

Musical Speech Analogy in Ernő Dohnányi's *Der Schleier der Pierrette*

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Abstract: Following a brief survey into the history of the *ballet d'action*, the article examines the techniques of *musique parlante* Dohnányi used in his pantomime *Der Schleier der Pierrette*. The subcategories illustrated with music examples include the direct speech imitation (focusing on the syllabic and rhythmic structure of single words) and the musical analogy of the question-answer complex. The analytical overview is extended to further indirect categories such as the recitative-like structures (built up not merely on speech, but on an already emancipated equivalent, the instrumental recitative) and the leitmotif technique which – although being more distant from speech – can, in some cases, still be seen as part of *musique parlante*. In an attempt to describe the position of *Der Schleier der Pierrette* in ballet music history, the author addresses Béla Bartók's reception of Dohnányi's pantomime and distinguishes the tradition followed by Dohnányi from the denial of *musique parlante* characteristic of the works Igor Stravinsky composed for the *Ballets Russes*.

Keywords: Ernő Dohnányi, *Der Schleier der Pierrette*, *ballet d'action*, *musique parlante*

Ernő Dohnányi labelled *Der Schleier der Pierrette* [The Veil of the Pierrette] a pantomime, a broadly defined term referring to very diverse characteristics in different genres. In this article I want to examine the pantomime from a music-historical point of view.¹ Ever since Jean-George Noverre's ballet reform, in his *Let-*

1. This article is partly an addendum to my doctoral thesis *Béla Bartók's Handlungsballette in ihrer musikalischen Gattungstradition* [Béla Bartók's *ballets d'action* and the Musical History of the Genre], (Berlin: Köster, 2012) which focuses on Bartók's two ballets and on the development of action analogising techniques in ballet music since Gluck's *Don Juan*, the first actual *ballet d'action*. Herewith I want to thank László

tres sur la danse et les ballets (1760),² the ‘pantomime’ together with the ‘danse’ has constituted the elementary parts of the *ballet d’action*. Noverre describes the ‘danse’ as being much more than the previous divertissements, where “dances were thoughtlessly thrown onto stage without any dramatic reason.”³ The ‘pantomime,’ however, has a special function: it conveys the action to the audience.

The action in dance is the art to touch the audience’s spirit with our feelings and passions through the real expression of our movements, of our gestures and of our physiognomy. The action is therefore nothing else than the pantomime.⁴

Within this new definition of ballet and especially of the pantomime’s function in the *ballet d’action*, Noverre attributed a role of uppermost importance to the music and therefore to the composer of ballet music: “the *danse en action* is the organ that has to explain clearly the ideas written in the music.”⁵ It is highly important to specify Noverre’s perception of ballet music. In the opinion of Dorion Weickmann, Noverre even goes so far as to declare “that a musical score would pre-set and manipulate the actions and movements of the performer. The protagonist [and also the choreographer] was supposed to translate music into gesture, make its meaning transparent.”⁶

Consequently, ballet music composers suddenly stood in front of new challenges, notably to communicate the action through their music to the dancers and, finally, to the audience. One of the earliest techniques in the *ballet d’action* (cf. for example Beethoven’s *Die Geschöpfe des Prometheus*) with which an analogy of action could be made, and which became diversified in the 19th and 20th centuries, was the imitation or more precisely the musical analogy of human speech, that took place in the pantomime parts of the ballets, as Marian Smith points out:

[Ballet m]usic often provided the sound of the human voice too. In some cases, a solo instrument played a recitative as performers on stage mimed. (A fine example may be heard today in the trombone “voice” of a street entertainer in August Bournonville’s *Napoli*, first produced in Copenhagen in 1842.) In oth-

Vikárius, head of the Budapest Bartók Archives, who was the first to mention the connection between Bartók’s and Dohnányi’s ballets and told me about Bartók’s article “Schönberg and Stravinsky Enter ‘Christian-National’ Budapest Without Bloodshed,” in which Bartók mentions Dohnányi’s *Veil*. Furthermore, I want to thank Veronika Kusz from the Dohnányi Archives in Budapest who helped me in the preparation of this paper.

2. Jean-George Noverre, *Lettres sur la danse et sur les ballets* (Lyon: Delaroché, 1760).

3. Judith Chazin-Bennahum, “Jean-George Noverre: dance and reform,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Ballet*, ed. Marion Kant (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 87–97, here 95.

4. Noverre, *Lettres*, 262: “L’action en mati[è]re de Danse est l’Art de faire passer par l’expression vraie de nos mouvements, de nos gestes & de la physionomie, nos sentiments & nos passions dans l’[â]me des Spectateurs. L’action n’est donc autre chose que la Pantomime.”

5. Noverre, *Lettres*, 142–143: “la Danse en action est l’organe qui doit rendre, & qui doit expliquer clairement les idées écrites de la Musique.”

6. Dorion Weickmann, “Choreography and narrative: the *ballet d’action* of the eighteenth century,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Ballet*, 51–64, here 60.

ers, the rhythm of the music matched that of key phrases of text written in the libretto (for instance, “écoutez-moi” (listen to me) in a key scene in *La Somnambule*, 1827). In still others, composers used syncopation, dotted rhythms, a wide tessitura or a phrase-ending uptilt to imitate the sound of spoken French.⁷

Smith refers to this technique as “speechlike (or *parlante*) music,” meaning music “that imitate[s] the human voice in a far less obvious fashion.”⁸ I would like to call this technique ‘*musique parlante*,’ following on one side the tradition of the French ballet terms, but implying, on the other, any kind of speech imitation or analogy.

Shortly after Noverre’s reform, ballet music scores were accompanied by stage directions, written directly in the full score or in the piano reduction; they helped dancers, choreographers, and the audience⁹ to orientate in the music. It is astonishing to recognise that many of these stage directions were inscribed in direct speech, even if – of course – these were not spoken out loud. As we will see, this does not mean at all that every stage direction in direct speech was musically analogised, nor that those in indirect speech were not potentially analogised. In the scenario of *Der Schleier der Pierrette* the abundance of Arthur Schnitzler’s stage directions in direct speech, that Helmut Vollmer explained as “Orientierung am Wortdrama” [orientation towards the spoken drama],¹⁰ seems to be located both programmatically and symbiotically in the context of the turn-of-the-century “speech crisis” (Sprachkrise). Arthur Schnitzler is, in my opinion, demanding and searching for new subtle speech forms with this abundance of direct speech stage directions. And indeed, Dohnányi followed this demand in *Der Schleier der Pierrette* absolutely adequately, by presenting a huge portfolio of diverse possibilities of speech imitation and analogy. It seems important to mention that the techniques of ‘*musique parlante*’ are definitely to be found in 19th- and 20th-century ballet music, but the speech analogy did not play such a dominant role ever before the *Pierrette*.

As *Pierrette* has been quite unconsidered both in Schnitzler and in Dohnányi research, it might be useful first to begin with a quick historical introduction, followed by a short summary.

Ernő Dohnányi completed his pantomime *Der Schleier der Pierrette* in 1909,¹¹ based on Arthur Schnitzler’s work with the same title which was also the basis

7. Marian Smith, “The orchestra as translator: French nineteenth-century ballet,” *ibid.*, 138–150, here 140.

8. Marian Smith, *Ballet and Opera in the Age of Giselle* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 111.

9. The stage directions (in libretto/scenario form) were sometimes published ahead of a performance.

10. Cf. Hartmut Vollmer, “Die Poetisierung stummer Traumbilder: Arthur Schnitzlers Pantomime ‘Der Schleier der Pierrette,’” *Sprachkunst. Beiträge zur Literaturwissenschaft* 38/2 (2007), 219–241, here 240: “Dass Schnitzlers Pantomimen sich von einer Orientierung am Wortdrama nicht völlig lösen konnten, dokumentieren die dialogische Struktur und einige [...] Redepassagen der Stücke.”

11. On the last page (page 347) of the handwritten full score of *Der Schleier der Pierrette* (Music Collection of the National Széchényi Library, Budapest, Ms. Mus. 2.994) which probably is a printer’s copy, are two dates: Grunewald, 27. April [1]909 (in black ink used for the basic layer) and Pressburg, 6. Sept[ember] 1]909 (in red ink used for revisions).

for his drama *Der Schleier der Beatrice*.¹² *Pierrette* was premiered on 22 January 1910 in the Königliches Opernhaus of Dresden with Ernst von Schuch as conductor and Miklós Guerra's choreography compiled with Dohnányi's help. In the following years the work was performed among others in Vienna, London, Berlin, and Copenhagen. Beside the premiere in Dresden, it was especially the Budapest premiere on 7 May 1910 that led to positive reviews such as:

It is first of all the work of one brilliant composer, whose music under the mute action had been formed, following the lyrical, dramatic and scenic intention of the librettist. Merely the beauty and esprit would suffice to attribute this double work fine artistic importance.¹³

The next important step in the history of this work is Dohnányi's cooperation with his future second wife Elsa Galafrés, who in 1913 compiled a new choreography that granted the piece substantial renewed interest.¹⁴ It was this choreography, fully maintained by entries and remarks in Elsa Galafrés' personal piano reduction, deposited at the Archives and Research Group for 20th- and 21th-Century Hungarian Music of the Institute for Musicology in Budapest, that was performed, at least at the Budapest opera house, until after the 1920s and that led Béla Bartók to write the following in an article, published in February 1921:

This pantomime does not stand for mass effect or startling decorations pandering to cheap tastes, but demands gestures of unhackneyed refinement and noble expressiveness. Thanks to Mme. Dohnányi-Galafrés' finished art, which she also revealed in the stage management and in the preparation of the other roles, the scenic performance was a perfect one.¹⁵

12. Cf. Vollmer, "Die Poetisierung stummer Traumbilder," 219–241. Vollmer proves with documents that *Der Schleier der Pierrette* was basically used for *Der Schleier der Beatrice*.

13. "[Es ist] die Arbeit vor Allem eines genialen Tonkünstlers, in dessen Musik unter der stummen Aktion die subtilsten lyrischen, dramatischen und szenischen Intentionen des Textdichters in Formen zum Klingen gebracht werden, deren Schönheit und Geist allein hinreichen würde, dem Doppelwerk vornehmste künstlerische Bedeutung zu richten." This article, entitled "Theater, Kunst und Literatur – Der Schleier der Pierrette, Pantomime in drei Bildern von Arthur Schnitzler, Musik von Ernst von Dohnányi [sic!]. Erste Aufführung in der königlichen Oper [Budapest] am 7. Mai 1910," is glued on the last page of the first flute part (National Széchényi Library, Music Collection, ZB 33/c) that had been (together with the other parts) probably used for the Budapest premiere and further performances. Unfortunately the origin, the exact date of publication and the author are not mentioned. (Many Budapest performance dates are inscribed on the first and second pages in the harp part, *ibid.*, ZB 33/c).

14. Of course there were other choreographies between 1910 and 1913.

15. Béla Bartók, "Schönberg and Stravinsky Enter 'Christian-National' Budapest Without Bloodshed," *Documenta Bartókiana* 5 (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1977), 72.

Summary of *Der Schleier der Pierrette*

(First picture) Pierrot is sitting alone in his room, yearning for his Pierrette. Lost in his thoughts, he falls asleep. His friends, Fred, Florestan, Annette, and Alumette enter the stage and meet Pierrot's valet, who is looking for his master. After having found Pierrot, they try to distract him from his lovesickness, but Pierrot dismisses them. Pierrette unexpectedly appears in her wedding dress (with her veil, as symbol of her virginity), for her parents have betrothed her to Arlechino, and she wants to commit suicide together with Pierrot by drinking poison. Pierrette removes her veil (as symbol for her deflowering) and due to a hesitation, being not really certain about the suicide, only Pierrot dies and Pierrette runs away anxiously. (Second picture) The wedding guests that Pierrette had left in the first picture notice her absence. After a fruitless search for Pierrette, Arlechino, her fiancé, swears revenge. But, once again, Pierrette appears unexpectedly and everything seems to return to normal. Only visible to Pierrette, the dead Pierrot appears three times, the last time with her veil, whose absence Arlechino remarks immediately. He forces her to lead him to the veil. (Third picture) Back in Pierrot's room, Arlechino discovers her disloyalty and locks her up alone in the room. Pierrette goes insane and dances herself to death in a grotesque *danse macabre*.¹⁶

Direct syllabic speech imitation

“Because there are some words,
which build up their own melodies, like these.”
(Arthur Schnitzler)¹⁷

When Marian Smith describes “the rhythm of the music match[ing] that of key phrases of text written in the libretto,”¹⁸ she is primarily talking about a very direct speech imitation. We already find examples for this kind of speech-like music in Ambroise Thomas' *La Gypsy* or in Adolphe Adam's *Giselle*, but also in early 20-century ballets, especially in Béla Bartók's *The Miraculous Mandarin*.¹⁹

16. In this article I want to focus on Dohnányi's music. For further information on relevant themes for *Pierrette* used in other works of Schnitzler, cf. for example: Sol Liptzin, “The Call of Death and the Lure of Love. A Study in Schnitzler,” *The German Quarterly* (Oxford: American Association of Teachers of German), 5/1 (January 1932), 21–36; or Frederick J. Beharriell, “Schnitzler's Anticipation of Freud's Dream Theory,” *Monatshefte* (University of Wisconsin Press), 45/2 (February 1953), 81–89.

17. “Denn Worte gibt's, / Die selbst sich ihre Melodie erschaffen, / Und diese sind davon.” Arthur Schnitzler, “Der Schleier der Beatrice,” *Gesammelte Werke*, Bd 3: *Die dramatischen Werke* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1962), 555.

18. Smith, “The orchestra as translator,” 140.

19. Cf. the chapter “musique parlante” in Lebon, *Béla Bartók's Handlungsballette*. To give a few examples of speech-like music in Béla Bartók's *The Miraculous Mandarin*, I mention the following: the three chords at fig. 17¹¹ referring to the three syllables of the girl's question: “Van pénzéd?” [Got any money?]. These chords

In these cases the focus of the musical speech imitation often resides on syllables and/or on the speech emphasis pattern. In this context it might seem important to mention that Dohnányi's pantomime had been conceived completely in German (as Arthur Schnitzler was Austrian and Dohnányi was subsequently appointed to a professorship in Berlin). This point, as incidental it may appear, is indeed significant and should be worked out in every analysis of ballet music – even though the words are actually not spoken. The direct syllabic imitation we find in Ambroise Thomas' or in Adolphe Adam's works are therefore in French, those in Béla Bartók's ballets in Hungarian, and can only be analysed taking into consideration these languages.

In Dohnányi's *Der Schleier der Pierrette* we find syllabic speech imitations – of course the words are definitely not spoken – at several moments of the score.²⁰ The first quite obvious one is placed at fig. 23⁴⁻⁵, just after Pierrot's friends find him asleep on the divan. Florestin asks: “was ist mit Dir geschehen?” [What happened to you?]. In Pierrot's answer (*Example 1a*) the speech imitation clearly takes place syllabically – the three chords correspond to the three syllables of the answer “Fragt (1) mich (2) nicht (3).” [Don't ask me]. Furthermore the diatonically descending upper voice follows the characteristic style of an answer, which will be discussed in the next chapter (question-answer complex). Only a few bars later, at fig. 24⁴⁻⁵ (*Example 1b*), Pierrot echoes his answer, getting even more dynamic: “Laßt mich doch.” [Leave me after all]. Once more Dohnányi's intention of imitating speech by focusing the syllabic speech structure is obvious (compare violins 1 and 2 in the full score,²¹ at fig. 24⁴⁻⁵). This dynamic augmentation that can be observed in Pierrot's statements may be recognised in the music too. Dohnányi simply inverts the direction of the last note and changes the descending answer (*Example 1a*) to an ascending demand (*Example 1b*). Finally, also Elsa Galafrés enhances the situation choreographically by contrasting a fending-off move (“abwehrende Bewegung,” *Example 1a*) to a reluctant fend (“wehrt unwilling ab,” *Example 1b*).

are part of the question-answer complex “Van pénzed? A pénz mellékes...” [Got any money? Never mind money...]. Finally, recitative-like structures are to be found at fig. 39: “Gyere közelebb...” [Come closer...].

20. The examples of Dohnányi's music in this article, reproduced with the permission of the publisher Ludwig Doblinger (Bernhard Herzmannsky) KG, Vienna, are taken from the piano reduction of *Der Schleier der Pierrette* belonging to Elsa Galafrés. The source DA 2.098 can be found at the Archives and Research Group for 20th- and 21st-Century Hungarian Music of the Institute for Musicology, RCH, HAS in Budapest. It contains Galafrés' complete inscriptions of the choreography that was worked out (partly together with Dohnányi) for the 1913 production in Budapest; at least some of the inscriptions go back to the composer. Cf. Elsa Galafrés, *Lives... Loves... Losses* (Vancouver: Versatile Publishing, 1973), 174: “I picked up the piano score [of *Der Schleier der Pierrette*], in which, I had already made marks and notations, and handed it to him [Dohnányi...]. He took it from me turning the pages to complete the marking of the motifs which would make for quicker and easier studying of the melody and phrases.” There is even a small indication in Arthur Schnitzler's diary concerning this collaboration: “Dohnanyi [sic!] kam, von Fr. Galafrés [sic!], mit der er die Pierrette durchgenommen hat.” [Dohnányi just came from Elsa Galafrés, with whom he had gone through the *Pierrette*]. Arthur Schnitzler, *Tagebuch 1909–1912* (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaft, 1918), 303 (1912: II, 12).

21. Ernő Dohnányi, *Der Schleier der Pierrette – Pantomime in drei Bildern* (full score, Vienna: Doblinger, 1910).

EXAMPLE 1a–b Dohnányi, *Der Schleier der Pierrette* DA 2.098, page 14

In another answer of Pierrot, Dohnányi presents an even more simple syllabic imitation structure. In the Pierrot-Pierrette scene (part 1, scene 6) Pierrot replies: “Nein, mir graut” [No, I dread it] (*Example 2*). In this case the composer is only focusing on the rhythmic-syllabic structure of Pierrot’s answer, repeating the same A major seventh chord three times. This of course seems to be a quite simple way to imitate speech, but we should not forget that one of the major reasons why speech is imitated is the transparency for the audience. Dohnányi uses quite often this kind of repetitive rhythmic-syllabic imitation in a more stylised way, i.e. he does not follow precisely the number of syllables. For instance at fig. 157² (Arlechino’s laughter),²² or at fig. 161⁵ (Arlechino: “So trink doch” [Drink after all]). We may even mention in this subcategory a harmonised trill which consists of two alternating chords, for example in Arlechino’s statements at fig. 129¹–130¹¹, at fig. 139^{7–15}, or at fig. 153^{1–9}. In some other cases Dohnányi reduces the repetitions to only one single note for instance at fig. 46^{1–3} (Pierrette: “Was kümmert Dich das jetzt?” [Why should it bother you now?]), at fig. 129^{4–16} (Pierrette: “Ich kann nichts anderes antworten.” [I can’t answer anything else.]), at fig. 139^{1–3} (Arlechino: “Elende...” [You miserable...]), or at fig. 153¹⁰ (Arlechino: “Hier hat er Dich in den Armen gehalten.” [So he embraced you here.]).

A last type of syllabic speech imitation might have been intended in analogy to Pierrette’s call in the ultimate scene of the piece. Unfortunately the call is not mentioned in direct speech in Schnitzler’s stage directions: “[Pierrette] sieht Arlechino fortgehen, ruft ihn zurück.” [Pierrette sees Arlechino going, calls him back]. Nevertheless Elsa Galafrés wrote the word “Ruf” [Call] under each of the motif’s three repetitions in the woodwinds (*Example 3*).²³

22. In *Der Schleier der Pierrette* the laughter has the function of mocking (fig. 22¹, fig. 64¹⁰, and fig. 157^{1–2}). It is remarkable that Dohnányi does not repeat identical motifs, but adapts the musical structures to the actual situations.

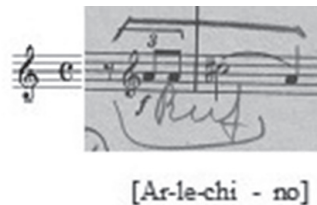
23. Note that Jan Brandts-Buys also mentioned this example in connection with the ‘Ar-le-chi-no’ call; cf. Jan Brandts-Buys, *Der Schleier der Pierrette – Ein Führer durch das Werk* (Vienna: Doblinger, 1912), 17.

It is of no surprise that the four syllables of the name *Ar-le-chi-no* match with the four notes of the major third motif (with a stress on the third syllable ‘-chi-’). After the motif has appeared in its basic form, it is echoed in octaves, and finally (for the third time) it is repeated within chords/harmonies (F major^{5<}/A major), imitating the crescendo of Pierrette’s calls. This last example shows that musical speech imitation not only goes back to direct speech stage directions, but can be traced in many kinds of narrative directions. Marian Smith describes a similar case in François Benoist’s *La Gypsy* (see *Example 4*)²⁴ where “Lord Campbell demande où est sa fille.” [Lord Campbell asks where his daughter may be]. In this case too, the ascending four syllables describe the four syllables of the sentence. Indeed, in French opera this question would have been composed considering five syllables, as it is the tradition to respect even the unspoken syllables. But speech imitation or analogy in ballet music only considers the spoken syllables: in many cases textbooks were handed out ahead of the performance so that the audience could follow the action and could recognize a more natural (still unspoken) speech, where the last syllable ‘-le’ was and is indeed mute.

EXAMPLE 2 DA 2.098, page 23



EXAMPLE 3 DA 2.098, page 73

EXAMPLE 4 François Benoist, *La Gypsy*

24. Example taken from Smith, *Ballet and Opera*, 112.

Stylised question-answer complex

“How clear the questions and answers of the violins,
clarinets, flutes and oboes!”
(Elsa Galafrés)²⁵

The musical analogy of the question does have a time-honoured tradition in musicology. As this practice goes back to 16th-century *musica poetica*, it cannot be discussed here in a historically adequate manner.²⁶ We should nevertheless take a more precise look at the musical analogy of the question-answer structure in non-vocal genres, which takes us back to Beethoven's string quartet opus 135. The composer preceded the last movement *Der schwer gefaßte Entschluß* with the musical motto “Muss es sein? Es muss sein!” [Must it be? It must be!] (*Example 5*).²⁷

EXAMPLE 5 Beethoven, String quartet Op. 135

The image shows two musical staves. The first staff is in bass clef, 3/2 time signature, and is marked 'Grave'. It contains a sequence of notes: a dotted quarter note (G2), an eighth note (F2), a quarter note (E2), and a half note (D2) with a flat. Below this staff is the text 'Muss es sein?'. The second staff is in treble clef, 3/2 time signature, and is marked 'Allegro'. It contains a sequence of notes: a quarter note (G4), a half note (F4), and a whole note (E4). Below this staff is the text 'Es muss sein!'.

Even though these words are not spoken, Beethoven imitates the speech structure first of all by focusing on the syllabic structure discussed above. But furthermore, the character of the question has been analogised by raising the last note, copying the typical human voice uplift at the end of a question. In contrast, the answer – a kind of inversion of the question motif – has been composed with a falling fourth. This example, apparently having nothing to do with ballet music, reveals the composer Ludwig van Beethoven, who used parts of his *Prometheus* for his *Eroica* and therewith placed first ballet music and the techniques used in it in a symphonic context, in such a way that parts of this symphony cannot be explained as absolute music, i.e. without considering *Prometheus*' program.²⁸ Turning back to our topic, we may of course find further examples of question-answer structures in 19th-century ballet music, such as in Léo Delibes' *Coppélia*²⁹ – which

25. Galafrés, *Lives...*, 180.

26. Cf. Ariane Jeßulat, *Die Frage als musikalischer Topos. Studien zur Motivbildung in der Musik des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Sinzig: Schewe, 2001) (= *Berliner Musik Studien. Schriftenreihe zur Musikwissenschaft an den Berliner Hochschulen und Universitäten* 21).

27. An example of syllabic speech imitation can also be found in the three first chords of Beethoven's piano sonata *Les adieux*.

28. Cf. Constantin Floros, *Beethovens Eroica und Prometheus-Musik. Sujet-Studien* (Wilhelmshafen: Heinrichshofen, 1978).

29. First picture, No. 5 *Ballade*: “Wird man sie morgen vermählen? – Das ist noch nicht ausgemacht.” [Will they get espoused tomorrow? – This is not yet decided].

Dohnányi certainly knew quite well³⁰ – or in Peter Tchaikovsky's *The Sleeping Beauty*, where the stylised question-answer complex had even been requested by Marius Petipa.³¹ In most cases, the syllabic imitations are strictly separated from the question-answer analogy, but in some cases, as we will see in Dohnányi's pantomime, these techniques can be combined.

The first direct speech stage direction we find in the scenario of *Pierrette* is a short dialogue between Florestan/Fred and Pierrot's valet: "Fred, Florestan fragen den Diener[,] wo sein Herr sei [...] – Der Diener [...] 'Hier ist er gesessen'" [Fred, Florestan are asking the valet where his master is. The valet: 'he was sitting here']. Arthur Schnitzler footnoted this passage with the indication: "The dialogue parts of the text should of course also be mimed."³² It is very instructive to recognise that Dohnányi as well chose this dialogue for his first speech analogy (at fig. 10⁷⁻¹⁰, see *Example 6*).

EXAMPLE 6 Dohnányi, *Der Schleier der Pierrette* DA 2.098, page 9

Fred, Florestan fragen den Diener,
wo sein Herr sei. [...]

Der Diener [...] "Hier ist mein Herr gesessen."

The musical score consists of two staves, treble and bass clef, in common time. The first part, marked *p*, features an ascending chromatic line in the middle voice (violin/viola) that ends with a question mark. The second part, marked *pp*, features a descending line in the middle voice, answering the question. The harmonies in both parts are contrasting.

We may observe here two completely contrasting parts, the first one in analogy to the question, the second one imitating the answer. Within the melody of the first part one may see an ascending chromatic structure in the middle voice (violins and violas in the full score) leading to an imaginative question mark. On the other hand the second part goes completely down, answering the question. Furthermore, the parts' contrast is eminently accentuated by the harmonies. The

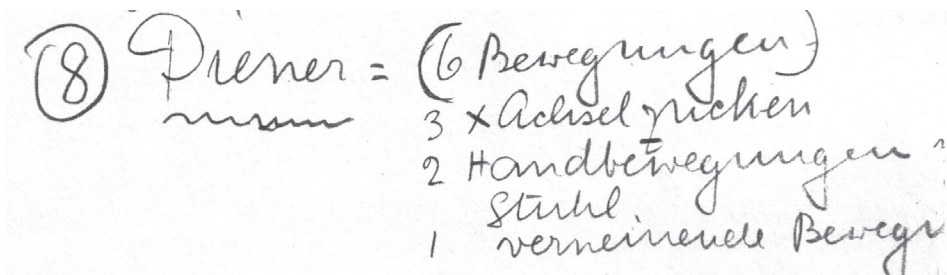
30. Before composing the pantomime, Dohnányi already published an adaptation of Léo Delibes' and Ludwig Minkus' *La source / Naila* (1897), and afterwards an arrangement of Delibes' *Coppélia* (1925). Cf. Deborah Kiszely-Papp, *Ernő Dohnányi* (Budapest: Mágus, 2001) (= *Hungarian Composers* 17), 33.

31. The following extract from the minutage to *The Sleeping Beauty* refers to the 'scene (No. 5)' of the second section that Petipa named the first act: "8 Takte für die Ankunft auf der Terrasse, danach 4 Takte für eine Frage und 4 Takte für eine Antwort, insgesamt viermal. Beispielsweise die Frage: Wohin führt Ihr diese Frauen? 4 Takte. Antwort: Ich führe sie ins Gefängnis." [8 bars for the arrival on the terrace, then 4 bars for one question and 4 bars for one answer, in total four times. For instance the question: Where are you conducting these women? 4 bars. Answer: I bring them to prison.] Marius Petipa, *Meister des klassischen Balletts – Selbstzeugnisse Dokumente Erinnerungen*, ed. Eberhard Rebling (Berlin: Henschelverlag, 1975), 123.

32. "Auch was im Text dialogartig gebracht ist, wird selbstverständlich nur pantomimisch ausgedrückt." Arthur Schnitzler, *Pierrette* (textbook), 4.

chromatic elements of the first part lead in connection with the leading-note A# (to B) in the upper voice to a dominant tension, so that we do not have the impression of reaching the desired E major, especially since the pedal note B is held in the bottom voice (violoncello in full score). The second part starts with quite unclear harmonies and turns then to an authentic cadence with the G dominant seventh chord turning to C major. And even the 'unclear harmonies' have their function. For this we should have a look at Elsa Galafrés' inscriptions, where the valet's answer is choreographed as follows: "Valet = (6 gestures) / 3 x shrug of the shoulders / 2 hand moves in direction of the chair / 1 negated gesture" (see *Plate 1*).

PLATE 1 Dohnányi, *Der Schleier der Pierrette* DA 2.098, notes to page 9



Dohnányi and Galafrés divided the valet's answer into two sections: the first three moves equivalent to the first three chords without any clear harmonic function for the upcoming cadence, the last three gestures corresponding to the last three chords, being all part of the cadence. The third chord D minor (of the first section) is the connector between the two parts, as being on the one side harmonically quite far away from C major, but taking on the other side the place of the subdominant F major as supertonic (subdominant parallel), being herewith part of the cadence. With this clear opposition of the question and the answer part(s) the audience is immediately able to recognise a small dialogue.

Another good example for the question-answer complex has already been partly discussed in the first chapter of this article (cf. *Example 1a*) and will be mentioned here once again shortly to demonstrate that the techniques of speech analogy are mostly used simultaneously. At fig. 23⁵ Fred (although Galafrés attributed this to Florestan) asks "Was ist denn mit Dir geschehen?" [What happened to you?] and Pierrot answers: "Fragt mich nicht." [Don't ask me] (see *Example 7*).

The *espressivo* question has clearly been underlined and overwritten with "Frage" [Question] in Elsa Galafrés' piano reduction. But more astonishing seems to be the fact that Dohnányi, in this case, did not return to the so typical ascending question end. Nevertheless, it should be mentioned that this question ends on an open dominant ninth chord, which then builds (in inversion) the starting point for

EXAMPLE 7 DA 2.098, page 14

The image shows a musical score for a scene from 'Pierrot'. It features two staves: a treble clef staff for the vocal line and a bass clef staff for the piano accompaniment. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. Measure 11 is marked with a circled '11' and the name 'Florestan'. The vocal line begins with the text 'Was ist denn mit Dir geschehn?'. The piano accompaniment is marked 'espress.' and has a 'frage' annotation. Measure 12 is marked with a circled '12' and the name 'Pierrot'. The vocal line begins with 'Fragt mich nicht'. The piano accompaniment is marked 'a tempo' and 'f'. The score ends with a piano (p) dynamic marking.

Pierrot's answer that finally ends on an E major dominant seventh chord. Herewith Dohnányi connected the two statements harmonically.

Contrary to the valet's answer, which closes with an authentic ending to C major, Dohnányi did not intend a closing cadence here, as the answer is semantically not closing either. But even if the cadence is not perfect and the question does not follow the natural ascending voice accentuation, the audience ought to recognise the dialogue situation, which is in this case even supported by different types of instruments: the clarinet for the question and the strings for the answer. In this instrumentation, in connection with the moving-on harmonies, lies another category of the technique of '*musique parlante*,' that I want to discuss now.

Recitative-like structures

“Music supports the player's gesture, speaks instead of him.”
(Ernst Neufeld on the premiere)³³

The category of recitative-like structures does not, contrary to the above mentioned techniques, stand directly in connection with human speech, but is orientated on one kind of already emancipated musical pendant of it: the recitative. One might say that the thesis that recitative embodies speech is quite banal, but we should mention once again that the recitative-like structures take place in a decidedly non-verbal genre: the ballet or the pantomime, as being a part of the *ballet d'action*

33. “Die Musik unterstützt die Geste des Spielers, spricht anstatt seiner.” Ernst Neufeldt, “Der Schleier der Pierrette. Uraufführung in der Kgl. Hofoper;” *Dresdner Neueste Nachrichten* (23 January 1910), quoted from Vollmer, “Die Poetisierung stummer Traumbilder,” 226.

Once more we need to go back to Beethoven's *Die Geschöpfe des Prometheus*, where (in No. 9) the oboe imitates Melpomene's speech.³⁴ This is exactly what Marian Smith is talking about, when she says "[i]n some cases a solo instrument played a recitative as performers on stage mimed."³⁵ Further examples for this technique are to be found in Léo Delibes' *Sylvia*, where in the third act the solo violin suddenly plays 'en récitatif,' or in Béla Bartók's *The Miraculous Mandarin*, in which the composer added to fig. 39¹ 'quasi recitativo.'³⁶

Recitative-like structures are a characteristic but not permanent component of many dialogues in *Der Schleier der Pierrette*. By analysing the score one may see that these structures are not very concrete and that Dohnányi uses them only in a very stylised way. So we will not find any longer recitative passages or *recitativo* indications. Nevertheless, there are some examples to be found, where the composer tried to follow at least in a stylised way the rhythm and tempo of a statement, by indicating some kind of rhythmical and temporal freedom, which is indeed another characteristic of the recitative. Another point is that this technique is rarely used in isolation, but much more often in combination with the other subcategories of musical speech analogy presented above.

One situation, where a recitative-like structure can be isolated, is Fred's statement at fig. 25²⁰ (with a quaver upbeat) just before the C-sharp major waltz: "Schlag dir die Sache aus dem Kopf, Pierrot, es ist nicht die Mühe wert[,] sich um Pierrette zu kümmern." [Pierrot, banish the thought of Pierrette, she's not worth it] (see *Example 8*).

Besides the fact that the melody (played in the flute) could perhaps stand in connection with the ups and downs of speech, one should in this case look especially at the accompanying chords (played *pizz.* in the strings), which altogether approach a *secco* recitative style, as there are only ninth and seventh chords. The following cadence, with which a recitative traditionally closes (in a modulation),

EXAMPLE 8 DA 2.098, page 15

The image shows a musical score for a recitative passage. The title is 'Fred: „Schlag dir die Sache aus dem Kopf, Pierrot, es ist nicht der Mühe wert sich um Pierrette zu kümmern.' The score is written for flute and strings. The flute part has a quaver upbeat. The string part has chords. Handwritten annotations include 'dim.', 'rallent.', and 'cresc.'. There is a circled '22' in the top left corner.

34. Cf. Floros, *Beethoven's Eroica*, 65–67., and Stephan Drees, *Vom Sprechen der Instrumente: Zur Geschichte des instrumentalen Rezitativs* (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 2007), 124.

35. Smith, "The orchestra as translator," 140.

36. Cf. A. Nirschy, "Varianten zu Bartóks Pantomime Der wunderbare Mandarin," *Studia Musicologica* 2/1–4 (1962), 189–223, here 215–218., and Béla Bartók, *The Miraculous Mandarin* (piano reduction; Vienna: Universal Edition, 2000). Note that the 'quasi recitativo' does not appear in the full scores.

is introduced by the leading note B \sharp (last note of the *Example 8*) resolving to C \sharp . The note reached is indeed at the same time the tonic of the waltz starting then in C-sharp major even if it begins on the subdominant F-sharp major. Furthermore, I think it could be important to mention that Elsa Galafrés noted the words ‘*dell’arte*’ just under the recitative-like speech, perhaps referring to the improvisational character of that *Commedia* that leads to a certain musical freedom, too. This last point becomes even clearer in *Example 9* taken from the end of the second picture.

EXAMPLE 9 DA 2.098, page 56

Musical score for Example 9, showing a recitative-like statement by Pierrette. The score is in 3/4 time, C-flat major, and features a treble and bass staff. The treble staff has a melody starting with a circled '11' and ending with a circled '12'. The lyrics are 'Pierrette: „Ich bin spazieren gegangen drauŝen im Garten.“'. Dynamics include *p*, *frei*, and *ff*.

Dohnányi composed Pierrette’s recitative-like statement “Ich bin spazieren gegangen drauŝen im Garten” [I went for a walk outside in the garden] for the cor anglais and marked clearly that this short part ought to be played “frei” [freely]. The motif, which is already a varied echo of another statement of Pierrette, consists of only four notes which are taken from the C-flat major scale, as we get to know shortly after when they become part of the waltz theme at fig. 130¹⁻². In this case we do not find any harmonies that could give us another hint for a recitative-like structure, the last E-flat minor chord belonging to the speech analogy of Arlechino. Dohnányi’s focus is merely lying on the free solo part of the cor anglais.

To conclude this chapter I should progress to some special cases of speech analogy that can only partly be traced back to a recitative-like structure but still have the same function as the techniques mentioned so far, which is the recognisability of speech analogy for the audience. The example of Pierrot’s statements in the Pierrot-Pierrette scene from the first picture (prior to the grotesque funeral

EXAMPLE 10 DA 2.098, page 24

Musical score for Example 10, showing a recitative-like statement by Pierrot. The score is in 3/4 time, C-flat major, and features a treble and bass staff. The treble staff has a melody starting with a circled '11' and ending with a circled '12'. The lyrics are “Wie, das sollen wir trinken?”. Dynamics include *p* and *espress*.

march) shows that Dohnányi was still employing a solo instrument (once again it is first the cor anglais) to analogise Pierrot's speech: "Wie, das sollen wir trinken?" [What, we should drink this?] (see *Example 10*).

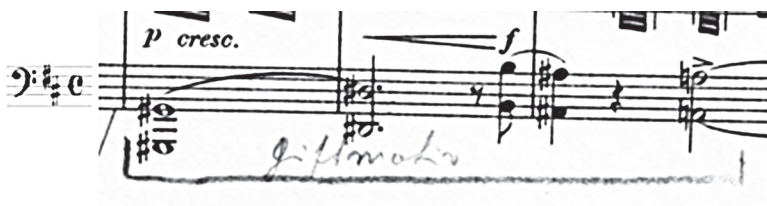
The composer uses a musical motif to accentuate the actual speech situation and varies this motif several times in rapid succession, only interrupted by the speech analogy of the dialogue partner. In these cases the recitative-like structure can only be traced out as the motif's basis. In some other cases the motifs even take on the function of leitmotifs, which leads us to the last technique I want to talk about.

Speech analogy by means of musical leitmotifs

"Dohnányi's musical motifs never retain their original form, but changes following the psychological moments. Herewith the music of this pantomime offers the substitution of the spoken word.
(Felix Adler on the premiere)³⁷

Dohnányi decidedly uses leitmotif technique in his pantomime, but we must clearly underline that the leitmotifs, unlike the other techniques, do not have to stand in connection with speech in ballet music, but they do many times in this piece. That is why I should start with the only leitmotif that is introduced by direct speech stage directions: the poison motif. In the sixth scene of the first picture, Pierrette introduces it with the words: "Das ist Gift." [This is poison.] (see *Example 11*). Even if this "Giftmotiv," as Elsa Galafrés marked it, is first repeated at fig. 48¹⁻³ in exactly the same form, it has already been varied at fig. 48⁸⁻¹⁰ and can be regarded as a real leitmotif, which does only partially refer to Pierrette's statement, but rather more to the herewith self-built semantic of the word 'poison.'

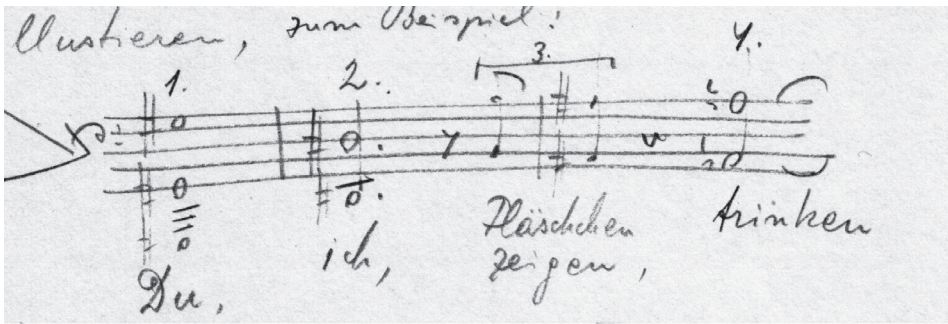
EXAMPLE 11 DA 2.098, page 24



37. "Dohnányis [sic!] Motive behalten nie die ursprüngliche Form bei, sondern sie verändern sich, wie es das psychologische Moment befiehlt. So bietet die Musik in dieser Pantomime den Ersatz für das gesprochene Wort." Felix Adler, "Der Schleier der Pierrette," *Die Schaubühne* (3 March 1910), quoted from Vollmer, "Die Poetisierung stummer Traumbilder," 227.

Furthermore this example clarifies that leitmotifs, like the other techniques used for any kind of action analogy, do not have to be only an isolated part of ballet music, but can be used in the choreography, too. But as opposed to musical notation, leitmotifs are unfortunately not generally accepted in dance notation. That is why it is a great opportunity to have the complete choreography of *Der Schleier der Pierrette* notated down in such a clear way in Elsa Galafrés' piano reduction, so that we do have the good fortune to recognise a close connection between music and mime, for example for the poison motif, which was choreographed as follows (Plate 2).

PLATE 2 Dohnányi, *Der Schleier der Pierrette* DA 2.098, notes to page 24

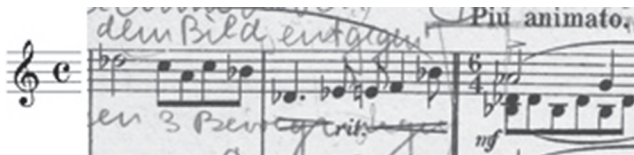


The poison motif has to be performed with four movements every time it appears (“Das ‘Giftmotiv’ ist jedesmal [sic!] mit vier [underlined] Bewegungen zu illustrieren”): “Du, ich, Fläschchen zeigen, trinken” [You, me, show bottle, drink]. It is very instructive to observe how clearly a leitmotif is just simultaneously used in music and mime – and indeed in the same function.

Not only had the poison been analogised by a leitmotif, but also the person who introduced it, namely Pierrette. Her leitmotif is first heard at fig. 4²⁻⁴ and is often used in the first scene of the pantomime, even if she is actually absent there (Example 12).

Despite her absence in the first scene of the first picture, Pierrette is recalled by some other objects, like her portrait, flowers, letters and ribbons, and every time

EXAMPLE 12 DA 2.098, page 6



one of these objects is mentioned in the stage directions, her leitmotif is heard. This motif has apparently been given a referring function, as it is very rarely used in connection with the present Pierrette. Another good example of this referring function is to be found at the beginning of the second picture – Pierrette still at this point finds herself in Pierrot's room. At fig. 106¹⁻⁷ Gigolo is first mentioning her, then Arlechino at fig. 107¹⁰⁻¹³, once again Gigolo at fig. 109⁴⁻⁸, and finally her mother with only the second half of the motif, starting at fig. 109⁹ (afterwards the first part of the leitmotif is used for the ensuing minuet). According to Elsa Galafrés' notes, Pierrette's leitmotif does not stand in direct connection with her in the Pierrot-Pierrette scene, where it rather symbolises the desire in Pierrot's speech. One of the rare examples – if not the only one – where the Pierrette leitmotif is clearly connected to its owner is to be found at the beginning of the second scene of the second picture, at fig. 128²⁻⁴ in the oboe.

There is still another musical motif in the pantomime that clearly refers to an object, notably to the veil. But the concept of this motif (note that I do not want to call it a leitmotif) is quite different from the Pierrette or the poison (or the not yet mentioned Pierrot or Arlechino) leitmotif. This veil motif does have a stable structure and only appears in this form, throughout the piece (*Example 13*).

EXAMPLE 13 DA 2.098, page 23

Pierrot weicht vor ihr zurück, weist auf ihren Myrtenkranz, auf ihren Schleier.
 Più Allegro.
 ff
 legato

The veil motif is first introduced with a quite indirect stage direction (“Pierrot [...] weist [...] auf ihren Schleier” [Pierrot points at her veil]) and is connected only later to a direct speech stage direction of Arlechino, starting at fig. 139¹. But nevertheless the audience is herewith given a good way to recognise the veil musically.

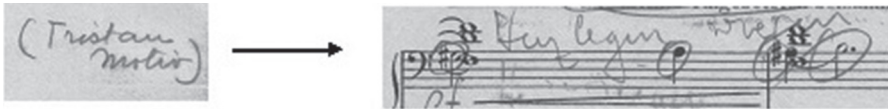
To finish with the leitmotif technique, one special case should be mentioned where a leitmotif is used only once.³⁸ But why should we call it a leitmotif then?

38. We may discover this motif within Pierrette's leitmotif, too (cf. *Example 12*). It is interesting to recognise its yearning function, as the Pierrette leitmotif is first introduced by Pierrot who is indeed yearning for his loved one.

Because it is a musical quote from Wagner's opera *Tristan and Isolde* that would indeed be quite hard to work out, had Elsa Galafrés not noted it down clearly. In the fourth scene of the first picture the valet is replying at fig. 32^o: "Ich bin verliebt und sehne mich danach[,] mit meiner Angebeteten zusammen zu sein." [I'm in love and I yearn to be together with my loved one.]. Elsa Galafrés encircled the four notes building what she called the 'Tristan-Motiv' (see *Examples 14a–b*).

Actually this musical motif is known as the 'Sehnsuchtsmotiv' [yearning motif] from Wagner's *Tristan*. Dohnányi placed it as a unique entry in the cor anglais within the fourth scene of the first picture. The motif does indeed have a close connection to the action – which is one of the major functions of musical quotes in ballet music too. This special technique has been excessively used in the ballet music of the first half of the 19th century. Within it the audience was given musical themes or motifs from well-known or contemporary popular pieces, that had already been connected to a special action, character, object, or feeling. The audience recognised the quote and conveyed the knowledge to the present piece and understood automatically the composer's intention. With the upgrading of ballet music, especially with Delibes and Tchaikovsky, this technique began to vanish but had been still used in a more appropriate way since then, as in this example from *Der Schleier der Pierrette*.

EXAMPLE 14a DA 2.098, page 18



EXAMPLE 14b Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*



The turn of the century, in which both Schnitzler's and Dohnányi's works are situated, was hallmarked by cultural crisis, especially speech crisis. Hugo von Hofmannsthal criticised the language and its means of expression quite strongly in his *Chandos-Brief* of 1902. For Schnitzler, as well as for his close friend Hofmannsthal, the literary genre of the pantomime offered a potential way out of the crisis, because of its muteness. It was Richard Beer-Hofmann, who introduced them to the pantomime in 1892:

As one of his earliest literary attempts, Richard Beer-Hofmann read out loud to his circle of friends his pantomime *Pierrot Hypnotiseur* and earned admiration especially from Schnitzler and Hofmannsthal.³⁹

During the following years, Hofmannsthal began to work out an adequate pendant to language within the pantomime. Ernst Osterkamp pointed out: "In his later works Hofmannsthal used three non-verbal art forms instead of the 'language of silence': pantomime, dance and music."⁴⁰ In just the same way, Wayne Heisler explains this turning towards the pantomime: "[...] Hofmannsthal looked for gesture, pantomime, and dance in an attempt to escape the mediation of language [...]."⁴¹ Schnitzler, too, doubted that the language was an adequate tool of cognition. But, as already emphasised in the introduction, Schnitzler never excluded the direct speech from his pantomimes.

Ernő Dohnányi understood the widened criticism of the language of his time and offered in his *Pierrette* abundant examples of speech analogy and imitation. To underline it once more: never, before *Pierrette*, had the technique of '*musique parlante*' been used in such subtle and abundant diversity in the history of the *ballet d'action*. Therewith, Dohnányi struck new paths in ballet that were followed especially by Béla Bartók, creating thus a contradictory ideology to the ballet company under the directorship of the impresario Sergei Diaghilev, which decisively marked ballet history: the *Ballets Russes*. Taking a look at their first great success, Igor Stravinsky's *Firebird* – premiered in the same year, 1910, as *Pierrette* –, we may recognise that there are definitely no speech imitations or analogies here, nor in *Petrushka* or in *Le sacre du printemps* (but we do find all the other techniques for the analogy of action used by then). The negation of the '*musique parlante*' technique probably goes back to Michel Fokine, who pointed out in his memoirs:

The Tsarevich did not say – as was customary in ballet tradition: 'I have come here.' Instead, he just entered. The princesses did not say: 'We are having a good time'. Instead, they had a good time, in reality. King Kastchei did not state: 'I will destroy thee', instead, he attempted to turn Tsarevich into stone. The fairest princess and the Tsarevich did not use sign language to express their love. [...] In short, no one had to explain anything to anyone else or to the audience; everything was expressed by action and dances.

39. "Als einen seiner frühesten literarischen Versuche las [Richard] Beer-Hofmann [seine Pantomime *Pierrot Hypnotiseur*] im Freundeskreis vor und erntete besonders von Schnitzler und Hofmannsthal Bewunderung." Julia Bertschik, *Mode und Moderne* (Köln: Böhlau, 2005), 164.

40. "An die Stelle der Sprache des Schweigens treten im späteren Werk Hofmannsthal drei nicht sprachliche Kunstformen [...] Pantomime, Tanz und Musik." Ernst Osterkamp, "Die Sprache des Schweigens bei Hofmannsthal," *Hofmannsthal-Jahrbuch* 2/1994, 111–137, here 133.

41. Wayne Heisler, *The Ballet Collaborations of Richard Strauss* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2009), 47.

[Footnote]: I use storytelling, but not narration. There is no conversation in *The Firebird*. Ivan explains nothing. This is a vital difference between the old and the new ballet.⁴²

Fokine's statement concerns, above all, the scenario, but can also refer furthermore to choreography and music. In this so-called 'new ballet' – i.e. the works of the *Ballets Russes* – the personae dramatis became silent. The climax of this ideology was reached with *Le sacre du printemps* in which the focus was totally concentrated on 'danse.' Here, the rare mimed passages arise completely out of the dance ritual. In contradiction to this, *Pierrette* is "a vehicle of avant-garde experimentalists on the Russian theatrical scene."⁴³ In it the dance passages arise completely out of the 'pantomime' scenario. In my opinion the climax of this ideology was reached with Béla Bartók's *The Miraculous Mandarin*, a work that perhaps could not have been composed without Dohnányi's *Der Schleier der Pierrette* – in the words of Béla Bartók: "a deep and gripping drama without words, in which Dohnányi's most characteristic music takes the place of the spoken word."⁴⁴

42. Michel Fokine, *Memoirs of a Ballet-master* (Boston: Little Brown, 1961), 168–169.

43. Lawrence Sullivan, "Arthur Schnitzler's 'The Bridal Veil' at the American Laboratory Theatre," *Dance Research Journal* 25/1 (1993), 13.

44. Béla Bartók, "Schönberg and Stravinsky," 72.