added to the initial choral version, representing an introduction which prepares the binary structure of the bagatelle (A A_{v1}),¹⁷ configuring the vocal space of the accompaniment, based on the perfect and augmented fourths (Ionic, Lydian but also Phrygian or Aeolian tetrachords) and suggests the fluidity of the water through *glissandos* overlapping with the pedals of the grave chords, by creating a “texture” that is instrumentally different idiomatically from the choral piece.

E.g. 1

1. Moderato quieto (♩ cca 60)

Adrian Pop – *Bagatelle 1*, m. 1-8.

¹⁴ *Fără glas, fără glas/ curge apa ceas de ceas;/ dar oricât, dar oricât,/ tot n-ar spune ea decât:/ A mânca, a iubi, - / și nimica nou n-ar fi./ Așadar, așadar,/ apa ar vorbi-n zadar* (Voiceless, voiceless,/ Ran the clock water;/ Much as it did, much as it did,/ It would only say;/ Eating, loving/ Nothing new would bring,/ So in vain would water speak.) (Romanian translation by Adrian Pop – cf. note on the score, see volume *Adrian Pop – Coruri (Adrian Pop – Choral works)*, Ed. Muzicală, Bucharest, 1987.)

¹⁵ Angi, Șt. *Op. cit.*, p. 295.

¹⁶ Jucan, V., Silaghi, N., Suărășan, M., *Op. cit.*, p. 9.

¹⁷ The three members of the “Transylvanian Quartet”, in *Opusuri camerale pentru coarde de Adrian Pop (Chamber opuses for strings by Adrian Pop)*, appreciate this means “a ternary form” (ABB song form), subsequently nuancing that, in fact, “the only possible cut-out appears in measure 43” (hence creating a binary structure), whereas the A in the inverted bar only has 8 measures (meaning the Introduction, in our vision) – see *Op. cit.*, pp. 9-12.

In fact, it is not only the introduction of the piece *Apa (The Water)* that is amplified, but the entire first bagatelle, by prolonging the pauses, the pedals, resulting in the end in 60 measures, compared to the 35 of the original choral, enhanced, arranged, and instrumentalized.

Therefore, in the musical example 2, we can see how the melody is transposed to the upper octave (compared to the original), in *pizzicato* (which suggests, presumptively, water drops). The measurement for the pause (m.7 to the choir) is tripled (m.17-19 in quartet), and the entire accompaniment of the melodic line is transformed, instrumentalized, liquefied, starting from the suggestions of the choral version. In other moments of the bagatelle we can encounter again the extended pedals, various repetitions with the framing of a different tempo of the measure, by acquiring new combinations in relation to the “texture” of the accompaniment.

E.g. 2

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Andantino *mp* semplice

S. *p* bocca chiusa, sempre legato *mp* semplice
Fă-ră glas,
Oh-ne Wort,

A. *m*

T. *m*

Fă-ră glas
Oh-ne Wort

cur-ge a-pa
rinni das Was-ser

ceas de ceas;
im-mer-fort,

Adrian Pop – comparison between the measures 10-21 of *Bagatelle 1* and measures 1-10 of the choral piece *Apa (The Water)*.

The final cadence reveals a new modification, apparently minor, by eliminating the last key, leaving the discourse suspended, tensioned, preparing the „*attacca*” of the second bagatelle. By not solving the harmony tension on that key of “B-flat major” with an added *ninth*, the instrumental version is delimited even more from the choral original, even if in a subtle way, as we will proceed to explain. Thus, if the choral pieces could be interpreted in any order and combination (even if partial), therefore requesting a clear final to any of them, the string quartet version is a unitary whole, relinquishing the relativity of the order of its composing parts, which now converge, from one to another, by the end of the cycle, being welded through transitions, connecting units, and, especially, by eliminating the final cadences (except for the last bagatelle, articulating the end of the entire cycle).

The image displays two musical staves. The upper staff is a string quartet score with parts for Violin 1, Violin 2, Viola, and Violoncello. It includes performance instructions such as 'arco', 'pp', 'pp sotto voce', 'via sord.', and 'sul tasto'. The lower staff is a choral score for Soprano (S.), Alto (A.), Tenor (T.), and Bass (B.), with German lyrics. A red rectangular box highlights the final cadences of both the string quartet and the choir, showing the convergence of the two musical textures.

Adrian Pop – comparison of the final cadences of the *Bagatelle 1* and the choral piece *Apa (The Water)*

The tonal appearance of the first piece (“noted with the key signature of the F major tonality”¹⁸) is shadowed, if not completely annulled “because of the cluster collision resulting from the overlap of the two motifs¹⁹” which are chief. The **second bagatelle**, corresponding to the choral piece *Marele Lalula (The Great Lalula)*²⁰, has as starting point five abracadabra lyrics, based „solely on the euphonic-arbitrary expressiveness of the letters”²¹.

¹⁸ Jucan, V., Silaghi, N., Suărășan, M., *Op.cit.*, p. 9.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*.

²⁰ *Kroklowafzi? Semememi! / Seiokronto – prafriplu: / Bifzi, bafzi; hulalemi: / Quasti basti bo... /Lalu lalu lalu lala!*

²¹ Șt. Angi, *op. cit.*, p. 294.

To the five lines of the first stanza of the poem *Marele Lalula* (*The Great Lalula*) correspond the five chief musical motifs²², the original choral is extended from 44 to 118 measures, and the movement become more alert (from *Moderato* to *Allegro*). Thus, an entire imitative, motoric accompaniment is added, with a *scherzando* character. The stamps of the feet (of the choral play) are replaced by the harmonic accompaniment, but also by the *col legno* effect, whereas the introductions and the sections of the bagatelle are extended, engaging new rhetoric moments, necessary to the new context, affecting the form of the part itself. Hence, if the choral piece had three sections (the last with two segments), the instrumental bagatelle has an elaborative four-part song form, of the A A_{v1} (by involving a quadruple counterpoint) A₁ A₂ type.

In the beginning of the part, one can observe how the double alto pedal and base (the highlighted fragment in the following musical example)²³ is entrusted to the second violin, in double free strings, and the melodic intervention from the soprano (doubled by the tenor and alto) is rendered also by the second violin, in an isorhythmic intervention with the first violin (which attains mixes of the variable harmonic intervals). Alongside all these elements taken from the choral piece and augmented, we can see the imitative accompaniment in *pizzicato*, as a novel element of the instrumental version.

E.g. 4

2. Allegro (♩ min. 120)

The musical score for E.g. 4 is in 3/4 time and marked '2. Allegro (♩ min. 120)'. It consists of four staves: Vln. 1, Vln. 2, Vla., and Vc. The Vln. 1 and Vln. 2 staves are mostly empty, with a red annotation 'new accompaniment' under the Vln. 1 staff. The Vla. and Vc. staves show a complex rhythmic pattern starting with a 'pizz.' (pizzicato) marking. The Vln. 2 staff has a '(ord.)' marking above it. Dynamics include sfp and pp.

²² Cf. V. Jucan, N. Silaghi, M. Suărășan, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

²³ Note the unusual arrangement in the score for the choral voices.

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7

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

arco (pressare l'arco, quasi non vibr.)

franco

(ord.) arco (pressare l'arco, quasi non vibr.)

franco

col legno batt.

col legno batt. *

mp → *pp* → *mp*

* col legno batt. - le battute devono essere eseguite con l'arco caddendo direttamente sulle corde, senza nessun movimento laterale

Moderato

S.

T.

A.

B.

f

p

* = bălăie din picior; se execută de către perechile de partide între care este notat (sopran / tenor, respectiv alt / bas). Perechile de optimi (♫) se vor executa cu picioare alternante.
 = ein Stampfen mit dem Fuß; es wird von den Stimmpaaren ausgeführt, zwischen denen es notiert ist (Sopran / Tenor, bzw. Alt / Baß). Die Achtel - Paare (♫) werden abwechselnd mit beiden Füßen gestampft.

Adrian Pop – comparison of m.1-12 from the second bagatelle to m.1-5 of the equivalent choral play

The comparison of the two new equivalent fragments in the two versions of the vocal-instrumental bagatelle (see musical example 5) highlights the variation of the harmonic elements (a second added compared to the choral piece, use of the new accompaniment with fourth chords, fifths, but also an added seventh), as well as the metric re-contextualising of the sound interventions (syncopé on the quarter note, instead of the eighth note).

second added compared to the choral piece

starts on a quarter note, instead on an eighth note

double stop, takeover from soprano and tenor

chords with 4, 5, 7+

p

p

la

lu

la

lu

la

lu

la

lu

la

lu

Adrian Pop – comparison of m. 13-18 of the second bagatelle to m.6-10 of the choral piece *Marele Lalula (The Great Lalula)*

The quadruple counterpoint used in articulating the section A_v means permuting the four instrumental voices, by assigning the melodic plan and pedals to the mission of the high pitch instruments.

E.g. 6

arco (pressare l'arco, quasi non vibr.)
 (ord.)
 f rauco
 arco (pressare l'arco, quasi non vibr.)
 f rauco
 col legno batt. *
 mp
 col legno batt. *
 mp
 mp
 pp
 mp

* col legno batt. - le battute devono essere eseguite con l'arco caddendo direttamente sulle corde, senza nessun movimento laterale

pizz.
 pp
 col legno batt. *
 mp
 col legno batt. *
 mp
 arco (pressare l'arco, quasi non vibr.)
 f rauco
 arco (pressare l'arco, quasi non vibr.)
 f rauco
 f rauco

**Adrian Pop – the quadruple counterpoint of the second bagatelle
 (between sections A and A_{v1}, m.7-12 vs. 27-31)**

Another relevant example in respect to the multiple transformations brought to the choral piece is found in the following musical example, where the sound material is transposed in the ascending minor third (*tenth*), rhythmically diminished (but also doubled, by the “stammered” semiquavers), spatialized and instrumentalized, while the end of the instrumental piece avoids the final sound gesture, just like the first bagatelle, by extending a double pedal in the acute and grave registers, as a connecting element to the following bagatelle.

Measure 110 quartet vs measure 41 choir -
transposition, rhythmic variation, instrumentalisation

The image displays two musical staves side-by-side. The left staff is a quartet version for measures 110-113, featuring Violin 1, Violin 2, Viola, and Violoncello. The right staff is a choir version for measures 41-44, featuring four vocal parts with lyrics 'la lu la'.

The final cadence quartet vs choir,
continuity and anticipation vs final gesture

The image displays two musical staves side-by-side. The left staff is a quartet version for the final cadence, featuring Violin 1, Violin 2, Viola, and Violoncello. The right staff is a choir version for the final cadence, featuring four vocal parts with lyrics 'la lu' and 'attacca'.

Adrian Pop – the rhythmic diminution and the transposition used in the quartet version, comparison between the final cadences.

The third bagatelle, “with symbolical and allegorical connotations”²⁴, corresponds to the choral piece *Capra și năpârca* (*The Goat and the Adder*)²⁵ and it is until now the bagatelle closest to the original choral, with a total of

²⁴ V. Jucan, N. Silaghi, M. Suărășan, *op.cit.*, p. 20.

²⁵ *Năpârca-și cântă ruğa sa, / se uită capra fix la ea / și-și scutură bărbuța mult, / ca un profesor foarte cult. / I-e cântecul necunoscut, / aude doar că e plăcut. / Năpârca-adoarme în curând. / Iar capra pleacă cugetând.* (The adder sings its prayer, / the goat staring at it / heavily shaking its beard, / similarly to an erudite teacher. / An unknown song, / that just feels good. / Soon the adder falls asleep / And the goat leaves pondering.)

56 measures compared to the 51 in the choral piece. The formal structure of the part sets off with the contrast between sections A and B, which are then elaborated within a median section (A+B, of 28 measures), and the movement is ended with a varied “reprise”, Av1 and a Coda. Among the arsenal of procedures used in the instrumental adaptation of the original choral, we mention spacing, by adding a supplementary register, transposing the melody to the higher octave (see musical example 8), using certain specific instrumental colours (*flageolet*), but also undertaking certain onomatopoeias from the tenor, suggesting the “prayer of the adder”.

E.g. 8

Quartet, measures 1-4

Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.

pp
p
mp
poco
poco in rilievo
(ord.)
al pont.
[sh]
[sh]

* pronunciare (come in inglese) i fonemi iscritti fra parentesi, mantenendoli per la durata corrispondente alla linea orizzontale e colla dinamica indicata

Choir, measures 1-4

Andante molto

S.
A.
T.
B.

p
m
[sh]
m

Nä - pä - Die Schlei - che - cä - si - cîn - fä - ihr

* [] indică emisiunea șoptită. — bezeichnet das Flüstern.

Adrian Pop – Third bagatelle, quartet incipit vs. choir incipit

The section A_{V1} also contains novel supplementary imitations, evoking “the cultic atmosphere of the renaissance motets”²⁶ (see musical example 9). In both versions of the play, the coda strains a diminished chord by a seventh, whose sonority requires and ensures the continuity of the musical discourse in the subsequent play.

E.g. 9

Quartet, measures 46-50

The musical score for the quartet (measures 46-50) is arranged in four staves: Violin 1 (Vln. 1), Violin 2 (Vln. 2), Viola (Vla.), and Cello (Vc.). The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 7/8. The score includes dynamics such as *p* and *pp*, and performance instructions like *con sord.*, *ord.*, and *added imitation*. The Cello part shows a diminished chord with a seventh, which is noted as a 'coda' in the original text.

Choir, measures 40-43

The musical score for the choir (measures 40-43) is arranged in four staves. The lyrics are in Romanian and German. The lyrics are: *Mă - pir / Die Schlei*, *eș-a - doar / che fällt*, *me / in*, *în / Sclaf*, *cu / als*.

Adrian Pop – supplementary imitations added to the cello, without correspondence in the choral version

The atmosphere of the **fourth bagatelle**, corresponding to the choral piece *Suspînul (The Sigh)*²⁷ can suggest “the delicate irony touching on the

²⁶ Ș. Anghi, *op. cit.*, p. 296.

²⁷ *Pe luciul nocturn un suspîn patina / Visând fericiiri și iubire. / Cu alba ei mantie neaua / Caselor da strălucire. / O față frumoasă-și închipui, / Se-opri arzând de dor. / Atuncea gheșușul sub el se topi – / Înghițind visătorul suspîn.* (On the night gloss a sigh glided/

obsolete sentimental²⁸ or “a bizarre and sympathetic musical tropology: the sigh is wavering to dance a waltz.”²⁹ And this movement is presented without major changes to the original choral, resorting only to the extension of the ambitus to the higher octave (more resonant and organologically accessible to the first violin, unlike the natural limitations of the soprano voice), whereas in the beginning of the play there is a new base, in *pizzicato*, that makes the sonant discourse more dynamic and emphasizes its dancing character.

E.g. 10

melody transposed to the higher octave
con sord.

Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.

Allegretto, molto leggiero
mf

S.
A.
T.
B.

Re
Ein
lu - ciei noc - turn - un sus - pin pa - li -
Seuf - zer lief - Schritt - schuh auf - nacht - li - chem

Adrian Pop – beginning of the fourth bagatelle, in the two instrumental-choral versions of the movement

Dreaming of happiness and love. / With her white cloak, the snow / Irradiates all houses. / Fancying a beautiful girl, / It halts burning with longing. / Then the ice underneath melted – / Swallowing the dreaming sigh.)

²⁸ V. Jucan, N. Silaghi, M. Suărășan, *op.cit.*, p. 23.

²⁹ Ș. Anghi, *op. cit.*, p. 296.

In our view, the structure of the movement articulates a binary form A A_{v1} and sums up 48 measures, but only by seven more than the choral version. The coda of the bagatelle represents a new material added, which ensures the transition to the following movement by anticipating the pedal rhythm on C# (from the viola, in the Coda part, the pedal will pass to the cello in the beginning of the following bagatelle). In the following musical example, we shall also observe the amplified short caesura (also emphasized through fermatas), preceding the final choral cadence, which becomes a measure for the general pause in the string quartet version (m. 38). For the reasons already presented, in all the changes made to the final cadences of the bagatelles, the major chord on G will be avoided. At the same time, we wish to also draw attention to the rearrangement of the voices in the chord of measure 32, without changing however the distribution in comparison to the choral version, but by seemingly choosing the most convenient instrumental combination of the double strings from the second violin (although it would have been possible to interpret the harmonious interval C#-G, resulting from the “mechanical” assumption of the alto and soprano 2 voices).

E.g. 11

Quartet, measures 32-48
rearrangement of voices
tornando a... **Tempo I** *con slancio* **Piú lento**
estando

The musical score shows four staves: Vln. 1, Vln. 2, Vla., and Vc. Measure 32 is highlighted with a red box. The score includes dynamics (p, cresc., f), articulation (gliss.), and performance instructions (Tempo I, con slancio, Piú lento, estando).

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new Coda, transition to the next movement

Molto allegro

via. sord *accel. molto*

(attacca)

Choir,
measures 32-41

mf con slancio

a tempo

Più Lento

mp sempre

major chord on „G”

attacca

Adrian Pop – the end of the fourth bagatelle, comparison of the two hypostases.

The **fifth** bagatelle becomes a new occasion to showcase the author's creative fantasy. Accordingly, the movement starts from the binary (A B) premises of the choral piece *Hermelina estetică (The Aesthetic Stoa)*³⁰ (with an extension of 20 measures) and is deployed in a movement of 120 measures (establishing a 6:1 ration), where the B section becomes only a Coda and the first section, A, is further augmented, rewritten, elaborated, diversified, generating the deployment: A (*scherzando*) A₁ (elaborative) A₂ (elaborative plus retransition) A_{v1} (transposed to perfect ascending tetrachord) Coda, thus setting the "trajectory of an austerely conducted stanzaic rhythm"³¹.

The initial, choral version is diminutively articulated, conditioned by the difficulty of the vocal execution of the semiquaver passages, leading to the numerous assumptions of the fractional pulsations by one voice and the other, when the pauses or long sounds ensure the equilibrium needed in the writing for each voice, revealing the remarkable experience of the author in choral writing. In exchange, the string quartet occasions a relaxation of these constraints, with *Allegretto* turning into *Presto*, measure 2/4 becoming 2/2, and the quaver pulsation is generalised and almost continuous for the violins and viola, at the beginning of the play.

If we compare the beginning of the two versions of the bagatelle, we notice the absence of the anacrusis in the instrumental version, replaced with the rhythmic pedal of the cello, and with the Phrygian tetrachord (or Locrian, but with unaccented tetrachord) from the second violin, imitated in *stretto* with a modified rhythm for the viola.

³⁰ Based on the following verses: *O hermelină sta pe o tulpină / lângă o apă lină. / Știi voi de ce? / Mi-a spus-o vițelul cel din lună: / Jivina sta / așa / să iasă rima bună* (On a stalk sat a stoa / near a still water. / Do you know why? / The calf on the moon told me: / The critter sat so / to let the good rhyme flow).

³¹ Ș. Angi, *op. cit.*, p. 297.

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E.g. 12

Quartet, measures 1-6
without offbeat

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

ppp *arco* *al pont.* *pedal point to the cello*

ppp *sempre stacc.*

al pont.

pp *Phrygian/Locrian tetrachord*

pp *melodic imitation, modified rhythm*

Choir, measures 1-5

Allegretto
mp

S.

A.

pp

cresc.

pp *her-me-li-nā, li-nā, li-nā, li-nā, sta pe o tul-*
Wie-sel, Wie-sel, Wie-sel, Wie-sel, Wie-sel, Wie-sel, saß auf ei-nem

p *her-me-li-nā sta*
Wie-sel, Wie-sel, saß

pp *her-me-li-nā sta*
Wie-sel, Wie-sel saß

cresc.

pp *o her-me-li-nā, li-nā*
ein Wie-sel, Wie-sel, Wie-sel

p *sta lin-gā o a-pō li-nā sta o her-me-li-nā, li-nā*
Kie-sel, Kie-sel, Kie-sel saß in-mit-ten Bach-ge-rie-sel saß ein Wie-sel, Wie-sel, Wie-sel

p *o tul-pi-nā sta o her-me-li-nā, li-nā*
Kie sel, Kie sel saß ein Wie-sel, Wie-sel, Wie-sel

p *o ful-pi-nā sta o her-me-li-nā, li-nā*
Kie-sel, Kie-sel saß ein Wie-sel, Wie-sel, Wie-sel

p *o-pō li-nā sta o her-me-li-nā, li-nā*
Bach-ge-rie-sel saß ein Wie-sel, Wie-sel, Wie-sel

pp *o ful-pl-nā sta o her-me-li-nā, li-nā*
Kie-sel, Kie-sel saß ein Wie-sel, Wie-sel, Wie-sel

Adrian Pop – *incipit* compared to the two versions of the fifth Bagatelle

Section A₂, newly added, also plays the part of retransition, preparing the varied “reprise” and circulating descending scales (Bach’s minor melody, on the sounds G, A, B or, subsequently, C#, as a “dominant” of F#, the central sound to which section A_{v1} is transposed), associated with the harmonic intervals of major and minor ninth. The transposition to perfect ascending tetrachord of the diversified “reprise” of the A (A_{v1}) section cannot eschew the allusion to the “tonal” relations specific to the sonata form.

E.g. 13

Descending Bach minor scales, on G, A, B and later on C# (the dominant of F#), associated with intervals of 9M and 9m

The musical score shows four staves: Vln. 1, Vln. 2, Vla., and Vc. The key signature has one sharp (F#). Measure 64 starts with a *ppp* dynamic. Vln. 1 has a descending scale starting on G. Vln. 2 has a descending scale starting on A. Vla. has a descending scale starting on B. Vc. has a descending scale starting on C#. The score continues with similar patterns, including a fermata in Vln. 1 at measure 67. Dynamics range from *ppp* to *p*.

Adrian Pop – section A₂, fragment, also with a role retransition, m.64-70

The final cadences of the two versions reveal new changes ensued in the score of the string quartet, by using the rhythmic diminution, voice rearrangement, amplification of the *cluster* taken from the choir, as well as the transposition to the accented octave by the final musical gesture.

The final cadence, quartet, measures 116-120

rhythmic diminution

final gesture at the upper octave pizz.

sul tasto

pp

al pont. *mf*

rearrangement of voices, amplified cluster compared to choir

transition to number 6

f

pp

mf

attacca

The final cadence, choir, measures 18-20

S.

A.

mf

attacca

Ji - vi - na sta a - sa sa ia - sa ri - ma bu - na.
 Das raf - fi nier - te Tier tats um des Ret-mes wil-len.

Adrian Pop – the ending of the fifth bagatelle, with its two versions

In the case of the **sixth bagatelle**, for the first time in the instrumental version, we witness an abbreviation in comparison to the original choral, titled *Floare de tapet (Wallpaper Flower)*³², gathering 41 measures, compared to the 51 for the choir. Moreover, even the compressed existing measures, will

³² *Sunt mândra floare de tapet; / corolele-mi cochete / nu-s într-al lunii mai buchet, / ci numai pe perete. / Prin cameră oricât privești / nu poți a mă cuprinde, / iar să mă numeri de-ndrăznești / îți ieși curând din minte. (Wonder wallflower I am; / with coquettish corollas/as one in the month of May's bouquet, /but only on the wall, / However much you look around/ hardly you perceive me/ and should you deign to count me, /quickly will you'd go mad.)*

be differentiated in an emphasized manner compared to the initial version, proposing a first half of the completely different movement (22 measures), with *glissandos* on the harmony sounds, but also with a fragment of neo-renaissance choral (where, however, the accords are not traditional, but accords with seconds and fifths, delays that are solved on different other harmony structures, with added seconds). In this general sound context, the imitative musical material of the beginning of the choral piece is suggested only in passing, allusively.

E.g. 15

Incipit, quartet, measures 1-12 gliss. armonici

choral

Vln. 1 *pp*

Vln. 2 ord. *pp* *flautato, smorzando*

Vla. *pp* *pp lontano, non vibr.* *flautato, smorzando*

Vc. *pp* *pp lontano, non vibr.* *flautato, smorzando*

* tirare l'arco proprio sul ponticello, senza suono

Vln. 1 *pp lontano, non vibr.*

Vln. 2 *pp*

Vla. *pp lontano, non vibr.* *quasi allusion to the musical material of the choral piece*

Vc. *pp* *pp* *gliss. armonici*

Incipit, choir, measures 1-3
imitations

Moderato

S. *mf* *Sinf* min-dra floa-re de-ta-pet, sint min-dra floa-
Ta-pe-ten-blu-me bin ich fein, Ta-pe-ten-blu-

A. *mf* min-dra floa-re de-ta-pet, sint min-dra floa-
Ta-pe-ten-blu-me bin ich fein, Ta-pe-ten-blu-

T. *mf* min-dra floa-re de-ta-pet, sint min-dra floa-
Ta-pe-ten-blu-me bin ich fein, Ta-pe-ten-blu-

B. *mf* min-dra floa-re de-ta-pet, sint min-dra floa-
Ta-pe-ten-blu-me bin ich fein, Ta-pe-ten-blu-

Adrian Pop – *Incipit* of the two versions of the sixth bagatelle

As a natural consequence of the frailer rapports when compared to the initial choral premises, the form of the play is not changing. Thus, if the initial choir sections A, A₁ și A₂ naturally led the discourse towards the outlines contrasts in sections B and C, in the instrumental play we are left with only a heterogeneous quaternary (A B C), where the B seems an allusion to the musical material of the fifth bagatelle (by the *staccato* movements of eights, with the difference that the vertical superpositions of the eighth pulsations do not generate a *cluster*, as they do for the previous bagatelle; they do generate a sort of diminished hexachord, with a delay of 7-8). The obvious correspondences of section C to the homonymous choral section highlight, as well, some transformations (see musical example 16); such as the arpeggios of the first violin, distanced by one octave from the ostinato plan of the second violin (whereas for the choir, the divided soprano displays both plans in the same register), and, moreover, the oscillation in thirds of the tenor is more fully arched in the viola, by adding sixths (on the same general tendencies of amplifying the ambitus).

E.g. 16

Incipit B and C, quartet,
measures 20-24, 30-35

section B, looks like it's borrowed from bagatelle no.5,
but it's not a vertical cluster, only a kind of diminished
sextacord with a 7-8 suspension

Musical score for measures 20-24, featuring four staves: Vln. 1, Vln. 2, Vla., and Vc. The score includes performance markings such as *pp*, *al pont.*, and *∞*. A performance instruction in Italian is present: ** - tirare l'arco proprio sul ponticello, senza suono.*

C

Musical score for measures 30-35, continuing the quartet. The score includes tempo markings (*Molto vivace*, *Meno mosso*, *rit.*) and dynamics (*ff*, *dim.*). Blue annotations describe the arpeggios: *arpeggios placed one octave higher than the ostinato of the second violin* and *ff thirds and sixth*.

FROM CHOIR TO STRING QUARTET – SOUND METAMORPHOSES...

Incipit B and C, choir, measures 33,
41-43

sempre accel. e cresc.

S.
să mă nu-meri de por-nesți, iar
folgst du mich per Rös-sel-sprung, und
iar
und

A.
să mă nu-meri de por-nesți, iar
folgst du mich per Rös-sel-sprung, und
iar
und

T.
să mă nu-meri de por-nesți, iar
folgst du mich per Rös-sel-sprung, und
să mă
folgst du

B.
să mă nu-meri de por-nesți, iar
folgst du mich per Rös-sel-sprung, und
să mă
folgst du

Allegro
ff

să mă nu - meri de por - nesți, iar să mă nu - meri
folgst du mich per Rös - sel - sprung, und folgst du mich per

mp (eco)

să mă nu - meri de por - nesți, iar să mă nu - meri
folgst du mich per Rös - sel - sprung, und folgst du mich per

f (uniti)

să mă nu - meri de por - nesți, iar să mă nu - meri
folgst du mich per Rös - sel - sprung, und folgst du mich per

f (uniti)

să mă nu - meri de por - nesți, iar să mă nu - meri
folgst du mich per Rös - sel - sprung, und folgst du mich per

f (uniti)

să mă nu - meri de por - nesți, iar să mă nu - meri
folgst du mich per Rös - sel - sprung, und folgst du mich per

Adrian Pop – comparison of the *incipit*-uses of sections B and C in the two versions of bagatelle no. 6

The before last bagatelle, the seventh, corresponds to the choral bagatelle *Pâlniile* [The Funnels] and the literary, poetic support strikes from the very beginning by the graphic, visual character of the arrangement of the verses in a “funnel” with its opening upwards.

*Prin noapte două pâlnii trec.
Prin gâturi strâmte-ncet, încet,
pe drum, în crânguri
se prelingea
lumina
lunii
e t
c³³*

The two versions of the play have an identical extension of 24 measures, suggesting, particularly through the external instrumental plans (first violin and cello), four sound “funnels”, the first two – and also the last – with the opening directed to the left (the sound discourse) evolves towards the contraction of the initial ambitus), while the third “funnel” has its opening directed to the right (the sound discourse of the ambitus is amplified). Considering the restrained extension of the four subcomponents of the shape, we opted for their codification in the scheme with a frame of lowercase and not uppercase: a a_{v1} b a_{v2}³⁴.

The transcription for string quartet uses minimal modifications, aimed at widening the ambitus (with both violins or only with the first violin transposed to the higher octave) and instrumental rearrangement of the sound plans (in musical example 17, the viola takes over the soprano voice, the second violin is equivalent to the divided alto, while the tenor identifies with the cello).

³³ (In the night two funnels pass, /through narrowing tubes, /on the road, in the grove, / gently would/ the moonlight/ flow/et/c)

³⁴ V. Jucan, N. Silaghi, M. Suărășan, in op.cit., p. 30, propose the form AABA.

"funnel" b, quartet,
measures 13-18

rearrangement of voices
compared to choir

"funnel" b, choir,
measures 15-18

1 Solo
mp espress.

1 Solo

Adrian Pop – “Funnel” B, compared in the two versions of the bagatelle

In the final cadence of the instrumental movement, unlike the *attacca* ending of the choral piece, a connecting unit to the cello appears, welding the passage toward the end of the cycle, in the same way of ensuring continuity between the parts of the version for the string quartet.

E.g. 18

the "funnel" av2, quartet, measures 19-24

Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.

ord.
via sord.
pp

the "funnel" av2, choir, measures 20-24

S.
A.
T.
B.

nii et ce - te ra
weg und so wei - ter.
lu - nii et ce - te ra
Wald - weg und so wa.
lu - nii et ce
Wald - weg und ce
attacca

Adrian Pop – “Funnel” av2, compared in the two versions of the bagatelle

The last instrumental *bagatelle*, the eighth, revisits the theme of “water” in the first *bagatelle*: “water purposefully spoke ‘in vain’... but spoke softly, playfully, to the satisfaction of us all.”³⁵ Thus, the ending reutters the musical contents of the first movement of the instrumental cycle, with the role of a shortened “reprise”, nevertheless guaranteeing the cyclic thought pattern of the entire composition. The corresponding choral piece is called *În zadar* (In Vain) and resorts to only two verses: *So, so, /water would speak in vain.*

³⁵ Angi, Șt. *op. cit.*, p. 299.

Considering the existence of a corresponding choral, but also that of a recapitulative relation compared to the first instrumental movement, the comparisons to which we subject the last bagatelle, will be consequently divided. The extension of the instrumental part by 37 measures, is almost identical to the one of the choral pieces (35 measures) and, what is more, in the instrumental version, too, we finally have a clear accord ending that offers a “tonic” sound sensation. On the other hand, considering the instrumental changes already described in the first bagatelle in relation to the original choral, the ending of the instrumental cycle can stand for a clearer comparison to the beginning of the string quartet piece, than to the ending of the choral cycle.

In this respect, the beginning of the final movement resembles measure 15 of the first bagatelle (only the first violin, the rest of the sound plans of the accompaniment proposing a different vertical overlap), but from measure 15 of the last bagatelle until measure 33 we see a faithful replica of measures 40-58 of the first part.

As we have already anticipated, the final cadence will be different from that of the first bagatelle and much closer to the cadence of the choral piece, in the sense of a major agreement on *B flat*, with a high ninth added, preceded by a kind of agreement altered by the "dominant seventh" (with the rising altered fifth, but also with enhanced tetrachord added), which can also be seen as a cut out of whole-tone scale system, but without the G sound.

E.g. 19

different cadence from bagatelle 1, similar to choral cadence

gliss. uguale e continuo

lontano, come eco

Vln. 1

altered seventh dominant chord with added fourth

Vln. 2

lontano, come eco

Vla.

gliss. uguale e continuo

lontano, come eco

Vc.

B flat major chord with added second

Adrian Pop – final cadence of the string quartet version

Now at the end of our analytical, comparative journey, we shall synthesize the main conclusions that emerge from our endeavour.

Hence the third, fourth and seventh bagatelle are close to the choral original, engaging only minimal changes in the instrumentalization process of the choral music. On the other hand, the other parts of the string quartet, namely bagatelles 1, 2, 5, 6, 8 are rewritten, with substantial modifications.

The minor transcription changes that we refer to above aim to reach the augmentation of the ambitus, transpositions to the higher octave, rearrangement of the instrumental voices, or changes to the accord distributions.

The substantial changes, on the other hand, resort to augmenting transitions, introductions and different musical sections, by adding new accompaniment formulas and new harmonies, the arrangement and addition of new sections, as well as the use of specific instrumental colours, applied to the existing or new materials.

The tonal suggestion provided by the presence of the armours in the case of bagatelles 1, 4, and 8, pleads only for the key existence of an enhanced tonal-modal sound centre (sanctioned by the final cadence of the last bagatelle), but in a generally heterogeneous and harmonic context, that is more current, which encompasses accords of fourths and fifths, accord with added sounds, accord engendered by the whole-tone scale and even *clusters*.

The instrumental and colour refinement of the eight bagatelles confirms their essential role in the creation of one of the most important contemporary composers of Cluj and Romania.

The depth, talent, and craft of composer Adrian Pop have gained not only the appreciation of the melomaniac public, of his Romanian peers, but also that of important contemporary composers, of whom we mention the one rife with relevance of György Kurtág, noted in writing on 20 September 2007, at his then home in Saint-André de Cubzac:

„My encounter with the music of Adrian Pop was a genuine discovery: I found it fresh and virtuosic, highly idiomatic, simple and at the same time sophisticated. It shows a mastery of the art of composition and impresses with the way it explores rarely charted regions of the soul. [...] In the light of all this, I am convinced that Adrian Pop is not only an outstanding composer but is equally as remarkable as a teacher of composition.”

Translated from Romanian by Adina Fodor

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