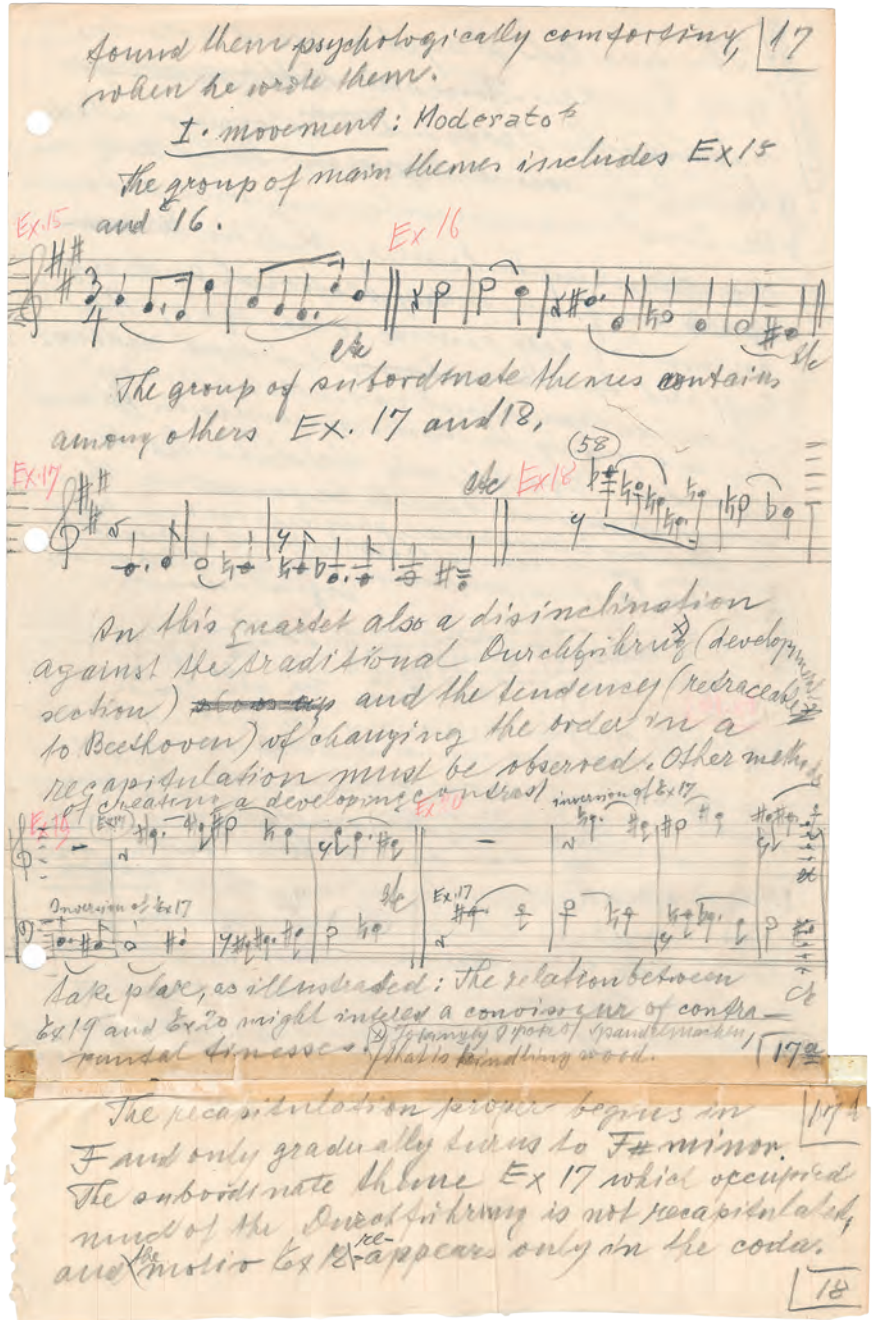


Arnold Schönberg: Analysis (in the form of program notes) of the Four String Quartets (1950)
(Arnold Schönberg Center, Wien [T70.03])

Fusako Hamao

Arnold Schönberg's Disinclination Against the Traditional Durchführung

The Second Movement from the *Second String Quartet*, op. 10

Arnold Schönberg's *Second String Quartet* in F-sharp minor, op. 10, was composed between 1907 and 1908, during his transitional period from tonal to atonal music. Schönberg later explained in his program notes:

> *In this quartet also a disinclination against the traditional Durchführung (development section – Jokingly I spoke of "Spandelmachen," that is kindling wood) and the tendency (retraceable to Beethoven) of changing the order in a recapitulation must be observed.*[1]

"Spandel" or "Spandeln" means "Holzspan (wood chip, splint)" in Austrian dialect.[2] Here arise the following questions. What did Schönberg mean by Spandelmachen? Which direction did he seek due to the disinclination against the traditional technique? To answer these questions, this study examines: 1) Schönberg's writings and teaching materials to identify the technique of Spandelmachen, and 2) his sketches and drafts for the *Second String Quartet* to see how Schönberg started to move away from traditional technique to find a new method of constructing a development section. This study focuses on the second movement, Scherzo in D minor, because its source material reveals extensive revisions which cannot be found in the sketches for the rest of the work.[3]

1 Arnold Schönberg: Analysis (in the form of program notes) of the Four String Quartets (1950) (Arnold Schönberg Center, Wien [T70.02] | ASSV 5.2.1.10.) (1950); published as idem: Notes on the Four String Quartets in *Schoenberg, Berg, Webern: Die Streichquartette. Eine Dokumentation*. Edited by Ursula von Rauchhaupt. München, Hamburg 1971, 35–65; and as idem: 7.3. Program Notes for the Juilliard String Quartet Performance of the Four String Quartets, end of December 1949 or early January 1950, in *Schoenberg's Program Notes and Musical Analyses*. Edited by J. Daniel Jenkins (New York 2016), 354–396, 364–365 (Schoenberg in Words 5).

2 Hartmut Krones: Wienerisches und Sprachschöpferisches in den Schriften Arnold Schönbergs, in *Arnold Schönberg in seinen Schriften. Verzeichnis, Fragen, Editorisches*. Edited by Hartmut Krones (Wien, Köln, Weimar 2011), 59–77, 72–73 (Schriften des Wissenschaftszentrums Arnold Schönberg 3).

3 See fn. 15 for the information on the source documents.

Schönberg's reference to Spandelmachen appears in his Gedanke manuscript, dated between 1934 and 1936.[4] In the section titled "Durchführungsteil," Schönberg described that the development section maintains the following devices from earlier compositional forms such as the fugue: *"1) Das Modulieren | 2) Die strettaartige (Engführungsartige) Verkleinerung der Abstände in welchen die Themen einsetzen (Spandeln machen) | 3. die excentrische Tendenz."* [1) modulation, 2) stretto-like reduction of the distances between entrances of themes, 3) eccentric tendency.] He continued that

> *Je mehr sich die moderne Musik von gewissen "altmodischen" Kunstgriffen entfernte,* [...] *je unnötiger einem geübten modernen Auffassungsvermögen die in den Sequenzen und dem Spandelnmachen sich zeigenden unvariierten (oder wenigstens nicht weiterentwickelnden Variationen) Wiederholungen erscheinen – desto mehr war eine moderne Technik genötigt* [...] *für die excentrische Anlage einer Durchführung neue Methoden zu finden.*[5]
>
> [the more modern music has distanced itself from certain "old-fashioned" devices, [...] the more a trained, modern faculty of perception has found unnecessary the unvaried repetitions (or at least variations having no further development) that occur in sequences and Spandelnmachen – so much more was needed a modern technique [...] that could find new methods for the eccentric plan of a development.]

According to Schönberg, Spandelmachen indicates the reduction of the distances between entrances of themes like stretto (Engführung)[6], and creates unvaried repetitions – or variations having no further development – like sequence. However, stretto means overlapping of a statement and any stretto must exhibit unvaried repetitive sequences. Then, why did he not simply use the word "stretto" instead of Spandelmachen?[7]

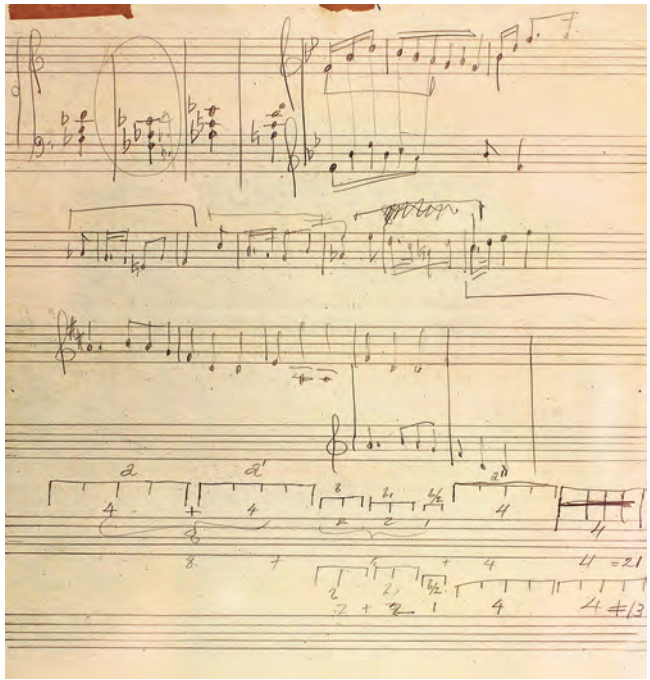
Although we cannot find Schönberg's reference to Spandelmachen in his writings any further, one of his teaching materials, employed after his retirement from UCLA in 1944, may help to identify the technique. When Schönberg taught students at his home in Brentwood, California, he usually placed a

4 Arnold Schönberg: *Der musikalische Gedanke und die Logik, Technik und Kunst seiner Darstellung* (1934/1936) (Arnold Schönberg Center, Wien [T65.03] | ASSV 2.3.5.i.); published and translated as idem: *The Musical Idea and the Logic, Technique, and Art of Its Presentation*. Edited by Patricia Carpenter and Severine Neff (New York 1995). German critical edition: idem: *Der musikalische Gedanke*. Edited by Hartmut Krones (Wien 2018) (Sämtliche Schriften. Kritische Gesamtausgabe. Abteilung II. Lehrwerke. Band 6. Fragment gebliebene Lehrwerke I).

5 Arnold Schönberg: *Der musikalische Gedanke*, 54. Arnold Schönberg: *The Musical Idea*, 48 and 119 (manuscript). Translation 271 (modified), ibidem.

6 Engführung means "thematic imitation at a short time interval, done in such a way that the statements of the theme overlap. In fugue or other contrapuntal forms it is called Stretto." See "Engführung," Grove Music Online (Accessed 07.08.2020).

7 Patricia Carpenter and Severine Neff translated this word as "strettos" in their English translation of the above phrase: *"the more a trained, modern faculty of apprehension has found unnecessary the unvaried repetitions* [...] *that occur in sequences and strettos* [Spandelnmachen] [...]," see fn. 4, 271.

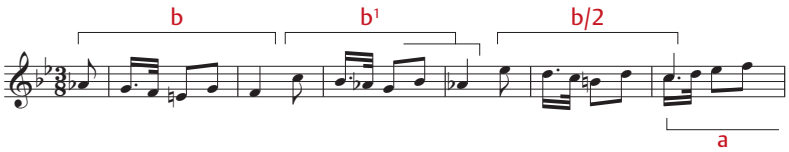


Example 1: Schönberg's analysis of Ludwig van Beethoven: *String Quartet*, op. 59/1, 2nd Movement, *Allegretto vivace e sempre scherzando* (Arnold Schönberg Center, Wien [Teaching Materials 2.16v | ASCI TM4717])

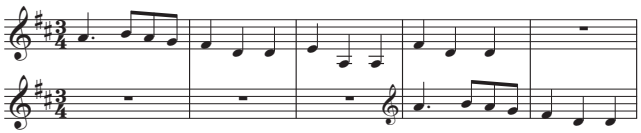
large sheet of paper with handwritten staves on easel stand and used it as the whiteboard. Among such teaching materials, we find a sheet, reproduced in Example 1, which illustrates his analysis of Ludwig van Beethoven's *String Quartet,* op. 59, No. 1, one of his three Rasumovsky quartets.[8] On the third staff, Schönberg wrote a phrase from the second movement, *Allegretto vivace e sempre scherzando*, mm. 123–128. Just below this phrase, Schönberg wrote the first four measures of "O, du lieber Augustin," a Viennese folksong, and imitated it before it ends. After the folksong, Schönberg returned to the analysis of the second movement, and wrote a diagram for mm. 115–148, in which motivic segments are identified by **a** and **b**, and the length of each segment is represented by its number of measures.

The phrase written on the third staff, transcribed in Example 2, is a continuation of the secondary theme that starts at m. 115. Schönberg wrote three brackets above this melody and one half-bracket under it. In the diagram, these segments are labeled **b**, **b**^{1}, **b/2**, and **a**. Segment **b** is a two-measure fragment

8 Arnold Schönberg Center, Wien (Teaching Materials 2.16v | ASCI TM4717).



Example 2: Ludwig van Beethoven: *String Quartet*, op. 59/1, 2nd Movement, secondary theme, mm. 123–128. Transcription (adapted) of TM4717, staff 3, see Example 1. Schönberg's label for each segment added with red letters according to the diagram on the same sheet



Example 3: "O, du lieber Augustin." Transcription (adapted) of TM4717, staves 4 and 5, see Example 1

in F minor, and **b¹** is a sequence of **b**, transposed to A-flat major. Segment **b/2** is also a sequence of **b**, transposed to C minor, but is shortened by the overlapping entry of the previously introduced theme **a** (mm. 115–122) at m. 128. His label for the third segment, **b/2**, indicates that the length of segment **b** is halved.

As transcribed in Example 3, Schönberg wrote an example of stretto on the next two staves. Since the first four measures of "O, du lieber Augustin" are imitated after three measures in the same register without transposition, these two voices sound like a repetition of the three-measure phrase. In this sense, the four-measure phrase is shortened to a three-measure phrase, just as segment **b¹** is reduced to **b/2** in Example 2. Although it is not known whether he actually used the word "Spandelmachen" in the above lecture or not, from "making kindling wood," we can intuitively imagine the process of splitting off a piece of wood. The species of the wood is unchanged regardless of the size. For example, if a piece of cedar is used, the kindling wood is still cedar. This term probably describes the process in which a theme is shortened by deleting a part of the theme and is repeated or transposed without a major variation. Returning to the question raised earlier – why did Schönberg not use the word stretto instead of Spandelmachen – we may be able to say that, by Spandelmachen, he probably did not mean stretto per se, but the reduction of the length of a segment, which could occur in stretto, as seen in Example 3, but is not necessarily related to it, since such reduction could also occur in a single voice successively, as in Example 2.

In his Gedanke manuscript quoted earlier, Schönberg also described "the eccentric tendency" as one of the devices of creating a development section from earlier compositional forms. In the same manuscript, he stated that the

eccentric tendency can be achieved by "dissolution, liquidation."[9] In *Fundamentals of Musical Composition,* Schönberg explained,

> *Liquidation consists in gradually eliminating characteristic features, until only uncharacteristic ones remain, which no longer demand a continuation. Often only residues remain, which have little in common with the basic motive.* [...] *The liquidation is generally supported by a shortening of the phrases.*[10]

While the character of a phrase or theme changes in liquidation, it remains unchanged or slightly changed in Spandelmachen. However, they are similar in terms of size. Since both techniques involve the shortening of themes and melodies, Schönberg's disinclination against the traditional Durchführung may indicate his preference to avoid the use of unchanged fragments of themes and motives to create a modulatory section.

Explaining the musical form of the middle section (elaboration) of Scherzo in *Models for Beginners in Composition*, Schönberg described that the process of liquidation *"is done gradually, by at first omitting subordinate features and reducing the four measures to two (mostly followed here by a sequence). The liquidation thereafter reduces the model to one measure and even smaller units."*[11] In his musical example, Schönberg indicated the initial stage of the process as reduction, and the later stage as liquidation.[12] In *Fundamentals of Musical Composition,* Schönberg also stated that *"reduction may be accomplished by merely omitting a part of the model,"*[13] and regarded it as a part of liquidation.[14] Since there is no further way to prove the definition of Spandelmachen, let us assume that it refers to a reduction of a phrase by eliminating a part of it, a simplified form of liquidation. When it is difficult to differentiate Spandelmachen from liquidation, as the former may involve a variation of the original phrase like the latter, such technique is noted as Spandelmachen/liquidation.

Schönberg's sketches and drafts for his *Second String Quartet,* op. 10 appear in his sketchbook, dated between 1906 and 1916.[15] Example 4 is a transcription

9 Arnold Schönberg: *The Musical Idea*, 33 (manuscript, see fn. 4). Schönberg stated that *"If* [...] *the tendency of the stably formed is concentric, that of dissolution is eccentric."* Translation ibidem, 252–253.

10 Arnold Schönberg: *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*. Edited by Gerald Strang, with the collaboration of Leonard Stein (London 1967), 58.

11 Arnold Schönberg: *Models for Beginners in Composition: Syllabus, Music Examples, and Glossary*. Revised edition with corrections. Edited by Leonard Stein (Los Angeles 1972), 11.

12 Ibidem, Example 249, 49.

13 Arnold Schönberg: *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*, see fn. 10, 59, footnote 1.

14 For example, Schönberg described the modulatory section of the third movement of Beethoven's *Symphony No. 4*, op. 60, that a four-measure pattern is "*liquidated by reduction to two measures*." Ibidem, 154.

15 This sketchbook is known as Sketchbook III (Arnold Schönberg Center, Wien [MS 77]) in Josef Rufer: *The Works of Arnold Schoenberg: A Catalogue of His Compositions, Writings & Paintings* (London 1962), 126; SK06-16 in Jan Maegaard: *Studien zur Entwicklung des dodekaphonen Satzes bei Arnold Schönberg* (Copenhagen 1972), Vol. 1, 21. Sketches and drafts, found between pages 56 (MS 77, Sk234) and 115 (MS 77, Sk298) of this sketchbook, are transcribed in Arnold Schönberg: *Streichquartette I. Kritischer Bericht, Skizzen Fragmente*. Edited by Christian Martin Schmidt (Mainz, Wien 1986), 177–192 (Sämtliche Werke. Abteilung VI: Kammermusik. Reihe B, Band 20).

of a section that became the beginning of the development section in the final version, extracted from an early draft for the Scherzo.[16] The Scherzo theme in the upper two voices is accompanied by countermelody in the lower two voices in the first two measures. In the succeeding three measures, a transitional passage is made by the Spandelmachen/liquidation of these melodies: as indicated by red arrows, the last half of the Scherzo theme is repeated at the beginning of the passage with some modification, and then, its last half is repeated. Similarly, as indicated by green arrows, the last half of the countermelody is repeated at the beginning of the passage. In the final version at mm. 20–21, the transitional passage was deleted entirely. As shown in this example, Schönberg's early drafts of the Scherzo include transitional passages, made from fragments of themes and melodies, which are omitted in the final version. Such omission suggests that the juxtaposition technique (in which materials are placed next to each other without a connective passage) observed in this quartet was not necessarily present in the early stage of the composition.[17]

The Trio was drafted without major changes except for the change of meter: it was originally written in the composite meter of 2/4 and 3/8 – equivalent to 7/8.[18] Schönberg later recalled that *"a figure of seven notes* [...] *came to mind. I used it as 4 3 because I feared to be called a revolutionary. I consider myself a conservative."*[19] This seven-note figure is repeatedly transposed, and functions as the countermelody to the theme in the lower register. This passage is interrupted by a chordal phrase, as shown in Example 5. This pattern – the Trio theme with the seven-note figures followed by a chordal part – is repeated as a sequence in the first section of the Trio in the final version (mm. 98–122). At the beginning of the development section (mm. 123–150, shown in Example 6), the seven-note figure and its transposition, played by the first violin, are imitated by the second violin, and is transposed down perfect forth by the cello. This figure is indicated by a green bracket. Each figure is followed by a scale-like passage, shown by a broken green bracket. This is combined with the inversion of the seven-note figure followed by its transposition, shown by a purple bracket. In Schönberg's program notes quoted earlier, he continued to write that "*methods of creating a developing contrast* [other than Spandelmachen] *take place, as illustrated*," and cited two phrases from the development section of the first movement.[20] As shown in Example 7a and 7b, the entire secondary

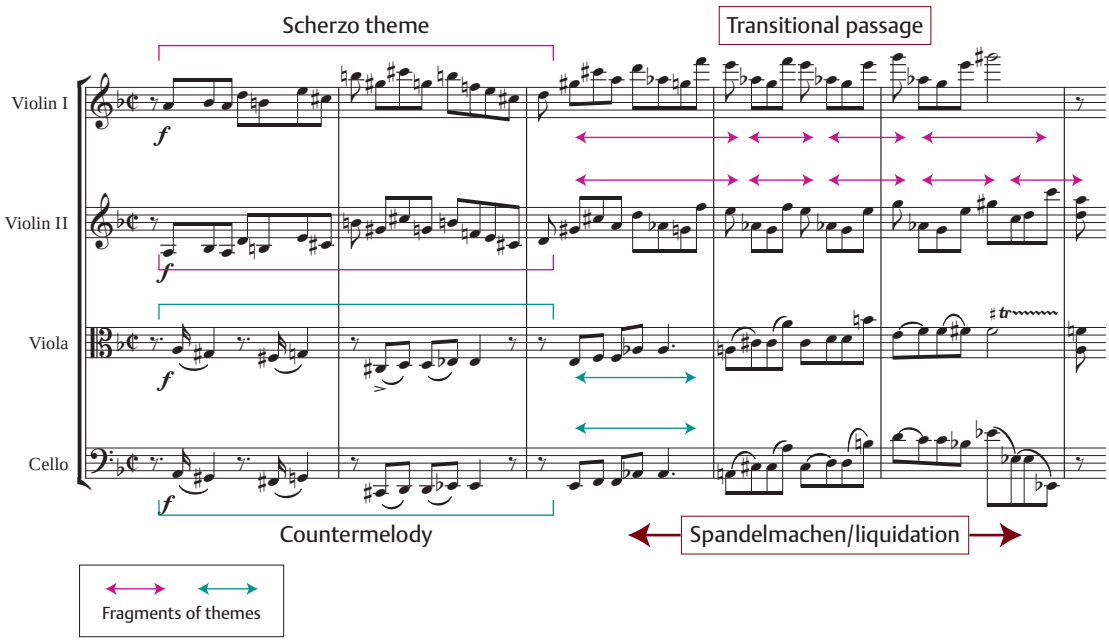
16 Sketchbook III, 93 (Sk271). Transcribed in Arnold Schönberg: *Streichquartette I*, see fn. 15, 180–181. The entire draft was crossed out.

17 Arnold Schoenberg: *The Second String Quartet in F-Sharp minor, Opus 10. Authoritative Score, Background and Analysis, Commentary.* Edited by Severine Neff (New York 2005), 141–146. Neff discussed Schönberg's technique of juxtaposition.

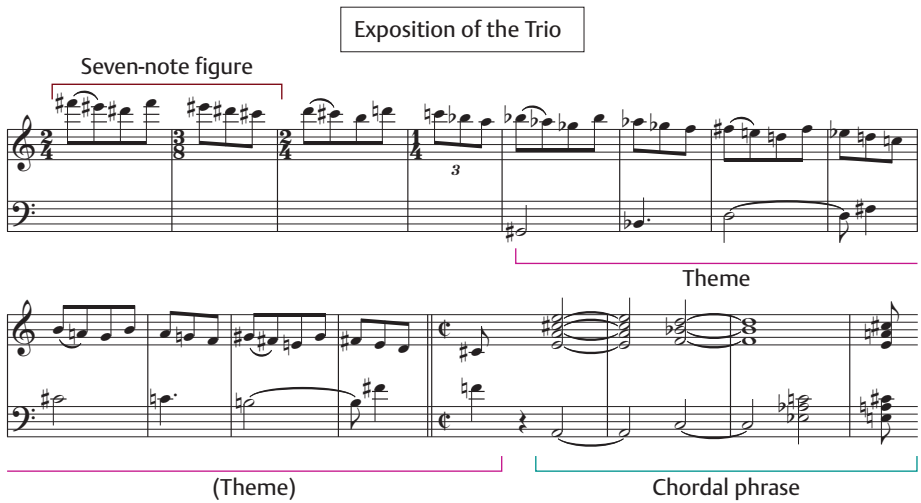
18 This early draft is found in Schönberg's Sketchbook III, 101 (Sk279). Transcribed in Arnold Schönberg: *Streichquartette I*, see fn. 15, 189–191.

19 Arnold Schönberg: Analysis, see fn. 1. Transcribed in *Schoenberg's Program Notes and Musical Analyses*, see fn. 1, 366–367.

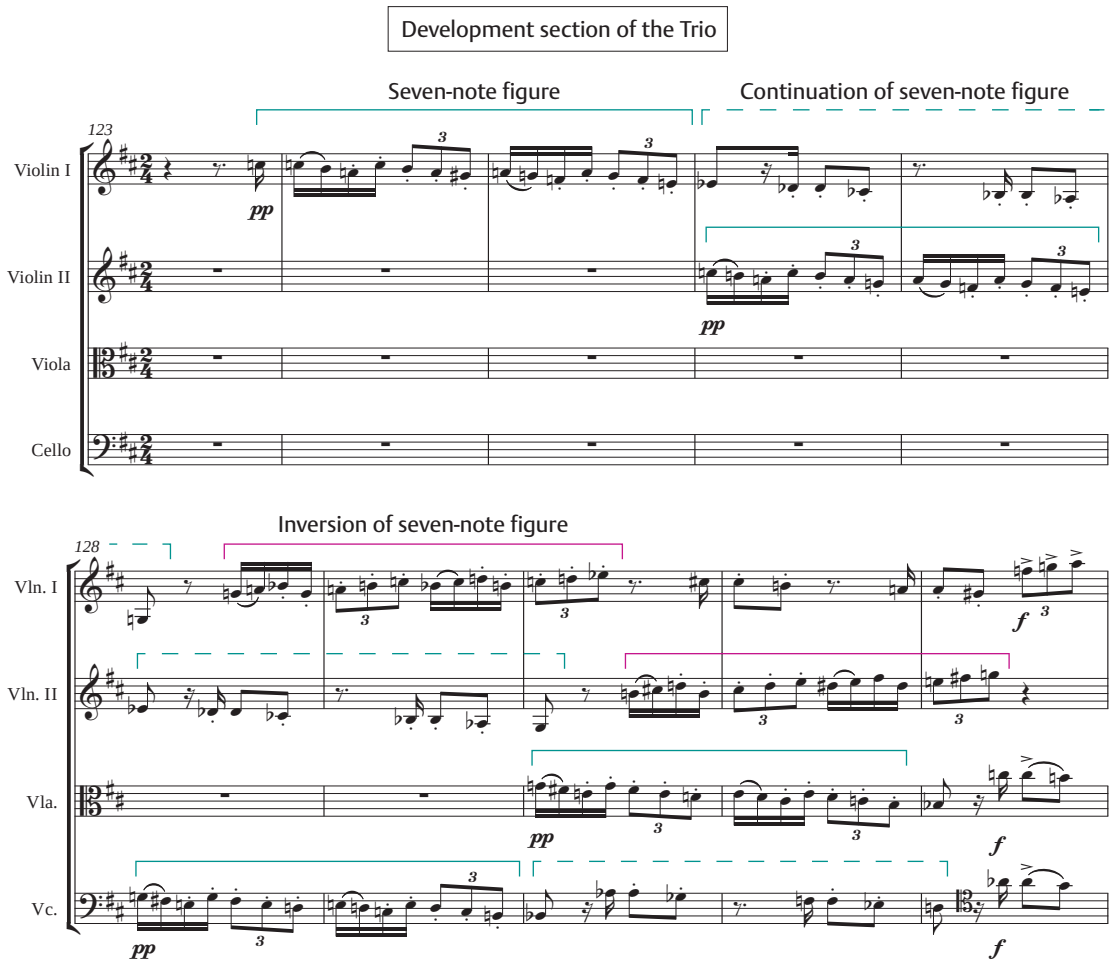
20 Ibidem, 365.



Example 4: Arnold Schönberg: *String Quartet No. 2*, op. 10, 2nd Movement (Scherzo). Early draft in Sketchbook III, p. 93 (staves 6–9 and 10–13, adapted) (Arnold Schönberg Center, Wien [MS 77, Sk271])



Example 5: Arnold Schönberg: *String Quartet No. 2*, op. 10, 2nd Movement (Scherzo). Early draft of Trio in Sketchbook III, p. 101 (staves 6–9 and 10–13, adapted) (Arnold Schönberg Center, Wien [MS77, Sk279])

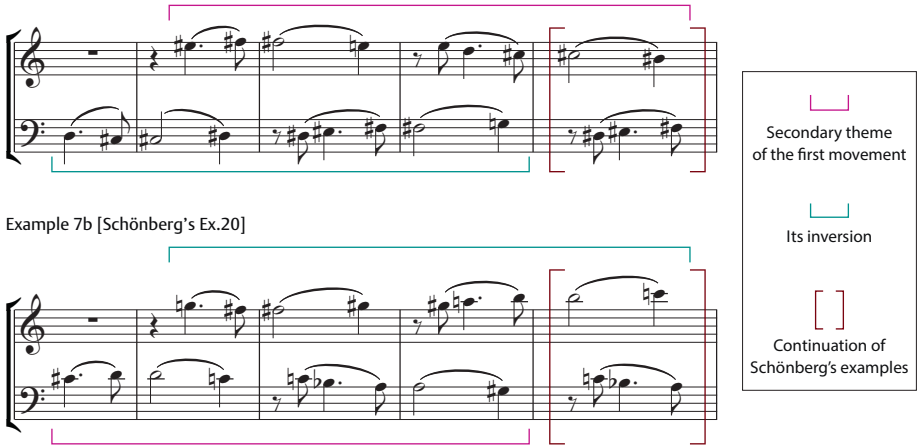


Example 6: Arnold Schönberg: *String Quartet* No. 2, op. 10, 2nd Movement (Scherzo)
Final version of Trio, mm. 123–132, beginning of the development section

theme of the first movement is imitated by its inversion in Example 7b and vice versa in Example 7a. Such technique – combining the entire theme and its imitation symmetrically – must have been one of his new methods of constructing the development section, which differed from Spandelmachen. In the following section (mm. 151–164), Schönberg built a climax by using the seven-note figure and the theme.

The last section of the Trio (mm. 165–194) functions as the transition to the reprise of the Scherzo. At the beginning of this section, he quoted "O, du lieber Augustin" and imitated it after three measures, just as it appeared

Example 7a [Schönberg's Ex. 19]



Example 7b [Schönberg's Ex.20]

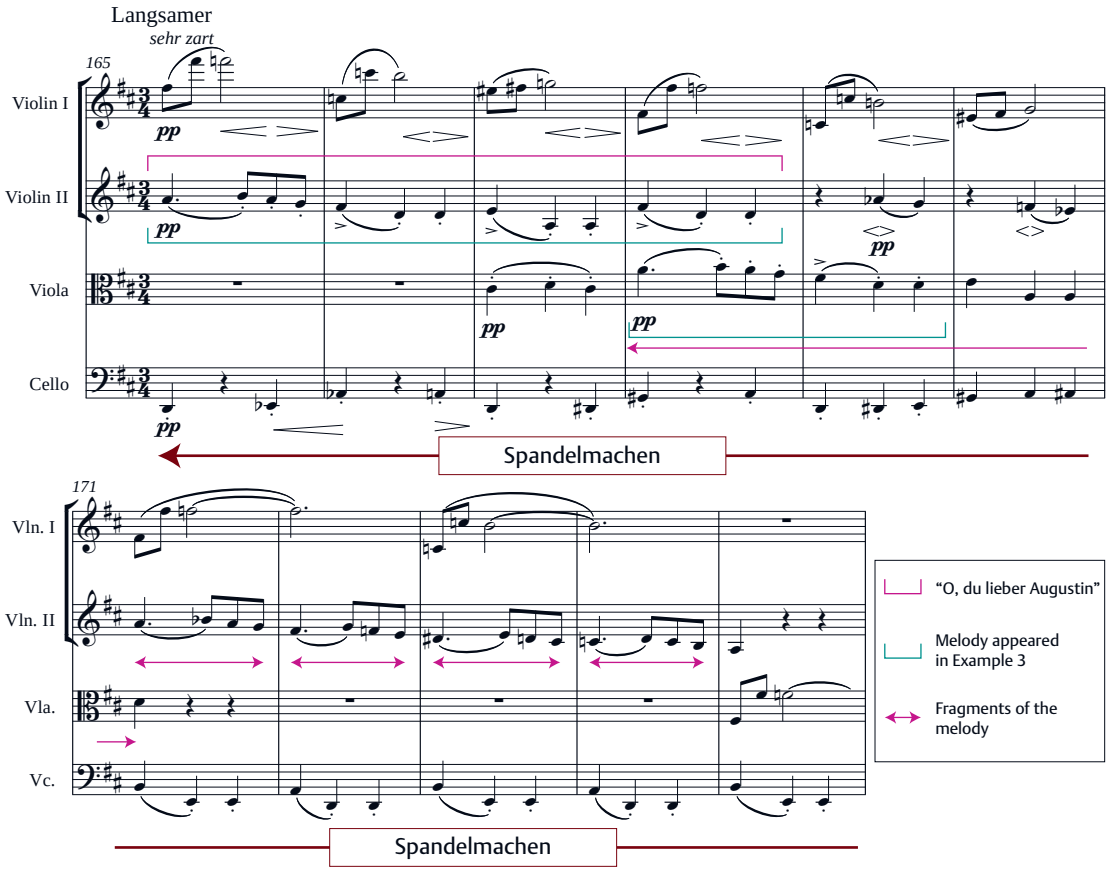
Examples 7a, b: Arnold Schönberg: Analysis (in the form of program notes) of the four String Quartets, see fn. 1. Examples for *"other methods of creating a developing contrast"* in *String Quartet No. 2*, op. 10, 1st movement, mm. 106–110 and 123–127, brackets and annotations added, some corrections added

in his musical example for teaching Beethoven's Rasumovsky quartet (see Example 3).[21] In Example 8, the voices that occurred in Example 3 are marked by green brackets. The imitations of the first four-measure melody are indicated by red arrows. Here, none of the imitations repeat the entirety of the four-measure melody: when it is imitated by the viola, the last three notes of the melody are replaced by a quarter note. This is followed by its reduction, the opening measure of the melody, and is transposed three times. As a result, the melodic structure of the first half of this section can be explained by the technique of Spandelmachen. About the last half of this section (mm. 178–195), Schönberg wrote in his program notes, *"later, in liquidation, some residues are transformed, so as to remind of motives and phrases of the first movement."*[22] One of his examples (Example 9) exhibits the first five notes of the folksong with a variation, played by the second violin, C♯–D–C♮–B–A. These notes also form the secondary theme of the first movement (see the lower voice of Example 7b).

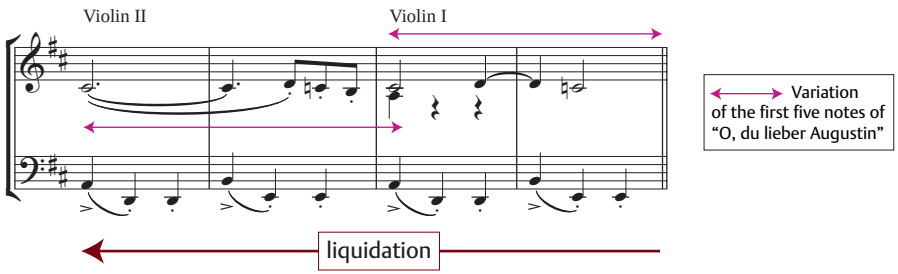
Whereas Schönberg pursued a new direction in the composition of the Trio, why did he employ such old-fashioned technique – Spandelmachen – in

21 Regarding the quotation of "O, du lieber Augustin," scholars have offered several interpretations such as a reference to the composer's marital crisis and an allusion to the expansion of tonal harmony to its limits. For discussions of the quotation, see Ethan Haimo: *Schoenberg's Transformation of Musical Language* (Cambridge 2006), 227–228.

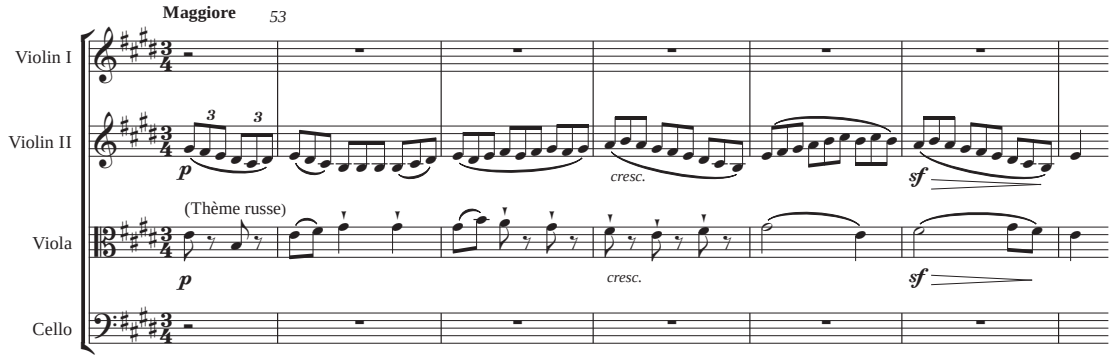
22 Arnold Schönberg: Analysis, see fn. 1. *Schoenberg's Program Notes and Musical Analyses*, see fn. 1, 367.



Example 8: Arnold Schönberg: *String Quartet* No. 2, op. 10, 2nd movement, Trio, mm. 165–175



Example 9: Arnold Schönberg: Analysis (in the form of program notes) of the four String Quartets, see fn. 1. Example 27, *String Quartet No. 2*, op. 10, 2nd movement, "O, du lieber Augustin," liquidation, mm. 178–181 (transcribed from score)



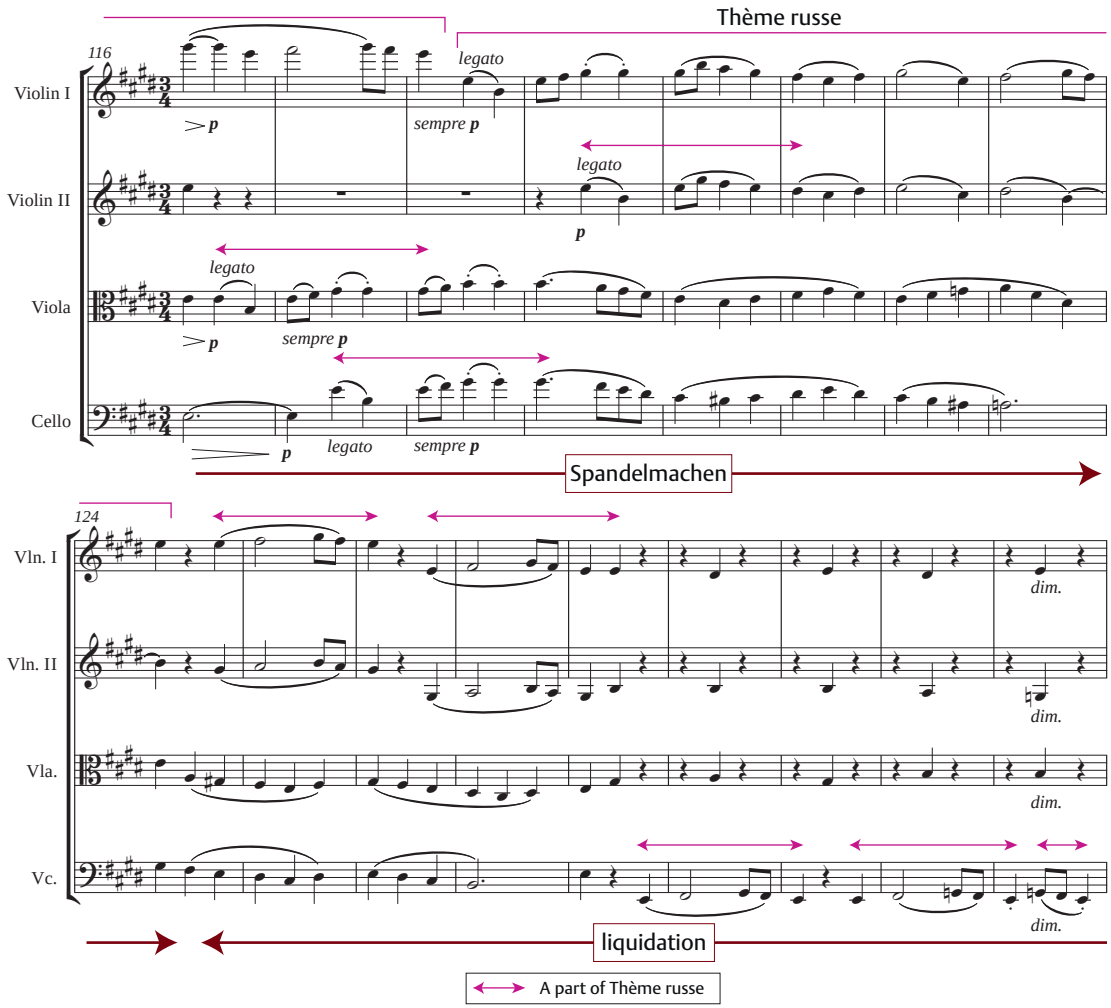
Example 10: Ludwig van Beethoven: *String Quartet*, op. 59/2, 3rd movement, Trio, *Maggiore*, mm. 52–58

the Augustin section? Looking back to his youth, Schönberg wrote, *"I bought second-hand, a few scores of Beethoven: the third and fourth symphony, two Rasumovsky string quartets, and the Great Fugue for string quartet, opus 133. From this minute, I was possessed by an urge in me to write string quartets."*[23] In the third movement of his *String Quartet*, op. 59, No. 2, Allegretto, Beethoven incorporated a Russian folksong, "Uzh kak slava Tebe Bozhe [Just as there is glory to thee, God in heaven]," in the Trio, marked *Maggiore*.[24] In the fugal exposition (mm. 52–80), this melody is accompanied by a fast-moving countermelody in triplets, as shown in Example 10. The countermelody is changed to an eighth-note figure with *sempre staccato* in the succeeding fugal section (mm. 80–104), which is followed by a canonic section formed by stretto (mm. 104–115). As indicated in Example 11, the transition to the recapitulation of the *Allegretto* is created by the technique of Spandelmachen (mm. 116–124), in which a part of the folksong overlaps repeatedly, then followed by liquidation (mm. 124–135), the folksong now further segmented, similar to the Augustin section of Schönberg's String Quartet. When Schönberg was discussing Beethoven's Rasumovsky quartet to students, the beginning of the Augustin section must have emerged spontaneously in his mind.[25] By using a famous Viennese folksong and developing it with the old-fashioned compositional device,

23 Arnold Schönberg: Analysis, see fn. 1. *Schoenberg's Program Notes and Musical Analyses*, see fn. 1, 357.

24 Nikolai Lvov and Ivan Prach: *A Collection of Russian Folk Songs (Classics of Russian Musical Folklore in Facsimile)*. Edited by Malcolm Hamrick Brown (Ann Arbor, London 1987), "Uzh kak slava Tebe Bozhe," facsimile no. 297.

25 Walter Frisch pointed out the first three-note figure in the cello at the beginning of the Scherzo as reminiscent of Beethoven's *Allegretto vivace e sempre scherzando* from *String Quartet*, op. 59/1. See Walter Frisch: *The Early Works of Arnold Schoenberg, 1893–1908* (Berkeley 1997), 263.



Example 11: Ludwig van Beethoven: *String Quartet*, op. 59/2, 3rd movement, *Maggiore*, mm. 116–132

Schönberg must have been paying his respects to Beethoven who himself incorporated a Russian folk song into his quartet. Here, we can see that the young composer had clearly studied Beethoven's *Rasumovsky String Quartets* in great detail, leading to his own solution in creating *Durchführung*.