THE INFLUENCE OF RENAISSANCE MUSIC IN ERNST KRENEK’S

_ LAMENTATIO JEREMIAE PROPHETAE_

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*Lamentatio Jeremiae Prophetae*, Opus 68, composed by Ernst Krenek in 1941, is a musical work that is difficult to analyze and classify due to its fusion of contrasting musical styles. The pervasive dissonance of the work shows its modern twelve-tone organization, yet other aspects more closely resemble the sacred music of the early Renaissance. Analysis of *Lamentatio* solely in terms of the atonal twelve-tone system belies the work’s full complexity and range of expression. While the twelve-tone system is the basis for the organization of the work, Krenek radically modifies the system to allow for more possible combinations of tones through an innovative technique he calls “rotation.” The primary objective of this study is to consider the influence of early Renaissance sacred music, particularly that of Johannes Ockeghem, on certain aspects of *Lamentatio*, including the text, pitch organization, form and structure, rhythm and meter, and expressive markings. The study reveals that though the pitch organization is based on the twelve-tone system, Krenek uses the increased flexibility granted by his rotation technique to create implications of the modal system of the Renaissance. In the other aspects considered, the music of *Lamentatio* also bears clear Renaissance influences. A thorough understanding of these earlier influences in *Lamentatio* will influence both future performances and written characterizations of this enigmatic work.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

*Lamentatio Jeremiae Prophetae*, opus 68, composed by Ernst Krenek in 1941, is a work modeled after the modal contrapuntal compositions of 15th century composers, particularly Johannes Ockeghem. Its music fuses the characteristics of this earlier style with the modern twelve-tone technique of pitch organization. Study and analysis of *Lamentatio* in terms of the style of 15th century modal counterpoint offer answers to many questions left unanswered by its score and provide invaluable interpretive guidance for performers.

Recognition of the work's diverse sources of influence is essential for performing and understanding *Lamentatio*. The work presents daunting challenges for scholars, performers, and listeners. Krenek himself calls it “fiendishly difficult.” Perhaps due to its great difficulty, the work was not performed in its entirety until sixteen years after its completion and it is rarely performed today. *Lamentatio* is challenging in seemingly every aspect, but perhaps its greatest challenge is the paucity of information in its score; Krenek’s score offers little beyond the notes and the text. Absent are barlines, meter signatures, key signatures, dynamic markings, and most other expected indications. These ambiguities in the score are particularly unexpected in light of the tendency of mid-20th century composers to carefully script every possible aspect of their creations. As Krenek composed

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1 The full title of the work is *Lamentatio Jeremiae Prophetae: Secundum Breviarium Sacrosanctae Ecclesiae Romanae*. Hereafter referred to as *Lamentatio*.
3 Krenek, “Circling My Horizons,” 30.
Lamentatio, he himself wondered whether performance would ever be possible.⁴

Augmenting the difficulty of Lamentatio is the uniqueness of the work’s style among compositions of its time, even among those of Krenek himself. Lamentatio is shrouded in a quality Krenek himself calls “an unusual obscurity, even anonymity.”⁵ Beginning around 1930, Krenek embraced the twelve-tone⁶ technique of composition and used the system throughout the remainder of his compositional life.⁷ Other than Lamentatio, Krenek’s compositions are composed in a distinctly modern style. While Krenek makes use of the twelve-tone technique in organizing Lamentatio, the contrasts between Lamentatio and other twelve-tone compositions are numerous. For comparison, several years later Stravinsky set a nearly identical text from the Book of Lamentations using serial techniques in his Threni. Unlike Lamentatio, Threni is thoroughly modern in style and typical of other twelve-tone works, particularly in its rhythm and pitch organization.⁸

Fortunately, the writings and biography of Ernst Krenek shed light on these mysteries. Particularly useful is Krenek’s own brief introduction to the score,⁹ in which he identifies his source of inspiration for Lamentatio as his study of Gregorian chant and 15th century modal counterpoint. Study of Krenek’s life and writings reveals the depth of his unusual interest in these musical styles, an interest that yielded vast knowledge and

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⁴ John L. Stewart. Ernst Krenek, the Man and His Music. 238  
⁵ Dorothy L. Crawford, A Windfall of Musicians, 205.  
⁶ Throughout this document I use the term twelve-tone rather than serial in describing music in which the pitches follow a prescribed order but other elements are freely composed. In “Circling My Horizons” Krenek states that Pierre Boulez and Karlheinz Stockhausen, with their experiments in rhythmic serialism that post-date Lamentatio, create serial music. Krenek prefers the term “twelve-tone” for pieces such as Lamentatio and that term is for that reason applied throughout. Krenek, “Circling My Horizons,” 76-77.  
following Krenek’s immigration to the United States in 1939, he began an intense study of the music of the 15th century. Krenek’s first teaching appointment in the United States was at Vassar College, which possessed an extensive music library. It was only during this time that he became “fully conscious and cognizant of music history.” Krenek became especially interested in Gregorian chant and the polyphonic compositions of the 15th century. His most specific interest was the life and music of Johannes Ockeghem, which led to a monograph on the subject in 1952. Krenek admired the music of many 15th century composers but felt a particular kinship with Ockeghem, entitling the final chapter of his monograph “The Distant Friend.” Tracing this thread of influence through \textit{Lamentatio} is essential for performance and understanding of this challenging work.

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12 Krenek, \textit{Johannes Ockeghem} 82. Krenek’s sense of connection with Ockeghem was somewhat related to what Krenek perceived as a mutual rejection by musicologists. Krenek wrote of Ockeghem “the modern composer is quite sure that he himself is unjustly accused of an overdose of intellectualism, and he is anxious to find support in the historical analogy.” Ernst Krenek, \textit{Johannes Ockeghem}, 12.
CHAPTER II
THE TEXT

The text of *Lamentatio* was frequently set by composers of the 15th and 16th centuries and shares many characteristics with other texts commonly set during that period, and these characteristics influence the style of its music. The composers of the 15th century devoted most of their attention to setting Latin, sacred, liturgical texts. Most of these works were composed for liturgical use and for that reason conformed to the liturgical requirements of the Roman Catholic Church of the time.

The text of *Lamentatio* is prescribed for the Roman Catholic Tenebrae services (matins and lauds) for Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday. Though Krenek did not intend the work for liturgical use, he nonetheless set the complete text prescribed by the liturgical rubrics, meaning that the text could function liturgically. Krenek set the text in Latin, the language of the Roman Catholic liturgy. The selection of this ancient text is an indication of Krenek’s interest in connecting artistic expressions of the past to his own life and historical context.

The history of Lamentations settings is extensive. The first polyphonic composition that employs a *cantus firmus* drawn from a monophonic setting of the Lamentations text was composed by Guillaume DuFay (c. 1400-1474) in 1454. The first extant polyphonic setting of a portion of the text was composed by Johannes Cornago (fl. c. 1450-1470), a contemporary of Ockeghem. Extant polyphonic settings of the text from the 16th century are common; composers of well-known settings include

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Brumel, Palestrina, Tallis, and Victoria. Many of these settings achieved considerable fame and remain part of the standard repertoire for choirs even today.

Krenek’s selection of this text is made remarkable by the dearth of such settings composed after 1600. After being set so frequently during the 15th and 16th centuries, the text is rarely set by composers between 1600 and 1941, the year Krenek undertook *Lamentatio*. Several settings of portions of the text have been composed since including those of Stravinsky, Pinkham, Bairstow, and Ginastera, but *Lamentatio* is the earliest 20th century setting. Krenek’s setting is unique among the other 20th century settings in its concern for liturgical authenticity.

Krenek’s choice of text is also striking in view of his compositional context. *Lamentatio* was composed during a secular age. Avant-garde composers largely eschewed sacred texts in favor of those of modern writers. Krenek had himself written the texts for most of his previous vocal and choral works, or selected texts of other modern writers. Examples of liturgical works of other modern composers exist, but most were composed after *Lamentatio*. Krenek’s attempt to set a Latin liturgical text using the 12-tone technique was not unique but certainly out of the ordinary.

Krenek’s decision to set this Latin text and to set it in accordance with the rubrics of the Roman Catholic liturgy can also be partially explained by his historical context. While still in Austria during the 1930s, Krenek desired the establishment of a “Catholic Austrian avant garde.”\(^\text{17}\) Krenek’s desire for this movement was more political than religious or artistic. He writes of the people of Austria, “perhaps we shall remember that we are a Christian-Catholic nation too strong to sink into oblivion.”\(^\text{18}\) The oblivion of

\(^{17}\) Stewart, *Ernst Krenek*, 184.
which he refers is Nazism. Krenek believed that a political and cultural coalition of traditional elements of Austrian culture, such as the artistic community and the Roman Catholic Church, would be effective in resisting the Nazis. This movement is also referred to as Catholic humanism. By 1941, Krenek’s artistic and cultural vision seems doomed as Austria is ruled by the Nazis and Krenek himself has fled to the United States. *Lamentatio* is an intensely personal composition that laments Austria’s welcoming of Hitler and the resulting damage to Austrian culture. *Lamentatio* is also a doomed attempt to bring to fruition Krenek’s vision of Catholic humanism. In keeping with that concept, Krenek’s choice of text and subsequently musical material connects modern musical language and cultural life with the musical and culture traditions of his native Austria.

The most distinctive characteristic of the text of *Lamentatio* is its acrostic form; this form is much more common in musical settings of the 15th and 16th centuries than in settings of the 20th century. The Book of Lamentations consists of five separate poems. Each of the poems, except the third, contains exactly 22 lines, one for each of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet. In the first, second, and fourth poems the 22 lines begin with each letter of the Hebrew alphabet in their alphabetical order. The lines of the fifth poem are not alphabetic and therefore this poem is not actually acrostic, but its 22 lines create an implied acrostic form. The third poem is a more elaborate triple acrostic form, containing 66 lines. The lines are alphabetic, presenting the entire alphabet three times.  

When the text of Lamentations is translated, the lines are no longer alphabetic. In

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order to preserve the form in translation, each line begins with a statement of the appropriate letter of the Hebrew alphabet followed by the translated text. The fifth poem contains no Hebrew letters because the original text is not alphabetical.

Acrostic poems on serious subjects are rare and are primarily ancient sacred poems. In addition to Lamentations, other serious uses of the acrostic form are limited to other Biblical texts and ancient near-Eastern poems on serious topics. Most acrostic poems of later centuries are intended to be comedic or clever.

Like Lamentatio, most Lamentations settings of the Renaissance include elaborate musical settings of the acrostic letters that begin each verse. In contrast, most post-Renaissance Lamentations settings of the 20th century do not include acrostic letters. Lamentatio is one of few later settings that include acrostic letters in the text.

The musical depiction of textual concepts, or text-painting, in Lamentatio represents a fusion between the choral polyphonic style of the Renaissance and the style of 20th century choral music. Text-painting is a prominent style characteristic of the polyphony of the 16th century. The technique is less common in the music of the 15th century, but not unknown to composers such as Ockeghem and Obrecht.

One example of text-painting is Krenek’s setting of the text “De excelso misit ignem in ossibus meis,” meaning “from above he has sent fire into my bones.” The section begins with a high note in the soprano part, followed by a descending melodic figure. The melody is soon transferred to the alto part, where the phrase is completed two octaves lower than the initial pitch. Additionally, the two statements of the word

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21 One notable example is Stravinsky’s Threni.
22 Stolba, The Development of Western Music, 181.
23 Krenek, Lamentatio Jeremiae Prophatae. 25.
“ignem,” meaning fire, are set with the strongest dissonance of the passage. A similar example of text-painting is found in the setting of the text “Defixae sunt in tarra portae ejus24,” meaning “sunk to the ground are his gates.” This setting uses a three-voice texture, with each voice descending throughout the passage.

Another example of text-painting is the setting of the text “Haeccine est urbs, dicentes, perfecti decoris, gaudium universae terrae,25” meaning “this is the city that is called the perfection of beauty, the joy of the whole earth.” This text is spoken with derision by those passing by Jerusalem on the road, gazing upon the misery of the city. Krenek depicts their mockery in the music by repeating the word “dicentes” in a homophonic three-part texture, separated by rests to create agogic accent. The repetition of the text in this texture creates the musical image of a group of voices chiding and deriding the city.

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24 Krenek, Lamentatio Jeremiae Prophatae. 31.
25 Krenek, Lamentatio Jeremiae Prophatae. 41.
CHAPTER III
PITCH ORGANIZATION

*Lamentatio* is a twelve-tone composition, but this description does not fully explain its organization; the work’s pitch organization is a fusion of twelve-tone techniques and the modal system of the 15th century. While some commonalities exist between these techniques, they are in other respects difficult to merge. By compromising some principles of each system, Krenek develops a hybrid musical language that is unique to this work.

In Krenek’s introduction to *Lamentatio* he introduces two pre-existing melodic motives that form a thread throughout the work. The first motive is a Gregorian chant intonation that sets the first words of *Lamentatio*.

Example 1: Ernst Krenek, *Lamentatio Jeremiae Prophetae*, op. 93, p. 3. With kind permission of Bärenreiter-Verlag, Kassel.

The other melodic fragment is Gregorian chant melisma that traditionally sets the first acrostic letter in settings of texts from Lamentations.

Example 2: Ernst Krenek, *Lamentatio Jeremiae Prophetae*, op. 93, p. 3. With kind permission of Bärenreiter-Verlag, Kassel.
Krenek explains that these two Gregorian chant fragments are the source material for this twelve-tone row, which forms the basis for the pitch material of *Lamentatio*.\(^{26}\)

![Example 3: Ernst Krenek, Lamentatio Jeremiae Prophatae, op. 93, p. 3. With kind permission of Bärenreiter-Verlag, Kassel.](image)

The idea to base this row on Gregorian chant may have emerged from Krenek’s own study of Gregorian chant in the years immediately before the composition of *Lamentatio*. Krenek was intrigued by the commonalities between Gregorian chant and the organization of twelve-tone music. Krenek discovered that embedded within the melismas of Gregorian chant are inversion and retrogression, two common techniques of twelve-tone composition.\(^{27}\) Gregorian chant, like twelve-tone music, is in Krenek’s view “two-dimensional music,” creating interest through linear pitch and rhythm, rather than through any progression of harmonic relationships.\(^{28}\)

That pre-existing melodic motives form the basis of the prime row of this twelve-tone composition is unusual. In the traditional twelve-tone system, the tone row is not a motive but a structural basis for the music. Prime rows are better described as a collection of intervals than as a melodic theme or motive. Composers choose rows on the basis of their distinct intervallic qualities, which serve as a source of harmonic and melodic shapes in the compositional process. In twelve-tone compositional practice, the melodic and harmonic material of each composition is based entirely on the work’s original and unique prime row. The persistent repetition of various forms of this row


\(^{27}\) Krenek, “Circling my Horizons,” 31.

lends the work a particular character, “like a red thread which, woven into a fabric, lends it a characteristic color shade, without ever becoming conspicuous as such.” The unusual twelve-tone row created for *Lamentatio* is conspicuously designed to facilitate Krenek’s vision for this particular work. While tone rows are used by many composers, including Schoenberg, as a generator of motives, the row is not a motive in itself and most twelve-tone composers eschew tone rows that imply melodic or harmonic associations. A listener to a twelve-tone work is not expected by the composer to recognize the sound of the row after hearing a completed composition.

Krenek’s creation of the prime row of *Lamentatio* is stimulated not by his obedience to twelve-tone procedure but by his interest in 15th-century *cantus firmus* technique. In his book on Ockeghem, Krenek explains that 15th-century contrapuntal technique is based on the use of a *cantus firmus*, which Krenek defines as a “fixed chant.” While many of these compositions are based on *cantus firmi* that are not Gregorian chant, the compositional technique developed from the liturgical practice of improvising contrapuntal lines set against a selected Gregorian chant passage. Many of Ockeghem’s sacred compositions are based on *cantus firmi* drawn from Gregorian chant. Krenek’s use of a tone row based on pre-existing Gregorian chant material therefore represents an intersection of twelve-tone and 15th-century styles of motivic generation.

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29 Ernst Krenek, *Studies in Counterpoint Based on the Twelve-Tone Technique* (New York: G. Schirmer, 1940), viii.
By Krenek’s own definition, the prime row chosen for *Lamentatio* is not an ideal row for a twelve-tone composition. Krenek’s first rule for an ideal row is blatantly ignored in this row, that a composer should avoid “a series with too many equal intervals, because the repetition of the same interval will make it difficult to avoid monotony in the melodic development.”\(^{34}\) The row of *Lamentatio* contains exclusively major and minor seconds, with the exception of one minor third, so that the row strongly resembles a scale or mode. Though Krenek’s second rule for selecting an ideal tone row is to “avoid more than two major or minor triads formed by a group of three consecutive tones,”\(^{35}\) is not directly violated by this tone row, the rule points out an important flaw in the row in terms of twelve-tone practice. Within this row the pitches are grouped in a way that could be heard to imply tonal relationships, which are largely avoided in twelve-tone music. The most obvious example is the first four pitches of the row, which are the first four pitches of the F major scale. The second half of the row could be heard to imply an E major tonality. While these relationships could imply tonal relationships, the stronger association is modality. F is the implied tonal center or final of the first set of six tones, or hexachord, but the final tone is E flat, avoiding an implied leading tone and giving the hexachord a modal implication. The implied final of the second hexachord is E, and the presence of the D natural gives this hexachord a similar modal quality. Because the pitch motives in twelve-tone compositions are created by presenting the tones of the row in order, this row’s resemblance to a mode could make avoiding modal implications difficult. This row naturally divides into two hexachords; within each hexachord the pitches ascend by major or minor second, with the exception of one ascending minor

\(^{34}\) Krenek, *Studies in Counterpoint Twelve-Tone*, 1.

\(^{35}\) Krenek, *Studies in Counterpoint Twelve-Tone*, 1.
third, rather than including both ascending and descending intervals. This design is not ideal because the constantly ascending nature of the row creates considerable commonality in the inversion, retrograde, and retrograde inversion of the row. This commonality limits the possibilities for motivic material, which will be created exclusively from these various forms of the row.

Though flawed in terms of traditional twelve-tone technique, this row is ideally matched to Krenek's artistic vision for *Lamentatio*. In Krenek's twelve-tone compositions the most important purpose of the row is creating melodic motives. Krenek sees the row as a "store of motives out of which all the individual elements of a composition are to be developed." The row "comprehends the sum total of the available material…and presents this material in a characteristic order." This row naturally generates melodic and harmonic material that strongly resembles that of modal music.

Although the prime row of *Lamentatio* bears some resemblance to a mode, its compositional function is different than a mode. Whereas a modal composer can form motives from the pitches of the mode in any order, the twelve-tone composer is not allowed to freely order the collected pitches of the tone row. The rules of twelve-tone technique create limitations on the way the pitches of the tone row are used. According to Krenek, once a particular row form is introduced, the series must be continued to its end. "In twelve-tone music the order of the pitches cannot be varied and all twelve pitches must sound before any pitch can be repeated. These rules are intended to avoid the very types of modal and tonal relationships that Krenek seeks to create in this work."

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36 Krenek, *Studies in Counterpoint Twelve-Tone Technique*, viii.
By the fall of 1941, Krenek had come to find the precepts of the traditional twelve-tone system to be an intolerable limitation upon his creative process. Not many melodies naturally have exactly twelve tones. Even after exhausting all permissible variations on the row, considerable redundancy seemed inevitable. Believing that he could not return to tonality but needed more flexibility than could be found in the twelve-tone system, Krenek sought another way.

Perhaps the foremost compositional challenge of *Lamentatio* is reconciling the rigidity of the twelve-tone system with the greater freedom of the modal system in which the seven tones of the mode can be used in any order or combination in creating motives. In the face of this challenge Krenek creates a variation on the twelve-tone technique which he names “rotation.” The rotation technique preserves many of the concepts of traditional twelve-tone technique while allowing flexibility in their practice.

The “rotation” technique was developed specifically for *Lamentatio* but some of its concepts had been used in Krenek’s earlier compositions. Krenek first explores some of these concepts in his opera *Karl V*, but develops the principles more systematically in *Lamentatio*. Krenek sketches the principles of rotation in a journal entry dated November 16, 1941, only a few days after the initial concept for *Lamentatio* was created on November 2nd.\(^{38}\) The process through which Krenek creates this rotation technique is worthy of exploration because it is intertwined with Krenek’s interest in earlier music. First, Krenek exchanged a number of letters with Richard S. Hill, who had written an article on twelve-tone technique that had deeply influenced Krenek’s Sixth String

\(^{38}\) Stewart, *Ernst Krenek*, 227.
Two ideas from Hill’s letters contribute significantly to the development of the rotation technique. The first idea is that the twelve-tone principle is modal in character in that its primary use is to generate melodic material for contrapuntal compositions. The second is his belief that the row need not be constantly presented in its entirety and can be divided, although he states that implications of tonality should be avoided and that portions of row forms should not be combined to create such implications. Hill believes that within the twelve-tone system the composer should be allowed artistic freedom and flexibility.

A few months later in the summer of 1939, Krenek’s friend George Perle suggested to him in conversation that the tone row might be “treated in ways analogous to the practices of medieval composers when they developed variations on a cantus firmus.” Krenek objected to Perle’s ideas, believing that the intrinsic values of twelve-tone composition would necessarily be compromised by this practice. However, the idea that the structures of modal composition could be carried over into twelve-tone practice intrigued Krenek and over the next two years he pored over the scores by Ockeghem, Francesco Landini (1325-1397), Giovanni Palestrina (1525-1594), and others. The rotation technique represents a merger of these influences with Krenek’s previous experiment in shifting the notes of the tone row in Karl V. The ideas of Anton Webern (1883-1945) on symmetry are also an important influence. Webern experiments with tone rows in which repeated pitches are symmetrically ordered around a central axis pitch, literally a tonal center. Though Krenek’s rows do not in themselves have this type

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41 Stewart, *Ernst Krenek*, 225.
of internal symmetry, the pitches of his rows rotate around a similar pitch axis as they are created.

Krenek’s rotation technique allows for greater compositional freedom than the traditional twelve-tone technique by loosening some of its rigid conventions. Because this technique is the vehicle through which Krenek creates the pitch material of *Lamentatio*, the technique bears explaining here. Krenek himself explains the technique in the introduction to *Lamentatio*.\(^{43}\)

The technique consists of several pre-compositional steps. The process begins with development of a complete twelve-tone row. The tone row that forms the basis for *Lamentatio* is presented above.

The next step is to divide the row into two six-note hexachords. The tone row of *Lamentatio* appears to be formed with this step in mind. The two corresponding hexachords, when combined, contain all twelve tones, but in *Lamentatio* the hexachords function independently after this step. Next, ten additional hexachords are created by rotating the starting pitch of each row to the end, and starting a new hexachord with the next tone, as shown below. Each of these hexachords Krenek calls “diatonic” because they each contain the same six pitches as the original hexachord from which they are formed.\(^{44}\)

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This step shows particular influence of the modal system. The eight church modes consist of the same seven pitches, differentiated by rotating the pitches so that each mode begins and ends with a different pitch.45

The next step in Krenek’s rotation technique is creating several new rows by transposing all the newly created hexachords so that they begin on both F and B, the starting pitches of the two original hexachords of the prime form, as shown below. This technique is particularly significant in Lamentatio as these tone rows are used to create the implication of F as a pitch center and give the music its modal flavor. The frequent use of melodic motives that ascend or descend from F, combined with the prevalence of B rather than B flat, creates the impression of Hypomixolidian mode. The prevalence of tone rows beginning with these pitches allows Krenek to explore countless melodic possibilities while maintaining F as an implied pitch center. Krenek calls these hexachords “chromatic” because they together have the possibility of containing any of the twelve tones.46

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45 Krenek, Lamentatio Jeremiae Prophetae, 3.
46 Krenek, Lamentatio Jeremiae Prophetae, 4.
Krenek next creates even more hexachords by applying this same technique to the inversion of each hexachord. The possibility exists of creating seemingly unlimited new hexachords through applying and reapplying these techniques.

Through rotation Krenek creates a vast collection of pitch sets far more diverse than the forty-eight rows associated with a traditional twelve-tone matrix. His compositional flexibility is also enhanced by being able to select and use pitches in sets of six, rather than in sets of twelve.

Though the rotation technique requires the rules of the twelve-tone system to be modified, Krenek does strictly maintain some twelve-tone principles. Though Krenek’s rows use only six pitches, he always uses all six tones of a hexachord in sequence once a row begins, as required in traditional serialism. Krenek, like traditional serial composers, allows a row to skip from part to part, and when skipped, not necessarily be picked up immediately. Krenek also permits the interpolation of one row within

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48 Krenek, Studies in Counterpoint Twelve-Tone, 15.
another, and repetition of pitches within interpolations, so long as all rows are eventually completed in their order.\textsuperscript{49}

Of these diverse pre-conceived hexachords, Krenek builds melodic material reminiscent of that of 15\textsuperscript{th} century contrapuntal composers. In his writings Krenek discusses the melodic characteristics of Ockeghem and his contemporaries. These writings are brief and certainly not intended as a comprehensive discussion of the works of these composers. However, Krenek’s synopsis of their characteristics is useful in considering their influence upon \textit{Lamentatio}.

Krenek describes the melodic motion as primarily stepwise, with skips used sparingly, making their effect more dramatic. He describes the melodic lines as primarily diatonic, with chromatic notes used primarily as \textit{musica ficta}. Krenek’s relative levels of attention indicate that he considers the lines’ rhythmic variety far more interesting than their pitches. Krenek also points out the strong influence of Gregorian chant on the melodic lines of the period.\textsuperscript{50}

As Krenek describes, melodic lines of the late 15\textsuperscript{th} century begin to display the rules of Renaissance counterpoint. Motion is primarily conjunct, with few skips larger than the interval of a fifth. The larger skips are usually the interval of a sixth or an octave and are followed by stepwise motion in the opposite direction.\textsuperscript{51} Ockeghem’s “long-breathed” melodies flow on in this manner, rarely interrupted by cadences.\textsuperscript{52}

The linear pitch motion in \textit{Lamentatio} has much in common with the melodic lines of Ockeghem and his contemporaries. For example, in the first section of music the

\textsuperscript{49} Ogden, “Horizon Circled Observed,” 101.
\textsuperscript{50} Krenek, \textit{Johannes Ockeghem}, 44.
\textsuperscript{51} Mark Even Bonds, \textit{A History of Music in Western Culture} (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2003), 111.
\textsuperscript{52} Stolba, \textit{The Development of Western Music}, 184.
soprano and alto lines are composed exclusively of major and minor seconds, with one minor third. The tenor and bass line are formed of the same intervals, with the exception of one leap of a minor seventh in each part. This leap in the bass is followed immediately by step-wise motion in the opposite direction. The large leap in the tenor is followed immediately by a descending major third in the same direction, but then followed by motion an entire hexachord that proceeds in the opposite direction.53

These lines of pitches are formed naturally from the prime row Krenek chooses for *Lamentatio* and its variations. The row is formed entirely of major and minor seconds, except for one minor third. In the rotations of the hexachords, the order of these intervals is repositioned but new intervals are not created. This characteristic of the row does limit Krenek’s options with regard to melodic leaps. Because neither a fourth nor a fifth is included in the row these intervals are not possible in linear motion without combining two hexachords. As a result, those intervals are used sparingly in *Lamentatio*. A skip of a major sixth is possible through octave displacement of the minor third found in some hexachords. The most common linear leaps are those of a major or minor seventh, which are created through octave displacement of the many major and minor seconds found in every possible hexachord form. A leap of a seventh is highly unusual in Renaissance music. Due to unidirectional nature of the hexachords, each large leap is naturally followed by step-wise motion in the opposite direction, in keeping with 15th century contrapuntal practice.

The saturation of second and sevenths helps to maintain the integrity of the twelve-tone system that underlies the work. The presence of consonant skips such as thirds and fifths and their inversions would likely create tonal implications. However, the

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strings of seconds prevent implied melodic triads. They also assist in creating the modal implications in the music; these seconds allow Krenek to establish a pitch as an implied tonal center through linear means without resorting to implied tonal relationships.

The vertical simultaneities of *Lamentatio* are perhaps the most challenging aspect of the work. Though the vertical pitch collections of *Lamentatio* are primarily controlled by the premises of the twelve-tone system, some collections defy these rules, showing instead the influence of modal conventions. In many cases these modally-influenced simultaneities can be seen in the score but are difficult to hear in performance, being obscured by surrounding dissonances. Analysis of the vertical sonorities of *Lamentatio* also reveals commonalities between the twelve-tone and modal systems, which Krenek highlights and utilizes in his music.

Many commonalities exist between the twelve-tone and modal compositional systems and the vertical simultaneities of *Lamentatio* can be analyzed within either system. For example, *Lamentatio* is primarily conceived as linear, contrapuntal music and the interplay of horizontal lines is the main generator of vertical sonorities. This characteristic is common to nearly all twelve-tone compositions and nearly all modal compositions. Krenek defines the “harmonic” aspect of modal music as “the aspect of the sounds produced at any given moment by the simultaneous progressing voices.”

The vertical sonorities are not to be heard as “chords” but as simultaneities, combinations of notes that sound simultaneously but do not exist in relationship to other simultaneities. In modal music the composer is free to select any pitches from the mode to create the horizontal motives, as long as the combinations follow the conventions for consonance and dissonance. The twelve-tone system is more rigid; a basic premise of

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54 Krenek, *Johannes Ockeghem*, 58.
the twelve-tone system is that the pitch material, vertical or horizontal, is “motivic,” generated from linear sequences of tones developed during a pre-compositional process.\textsuperscript{55} The vertical simultaneities are sometimes produced by the interaction of different tone rows proceeding linearly, but in other cases are created from portions of the row or its variations proceeding vertically.

Another relevant commonality between the two systems is the way that vertical sonorities are perceived and analyzed, as collections of independent intervals. In each system, a collection of three or more pitches is not analyzed as a unified harmonic unit, but rather as a collection of interval relationships. For example, the collection of tones known in the tonal system as a major triad is heard in modal and twelve-tone music as three intervals, a major third, a minor third, and a perfect fifth.\textsuperscript{56}

This lack of stereotyped harmonic units creates another important commonality between the two systems, the lack of “harmonic progression” as employed in tonal harmony. In tonal music, collections of three or more pitches are heard as a unit, such as a major or minor triad or a seventh chord, and these units function in relationship with one another. Pitches sounding along with harmonic units to which they do not belong are heard as creating a sense of tension, leading to inevitable resolution. Nearly all vertical collections or chords are created as part of a progression and these progressions are used to define every level of the form of a tonal composition.

These stereotyped progressions of vertical sonorities do not exist in twelve-tone music or in modal music. In twelve-tone music, each pitch collection exists independent

\textsuperscript{55} Morgan, \textit{Twentieth-Century Music}, 195.
\textsuperscript{56} Krenek, \textit{Johannes Ockeghem}, 58.
of any other and no sense of progression exists between any sonority and another.\textsuperscript{57} According to Krenek, the listener’s interest in twelve-tone music “emanates from what (the music) has to offer at any moment rather than from a context that may be followed intellectually by the listener.”\textsuperscript{58} In 15\textsuperscript{th} century modal counterpoint, many vertical pitch collections contain the same intervals as a triad but only due to coincidence. Modal composers generally prefer combinations of consonant intervals, the consonant intervals that are also used in tonality to form triads. Some vertical intervals within sonorities create a sense of tension and release through the use of dissonance and consonance, and these resolutions of tension often serve to mark the end of formal sections. However, form-defining progressions of vertical harmonic units do not exist in modal music as they do in tonal music. Most vertical sonorities in modal music exist independently, with more commonality to twelve-tone music than tonality.

Related to the lack of harmonic progression is the fact that in \textit{Lamentatio}, as in much 15\textsuperscript{th} century modal polyphony, each voice is equal within the contrapuntal texture.\textsuperscript{59} The voices do not function as a “bass” or a “melody” as one would expect in tonal music, but as interchangeable equals.

Another commonality between the two systems is the way the individual intervals within simultaneities are defined. In both twelve-tone and modal music, pitch collections are classified in terms of their “consonance” and “dissonance,” and these classifications are remarkably similar. In his book \textit{Modal Counterpoint of the Sixteenth Century}, Krenek himself defines his view of consonance and dissonance in modal music. Consonances are grouped as perfect and imperfect. The perfect consonances are the unison, perfect

\textsuperscript{57} See Morgan, \textit{Twentieth Century Music}, 67.
\textsuperscript{58} Krenek, “Circling My Horizons,” 89.
\textsuperscript{59} See Stolba, \textit{The Development of Western Music}, 184.
fifth, and octave intervals. The imperfect consonances are the major and minor third and major and minor sixth intervals. Perfect fourths are heard as either consonance or dissonance depending on context. All other intervals are classified as dissonances.

Krenek’s definitions of intervals in twelve-tone music is similar but with slightly different classifications of consonance and dissonance. No differentiation is made between types of consonances, and all of the consonances of modal music are considered consonant in twelve-tone music. The classification of consonances as perfect or imperfect in modal theory was necessitated by the use of Pythagorean tuning during the 15th and 16th century and is made unnecessary by the equal temperament commonly practiced in later centuries. The consonance or dissonance of a perfect fourth is dependent upon its context, as in the other system. The dissonances are divided into those of lower tension, major seconds and minor sevenths, and those of high tension, minor seconds and major sevenths. Perhaps the most significant difference between the two systems is the classification of the augmented fourth or diminished fifth, otherwise known as the tritone. In modal music, the tritone is considered the strongest dissonance. In twelve-tone music it is considered a “neutral interval, dividing the octave in two equal parts.”

Krenek wrote that these definitions of intervals are based on natural phenomena, such as “vibration-ratios, combination-tones, and other acoustic phenomena.” He acknowledges that consonance and dissonance are perceived naturally, writing “the ear

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64 Krenek, *Studies in Counterpoint Twelve-Tone*, 7.
needs no...scientific instruction to find out that the octave is the purest form of consonance.”\(^6^5\) Krenek’s classification of intervals for twelve-tone music differs from those of modal music because he believes that for twelve-tone composers aesthetics play a role in perception of intervals and that acceptance of the relative consonance or dissonance of intervals is an aesthetic choice. Krenek warns that in twelve-tone music excessive loyalty to intervals due to their perceived consonance could become a “fetish” and says that the “beauty” of an interval is “only an aesthetic judgment and is subject to dispute.”\(^6^6\)

During the 15\(^{\text{th}}\) century classification and use of intervals becomes increasingly uniform, and rules regarding the use of consonant and dissonant intervals are codified. These rules require that all dissonances be surrounded by certain intervals and only be used under certain rhythmic conditions.\(^6^7\) These conventions can be gleaned from the music of the era but are also recorded in the writings of theorists such as Johannes Tinctoris (ca. 1435-ca. 1511). This regulation of dissonance is strictly practiced during the 16\(^{\text{th}}\) century in the music of Palestrina and many of his contemporaries. However, these rules were not yet consistently practiced during the 15\(^{\text{th}}\) century. Many 15\(^{\text{th}}\)-century composers use dissonance with relative freedom, in ways similar to those of twelve-tone composers centuries later. For example, Ockeghem’s “highly unorthodox” use of dissonance is considered by Krenek to be “one of the outstanding features of his style.”\(^6^8\) According to Krenek, Ockeghem’s music does not “at all live up to the

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\(^6^6\) Krenek, *Music Here and Now*, 194.
\(^6^8\) Krenek, *Johannes Ockeghem*, 61.
theoretical demands of his friend (Tinctoris)”69 but “exploits the tensions of dissonant combinations in an unconventional way.70 Ockeghem’s use of dissonance is considered by Krenek a source of great expression, giving his music “a flavor of rugged melancholy and…situations of strength and intensity of feeling not easily found elsewhere” and makes the music “sound bold and progressive.” 71

Ockeghem and his contemporaries do apply the principles codified by Tinctoris in most instances. Points of closure known as cadences often represent a progression from a dissonance to a consonance, as required by convention.72 In general, the music follows prescribed patterns of tension and release, dominated by consonance. However, these progressions are defined by the relationship between two intervals, not by the strings of complex sonorities as in tonal progressions. Ockeghem’s music is known for its long contrapuntal lines and sparing use of cadences.73 In general, the vertical sonorities of Ockeghem’s music exist independently and do not express a sense of progression. Ockeghem’s music often exudes a certain drive toward a cadence, but this drive is created through the use of increasingly dissonant intervals as well as rhythmic and textural devises, not by harmonic chains.74

Despite the commonalities between twelve-tone music and modal music in terms of creating vertical sonorities, the two systems yield nearly opposite musical results. The differences between the two systems represent a central compositional struggle in Lamentatio; Krenek is forced to choose between strictly applying the techniques of

69 Krenek, Johannes Ockeghem, 60.
70 Krenek, Johannes Ockeghem, 61.
71 Krenek, Johannes Ockeghem, 61.
72 Stolba, The Development of Western Music, 167.
73 Grout, A History of Western Music, 164.
74 Stolba, The Development of Western Music, 185.
twelve-tone composition and disregarding those techniques in favor of those of modal music. In general, the vertical sonorities are based on twelve-tone technique.

The primary difference between the two systems in terms of vertical sonorities is the intentional avoidance of tonal implications in twelve-tone composition; modal composers were not aware of tonality and therefore could neither avoid nor emulate it. Though in theory the sonorities of twelve-tone music are created according to the rules of consonance and dissonance and uninfluenced by tonal music, in reality twelve-tone composers tirelessly avoided the sonorities most commonly associated with tonality. In general, *Lamentatio*, like other twelve-tone compositions, is composed almost exclusively of sonorities that would have been considered unacceptably dissonant by modal or tonal composers.

However, *Lamentatio* does contain some modal associations that are avoided in most twelve-tone compositions. For example, one section ends with the pitch collection D-F-A, the same collection as a minor triad. Two of these pitches, D and A, form a perfect 5th, and these two pitches are approached in contrary motion by step, typical of a modal cadence. In many instances, voices are grouped to create sonorities with modal or tonal implications while other parts simultaneously contain dissonant pitches. For example, in one section the alto, tenor, and bass parts hold the pitches D, B, and F sharp, the same collection as a B minor triad in first position, while at the same time the soprano part concludes with contrasting rhythms and dissonant pitches. The sound of the B minor triad is easily heard due to the length the sonority is held, despite its being obscured by the soprano part. In another instance, the soprano, alto, and tenor parts

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end a section on a unison F. This pitch is approach in contrary motion by step, with the tenor ascending by step from E flat and the soprano and alto descending by step from G.\textsuperscript{77} The sonority of E flat and G that precedes the unison F is similar to the typical penultimate sonority of modal cadences.

\textsuperscript{77} Krenek, \textit{Lamentatio Jeremiae Prophetae}, 20.
CHAPTER IV
FORM AND STRUCTURE

One challenge of twelve-tone composition is defining form and structure. One purpose of Krenek’s extensive study of modal music was the pursuit of universal principles governing these elements of music. This study led to the creation of Lamentatio, and the structure of the work is based on principles found in the music of Ockeghem and other 15th century composers. During the Common Practice Period, key relationships provide the primary means for elucidating musical form. Rejecting the relevance of tonal relationships, the twelve-tone composer must find other means for creating musical order. The tone row itself provides a unifying devise, but does not itself create structure or form.

Like twelve-tone composers, composers of modal music must also use elements other than key relationships to establish form. During the early 1940s, Krenek sought to extrapolate principles of this music into his own. In particular, Krenek studied the way modal composers achieve closure and transition between musical sections; these effects are particularly challenging for twelve-tone composers. He sought universal principles for cadential effects and other organizational elements, hoping these principles could be applied to any musical style.78

Krenek is not alone among twelve-tone composers in looking to earlier music as a source for form and structure. For example, the four movements of Schoenberg’s Woodwind Quintet, Op. 26 (1926) are based on Classical forms: sonata form, scherzo with trio, ternary form, and rondo.79 Webern’s Symphony, Op. 21 (1928), has a name

78 Stewart, Ernst Krenek, 226.
79 Morgan, Twentieth-Century Music, 194.
inspired by Classical and Romantic models and is built on a series of double canons, an organizational technique used throughout the history of western music.\textsuperscript{80}

Many aspects of the form and structure of \textit{Lamentatio} emulate that of 15\textsuperscript{th} century polyphonic choral works. The work is composed for unaccompanied chorus, as is nearly all sacred music of the 15\textsuperscript{th} and 16\textsuperscript{th} century. Beginning with the Baroque period, unaccompanied choral composition falls out of fashion and remains so into the 20\textsuperscript{th} century, with the exception of some sacred choral works, mostly intended to emulate earlier styles. Like \textit{Lamentatio}, many works of unaccompanied choral music of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century are modeled on earlier musical styles.

Also typical of choral music of the 15\textsuperscript{th} century, the form of \textit{Lamentatio} is created by its text rather than any predetermined musical structure. The work is divided into many brief sections; each of these sections is delineated by a double barline. These double barlines represent a brief increment of silence, making the separation between sections aurally apparent in performance.

Krenek places headings throughout the score indicating the structure of the text. For example, above the first musical section Krenek places the heading “1. In Coena Domini,” meaning “at the Lord’s Supper.”\textsuperscript{81} Liturgically, this text is sung in the liturgy of Holy Thursday, the occasion on which the Biblical Lord’s Supper is commemorated in the Catholic Church. The two subsequent major sections also receive headings in the score indicating their respective liturgical occasions.\textsuperscript{82}

\textsuperscript{80} Morgan, \textit{Twentieth-Century Music}, 202.
\textsuperscript{81} Krenek, \textit{Lamentatio Jeremiae Prophetae}, 5.
Each of these major sections commences with a brief introductory section, announcing the origin of the text to follow.\textsuperscript{83} The remainder of each major section is divided into three smaller lessons titled “lectio primo,” “lectio secunda,” and “lectio tertia,” meaning first, second, and third lesson; a heading is placed in the score before each of these sections.\textsuperscript{84} Most of these lessons themselves contain seven sections, an acrostic letter paired with a verse, two other acrostic letters paired with verses, and a refrain. This form is slightly modified in the final lesson of the second section and the first lesson of the third section. In these sections the acrostic letters are presented along with the verse rather than separately. Krenek makes this adjustment in order to conform to the rubrics of the \textit{Liber Usualis}.\textsuperscript{85} The final lesson is also different than the others; the verses are set as one large section without separation by acrostic letters. This formal shift is dictated by the Biblical text; this section of Lamentations is not acrostic.\textsuperscript{86}

The form of \textit{Lamentatio} emulates the many 15\textsuperscript{th} and 16\textsuperscript{th} century settings of text from Lamentations; one such setting is that of Palestrina. Like \textit{Lamentatio}, Palestrina’s setting is sectionalized according to the structure of the text. Palestrina sets the acrostic letters melismatically and the texts of the lessons mostly syllabically, as does Krenek. In both settings, each lesson is followed by a refrain. Palestrina also modifies the forms of the lessons that do not conform to pattern of the others, including repeating the acrostic letters in two lessons and leaving out the acrostic letters in the final lesson, which is not


\textsuperscript{85} Krenek, \textit{Lamentatio Jeremiae Prophetae}, 4.

\textsuperscript{86} Klimisch, “The Music of the Lamentations, 120.
acrostic. *Lamentatio* bears formal resemblance to other 16th century settings, including those of Tallis and Brumel.

The use of this text-based form in *Lamentatio* is unique among 20th century settings of this text. Although *Lamentatio* is the earliest 20th century setting of this text, several other settings of text from Lamentations have been composed since, including settings by Edward Bairstow (1874-1946), Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971), Alberto Ginastera (1916-1983), and Daniel Pinkham (1923-2006). Each of these later settings adopts a more modern form.

The primary structural element of *Lamentatio* is imitation. The piece is composed in a style that could be termed pervasive imitation, a style typical of 15th century polyphony. In this compositional technique, one voice sings a particular text, followed by staggered entries of other voices singing the same text and imitating the melodic motive of the first voice. When the first voice has completed a phrase it typically begins another phrase, setting the next portion of the text, as the other voices continue with the preceding text. As each voice completes the first phrase they begin the second phrase, again at staggered intervals.

One example of this technique in *Lamentatio* is found in the first “Lectio Tertio.” The first phrase, “Manum suam misit hostis,” begins in the soprano part. The alto, tenor, and bass parts each enter in that order with the same text, staggered by the increment of a whole note. This staggering continues throughout this musical section until the voices come together during the final phrase. All voices are equal in importance and treatment. None can be singled out as a particular “melody” or as a particular generator of harmonic structure. Each part functions independently and equally.
Several aspects of the structure of *Lamentatio* show the particular influence of Johannes Ockeghem; one example is the first “Lectio Tertio” passage.\(^{87}\) As is common in the music of Ockeghem, this section contains few rests; all four parts sing nearly constantly.\(^ {88}\) One structural device used by Ockeghem is the creation of an imitative texture of paired voices, as Krenek does on the text “Sanctuarium suum, de quibus praeceperas.” In order to emphasize a particular text Ockeghem often employs a homophonic texture, as Krenek does at the end of this section, on the text “in ecclesiam tuam.”\(^ {89}\) Krenek employs homophonic texture often in *Lamentatio* to emphasize particular sections of text. Krenek also varies the number of voices used in a section for expressive purposes, as did Ockeghem.\(^ {90}\) One example of this structure is the use of voices in the refrains that end each lesson. The first refrain is completely unison. The second refrain uses two voices, and each subsequent refrain adds one voice until the ninth and final refrain which is composed for nine voices.

One important formal element Krenek borrows from 15\(^{th}\) century music is the implied use of modal formal structures. Though the pitch organization of *Lamentatio* is unquestionably based on the twelve-tone system, one important source of structural unity is frequent allusion to the Hypolydian mode. The form is not based on the mode in the way a 15\(^{th}\) century composition would be; the music of Ockeghem and his contemporaries is modally diatonic. Rarely do these composers use pitches that are not included in the mode of the composition, and even the performance tradition of *music ficta* adds only a narrow range of additional pitches and only in carefully controlled

\(^{88}\) Grout, *A History of Western Music*, 164.
\(^{89}\) Stolba, *The Development of Western Music*, 185.
\(^{90}\) Ernst Krenek, *Johannes Ockeghem*, 43.
situation. Though dissonance pervades the music of *Lamentatio*, some implication of the Hypolydian mode is present in nearly every section and these modal allusions provide important musical continuity between sections.

One defining characteristic of modal music is the use of a predominant pitch called a final; while *Lamentatio* does not have a final that is defined as clearly as one would expect in a modal composition, the pitch F is clearly a dominant pitch center throughout the work. This pitch center not only defines the implied mode as Hypolydian, but also serves as a primary structural element in the work, providing some sections with a sense of arrival and others with a sense of transition.

One musical example of Krenek’s use of modal implications is the incipit section which opens the work.91 The section begins with the alto part singing the portion of Gregorian chant quoted in Krenek’s introduction as the basis of the tone row of *Lamentatio*. While the other parts contain all twelve pitches, the alto part conspicuously includes only pitches from the Hypolydian mode, with the exception of one B flat. This B flat is present due to the influence of modal performance practice; *musica ficta* dictates that a B between two A’s would become a B flat.92 The opening of this section has a strongly modal flavor, but the alto ends before the other parts, which arrive at a dissonant ending. This ending implies instability, creating the expectation of a transition.

Each of the nine major sections of *Lamentatio* ends with the implication of the Hypolydian mode. The implication of the Hypolydian mode, as opposed to the Lydian which shares the tonic pitch F, is given by the motivic shapes. The motives hover around the tonal center, generally with a narrow pitch range. One example of this

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92Krenek ignores this convention in other instances.
modal implication is the music of the third refrain, which ends the first major section. The music begins with the altos singing pitches from the Hypolydian mode.\textsuperscript{93} As the movement continues, the clarity of the mode is obscured by the many non-modal pitches. However, at the end the modal pitches return in the tenor part. The final five pitches of the tenor part are the final pitches of the first Gregorian fragment Krenek mentions in the introduction.\textsuperscript{94} This motive has the sound of a modal cadence. While the cadential sound is partially obscured by the surrounding chromatic pitches, the return to F provides a sense of closure to the entire first section.

Throughout the work the refrains become increasingly dissonant, yet the tonal implications remain perceptible. In the final refrain, set for nine voices, the tonal implications are highly obscured, but nonetheless present. In the alto part, where the modal material is frequently found in previous sections, the section begins with pitch A, which is followed almost immediately by the consonant collection F-A-C, the same collection as a tonal F major triad. Though the ending of the movement is highly dissonant, at the top of the texture the soprano part ends with the pitch sequence B flat-A-G-F. Because this motive is presented in the highest voice, it is clearly audible. The structural implication for the entire work is clear, as the music ends on the same F on which it began.

In order to define the close of musical sections, Krenek uses melodic material that resembles modal cadential patterns. These patterns are not actually modal cadences, which require at minimum an octave approached through contrary motion. However, many sections end with melodic lines moving by step, reminiscent of a modal

\textsuperscript{93} Krenek, \textit{Lamentatio Jeremiae Prophetae}, 28.
\textsuperscript{94} Krenek, \textit{Lamentatio Jeremiae Prophetae}, 3.
cadence. The predetermined pitch material of *Lamentatio*, which is primarily scalar, lends itself to such implications. One example is this implied cadence on pitch F.


In this instance, pitch F is approached by contrary motion from pitches E flat and G, reminiscent of a modal cadence. While this instance is not a true modal cadence, the sequence of pitches creates a strong sense of closure. In another instance, the close of a section is approached in contrary motion by step in two voices, though the final interval is a consonant minor 6th rather than an octave or unison.\(^95\) While this passage is considerably different from a true modal cadence, the implication is clear. In addition to providing closure to formal sections, these scalar closing patterns serve another important formal purpose, establishing F as an implied tonal center. Each of the nine lessons in *Lamentatio* ends with pitch F in one voice approached by step.

Another formal device that Krenek borrows from modal polyphony is canon. Many varieties of canons are found in the music of composers of the 15\(^{th}\) and 16\(^{th}\)

centuries. The *Missa Prolationum*, one of most famous works of Ockeghem, is a work constructed entirely of canons.\textsuperscript{96}

In *Lamentatio*, Krenek explores a wide variety of canonic devices. Some canons are simple, such as the “migravit Judas” section, a two-voice canon at the tritone.\textsuperscript{97} Other canons are more complicated, such as the “cogita Dominus” section, described in the score as “Canon, a 4, per augmentation, et motu contrario.”\textsuperscript{98} In this canon for four voices, the rhythmic values of the first voice are doubled in the second voice, and the pitches of the second voice are the inversion of the first. Octave displacement in some voices makes the canon even more difficult to decipher.\textsuperscript{99}

One canon that shows the particular influence of 15\textsuperscript{th} century forms is the sixth refrain, labeled “Canon, a 6, cancrizans.”\textsuperscript{100} This type of canon is commonly referred to as a “crab” because some voices are the exact reverse of others, as if walking backward. For example, the opening pitches of the movement in the first alto part are exactly reversed to close the movement in the bass part. The pitches of the second entry, in the first tenor part, are found in reverse to end the movement in the first alto part. These canonic elements are not heard but provide a means of organizing the musical materials of the movement.

Another influence of modal polyphony on *Lamentatio* is the *cantus firmus* technique. In his introduction, Krenek states that the fragments of Gregorian chant he identifies serve as a sort of *cantus firmus*, especially in some sections.\textsuperscript{101}

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\textsuperscript{96} Krenek, *Johannes Ockeghem*, 69.
\textsuperscript{97} Krenek, *Lamentatio Jeremiae Prophetae*, 9.
\textsuperscript{98} Krenek, *Lamentatio Jeremiae Prophetae*, 29.
\textsuperscript{100} Krenek, *Lamentatio Jeremiae Prophetae*, 48.
Krenek exploits the commonality between the twelve-tone technique and the cantus firmus technique. In compositions based on a cantus firmus, the cantus firmus is often presented in such long note values that it is not easily identified by the listener. Like the prime row in twelve-tone music, the cantus firmus represents a “cornerstone” of the musical structure, but is not actually heard as a musical motive. The cantus firmus may also serve as a generator of melodic material, but is only a melodic starting point. In Lamentatio, the prime row, which acts as a cantus firmus is not easily identified in the music. However, it is not totally hidden and its musical characteristics can be heard constantly throughout the work. The tone row, like a cantus firmus, is not a theme or recurring melody, but rather a hidden element of musical structure.

102 Krenek, Johannes Ockeghem, 38.
CHAPTER V
RHYTHM AND METER

One of the greatest performance challenges of *Lamentatio* is the rhythm. In particular, the rhythmic notation is atypical of 20th century choral music. The score contains no time signatures or barlines. Double barlines are used to denote the end of formal sections, but the music proceeds for vast stretches of time without a double barline. Krenek does provide performers one important clue, metronome marking at the beginning of each section. In addition to indicating a possible speed of performance, this marking indicates which note value should receive the tactus, or primary metric beat. These metronome markings indicate that the half note should receive the tactus throughout the work.

Though creating a challenge for performers, Krenek actually omits these expected metric elements in order to simplify performance of the music and to further his expressive intentions. Krenek explains in his introduction to the score that the rhythm and meter of *Lamentatio* are based upon principles he discovered during his study of the polyphony of the 15th century. In his writings, Krenek laments the placement of barlines in modern editions of polyphonic music, as barlines obstruct “a clear understanding of (the music’s) character.” He further says that “if one omits the barlines…an entirely different and rather surprising picture of that music emerges.”

The character of the rhythmic gestures of *Lamentatio* is also unexpected in a twelve-tone work. The rhythms are generally simple and repetitive. The music consists primarily of whole notes, half notes, and quarter notes. In many cases, whole notes are

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104 Krenek, *Johannes Ockeghem*, 57.
dotted or tied together to create very long values. Few eighth notes are found; rarely is any sense of syncopation created. The settings of acrostic letters are the clearest examples of the abundance of whole and half notes in *Lamentatio*. For example, the first acrostic letter, “aleph,” contains only whole and half notes, with the exception of two dotted-whole notes, which create an even longer value, that of three half notes. 105 The setting of the acrostic letter “Ghimel” contains several very long values, including four whole notes tied together. 106 These rhythmic characteristics are typical of the music of Ockeghem and his contemporaries.

Twelve-tone compositions are most often composed in a more active and complicated rhythmic style. In his treatise on twelve-tone counterpoint, Krenek writes that in twelve-tone compositions “rhythmic liveliness is a vital requirement.” 107 To prove the point, he includes dozens of examples, nearly all containing a wide variety of rhythmic values, including many short note values and frequent syncopations. 108 In the same volume, Krenek specifically warns against the type of rhythms that pervade *Lamentatio*. He writes that such “protracted use of unaltered rhythmic patterns results in a monotony less admissible in this style than in any other idiom.” 109

White-note notation is a term describing music dominated by whole and half note rhythmic values. This style of notation is associated with the modal polyphony of the 15th and 16th centuries. Around the middle of the 15th century, longs and breves, the most prevalent rhythmic values, began to be left white rather than filled in with ink. 110

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108 See Krenek, *Studies in Counterpoint Twelve-Tone*, 4-14.
When this music is transcribed into modern notation these note values are typically converted to whole notes and half notes, note values which are also not filled in with ink. Because the quarter-note is typically assigned the tactus from the baroque period to present day, the use of this white-note notation is unique to music composed before 1600 or music that emulates it.

Krenek’s choice of note values does not necessarily affect the performance of the music; any note values can be performed at any speed. However, his choice of note values does provide stylistic clues to the performers. These note values give the score a particular look that is unique to 15th and 16th century polyphony, implying that the music should be performed according to the rules of performance practice of that style.

Krenek’s decision to omit meter from *Lamentatio* is intended to eliminate unnecessary metrical accents. One important role of meter in the music of the Common Practice Period is to provide a hierarchy of accents. The use of a particular meter signature typically indicates to the performers which beats should receive more stress than others. One characteristic common to all meter signatures is that the beat following each barline receives the most stress.

Krenek omits meter signatures and barlines so that the performers will seek other motivations for the relative stress of notes, as they would in performing earlier polyphony. Krenek writes that in polyphonic music “every melodic phrase unfolds according to its own law, without any tone being automatically thrown into relief on account of a pre-existing pattern.”\(^{111}\) In modal polyphony, performers can look to both the text and the length of notes to determine rhythmic accent. Generally longer (and higher) notes are more stressed than shorter (and lower) notes. Likewise, in

\(^{111}\) Krenek, *Johannes Ockeghem*, 46.
Lamentatio the rhythm affirms the natural stress of the text and long notes usually accompany stressed syllables.¹¹²

One example of the relationship between text and rhythm is this excerpt from the soprano part:

![Example 7: Ernst Krenek, Lamentatio Jeremiae Prophetae, op. 93, p. 37.](image)

In this excerpt, longer notes set the accented syllables of each word, while shorter notes set the unaccented syllables. The rhythm of the passage also matches the grammar of the passage. The first syllable of the first word is set with whole notes, as is the following “te,” which is followed by a rest. This rhythm shows that the adjoining notes are one idea, in this case a question. The shorter note values in the next section give the impression of increased intensity, building to the whole note on the accented syllable of “Jerusalem.” This whole note, which represents the highest and longest note to that point, shows that the word “Jerusalem” is the climax of the text to that point.

Another example of the relationship between text and rhythm is this passage:

¹¹² Krenek, Lamentatio Jeremiae Prophetae, 4.
This text is translated “they clap their hands.” As in the previous passage, Krenek uses note lengths to bring out accented and unaccented syllables. However, the rhythmic values also complement the meaning of the text. In this case, those who clap their hands do so in mockery of the daughter of Jerusalem. The brief melisma on the accented syllable of “plaeuserunt,” gives the impression of laughter. As the phrase progresses the note values get shorter, culminating in the dotted rhythm. This dotted rhythm is made more dramatic by the inclusion of an eighth note; eighth notes are used sparingly throughout the work. This rhythmic snap could give the listener the impression of a hand clap. Again, the text provides meaning to an otherwise long and shapeless series of notes.
CHAPTER VI

EXPRESSIVE MARKINGS

The score of *Lamentatio* contains no expressive markings of any kind. The few slurs found in the score merely explain the text underlay and do not provide any interpretive guidance. The performer is left to make countless interpretive decisions, many of which are typically made by the composer. Twelve-tone composers typically seek to control every possible element of their creations. In his treatise on twentieth-century counterpoint, Krenek admonishes the twelve-tone composer to “use expression marks to fit the metric, rhythmic, and agogic meaning of every note exactly.” In the musical example that follows this statement, Krenek applies some sort of expressive mark to nearly every note. Most twelve-tone pieces are filled with dynamic markings, accents, staccatos, slurs, and every other type of expressive marking. In *Lamentatio* such markings are absent.

This lack of markings is typical of 15th century modal counterpoint, and shows again the strong influence of that style on *Lamentatio*. The musical notation indicates only pitch and rhythm. At times the text underlay is clear, but at times even the text underlay is left to the performer. However, composers of this period often use texture, tessitura, rests, and other elements to create dynamics, accents, and other effects. Recognizing the influence of 15th century music on *Lamentatio* allows performers to apply the performance practice conventions of that style to its music.

Although the score contains no slurs except to indicate text underlay, the style of the music of *Lamentatio* probably indicates that performers should sing the notes legato.

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unless a musical line is broken by a rest or the performer desires a separation for an interpretive purpose. This assumption can be carried from modal polyphony, a style in which legato is generally assumed. Throughout the score Krenek uses rests to break melodic lines for effect. For example, in this instance Krenek creates a marcato effect by placing quarter rests in between syllables:


In another instance in the same section, Krenek creates separation within a melodic line using rests, perhaps to create emphasis:


Krenek’s frequent use of rests to create interpretive separations within phrases may suggest that in absence of such rests the music is intended to be sung legato.

Although the score contains no dynamics, Krenek uses other musical elements both to indicate dynamic contrasts to the performers and to create contrasts naturally. One such element is the natural phrasing of the text. One example is Krenek’s setting of the text “dicentes.”
Example 11: Ernst Krenek, *Lamentatio Jeremiae Prophatae*, op. 93, p. 41. With kind permission of Bärenreiter-Verlag, Kassel.

Were no text attached to these brief phrases, the performer would have no inkling of the composer's intent for the shape of this phrase. However, applying the polyphonic principle of shaping phrases according to the text, the performer will likely choose to sing the second note more loudly and with more weight than the first and third notes.

Another example is this phrase:

If the text is ignored, a performer could interpret this phrase in several different ways. However, according to the natural annunciation of the text, the first syllable of the word “Juda” receives considerable accent. For that reason, the performer would likely sing the penultimate quarter note more loudly than would be warranted by purely musical considerations.

Krenek’s use of texture provides another important performance clue for performers. Composers of modal polyphony often use tessitura to affect both loudness and timbre in their music. Higher notes indicate a brighter and louder sound, while lower notes indicate a softer and darker sound. In many instances, 20th century composers use dynamic markings to counteract this effect, often placing great demands on performers. The score of *Lamentatio* contains no such dynamic markings, and tessitura is one important indication of Krenek’s intentions.

One example is the repetitive iterations of the acrostic letter “Ghimel,” as in this example:
From the tessitura a performer can assume that this phrase is intended to create a crescendo. The rapidly ascending pitches will naturally be sung with increasing loudness, unless the performers work to counteract this effect. Because the music provides no indication to avoid the crescendo, performers can assume that it represents Krenek’s intention for the phrase.

Another example is the setting of the acrostic letter “Heth”:

The sopranos are tacit and the altos are divided and the notes are low in the singing range. From these facts, performers may hypothesize that this passage is to be sung softly. The subsequent pitch descent in all parts creates a natural decrescendo to the close of the section. In this case, Krenek’s dynamic effects would be difficult for
performers to mitigate because the altos of modern choirs are generally women, for whom these pitches would be very low. Performers can use tessitura and other clues to determine whether to allow the effects to occur naturally or whether to accentuate them further.

Another instance is this example from the end of the first refrain, which is set monophonically with the single melodic line passing between parts:


A decrescendo can be assumed from the gradual descent of this melodic line. These pitches in the alto part are low in pitch and as the pitches descend, they are likely to be sung more softly and with a more mellow quality than if the same pitches had, for example, been scored in the tenor part.

Although the score of *Lamentatio* contains no articulation markings, Krenek uses rhythm to create accent and other effects of articulation. One example is declamatory setting of the word “dicentes,” as seen above in example 11. 115 The rests that separate each repetition of “dicentes,” augmented by homophonic rhythm in three parts, create a strong sense of agogic accent.

Another instance is found in this example from final refrain, near the end of the entire work:

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Example 16: Ernst Krenek, *Lamentatio Jeremiae Prophatae*, op. 93, p. 73.
With kind permission of Bärenreiter-Verlag, Kassel.

The rests placed between iterations of the word “convertere” create a sense of emphasis. The word “convertere” is used as a command in this instance, pleading with the people of Jerusalem to return to God. As the work progresses these refrains become increasing desperate and emphatic. In this example, this meaning is partially created by the use of rests. Another example of Krenek’s use of rests for emphasis is found in this example:
Example 17: Ernst Krenek, *Lamentatio Jeremiae Prophatae*, op. 93, p. 66. With kind permission of Bärenreiter-Verlag, Kassel.

The word “recordare” in this text can be translated as the imperative tense of the verb “remember.” The repetitions of the text, separated by rests, create a sense of emphasis on each repetition. This effect of emphasis draws attention to the imperative nature of the text.
CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

*Lamentatio* is a work modeled after the modal contrapuntal compositions of 15th century composers, particularly Johannes Ockeghem. Its music fuses the characteristics of this earlier music with modern twelve-tone compositional technique. *Lamentatio* is an intensely personal and autobiographical work, inspired by Krenek’s philosophical, musical, and geographical isolation from his native Austria.

Although the work is composed as a lament for Austrian culture, the music of *Lamentatio* is most influenced by the music of Ockeghem and other Franco-Flemish composers of the 15th century, rather than Austrian composers. One possible explanation for this influence is Krenek’s sense of personal kinship with Ockeghem. Krenek writes that historians have recounted that “Ockeghem at the end of his life was an isolated figure, since the trend of the period was rapidly moving away from the ideals that animated his creative work.”116 Krenek also writes of Ockeghem as “a man who was by no means a conformist, who dared to venture into territories off the beaten track according to his own lights.”117 Krenek may also have felt a sense of reassurance that a composer such as Ockeghem, considered a non-conformist in his own day, would in later centuries be widely considered a master of composition.

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117 Krenek, *Johannes Ockeghem*, 84.
WORKS CITED


