

# The Musical Foundations of Alfred Schutz's Hermeneutics of the Social World

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In 1956 a Baltimore newspaper published an article entitled “Mozart Authority to Lecture” announcing that Alfred Schutz was to give a lecture (“Mozart and the Philosophers”) in the North Hall of Peabody Conservatory.<sup>1</sup> To introduce the lecturer to the potential audience, the article presented the following concise statement:

His principal fields of endeavor are philosophical interpretations of the social world through language and the arts, especially music.

A search for the origin of this notable précis of Schutz's intentions as a philosopher of the social sciences in the Alfred Schutz archive at Beinecke Library leads to the correspondence between Schutz and Reginald Stewart, then director of the Peabody Conservatory and former conductor of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. Stewart had invited Schutz to present his Mozart paper in the renowned “Peabody Lectures” series.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Newspaper clipping [1956]. *Alfred Schutz Papers*, Beinecke Library, Yale. Series II/ Box 14/ Folder 271, p. 13019. Probably the article was published in the daily newspaper *The Baltimore Sun*. Even though “Mozart and the Philosophers” has received much less attention than “Making Music Together”, the author seems not to exaggerate when characterizing Alfred Schutz as a “Mozart authority”: Schutz's Mozart essay is listed in the catalogue of the world's most comprehensive library on Mozart, the Bibliotheca Mozartiana at Mozarteum in Salzburg, under the section “Philosophical Reflections”.

<sup>2</sup>The Ralph Waldo Emerson lectures “On Imagination and Poetry” 1872 and the “Igor Strawinsky Lectures” 1946 pertain to the eminent contributions to the “Peabody Lectures”. – Alfred Schutz's invited lecture probably resulted from his presentation of “Mozart and the Philosophers” at a meeting of the Musicological Association in New York in 1956. The first public presentation of the paper had taken place in spring 1956 in the General Seminar of the New School in New York. The philosopher Hans Jonas and the musicologist and initiator of musical iconography, Emanuel Winternitz were among the participants in the discussion that followed the presentation.

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Of course the above statement is not only relevant in terms of discussing Alfred Schutz's phenomenology in the context of hermeneutic traditions. The wording makes perfectly clear that Alfred Schutz's approach does not consist in analyzing music and music making from the perspective of and with the concepts of social theory. On the contrary, it is the "philosophical interpretation of the social world", the theoretical approach to the social, which is achieved *through* music. A first outline of some perspectives and implications of this very specific orientation is sketched in the present article.

In his famous paper "The Problem of Transcendental Intersubjectivity in Husserl" (1957) Alfred Schutz probed the limits of the transcendental approach with regard to the theoretical understanding of the genesis of social relationship and intersubjectivity, i.e. the genesis of the difference that separates *and* connects my life and the Other's life. In order to clarify the "immediacy of understanding by which the existence of the Other is apprehended in shared situations" (Schutz 1966: 55) Alfred Schutz in the above paper proposes an approach that is grounded in the phenomenological analysis of temporality, referring to the "question of the simultaneity of the ego with Others, of the common Now as a presupposition for differentiating a Here and a There" (ibid.: 88). In the discussion that followed the presentation of the paper at Royaumont, Schutz therefore stated: "The problem of simultaneity, taken not merely as a common Now in objective time but also as a community of two inner flows of time – [as a community of] 'durée' in Bergson's sense – seems to me to be of the greatest significance for the problem of intersubjectivity, and that not only in regard to transcendental but also to mundane intersubjectivity" (ibid.).

Evidently this line of thought pertains to the very core of Schutz's work. It goes back to the outstanding and lasting influence of Bergson's book *Durée et simultanéité. À propos de la théorie d'Einstein*, first published 1922, and to the corresponding debate between Bergson and Einstein.<sup>3</sup> A comparative reading of Schutz's annotations<sup>4</sup> and comments provided in his own copies of Bergson's works reveals the

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<sup>3</sup>See "Discussion avec Einstein" (Bergson 1972). Jimena Canales' article "Einstein, Bergson, and the Experiment That Failed: Intellectual Cooperation at the League of Nations" (Canales 2005) provides an outstanding historical reconstruction along with an evaluation of the Bergson-Einstein debate as an important milestone in the history of science. "Einstein claimed that no overlap existed between psychological conceptions and physical conceptions of time. He, therefore, did not see a role for philosophy in matters of time. Bergson gladly granted that psychological conceptions of time differed from physical ones. Knowledge of this, he bemoaned, was hardly new. Henri Pieron, an experimental psychologist, joined the debate by reminding listeners of the problem of the personal equation that arose in astronomical determinations of time: 'For a long time now, astronomers have known that it is impossible to base precise determinations of physical simultaneity on psychological simultaneity...' This example clearly illustrated the difference between psychological and physical conceptions of time. If the enormous speed of light had caused this realization to arrive slowly for physicists, the slow speed of nerve transmission had made it evident a long time ago for physiologists, psychologists, and astronomers. They had long known that perceptions of simultaneity differed from physical simultaneity. Legend had it that most scientists had learned this lesson as early as 1795. Relativity, in this respect, had only rediscovered what had already been known" (ibid.: 1176).

<sup>4</sup>The collection of Schutz's personal library and transcriptions of Schutz's annotations is held at Social Science Archive Konstanz and at Alfred Schutz Archive, Waseda University.

crucial relevance of *Durée et simultanéité*. Together with the concept “simultaneity”, the notions “synchronization” and “tension” gain essential importance for Schutz's phenomenology of the social world. Although all of these are concepts of Henri Bergson's philosophy, Schutz is far from a mere adaptation. Schutz is rethinking Bergson through the music-centered gaze.

The biographical background of such a unique approach has been characterized by Schutz's friend Emanuel Winternitz:

Even in his student days, his knowledge of the theory and history of music would have done honor to any musicologist. His interests and his tastes were catholic, and reached from Pachelbel and Heinrich Schutz to Alban Berg's 'Wozzeck'. He knew by heart J. S. Bach's Passions, most of his Cantatas and the Goldberg Variations; he was equally at home with Mozart's Masses and operas and the chamber music of Brahms [...]. He played the piano with little technique, but the form and emotional content were magically conjured up by his enthusiasm. We played four-hand music throughout all the years of our friendship [...]

We often discussed the experience provided by music, and analyzed the nature of flow, succession and time and their relation to Bergson's *durée*, and the musical structure as a model of the role and function of memory as creator of form and flux. Alfred Schutz's concern with the phenomenon of music deeply influenced his philosophy. It will be a task for his philosopher friends to explore this connection and to continue his work. (Winternitz 1971: 270–1)

The reinterpretation of Schutz's oeuvre as “philosophical interpretations of the social world through language and the arts, especially music”, explicitly proposed by Emanuel Winternitz, can be pursued via two complementary directions of analysis: First by exploring correlations between Schutz's theoretical positions, his own musical practice and musicological reflections and second by reconstructing the influences of the Nietzsche-Wagner and Bergson-Einstein debates on Alfred Schutz's thought, which can be traced throughout the *cantus firmus* of his oeuvre: the nexus of time, action, and the plurality of rationality.

The crucial “through” is adequately understood if music and literature are considered the source of *operative questions* and, with *counterpoint* being one example, *operative concepts* (cf. Fink 1957), as it is clearly revealed by Schutz himself in a letter to Aaron Gurwitsch on December 4, 1952:

A difference—and I hope not an opposition between us—lies in the fact that you take perception or mathematics as the point of departure and model in all of your works, whereas I like to think through phenomenological problems in terms of the states of affairs of music and of human action in the social sphere. In all of these spheres there are certain abstractions on a non-perceptual basis, though surely of the same type of sedimented inner horizons you describe and compare to Piaget's *schème*. I would like to suggest deriving formal logic from the laws of counterpoint, which are laws of sense [*Sinngesetze*] dependent on the tone material and its perception just as much, but no more, than the content of this letter on the sheet of paper covered with ink marks. (Schutz and Gurwitsch 1989: 193)

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Which theoretical aspects may have motivated Alfred Schutz to take “music matters” (“Sachverhalte der Musik”) as a starting point for the inquiry into philosophical and sociological questions? This undertaking was fuelled not by some marginal theoretical concerns, but by a question that touches the very foundation of the social sciences: “The problem which has to be investigated”, as outlined by Schutz in the

preliminary sketches to “Making Music Together”, “is the following one: Is the communicative process really at the origin of social relationship or is there a preceding layer”?<sup>5</sup> Music possesses the potential to provide access to this preceding layer, that is, to the pre- and extra-linguistic dimensions of meaning, together with and through the exploration of the temporal structures of experience and sociality.

In this context Schutz started from posing the question how the relationship between language and music can be adequately understood, probing the phenomenon of rhythm as potential anchorage. To this end he turned towards the Greek conception of *mousikē* and the works on rhythm by Aristotle’s student Aristoxenus, who had provoked an epistemological revolution by first claiming that specific musical qualities rather than numerical ratios are essential to music.

Rhythm also represents the conceptual hinge with regard to Schutz’s pivotal thesis: the principal relevance of temporal structures for genesis and understanding of social relationship. The focal temporal concepts in Schutz’s work – “simultaneity”, “tension”, and “synchronization” – are not adequately interpreted if regarded as mere adaptations of concepts of temporality from Bergson, Husserl and James. Rather these concepts epitomize the results of a dialogue nourished by phenomenological reflection on the experience of music from the standpoint of the practicing musician that is initiated and put forward by three cardinal issues:

1. The first issue arises when studying the temporality of experience in the context of analyzing the lived experience of polyphonic music. It can be titled the problem of the coherence of a multiplicity of distinct flows, that is: experienced multiplicity as “multiplicity of interpenetration” as opposed to “multiplicity of juxtaposition”.<sup>6</sup>
2. The second cardinal issue emerges when the inquiry into the coherence of multiple streams is transposed into the realm of intersubjectivity: The performance of chamber music tells us about the practical possibility to establish a mutually shared (or at least compatible) temporal articulation: synchronized tempo. How can synchronization of tempo be apprehended from the point of view of phenomenology, and how can this exploration contribute to the understanding of intersubjectivity and sociality?
3. Given that “music is a meaningful context” (Schutz 1964: 159) while at the same time it is self-evident that music does not have a predicative structure, how can we conceive of the constitutive hinge that screws together temporality and meaning in music ?

In what follows let us try to re-enact the phenomenological significance of these cardinal issues by way of an experimental phenomenological study.

Why does the context of ‘making music’, when it is the origin of phenomenological reflection upon musical experience, give rise to the first cardinal issue? The pianist, as part of his everyday working practice, finds himself confronted with

<sup>5</sup> *Alfred Schutz Papers*. Beinecke Library, Yale. Series I/ Box 6/ Folder 106, p. 3090.

<sup>6</sup> See John Durie’s introductory remarks in (Bergson 1999: vii).

the need to develop what is frequently called “the independence of the hands”, that is: to establish coherence of a multiplicity of distinct simultaneous streams in the realm of animate bodily movement. This particular requisite of piano playing, programmatically represented by Johann Sebastian Bach's *The Well-Tempered Piano* and *Goldberg Variations*, pertains to the specific features of keyed instruments, the history of which is closely linked to the idea and art of polyphony in the sense of multi-part music.

Although, in practice, the so-called “independence of the hands” – i.e. polyphonic bodily movement – is not just naturally given to the pianist as a matter of course, but presents a fundamental problem and continuous challenge. Consequently, the protocols of Alfred Schutz's daily piano practice, kept in his *Nachlass* at Beinecke Library, contain notes related to this problem: Schutz reports detailed procedures of the separate practice of left and right hand that precede the simultaneous activity of both hands: “Put parts together very slowly”,<sup>7</sup> he notes on his handwritten practicing schedule.

Thus the piano, through its physical and instrumental structure and typicalities of sound-production, provides access to the experience of polyphony as experience of the moving animate body. For Alfred Schutz ‘the pianist’, this experience formed the basis for his understanding of Bergson's concept of simultaneity.

From a point of view that is not centered in piano playing experience, which is probably the case for most readers, a reconstruction of the phenomenological significance conveyed through the exercise of developing “independence of the hands” is possible by way of an elementary experimental study. It is performed using the fundamental musical instrument, the faculty of auditory experience, while following Bergson's approach towards reflection upon the “nature of time” in *Duration and Simultaneity* (Bergson 1999: 30):

A melody to which we listen with our eyes closed, heeding it alone [...]

Note that Bergson uses the verb “to listen”, i.e. he refers to a type and style of auditory perceiving quite different from that represented by the verb “to hear”. When listening is performed “with your eyes closed” (ibid.: 34), chances are that one succeeds in giving heed alone to what is audibly presented. In this specific state of auditory attentiveness, following Bergson, “no longer juxtaposing on paper or an imaginary keyboard notes which you thus preserved one for the other, which then agreed to become simultaneous and renounced their fluid continuity in time to congeal in space” (ibid.: 34), the “melody to which we listen [...] comes close to coinciding with this time which is the very fluidity of our inner life” (ibid.: 30). Thus “you will rediscover, undivided and indivisible, the melody or portion of the melody” (ibid.: 34).

Although, following Bergson, we might succeed in giving heed to the melodic flow alone while listening with our eyes closed, the experience of music will only bring us “close” enough to allow for *durée* – “the very fluidity of our inner life”

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<sup>7</sup>*Alfred Schutz Papers*: Op. cit. I/14/271, p. 13021.

(*ibid.*: 30) – to be given as immediate lived experience (*anschauliche Erfahrung*), because:

we must first efface the difference among the sounds, then do away with the distinctive features of sound itself, retaining of it only the continuation of what precedes into what follows and the uninterrupted transition, multiplicity without divisibility and succession without separation, in order finally to rediscover basic time. Such is immediately perceived duration, without which we would have no idea of time. (Bergson 1999: 30)

Obviously, to put these didactic clues into praxis is not at all simple and straightforward. The requisite particular attitude towards which is audibly given is not easily established, even though listening with our eyes closed proves to be a valuable bodily measure to motivate an alteration of the state of auditory consciousness. To put it into an Husserlian context: The above exercise confronts us with the ‘I can’<sup>8</sup> as opposed to the ‘I cannot’:

In experience, the ‘I can’ is distinct from the ‘I cannot’ according to their phenomenological characters. There is a resistanceless doing of things, i.e., a consciousness of an ability that meets no resistance, and there is a doing as an overcoming of resistance, a doing that has its ‘against which,’ and a corresponding consciousness of an ability to overcome the resistance. (Husserl 1989: 270)

Now in order for a musical experiment to allow us access to the experience of multiplicity as “multiplicity of interpenetration”, polyphonic music has to be chosen for the experiment, ideally, the most elementary form of polyphony, diaphonia. Any two-part music, provided there is sufficient difference between the two voices and the overall complexity is adequately limited, may serve, be it a traditional song like “Sur le Pont d’Avignon” or the recording of a suitable work of music. Regarding the latter, the two duets for violin and viola by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (G major, KV423 and B flat major, KV424), particularly the second and third movement from KV423 in G major (Adagio and Rondo) can be recommended as a highly appropriate reference for the performance of the Bergsonian experiment described below. As many recordings of these famous duets have been published, it might also be useful to point towards an acclaimed recording, which also includes an institutional link to Alfred Schutz: the performance by violist and Peabody Conservatory alumna Kim Kashkashian and violinist Gidon Kremer, published by Deutsche Grammophon.<sup>9</sup> Another impressive performance (1990) of the duo G major KV423 by Oleg Kagan (violin) and Yuri Bashmet (viola) has been preserved by an amateur video-recording; a part of this recording – the third movement (Rondo) – is available online.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>In the context of Husserl’s phenomenological analysis of subjectivity, the notion “I can” attains focal relevance. As Alfred Schutz has pointed out in his review of “Edmund Husserl’s Ideas, Volume II”: “The I as a unity is a system of faculties of the form ‘I can’” (Schutz 1966: 32).

<sup>9</sup>*Mozart. Chamber Works.* Gidon Kremer (vin); Kim Kashkashian (via); Valery Afanassiev (pno). Deutsche Grammophon, DG digital, (October 25, 1990). Quick access to this recording is possible via Apple’s iTunes music platform.

<sup>10</sup><http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ytKuPDLXImA>

When performing the musical experiment, a sequence of different stages should be followed: First, let us listen to the recording just like we are used to listen to music in our daily life. In the second stage, take up the perspective of either one of the two instruments, as if you were one of the two musicians, by continuously paying heed to one of the two parts, i.e. persistently tracking its flux without digression. Please try to commit to memory the specific motion related qualities that characterize the part selected, the different temporal qualities and dynamics exhibited, and how these differences become manifest on the musical level as a specific musical *Gestalt* that differs from its counterpart. Note that the characteristic musical meaning of either consistent *Gestalt* is revealed by its memorability, which becomes evident in the course of reiterated practicing of the second stage exercise. At this point, we also note that it makes a lot of sense to limit our study to a limited excerpt of the Adagio. The first 50 s of the Adagio that encompass two distinguishable parts (around 30" and 20" respectively) do serve very well for the performance of this study.

As a result, the first two stages of the experiment reveal that what has presented itself as a unity in 'naïve' listening is given as *two* different meaningful processes in stage two. Here, the two flows differ with regard to musical meaning (both processes appear as musically meaningful, but not in identical ways) as well as with regard to the dynamics of the musical movement and the corresponding temporal qualities; both parts are being experienced "as movement", but as movement differing in terms of dynamics, mode and *Gestalt*.

With respect to the *modi operandi*, listening to music as we typically do in everyday life is characterized by the focal role of resonance: listening in *resonating mode*. By contrast, when listening to music while persistently paying attention to one part without digression, the '*I am doing*' becomes the focus of attention along with its two correlative dimensions '*es zeigt sich*' and '*ich erlebe mich*', with the respective temporal horizons and directions of description (*Beschreibungsrichtungen*). In particular, the '*I am striving to intentionally direct my listening towards*' turns to be a focal moment of experience, since, due to the continuous co-presence of the entire musical flux, the auditory perceiving activity needs to be equipped with a strong analytical intention especially when paying attention to the lower voice, i.e. the viola. The described analytical mode of listening thus can be termed *intentional mode*.

Let us now proceed to the final stage of the experimental study: Try to deliberately alternate between the modes of listening – *resonating mode* and *intentional mode* – while explicitly deciding *ad libitum* when to change between the two.

As a result of this exercise, the two flows – in our example the parts of violin and viola respectively – are given to me as a single flux, if I decide to listen in resonating mode, or as two discrete separated flows, if I persistently attend to one part without digressing in intentional mode. Finally, a third mode of listening comes into play: listening in *co-performing mode*. A performer's perspective certainly is centered in the respective part performed, at the same time being immersed in the flux of music *and* directed towards the approaching that comes down towards him in a "retrograde movement *in futuro*" (Merleau-Ponty 2001: 18). Although – at one and the same time – the performers are required to be directed towards the ongoing flux of music as a unity, i.e. to "divide their attention without cutting it in two"

(Bergson 1999: 35), if not to let the performance of a duo result in two solos, i.e. discrete monologues.

At this point let us again take a fresh look at *Durée et Simultanéité*, focusing on a passage that Alfred Schutz quotes in “Scheler’s Theory of Intersubjectivity and the General Thesis of the Alter Ego” preceded by the following statement: “We use the term ‘simultaneity’ in the same precise sense as Bergson in his book, *Durée et Simultanéité*. A propos de la théorie d’Einstein, Paris, 1923, p. 66” (Schutz 1962: 173)<sup>11</sup>:

I call two flows ‘contemporaneous’ when they are equally one or two for my consciousness, the latter perceiving them together as a single flowing if it sees fit to engage in an undivided act of attention, and, on the other hand, separating them throughout if it prefers to divide its attention between them, even doing both at one and the same time if it decides to divide its attention and yet not cut it in two. (Bergson 1999: 35)

Clearly, this passage not only explicates Bergson’s concept of simultaneity with regard to the coherence of a multiplicity of distinct flows, but also contains in nuce the essence of the above experimental phenomenological study performed via listening to music “with our eyes closed”. As a consequence, the musical notions *polyphony* and *counterpoint* as conceived from a phenomenological point of view are presented as implications of Bergson’s idea of simultaneity, which brings to light their powerful significance as operative concepts that fuel Alfred Schutz’s theoretical approach.

The problem of simultaneity, taken not merely as a common Now in objective time but also as a community of two inner flows of time . . . seems to me to be of the greatest significance for the problem of intersubjectivity, and that not only in regard to transcendental but also to mundane intersubjectivity. (Schutz 1966: 88)

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When the problem of the *coherence* of a multiplicity of distinct flows is transposed into the thematic field of intersubjectivity, the second cardinal issue brought forth by phenomenological analyses of the intertwining of temporality and sociality becomes evident: synchronization of time-as-experienced (*temps durée*).

As a matter of fact, synchronization of time-as-experienced is possible. This is revealed by practices that form part of everyday life, like “dancing”, “making love” und “making music together”, to quote three of Alfred Schutz’s favorite examples. Although, everyday practice also reveals that synchronization is not entirely naturally given, but rather has to be established and maintained. This not only implies the possibility of failure, but implies further that it is anything but a matter of course that an established harmony of perfect synchronization is attained.

In order to evaluate whether in the context of “philosophical interpretations of the social world” the phenomenon of synchronized *temps durée* might open up

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<sup>11</sup> Alfred Schutz quotes his own English translation of the referenced passage on page 66 of his copy of *Durée et Simultanéité*. As far as the archived holdings of his personal library reveal, Schutz did not possess a copy of Leon Jacobson’s English translation first published in 1922 and reprinted as part of the edition prepared by Robin Durie (1999), which is referenced in the present paper.



productive theoretical insights let us again refer to the 'making music together' of a small chamber ensemble playing without director, e.g. a string quartet, which provides an excellent exemplary situation for analyzing the problem of synchronization.

To start simultaneously and in a common tempo pertains to the elementary as well as demanding requirements of ensemble performance, and it is almost equally difficult to maintain a common, perhaps commonly modified tempo throughout the whole piece of music.

The synchronization of tempo is neither established nor maintained automatically with the flux of music. At the same time, arranging the attunement of tempo in the form of a *consensus* or a planned *project of action* is impossible. Moreover, the movements and gestures of the musicians cannot provide the foundation of synchronization. The cue of the primarius only presents a single temporal pulsation in spatial form, which consequently can only approximately indicate the definite tempo that is to be played *in futuro*. And finally, every attempt to react in response to a communicative action embedded in the flux of music results in breaking the synchronization of tempo, as the reaction always comes "too late" (as musicians use to say).

Rather, the foundation and precondition for establishing a common tempo has to be specified as a common level of *bodily attention*, rooted in and expressed through the animate body via the correlative *tension* of the flesh. The intensity of this "tension of consciousness" determines the density of the temporal intervals that function as the meter according to which the ongoing flux is structured and experienced as a succession of "steps". With regard to the metrics of temporal structuring, the phenomenological study of making music together also corresponds to Bergson's philosophy of temporality. Let us have a look at the following passage in *Matière et mémoire. Essai sur la relation du corps à l'esprit*:

The duration lived by our consciousness is a duration with its own determined rhythm [...], which can store up, in a given interval, as great a number of phenomena as we please. (Bergson 1911: 272)

When employing the concept of tension in the context of analyses of temporality, the history of philosophy invites us to go back to Augustine of Hippo, who used several derivations of *tendere* und *tensio*, particularly in his reflections on time and time consciousness. Baumgarten adverts to the psychological concept of tension when discussing the foundations of the *impetus aestheticus*. Finally, in the field of musicology the works of Ernst Kurth have to be mentioned, where tension is analyzed as constitutive with regard to music as experience as well as to music as form of art.

The famous Schutzian notion *Tuning-In Relationship* (Schutz and Luckmann 1989: 229) is a result of reflecting upon the experience of making music together, while Bergson's thought on time and time consciousness provided guidance in the sense of a *fil conducteur*. *Tuning-In* is set in motion by the mutual intentional orientation towards the establishment of a shared level of tension of the flesh founded upon a correlative intensity of bodily attention, thus giving way to the possibility of sharing the 'rhythm of *durée*'.

In Alfred Schutz's thought the idea of a *Tuning-In Relationship* (also: *Einstellungsbeziehung*), after 1955, acquired an outstanding position as the constitutive origin of the "We". While working on the drafts of "Making Music Together" (probably written 1951/52) Schutz still declared with regard to the foundational relevance of *Tuning-In*: "The problem which has to be investigated is the following one: Is the communicative process really at the origin of social relationship or is there a preceding layer?"<sup>12</sup>; in the "Seelisberger Notizbuch" (1958) the *Tuning-In Relationship* is definitely understood as the foundation of sociality, as it "must precede the establishment of all social relationships, including language" (Schutz and Luckmann 1989: 226).

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After the exploration of the first two cardinal issues has been dedicated to a discussion of aspects of the interrelatedness of temporality and sociality through the phenomenological analysis of musical experience, what does music tell philosophy about pre-predicative, pre-linguistic constitution of meaning (*Sinn*), given that "music is a meaningful context" (Schutz 1964: 159) that does not have a predicative structure?

How the aspect of meaning and the aspect of temporality are screwed together becomes understandable if we refer, like Schutz repeatedly did, to Husserl's distinction of "two different modes in which the sense of past experiences can be 'grasped'" (Schutz and Luckmann 1973: 53). Husserl first introduced the distinction between polythetic and monothetic modes in volume 1 of *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology* in 1913 and took the topic up again 1938 in *Experience and Judgement*. In this work, Husserl analyzes experience as becoming originarily constituted step by step, resulting in a polythetic unity:

In streaming forth in a linear continuity, the act of contemplation would become a simple fixed view if it did not disengage itself and pass over into a chain of individual apprehensions, of individual acts, in a discrete succession of separate steps which, bound internally to one another, form a polythetic unity of the individual theses. (Husserl 1973: 112)

Now, many cases allow for a transformation of such a discrete succession of separate steps into a "one-rayed" object, which can be "grasped" monothetically. "Every such many-rayed (polythetic) constitution of synthetic objectivities – which are essentially such that "originally" we can be aware of them only synthetically – possesses the essential law-conforming possibility of transforming the many-rayed object of awareness into one that is simply one-rayed, of "rendering objective" in the specific sense and in a monothetic act what is synthetically constituted in the many-rayed object" (Husserl 1931: 336).

But, Schutz holds, the transformation of a "many-rayed" into a "one-rayed" unity of experience is impossible in the case "of those experiences whose meaning is essentially contained in the polythetic structure of its elements, that is, experiences of so-called temporal Objects." Therefore, if I want to attempt to grasp the meaning of the experience of a temporal object in retrospect, I must "reflectively realize the polythetic building up of this experience" (Schutz and Luckmann 1973: 53).

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<sup>12</sup>Alfred Schutz Papers: Op. cit. I/6/106, p. 3090.

Indeed, music in many ways is essentially and indispensably dependent on the “discrete succession of separate steps, which, bound internally to one another, form a polythetic unity of the individual theses”. “When it concerns the meaning of a musical theme [...] I must carry out polythetically, [...] what has been built up polythetically. [...] In order to grasp the sense of a composition, I must reproduce it, at least internally, from the beginning to the last measure” (ibid.: 54).

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Correlating with its exclusively polythetic organization, music lacks a conceptual or semantic scheme of reference. But although it is self-evident that music does not have a predicative structure, it is equally self-evident that “music is a meaningful context” (Schutz 1964: 159), as Alfred Schutz concisely states in “Making Music Together.”

As a temporal context whose meaning is given as non-predicative meaning, music confronts musicians, composers, critics and listeners with the problem of interpretation. The musician has to deal with this problem as he is required to model the relationship between the musical work and its concretion; critics and journalists attempt to reconstruct and evaluate this relationship; the composer – frequently faced with what appears to him as a failure to understand – finds himself more or less helpless in the face of what musicians and critics are doing; and finally the recipients, in the course of conversations about music frequently encounter difficulties in communicating about what has been an evident and meaningful lived musical experience to them.

Evidently, interpretation poses problems in music. After what has been said before about the pre- or non-predicative structure of music, these problems are no surprise. “Music as a meaningful context” confronts us with the task of a hermeneutics of pre-predicative and extra-linguistic dimensions of meaning. This at least is a challenge, if not an imposition, a “borderline experience of western thought”, as Thomas Schieche has put it in the title of his monograph on musical hermeneutics (Schieche 1998).

Alfred Schutz's essay “Mozart and the Philosophers” is dedicated to sound precisely this difficult scenario. To this end, Schutz takes a playful journey through some relevant chapters of the history of philosophy, with Schopenhauer's thought on music as point of departure starting right with the essay's title. By drawing the connection between “Mozart” and “the philosophers” Schutz alludes to Schopenhauer's variations on Leibniz' famous dictum on music as hidden arithmetical activity of the soul not aware that it is calculating: “*Musica est exercitium arithmeticae occultum nescientis se numerare animi*” (ibid.: 331). Schopenhauer, in *The World as Will and Idea*, replaces arithmetic with metaphysics:

Consequently the saying of Leibniz quoted above, which is quite accurate from a lower standpoint, may be parodied in the following way to suit our higher view of music: *Musica est exercitium metaphysices occultum nescientis se philosophari animi* (ibid.: 342).

Alfred Schutz continues Schopenhauer's parodying play on words when in the essay's introduction he announces: “I shall close with a consideration of the purely musical means by which Mozart solved the problems of the philosophers in his own

way, thereby proving himself to be the greatest philosopher of them all” (Schutz 1966: 179). Finalizing the parody at the end of the essay, Schutz draws the conclusion: “If Schopenhauer is right, and I believe he is, then Mozart was one of the greatest philosophical minds that ever lived” (ibid.: 199).

In *The World as Will and Idea* the problem of interpreting musical *Sinn* as a problem of a hermeneutics of the pre-predicative and extra-linguistic dimensions of meaning is addressed, in Schopenhauer’s philosophical language, by the following passage:

For, as we have said, music is distinguished from all the other arts by the fact that it is not a copy of the phenomenon, or, more accurately, the adequate objectivity of will, but is the direct copy of the will itself, and therefore exhibits itself as the meta-physical to everything physical in the world, and as the thing-in-itself to every phenomenon. We might, therefore, just as well call the world embodied music as embodied will ; and this is the reason why music makes every picture, and indeed every scene of real life and of the world, at once appear with higher significance, certainly all the more in proportion as its melody is analogous to the inner spirit of the given phenomenon. It rests upon this that we are able to set a poem to music as a song, or a perceptible representation as a pantomime, or both as an opera. (Schopenhauer 1910: 339–40)

Written against the background of Schopenhauer’s, Dilthey’s and Kierkegaard’s works, “Mozart and the Philosophers” takes up questions Schutz had been engaged with since the time of writing his first manuscripts between 1919 and 1925: Bergson’s critical attitude towards language, Nietzsche’s questioning of the primacy of the word and the controversy between Nietzsche and Wagner are co-present through the whole discussion. Interpreted against this background and read along with Schutz’s works on sign and symbol, “Mozart and the Philosophers” reveals its relevance with regard to a Schutzian genealogy of meaning, inviting further exploration into how Nietzsche’s thoughts on music and the musical dimensions of language have migrated into the sociology of knowledge (cf. Berger and Luckmann 1967:17) via the Schutzian analysis of “communication in the life-world” (Schutz and Luckmann 1989: 148ff.). It is also in the context of these late manuscripts, eventually published by Thomas Luckmann as *The Structures of the Life-World* (Schutz and Luckmann 1989), that Alfred Schutz conceives the *Tuning-In Relationship* – the mutual intentional orientation towards the establishment of a reciprocal level of attentive tension of the flesh that gives way to “a growing older together” through the shared ‘rhythm of *durée*’ – as foundation of sociality that “must precede the establishment of all social relationships, including language” (Schutz and Luckmann 1989: 226).

Following this line of thought, we find evidence of the constitutive interrelatedness between the temporal constitution of sociality and the temporal constitution of meaning, which explains why, in “Mozart and the Philosophers”, Schutz advances the thesis that the topic of Mozart’s music “is the metaphysical mystery of the existence of a human universe of pure sociality”. Thus, the Mozart essay reveals its relevance not as an essay in musicology or philosophy of music, but as an etude in “philosophical interpretations of the social world” through music:

I submit that Mozart’s main topic is not, as Cohen believed, love. It is the metaphysical mystery of the existence of a human universe of pure sociality, the exploration of the

manifold forms in which man meets his fellow-man and acquires knowledge of him. The encounter of man with man within the human world is Mozart's main concern. (Schutz 1964: 199)

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